



The Lakeshorian

Vol. 2016-17
Issue No. 51
Tuesday
June 20
2017

WEEKLY BULLETIN OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF MONTREAL-LAKESHORE

Chartered February 27, 1961

This Week's Program...

Shelly Hayden, Meals-on-Wheels coordinator for Volunteer West Island, will tell us about the work of her volunteer-driven program.

Birthdays and Anniversaries this week...

Happy Birthday, Bill..... Today, June 20th!
Happy Birthday, Şehnaz..... Friday, June 23rd!
Happy Birthday, Steve..... Friday, June 23rd!

Future Programs...

June 27: **JP** will review his year as our club president.
July 4: [Evening] Our new club president **Helen** will tell us all about her plans for the new Rotary year ahead.
July 11: T.B.D.

Special Events...

June 29: (Thursday) Joint Meeting of our Outgoing and Incoming Boards of Directors
July 8: (Saturday) Changeover Party, Baie-D'Urfé Curling Club, 3-8 pm, \$30/person. Cash bar available.

Last Week's Meeting...

As a follow-up to the 2017 edition of our annual auction, we held a discussion about what went well, what mistakes were made, along with suggestions for improvements or changes in future auctions.

We were pleased to welcome 15 Active Members: **Wayne, Helen, Lawrence, Maureen, Rosie, Stan, Bill, Murray, Semi**, President **JP, Anne, Knud, Brenda, Cameron** and **Deniz**, plus Honorary Member **Joe Maxwell**.

We were also pleased to welcome Brenda's Dad, **Victor, Tian Tian** from Beijing, and her friend **Jennifer Gong**, as well as visiting Rotarian **Glorefe Kozma**, from The Philippines, who also brought her daughter, **Anastasia**.

Cameron had a message from daughter **Wendy** who had spoken to us last month about organ and tissue transplants. She had passed along stickers that can be attached to the back of Medicare cards to indicate the wish to donate organs and/or tissue after death. He also had brochures in English and French on the subject. If you wish to have a copy please see Cameron.

He also read a message from the Rotary Club of Hudson-and-Saint-Lazare. "We are proud to announce that, in partnership with Patrick King Imports, we have found a way to support the Vaudreuil-Soulanges Palliative Care Residence. With every Pillars-of-Hope Scottish Lamb's Wool Blanket that we sell, Clarence and Cripps will donate \$20, and Patrick King Imports will add another \$10 for the Residence. They are available in the store at \$119, tax included, and the full \$30 will go to the Vaudreuil-Soulanges Palliative Care Residence."

Maureen told us that **Margaret Moors** had smashed her knee and was in hospital.

Wayne told us that **Suzanne** (Abie's partner) would be coming home the next day, following successful knee surgery.

Brenda said she used the last of her Community Service budget funds to buy toiletries and snack food for the residents of the Denis-Benjamin-Viger home on Île-Bizard.

She said she and **Anne** attended NOVA West Island's Annual General Meeting. She said she would be going to a meeting at the West Island Mission that evening and would be giving them some Walmart gift cards for the flood victims.

She reminded us that our visit to the Old Brewery Mission would take place on Thursday, June 15th.

Knud won the opportunity to find the Ace of Spades but he turned over the Ace of Clubs instead, so our 50/50 will keep on growing.

Murray opened the auction discussion by saying he echoed "the sentiments expressed by others: It was a VERY successful auction. I would also like to thank those unsung heroes who worked so hard in the background, fixing and doing things. Some are not present today—**Jesper Jonsson** for the printing of the program, **Kelly** for the layout of the flyer and for her electronic genius, and **Paula** and **Kelly** for the Auction Facebook pages. I'm also very grateful to all those committee members who came early every Tuesday to look at where we are and what's next: **Deniz, Rosie, Lawrence, Maureen, Knud, Helen** and myself; and others who worked so hard on auction night: **Cameron** and his crew of spotters, **Bill** and his daughter who checked the buyers through and arranged payment. And, of course, our excellent auctioneer **Scott**.

"I'm led to believe this auction is our best ever. **Bill** sent out our revenue stream, showing more than \$30,000 net profit. ("It's even more now!" Bill said.) This amount of money will provide the operating capital for our various committees, programs and projects we want to do next year: Community, International, Youth and Club Projects. That bodes very well for the beneficiaries of our charity work. Thanks also to club members—and others—for their generous donations.



"As soon as I get revised figures from **Bill** I'll send all of our members a copy of our financial summary. We are out of bankruptcy, and that's a very good thing.

"So, to kick off the post-mortem, what went well?"

Maureen: Auctioneer Scott was brilliant!

Brenda: We had 40-odd items and many went, by and large, for the asking price and even more.

Murray: Typically at an auction the goal is to get at least 50 percent of retail value. We were blessed that people came with fairly deep pockets. Some of the travel experiences went for more than the stated value. Unfortunately, a few of those travel items did not. That was also true of some other more expensive items. On the other hand, the earrings brought more than their actual appraised value.

Knud: I invited the Chairman of the Board of Centaur Theatre, who is very keen on attending auctions, partly because the Centaur Theatre has an annual auction that raises more than \$80,000. We took some ideas from their last auction. They didn't all work; by that I mean we didn't get the response expected or hoped for. My assessment of the auction is that it's mainly middle-income people who came. They will buy middle-priced items and often pay more than the Fair Market Value. But there were too few people in the audience who would go for the big items. One of those was the trip to Scotland; that went for about \$300 above the FMV. But others, like the Barbados, fetched only \$1,400 versus the stated value of \$3,500. "The next time we do this, we need to attract people with big wallets who will bid on big items.

Bill: But we also tell people that there are bargains to be had and we need to make sure they get some of those bargains.

Murray: Cameron took one away from me—the lordship/ladyship plus a tremendous bottle of single-malt scotch.

Joe Maxwell: I came in from a visit to the washroom and started bidding on what was on the screen, the trip to Scotland, but the item being auctioned was not that at all.

Stan: We need to be more careful that the picture on the screen is of the item currently being auctioned.

Brenda: Why were the screens not on the wall behind Scott?

Lawrence: The hotel offered us a better price if we used the projectors aimed at the side wall. Those projectors are older but quality was quite satisfactory for our purpose.

Brenda: Could we not have moved Scott to that wall?

Murray: We'll make a note to have Scott and the display screens at the same wall next year.

Cameron: Did we straighten out the fiasco with the Hockey Tickets item?

Bill: What was advertised was 'Two hockey tickets in the red section for a Montreal Canadiens game at the Bell Centre during a 2017-18 regular season.' But what was in the envelope was \$600 in cash and a letter telling the winner that the tickets were not yet available and to use the cash to buy tickets when they became available. We should have put only a letter explaining that 2017-18 tickets not yet available but we will arrange to send you tickets when they are available.

Knud admitted putting the cash and letter in the envelope.

Murray: I was not aware of that problem. We have to be clear about why there is a difference between what we advertise and what is in the envelope and offer a solution. For example, we could have printed a gift certificate to be traded for two tickets when they become available. We need to ensure that nothing like that happens again.

Lawrence: Our 'spotters' who take note of the winning bids and the bidder numbers give them to Bill as 5 items to a sheet. That worked well in the past but this year many of the winning bidders wanted to check through and pay before the

spotters had the chance to give all 5 items to Bill. I suggest we cut that number of items per spotter sheet from 5 to 3.

Murray: There were also a few tables who were more interested in chatting than bidding. In one instance Scott had to call them out on that. Perhaps we should have members going around asking people to keep it down to a dull roar.

Stan: But remember, people pay \$30 to go to an event with their friends. We can't tell them to shut up.

Murray: It's a grey area, I know, but when the auctioneer has to tell people to keep it down, the people doing the talking have to respect that and try to be a little less loud.

Wayne: I've been to much bigger auctions, in terms of the number of people. They ring a bell when a new item is going up for bid and people are expected to respect the need for reasonable quiet during the bidding.

Murray: The intent of this discussion was to see what features of the auction could have been better, or needed correcting; and what we did well and should repeat in the future. A few other items I noted:

- There was more than enough food.
- People didn't drink as much wine as expected so that kept the cost down, relative to ticket revenue.
- We should also set out tables with free coffee, tea and soft drinks.
- Ticket sales are the key to success. Adverts in the media did not result in higher ticket purchases. Unsure of the effect of our Facebook pages.

Lawrence & Bill: Ticket revenue more than covered the invoice from the hotel plus the cost of additional potato chips and peanuts.

Helen: There were some problems with tickets presented at the door. We need to manage ticket numbers better next year, especially as they entitle the bearer to a free drink.

Lawrence: I hope we make the same mistakes next year, because this was the best damned auction we've ever had!

Murray: I'm raising these issues not to dump on our auction, but I think we can make it smoother. How to improve it? I think there is some committee structure we need to look at as to how it works; approval internally so that we don't have one person doing all the follow-up.

I'm preaching to the choir with this audience. We need to find a better way to engage other club members who aren't here. In some cases we will have to do that one meeting a month, that is when we have an evening meeting, but let's find some meaningful way we can get them involved. That addresses one concern I had about communications within the club and externally. Is there any other comment anyone would like to make?

Joe M: I propose Murray for chair of next year's auction.

Maureen: I second that motion.

All were in favour, with loud applause.

Murray: Not carried (smile). We need to think about our donor contract, our donations, what worked best, how it was done, type of follow-up, type of content, type of getting the electronic material from them. Some operational issues I will work on. Thank you all very much for your candid comments. I think that's what makes events work better. So I look forward to next year's effort. We'll see what happens as to how that goes. Thank you all for your input.