



The Lakeshorian

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Rotary



WEEKLY BULLETIN OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF MONTREAL-LAKESHORE

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This Week's Program...

Andrew Bock, the Beaconsfield High School student our club sponsored for the *Adventure in the Environment* in Cornwall last September, will tell us about his experience.

Birthdays & Anniversaries...

Happy Birthday, Glofe.....Sunday, March 25th!
Happy Birthday, Jennifer NevilleSunday, March 25th!

Future Programs...

Mar 27: **Lorena Morante**, Coordinator with *Encounters With Canada*, will bring us up to date on this multi-theme program, Canada's largest youth forum for students aged 14 to 17. We first sent a student to EWC in 2014-2015.

Apr 3: **NO MEETING (Tuesday after Easter)**

Apr 10: **[Evening meeting]** Our annual **Alan Liddiard Public Speaking Competition**.

Apr 17: **Murray** will give us an update on...and, perhaps, a sneak peek at...our **10th Annual Charity Auction**, which will take place at the Holiday Inn Pointe-Claire on **Friday, June 1st, 2018**.

Special Events...

Mar 24: **RLI – Rotary Leadership Institute**, Ramada Inn, 805 Brookdale Ave., Cornwall, 7:45 am to 4:45 pm.

Apr 20: (Friday, 5 to 7 pm) **LAST** opportunity this Rotary year to qualify for 2018-19 grant funding. NAV Centre, 1950 Montreal Road, Cornwall, ON.

Apr 21-22: **PETS (President-elect Training Seminar), Foundation Dinner & District Training Assembly**, NAV Centre, 1950 Montreal Road, Cornwall, ON. [Advance registration required.]

Last Week's Meeting...

Tania Charron, *West Island Youth Action's* Executive Director, told us about her organization.

Active Rotary club members present were President **Helen, Lawrence, Maureen Rosie, Esin, Stan, Bill, Murray, Semi, Glofe, Anne, Knud, Brenda, Emily** and **Cameron**. Honorary Member **Joe Maxwell** was also present.

We were also pleased to welcome visiting Rotarian **Louis-Philippe Lefrançois** from the Rotary Club of Hudson-and-St-Lazare, and guests **Nikita Moriarity**, Director of LGBTQ West Island, guest of the club; and **Thais Karsidag**, guest of **Semi**.

Cameron announced that both our **Men's** and **Women's** teams won **Gold** at the **World Junior Curling Championships** in Aberdeen Scotland the previous week.

President **Helen** had a few announcements...

- "Several of our members attended the **District International Service / Rotary Foundation** meetings in Cornwall on Saturday March 10th — **Knud, Deniz, Esin, Joe** and **Helen**. "There are lots of good projects out there," Helen said. "I plan to ask **Deniz** to give us a presentation on International Service, where we're at with our project in Guatemala and the one we're going to be involved with in Madras, along with stuff she learned at the International Service meeting."
- "The **District Training Assembly** will take place Sunday, April 22nd, at the NAV Centre in Cornwall. There will be lots of good sessions. So far **Murray** and **Helen** are the only people signed up. There will be many topics to choose from, of interest to all Rotarians, from new members to seasoned seniors. I will email an agenda to everyone, along with a link so you can register online."

Murray gave us an update on our auction. "We are over halfway there; we have 25 confirmed gifts, donations and items for auction. Tickets are printed and we'll be giving them out next week. We'd like to give every member ten tickets, or however many they want, and we hope they sell them all." Asked if there is a flyer, Murray said, "Not yet but there will be. We've already spoken to **Kelly** and **Jesper**; it's in the works. And the brochure will be ready for the evening. The last date for advertisements is May 10th."

Brenda told us that we have a volunteering opportunity at **Welcome Hall Mission on Wednesday, March 21st**, from 12:45 to 3 pm. "We'll be helping them with their grocery store. So far we are six; if anyone else wants to join us they are welcome."

"We will also be delivering Easter chocolates to the **Denis Benjamin Viger** residence."

"We can also help **On Rock Community Services** with their grocery store any Monday from 9 to 12. Anyone can just present themselves. The task is basically making boxes of donations from their warehouse shelves, for families to come and pick them up. They're located at 9554 Gouin Boulevard West in Roxboro, between Sources and Autoroute 13. They're near the west end of the building in that strip mall. The entrance is in the back."

President **Helen** reminded us that we have two jars at the head table that we can contribute loose change to. "We are way short of our \$1,500 goal for polio. We only have about three months left, so we'll be talking about that at our Board meeting on the 14th. We also have a jar for cleft palate donations. I'm not sure where we stand on that one. Semi, if you can, please look at totals and let me have them so I can make a more complete announcement in the coming weeks."

Helen also welcomed **Nikita Moriarity**, from LGBTQ. "She is a prospective member of our club and she has an event coming up on May 12th that she wants to tell us about."

Nikita said, "Just to recap, we are the only organization on the West Island that serves the LGBTQ community, so we're unique in that way. Our outreach services help youth, adults and seniors in that community. We are happy to say that on Saturday, May 12th, we will hold our Casino Night and Silent Auction. We are in the process of solidifying the details on that. Tickets will go on sale April 5th. They're \$50 per ticket and that includes \$10 on the house when you come in so that, hopefully, you can get started with Lady Luck on your side.

"It will be a formal event, so ladies and gentlemen, take out that formalwear from the back of your closet. It will be a fun casino Vegas theme kind of night. We'll have Texas Hold'em poker tables, as well as Roulette and Blackjack, all with professional dealers.

"Some of the tables have been purchased; others are available for purchase, to help offset cost.

"We are fortunate that RBC has come on as a major sponsor of the event. They are also providing volunteers but we will need other volunteers also to help with set-up and take-down, as well as helping out during the event. We're open to any help your Rotary club is able to give, whether manpower, or purchasing a table. By that I mean that you could purchase a Texas Hold'em table for example, and it would be called the Lakeshore Rotary Texas Hold'em table. Advertising is available as an overall sponsor or a table sponsor. If you can't volunteer or support the event as a sponsor, we hope you will buy tickets and come out. It will be a fun night. We plan to have music, a band offering upbeat jazz/swing, to fill the room with lots of great music."

Joe reminded her that May 12th is quite close to June 1st, the date of our own auction. "We have to support the home team first," he said.

Helen said, "The LGBTQ event is not an auction; it's a Casino night, a very different event, even though there will be a small silent auction as part of it. What Nikita is hoping to have from us is attendance on the part of Rotarians, maybe volunteers or buying a gaming table."

Nikita added that the event will be held on-site at the LGBTQ Centre, in the Beaconsfield United Church on Woodside Road.

Joe had a joke for us. "A man was lying on the grass, taking it easy. Looking up at the clouds, he decided to talk to God.

"God," he said. "What does a million years mean to you?" God answered, "In my frame of reference, a million years is about one minute."

The man asked God, "What does a million dollars mean to you?" God answered, "A penny."

The man perks up and asks, "So can I have a penny?"

God replied, "In a minute."

In our 50/50 fundraiser, **Glorefe** won the right to turn over the Ace of Spades but she turned over the Jack of Diamonds instead. Oh well, the pot will continue to grow, to the continuing benefit of the club and the eventual benefit of the member who finds the Ace.

Bill also had a funny story for us. "This story takes place in a small village with a General Store that sells all kinds of things including small livestock. A biker took his Harley into the local garage for a repair but the mechanic told him he couldn't do the work while he waited, so the biker decided to walk home. On the way he stopped at the General Store where he bought a few things he needed—a bucket and an anvil, two chickens and a goose.

But he had a problem—how to carry everything home. The General Store owner said, "Why not put the anvil in the bucket and carry it in one hand, put a chicken under each arm and carry the goose in your other hand?"

"Hey, thanks," said the biker and out the door he went. As he was walking along the sidewalk a little old lady approached him and said she was lost. "How can I get to 1603 Mockingbird Lane?" she asked.

"As a matter of fact," said the biker, "I live at 1616 Mockingbird Lane. We can take a shortcut down this alley and be there in no time."

The little old lady looked him over cautiously and said, "I'm a lonely widow. Without a husband to defend me how do I know that when we get in the alley you won't hold me against the wall, pull up my skirt and ravish me?"

The biker said, "Holy smokes, lady! I'm carrying a bucket, an anvil, two chickens and a goose. How in Hell could I possibly hold you against the wall and do that?"

The lady said, "Set the goose down, cover it with the bucket, put the anvil on top of the bucket and I'll hold the chickens."

Murray introduced our speaker. "**Tania Charron** has been involved with AJOI, West Island Youth Action, since April 2010. A former outreach worker, Board President and Development Officer, she understands the wide variety of difficulties encountered by young people in our community and how AJOI can respond to their needs. Since November 2017 Tania is the executive director of AJOI."

Tania apologized that her slides could not be shown on our screen for some reason. "But I have a Plan B," she said and proceeded to tell us about AJOI. "AJOI was created in 2007, after a working committee, having defined the profile of West Island Youth, started a Youth Action project in Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue and Sainte-Geneviève; Pierrefonds-Roxboro approved an outreach program for that borough. We have since expanded our territory to cover the entire West Island.

"Our mission is to establish and maintain street and community outreach work for West Island youth between 12 and 25 years old who are at risk or are living with difficulties. Since 2016 we also offer our services to adults struggling with homelessness.

"Our objectives are to offer and develop preventive services in sexual health, violence, crime and homelessness. We also encourage the integration of youth in the community by supporting them in projects by and for them. We prevent crime and membership in street gangs. We also encourage dialogue and partnership with other West Island organizations.

"Outreach street work is our particular approach. It differs from the approach of others in the social and psychological fields. Our workers reach out to vulnerable people in their life environments and create trust relationships with them. It's always confidential, with empowerment in the back of their mind, at the pace of the individual. We also work with a harm reduction approach. That means recognizing that some issues exist. For example, teenagers have sexual relationships; they drink alcohol; they will try drugs; they have physical and mental health issues, family conflicts, poverty and societal exclusion.

"To reduce the risk of sexual disease and alcohol poisoning, we give them condoms and educate them on how to drink responsibly. We listen to them, offer support and information, accompaniment and referral to the right resources. We also do mediation and crisis intervention.

"We also offer cultural and sport activities. In 2012 we introduced **L'Aut' Gang** sport activities for youth who don't have access to traditional community sports. It combats idleness and allows them to use their free time more wisely. In winter we have open gyms by arrangement with West Island schools. For example, Riverdale High School gives us access to their gym every Saturday for our 130 teenagers to play basketball and soccer. We have outreach workers and volunteers there to make sure everything goes okay.

"In summer we have ten park animators who go to West Island parks, find kids who are just chilling, doing nothing, and they encourage them to play basketball, soccer, football—they have big bags filled with balls for those sports. They create teams. We organize a big tournament called Les Jeux de la Rue de l'Ouest de l'Île. The winners go to Les Jeux de la Rue de Montréal.

"It's pretty big and it's really appreciated by youth. Last year we had 3,434 participants in 41 parks around the West Island during the summer."



Tania went on to discuss:

The Adult Homelessness Mandate

- Growing homelessness issue on the West Island;
- The West Island represent 12% of the island of Montreal's total population, yet we only have 4% of all social housing units;
- In comparison to Montreal, renting costs are much higher, yet the size of the apartment is often smaller, the location less desirable, far from public transportation, etc.

A study conducted in 2013 by UQAM with the City of Montreal found:

- Hidden homelessness;
- Used strategies (couch-surfing, crowding, exchange of domestic and sexual services);

Conclusion: There is a real need for additional housing resources on the West Island.

- No social housing with community support for people struggling with homelessness, unless they have a documented limitation or issue (mental health, violence victim, etc.).
- Since April, 2017: 1780 interventions linked to homelessness (majority 18-35 years old).
- Some adults live in their car or in abandoned buildings, or in church basements; some women agree to live with men when it is not safe; kids are left to Batshaw youth center because their parents can't take care of them.

RICOCHE (Housing): Create housing solutions for young adults struggling with homelessness in the West Island.

Many solutions exist to answer the need:

- Social housing project with *Résidence Bienvenu*.
- Fundraising to build an emergency shelter.

Prevention of Crime and Membership in Street Gangs:

- Our prevention work helps to minimize the risk that lead to crime.
- Consequently, our interventions with at-risk youth have a significant impact on harm reduction.
- Working in collaboration with the Ministère de la sécurité as well as with the public security of many municipalities or boroughs.

Workshops offered by AJOI:

- Presentation of AJOI services
- Rights and responsibilities
- Relational and sexual health
- Polysubstance abuse

Our Impact in the Community:

- With our strategic presence, we have reduced the number of interventions that would have to be made by public security with young people aged 12 to 17 in the West Island.
- Last year we carried out individual interventions with 9,671 persons.
- We distributed 6,357 condoms to sexually active youth and made 214 interventions concerning their sexuality, including 183 about sexual health.
- In the last 10 years of working in the streets, we carried out 33,475 interventions by listening, support, accompaniment, references or the distribution of prevention materials.



As is always the case when a speaker captures the interest of the members of our Rotary club, there were many questions, too many for us to recount in *The Lakeshorian*, but they represent a tribute to Tania and the great work AJOI is doing for youth and adults in our very own West Island.

President **Helen** told us, "This is the first time that Tania has made a presentation in English, which makes it all the more amazing!"

Glorefe thanked Tania for making such a formidable presentation without the aid of her slides, and congratulated her on the wonderful work of her organization.

