*Spinoff*

ROTARY CLUB OF WEST OTTAWA

 Marcia Armstrong, President

 April 9, 2024 Reporter: Ginette Thomas

 **This meeting was hybrid**

(In-person at the Queensview Café )

**Program**: District 7040 Governor Pardeep Ahluwalia Visit –Rotary Foundation Recognition and Support

**Meeting Video:**  <https://youtu.be/nY_ruGyvO5E>

 In-person: 39 members - 6 guests

 Online: 13 members – 1 guest

**We open:**

**President Marcia** welcomed us to what was an exciting 41st meeting of this Rotary year as we adjusted and settled in quite cozily into a new meeting venue at the Queensview Café with many who came to hear our District Governor! She acknowledged that we were meeting on the traditional land of the Algonquin Anishinaabe people who've lived on this territory for millennia and reminded us to always be mindful of their experience in the story of Canada, to learn about it, to act on it and to make changes.

**President Marcia** welcomed our guests Joan Hunter, Area Governor; Julie Cugalj; Barbara Fisk, District Foundation Chair; Simmy Ahluwalia; Jennifer Rose; June Wells; and Linda Roehrl, who will become a member of RCWO next week!

**O Canada**:

We all sang along to a beautiful acapella video rendition.

**Program:** District 7040 Governor - About the Rotary Foundation

Ottawa Central Area Governor Joan Hunter introduced **Pardeep Ahluwalia,** the 2023-2024 District Governor. He joined Rotary in 2016, his academic background is in the sciences, and his executive career in the federal public service. He and his wife Simmy recently became proud grandparents!

**Pardeep:**

RCWO is **Pardeep**’s home Club and he expressed regrets for not being able to attend more Club meetings this past year due to commitments in his DG functions. He focused on 2 themes: recognizing Rotarians’ contributions to Polio Plus and the Rotary Foundation; and, the difference that Rotary continues to make in the lives of individuals worldwide.

Recognition.

Emphasizing that one of the most rewarding things for him is to recognize Rotarians for what they have done and for their contribution to an organization whose mission is to make life better in the world, he opened by acknowledging some key contributions.

* To RCWO **Past President Graeme Fraser** he presented a recognition of the Club for its members’contributions to the polio fund in Rotary Year 2022-2023. These contributions are important. Achieving eradication is close with only 3 wild polio cases in the world: 2 in Afghanistan and 1 in Pakistan. Once these 2 countries are certified as polio free for 1 year, followed by another 3 years of monitoring, and if at the end of that 4-year period there are no wild polio cases, those countries will be declared polio free. Which means that for the 2nd time in history, we will have eradicated a disease from the human population. So yes, we truly are THAT close!
* He congratulated **Susan Diening** Rotary Club Foundation Co-Chair for her remarkable lifetime contributions totalling $25,000 to the Rotary Foundation, and for everything that she does for the Foundation. Rotary International celebrates US$10,000/US$25,000/US$50,000/US$100,000 total lifetime contributions as Major Donors. So **Susan** is a Major Donor, Level 2. It’s important to remember that Rotary projects are funded by these contributions from members. **Susan** said the fact that Rotary gets the highest US honour every year for how they use their money and the breadth of their outreach, are what convinced her to support the Foundation.

Collaboration At Work:

There are amazing Rotary projects initiated by clubs in our own District, where we can experience the importance of the Foundation's work. These projects are in our own backyards, and they are from around the world. What’s important is the people they reach, and how their lives are affected by the work we do. This is information that we should be sharing. Here is but a sample.

* *Food Rescue in Montreal*: The e-Club Premier 7040 in Montreal has had a food rescue program for years. Their program supplies food, largely fruits and vegetables, to food banks in the Montreal area that serve about 10,000 families. They process the produce that can't be distributed as fresh into sauces, jams and jellies that are sold in jars with the money going to the food banks. One day, they had a problem – a surplus of 6 tons of tomatoes! The solution of course is to reach out. Food rescue is an area of interest to many clubs across the District. So let's share information about what we do and who benefits from these programs.
* *Wells in Kenya*: Between 2007 and 2023, **Bea Osome** of RC West Ottawa spearheaded the building of 22 wells and 1 hygienic toilet in Kenya. This is a significant program that the club was supporting. Then they applied for district matching grants which meant that they could do more than they had planned at no additional cost to the Club. This is an example of Rotary Foundation funds at work to do good in the world.
* *Park Of Hope in Cornwall*: RC Cornwall Sunrise is overseeing the construction of a *Park of Hope* for children of all abilities. It’s a $600,000 project, and they are seeking $100,000 support from the Rotary Foundation. The community has contributed very significantly from their own resources, and even the Royal Bank has donated a substantial amount. All of which to show that we can have global grants here. It's not just all about what's elsewhere in the world.
* *Project Fairs – Colombia & Central America:* But he did emphasize that it’s actually when we do go elsewhere that we can truly experience how important Rotary is in the world to people who really do have very, very little. We get to see how much of what we do and what we contribute to has such a profound impact on people's lives. One place where this is on display is at *Project Fairs.* A *Project Fair* is an event in a geographic area where all the Rotary clubs in that area come together to make presentations and seek partner support. He and Simmy have been to fairs in Colombia and in Central America (*Uniendo*), and it’s at the Colombia *Project Fair* that they saw some really solid project proposals to really help people. One of them was a water treatment plant in Colombia and Amazonia.
* *Water Treatment Plant in Colombia & Amazonia:* **Robert Eagle,** RCWO International Service Committee Chairreceived a commitment from the Board for one such project, a water treatment plant for Indigenous communities in Colombia and Amazonia. So much water is being drawn from the area for both human consumption and for agriculture, all coming out of the same aquifer, that naturally toxic metals are seeping out of the ground, making the water non potable. This non potable water is generating huge numbers of acute and chronic health conditions. Because people are sick, they are not going to work, causing an impact on socioeconomic potential, social economic activity, and education since children that are sick are not going to school. **Pardeep** put forward a governor's initiative and committed Foundation Funds from the district for it. A number of clubs in the District have also started making commitments. What is needed is about $52,000 in total for a project that will help 3 indigenous communities in Amazonia and in Colombia.
* *Colombia Healthcare:* **Pardeep** shared his close encounter with the Colombian healthcare system after he suffered an injury on a Chiva bus (rustic bus with no steps – you just jump on!). The only way to get off is backwards, a bit like a ladder, and unfortunately he slipped and fell about a metre and landed on his back. He is still recuperating (…he said as he clutched the chair in front of him for support!), but it gave him the chance to see what the Colombian healthcare system was like. And surprisingly, it wasn't bad! But more important for today’s topic, it got him curious about healthcare projects that we have supported in that area.
* *Hospital In Buga, Colombia:* One project is at the Buga Hospital. This is a hospital with whom District 7040 has worked with over the years, with RC Gananoque leading the development and implementation of Global Grants largely to support neonatal and high risk pregnancy activities. The hospital has 2 plaques recognizing all the Rotary Clubs that have contributed, including our District. And what is surprising is that on the frosted windows in every room in that part of the hospital we see the Rotary wheel, because they are so grateful for what we do.

Conclusion – Creating Hope in the World:

**Pardeep** is a captivating storyteller. He speaks from the heart, and his words expose the profound insights that his travels offered through those direct connections with Rotary projects.

He closed by asking members to remember this year's theme, *Create Hope in the World*. The way that we create hope in individuals is that we help make their lives better. Then communities start thinking that way. And guess what? We may end up eventually in a place where, through creating hope in the world, we have helped create peace in the world. And wouldn't that be a wonderful place to be!

**Announcements:**

* **President Marcia** thanked **Pardeep** and is sure that we all now realize that for our charitable donations, the Rotary Foundation is an excellent option, as we saw just how much work it does here and abroad. And in a surprise move, she presented himwith a Paul Harris +8 pin of his own, recognizing his generous commitment to the goals of the Foundation.
* Together with **Pardeep,** she then recognized **Gord Leverton**, RCWO Foundation Co-Chair, for his contributions and his work with the Foundation. He’s an enthusiastic advocate and actively encourages members to contribute. He thanked the RCWO Board for their support for the Foundation by matching every dollar that members donate to the Foundation this Rotary Year towards their next Paul Harris recognition. He encouraged Club members to “give lots, give often”!
* On behalf of the Soc and Rec Committee, **Ron Doll** thanked everyone who turned out for the gathering to watch the solar eclipse on Monday. There was a good turnout and the weather cooperated, the sun cooperated, and it was a lot of fun, lot of food, a lot of fellowship.

**We Close**

Next week’s guest is Laura Reinsborough, the Ottawa Riverkeeper, who will be telling us about the work that they do. Some members from the Stittsville and the Arnprior Clubs may join us to hear her presentation.

Have a great week and we'll see you next Tuesday.

Meeting adjourned.

https://www.ottawarotarycalendar.com/2023-winners.html

**Next Meeting - Hybrid**

**Tuesday, February 16, 2024**

The Queensview Café, 2650 Queensview Drive, Ottawa

Doors open: 12:00. Meeting proper starts @ 12:30pm

Program: Laura Reinsborough, the Ottawa Riverkeeper

Intro & Thanks: **Larry Chop**

Spinoff**: Don Butler**

Past-President Draw: Jean Begin

Greeters: **Jean Holbert-Leighton**  Set-up: **Emilie Gendron & Mike Traub**

For log on info for Zoom see invitation