



Monthly Newsletter - September 2026

Your source for club events and news

Message from our Club President 2026-27

Dear Fellow Rotarians, Friends and Community Partners,

On May 1st, 1916, the Rotary Club of Ottawa was officially chartered as Ottawa's first service organization. Since then, thousands of local Rotarians have dedicated themselves to advancing the value of "Service Above Self" to make a lasting impact. Fittingly, creating a lasting impact happens to be Rotary International's theme for 2026-27. This theme encourages all of us, as people of action, to work together to make a meaningful difference in our communities and around the world.

As we proudly mark 110 years of continued service, we carry forward that legacy with renewed energy and purpose. With your help, we will continue to focus on meaningful actions and lasting impact be it via our community service and international service projects, our fellowship events or in the delivery of our youth programs including our signature Adventure in Citizenship program. Together, we will continue to build upon the strong foundation established by those who came before us.

I am truly grateful for your trust and support, and I look forward to working with all of you in the coming year.

Yours in Rotary,
Robert Therrien, P.Eng.
President, Rotary Club of Ottawa (2026-2027)

Join the International Service Committee

Interested in making a difference beyond our borders? The International Service Committee is looking for new members.

The committee reviews requests from Rotary clubs and partner organizations around the world and recommends which projects our club should support. In recent years, our club has helped provide school meals and uniforms for refugee children, supported maternal and child health projects, and responded to emergencies around the globe.

ISC members review proposals, check that projects are sound, and help decide where our club's international funds go. It's also a great way to connect with Rotarians around the world.

If you'd like to join, or simply want to learn more, please contact Nassim Barakat, Chair of the International Service Committee, at nassim.barakat.rco@gmail.com.

Rotary Club of Ottawa and Metro Glebe hold Food Drive for Ottawa Food Bank

On Saturday September 19th, 2026 the Rotary Club of Ottawa partnered with the Metro [Glebe \(754 Bank Street\)](#) to hold a food drive in support of the Ottawa Food Bank. We would like to sincerely thank Mr. Christopher Shaeen (Store Manager) and his staff for their hard work and incredible hospitality. We would also like to thank the local community and patrons of the Metro Glebe for their generosity. Together, we collected 70 bags of food valued at \$700.00. Thank you!



Passing of two former Club Members

We have lost two wonderful Rotarians from among our Rotary Club of Ottawa membership in the past months. Both lived by and are remembered by family and friends alike for their "Service above Self". Neither Don Chutter nor Jüri Wallner considered retirement from their professions to mean retirement from a life of service. Don and Jüri participated in countless Rotary projects which enriched our community and the global community. We extend our condolences to their families in friendship and appreciation for the role both men played in our club.

DONALD "DON" CHUTTER



On January 17, 2026, one of our longest serving members, Don Chutter, passed away peacefully in Brockville after a brief illness. He was 101 years old.

He had served as a Lieutenant with the Canadian Infantry Corps during WW II. Professionally, Don was highly respected in the Canadian Construction Industry. The GCAO (General Contractors Association of Ontario) established a bursary in his name, describing him as someone who "represents the best values in our industry. His leadership, unwavering commitment to excellence and integrity, and service to the community are values we want to inspire in the next generation of

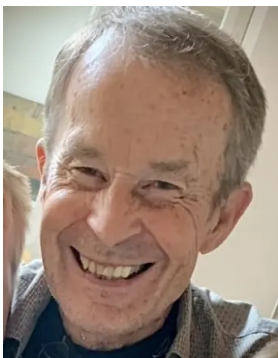
construction professionals."

Don's contribution to Rotary was similar and the characteristics that made him a valued professional also made him a valued Rotarian. The twinkle in his eye belied an ability to approach projects with a critical eye to detail. His welcoming support of new members to the club was low key, laced with humour and helpful advice.

Don joined our club in 1955 at the age of 31. He served as chair of the Adventure in Citizenship, Program, Crippled Children, Rotary Foundation, World Community Service Committees and the Council of Paul Harris Fellows, Weekly Bulletin Editor, a director of the Rotary Home and as Club Secretary and Director. He was our President for the year 1993-1994.

He recorded a 50 year membership in 2005 and was awarded a Paul Harris Fellow that same year. He became an Honourary Member of the Club in 2021 and remained so until his death.

JÜRI WALLNER



Jüri Wallner passed away in Kemptville on July 30, 2026 at the age of 87. He arrived in Canada, via years in a displaced persons camp, as a refugee from Estonia in WW II. He maintained close ties with family and friends in Estonia and eventually returned there to help with a World Bank Health Project.

Jüri's profession as a health administrator took him to hospitals in Winnipeg, Sudbury and Ottawa. He joined Rotary in 1985. You could count on Jüri for thoughtful, practical ideas as well as his time and effort to put projects into action. He was a strong supporter of Adventure in Citizenship among other club projects. Because of his close ties to the Estonian community, he championed a cause to support youth living on the streets in Tallinn...a cause to

which our club contributed for several years through the International Service committee.

He continued to attend our club's meetings after moving to Merrickville after his retirement but finally distance made it more practical to look for a club closer to home.

Adventure in Citizenship - Celebrating 75 Years

The Rotary Club of Halifax Harbour published this great story about our Adventure in Citizenship program. Look out for the story in the next issue of the Rotary Canada Magazine.

[From Halifax to Ottawa: 75 Years of Adventures in Citizenship | Rotary Club of Halifax Harbour](#)

Ottawa Citizen Article from January 16, 1951



Thirsty Thursdays are Back!

We had a great turnout at Thirsty Thursday on September 24th when 11 Rotarians gathered on their patio to re-connect and welcome the new Rotary season. Thirsty Thursdays are held the 4th Thursday of each month @7:00pm. Our next event will be Oct. 22nd at the same location as Sept, Beyond the Pale, 250 City Centre (but we'll be inside). We look forward to seeing you there!

Rotary Youth Exchange - Host Families Needed



The Rotary Club of Ottawa has been involved in providing exchange opportunities to many local high school students. Some of our Rotarians have over the years have themselves been exchange students, have children that were exchange students or hosted those who came to Ottawa on exchanges. If you have been with our Rotary Club for several years, you would have heard how these exchanges have been life-changing experiences for the students.

It has been more difficult for us in recent years to find host families for incoming international students. This

has prevented us from providing amazing experiences to our local students since we need to host an incoming student before we can send out our candidates overseas.

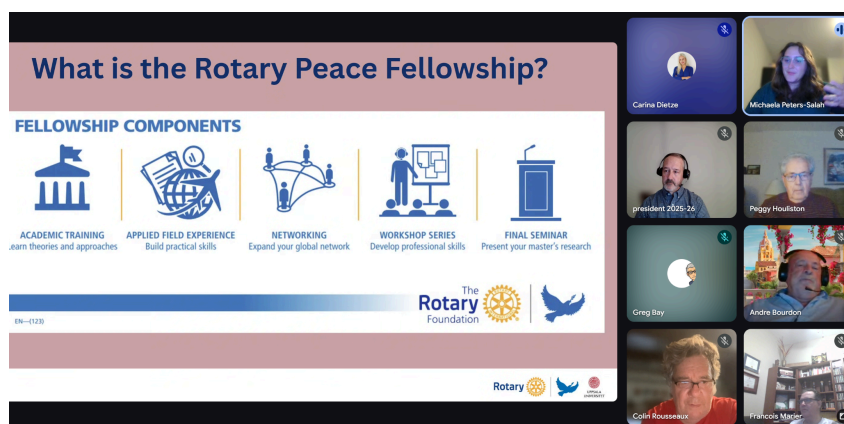
We are recruiting host families for the period starting in September 2027. Families are asked to host for about three months as we need the students to live with three different families during their time in Ottawa. Our Rotary Club provides monthly allowances (\$100) and we cover public transportation and cellular costs. District 7040 will feature about 6 to 7 weekend activities for the international students and transport to these events are provided by club Rotarians. The main duty for host families is to provide a separate bedroom and feeding the student during their time with them. Our Rotary Club is responsible for the administrative aspect in dealing with local school boards and to identify a high school suitable based on location of the three host families.

We would be pleased to answer any questions you may have in regard to hosting. If you know of family or friends that may be interested in hosting international students, please let us know soon since we need to confirm having three host families before interviewing local candidates in November 2026. You can reach me at albourdon29@yahoo.com or andrebourdon56@outlook.com for further information.

André B

.....

First Online Meeting



On September 28, we held our first online meeting of the new Rotary year with Michaela Peters-Salah who spoke to us about her Rotary Peace Fellowship. She is now in Ottawa and did her Masters in Sweden on climate related adaptation.



[Rotary Club of Ottawa Website](#)

7:00-8:00pm with Modern Angels to give us a presentation about dementia

News from around Rotary International



[Rotary projects around the globe – September 2026 | Rotary International](#)

[World Polio Day | End Polio](#)

[Indian Rotarian Bharat Pandya confirmed to lead Rotary in 2028-29 | Rotary International](#)

Club Executive Meeting Update

The Club's Executive Board met on September 21 and discussed the following items:

- Meetings for 2026-27
- Compliance with Ontario Not for Profit Corporations Act
- Treasurer's Report
- Peace Pole Project
- Committee reports

Rotary International President Olayinka Hakeem Babalola



Olayinka Hakeem Babalola is from Nigeria and received a university degree in engineering in 1988. He worked for 25 years in the oil and gas industry, holding senior positions at Shell PLC. He is the founder of two companies: an oil and gas infrastructure delivery

company, and an executive coaching and organizational performance advisory group. See his biography here: [My Rotary](#)

Upcoming Club Events

October 5: In-Person Meeting

Will be a breakfast meeting - look out for information soon



October 22: Thirsty Thursday
Our monthly social gathering is at Beyond the Pale at 250 City Centre @ 7:00pm

October 26: Online Club Meeting