



MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT GOVERNOR

Click on the image of
District Governor Fred
Wright to watch his video

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 4 - Winnipeg Pride Parade
June 13 - District Board Meeting
June 21 - President's Meeting

DISTRICT CONFERENCE 2023 - ImaginAction

Congratulations to the Rotary Clubs of Saskatoon and the amazing organizing committee on planning and presenting a wonderful and unique conference!

The conference started with a welcome reception on Thursday evening that provided endless fellowship opportunities to connect with Club members with a musician playing beautifully in the background.

Friday morning provided hands on service projects both at the hotel and in the community. More than half of the attendees prepared and served breakfasts, cleaned a park, read to students and prepared notes and packages of needed items.

Our opening ceremony and beginning of the hybrid part of the conference featured a very wise and gracious elder, followed by major project presentations from the Rotary Clubs of Prince Albert, Dauphin and Kenora demonstrating that smaller communities can be led by Rotarians to complete very significant half million dollar plus projects.

A live citizenship ceremony kicked off the afternoon with twenty new Canadians becoming Canadian citizens and all in attendance being afforded the opportunity to participate in the oath.

The day concluded with an opportunity to tour the world class Wanuskewin indigenous heritage site followed by dinner in their magnificent facility.

Saturday was dedicated to learning sessions presented by our District Learning and Development committee. These sessions were interactive in-person and online and reinforced our District Action Plan.

The conference concluded with an excellent dinner at which many of the attendees wore Kenora dinner jackets as a tribute to DG Fred. (Fred was completely surprised and humbled) The exchange of pins by the District Governor Team introduced soon to be District Governor Sonja Susut. DGN Peter Tonge, soon to be District Governor Elect, had to leave the conference earlier in the day to attend the passing of his mother-in-law in southern Ontario. Our condolences for Rotarian Nancy Hansen and Peter Tonge.



Deb and Gord LeMaistre were awarded the 2022 Rotary International Donald MacRae Peace Award on October 26, 2022. They were officially presented with the award at the conference.



Conference hijinks.



Gailmarie, Fred, & Fred in Kenora dinner jackets

Deb and Gord LeMaistre were officially presented with the Donald MacRae Peace award, one of Rotary International's highest awards for their incredible work and dedication with Ripple Effect.

A very informative and beautifully displayed House of ImaginAction was available in the same conference room area throughout the Conference. A beautiful memorial to all of our Rotarians who passed during the year was tastefully displayed throughout the conference.

So very well done ImaginAction Team! A conference for and by People of Action! We learned, we had fun, we enjoyed great fellowship, we served and we were entertained!

See you in Moose Jaw May 9 to 11, 2024.



Rotarians picking up garbage on the Meewasin Trail, part of the Rotary International District 5550 ImagineAction conference hands on projects.



Early on Friday morning the attendees volunteered for hands-on community activities - reading to children, serving a hot breakfast at an inner-city school, cleaning up a park, and making cards to be put into the parcels handed out at the Food Bank. Seen here Arlene Jorgenson, (left), and her team making cards!



Members of the Canadian Ripple Effect Committee at the Rotary International District 5550 Conference. LtoR PDG Peter Neufeldt, PDG Ed Thompson, Deb & Gord LeMaistre, and Glenn Hagel. Missing, but attended by Zoom, PDG Peter Peters, Joanne Meisner, Marian Kettlewell.



25 people took their Canadian Oath and became New Canadian citizens at The ImaginAction Rotary International District 5550 Conference in Saskatoon



Rotarians taking part in the ImaginAction Rotary International District 5550 conference had time to tour Wanuskewin Heritage Park to see the buffalo including the newest member of the herd just a week old.





QUEEN ELIZABETH II PLATINUM JUBILEE MEDALS

We are thrilled to announce that two of our members of Rotary District 5550 have been honoured with Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee medals by Manitoba. These medals celebrate the 70th anniversary of Her Majesty's accession to the throne and recognize outstanding individuals who have made a positive impact on their communities. Congratulations to our medal recipients, Rotarians David Thorne and Jean Oliver, for this prestigious achievement!



DISTRICT GOVERNOR NOMINEE PETER TONGE (from the Winnipeg Free Press)

When Peter Tonge is assessing the accessibility of a space, he likes to go in cold. He refrains from looking up available accommodations and avoids Googling the layout. By arriving without preconceptions, he can experience all the potential barriers first-hand.

Tonge is the project lead for Arts AccessAbility Network Manitoba's venue audit — a wide-ranging assessment of the accessibility of local concert halls, theatres and galleries that is now available online for patrons and artists.

"It's really sort of opened my eyes to lots of things," Tonge says of the process of auditing three to four venues a week for the last several months. The *Free Press* tagged along during a recent survey of Platform Centre for Photographic and Digital Art.

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ROTARY SPOTLIGHT ON SONJA SUSUT

Rotary was introduced to me by my sister who was a member of the Rotary Club of Toronto, a club with a membership close to 200. On several visits I attended meetings with her, traveled to president-elect conferences with her, volunteered with her club, and learned to appreciate and value the work that Rotary does both at home and throughout the world. Upon her urging, I finally joined the Moose Jaw Wakamow Rotary Club when I superannuated from 38 years in the field of education. It has been a truly rewarding experience, both for fellowship and service.



In my club I have served as president, now past-president, and a member/chair of various committees-- International Services, Membership, Fellowship/social/program, Global Service Above Self, Grants, and community projects. Becoming part of the District Governor team three years ago also showed me the commitment of our District committees as they provide the leadership to assist our clubs.

My family consists of a son in Ottawa, with one grandchild, a daughter in Saskatoon, plus two small dogs and two cats. I am still employed part-time but I enjoy my summer passions of gardening and hiking. While winter involves dealing with snow, there is time for reading, cooking, and long walks.

During my education profession, there were many defining moments that reminded me of what it meant to have been given the public trust of educating our youth. In Rotary, I see a similar trust—a trust given to make a difference in our communities, to help in providing opportunities for others who are less fortunate so they, in turn, may make a difference as they develop passion and persistence and confidence. Recruiting engaging and retaining membership is a pipeline, engaged over a period of years, that builds unity, strength, and teamwork that allows common people to achieve uncommon results.

I am looking forward to serving as your District Governor as we build the new format of the District Leadership Team.

GRATITUDE IS A GREAT ATTITUDE

by Ruth Marritt & Brenda Banbury

Committee members,

What an incredible job each and every member of the committee achieved.

Fred – thanks for the stories and your leadership. ‘Where’s Fred’?

Candace – you carried the greatest burden with skill and patience – from designing our great theme ‘ImaginAction’, the graphics, all aspects of registration, some refunds and crafting all the emails Fred circulated. The Photobooth was a fun addition.

Bob – thanks for being the ‘worry wart’ and continuing to follow through with 5x5 – it all went flawlessly. The piano music with Don Griffith was a great touch on Friday evening.

Stan – great find in 5x5 (they were incredible), arranging the Stone Frigate Big Band who were seriously awesome, carrying us in O’Canada and the 4 Way Test.

Ron – the House of ImaginAction looked awesome, had impact and punch.

Rob – thanks for providing your expertise on First Nation culture and protocols, pinning down Mark Arcand and arranging with the RI Foundation to acquire the certificates. The presentation on Friday evening was flawless.

Asit – thanks to you, we as a committee started thinking outside of the box from the very beginning – the hands-on activities which were well organized and the Citizenship Ceremony – all were enjoyed by the attendees. Your connections with the First Nations community were invaluable – the elders were wonderful and the speakers on Friday evening finished off the theme for the day.

Wayne – our finances were always in order, not an easy thing when unexpected costs and donations arise. AND your job is not yet quite finished!

Gary – your commitment to obtaining sponsorships continued until the end empowering us to provide a A1 conference at a very reasonable cost. Through you, Global Printers did a wonderful job of the program and name tags.

Gailmarie – provided additional insight to First Nations Culture and made Saturday happen through the L&D team. The room buzzed with conversations all Saturday. The Photobooth also provided another fun venue.

Sarah – WOW – brush off your resume, you could be in great demand. You carried out the MC duties with humour, a smile and laughs, still keeping it all on time. Great District Governor material 😊

Al – the Memory table with obits looked professional. A Memory table looks so simple but was due to your patience and persistence. A big thank you to Art for helping you with edits and layout.

Jim – worked hard on the Silent Auction table – all items were well displayed and the bidding was furious on some items. A great fundraiser done well.

Jeff – last but not least, our unofficial member of the committee. YOU made us look so great - the ImaginAction banner, the Friday and Saturday night menu/program, our vests, the sponsor recognition tents, note pads and pens – AND FAKE FRED!!!!

It was such a pleasure to work with a committee who got things done, totally in co-operation with all committee members and were offering up help throughout the actual conference. Aren’t we glad we didn’t listen to the naysayers, WE planned and implemented one of the best District 5550 Conferences!!!!

District Conference 2023 Co-Chairs
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2023 FOUNDATION REPORT

Check out the recipients of the 2022-23 District and Global Grants by clicking on the Read More Icon.



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