

Rotary Club of Palgrave's Weekly Rotary Minute

By Jim Firth

Each Wednesday night the Rotary Club of Palgrave meets to conduct our usual business, share in friendship and be engaged by interesting speakers.

Speakers can be local community groups, community leaders and special speakers. Some of the speakers have included Canadian historian and writer John Boyko (www.johnboyko.com) presenting his book on Canada's role in the U.S. Civil War, local historian and writer Ken Weber, Joe Roberts (www.thepushforchange.com) who was pushing a shopping cart across Canada to raise awareness of youth homelessness.

Recently, we were treated to an exceptional presentation by David Nairn, artistic director of Theatre Orangeville (www.theatreorangeville.ca) and he was more than just an enthusiastic presenter.

David spoke passionately about how Theatre Orangeville relies on children and adults with developmental disabilities from Community Living Dufferin to assist with the annual slate of productions. For more than 15 years, members of Community Living Dufferin (www.communitylivingdufferin.ca) have helped build stage sets, operate lighting and volunteer and take part in shows, giving them employment and purpose.

David and Theatre Orangeville developed a strong partnership with CLD years ago when a patron made a derogatory comment about some people who worked the show. That comment triggered another reaction in David and he has since organized workshops and presentations to youth in Dufferin County to confront the impacts of negative stereotypes. Whether it's in jest or used harshly, David now speaks to all youth about never excluding others and doing harm through improper language.

David developed another passion recently. "People in theatres are rude if they have their cell phones open during a production." Or are they? Theatre Orangeville now recognizes the power of social media in promoting the theatre. A special "twitter row" has been created to allow guests to tweet and use social media to promote live the happenings at Theatre Orangeville. Well done David!

Yet again, we were treated to another wonderful presentation by a true community leader.

The Rotary Club of Palgrave meets each Wednesday night for supper. For \$20 you get a full dinner, help create ideas on how to help out in the community, and listen to great presenters like David Nairn. Please join us by visiting www.rotaryclubofpalgrave.com