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OCTOBER

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MONTH

"When love is infused into our actions, we do not stop to question the time or money we are sacrificing. We are inspired to do more, to give more. Love is the motivating force behind all of Rotary's best work."
PRIP Bhichai Rattakul 2002-03

Rotary TAKE ACTION: Join Rotary, Be a People of Action

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2023-2024 Officers and Directors

Rob Wolfson, President
Wayne Wiebe, President Elect
Anthony Tonkinson, Past President
Dale Perret, Secretary
Vlad Sasarman, Treasurer

Pam Montgomery, International Service
Dean White, Youth Service
Brennen Pell, Community Service
Neil Beatty, Club Service
Keith Wellon, Club Operations
Peter Bickham, Club Financial
Sharon Fraiman, Membership
Hank Popoff, Rotary Foundation

RI President Stephanie Urchick
Rotary Club of McMurray, Pennsylvania USA
District 5360 Governor Christina Hassan
Rotary Club of Calgary Fish Creek

Amarok Society Gem Munro, Co-Founder and Director



Rob introduced our guest speaker, Gem Munro, co-founder of the Amarok Society, a registered Canadian charity that provides education programs to the very poor in Bangladesh. Gem has devoted his life and career to improving educational opportunities for disadvantaged people across Canada and abroad.

Pursuit of this objective carried him into residence in unfortunate communities across most of Canada, before carrying him overseas. As well, Gem is an author of a bestselling collection of stories about some of the extraordinary people he's come to know in the slums of Bangladesh. For their work, Gem and his wife, Dr Tanyss Munro, have been named recipients of Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medals.

In 2005, Dr. Tanyss and Gem Munro packed up their 4 children and moved from Vancouver, Canada to Dhaka, Bangladesh. They'd been invited by an international organization to make improvements to the country's education system. However, as they worked within the existing school system, they noticed thousands of children who weren't in school at all. It turns out the biggest threat to education in the developing world isn't a deficient school system — it's that even those deficient schools are out of reach for millions of children. So, they tried to help in the most obvious way, by opening their own free schools for children. However teaching 60 children at a time, in a world where 250 million of the world's 650 million children are growing up illiterate — well, it was like trying to drain the ocean with a spoon.



A chronic global challenge needed an innovative approach — teach mothers to teach others. Amarok Society goes about this work in an unusual way. Rather than opening

schools for children, it opens schools for destitute and illiterate mothers. Each mother teaches everything she learns to at least 5 children in her neighbourhood, thereby creating a sustainable culture of education from within the family. The first school for mothers opened in January of 2006.

Their schools have a very basic curriculum, including arithmetic, science, health, hygiene and nutrition, social studies, and one you might not think of, conflict resolution. By participating in this school process,

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President Rob called our meeting to order at 12:15, welcoming all in attendance. He noted Rotary's 2024 theme 'Magic of Rotary' and led us through O Canada.

Indigenous Fact
National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

Each year, September 30th marks the National Day for Truth and

Reconciliation. The day was elevated to a statutory holiday for federal workers and workers in federally-regulated workplaces by the Parliament of Canada in 2021. This day honours the children who never returned home, and survivors of residential schools, as well as their families and communities. Public commemoration of the tragic and painful history and ongoing impacts of residential schools is a vital component of the reconciliation process.

Rob **thanked** George Van Schaick for managing our meeting notices, and Paul G. for being our scribe today. He thanked Paul Hussey for managing our greeters and set up, as well as George K. and Monty for being our greeters today, and for making everyone feel welcome. He thanked Stephen and Anne for all they do for our Club, most notably the regular production of our e-Arch. In addition we also wish to thank both Hank and Neil for operating our payment system.



We had 28 participants at our meeting today which included our Guest Speaker, Jem Munro.

Club Business

Fundraising Updates — Ribfest and Concert

Rob announced that the numbers are in for both of our September fundraisers — our Ribfest on September 6th, 7th and 8th, and our Concert on the 17th. Ribfest earned us \$8,160, and

for the Concert, we sold 114 tickets and earned \$5,758. Rob extended special thanks to both Bev and Sharon for all their work arranging the concert and silent auction. These two events were great fundraising and fellowship events for our Club, and thanks to everyone who participated.

Also on fundraising, Rob highlighted that we have arranged our next **bottle drive drop-off** at the Tonkinson residence in Bonavista for October 16th (actual drop off by our members and friends must be there by the 15th, a Tuesday). Bev has confirmed that we can drop our cans and bottles off in their driveway any day between now and the 15th. Our code is '5ZLQ' which will be attached to the bags.

Good News/Bad News

Bill Stemp reported that his daughter is a first officer (aka co-pilot) with Southwest Airlines and lives in Scottsdale, Arizona. She now regularly flies between Los Angeles and Hawaii.

Rob apologized for an error he made today when he forgot our flags and Sharon Bickham's silent auction purchase in his garage.



Community Service Announcement

Wayne announced that we will be sponsoring and serving supper to 300 plus homeless folks on Wednesday, October 23rd at Mustard Seed. We have a commitment from 2 volunteers and need 4 more to help serve. The time commitment is from 5:30 to 8 pm. The Mustard Seed's location is at 7025-44th Street SE. Please call, text or email Wayne if you're able to help, or if you need more information as it relates to

this very worthwhile Community Service effort! Wayne's number is (403)975-2807.

Chase the Ace

Rob noted that Tammy had won our previous draw but had not been in attendance that day. He was in contact with her, and she selected the 6th card which turned out to be the 2 of Spades.

Photos courtesy George Van Schaick

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The winner of today's draw was Peter Bickham. He won a weekly prize of \$78, the Club received \$104, and our jackpot is \$1,209. Peter missed the Ace with his pick, so onward we go! There will be two more picks this month.



Sunshine Report

There was no illness reported (thankfully) among our members.

International Service Chairperson Needed

Rob noted that our club continues to seek a volunteer to take over from Graham Boone as a Chairperson for International Service. He asks everyone to kindly consider taking on this opportunity. We have an experienced Director in Pam Montgomery, and Graham is available to train and encourage the new Chairperson. Please reach out to Rob or Pam or Graham if you are interested.

Presentation of our Year End Financial Statements

Our treasurer, Vlad Sasarman, reviewed our June 30th financial statements. He highlighted a number of points (such as there is a list of all the International and local community projects which we supported during the year outlined on page 3), and opened the floor for questions. He noted that everyone should review the statements and if they have any questions, we can discuss them at our next meeting. Rob thanked Vlad for all the work he has done in preparing our year end statements.



Rob's Fun Facts

Rob did some digging and found a number of facts that occurred on today's date (October 1st) in prior years. We present a few examples here:

- 1903 Pittsburg beats Boston in first World Series game
- 1920 Scientific American reports that radio will soon transmit music to the home
- 1958 American Express launches its first credit card
- 1961 Roger Maris breaks home run record
- 1962 Johnny Carson makes debut as 'Tonight Show' host

Guest Speaker Presentation

Rob introduced our guest speaker, Jem Munro, co-founder of the Amarok Society, a registered Canadian charity that provides education programs to the very poor in Bangladesh.

Dates to Remember

- October 15th Meeting at noon at the Carriage House. Guest speaker is Kent Griffiths, Royal Canadian Legion, Centennial Calgary Branch #285
- October 15th Bottle Drive!! ... drop your empties off at Tonkinsons' driveway

Rob thanked everyone for attending today and asked all to stand and help close our meeting with a reading of Rotary's 4 Way Test.

Remember, 'The Magic of Rotary. Have a great Rotary week!

Amarok Society

... cont'd from page 1

the women essentially learn how to think. In our society we have been learning about our environment, relationships and history since very early in our lives through our school system, whereas these women never had this opportunity and need to be taught the very basic concepts around thinking. They have found that this learning process has taught the mothers to feel that they now have an actual purpose in their lives, to teach others in their community. This process gives them happiness and introduces hope into their lives. These teachers often become leaders in their community.

Jem wrapped up his presentation by telling us about a couple of extraordinary mothers whom he has been fortunate enough to work with, and how successful they have turned out to be. Their educational system is both unique and successful in the face of unbelievable odds (family distrust/poverty/violence, to name a few).

Paul thanked Jem for sharing their story today and telling us about their wonderful approach to educating families in the slums of Bangladesh. He was presented with our Certificate of Appreciation and advised that a donation would be made to help eradicate Polio from our world.



'Skip the Depot' Fundraiser

Today's the Day !!

Bring us your empties !!

Members and Friends, drop off your bottles/cans in
Tonkinsons' driveway **Today !!**



The address is **12119 Lake Louise Way SE**, in the community of Lake Bonavista.
(phone # 403 271 4026)

Special thanks to Bev and Anthony for once again hosting the pick up site at their home.

Community Economic Development Month

October 15th Kent Griffiths, Royal Canadian Legion, Centennial Calgary Branch #285
 October 15th Bottle Drive!! ... drop your empties off at Tonkinsons' driveway
 October 23rd Supper service at Mustard Seed from 5:30 to 8 pm — contact Wayne Wiebe to volunteer



Rotary Foundation Month

November Friendship Exchange to Brazil
 November 5th Speaker from the Calgary Food Bank

END POLIO NOW WORLD POLIO DAY IS 24 OCTOBER



One Day. One Focus: Ending Polio

World Polio Day is a time for Rotary members, public health advocates, and all who want a world free from polio to come together, recognize our progress in the fight to end polio, and talk about the actions we need to take in order to end polio for good.

All donations are matched 2:1 by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, tripling your impact!

The Disease

Poliomyelitis is a highly infectious disease that most commonly affects children under the age of 5.

Most know it as poliovirus. The virus is spread person to person, typically through contaminated water. It can attack the nervous system, and in some instances, lead to paralysis. Although there is no cure, there is a safe and effective vaccine – one which Rotary and our partners use to immunize over 2.5 billion children worldwide.

Unless we eradicate polio, within 10 years, as many as 200,000 new cases could occur around the world each year.

In the past few years, only two countries have reported cases of polio caused by the wild virus, but no child anywhere is safe until we've vaccinated every child.



Progress from 10 years after the Club was Chartered until the present ... cases have been reduced by 99.9%.

