

December 2007

President Terry Toone  
The Rotary Club of Victoria, B.C.  
c/o The Union Club of B. C.  
805 Gordon Street  
Victoria, B. C. V8W 1Z6

Dear President Terry:

We are pleased to enclose our Task Force Committee Report, which not only covers our observations on various trends in our Club, but includes a number of recommendations which we hope will be helpful to you and the Board members.

After you've had an opportunity to study it, we suggest you might find it helpful if our committee could meet with you and the Board at a special meeting to discuss the contents. If you are agreeable, an early date in January would be preferable in order to allow as much time as possible to implement any changes in procedure you may want to commence.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Norm Bradshaw". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "N" and "B".

Norm Bradshaw  
Task Force Committee

Enclosure

# ROTARY TASK FORCE REPORT

Presented to:

The President of the Rotary Club of Victoria, B.C.

December 2007

The Task Force was formed by a group of six dedicated Rotarians who are becoming increasingly concerned over a number of disturbing trends in our club. These centred around our meeting place and the services offered, the steady decrease in weekly attendance and the dramatic fall-off in membership, especially over the last five years.

Each of the above factors will be dealt with separately in our report.

The committee members:

Norm Bradshaw

Pat Crofton

Gus De Jardin

Norma Friedmann

Allan Neale

Bob Whyte

After several committee meetings and numerous interviews with members, the committee agreed the current unsatisfactory situation stems from three main factors which should be addressed immediately:

1. OUR REGULAR WEEKLY MEETING PLACE (THE UNION CLUB) AND THE SERVICES PROVIDED.
2. THE CLUB LACKS A SENSE OF CONTINUING PURPOSE OR SPECIFIC COMMON GOALS.
3. OUR MEETINGS SUFFER FROM A LACK OF FUN AND FRIENDSHIP.

We comment on each of the above as follows:

#### THE UNION CLUB

Since moving to the Union Club several years ago, our membership and attendance have both fallen sharply with the main complaints being:

- 1 . The quality of the meals is not in keeping with the current \$17.00 charge.

2. Monday is not an acceptable time of the week for a business person to attend as this is usually their busiest day - suggest we revert to Thursday meetings, even if this means a move to a new location.
  
3. The lack of free parking. Even though the Club provides us with a one-hour parking pass, it still costs an average of \$2 - \$3 to use a city parkade which means an average outlay of some \$23 - \$25 per meeting.

#### ROTARY CLUB/UNION CLUB CONTRACT

The current contract was signed in July 2007 when the luncheon cost was . increased to \$15.29 per person plus a 75 cent service charge and taxes for a total of \$17.00 inclusive. To this our Club adds \$1.00 for a total of \$18.00. The contract expires at the end of June 2008. (A copy is attached at the end of our report.)

We have to guarantee a minimum attendance of 75, reduced to 70 for the months of July and August. In recent months our attendance is between 60 and 65 which means that each week we subsidize approximately 12 meals at \$17.00 for a total of \$204.00 weekly, \$800 monthly or \$9,600 annually.

This is something the Club clearly cannot afford and the contract should be re-negotiated with a new minimum requirement of 60.

Members frequently complain about the number of times we are given soup and sandwiches as the main course which is contrary to the menu selection outlined in the contract. With a little imagination, there is no reason why the chef cannot provide a hot meal on a regular basis with sandwiches as the exception. This should be reviewed with the Union Club without delay and a member of the Task Force would be pleased to be part of these discussions.

We seriously recommend consideration be given to change our meeting day from Monday to Thursday for the reasons given in number 2 above. While we recognize this presents a problem for the Union Club and its own members, the possibility must be explored, not only with the Union Club but our own members as well, as such a change, if adopted, could very well mean a move to another location at the end of our contract.

OUR CLUB LACKS A SENSE OF CONTINUING PURPOSE AND SPECIFIC  
COMMON GOALS

We all recognize that we are a service club whose main mission is to basically help others by raising funds or using manpower to assist those in need.

However, apart from general goals of supporting Rotary International and raising funds from the annual car raffle to assist local non-profit groups, we lack a sense of excitement and commitment toward achieving specific targets within our Club.

A good start would be the development of a well thought out Mission Statement covering fundraising, membership development, fun and fellowship, etc.

Specific goals should be established annually such as:

- 1 . Our club will donate a minimum of dollars to RI through member contributions.
  
2. Through the car raffle and other programs, our goal this year is to raise dollars to be distributed to local non-profit groups.
  
3. Increase net membership by 30.

4. Emphasize fun and fellowship at meetings and at outside activities.

Note: Would our profile be more prominent in the community and among members if we took on one major specific cause to support annually, rather than the number we are now giving small to medium size amounts to with little public recognition or member excitement and satisfaction.

### FUN AND FELLOWSHIP

Our meetings are sometimes described as boring, repetitious, without purpose, while our members are said to be elderly, not altogether friendly, fixed in their ways, and do not go out of their way to meet and greet newer members.

We seem to have fallen into a predictable routine where change is almost frowned upon and more emphasis should be placed on having such interesting and varied meetings, combined with a level of fun and fellowship, that a member would make every effort to attend.

We comment on the forgoing as more than a few members have told us it does not seem to make any difference if they attend or not because no one misses them nor do they miss not coming. This has to change.

There are many no-cost ways to correct the problems cited above and we suggest you form a new committee called "Fun and Fellowship" which could devote its attention to adding some 'spice' to our meetings.

We would be remiss if we did not pause here to compliment the Rotary Choir and our pianist for a great start to our meetings, something visitors always comment favourably on.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Membership development and membership retention are so vital to the ongoing continuation of our club that we have given serious consideration to the following and have included our suggestions:

The recently submitted membership report by Larry Forster and his committee is a promising start toward answering the worrisome decline in members over recent years. However, judging from past rather dismal results when asking our existing members to bring in a new prospect, we have certain reservations in this respect.

We submit the following for consideration:

1. Appoint a Vice-President of the Board to work diligently with the chair of the membership committee, whose results will be reviewed by the Board monthly.
  
  3. Similarly, the other Board Vice-President should assume responsibility for member retention and also report to the Board monthly.
  
  3. To ensure continuity of the membership committee and its plans, members should have a minimum term of two years.
- . • Since few of us have proven ourselves to be overly successful at recruiting, perhaps a different approach is warranted. Both the Chamber of Commerce, the Better Business Bureau, and others employ a paid representative to approach business entities for membership. Others, such as the Newcomers Club, have their literature in Welcome Wagon baskets. Along this line, we could consider engaging a dedicated Rotarian with successful selling skills (such as Don Jenson) to work several hours each week, calling on business leaders in the area our Club serves.

- We recognize the difficulty in attracting the head of an organization to take a minimum of 1 1/2 hours away from the office to attend a weekly Rotary meeting, especially on a Monday. To offset this, why not ask the leader to sponsor a "rising star" in his organization to our Club to assist in developing their potential.
- Concerning the above, we have to ask ourselves why our Club has, at best, only one or two members from the 100 largest employers in the city.
- When one of our members brings a prospect for lunch they should receive, on a one-time basis, a free lunch ticket for the guest.
- A new prospect/member should not be asked to pay his annual membership until he/she has attended at least four meetings.
- Once a new member has joined they must become active doing something worthwhile - otherwise they will quickly fade away - we must remember, we are not a SOCIAL club. It is the responsibility of the Board to ensure each and every committee is active. Why do so many committees only have 1-2 members? Is each being asked to submit a goals and action report? Is there any follow-up by the Board?

- To help us to get to know the new members quickly, have their photographs and names displayed prominently on a large bulletin board near the front entrance.
- We recommend the committee have a specific budget assigned on an annual basis to assist in its efforts.
- Have the Sergeant at Arms fine us if we can't remember the names of new members.
- A frequent suggestion heard was to bring back the "Rotarian of the Week" program where a new member interviews and reports on a senior member within a 5-7 minute time limit. ,We suggest at one meeting a month we do not have a speaker, but could do one or two of these reports, and devote the rest of the meeting to committee reports, member feedback, etc.
- As far as we know there is no systematic follow-up or contact with members who, for whatever reason, stop attending on a regular basis. Not only does the Club have to pay for their meal when they are absent (because of our minimum guarantee), but perhaps they are ill or require assistance.

- In any event, whoever is checking attendance, should inform the Care and Concern Committee at least every two weeks, who could then make telephone contact.

### **CAR RAFFLE PROJECT**

For the last several years this has been the Club's major fund raising project, but lately it has also been a contributing factor toward undue stress for our members, even resulting in the resignation of several with promising potential. It has become apparent that we are trying to accomplish too much with our limited resources. We suggest:

1. Set our financial goals to a more realistic figure of say \$25,000, thereby eliminating a number of shifts, many of which had limited potential in any event.
2. Instill the sense of fun and fellowship we used to enjoy by stressing each shift be staffed by two persons, members, family, friends, etc.
3. Ensure, where possible, our newer members are teamed with an experienced one.

4. Since this is our major exposure to the public, in addition to the Rotary aprons we wear, the Club should consider purchasing armbands, hats, etc., with the Rotary label.
5. Any charity that is to receive a portion of the proceeds would be obligated to provide volunteers to work with Club members in shifts.
6. The car raffle committee should have many more members than usual:- NOT ONE is listed in the current roster - and planning must begin at an early stage. The Board should rectify this as soon as possible to ensure we do not have a repetition of last year.

#### **OTHER SUGGESTIONS**

- Members have been discussing what should be done with the savings in the secretary's salary that had been budgeted. Our recommendation is to reduce Club member annual dues by \$50 and portion the other \$50 [approximately] to the Club's surplus-which will help defray the cost of meals we are currently absorbing.

- As we will not be hosting an exchange student next term, we suggest the saving of some \$6,000 also go directly to the Club's surplus to improve our financial position.
- An "Action Committee" should be formed to develop new and exciting ideas for members' involvement - especially newer members - geared toward helping those in our community. For just one worthwhile idea refer to the proposal of Bob Whyte which is attached.
- New members should have their own committee and develop ideas of community service.
- Emphasis on new projects should, if possible, be oriented toward including all family members to assist us in getting to know each other much better we're always saying Rotary Is a Family - well, let's make it that way and at minimum cost.
- Request for Funds/Donations. We are becoming overwhelmed by repeated requests to dig in our wallets for a multitude of great causes. These requests should be carefully monitored and timed to ensure they do not result in further resignations.

- The majority of our senior members, comprising nearly 50% of our club, are content to restrict their activity to being a social member only and enjoying the friendship, a speaker, etc. To stimulate their interest further, we suggest they become involved in a Learning to Read program for kindergarten to grade 2 students, using programs already developed by the schools or other Rotary clubs, which are very successful. Any other member could be involved as well.
- Dress Code. Since the majority of offices now seem to operate on a "Smart Casual" type of dress we must recognize that new members, especially the younger set, are not going to dress up for our meetings.
- The Sunshine Bulletin. Ken Lane is doing an excellent job in producing an attractive, informative weekly publication. We have to ask, why are there seldom any committee reports - have they nothing to say? Could new members be assigned to help out as reporters, search out and write reports, profiles, and distribute copies, etc.
- Quite a number of the members stated they missed the talented artists and entertainers we used to enjoy. They specially like the children performing. Could this be done once monthly with no meals provided them, but in turn we donate a small cheque to help defray their costs.

- The importance of a quality speaker at our meetings is recognized, especially if the subject matter is of keen interest to our members. For suggestions in this respect, we refer you to the attached memorandum from Jim Cutt.

It is the sincere hope of the Task Force members that you and the Board will give every segment of this report careful and urgent consideration which hopefully will go a long way toward reversing the unfavourable trends noted. If not, a merger with another club may have to be studied which would be unfortunate bearing in mind the long and favourable history of our Club.

Attachments

# Catering Contract

**Group Name** Rotary Club of Victoria

**Date** Every Monday Excluding Banking Holidays, as of July 23rd 2007 for the 2007-2008 Rotary <sup>year</sup> Calendar

**Attendance** Minimum of 75, up to 80 on regular weeks, Special events up to 120  
Reduced minimum of 70, set for 75 for the months of July and August

**Venue** Main Dining Room

**Start Time** 11:30 a.m. **End Time** 2:00 p.m.

**Bar Details** None required except on special occasions, cash bar

**Food Details** Chef's Choice Mini Lunch buffet consisting of the following:  
Self-serve soup of the day  
Seasonal green salad with choice of dressing  
3 Mixed salad to change weekly  
Cold Vegetable Tray with choice of dips  
Selection of pickled vegetables

1 Lunch entrée to change weekly, samples as listed  
Assorted sandwich station or,  
Baked Lasagna or,  
Beef stew or,  
Chicken casserole or,  
Monte Cristo sandwiches or similar hot sandwich or  
Chilli

1 dessert item to change weekly (Squares, cookies, layer cake, pie etc.)  
Fresh Fruit tray including sliced and whole fruit  
Self serve coffee and tea station, Topped up by servers  
Rolls and butter

**Pricing Details** billed at \$15.29 per person plus \$.75 service charge and taxes to equal \$17.00 inclusive  
The Union Club will have seating for 80 unless guarantee is increased 3 working days prior to lunch  
Minimum billing will be for 75 lunches  
The Union Club reserves the right to review pricing yearly to coincide with the Rotary calendar year  
The next pricing review to occur June of 2008  
Notice of any price changes will be given in writing 1 month before becoming effective or as agreed by both parties.

**Audio/Visual** The Union Club's podium and PA system will be made available  
The Union Club's 5 foot Projection screen and associated power cords will also be available  
The Union Club's Piano will also be available  
The Rotary Club will use their own wireless lapel mic and LCD Projector as required  
One 8 foot and one 10 foot registration table set up at entrance to dining room  
Any other requirements must be confirmed 72-hours prior to lunch

**Billing** A house account will be set up with monthly Statement  
Payment required within 30 days of invoice

**Storage** A limited amount of storage space will be made available with understanding that an agreement with Harbourside Rotary Club be met to share common equipment

**Please Note** The Union Club reserves the right to relocate the Rotary Club of Victoria to an alternate venue within the Club, at any time, without notice, due to emergency situations.

All details are agreeable as listed  
Exceptions listed on reverse

Union Club Representative \_\_\_\_\_  
John Cargnelli, Food & Beverage Manager

Date July 11, 2007

Rotary Club Representative \_\_\_\_\_

Date 16 July 2007



Room Rental, Taxes, and Gratuity May Apply  
**THE UNION CLUB OF BRITISH COLUMBIA**  
805 Gordon Street, Victoria, B.C. V8W 1Z6  
Tel: 250-384-1151 Fax: 250-384-0538  
www.unionclub.com e-mail: catering@unionclub.com



## ROTARY CLUB OF VICTORIA

**November 28,2007**

Re: Our Club's future

Dear Fellow Rotarians:

We have been recently considering our club's future - Our mission, our reason for existing.

We know, most certainly, Rotary International and its many goals, projects, dreams and aspirations inspire us greatly.

However, in a local Greater Victoria context, we seem to be drifting along each year raising funds and dispersing them through our Community Needs committee to various and sundry needy and charitable groups with little or no recognition other than a polite 'Thank you' as we hand out cheques at our weekly meetings.

I believe it's time to venture forth with new ideas and challenges: to mine the depth of knowledge, talent and strength of our membership and to offer to potential new members in our club the opportunity to participate in an exciting and vibrant Rotary club passionately involved in one of it's communities greatest issues which is right in 'our own backyard' - "Homelessness".

recently, in the Times Colonist, Rev. Allen Tysick and Rev. David Stewart of "Our place" plead for help and state clearly in their advertising "We need your help badly". (Copy attached). Can there be any more visible and greater need in our community than this? (Constant TC headlines bring to our attention the myriad of problems associated with 'homelessness'.)

Why can't we set up a meeting with the 'Reverends' and explore the possibilities of how the downtown Rotary Club of Victoria might help? Not just financially in a major way each year but physically involving our membership as well. While we are at it we should consider setting up a meeting with our very own, and much loved, fellow Rotarian Tom Oshiro and "The Mustard Seed" to see how our club might be involved there.

I see this as a way for our club, if we become involved and major supporters of either of these charitable organizations, to raise our visibility and stature in our community. I see our involvement in either of these as a huge potential draw for citizens aged 25 to 90 in our community to consider joining our Rotary club. I see our club having a renewed mission and a wonderful new reason for existing.

Obviously, we should approach this new direction very carefully and with the full blessing of our Past Presidents group, our President and his Board, and ultimately gain the approval of our membership to move forward.

I hope you will give these suggestions your sincere consideration and remain,

Yours in Rotary,  
Bob Whyte, Past President

*From: Bob Whyte Date:*

*11/30/07 19:51:09*

*To: Norm Bradshaw; Norma Friedmann; Larry Forster; Allan Neale*

*Subject: Fwd: Positive thoughts about the Club*

- Original Message -From:

Jim Cutt

To: Bob Whyte

Cc: Jim Cutt

Sent: Wednesday, November 28, 2007 9:03 PM

Subject: Positive thoughts about the Club

Bob, As requested, here are a couple of quick and positive thoughts about strengths to build on:

First, Traditionally, the club has had a very strong speakers' program. Indeed a good speaker is the centrepiece of the lunch meeting. I therefore think we should move to prevent any erosion of the quality of that program, and indeed to invest in a consistently excellent program. This would mean, I think, having one of the VPs chair that committee and putting in place a speaker planning program that restores and even improves the reputation of the program and the Club. We should draw on the resources of all members to develop and maintain this program. Second, Larry Forster's summary of our membership erosion was very telling. So my second point is that the Club needs an active membership recruitment and retention strategy that involves every member. Again I would put a VP as Chair, and would strongly advocate a recruitment policy that took advantage of incoming retirees but aimed specifically at younger members still in the work force. This is going to involve specific targeting and then careful retention policies that deal, somehow, with the scheduling difficulties that working members find with a lunch meeting. I have lost two female members from Community needs because of work pressures in the last week.

In short, I think our two serious priorities should be the program and membership recruitment and retention, and that we need Executive leadership and the involvement not just of a committee but of all members under both heads.

cheers,

Jim

12/1/2007