

# Delivering on the promise

Rotary Club of Sarnia has decades-long track record with plans to continue serving



**W**hen it comes to the idea of building community, it would be difficult to find a better example of a diverse gathering of individuals, united in a mission of service, than the Rotary Club of Sarnia.

Certainly there are numerous other groups, in various flavours throughout Sarnia-Lambton, who contribute to our collective sense of community.

Included in that list would be groups such as Kiwanis, Kin, Lions, and Optimists, clubs whose members continue to add value.

But arguably, the Rotary Club of Sarnia, founded on February 24, 1928, has earned a certain distinction, and not just because of monetary contributions that have included a \$1 million donation to Bluewater Health, at least \$600,000 for Pathways Health Centre for Children, as well as substantial donations in support of the YMCA's Rotary Aquatics Centre, St. Joseph's Hospice, and numerous others.

A full list can be found on the club's website—[rotarysarnia.com](http://rotarysarnia.com).

Rotary Club of Sarnia members have also seen a "spin off" effect over the years, including the birthing of the Rotary Club of Sarnia Bluewaterland in 1990, and the Rotary Club of Sarnia-Lambton After Hours in 2007.

Today, there's also a Passport Club, which includes members throughout the area, and Rotaract, described as a distinctive place for members age 18-30, although those are also eligible for membership in the parent club.

There's also an Interact Club, which has high school students among its membership.

And, of course, there's the Rotary Club of Petrolia, where the shared connection is the larger group of clubs in the region.

Sandra Graham, a twice-retired banker who serves as this year's president of the Sarnia club, makes an important point regarding the impact members of the Rotary Club have made over the years, and continue to make.

"Rotary has contributed to the community, not only in dollars, but in what Rotarians have done, and what they continue to do today," said Graham. "Certainly the dollars are one thing and we've contributed to all kinds of non-profit organizations. But it's also the feeling that we have about giving back."

Graham says it's the heritage of Rotary that drives what the current membership continues to embrace.

"That's something that has existed from the very beginning, not just this club, but yes, globally, the 'Service Above Self' expression that says we can benefit humanity, one member at a time," she added.

In her particular case, joining Rotary in 1995 was initially prompted by her connection to the business community.

"I was a bank manager at the time, and I joined for the need to become visible in the community," said Graham. "Since then, there have been so many people that I have become friends with and so many people that I am so proud to have known."

One of the club's "signature" events continues to be its Pancake Breakfast, which coincides with the Port Huron to Mackinac Boat Race that occurs in July.

"It's not what I would call a major fundraiser," says Graham of an event that this year generated at least \$10,000 in ticket sales. "But it



gets all the Rotarians together for a fun morning. We joke and laugh and it's a way for us to get together and fellowship. And I think it continues that way because we have so much fun."

Not every fundraiser that has been initiated over the years has lasted, however.

"I think all the events run their course," said Graham. One example was the Rotary Roses campaign, which ended when the florist that participated closed its business.

"We're actually looking at a few ideas for another fundraiser," she added.

There's also a history among local Rotary clubs for joint projects, including one that involving accessible playground equipment for Canatara Park, funded at least in part through a "Trip of the Month" lottery, tickets for which have been sold by members from all three Sarnia-based clubs.

Aside from the vision and energy that continues to drive Rotarians, there's also an acknowledgment of a need to "reinvent" the club for future generations of those who have a desire to serve.

It's one reason that Rotary International, the formal governing body,

has relaxed rules such as having one member per profession in a club and even attendance rules that at times has handcuffed clubs rather than serving as a way to sustain them.

"In order to sustain Rotary, you have to change and that's been a common theme for us," said Graham.

One of many stalwart members of the Rotary Club of Sarnia is Bill Hoad, a retired electrical engineer who first joined the club in 1980 when he was plant manager of Ethyl Canada's Corunna site.

And while that plant eventually closed in 2013, Hoad, who has now been retired for some 26 years, remained in the club for one of the most obvious reasons.

"I enjoyed the people and I enjoyed the work we've been doing in the community. And it would have been hard to fill that void."

Another long-serving member is Bill Boynton, who joined the club in 2004 and whose "specialty" in the club is his involvement with youth programs, including one involving the Rotary Youth Exchange.

Boynton's family has been among several Rotarians who have hosted students, one of the most recent being one from Brazil.

He's also taken the time to remain in contact with past exchange students.

"I was talking to an exchange student this morning from Brazil that I had 11 years ago. I call them my kids and they're all over the world."

Again, focusing on Rotary's worldwide impact is an ongoing program to eradicate polio, a disease that at one point was endemic.

Today, through a coordinated program involving Rotary Clubs throughout the world, Africa is on the verge of being polio-free and efforts continue, in partnership with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization, to complete that decades-long goal.

Regarding ongoing efforts to recharge the Rotary Club of Sarnia, recent changes such as a downward adjustment in membership rates, and specific goals involving the invitation of prospective members to its ranks, continue to inject a certain energy among those who have seen the value of "Service Above Self" manifest itself.

*To be a Rotarian is something very special. But it's also important to remember that our doors are always open. The real value takes shape when we are able to provide opportunities for service to as many people in our community as possible. It really is a special thing that people can do, for themselves, and for others.*

We'll give the last word to Sandra Graham, the current president of the Rotary Club of Sarnia.

"To be a Rotarian is something very special. But it's also important to remember that our doors are always open. The real value takes shape when we are able to provide opportunities for service to as many people in our community as possible. It really is a special thing that people can do, for themselves, and for others." ■

# PLACES TO SERVE...

MAKING A DIFFERENCE  
IN OUR COMMUNITY

## ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF SARNIA LAMBTON

[alzheimer.ca/en/sarnialambton](http://alzheimer.ca/en/sarnialambton)  
519-332-4444

## BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF SARNIA-LAMBTON

[sarnia.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca](http://sarnia.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca)  
519-336-0460

## BLUEWATER ANGLERS

[bluewateranglers.com](http://bluewateranglers.com)  
519-344-9821

## BLUEWATER HEALTH FOUNDATION

[bwhf.ca](http://bwhf.ca)  
519-464-4408

## BLUEWATER GYMNASTICS CLUB

[bluewatergymnasticsclub.com](http://bluewatergymnasticsclub.com)  
519-542-3062

## BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION SARNIA-LAMBTON

[sarniabiasl.ca](http://sarniabiasl.ca)  
519-337-5657

## BREAST CANCER SOCIETY OF CANADA

[bcsc.ca](http://bcsc.ca)  
519-336-0746

## CATHERINE WILSON FOUNDATION

[catherinewilsonfoundation.org](http://catherinewilsonfoundation.org)  
519-336-8770

## CHARLOTTE ELEANOR ENGLEHART HOSPITAL FOUNDATION

[ceehf.ca](http://ceehf.ca)  
519-882-4325 Ext. 2404

## CHRISTMAS FOR EVERYONE

519-882-3950

## COMMUNITY LIVING SARNIA-LAMBTON

[communitylivingsarnia.org](http://communitylivingsarnia.org)  
519-332-0560

## FRIENDS OF THE ST. CLAIR RIVER

[friendsofstclair.ca](http://friendsofstclair.ca)  
519-336-5545

## GALLERY IN THE GROVE

[galleryinthegrove.com](http://galleryinthegrove.com)  
519-869-4643

## GENERATIONS DAY CARE INCORPORATED

[generationsdaycare.ca](http://generationsdaycare.ca)  
519-882-3012

## GOODWILL INDUSTRIES - HABITAT FOR HUMANITY SARNIA-LAMBTON

[habitatsarnia.org](http://habitatsarnia.org)  
519-339-7957

## HARMONY FOR YOUTH

[harmonyforyouth.ca](http://harmonyforyouth.ca)  
519-336-0344

## HURON HOUSE BOYS' HOME

[hhbh.ca](http://hhbh.ca)  
519-869-4000

## INFORMATION SARNIA-LAMBTON

[informationsarnialambton.org](http://informationsarnialambton.org)  
519-542-1949

## PLACES TO SERVE...

### RAYJON SHARE CARE OF SARNIA

🌐 rayjon.org

☎ 519-381-5929

### ROTARY CLUB OF SARNIA

🌐 rotarysarnia.com

☎ 519-490-1066

### ROTARY CLUB OF SARNIA BLUEWATERLAND

🌐 rotarysarniabwl.org

☎ 226-349-3524

### SARNIA AND DISTRICT HUMANE SOCIETY

🌐 sarniahumanesociety.com

☎ 519-344-7064

### SARNIA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

🌐 sarniacommunityfoundation.ca

☎ 519-332-2588

### SARNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

🌐 sarniahistoricalsociety.com

☎ 519-491-6361

### SARNIA KIWANIS FOUNDATION

🌐 sarniakiwanis.com

☎ 519-344-5543

### SARNIA-LAMBTON COMMUNITY CONCERNS FOR THE MEDICALLY FRAGILE

🌐 ccmfsarnia.com

☎ 519-344-2719

### SARNIA-LAMBTON CRIME STOPPERS INC.

🌐 sarnialambtoncrimestoppers.org

☎ 800-222-8477

### SARNIA-LAMBTON FAMILY COUNSELLING CENTRE FOUNDATION

🌐 familycounsellingctr.com

☎ 519-336-0120

### SARNIA-LAMBTON GOLDEN K KIWANIS CLUB

🌐 sarniakiwanis.com

☎ 519-344-5543

### SARNIA-LAMBTON REBOUND

🌐 reboundonline.com

☎ 519-344-2841

### SARNIA MINOR ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

🌐 sarniaminorathletic.com

☎ 519-332-1896

### SARNIA ORGAN DONOR'S AWARENESS GROUP

🌐 sarniaorgandonors.ca

☎ 519-344-7777

### SEAWAY KIWANIS

🌐 seawaykiwanis.ca

☎ 519-330-0714

## GMSB

GEORGE MURRAY SHIPLEY BELL, LLP  
BARRISTERS AND SOLICITORS

D'Arcy Bell and Ryan Bell offer legal services in the following areas:

Corporate, Real Estate, Wills & Estates, Land Development.

Our skilled, experienced and friendly team is dedicated to providing premium legal services to all of our clients, old and new.

Contact us today: (519) 336-8770

rbell@sarnialaw.com | sarnialaw.com

\*D'Arcy D. W. Bell Professional Corporation is in association with GMSB LLP

**We're More Than Math  
We're Math PLUS**



**MATH PLUS  
TUTORS**

**Math Plus Junior**

*Reading/Writing/Math  
English/French (gr 1-6)*

**High School Prep**

*Academics & Study Skills  
for Grades (7-8)  
English/French*

805 Christina St. N., Suite 101, Point Edward  
519-542-1999 [www.mathplustutors.ca](http://www.mathplustutors.ca)



# Circle J Trading Inc

**CUSTOMIZABLE DELIVERY**  
Same or Next Day Local Service

[www.circlejtrading.ca](http://www.circlejtrading.ca)