

THE STANDARD

THE ROTARY CLUB OF CALGARY HERITAGE PARK



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FOUR WAY TEST

In all things we think, say or do

1. Is it the TRUTH ?
2. Is it FAIR to all concerned?
3. Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIP
4. Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

Meeting Highlights

The Beginning – It is morning. It is 8C at this appointed hour as we gather in the Gunn Barn. The cattle are lowing and food we await. The crowd seems larger for some reason this morning. We certainly have a number of guests this day. Lurking around the podium is Martin Harvey.... looking at notes and his watch...notes and watch. Like good cattle we stand. MOOOOO. Martin brings the meeting to order and tells us that our fearless President is way on vacation. Joan Bedard is asked to lead us in O Canada. Ray Gosselin leads us in Grace. Guests at our tables are introduced and they in turn select

someone to join them at he breakfast table. The guy making sure our plates are clean is Max Patel. He is chosen because his family is going to have a big wedding soon and he needs the practice! And another fabulous breakfast is consumed.

Our meeting begins with the induction of a new member transferring from Olympic. She is Doris Kutrowski and Harry Kim introduces her. Martin leads her in the formal statement of membership "Deerly beloved.... we are gathered...and all that stuff. Doris is a Wealth Advisor and boy do we need one of those!



Guest Speaker: Gerry Darichuk

Our speaker is Gerry Darichuk of Calgary North. He and an associate are with us to do a sales job on a project in Uganda. The project is to involve 5 Clubs from Calgary and 16 from Kulika, Uganda. Our district and District 9200 are to join forces to make this work. Four Clubs have signed up from Calgary. They include Crowchild, Calgary North, Airdrie and Sarcee. Gerry hopes that we will be number five. The project is multi-purpose including funding of schools, micro-industries, micro-credit, and building houses. If we want to participate we need to come up with \$25,000. It's quite a sales job. And of course our Club will consider.

Ah me. "Tis over and we go on our merry ways."



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Meeting Highlights

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Martin Harvey will be filling in for President David for the next 2 meetings

In a Minute – A Lady involved with the Shelter Box Program tells us that the Fish Creek Club is hosting a Gala on September 15th featuring the founder of the Shelter Box program and in support of same.

Bob Sadler says.... **PAY YER DOOS.**



RI President Dong Kurn Lee



Dear fellow Rotarians,

The beginning of the Rotary year is always an exciting time, with new club and district officers, a new theme to work with, and a renewed sense of purpose for our service projects. The beginning of this particular Rotary year is, of course, especially exciting for me as I look forward to meeting Rotarians throughout the world and seeing firsthand the many remarkable projects you are carrying out.

In planning how your club, and each one of you, can *Make Dreams Real* this year, I ask you to consider the millions of children who never even have the chance to dream. Every day, more than 26,000 children under the age of five die from preventable causes. As appalling as that number is, it is a decrease from the figure of 30,000 that first caught my attention and spurred me to bring this matter of grave concern to Rotarians.

UNICEF's *State of the World's Children 2008* report states that "by 2006, the most recent year for which firm estimates are available, the annual number of child deaths globally fell below 10 million, to 9.7 million, for the first time since records began." I would guess that some of the improvement in child survival rates can be directly attributed to Rotary projects that have been successfully addressing problems related to health, hunger, water, and literacy for a number of years now. So I asked myself: "What would happen if 1.2 million Rotarians focused their service efforts on keeping even more children alive?"

I think we already know some of the answers. If Rotarians provide insecticide-treated bed nets, fewer children will succumb to malaria. If we dig wells and address sanitation problems, more children will have clean water to drink and more hygienic surroundings. And if Rotary clubs carry out effective nutrition projects, we can save some of the almost five million children who die each year from undernourishment.

UNICEF estimates that fully two-thirds of the 9.7 million deaths in 2006 were preventable. With Rotarians working to provide vaccines, oral rehydration therapies, accessible health care for mothers and newborns, and other relatively simple interventions, I'm confident that many more babies will not only survive but go on to live healthy, productive lives. Let's *Make Dreams Real* by giving these children the chance to grow up and have dreams of their own.

Dong Kurn (D.K.) Lee
President, Rotary International

SUNSHINE REPORT

Sunshine Report

Graham Drake announces the 7th Anniversary of Jamie Powell and his beloved wife. A lot of congratulations to Jamie on his hair-do. You might say his hairs are a bit stiff. Cement and stuff.



Happy Bucks

Happy Bucks

There is an array of Happy Bucks from the Happy Folk of our Club. None really stand out...but Happy.



Sheriff Marian Barrett: You're BUSTED!

Sheriff – John Radermacher

Marion Barrett very nicely ascends the throne and looks down at us waiting mortals. John Radermacher is fined 2 bucks for insulting his wife and he must kiss her. He said that with some reluctance she managed to get up and join him at the meeting. And he does. Acting President Martin is hit for insulting Jamie's haircut. Raju is fined and the list goes on and on.



50/50 JACK POT



More than 700 bucks in the pot. Doris (our new member) has the ticket but doesn't win.



Barefoot and tired from a 20-mile trek, the young Ethiopian farmer nimbly descends a line of steep cliffs and jagged black rocks leading to the Blue Nile's edge.

When he finally reaches the base of a bridge nestled deep inside a gorge, he lets out an exhausted sigh. He sets down his heavy basket of fresh bananas, bound for sale at the market, and waits. The Sebara Dildiy looms before him. The historic beauty of the bridge spanning the river's rushing waters, constructed ingeniously nearly 400 years ago with sand, stone, lime, and egg whites, is barely discernible. In Ethiopia's national Amharic language, *sebara dildiy* means "broken bridge," a moniker it earned in 1935 when dozens of Ethiopian resistance fighters, armed only with modest farm tools, chiseled away the decking between the center arches in an attempt to slow Italy's invading military. The entire span plummeted to the waters below, killing the men.

Broken it may be, but now, in October 2007, in this remote northern region of Ethiopia bordering Sudan, the bridge remains the fastest route to the market and medical care. The next closest crossing over the Blue Nile adds 100 miles to an already agonizing hike.

Life here, where most families barely survive on less than US\$1 a day, revolves around the market. A good day could bring in enough money to allow a son or daughter to go to school. But most children stay home to shepherd animals and chase monkeys away from small vegetable plots. The homes are mud huts with dirt floors. Children wear torn clothing; flies circle their mouths and eyes.

Only one person can cross the Blue Nile's broken bridge at a time, making long waits common. Eight men – four on each side of the missing span – tend a yellow rope stretched across the opening. After 20 minutes, the banana merchant slips a loop around his torso. Carefully, he eases himself off the edge of the bridge and for several minutes hangs dangerously, 50 feet above the fast-moving river, as the men pull him across inch by inch. About 50 people cross safely on this day. Falling from the rope – as one man did not long before – means almost certain death.



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**WEAR YOUR
ROTARY PIN**



The Rotary Club of Calgary Heritage Park Announcements

Speaker for August 8 is

Hans Wiesner

The Walk to Beat Polio

The merchant gathers his goods, which are pulled across the river after him, and begins hiking the last 26 miles to the market on the other side of the bridge.

Photo opportunity

In 2001, Ken Frantz, of the Rotary Club of Newport News, Va., USA, was flipping through an issue of *National Geographic* when he saw an image of a man risking his life to cross the Sebara Dildiy. “The magazine literally fell open to the photo,” he says. “I knew right then and there what I was being called to do: go help repair this bridge.

“As Rotarians, we can build play structures or build to improve lives for those living in extreme poverty,” Frantz continues. “Being a Rotarian made me realize that I could do more. And it made me want to help other Rotarians become engaged in the worldwide effort to eliminate extreme poverty.”

Frantz founded a nonprofit, Bridges to Prosperity, in March of that year and soon traveled to Ethiopia. By 2002, largely with his own funds and the support of several Rotary clubs in Virginia, he managed to bridge the gap of the 230-foot Sebara Dildiy with a lightweight steel truss. About 25,000 pounds of steel, cement, and equipment were packed on the backs of 350 donkeys.

The bridge quickly became the economic engine that Frantz had envisioned. People who ordinarily refused to cross with the rope began to make frequent treks to the market. Young women started earning their own money, and some went on to school. Men hiked more frequently to larger cities in search of daily work to supplement their minimal farming income. And families visited relatives they hadn’t seen in years.

After that first bridge repair, Frantz leveraged donations from 31 Rotary clubs, including his own, along with Rotary Foundation Matching Grants, to build 40 more bridges in 11 other countries by the end of 2007. This year, he’s leading and funding community footbridge programs in Bolivia, El Salvador, Peru, and Zambia. As in Ethiopia, the bridges don’t just improve lives – they save them. In Peru, Rotarians replaced a notoriously treacherous structure where three children died last year alone. His goal is to be building 500 footbridges each year by 2020.



Sadly, in 2005 the bridge that had been the genesis of Frantz’s mission was at the epicenter of a massive flood. Village elders living nearby reported that rising waters had swept away the steel repair work. When he learned of the devastation, Frantz immediately went to work: He had promised to help the rural Ethiopian highlanders on the road to a better life. Though keeping his word meant building an entirely new bridge on higher ground, to Frantz, there was no alternative. The nonprofit he’d started had become his life’s calling.

Crossing over to a new life

When he saw the photograph of the broken bridge that day in 2001, Frantz felt his life come into focus. He’d spent years heading in a different direction. After college, he landed a job working on the Alaskan pipeline, then moved on to California, where he started a fast-paced construction company, building an average of 400 apartment units a year. He made a lot of money, but that wasn’t enough. Wanting to slow down and spend more time with his wife and three children, Frantz moved to rural Virginia, where his wife had grown up. He returned to construction, this time as a developer, and fulfilled a lifelong fantasy by buying a small island for his new home – he even built a bridge to it. But he had begun to seriously question his purpose in life.

The nonprofit he went on to establish aims to eliminate extreme poverty one bridge at a time. Volunteers, who include Rotarians, people living near the bridges, engineers, and engineering students from U.S. colleges, not only help build the structures but also teach local people how to construct and maintain them on their own.

Given his earlier business success, Frantz, now 58 and executive director of Bridges to Prosperity, is able to serve as a full-time volunteer. His organization has a handful of paid employees in countries with bridge-building programs, and Rotary clubs, along with engineering groups, corporations, churches, private donors, and other nonprofits such as the Swiss group Helvetas, have partnered with Bridges to Prosperity to provide labor, funding, and technical aid.

When Frantz learned that he needed to rebuild the broken bridge in Ethiopia, he turned first to Rotary. Three clubs in Virginia and one in Ethiopia offered donations that were matched by The Rotary Foundation, which earlier had provided six other Matching Grants to build 23 bridges. The seven grants and club contributions totaled \$281,000.

The Virginia Rotarians had helped on other bridge projects. But for the members of the Rotary Club of Bahir Dar, Ethiopia, who

pledged \$100, this one marked not only their first partnership with Bridges to Prosperity but also their largest community service effort. “Most of our members know about the bridge,” says Abebe Yimenu Tessema, 2007-08 club president. “They know how difficult it is for the people.” The Bahir Dar club, located in the capital city of Ethiopia’s Amhara State, is the closest Rotary club to the bridge. Getting there means a three-hour drive followed by a two-day hike.

Because the club is small, members look for projects with a big impact. Choosing can be a tough call. As Ethiopia faces a growing HIV/AIDS crisis, a lack of rural education, and poor access to clean water, the Bahir Dar Rotarians are rarely at a loss for service ideas. But the vote on the bridge, Abebe says, was unanimous.

Fulfilling a promise

On this day in October 2007, Frantz has sent Mebratu Abebaw, one of the first Ethiopian engineers trained through the program, to the Sebara Dildiy.



Shortly after the banana merchant disappears up the steep cliffs leading to the market, the young engineer from Addis Ababa begins organizing farmers to collect logs and stone from the surrounding woods. For two days, Mebratu, who has brought nails and heavy cable, directs the villagers in building a temporary crossing. Everyone who is able joins the effort; farmers leave their fields, and militiamen lay down their AK-47s. When construction begins on the new bridge – which will be located slightly upriver – workers will need a safe route over the water.

It’s a rough and rugged effort, with the railing made of narrow timbers, the decking of eucalyptus logs filled in with small stones. But it works. Shortly after the volunteers finish, two men arrive carrying a woman on a stretcher, handmade out of thin timbers and stretched animal skins. They’ve trekked for dozens of miles, fearful the entire journey, wondering how they would transport the woman across the broken bridge. To their amazement, it has been fixed.

Abebaw tells the villagers that Frantz will return shortly. In the meantime, they can begin clearing a path to the new bridge site, collecting stone, and excavating the area that will house the structure’s base. Their wait for a new bridge, one that will survive even the worst flood, will soon be over, the engineer says. Construction on the new, permanent bridge is expected to begin early next year.