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## DART Update – Q3 January 2016

Happy New Year everyone! First of all, the DART team is very excited to have received an invitation to speak at a number of clubs. A presentation was made to RC Erin on January 7<sup>th</sup>, and we have 3 more presentations lined up for the next few weeks:

- RC Milton – January 11<sup>th</sup>
- RC Orangeville – January 28<sup>th</sup>
- RC Mississauga/Dixie – February 22<sup>nd</sup>

FYI, the presentation is posted on the DART website. Scroll down to the bottom of the DART menu on the left-hand side of the screen until you see DART Presentations.

Also, the first DART information session for 2016 is coming up on Monday February 1<sup>st</sup>, 7 p.m. in Orangeville. Marilyn Field, President and founder of DAREarts, will be speaking about the work DAREarts is doing with First Nations. DAREarts is a charitable organization that, using the arts, empowers at-risk kids with life and leadership skills. Their Aboriginal-focused program is called First Roots and they've had real success in helping youth, in Canada's remote First Nation communities, combat isolation, suicide and substance abuse.

If you would like DART to present at one of your club meetings, or would like to attend the DAREarts presentation on February 1<sup>st</sup>, please e-mail me at [isproxto@hotmail.ca](mailto:isproxto@hotmail.ca).

Since the last update in October, DART members have had the opportunity of attending two events with indigenous leaders speaking. The first was at Humber College Lakeshore where Justice Murray Sinclair, Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, spoke on the topic of Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future. Justice Sinclair provided an overview of the process the TRC followed to produce their reports, including the Calls to Action report which details 94 recommendations to help reset the relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous Canadians. It was a moving and powerful presentation but my biggest takeaway was a piece of advice given by Justice Sinclair in response to a question,

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asking what actions Canadians could undertake to facilitate reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous Canadians. He said a good starting point is to read the TRC's Calls to Action report. Then choose the recommendation that most resonates with you or your group, and work towards making it happen.

The 2nd event was the Rotary Club of Toronto meeting on Nov. 27<sup>th</sup>. District 7080 was well represented! DG Will Pugh, DGE Bill Proctor, DGN Kathi Dick, PDG Mike Gauthier and I were in attendance. The speaker was Perry Bellegarde, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations; Regional Chief of Ontario Isadore Day and M. Bryan LaForme, Chief of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation were also there. Chief Bellegarde spoke about the quality of life gap between indigenous and non-indigenous Canadians and how that gap needs to be narrowed and finally eliminated. He is hopeful, with the release of the Truth and Reconciliation's final report in December and with the published goals of the new Minister for Indigenous and Northern affairs in Ottawa, that the momentum for change will move the reconciliation process forward.

I would like to urge every Rotarian to take this opportunity to read the Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada reports—a link to the reports is provided on the DART website; the reports are also available as books at Indigo.ca and Amazon.ca. These reports provide an extraordinary resource for Canadians to learn about the history of First Nations, Métis & Inuit Canadians, since 1867. On the topic of reconciliation, the TRC's final report states:

“To the Commission, “reconciliation” is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country. For that to happen, there has to be awareness of the past, acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour.

We are not there yet. The relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples is not a mutually respectful one. But we believe we can get there, and we believe we can maintain it.”

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The TRC reports, in particular the Calls to Action report, establish a plan of action to help move us towards that “mutually respectful relationship”.

And finally, an update on the Aboriginal projects currently ongoing:

### **RC Bolton’s delivery of beds to the Kingfisher Lake First Nation**

Ron Kyle from RC Bolton has advised me that the club will **not** be proceeding with delivery of the 50 bunk beds and mattresses to the Kingfisher Lake First Nation this March. In previous years, Ron has delivered over 500 beds to many FN communities and there are other communities that might benefit from the program that may come up in the future, but there are no plans at this time. A note to all donors will be sent out shortly, and donated funds will be returned or redirected, as per the wishes of the donors.

### **RC Burlington North – OneXOne First Nations School Breakfast Program**

RCBN is supporting the OneXOne breakfast program for the Keewaytinook Internet High School, a program that allows Aboriginal students to complete their high school education remotely, while staying in their home and community. Classrooms are located in Fort William, Keewaywin, Mishkeegogamang, Nibinamik, North Spirit Lake and Poplar Hill, all in northern Ontario. For the 2016-17 year, RCBN’s goal is to bring ten 7080 clubs on board with a \$500 donation, for a total of \$5,000. RCBN will be applying for a matching District Grant to double funds to \$10,000. To-date, three 7080 clubs have committed \$500 for the 2016-17 year.

### **RC Guelph – Better Hearing in Education for Northern Youth**

Deafness and diminished hearing are rampant in the North; studies have shown that up to 67% of Inuit children have some degree of hearing loss. In infants, hearing loss delays motor and language development; in school, undiagnosed hearing loss can be mistaken for learning or attention deficit disorders. Enhancing the sound environment, by installing Sound Field Wireless Systems in K-5 classrooms, will improve students’ attention span, participation & comprehension. The first phase of the project,

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installation of the sound systems at one school, is \$90,000; total estimated project cost if the pilot is successful and more systems are installed is \$240,000. To-date, \$70,000 has been raised and three sound systems have been installed, with teacher and installer training, in a school in Pond Inlet. FYI, RC Guelph is also working with HIP and this project appears on both the DART and HIP websites. As well, this project is one of three finalists for the 2015 Arctic Inspiration Prize, which is awarded by the S. and A. Inspiration Foundation. The winning project will receive \$1 million and will be announced on January 27<sup>th</sup> in Ottawa. For more information about the Foundation and the Arctic Inspiration Prize, please go to the Arctic Inspiration Prize website at <http://www.arcticinspirationprize.ca/finalists/2015finalists.php>.

### **RC Oakville Trafalgar – University of Sudbury First Nations Scholarship Program**

The University of Sudbury First Nation scholarship goes to 2nd-year UofS students who have successfully completed their first-year studies at one of two indigenous education centres. The scholarship is \$7,500 per student per year for 3 years; students are not required to major in indigenous studies but must take at least one course from that program. RC Oakville Trafalgar has committed to providing funds for 3 years to one scholarship student, and hopes to bring at least one other 7080 club on board, so the scholarship can be extended to 2 students.

More info about, and how to donate to, any of the above can be found on the DART website under *Current Projects & TRC Reports*. Please check out the DART website at <http://portal.clubrunner.ca/50042/Page/ShowSitePage?ClassCode=SitePage&Slug=dart> regularly, for more information and recent updates. Hope to connect with you soon!

Yours in Rotary,

Ingrid