



# Spinoff

ROTARY CLUB OF WEST OTTAWA;  
Pardeep Ahluwalia, President  
July 31, 2018 Editor: Robert Shaw-Wood

Program: "Club Sages" series: Rotarian **Fred Sirotek** talks about his past

At this 4th Club meeting of the Rotary Year Rotarian **Fred Sirotek** will be second after **Doug Heyland** in a series of long-term Club members who will speak to us about their lives

## DUTIES

Grace: **Navin Parekh**. Reception: **Sucha Mann**. Past Presidents' Draw: **Linda Flynn**. Greeters: **Jean Bégin** and **Susan Diening**. Attendance: **Linda Flynn** and **Doreen Ide**

## THE MEETING- Regular Items

Following grace, **Sucha Mann** recognized our visitors: Denis McCann, Marcel Lacasse, Simmy Ahluwalia, June Wells, Jayne-Lynn Mauchier, Ryan Blimkie, John Graham, Amanda Sirotek, Robert Sirotek, Megan Sirotek and Bob Colford, a Rotarian from Saint John's. **Rod Holmes** provided the keyboard accompaniment to the Welcome Song. The PP Draw winner (of a \$30 gift certificate to Chapters) was **Jim's** spouse, Diane Maxwell. Silly Sarge **Shaw-Wood** picked the winning ticket from our top hat.

## General Announcements

-**Doreen Ide** had brought a selection of kindergarten books for pick-up by any Rotarians participating in the various reading to children programs. **Linda Flynn** took some of the leftovers for her "bookbank" and **Larry Chop** took the remaining books for presentation to the kindergarten teachers at Regina Street Alternative Public School in September

-**Caroline De Witt** reported that nine Rotarians had provided many excellent photos in response to the call for photos for the 2019 Cash Calendar. A special committee meeting will be called to make final selections.

## President's Announcements

- Happy Birthday to **Ron Scott** and **Doreen Ide**
- Thirty members (including **Shaw-Wood**) have still not paid their 2018/19 dues and need to settle with **Marcia Armstrong** soon.
- Susan Diening** has info on recognition of Club contributors to the Rotary Foundation.
- A special "Paul Harris plus five" award was made to **Doug Heyland** for his continuing donations to the Foundation.
- A meeting of local Rotary Presidents (The Presidents' Council) was held July 30;
- The Ottawa area Rotary clubs and the Youth Now Farm Denim and Diamonds Hoedown will be held at the Farm on August 24. [**NB President Pardeep** e-circulated to members a flyer with event details on August 3]
- Rotary grants management seminar will be in Cornwall on August 25;
- The Give a Mulligan golf tournament, sponsored by RCWO and Mulligans Golf Bar to benefit underprivileged children, will take place on August 27 at the Canadian Golf Club in Ashton Ontario ( see <https://canadiangolfclub.com/collections/mulligans-golf-bar/products/mulligans-golf>)

-The Barrhaven Lions Club invites Rotary participation in its Autism fundraiser on Labour Day. RC Nepean-Kanata will respond.

-The Voyageurs weekend is September 14-16;

-The Conference of Rotary Zones covering Districts in Canada, Alaska, north eastern USA and Bermuda will be held in Montreal on September 18-22; (see

<https://portal.clubrunner.ca/50077/sitepage/2018-montreal-conference/div-style-display-none-welcome-div> )

- The Rotary Home Whiskey and Wine Event is set for September 25;

- The Rotary Home "Amazing Race" of 2-person teams will take place September 29-30;

- Dictionary4Life Week is October 15-19;

- Polio Week is October 22-26;

- The Rotary District Conference will take place in Kingston on October 26-28;

#### **PRESENTATION:**

**Fred Sirotek** was introduced by **Ed Balys** who told us Fred was born in Prague and lived there until his family fled communism in 1948 to live in Germany and then in Canada. He is a charter member of the Rotary Club of West Ottawa.

**Fred** started by telling us Czechoslovakia was dominated by Hungary until 1918 when the Austro-Hungarian Empire was dissolved, and Czechoslovakia became independent. The Germans ruled it brutally from 1938 to 1945 to be replaced after the war by the Communists. The family, as refugees in Germany, applied to immigrate to Canada, but his father was initially refused on medical grounds. That decision was overturned when his father showed a letter of thanks from Viscount Alexander, at that point Governor General of Canada, for assistance given to downed Allied pilots during the war. In Ottawa the family worked in construction. Sirotek Construction Company was born after the family bought a plot of land to build a house and a neighbour asked them to build one for him as well. When they won a contract with the Department of Public Works to build a greenhouse on the Governor General's estate, they met Governor General Viscount Alexander.

**Fred** shared with us some of the hardships and memorable moments in the development of the family business. He had needed, for example, to adjust working hours to the Bay of Fundy tides during their construction of a ten-story building. He remarked on the difficult financial times such as those caused by labour unrest at the University of Waterloo, from which he concluded that it is always wise to deal with at least two banks. Unusually for a small construction company, Sirotek Construction tackled the international market with a joint venture in the Caribbean and seeking work in the middle east. In Saudi Arabia he had answered a 'facilitator's' request for upfront payments to guarantee work with an offer of half the profits from any work 'facilitated'. Offer refused. **Fred** sold all his real estate assets in 2007 when he retired.

Answering **Larry Chop Fred** on improvement in conditions in today's Czech Republic **Fred** said he had visited over the years, but that attitudes had been warped by decades of communism and corruption.

**Dirk Keenan** thanked **Fred** noting he had drawn three lessons from the talk: always have two banks; always have a counter proposal when asked for a bribe; and never lose control of circumstances.

#### **HAPPY DOLLARS**

**Alan Bowles** reminded **President Pardeep** of this program component and, of course, was then the obvious choice to collect. **Alan** started with few loonies to register his own "happiness" at having seen two excellent plays in Stratford. He said the production of Shakespeare's "Coriolanus" is a must-see experience.

-**Roy Miller** was happy at completing his first ever Spinoff editing job last week [for July 24] and he wanted to pay penance for missing some happy dollar comments. Too many members mumble into the microphone!

-**Cam Ross** has now been married for two weeks and so is officially off the market. He also

is happy that he has inherited the client list of a retiring financial planner. Very cool indeed.

-**Dave Morton** was happy to be at Camp Merrywood last week for Brockville Rotary Club's BBQ. 72 Easter Seals kid campers were there. He presented a cheque for Bushtukah's support to Easter Seals for the Ottawa River swim event two weeks before that raised a total \$62,000 for Easter Seals. Our Rotary Club has been a longtime supporter of "camperships" at Merrywood.

-**Sucha Mann** is back from a trip through Belleville and Whitby in his new hybrid car, which performed very well, used very little gasoline. It was easy to recharge along the way, at Ikea for example, where you can have breakfast while waiting.

- **Ginette Thomas** thanked **Fred** again for sharing his life story with us.

## MEETING ENDS

**President Pardeep** again reminded us to "Be The Inspiration" and that "Rotarians are People of Action, helping make a difference" and to invite potential Rotarians to a meeting.

## PHOTOS

<https://rcwo.org/PhotoAlbums/2017-07-31-fred-sirotek-a-sage-member-talk>

## CASH CALENDAR

Here are the winners of the Cash Calendar draws for the week, July 25 – 31, 2018:

2341 \$50 Sue Martel, Russell, ON

3538 \$25 Dr. Kate Stolee, Perth, ON

3045 \$25 Christine Wojcik, Ottawa, ON

0441 \$100 Gerald Davis, Carleton Place, ON

0734 \$200 Sharlene Swimmings, Kemptville, ON

1140 \$50 Karen Johnson, Spruce Grove, AB

2867 \$50 Willis McKoewn, Greely, ON

## Tuesday, August 7, 2018

**Meghan Casey** *A year on a Rotary scholarship in Belgium*

Intro: **Joan Heyland** Thanks: **Jean Begin**

Greeters: **Ali Pahlavani/Jen Ahde** Reception: **Anup Subedi**

Grace: **Ron Scott** PP Draw: **Jack Troughton** Editor: **Rod Holmes**

Sales/Attendance: **Carol Bell Thompson**

## Tuesday, August 14, 2018

### Club Assembly

Greeters: **Doug Heyland/ Rami Alsaqqa** Reception: **Susan Dening**

Grace: **Inna Flyazhenkova** PP Draw: **Warren Creighton** Editor: **Gaye Moffett**

Sales/Attendance: **Doreen Ide**

