



Spinoff

This meeting was hybrid

In person at New Desi Zaiqa Restaurant

Carlingwood Shopping Centre

Program: Taylor Mueller the Ruddy-Schenkman Hospice,

In-person: 30 members

Online: 25 members, 3 guests

Opening

President Marcia Armstrong welcomed members to the **34th meeting of the 121st Rotary Year**, acknowledging that the Club meets on the **unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe people**. She welcomed online guests **Dorothy Young**, wife of late member **Andrew Young** who had been a patient at the Ruddy- Schenkman Hospice, and speaker **Taylor Mueller**

With no video or music for **O Canada**, **President Marcia** called upon **Gaye Moffett and Ron Baker** to lead the club in singing the anthem.

She then invited **Lynne Fraser** to introduce the guest speaker.

Lynne Fraser told us **Taylor Mueller**, the **Interim Director of Fund Development and Communications at Hospice Care Ottawa**, had enjoyed fundraising for several non- profit organisations, She joined Hospice Care Ottawa after seeing the **in-home hospice care** of her **grandfather** which allowed him to **die with dignity in the comfort of his own home**

Taylor opened her presentation by acknowledging that while conversations on death and dying can be emotional, hospice care is fundamentally about **helping people live well until the very end**. She described Hospice Care Ottawa as **the happiest workplace she has ever been in**. Laughter, dancing, and celebration are just as much a part of hospice life as the quiet moments of reflection.

She provided a brief history of **modern hospice care**, crediting **Dame Cicely. Saunders**, an **English nurse, social worker and physician**. as the **founder of the hospice movement** . Saunders introduced the concept of "**total pain**", which includes **physical, psychological, social,**

and spiritual elements. A well known quote by Saunders is “You matter because you are you, and you matter to the last moment of your life.”

Taylor also noted the contributions of **Dr. Balfour Mount**, a Montreal physician who coined the term **palliative care** as the French meaning of “hospice” is somewhat different from the English meaning. Mount adapted hospice principles to the Canadian healthcare system.

Taylor explained that hospice palliative care is **not about curing illness but about improving quality of life** for patients and their families. She emphasized that **hospice care is not limited to the final days of life**; patients may receive support from the moment they are diagnosed with a **life-limiting illness**. She added that a hospice care principle is “dying doesn't mean (one) can't live the best days of their life up until then.”

The **Ruddy-Shenkman Hospice**, located in Kanata, is one of three hospice facilities operated by Hospice Care Ottawa. In total, Ottawa has **only 35 hospice beds**—far below the estimated **70 to 80 beds needed** to serve the city's growing population. Hospice care significantly reduces strain on hospitals, as a **hospice bed costs approximately \$460 per day, compared to \$1,100 per day for an acute care hospital bed**.

Beyond residential care, **community hospice programs** provide essential support to patients and families, particularly care givers. Taylor described **Day Hospice**, a weekly gathering where patients with life-limiting illnesses come together for **board games, art therapy, massage therapy, music, and socializing**. These programs not only enrich the lives of participants but also provide **respite for caregivers**, allowing them time for errands, appointments, or self-care.

Taylor shared a moving story of **a grandmother who longed to spend time with her granddaughters during pandemic**. Staff arranged a **popsicle party in the garden**, allowing them to create lasting memories together. Another story involved a **father of two young girls**—hospice nurses traced the outlines of his daughters on a blanket, so he could always feel their presence as he rested.

3% of us will die suddenly. The rest of us will require some service assistance with end of life care.

She concluded by highlighting the **funding challenges** faced by Hospice Care Ottawa. The organization must **raise over \$2.7 million annually** to continue operations, as government funding only covers a portion of costs. Community support through **donations, fundraising events is important, Volunteer service is crucial to sustaining hospice programs** and Taylor detailed some of the help provided by volunteers. She stressed this was very flexible. If you want to volunteer one hour per week once a month you can.

Taylor thanked the club for the opportunity to tell about her work, reminding members that **"while we cannot add days to one's life, we can add life to one's days."**

Q&A Highlights

- **Ron Baker** asked whether any organizations provide **matching funds** for donations. Taylor explained that while some corporations like **Scotiabank and VIA Rail** match volunteer

hours, Hospice Care Ottawa does not currently have a major ongoing matching donor, aside from an **anonymous individual who donates \$50,000 annually to match donations during the annual Hike for Hospice fundraiser**.

- **Bob Harrison** inquired about the hospice's approach to **Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID)**. Taylor clarified that while **Hospice Care Ottawa does accommodate MAID requests**, the procedure is conducted by **external healthcare providers**.
- **Don Butler** asked whether one can **pre-book a hospice bed** before they develop a life limiting condition. Taylor explained that hospice admissions are based on **medical triage**,
- **Andrew Young's daughter Stephanie** had joined the meeting later and stressed how wonderful and peaceful she had found the Ruddy-Schenkman hospice experience to be for her dad and the family after the chaos of his time in hospital.
- **Beryl Puddifer** asked if there was training available in Ontario for volunteers and others to support the actual palliative care workers as there is in Quebec. Taylor said there was.

Lynne Fraser thanked Taylor for her informative presentation and told her about our donation to End Polio to mark her presentation. It had meant a lot to a number of our members particularly as a fellow member had spent his final days at the hospice.

Club Business and Announcements

President Marcia told us she had a missive from peripatetic and probably amphibolic member **Henry Simm** now enjoying Majorca She congratulated **Jake Maarse** on winning the PP Draw and asked **Gaye Moffett** to tell us about nominating candidates for the Paul Harris Fellow award for non-Rotarians.

Nominees should have made **outstanding contributions to their communities**. See rcwo.org for links to criteria and nomination form Nominations must be in by end March

Susan Diening presented **Dave Morton** with his 5th Paul Harris Fellow recognition

Trivia challenge: Dave Morton told us the Club team defended their title at the **Stittsville Rotary Club's trivia challenge**, finishing again in **first place**.

Rotary Peace Conference in Istanbul – Hadi Mortada shared highlights from his experience attending the **Rotary Presidential Peace Conference**, where he connected with Rotarians from across the Middle East and Europe. Conference attendee Russian District Governor Aleksei Gridchen had given **Hadi** a district flag and asked **Hadi** to send him a photo of **President Marcia** holding it.

Venue Change for Next Meetings – The next two meetings will take place at **The Happy Greek (1651 Merivale Road)** as part of the club's ongoing search for the best meeting location.

Ron Doll reminded members about the **St. Patrick's Day Celebration** at **Connors Irish Pub in Orleans** on **March 16 at noon**.

Ron Baker introduced **STRIDE**, a local organization that refurbishes wheelchairs and provides them at **affordable prices**. He encouraged anyone with **bike repair or mechanical skills** to consider volunteering.

Gaye Moffett had **extra tickets** for the 11 March **PWHL game at Lansdowne Park** and invited members to join her. **Bob Harrison** accepted.

Closing

President Marcia reminded members of the breakfast meeting March 13 at 8:00 a.m. at the Broadway Bar and Grill, Fisher and Prince of Wales. Also to **purchase tickets for the March 30 Wine Tasting fundraiser**.

Adjourn

Next Meeting - Hybrid

Tuesday, March 18 2025

In person at The Happy Greek, 1651 Merivale Road

Luncheon at noon.

Program starts 12:30

Program Dr Susan Hempinstall- Artificial Intelligence Impact on Business, Memory and Mind

Intro and Thanks: **Sucha Mann**

Spinoff: **Don Butler**

Cash Calendar draw <https://rcwo.org/Stories/latest-calendar-draw-winners>

For log on info for Zoom meeting see invitation