



# The Lakeshore

WEEKLY BULLETIN OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF MONTREAL-LAKESHORE

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

**Wendy Sherry**, RN, BSN, MN, will talk to us about Saving Lives through Organ Donation.

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

*Happy Birthday, Peter Neville..... Thursday, May 25<sup>th</sup>!*

*Happy Birthday, Darren Frendo ..... Monday, May 29<sup>th</sup>!*

## ***Future Programs...***

May 30: **Club Assembly**. Board members, please remember to send an advance copy of your reports to all RCML members marked **PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL**.

June 6: [Evening] **Bill** will present ***A Musical History of Jazz***.

June 13: T.B.D. [This date is available. If anyone wishes to suggest a speaker or other program, now would be a good time to so inform **Lawrence**. Ed.]

## ***Special Events...***

May 25: (Thursday) **RMCL Board Meeting**.

June 2: (Friday) **Our Annual Auction**. In only 10 days we will host our most important fundraising event of this Rotary year. This year's auction will provide the lion's share of financing for our club's **charitable projects** in 2017-2018.

July 8: (Saturday) **Changeover Party**, Baie-D'Urfé Curling Club, 3-8 pm, \$30/person. Cash bar available.

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

With both President JP and President-elect Helen *in absentia* **Past President Lawrence** chaired our meeting — and did so with his usual British efficiency and aplomb.

The 15 members present including **Lawrence** were **Wayne, Maureen, Rosie, Sacit, Stan**, PDG **Bill, Murray, Steve, Knud, Brenda, Emily, Cameron, Deniz** and Honorary Member **Joe Maxwell**.

We were also pleased to welcome Benda's Dad, **Victor**, and visiting Rotarian **David Warne**, Past President of the Hudson-and-Saint-Lazare club.

**Maureen** read a thank-you note from **Anne Myles Brown**.

"I want to say Thank-You to all for your many good wishes on my 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, and especially for the gorgeous flowers. I'm enjoying them immensely—worth reaching 90 for."

**Brenda** told us that the Welcome Hall Mission is asking for volunteers for their 'grocery store' on about 10 days in June and 8 days in July, from 8:30 till noon or a full day, from 8:30 till 3. Tell Brenda if you wish to help and when, and she will organize a schedule of RCML volunteers.

She also reminded us that Lakeshore Hospital Foundation is launching its sale of tickets for its Duck Race. On Wednesday, May 31<sup>st</sup>, from 6 to 9 am, anyone buying a \$10 ticket at *Cora* restaurant at 187 Hymus Blvd in Pointe-Claire will get a free breakfast.

**Knud** gave us an auction update. "**Wayne** has offered two golfing foursomes, with carts. One is at Golf Dorval and the other is at Whitlock Golf & Country Club in Hudson.

"Thanks to the wonderful artistry of **Kelly-Anne** and complimentary printing by Jesper Jonson we have a really classy pair of documents, the auction program and now also a flyer." Knud had brought several hundred flyers, in packages of 40, and he urged everyone present to take packages and deliver them to stores that will make them available at the cash register.

"What we really need to work on now...TICKET SALES ! We have space for 300 people, who love going to auctions, who love to bid in the hope of getting a bargain, that's the kind of people we need.

"So, not just you who are here, but EVERYBODY in the club, let's get out there and sell those tickets, or buy them yourself to give to your family and friends.

"We are at the crucial point right now, where the number of seats we fill with auction-lovers will determine if we have a fantastic success, a moderate success or a disappointment."

No winner of our 50/50 so it will continue to grow.

Acting President Lawrence turned the program over to Youth Chair **Murray**, who wanted to discuss what could be done to improve our Public Speaking Contest in the future.

"Do we want to continue with the public speaking contest?" Almost all, but not everyone, gave a resounding Yes.

"That's great! First of all, I want to thank the Youth Committee—**Deniz, Rosie, Cameron** and myself—as well as **Emily**, who took on the task of contacting the schools and **Lawrence**, who emcee'd the contest itself. I must confess I was sceptical of a speaking contest in 2017. Is this something that young people are interested in today?"

**Brenda** said this was not where she thought our efforts should be put for young people. "Those who spoke were, of course, excellent, but students from a less affluent economic background have other needs that we as a Rotary club should, perhaps, be more concerned with."

**Stan** said, "I'd like to respond to that. I think speaking in public is the most important thing a young person can learn. When I was a kid I had all the advantages but I never learned to speak in public, from a podium. As a matter of fact, I wrote a speech once and gave it. The kids wanted to use my speech but they didn't want me to give it.

"And when I went 'on the road,' if I had been a good public speaker I would have been ten times as successful as I was.

"We used to have multi-club public speaking contests, where the winner of each club's contest would become a competitor in a finale at the Montreal club and they had a top prize for the winner."

"Apparently, that is no longer the case," **Murray** said. "But the teachers who were at our contest confirmed what you said earlier, that public speaking is a vital skill to be mastered if a young person wants to succeed in life."

"On BBC radio this morning there was a commentary on kids spending too much time in front of computer screens, whether hand-held or on a desk, and are losing their ability to speak in complete sentences."

**Bill** said, "I agree with Stan regarding the importance of being able to speak to an assembled audience. The multi-club competition he spoke about was much more interesting for all the participants—the clubs that held their own contest and the students who spoke, at both levels. Perhaps some of the other clubs, like Montreal-Westward or Westmount, also have public speaking contests of their own."

**Steve** said, "We, as a club, should try to get more out of it. We shouldn't just hand those kids a cheque, we should have a formal presentation at their school's graduation."

"We do," Murray assured him.

"On top of that," Steve continued, "we should ensure that the speeches are published in one of the local papers. The speaking part is important but the message is also important. It should get printed somewhere. That, too, would be a nice prize for the participants."

**Bill** suggested that we put all four recorded speeches, plus the comments by (Chief Judge) **Phil Méthot** on each of four flash drives and give one to each of the four participants.

"That's a good idea," Murray said, "but I'd like that to go out with a cover letter from the Youth Committee, on club letter-head."

**Deniz** said, "It is important to give young people an opportunity to speak in public, but not involving only four schools. Perhaps we could invite more schools to participate, even if it means we have two contests with smaller prizes."

**Emily** said she shared those concerns but "in past years we have had five or six students. This is, I think, the first time we have had just four. One or two we were expecting to come dropped out at the last minute. A lot of the problem has to do with the timing of our contest, when we approach the schools and when in the school year we schedule the contest."

"The teachers told me they liked having it in the evening. More parents were able to attend. More significantly, they would like to have it much earlier in the year. Next year, Easter falls on April 1<sup>st</sup>. So, for example, if we have it next year it should be April 3<sup>rd</sup> or April 10<sup>th</sup> at the very latest. Later than that, students are tied up preparing for exams."

"The second thing, I think our prizes are a lot of money just to hand out. Maybe we should take another look at that."

"Thirdly, in hosting this event we have to make it important not only to the schools, as now, but to the community at large. We need to consider what we could do to make it an event with wider interest to the entire West Island community."

"Lastly, when we are looking for students to go on one of the many adventures offered by other clubs in the district, we try to choose less affluent students. But for our public speaking contest we are only interested in students who are good at that and I can assure you, that talent is not limited to students from

families who are financially well off. Of the students who participate in our public speaking contest, we have had a real mixture of backgrounds."

"To summarize, I suggest an earlier approach to the schools, with a reminder, say, two weeks later, along with the topics and more details; and an evening event date mid-April or sooner, with the entire community welcome to attend."

**Joe Maxwell** pointed out that more student contestants also means a longer meeting.

**Bill** agreed. "Four seems to be the right number. With two more schools participating, we could hold two contests, one a public speaking contest and the other a debate. We could have two pairs of students debating the merits of both sides of a controversial issue."

**David Warne** suggested that, rather than giving cash prizes, the money be used to support other activities for underprivileged students. "I believe the students who are competing are self-motivated; they're not in it for the money."

**Wayne** said, "I don't think we are reaching enough kids. If we had a contest in October, November, February and March and had the winners of those contests compete in a finale in April. We could give smaller prizes, like \$100 for the winners of the preliminaries and \$500 for the winner of the finale."

**Deniz** said Wayne had a good point. "I'm all for reaching out to more students and that's a good way to achieve that."

**Murray** said the key to making a success of that would be better communication with schools and students, perhaps via social media.

**Bill** suggested that, instead of a cash prize, we offer to put the winner's name on the prize of a week at a summer camp for an underprivileged child.

**Brenda** said she liked the idea of underprivileged kids being the beneficiaries of whatever contest scheme we come up with.

**Cameron** said he had four kids who all went to Macdonald High School and he could attest to the fact that the schools have internal competitions in public speaking and debating, and send their best to us. "It isn't just four people who benefit from our little competition. It's far more than that."

**Bill** suggested we have a round-table discussion with the teachers, or counselors, from all the schools in the various communities we serve. "We could offer them a total of 4 or 5 meetings during the school year. We would like to know how we can help them help their kids. We could do it in early fall or even in late June."

**Murray** wrapped up the discussion, adding that he thought we were being overprotective of the students' identities by not giving everyone, judges, included, the name of each student and the name of his or her school. "In future," he said, "we should put more trust in the impartiality of the judges."

**Emily** added another comment. "In thinking about something Brenda said about the other 'adventures' we offer to our students, it occurred to me that we ask each of those students to visit our club afterwards and tell us about their experience. That, too, is good training in public speaking. Moreover, we expect them to take photos during the adventure and put together a slide show presentation to accompany their talk."

"I'm talking about the Adventure in Citizenship, in the Environment, in High Technology, and so on. They are all programs offered by other clubs in our district. There is also a program called Encounters With Canada, and we should not fail to take full advantage of all of the above in the future."