



The Fortarian

Dec 8th, 2021

Rotary Club of Thunder Bay (Fort William)

2021/2022 Board of Directors

President: Dawn Sebesta
 Secretary: Stephen Margarit
 Assistant Secretary: Irene Sottile
 Treasurer: Erle Wheatley
 Assistant Treasurer: Sante Sottile
 President Elect: Fhara Pottinger
 Past President: Cynthia Judge
 Meets: 3rd Tuesday of each month,
 Zoom: 6.30pm

Website www.fwrotary.ca

Directors:
 Irene Sottile
 Robert Moore
 Sante Sottile
 Mary Ann Breton
 Bev Knutson
 Stephen Margarit

Allocations Committee

Chair: Bob Hookham
 Meets: 2nd Tuesday of each month,
 Zoom 12 noon.

Rotary House Lottery Committee

Chair: Dave Knutson
 Meets: 1st Tuesday of each month,
 Zoom 12 noon.

Semi-monthly Zoom Meetings

Wednesday at 5:30 p.m.
 Meetings are on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday

Mailing Address

PO Box 10061
 Thunder Bay, ON
 Canada P7B 6T6

Newsletter Editors

Erle Wheatley & Brian Phillips

THE FORTARIAN
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President Dawn opened the meeting. Joan Krisko played O Canada. Robert Moore proposed the Toast to the Queen and Fhara Pottinger read the Land Acknowledgement statement. Our guest, Calista Perrons, was introduced by Dawn.

MaryAnn Breton introduced our guest speaker, Jackie Knough, who is the Executive Director of Our Kids Count. Jackie has been leading teams for close to 20 years in children and family programs between Calgary and Thunder Bay. Jackie has an in-depth knowledge of best practices and quality care, and a background in child development. She is also an experienced trainer, mentor and coach. Jackie has a passion for planning events and owned her own event planning company in Calgary as a side project.

Jackie told us that Our Kids Count, where she has been the Executive Director for the last six months, runs many programs out of their three locations. Their main hub is on McKenzie Street and they also have sites in Westfort and at Windsor/Academy. Their main focus is on healthy foods for families. They have an emergency food cupboard and they run both virtual and in-person programs, and counselling and support groups are also available.

One of their most popular programs is called “Infant Rhymes and Rainbows” where moms come with their babies for interaction and support. The Community Kitchen programs help families to learn to prepare healthy foods, and the Kids in the Kitchen are a lot of fun for the kids while they are learning about healthy foods.

Our Kids Count run workshops for painting and crafts, and they ran a workshop on general car needs and upkeep. They also organize outings to various community sites. They hold Community Breakfasts and Community Dinners where attendance has been as high as one hundred, although during the pandemic they have had to limit the numbers inside and do take out meals.

Roots of Empathy is a program where certified instructors help young children learn empathy. In kindergarten the children observe a baby as he/she develops throughout the year and learn how to interact.

Our Kids Count is running the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program in Thunder Bay which provides mentoring and positive role models. There is a long waiting list especially for male mentors. So, they are looking for volunteers to train as mentors.

Jackie outlined several fundraising events they hold as they receive no core funding. These events need a lot of volunteers, both individuals and community businesses. They also apply for grants and funding. Jackie expressed her thanks to organizations for their help, including thanking Fort William Rotary for their new fridge and freezer. Jackie is involved with media

outlets to help publicize Our Kids Count, with all the programs they operate and their need for funding.



President Dawn thanked Jackie Krough for her very interesting presentation to our club.

President Dawn thanked our guest, Calista Perrons, for designing and executing the poster for our Carol Sing and presented her with a gift card as a token of thanks from our club.

Allocations Chair, Sante Sottile, said there was nothing to report this month.

For the House Lottery Committee, Robert Moore said the preliminary budget has been approved and will go to the Board. We have received the new Letter of Credit and the credit card name has been changed. 20,000 tickets will be printed this year.

Irene Sottile reminded us that the Tri-Club Christmas Party is being held on Friday, December 10th at the Italian Hall with symposium at 6:30p.m. and dinner at 7:00p.m.

The annual Fort William Rotary Carol Sing will be held on Sunday, December 12th, at 7:00p.m. Dawn reminded us that all attendees must be double vaccinated.

On Monday, December 13th the Satellite club will be leading volunteers at RFDA.

On Tuesday, December 14th, Christmas Cheer is requesting volunteers who can carry filled hampers out to cars for either the shift from 9-12, or the shift from 12-4.

For the Lighter Side, Cindy Levanto Kawahara told two very funny anecdotes from “out of the Mouths of Babes”.

President Dawn wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays and then adjourned the meeting.

Next Meeting – January 12, 2022.

Editor Erle

Scribe Cynthia

