

Past-Rotarian Returns to Serve Through Rotary

Story by Ed Kolybaba on Dec 09, 2017



Kelowna Sunrise Rotary welcomed a long serving Rotarian to their membership during an induction ceremony conducted by Membership Chair Max Mosley at the club's December 08th meeting. Gary Bennett, sponsored by club member Al Strachan, after two years of absence from Rotary, decided that he missed serving the community and beyond through Rotary too much to not continue as an active Rotarian.



Gary was a member of the Rotary Club of Kelowna for 14 years from 2001 to 2015. During his service with the club, he served as the club's president during the 2006-07 Rotary year, and in many other leadership roles, including the chair of the Fundraising Committee and the Scholarship and Bursary Committee. He also served in a variety of capacities on at least ten other committees. Gary was the principal force behind the founding of the Rotary Club of Kelowna's Foundation, and served at the Foundation's president for seven years. Gary was awarded the club's 'Hass Houssian Memorial Service Award' in 2010.

Gary and his wife Maureen established their own "foundation", inaugurated as 'The Gary Bennett Family Fund' within the Central Okanagan Foundation which serves as a vehicle for donors who have a desire to make a significant donation to set up a named fund where the donors can advise the Foundation where the funds will be directed. Donors to the Fund join the Gary Bennett family in supporting a variety of local initiatives that support the community's most challenged youth and other worthy causes in an extremely cost effective manner. In February his foundation donated \$3,200 towards the Central Okanagan Food Bank's No Hungry Children program.



Aside from volunteering through Rotary, Gary has a special interest in The Young Citizen Foundation, which promotes Citizenship, the Scouts, Sea Cadets and the Rotary Adventures in Citizenship.

After completing a B.A. in Economics at the University of British Columbia, Gary was a sales executive for five years before going on to achieve a Professional Teaching Certificate in 1970. He taught law, economics, Canadian history and geography in the Vancouver and Delta School Districts. He also served as a department head for many years and went on to obtain an MA at U.B.C.