Program: Mark Prasuhn, President & General Manager, WPBS TV, “Public Television and Rotary”

Meeting Video
Not available.

Meeting begins
On this sunny, warm day in March, President Caroline Dewitt called the 36th meeting of the Rotary year to order at 12:31 PM.
We were again treated to the spectacular performance of Prelude and then the anthem, ‘O Canada’, sung in English, French and Cree by Revv 52 group.

Brett Brooking gave an invocation of optimism on this first meeting of the spring 2021. We look forward to new life, and hope for warm days ahead. Yet there is a balance between hope (the vaccine) and fear (third lockdown and final). Projects and fundraising will move full steam ahead. Give thanks for the spring.

Toastmaster Graeme Fraser read us some of the bad jokes and stories from the “Stripped gears” section of an earlier Rotary magazine. We laughed and he led us in a toast to the corny humour of those old magazines.

Guests We welcomed our keynote speaker Mark Prasuhn of WPBS and again Rotarian Keith Nixon,. Youssef Mani, guest of PP Pardeep Ahluwalia; Onyiye Abu, guest of Eugene Achihaei; and former WOer Brian Foster

Announcements
1. Johnny Marquez announced and described the awards that will be presented this year: Paul Harris, Lloyd Loynes, Ruth Martin Award, Honorary Member, and Honoured Life Member plus 10, 20, 30, 40, and 50 year awards. See https://rcwo.org/page/showhomepage/ Awards 2021 for more info and nomination forms. Awards criteria can be found at https://content.clubrunner.ca/512/Document/Search?DocumentType=AccountDocuments&Keyword=Awards Please submit the nominations asap.
2. March is Rotary Water and Sanitation month. And March 22 was World Water Day (https://www.worldwaterday.org/) . There are 2.2B people living without access to clean water. Club member Bea Osone has built wells, some with RCWO support, to supply clean water for
schools in western Kenya and she is there now working on her 21st. Also, RCWO has supported renovation of toilet facilities and construction of new hand washing stations for schools in Port of Spain in Trinidad and Tobago.

3. Cash Calendars: This Partnership with 11 Rotary Clubs supports other organizations in our community and provides visibility for our club in the community. Its selling points are 369 prizes quality local photographs, places to record events and appointments, and contact information to reach calendar sponsors. Ron Scott, the committee chair, started this major club project about 12 years ago.

4. The RCWO Cleanup Service project will happen on Saturday, April 24 between 10 AM-2 PM at either Britannia Beach or Andrew Haydon Park. Contact Caroline if you plan to participate. The date may be changed due to lockdown.

5. DG Hadi Mortada reminded us that The Rotary Foundation touches others’ lives. For example, Bill Moyers, TV journalist and commentator, and former Deputy Director of the Peace Corps. Bill says, “The five men who chose me to become a Rotary Scholar are gone . . . but they are not. . . .Because along the way, I will in my own way share with others - and have - what those five men and the 60 members of the Rotary Club of Marshall, Texas in 1956 when they said, ‘Bill Moyers, you can matter.’“

Hadi asks, “Can you help identify a candidate for a Global Grant Scholarship who will make a difference in the world?”

6. Donate meeting fees to local charities and to broader-based ones such as The Rotary Foundation.

Presentation
In September 2019 PP Pardeep and a few members participated in a PBS Watertown fund raising broadcast to help WPBS and to promote Rotary and our Cash Calendar. Pardeep now introduced Mark Prasuhn from WPBS. Mark’s Canadian roots run deep. From Thunder Bay where he was a teacher, Mark attended Queens, York, and U of T. His career in TV and Film started at TVO. He has recently joined the Watertown Rotary Club.

WPBS evolved out of a non-profit educational corporation founded in 1958 under charter from the New York state education authorities. Initially their programming was broadcast by a Watertown commercial TV station but in 1971 they got their own transmitters and became WNPE. PBS was started in 1970 and in 1998 WNPE changed its call letters to WPBS. It is non-profit and community based and is run by licensed volunteer board of trustees. There is annual budget of 2.7 million US and 20 full-time staff. Supported by members (70% of whom are in Canada), grants and underwriting services. There are 4 stations. Commercial free broadcasting covers a wide variety of foci--reality TV, documentaries, drama, current affairs, and health and wellness. Priorities for this year are to respond to the pandemic with accurate news and info, education (support for at home learning), performance, and “respite” programming...(entertainment in a “public tv way”)

WPBS wishes to enhance service to Canada and work with Canadian arts and culture, to continue to support non-profits, local small business, digital presence, and educators at the universities and colleges.
The 3-yr. strategic plan was recently updated and includes a weekly current affairs program about the region.

Q and A

Q: Ken Murray congratulated Mark on his good training in Saskatchewan. Rotary appreciates any way to get its message out. Apply the 4way test before they make their donation.

A. Mark wishes to visit the clubs in person once virtual visits are no longer necessary

Q. President Caroline supports WPBS which she has watched develop over the years. Would our Club service projects qualify for the new WPBS current affairs programming?

A. They want stories from around the region. Mark gave an example of how he incorporated a local event into his programming.

Q. Frank Cranton. Could the new District multi-club environmental committee provide a good story with which to promote our environmental initiatives?

A. Environment is one of the 6 main theme areas and it would be great to have this story.

Q. Hadi Mortada has a friend who was a member of the Watertown Rotary Club. Perhaps RC Watertown and RCWO can work together on the environment story. Hadi hopes to have WPBS on the calendar again.

Pardeep thanked Mark for participating. A lot of Club members are regular watchers of WPBS and it has been part of our lives as we were raising children.

A donation has been made to Polio Plus in recognition of Mark’s talk to us.

Happy Dollars
Collector Robert Shaw Wood. called first upon Caroline who thanked her daughter, Dawn Dewitt, for her assistance with the slides.

Pardeep thanks the members and friends who have signed up for the whiskey tasting event. The event is now sold out

Gord Levertone gave $20 Happy Dollars to announce that his first grandchild, a boy arrived a month and a half early. He weighed in at 3.18 lbs. Since his daughter lives in Owen Sound it is an unknown when he will see the baby.

Susan Diening announced that March 21 was Down’s Syndrome Day. Since her granddaughter has Downs Syndrome, one of her preferred charities after Rotary supports those affected. She also mentioned that we need more ads for the Cash Calendar.

Gaye Moffett celebrated the first birthday of her “pandemic grandchild” with a drive-by, outside birthday party. The baby was introduced to a double chocolate ice cream bar.

Jim Maxwell gave $10 happy dollars to congratulate Beosome on the official opening of her second well built this year--Well number 21.

Ken Murray requested that we send in Award nominations asap.

Carol Bell Thompson is happy for the work that Beosome does.

Joan Heyland donated $5 at having received two applications for Global Grants scholarships. The Rotary Foundation Committee will read and decide if phone interviews will be required. One applicant is at Ottawa U, and the other Carleton. We are allowed to sponsor more than one candidate if we feel it is warranted.

Meeting ends
President Caroline thanked all of today’s participants and gave a word on the March 30 program. classification talk.
She welcomed spring with a recording of Vivaldi’s Spring Concerto from the Four Seasons.
Meeting adjourned at 1:43

Tuesday, 30 March 2021 12:30pm
Jill Yarnell; Classification Talk & Stove Team International
Intro and Thanks: Ken Murray
Editor: Graeme Fraser
Invocation: Larry Chop     Toastmaster Alan Bowles

Meeting at Zoom https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82444180906
See President Caroline message March 28 for log-in details

Tuesday, 6 April 2021
Paul Elsley, President of the RC Kingston. “From Challenge to Opportunity: Finding Silver Linings During the Pandemic.”
Past President Pardeep and President Elect Graeme, report that Paul gave a great presentation at the recent Presidents-Elect Training Session (PETS)
Intro: Graeme Fraser     Thanks: Pardeep Ahluwalia.