



# The Lakeshorian

WEEKLY BULLETIN OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF MONTREAL-LAKESHORE

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## *This Week's Program...*

**Francis Scarpaleggia**, Member of Parliament for Lac-Saint-Louis, chaired the all-party House of Commons Special Committee on **Electoral Reform**. Prior to the 2015 election, the Liberal party vowed that "A Liberal government will restore the integrity of our electoral process and improve the fairness of our elections."

However, following the committee's report to Parliament, the Prime Minister, in a letter to Karina Gould, the newly appointed Minister of Democratic Institutions said, "a clear preference for a new electoral system, let alone a consensus, has not emerged" and "without a clear preference or a clear question, a referendum would not be in Canada's interest."

Francis will bring us up to date on this important issue.

## *Birthdays and Anniversaries this week...*

*Happy Anniversary, Andy and Kathleen...*

*...Sunday, March 19<sup>th</sup>!*

## *Future Programs...*

Mar 21: **Barbara Engels**, District Rotaract Co-Representative and member of the Rotaract Club of Downtown Montreal, will talk to us **about joint projects and partnerships**.

Mar 28: T.B.D.

Apr 4: [Evening Meeting] T.B.D.

## *Special Events...*

June 2: (Friday) **Our Annual Auction**. In less than twelve weeks we will host our most important fundraising event of this Rotary year. It will provide the lion's share of the funding for our club's projects in 2017-2018.

## *Last Week's Meeting...*

Our club's turnout for the sugaring-off party last Tuesday was dismal, to say the least. Only three members—**Helen, Knud** and **Cameron**, plus **Winnifred Sherry**—were present from our club.

Helen reports that, "The sugar shack was a lot of fun. The food was really good. It wasn't really a meeting. A few words were said by **Louis Lefrançois** and **Jeff Moat** about the mental health initiative that was started by Louis's father **Ken**."

The Rotary Club of Hudson & Saint-Lazare posted this brief report on the event:

"The Rotary Club of Hudson & Saint-Lazare would like to express a heartfelt thank-you for helping us raise \$800 last night at the Sucrerie Des Gallant!

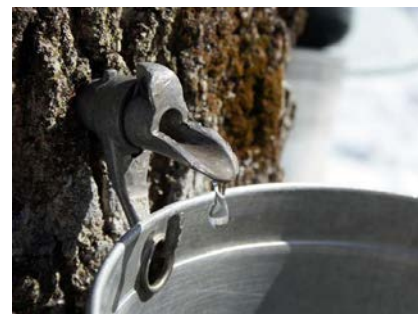
"Thank you to **Peter Schiefke, Linda Strong Gallant, Jewel 106.7, Kris Leblanc, Jeff Moat, Le Zèbre Rouge, Le Tournant, Le Versant, Partners for Mental Health / Partenaires pour la santé mentale, Your Local Journal, Montreal-Lakeshore Rotary Club** and the **Rotary Club of Westmount**

"And a special thank you to **Anita Ali** and **Social Charm** for their social media coverage of the event before and after! ❤️

"We truly are blessed!"

For the benefit of our members who are new to Québec and Canada, let me tell you all about these local events that are called by several names — Sugaring-off Party or Sugar Shack, or the versions françaises: *Cabane-à-Sucre* or *Sucrerie*.

In the spring when the sap (water and nutrients) begins to flow upward in the maple tree from the root to the branches, we put little spouts into the tree trunk with the opening sloping downward and we collect some of that sweet liquid in pails, as shown in the photo.



In the case of large maple syrup operations, the sap is now collected using a network of tubing that combines the liquid sap from many trees into large containers at a central location.

Then, to make maple syrup, the excess water is boiled away. That's a big job, since the sap is mostly water; it takes 10 gallons of sap to make 1 quart of syrup (i.e. 40 litres of sap per litre of syrup).

But, once the maple syrup is ready, the partying begins. A cabane-à-sucre offers a delightful mid-day brunch. A traditional sugar shack buffet features eggs, bacon, ham, sausages, baked beans, pancakes or French toast (with syrup of course). Not for the calorie-counters, to be sure!

And we must not forget the maple taffy ("tire d'érable" in French), pictured here. Maple syrup is poured over a bed of crushed ice, in long strips, then a strip is twirled around the end of a stick (like a popsicle stick). The end result is candy for the gods.



Other activities include: traditional music, dancing, sleigh rides through the maple forest, children's face painting and that wonderful Quebec springtime fresh air!

Perhaps we'll do another sugar shack before the season ends, but during the day when the children can enjoy it, too.

There are lots of cabanes-à-sucre nearby, so why not?