



Spinoff

ROTARY CLUB OF WEST

OTTAWA

Graeme Fraser, President

November 15 2022, Editor: Ginette Thomas

Evening meeting Zoom

PROGRAM: OPERATION POLLINATOR – Christopher Stein

Video: Not available

We Start: President Graeme welcomed us to the 20th meeting of the Rotary year and acknowledged that we are meeting on traditional Anishinaabe Algonquin land.

Visitors: Lynne Chant , RC Peterborough Kawartha, was Governor 2020-21 District 7010,; Luis Espinosa moved here from Mexico and is connecting with RCWO; Elsabé Falkson is Chair of D7040 Environment Committee; Jean Holbert-Leighton is from RC St Catharines South and in process of transferring her membership to RCWO; PP Bryon Milliere is RCWO Past President 2003-04; and our Guest Speaker is Christopher Stein, Chief Officer, Operation Pollinator.

PP Caroline DeWitt announced the slate of RCWO Officers for 2022-2023. She will send the list to all members for discussion and approval at the next AGM, tentatively scheduled for December 6th, 2022. She encouraged members to reach out to her if they know of someone to be nominated.

Program: Operation Pollinator – Christopher Stein

PP Caroline DeWitt started with a Mark Twain quote, “The secret of getting ahead is to get started”, and said it captured today’s theme. She told us Chris Stein has been a Park Ranger for 4 decades and now works for the National Heritage Area (U.S. National Park Service). From this experience, he will share how protecting the little things, our pollinators, is one of the most important environmental actions we can take to help protect the planet.

Christopher Klein: On a photo of planet earth, he pointed out that 85% of the green we see is the result of insect pollinators. Then with photos of the millions and millions of monarch butterflies covering trees on a mountain top in the middle of Mexico, he stressed that they are the best known insect species in the world. But they and many other pollinators are threatened.

Pollinators are essential for life on earth, but their numbers have declined by more than 40% in the past 50 years and Operation Pollination was developed to protect the planet for us and our children.

What is Operation Pollination? It's an inclusive framework to recruit organizational partners to realize 2 goals: habitat restoration and education. It's important to recognize the free ecosystem conservation services that pollinators provide planet Earth. They are responsible for the reproductive success of more than 85% of the world's plants. Operation Pollination was conceived and is being implemented by Rotarians around the world to help individuals and communities do something concrete today to help pollinators.

What is its brief history? In 2015, 3 US land management agencies partnered to establish the Operation Pollinator. In February 2020, the North American Central Chapter of ESRAAG (Environmental Sustainability Rotary Action Group) adopted the Operation Pollinator framework as its own, developed a website and published an article in Rotary Magazine. In February 2021, Chicago Rotary District 6450 became the first Rotary District to adopt an Operation Pollination Resolution and 28 Districts around the world have since signed Operation Pollination Resolutions.

How to engage?

Step 1: Districts sign a Pollinator Resolution recognizing that pollinators are declining in number, and we need to do something about it.

Step 2: Individual clubs sign a Pollinator Pledge Form that describes the actions they will take and the partner organizations they will engage. Projects can be any size and a list of projects is available on ESRAAG.org.

Step 3: Individual clubs recruit and include the names of partners on the back of their Pledge Form and then seek media attention

Christopher invited RCWO to help. The ESRAAG.org website contains the attached presentation as well as the forms we can fill out.

He wrapped up with a plea for us to start projects in our backyards, reminding us of Caroline's Mark Twain quote in that we don't need to sign anything to get started. Christopher's presentation <https://portal.clubrunner.ca/512/Documents/en-ca/7bcea55b-290a-44dd-971e-17b8a6e41444/1/>

He told us Rotary International President Jennifer Jones started *Monarch Mondays* on November 14 to discuss the importance of pollinators Her first presentation:

https://www.facebook.com/100044373701638/videos/1242112176355957/?__so__=watchlist&__rv__=video_home_www_playlist_video_list

Questions:

Christopher answered

To **Roger Wilson**, some ideas to get started: plant a pollinator garden; add an interpretation sign; give out milkweed seed packets; paint a mural; go into schools and teach about pollinators.

To **Bob Harrison**, his cottage association project to plant milkweed every year could be attached as a partner organization to RCWO's pledge form.

To **Caroline DeWitt**, he encouraged us to check out the ESRAAG iRotree database so that we can connect and enter our projects into the database. <https://esrag.org/irotree/>

To **Susan Diening**, he confirms that existing projects like the 2 pollinator gardens that **Marcia Armstrong** has already started can be added to our pledge form.

He adds that he is interested in District 7040 because we are in the Great Lakes Watershed and this year, a goal for Operation Pollination is to recruit 22 districts that are in this Watershed.

To **Bea Osome**, he's not familiar with Ontarians for Bees, but as a separate organizations like Rotarians for Bees <https://rotariansforbees.org/> , they can fill out a separate resolution or sign a pledge form if they want to stay connected with Rotary.

Pollinator Garden Seeds and RCWO

Larry Chop followed Christopher Stein's lead to show us pictures of a garden supportive or pollinators and called on us to consider our own pollinator patches (*see* <https://portal.clubrunner.ca/512/Documents/en-ca/b6c77989-09fa-48c3-827c-0c9265931449/1/>) Common milkweed seed pods are starting to open in his yard, What an opportune time to offer Milkweed and other pollinator seeds. He has had Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) in his garden for 4 years and they have a nice blossom. Finally, this year a monarch caterpillar showed up. Beautiful video! <https://youtu.be/Q4rTqQNBr4E> One needs patience with Nature. Larry has lots of Milkweed seeds and other native seeds to give to members and guests. It will soon be the perfect time of year to plant them so they can harden over the winter to germinate in the spring.

Larry concluded with an illustration of why small steps are valuable citing the work of Carleton University ecologist, Dr Lenore Fahrig , who won Canada's top science prize <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-lenore-fahrig-gerhard-herzberg-canada-gold-medal/>

Larry's challenge to us: find a corner of our yard where nothing grows, and he will give us seeds that can grow; use balconies; talk to condo boards and rental managers about adding pollinator plants. Give **Larry** or **Marcia Armstrong** a shout and they will be happy to help you!

PP Caroline DeWitt thanked Christopher Stein for his brilliant words, his inspiration, and teaching us about the monarchs and their travels. As a token of appreciation, we are making a donation to Polio Plus. Unfortunately, we did not get to see the video, "The Day of the Dead", when monarchs arrive in Mexico. It is narrated by Will Smith, the actor. Chris will send it to **Caroline** to share with the Club.

Announcements:

Dave Morton recommends the Russander Farm for fresh, free range Holiday turkeys (*see* <https://www.russanderfarm.ca/holiday-turkeys>). This is the former *Youth Now* Farm, and they still offer programs for disadvantaged youth with their Farm Visit Program.

President Graeme: Announcements:

-The jury is still out on the Best Western Macies as a meeting location, so we still await **Jen Ahde's** Committee working on options for a new meeting format and venue

-The Ottawa Rotary Social event is proceeding at Mama Theresa Restaurant on Tuesday November 29 at 6:00pm. Dinner is \$75 plus tax & gratuity. Information will come in an email from DGN Teresa Whitmore.

-Nov 22 Gerhard Peters from RC Arnprior will bring fruit cakes.

Ken Murray has linked us to the Orpheus production of *Newsies* at the Centrepointe Theatre. Information will be provided in an email.

November is Foundation Month. The District needs the money and funds do benefit us. So please consider donating.

We Close:

Next week's meeting will be a **HYBRID** meeting at the Best Western Macies with a few changes: buffet with soup and sandwiches; price remains \$20/person (coffee, tea, and tax included, but not gratuity). PLEASE arrive a few minutes before noon.

The meeting is adjourned with thanks from **President Graeme** for joining today, wishing us a good week, to get our shot, and to sell those calendars.

Cash Calendar winners

<http://www.ottawarotarycalendar.com/2022-winners.html>

Next Meeting

Hybrid meeting – Best Western Macies

November 22, 2022

Arrive before 12:00; meeting proper starts @ 12:30

Speaker: Scott Vetter, Chair of Rotel

Intro and thanks **Jen Ahde**

Spinoff: **TBA**

Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81365346181>

See **President Graeme** email for log-in details