



Spinoff

ROTARY CLUB OF WEST OTTAWA

Marcia Armstrong, President

April 8th, 2025 Editor: Gavin Schnobb

This meeting was hybrid

(In person at The Happy Greek, 1651 Merivale Rd, Ottawa, ON.

Program: **Club Assembly**

In-person: 25 members

Online: 25 members, 1 guest (Mikeala)

Opening

President Marcia Armstrong

Welcomed members to the 38th meeting of our 121st Rotary year. acknowledging the unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe people. She opened with a reflection from Ojibway author Richard Wagamese about the interconnectedness of all people and the earth, setting a thoughtful tone for the meeting.

Marcia Armstrong welcomed guests **Mikaela to the meeting.**

Board and Club Business

- The board approved a \$1500 district grant for the Dictionary for Life program.
- Wine Tasting for a Cause was sadly cancelled, refunds have been sent.
- \$1500 was also allocated to the Bugaa Columbia Mobile Clinic project, in collaboration with the Gananoque Rotary Club.
- Shelter Box total \$3,600. ShelterBox received \$2400, and Disaster Aid Canada received \$1200.
- The Google Drive Working Group has completed its mandate; club documents will now be stored online in a searchable digital archive.

- A new youth initiative, Adventure in Finance, was approved in principle. It will teach financial literacy to youth aged 15–17.
- RCWO donation ‘in memory of’ death of a club member increased to 100\$ from \$25.
- Five newer members were sponsored to attend the District Conference.
- Several club members plan to attend the Rotary International Convention in Calgary.
- The recent club health check highlighted public image as an area for improvement.
- Ironman volunteer opportunities August 3rd.
- 12 club members registered for Calgary RI International convention.
- Club health check about, how do we get the word out about what we do?

Fundraising and Projects Updates.

Hugh Williams shared a dynamic slate of upcoming initiatives aimed at boosting the club’s impact and visibility. The club will soon become the sole distributor of the Free Reading Program, an online tool to help children build literacy skills. This initiative promises both community impact and a new revenue stream.

Another project in the works is African Afternoon—a family-friendly event celebrating African heritage while promoting Rotary's values and inclusivity and diversity

Hugh also described a creative concept called Seniors’ Theatre, where senior performers bring short plays directly into the community to foster intergenerational connections.

On the civic engagement front, the club is exploring a Big Ideas Forum, a public event series that brings attention to pressing local issues, such as homelessness. Complementing that will be a podcast series, Big Ideas Podcast, showcasing stories from inspiring Rotarians and civic leaders in Ottawa.

Lastly, the Adventure in Finance initiative is moving forward. This one-day August event will give teenagers practical knowledge about budgeting, credit, and managing their money—an essential skill set for the next generation. Hugh invited members to help bring these exciting ideas to life. Kids these days are targeted by credit cards and don’t really understand Credit card debt and it’s a topic we will discuss. Hugh invited members to help bring these exciting ideas to life. If you want to participate, you can email send Hugh an email

Prepared and Positive Mental Health Forum

Marcia previewed this parent-focused event on May 3. **Marcia needs about 10 volunteers to help out!** Speakers include psychologists, psychiatrists, educators, and young people. Volunteers are needed to set up on Friday and assist on Saturday.

Other Announcements

- **Phil Powel Smith** shared updates on youth programs, including participation in RYLA and Adventure in Understanding. He also described the club's monthly menstrual hygiene product donation project.
- **Larry Chop** asked members to bring in egg cartons for the Westboro Food Bank.
- **YSB Donation:** The club received a heartfelt thank-you for a \$1000 donation that supported youth like Cassandra, who rebuilt her life through YSB programs.
- **Multifaith Housing Concert:** A music fundraiser on April 11 will feature Gail Gavin. The club is an event sponsor.

Jean Begin announced the following birthdays for April Henry Sin, Len Baird, Mike Traub, Gavin Schnobb, Brett Booking, Mariam Fraser, Don Straka, Doug Rowlands and Cletus Peters. The Club is always thankful for birthday donations that match their age.

Discussion Session Public Image and Promotion

Members broke into groups to brainstorm how to better promote Rotary. Suggestions included:

- Mums and Calendars, a visible sign of Rotary in action.
- Wearing Rotary pins and branded clothing, sparks conversation.
- Improving use of social media and tagging local media figures.
- Sharing news with city councillors and submitting stories to local media.
- Hiring a professional social media coordinator.
- Local newspapers such as 55 plus, Kitchissippi times.
- The Rotary Clock, maintaining it, on Richmond Rd.
- Rotary Signs and Stickers on car
- Rotary Signs on Activities
- Selling calendars in retirement homes
- Hiring someone to do social media
- How did you hear about us data on new members applications

Collecting permission to email Spinoff to calendar buyers

Announcements

Past Presidents Draw.

Congratulations to **Rod Holmes**, the winner

Ron Doll

Soc and Rec event, last call, Wednesday the 23rd, Maple Sugar Festival.

Next Meeting - Hybrid

Tuesday, April 15th, 2025

(In person at The Happy Greek restaurant

Luncheon at noon.

Program starts 12:30

Next week, (April 15) Martine Dore from the Westboro Food
Bank <https://www.westbororegionfoodbank.com>