Rotary Club of Camrose Daybreak

EyeOpener April 20, 2021 Operation Enduring Freedom, Afghanistan

April is Maternal and Child Health Month

Odell opened the meeting with a rendition of *O Canada* from the *One World Youth Arts Project* of the Toronto District School Board, 15 members present

***MSC*** *Jackie, Carol That we hold the meeting online.*

Patrice offered **Food for Thought** with the story of a boy and his favorite tree. As a young boy the tree produces apples and shade to enjoy. As he grows older the tree offers apples he can sell for spending money. As an adult wanting to build a house the tree offers up branches for timber. Looking for recreation, the tree offers him its trunk to build a boat. The moral – The tree is our parents. When we grow up, we leave them… only come to them when we need something or when we are in trouble. No matter what, parents will always be there and give everything they could just to make you happy. You may think the **boy** is cruel to the **tree**, but that is how all of us treat our parents.

Odell will offer **Food for Thought** next week

**Happy Bucks**

* Flowers are coming up
* AstraZeneca is a go for age 40 to 64
* Garden fresh chives for last couple of weeks, tulips and garlic breaking ground

**Presentation** – *Operation Enduring Freedom, Afghanistan*, Dean LaGrange

From November 2011 to November 2012 Dean took a leave of absence from the Calgary City Police to participate in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. He was part of a 24 member police force tasked with providing more formalized police procedure education to the local Afghan police force and improve the traffic conditions in Kabul where the daily traffic includes people, cars, trucks and sheep going wherever they want.

Afghanistan is a landlocked country the size of Alberta with the population of Canada and poorly developed or no infrastructure. The desert-like climate of Kandahar in the south gives way to the more Alberta-like climate of Kabul where Dean was stationed. The country is marked with extreme poverty, little water and sparse vegetation. After 3 weeks training in Ottawa, Dean arrived in Kabul. The heavy polluted air, unsanitary conditions and mass of people, vehicles, animals and activity is a rude transition.

Canada is one of 38 countries in Camp EGGERS, a compound in the ‘green zone’ housing 3,000 NATO personnel (primarily US) providing training and support. 12-hour days, 7 days a week (except Friday morning off) are filled with instruction in classrooms, patrolling routes and other training tasks. Free-for-all traffic mayhem is a stark contrast to the orderly patterns that are practiced on the training ground.

There is no sewage treatment facility. Water is trucked in and waste is trucked out to be spread in the country surrounding the city of 5 to 6 million. Driving isn’t pleasant when the wind blows, and snow has a slushy brown hue.

Stores and services are offered in whatever buildings there may be. There is a street to go to get your car serviced, another for foods, etc. Hygiene and cleanliness are not a priority – partly culture, partly lack of money, partly lack of supplies. Dean stopped on the street to let a man with bags of garbage to cross only to see him toss it into the frozen river. Spring would clean the river, sending the garbage downstream.

Dean said that while he went to Afghanistan to help the people, it was a challenge to create any sort of structure in a country where the residents are simply trying to survive one day to the next. Kabul bombing in December was a sad time, seeing the devastation and injury. Visiting orphanages with gifts, seeing the pride in those they trained and personal interactions were positive experiences to counteract the negativity. He said a military force cannot teach democratic policing in a war zone, and they cannot expect to change a history started 5000 BCE.

**Announcements**

* ***MSC*** *Chris, Alan That we donate $1,200 to the Lemonade Day Project.  John added that we take the money from the returned Interact funds.*
* ***MSC*** *Destiny, Dean That we provide two $1,000 Scholarships for post secondary students for the new Rotary year.*
* *Alan reminded us about Namaste Direct. The organization provides micro loans to women in Guatemala. He recommends that we apply for a $30,000 USD Grant from the Rotary Foundation to give to Namaste Direct. The club would be responsible to raise $10,000 USD (Alan has volunteered $7,000 Canadian himself). The remaining funds would come from the District Grant and the Rotary Foundation. Edmonton Northeast is considering partnering with us. The Rotary Club of Lake Atitlan would be our local partner club in Guatemala. Alan, Rob and Odell would form the local committee and have committed to take the required Rotary Training.*
* ***MSC*** *Alan, Harry that we apply for a Rotary Global Grant to support Namaste Direct.*
* Check the District *Connections* newsletter for coming event details:
  + Public Image: The Musical April 28
  + District 5370 Annual Conference May 1
  + What is Alzheimer? May 4
  + Zone 28/32 Rotary Foundation Gala May 12

**Reminders**

* Tuesday April 27 7:00 am, Club Meeting – We Are Rotary
* Tuesday May 4 7:00 am, Club Meeting – Primary Care Network COVID Response, Melissa Berg
* Monday May 10 7:00 pm, Joint Evening Meeting – TBA
* Tuesday May 11 8:00 am, Board Meeting

Alan closed the meeting with the *Four Way Test*

Morris

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