

NOTL Rotary bestows highest club honours to four individuals



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about 18 hours ago



The NOTL Rotary Club bestowed Paul Harris Fellow Awards to two club members and two non-members at their dinner on Thursday. L-R: Dana Litton (receiving the honour for her now deceased husband, Rotarian Tim Lutton), Dorothy Soo Weins, Lise Andreana, and Rotarian Carol Lipsett | Supplied

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Carol Lipsett, Tim Lutton, Dorothy Soo-Wiens and Lise Andreana were all named Paul Harris Fellows at the most recent meeting of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Rotary Club.

Named after the Chicago-based attorney who founded Rotary International in 1905, the award is the highest honour that can be bestowed upon a Rotarian or a non-member by the club. It is

awarded to individuals who have provided substantial support for the Rotary Foundation's programs, such as polio eradication, educational scholarships, and humanitarian grants.

Lipsett has been a Rotarian since 2017, and has served as president, past-president, treasurer, and chair of the membership committee. She has been active as an organizer of the Holiday House Tour and chaired the team for the Gigantic Garage Sale fundraiser that the club held after the pandemic lockdowns, and is NOTL's representative for Rotary International's Gift of Life program.

Tim Lutton, who passed away suddenly in January, was represented at the meeting by his wife, Dana.

After retiring from a career in the oil and gas industry, Lutton dedicated himself to volunteer work. At the time of his passing, he was the Rotary Club's secretary, a member of their St. George Breakfast team, the leader of its Adopt a Road Program, and a strong liaison for the club-sponsored St. Catharines Symbiotics robotics team.

Lutton was also a NOTL Ambassador and was on the board of the NOTL Pickleball Club.

Dorothy Soo-Wiens is involved in numerous charitable organizations and events in NOTL. She is a member of Cornerstone Community Church's funeral ministry and leads the In Stitches quilting group, which annually donates quilts to families in Newark Neighbours' food bank program.

She has served as treasurer of the NOTL Lions Club, and, with her husband, Erwin Wiens, created and organizes the NOTL Christmas Tractor Parade, which has raised over \$100,000 for the Terry Fox Foundation.

Not being a Rotarian herself, Soo-Wiens was shocked to receive the recognition.

"It was very humbling," Soo-Wiens told *The Local*, "to be in a room full of Rotarians who, themselves, are amazing volunteers. And to receive an honour like this amongst other volunteers was incredible."

The Paul Harris Fellow Award follows Soo-Wiens being honoured as NOTL's 2025 Citizen of the Year. She was also awarded a King Charles III Coronation Medal and received Ontario's June Callwood Award for outstanding volunteerism last year.

"I don't like talking about awards," she said. "Really, they need to go to the people that you work with. I may be involved in a lot, but it's never just one person doing all the work. I wish I could bring them all up with me to accept these things, because they are all so deserving."

Soo-Wiens is also on the board of the NOTL Pumphouse Art Centre, supports the Farm Worker's Hub, and was a co-organizer of the recent Paws for Heroes event that raised over \$90,000 for

support dogs for local veterans and first responders.

Lise Andreana established the Andreana Family Trust with the Niagara Community Foundation. The trust is dedicated to assisting youth and families with learning disabilities. She was board chair of the Pumphouse from 2016 until 2025, and in 2021, she founded the NOTL Arts Collective, a group of professional artists, curators and galleries that seeks to position the town as a hub for artistic excellence and cultural discovery.

“The Pumphouse gives me a platform to work on the causes that I care about,” Andreana said. “We’ve seen that over the past 10 years as the Pumphouse has grown and taken on social community projects. Our children’s Healing Arts for Kids camp, our seniors’ programs, mental health, so many different things.”

Andreana is also one of the driving forces behind the art project Thanks for the Meal, which is planning to install public art throughout the town’s rural areas, and she is involved with the Hydro Box Beautification Competition.

Like Soo-Wiens, Andreana also received a June Callwood Award for her contributions to her community. Also like Soo-Wiens, she was surprised to be recognized.

“I was stunned,” she laughed. “I’m not a Rotarian, so it’s not something I would have ever expected. I was completely caught off guard by it. It was a really, really nice gesture.”

Reflecting on her philanthropic endeavours during her acceptance speech, Andreana said her motivation is most likely similar to the reason others in the room became Rotarians.

The causes she supports, she said, “are based on my personal experiences and shaped by my life’s journey. Recurring themes centre around mental health, women, youth, seniors, diversity, and the powerful role that art plays in building bridges to improved social connections, equity and inclusion.”

She gave credit to the NOTL Rotary Club, as well, for always being there to help support the work of the Pumphouse to accomplish those goals.

“Never underestimate the impact of what you do,” said Andreana. “Your support matters more than you may ever know.”

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