



Rotary Wheel

Rotary Club of Oshawa

PO Box 91
Oshawa, Ontario
L1H 7K8

Report on the Meeting of August 19, 2019

Head table

President: Jay Cannings

Introducer: Cindy Ruckeman

Gust speaker: Paul Haines, Lakewoods Public School

Thanker: Trish Best

Fellow Rotarian: Kim Tam

Sergeant at Arms: Trish Best

Introductions/Guests

Trish Best invited Rhonda Gorham to read the invocation.

Guests:

- Paul Haines
- Walter Fernandes

President's Announcements

1. Gary Kindree would like to convene a meeting for the Charitable Committee on August 26 at noon at Oshawa Golf Club during the regular meeting.
2. Thank you to all those who gave of their time this weekend to make Ribfest a success. A special thank you to Walter Fernandes who spends so much time, year over year, to help out our club. He is always the first one there and the last one to leave. Without all of you, this event does not happen, so thank you.

Mic Time

Ron Dick: There's a sign-up sheet for donations for the Rotary Foundation Walk on the tables. The event takes place on Sunday, Sept 8 at Humber College in Etobicoke at Lakeshore & Kipling. It's a wonderful day of fellowship. The walk starts at 10 am with a BBQ following. Please make a pledge to the Rotary Foundation. Pledges of \$100 or more will get a lovely bottle of wine.

Peter Hernandez (via text) wanted everyone to know that Joan Mansfield will have a production called *Songs for a Summer Sunset* running from August 23-25. Tickets are on sale.

Speaker – Paul Haines, Principal, Lakewoods Public School

Paul Haines: Paul's presentation was entitled "Rowing Together, Lakewoods Story of School Improvement". Lakewoods is located in South Oshawa and has approximately 300 students. Prior to Paul's arrival, the school's main challenge was unacceptable student behaviour leading to excessive teacher turnover. Paul was the fourth principal in

five years. Prior to starting, Paul interviewed the outgoing staff and returning teachers to get their insights. He created a “courtesy camp” to explicitly teach students appropriate behaviour at the beginning of the year and introduced the theme “believe, persevere, achieve”. He explained to his staff that the only way to make a difference is to all be rowing in the same direction (hence, Rowing Together) — that included engaging parents and inspiring students to do the same. Doing so gave the students ownership of their behaviour and pride in knowing that the school belongs to all of them and they are the ones who will make it great. Essentially, he invited the students to row along with school staff. He noted that it was not smooth sailing at first and that students were skeptical. One teacher resigned a permanent job by Thanksgiving. Three staff went on stress leave in the fall. Parents were complaining about the new rules. But he communicated to parents the key message that parents are their child’s first teacher and they all needed to be on the same page.

Paul was completely engaged with students - greeting students every morning, visiting classrooms throughout the day — and he worked to motivate and inspire staff to believe things could improve. When students got in trouble and decided to go home, he would follow them and then connect with the parents to ensure their parents got the real story. In doing so, he reinforced their partnership in the children’s lives. This was especially well received by single parents.

Paul also secured Board resources to plan and implement strategies for academic success. Eventually, some days were somewhat better. People would say positive things. He noticed more students using technology in class which helped engage students and improve their behaviour and their scores. Parents became more confident in the process. Retention of teachers also improved. No teacher has left since the first year, making the students feel more secure and valued.

Paul also worked with a charity to subsidize field trips to the zoo, Science Centre, and Aquarium which they normally couldn’t afford. He secured new a/v equipment for the gym and created a STEM lab and is doing work with OnTechU. EQAO scores have continuously improved, staff morale is high, and students are happier.

Paul noted that while HE received the award, any success is due to the commitment of his entire team, including students and parents. It’s truly teamwork in action.

Happy Bucks (followed the speaker due to our President’s post-Ribfest exhaustion)

Donna Doherty wanted to say job well done for a successful Ribfest this weekend, noting the compassion shown to members of the community who may have imbibed a bit too much.

Kevin Harding was really moved by Paul Haines’ presentation, noting the lack of opportunity that the kids in the Lakewoods School community are afforded.

Geoff Lloyd was grateful for the support shown to Shelter Box at Ribfest.

Walter Fernandes was also happy that Ribfest was successful.

Ron Dick was (exceedingly) grateful to spend the weekend with Walter Fernandes. He was happy that initial Ribfest results seem to indicate that it was bigger and better and he hopes to see the trend continue.

Tom Maxwell noted that *To Sir with Love* was playing on the bus ride back from Cleveland (referencing Trish Best's remarks thanking Paul Haines). He compared Paul's way of leading his staff and students as similar to that in the independent school system, noting we could use more of it.

Noon Hour Draw

The pot was a modest \$35. Pat Rutka won the draw but picked the 8 of diamonds

Next Meeting – August 26, 2019

Rotarian Rhonda Gorham

All regular meetings held at:

12:10 at the Oshawa Golf & Curling Club
