



The Lakeshore

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BE THE INSPIRATION WEEKLY BULLETIN OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF MONTREAL-LAKESHORE

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This Week's Program...

Cameron will lead us in a game and a discussion about future speakers.

Birthdays and Anniversaries...

...none that we know of.

Future Programs...

January is Rotary Vocational Service Month.

Jan 22: **Lawrence** will talk about **bullying**.

Jan 29: **Club Assembly**, with a review of decisions taken at the January 24th Board of Directors meeting.

February is Peace and Conflict Prevention/Resolution Month.

Feb 5: T.B.D.

Special Events...

Jan 24: (Thursday) **Board of Directors Meeting** at the hotel. Club sandwiches at 6:30 pm, meeting at 7 pm.

Last meeting...

[We are grateful to **Stan** for notes and photos he provided, as I was unable to attend last week's meeting. *Ed.*]

Our special guest was former **MNA Geoff Kelley**, to whom we would be presenting a Paul Harris Fellowship certificate and pin.

Members and guests who were present: **Wayne** and **Sandie, Anne, Helen, Lawrence** and **Maureen, Sacit** and **Rosie, Esin, Stan** and **Anita, Knud, Cameron** and **Winnifred, Art, David, Joe Maxell** and **Joe Zemanovich**.

We were also pleased to welcome Pointe-Claire mayor **John Belvedere**, guest of **Wayne**.

Joe Maxwell gave the toast in Gaelic, but without a translation.

Maureen thanked everyone who donated and helped with the Christmas baskets. We put together 12 baskets this year.

She also thanked the members who took down the Christmas decorations at the Ste Anne's Veteran's Hospital.

Wayne introduced **Geoff Kelley**:

"**Geoffrey Kelley** was a member of the National Assembly of Quebec for the West Island riding of Jacques-Cartier from 1994 to 2018, representing the Quebec Liberal Party.

"He studied French at the Université de Montréal and then obtained a diploma at John Abbott College. He later obtained a Bachelor's degree in History and a Master's degree in Modern History of Canada at McGill University.

"He was a teacher at *Commission scolaire du Lakeshore* and a lecturer at various institutions, including John Abbott College, Collège Marie-Victorin and McGill University.

"He was also the political aide for several cabinet ministers, including Minister of Education (1990), Minister of Municipal

Affairs and Public Security (1990-1994) and was a chief of staff of the Deputy Premier and the President of the Treasury Board (1994).

"Kelley jumped into politics when he was elected in 1994 in Jacques-Cartier. He was re-elected in 1998 and again in 2003.

"He was a backbencher until 2005 when he was named Minister for Native Affairs. Despite being re-elected in 2007, he was not re-appointed to Jean Charest's cabinet, but became chair of the Social Affairs Commission. In 2011 he was re-appointed as Minister for Native Affairs.

"Throughout his years in public life he has been an ardent defender of the interests of the Anglophone community and has devoted a great deal of attention to issues affecting this community.

"Geoffrey Kelley announced his retirement in 2018, after 24 years as MNA for Jacques-Cartier. He was succeeded by his son Greg Kelley in the 2018 election.

"Married to Judy Harper, they have had five children. They live in Beaconsfield.

"Geoff, we're very proud to have you here tonight."

Geoff thanked Wayne for his kind introduction and said, "It's great to see so many familiar faces here tonight and people I've worked with. **Anny Myles**, we've been working together for quite a few years. **John Belvedere**, Mayor of Pointe-Claire.

"The first message I have for you is how proud I was to represent this part of the world in Quebec City for 24 years.

"I'm a very proud West Islander. What you Rotarians do for our community is one of the things that make me so proud to be a West Islander. We look after our neighbours.

"We believe very much that part of being in the community, being part of broader society, is that we look out for each other. And that's some thing that's very important, whether it's being involved in municipal politics, which has its challenges from time to time. Whether it's being involved in the School Board; many people here have a link to education. My wife taught for 38 years. All our children went to public schools in the West Island. My granddaughter is already in Grade 2, which is unusual because it seems she was just born last week.

"Time keeps accelerating but for all the people—teachers, school administrators and parents who get involved in their schools—I think it is a wonderful community.

"Our health system is well. A woman, Jennifer Ferguson, who worked for me in my riding office is now working for my



son, Greg. She struggles with some handicaps of her own but she got very involved in helping a prostate cancer support group on the West Island. It's just a small example of the kind of things—when you get lousy news like that, when you get a bad diagnosis, you think you're the only person on the planet who has ever had this kind of thing. But when you meet other people who have gone down that road, you realize that other people have faced the same thing. There is some support, some advice that you need to help get you through such hard time. And these are the things that, as MNA, you got happening over and over again, people committed to their community, who are looking out for their neighbours, who are doing the right thing.

"It was a great privilege for me to go down and share some of the wisdom from the West Island, some of the things we do right. I think we do a lot of things right that we take for granted. When I visit other parts of Quebec, they don't have the same kind of traditions that we have built up on the West Island.

"I think of fathers with lots of kids and the sports we offer here. When I bicycle around the West Island on a Saturday afternoon, there are soccer games going on everywhere. I think of some Mom who cut up oranges for the half-time break. I think of some Dad—like me—who's coaching, and I'll be the first to admit I never played soccer. To me it was sort of like hockey on grass. As the coach you always wanted to give the best advice to the kids.



"West Islanders are volunteers; they make community life go, whether it's sporting, whether it's looking in on our senior citizens in our community or other people who are going through tough times. I'm just so proud. Your Christmas baskets are another example of people who help other people less fortunate than themselves. They might be new Quebecers or refugees or immigrants trying to find their way. To give them help at Christmas, that's just who we are. Rotary support groups and the work that you do here and around the world is part of that.

"Secondly, I was very proud to serve for over eight years as Minister working with the First Nations and Inuit people of Quebec. It was a great honour to meet so many people on the West Island who had their own experiences, whether they worked with the Cree School Board or the Kativik School Board in northern Quebec, or who had contact with our Mohawk neighbours across Lac Saint-Louis, I always felt there was a great deal of interest and sympathy from the people here who know that we have to renew our relations with the First Nations; we have to do a better job. It's something in Canada we didn't get right and are still struggling to get right. But I was very proud that, wherever I went in the riding, the people were supportive of that kind of work and encouraged me. That was very, very special for me as well and a great honour, as I said.

"But after four years as a political staffer and twenty-four years going to and from Quebec City, at a certain point you've had enough! So I said to my wife, 'The days of living out of a suitcase are done. Maybe it's time to step aside.'

"So I told Philippe Couillard, who was the leader of the Liberal Party at the time, to please make sure that I was

replaced by someone from the West Island, preferably someone from the English-speaking community, that is very strong in the riding. Those were the only instructions I left with the Premier. I had nothing more to do with that, although no one believes me when I say that. The advice I got was that the last thing I should do is get involved. But one young person came along, who sold some membership cards and who was very interested. He happens to be someone named Greg Kelley. I know him fairly well, all of his life I can say with certainty.

"He has met with the mayors in the West Island. I'm sure John Belvedere has met with his council and will give Greg the same advice and support that he gave to me.

"It's fun to see someone of his generation and their challenges. Anne Myles pointed out to me that she met with Greg during the campaign and he was surrounded by young people.

"It is now their challenge. In our generation we didn't quite solve everything; we left a few problems for the next generation to figure out so Greg can work on that. I'm very proud of my son.

"Just in closing, thank you very much for the invitation to be here tonight. I'm sorry I missed your Oyster Party this year but me son had organized a Thank-you Evening for his volunteers that same night at our house so I could hardly say, 'Well, Dear, you take care of things here; I'm going out to the Rotary club's oyster party to drink beer with Wayne and his friends.' But I'll be back next year.

"Thank you all for listening. Thank you very much for your support over the years. We're not always very good at giving ourselves credit. We have problems and challenges on the West Island, yet we do a lot of things right so, once in a while, we have just stop and give ourselves a pat on the back.

"For all the good work that you do as Rotarians, for the involvement you have in your community, thank you very much. You make our world a better place.

"There are no miracles in life, just a steady flow of small gestures, motions of kindness, things that we do to look out for each other, that make this a strong community, that I was very proud to represent for 24 years in Quebec City.

"Thank you very much."

Lawrence then proceeded to present **Geoffrey Kelley** with a **Paul Harris Fellowship** certificate and pin.

