

Today's Program

Changeover Day

Topic

"Thank You," Outgoing President Richard White!

Location

National Club, 303 Bay Street



The Year in Review

– by Richard White

On July 5, 2013, I assumed the Presidency of the Rotary Club of Toronto. For the four years leading up to the Centennial, the Club had worked very hard in preparing for the celebrations and spent countless hours vetting and approving the Centennial projects. Under the inspiring and tireless leadership of President Neil Phillips, the Club's Centennial Celebrations were the envy of the Rotary world. Highlights were the Founders' Day Lunch at the King Edward Hotel, The Tanaka Lunch, the Gala Celebrations in the Canadian Room of the Royal York Hotel and, of course, all those special Centennial Lunches with amazing speakers during which we gave away one million dollars.

While this was going on, all the normal, everyday Club activities were quietly taking place too, including the Children's and Senior's Christmas Parties and Youth Day. At the request of President Sandy Boucher, I was privileged to establish the Strategic Planning Committee in the spring of 2012. This Committee worked hard over the next year to consult with the Club and establish a Strategic Plan to take the Club forward into its second century. A big thank you to the members of this committee – Lori Brazier, Greg Vermeulen, David Hetherington, Susan Hunter, Prince Kumar, Steve Smith, Sandy Boucher,

John Whincup and Ric Williams – with special mention of John and Ric for their invaluable professional help and guidance.

I believe more than ever that the Rotary Club of Toronto is a standout in the Rotary World. Our past deeds speak for themselves. We have always had and continue to have the talented members and resources to carry out unique and meaningful projects that make a difference in the lives of the disadvantaged in our community and around the world. We run first-class events that we carry off with style. Our Foundation is unique in the Rotary world. It greatly increases our ability to initiate and help fund projects in our community. It is the envy of all Rotary clubs, many that are two or three times our size.

We are often quick to be critical of ourselves and apologetic for our size and clout in the District and in Rotary. We tend to focus on our problems and lose sight of the Club as a whole. I say that we have got most things right, that we should be extremely proud of our Club, what it is and stands for and it's accomplishments.

The Strategic Plan was approved by the Club Board in August of 2013. The Strategic Planning Committee decided to initially focus on implementing two parts of the Plan and I am pleased to report that I think we have made considerable progress on Membership and Communications.

Sandy Boucher and Lori Brazier, along with Membership Chair Bill Morari are working hard to implement new programs and re-introduce old programs to keep existing members engaged. They are also focusing on finding and engaging new members by setting up mentors, having a new members table at lunches and getting the new members together as a group.

The Communications Committee

transformed itself during the Centennial Year and this work has continued with the invaluable help of Chair, Sylvia Geist and Greg Vermeulen.

Communication is crucial to the Club on many levels. It helps keeps the members informed and engaged. It puts us in touch with the outside community and those people who may become new members, those individuals and corporations who help us in our work and those organizations and individuals who we help in the community.

The most important thing we can do over the years ahead is to continue to implement, change and work with the Strategic Plan so that the Club remains strong and vibrant.

It has been a great honour to be your President. I want to thank each and every one of you for your good wishes and your strong and unwavering support throughout the year. My best wishes to President Steve as he takes over the gavel. I know that each and every one of you will give him your full support and continue to make a difference in the Club and the Community.



Richard at his farewell party on June 18, at Jack Astor's

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Welcome New Member Andrea Vabalis



Andrea was born in Niagara Falls of Latvian parents who immigrated to Canada after the war. She has an older sister, Ingrid, who is wheelchair-bound due to multiple sclerosis. As a result, Andrea is especially interested in supporting the MS Society's research. She spent almost 10 years studying at McGill, flitting about from Psychology to Art History to languages, to finally end up with an Honours Bachelor's degree in Religious Studies, and a Master of Arts degree in Feminist Theology. She met her husband while in Montreal and together they moved to Ontario where she completed her Bachelor of Laws program at the University of Toronto. Andrea spent her entire thirty-year legal career at the Toronto office of the law firm of Blake Cassels & Graydon as a corporate lawyer, becoming a partner in 1990. She has now retired from the active practice of law, and has become somewhat annoyingly gleeful about NOT having to work and face a daily 80 kilometer commute into the office from her home in Markham and back again.

Andrea has two daughters (and would love some grandchildren) and also has two cats. She loves travel, is a passionate foodie and restaurant goer, an aficionado of the Napa wine country, and an avid reader and theatregoer.

In retirement, Andrea appears to have become a sixteen-year-old boy – spending too much time playing computer word games, sleeping in, over-indulging in wine on weekends, watching golf and vampire shows on TV and reading dystopian literature. In her defense, she has realized this, and sees participation in the Rotary Club and its good works as a way of reconnecting with dedicated professionals and using her free time more productively.

Lake Scugog Camp Bike Rally

On Saturday, June 14 a dozen hardy Rotarians and camp staff rode their bikes from the Rouge Hill GO station to the camp, a distance of 72.5 km. The route was hilly and climbed from Lake Ontario to Lake Scugog. Although there were many dump trucks on Brock Road, we all made it safely to camp where we were greeted by a staff cheering squad and treated to a lovely lunch.

We raised over \$17,000 for this very special camp with more donations to come. Our efforts will subsidize the cost of sending four cabins of inner-city children to camp this summer – thank you one and all.

Bill Morari led the way, Sandy Boucher pre-scouted the route and both Kevin Power and Geoffery Johnson did it despite completing the Ride for Cancer just one week earlier.



A few of the RCT bikers with Camp Scugog staff after the ride

The Aboriginal Service Committee Provides a Second Chance for First Nations Youth

Our Club's Aboriginal Service Committee, in partnership with Native Child and Family Services is developing a General Education Diploma (GED) program at Native Child and Family Services' Scarborough facility. The Rotary Club of Toronto provided seed funding. Member Ross Amos and former member Fred Lawlor helped to create the business plan. This program plans a major expansion now that the needs and methodology have been proven. Many indigenous youth have fallen through the cracks of the secondary school system. The GED program provides a second chance for them to achieve high school equivalency and move forward with their lives.



Rotarian Chris Snyder (seated, centre) with GED Certificate recipients and Native Child and Family Services staff at the South east Scarborough Pow Wow on June 24, 2014



The Rotary Club of Toronto Newcomers Clinic: One Year Later

– by Robert O'Brien, Chair of Past Presidents Centennial Committee 2012-2013



Effective partnerships are all about sharing resources and strengths for the common good. One year ago The Rotary Club of Toronto and Sherbourne Health Centre joined again as partners to establish a desperately needed health clinic in the heart of St. James Town to serve one of the most densely populated and overlooked areas in Canada. In 2012 Rotary awarded a special Centennial grant of \$100,000 to build two brand new clinic rooms to be staffed by doctors within a community that has become known as “a world within a block.” Rotary previously partnered with Sherbourne Health Centre to put two health buses on the road in downtown Toronto with great success. But there was an urgent and ongoing need to reach out to 25,000 mostly low-income immigrants in the highly concentrated nineteen high-rise neighbourhood known as St. James Town. The Newcomers Clinic was officially opened on June 20, 2013 in a ribbon cutting ceremony attended by then President Neil Phillips, Suzanne Bogild, Past Premier and MP Bob Rae, the Hon. Glen Murray and Councillor Pam McConnell.

After all the fanfare of an official opening ceremony what happened at the Newcomers Clinic? How has the partnership worked out, one year later? The answer is an overwhelming, “Yes, Great!” On Thursday May 15, 2014, I had the privilege of visiting the clinic at 200 Wellesley St. East near Bleeker Street and was given a personal guided tour of the facility by Nalini Pandalangat, Director of Newcomer Health and Speciality Services. The clinic is a gentle and fertile oasis offering care for people who need it the most. The greatest concentration of patients are from the huge Tamil, Somalian and Nepalese communities who reside in the area. Every Thursday, from 9 am to 12 pm, a doctor and nurse meet patients by drop in or appointment. I met Dr. Naveeb Nawab and Registered Nurse Cherry Villasan. Their dedication and sense of caring was evident. The greatest health care needs they deal with include diabetes, cervical cancer and mental health. Each Tuesday there is a full day Diabetes Clinic staffed by a Registered

Nurse and Registered Dietician who prescribe and administer medication and provide advice with respect to basic nutritional requirements. These services are supplemented by monthly drop-ins for particularly high-risk community members.

Mental health counselling is provided on Wednesdays for those who are suffering from depression, anxiety and dislocation. Communication is through counsellors or interpreters who speak Mandarin, Nepali or Tamil. Every second Thursday a female physician is on duty and ninety percent of her patients are women. Before the Clinic opened its doors unscreened cervical cancer was the greatest health risk to women in the community, but now there is hope for earlier detection.

Kurt Aydiner, the Program Coordinator, shared statistics indicating high usage numbers for the limited available resources that are presently funded by the Ministry of Health. Seventy percent of the patients are new and have never had a regular health care provider. Nalini shared that the Rotary Newcomers Clinic was a leap of faith, but thanks to Rotary believing in the project the Centre has become established and has exceeded all expectations. Awareness and trust have been earned in the community, but much more is still needed. Goals include expanding the number of medical hours the clinic is staffed and hiring a nurse practitioner. As The Rotary Club of Toronto also moves forward with the new Transition Centre at St. Michael's Hospital, there is still so much good to be done here and in the community when the partners join together with faith, compassion and vision.



Staff of the Rotary Club of Toronto Newcomers Clinic (left to right) Nalini Pandalangat, Dr. Nawab, R.N. Cherry Villasan, Kurt Aydiner

The Rotary Club of Toronto Club 55 – 1912

Officers:

President: Richard White
 President-Elect: Steven Smith
 Vice President: David Hetherington
 Treasurer: James McAuley

Executive Director:
 Carol Bieser

Rotary Club of Toronto Charitable Foundation:
 Robert Smith, President

Editor of the Week:
 John Andras

Editor July 11th, 2014:
 Jeff Dobson

The Four-way test of the things we think, say, or do

1. Is it the Truth?
2. Is it Fair to all concerned?
3. Will it Build Goodwill and Better Friendships?
4. Will it be Beneficial to all concerned?

Submit an Article to the Voice Newsletter:
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Upcoming Speakers & Events

July 2014

- 11 Steve Smith - Throne Speech
- 18 Brian Thompson – Rotary 7070 District Governor

Events

August 12 – Argos Scholarship game
 August 21 – 66th Golf Tournament

Propose a Speaker
 Peter Simmie, Chair

Program Committee
peter.simmie@bristolgate.com



Lorraine Lloyd Wins The Paul Harris/ William Peace Fellow Award

– by Bert Steenburgh

The Paul Harris William Peace Fellow Award is the highest honour our club bestows upon members. The award is jointly named after the founding president of Rotary and the founding president of The Rotary Club of Toronto. It is an award unique to our club. In most other Rotary clubs around the world, the Paul Harris Fellowship award is given to a Rotarian based solely upon a donation made by the member to the Rotary International Foundation. In our club, our tradition is to award Paul Harris Fellow based upon merit.

Lorraine joined our club in 2003. She became fully engaged from the day she joined. Truthfully, she has served on almost too many committees and activities to mention. But more than that, when Lorraine serves in any capacity, she does so with class and finesse, unflinching commitment, and dogged determination to get the job done right. She is a born Rotarian – a doer and an inspirational leader. Her responsibilities have included being a member of the Board of Directors, coordination of our annual gala icebreaker, Children’s Christmas party, Golf Tournament and she chaired the Argo 50/50 draw. Committee chairmanships include, Fellowship & Entertainment, Community Services, Healthy Beginnings and Youth and Children’s Services. She received a Club Builder award in 2006. In my presidential year, Lorraine took my “Every Member Engaged,” motto to a whole higher level than I ever dreamed – she maintained active engagement in the club while also becoming engaged to one of the most irascible, cantankerous, erudite and all around high-need presidents we have ever seen.

You need to look no further than this Rotarian for a model of what a truly engaged member of Rotary is. Her passion for life and passion for helping others is an example many aspire to but few achieve.

What You Missed June 20/14

– by Lorna Pitcher



The Rotary Club of Toronto Youth Day Luncheon

You really should have been there! This was a Youth Day Luncheon not to be missed.

The four inspiring winners of the 2014 Youth Civic Leadership Awards humbled their audience with the thought expressed by Pres. Richard, “With competition like this, I don’t think I would have made it out of high school.”

A few words from the award winners:

Lisa Xiao – RCT Toronto Youth Civic Leadership Award

“Leadership is not what you’re born with. It is something that you grow.”

“Live life with a purpose--a purpose greater than yourself.”

“Youth are not the leaders of tomorrow. They are the leaders of today!”

Zameer Bharwani – Rotaract Gold Youth Civic Leadership Award

“Be a trailblazer. Someone’s got to do it. Let it be you.”

“You’re never too young to be a leader (pause to survey audience), or too old.” (Massive applause.)

Yasmine Gray – Rotaract Silver Civic Leadership Award

“Be the change you wish to see in the world,” is Yasmine’s favourite quote from Gandhi.

Emman Haider – Toronto Community Housing Youth Civic Leadership Award

“The one thing in life impossible to reach is your limit. Anything in life is possible.” Emman hopes to continue her work on global social justice issues at University of Waterloo next year.

Congratulations to the organizing committees of RCT, Rotaract Toronto and Rotaract UofT for the splendid Youth Day Luncheon and the very successful Youth Day Expo May 13 at OISE. Don Brooks and Prince Kumar stepped up when Youth Lunch Chair, Rotaractor Bethlehem Belte was in a car accident. We wish her a speedy recovery. MC Rotaractor Paul Churchward did an excellent job. A highlight was the honoring of four other youth finalists who were presented with certificates.

Pat Neuman was honoured with a Paul Harris-William Peace Award for her many years of Service Above Self to RC Toronto, including fittingly to the Youth Expo 2014. Past President Neil had the audience abuzz with speculation in his introduction listing this person’s many, many contributions to the club over the years. Congratulations, Pat.

The final word should go to Mayorality candidate John Tory from his speech June 13. “The power of combined effort knows no limitation.” Combining the efforts of Toronto Rotarians and Rotaractors with the drive and energy of these young award recipients makes for a very Howson winning Blue Jays tickets, and Saleem Kassum taking home the wine.



Yasmine Gray, Lisa Xiao, Zameer Bharwani and Emman Haider proudly hold their Youth Civic Leadership Awards at The Rotary Club of Toronto Youth Day.

The Rotary Club of Toronto

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