

December 6, 2012

Posted by Larry Kanters

President Bryn was the man at the mike as the meeting was called to order. Gerry Miller said grace giving thanks for the season and asking that our hands be used for His service, Service Above Self. Our guests were Carol Sims from the Innisfail Food Bank and our inbound exchange student Mevce.

President Bryn said Tom Peters could not be at the meeting today but said Tom wished to extend his thanks to all the Rotarians and others who helped with the set up, the take down and the transportation services for the Seniors' Dinner Tuesday night. There were 230 people in attendance and the seniors by all accounts had an enjoyable evening. President Bryn shared a card he had received from "The Seniors at 53rd Ave. Close" giving a sincere "Thank you" for the evening.

Next Mevce was encouraged by the members to give an account of what she had been up to recently. Mevce started out saying how she really liked the cold weather (tongue in cheek I'm thinking) and that she had recently moved to Lise's house from Denise Lester's domicile. She said she had been learning how to cook with some success at times. She reported that at the recent Celebration Dinner where the food students do the food preparation, for some reason or other it was recommended that the best job for her for the evening event would be doing the dishes. Mevce also mentioned as a new cultural experience she was learning the finer points of the game of pool. President Bryn said he and his family had invited Mevce over to his place for supper and found out she had a talent for playing cards (cleaned him out as a matter of fact!). Bryn also mentioned that if any members are doing anything special or they are going somewhere that they think would interest Mevce in her Innisfail/Alberta/Canada cultural experience, to ask her if she would be interested in joining them. Also, just an invite to dinner would be welcome just to get to know Mevce better and maybe learn a little bit about Turkey. Bryn went on to say that he would be checking the 7 Retention and Attraction teams next week to see how they are progressing and to get some feedback. Once again a reminder was given that the Rotary Foundation Paul Harris sustaining membership cheques of \$105CDN (\$100USD) made out to the RC of Innisfail could be given to Bryn or the recently scarce Gerry Meding.

Jane Duncalfe then came to the podium to talk of the goings on of the Christmas Bureau. The Bureau has been active in Innisfail since 1980 and was providing about 170 hampers to needy families and singles in the Innisfail and Spruceview areas. Gift certificates for teens to purchase electronic items would be very welcome as well as stocking stuffers such as soft candies, toiletries and small stuffed animals would be welcome for seniors in extended care and/or seniors who have little or no family. The Christmas Bureau this year is located in the Co-op Mall at the former dollar store location. Hours to volunteer are Tuesday 1 to 3 and 7 pm to 9 pm, and Thursday 7 pm to 9 pm to gift wrap and deliver hampers. Monday and Wednesday from 5 pm to 7 pm would be for volunteers in charge of registration. A photo opportunity presented itself when President Bryn announced he had a cheque to present which consisted of a \$300 donation from the RC of Innisfail and in addition one-half of the fines from the Sgt-at-Arms which made a grand total of

“\$410,000.00”. No one seemed surprised. The amount was later amended with a few less zeros.

Carol Sims from the Innisfail Food Bank was then invited to speak on the state of the food bank in Innisfail and the food banks in the rest of Canada. She said that after the impressive cheque given to the Christmas Bureau, if we had any loose change she would gladly accept it for the food bank. Carol then mentioned the food bank in Innisfail has been active since 1985 starting off with 6 people working at the bank. Currently 50 people are involved with running the Innisfail Food Bank providing 245 hours per month helping serve the 13,071 adults and 941 children that have benefited from the Bank. Carol said 57% of people use the Food Bank two times or less and 85 % use the Food Bank 5 times or less. Clients of the Food Bank serves are generally new to the area or have seasonal unemployment or have temporary setbacks in their lives. Carol also said the Hunger Count in Canada as a whole was up especially in Manitoba and Ontario but it was down 8.9% in Alberta probably due to the increase in AISH allowance and fewer non-skilled workers moving to Alberta. The National recommendations made to reduce the need for food banks included more affordable housing, a boost in assistance in the Canadian North and increase guaranteed supplements for seniors. 37,000 seniors monthly in Canada benefit from food banks. Carol finished her talk by thanking the RC of Innisfail for the past generous support. After questions Carol also mentioned the CP rail train in support of food banks will be stopping in Innisfail Dec. 12 at 11:00 am at the Fas Gas as it does every other year with ½ hour of entertainment (and I missed the name of the entertainment to be presented).

Eric Moe then reported of his attendance along with Michelle McDonald and John Newsham to the Rotary Leadership session this past weekend with past DG Al Bergsma in Red Deer. Eric mentioned it was a bit of an eye opener to see all there is to Rotary International. He also mentioned there are two more sessions in the series with the next one Jan. 26th at the Quality Inn Red Deer which can be attended by interested Rotarians even if the first one was not. A \$50 fee is involved.

For Happy/ Sad Bucks, Gerry Miller had an indeterminable buck saying he had some consternation of a park development near his house so he phoned up Town of Innisfail councilor Mark Kemball saying he was hoping Santa would somehow hear he wanted a bulldozer for Christmas. Larry Verbitsky(ya, the popular one) had a sad buck as a result of him arriving back from Arizona 2 days ago and in the morning he shoveled and the in the evening he shoveled and the next morning he shoveled and the next evening he shoveled. Sympathy was not forthcoming from the membership however. Sgt-at-Arms had a comment to make that members had one more week to make a contribution to the Innisfail Food Bank before the hammer came down. Mike then proceeded to tell a Catholic joke of a priest being thought of as a member of the Ku Klux Klan and about lady and a wizard. You really had to be there to get it. President then gave a reminder of the Rebels 50/50 event Dec. 14th.

Mark Jejina was the lucky guy to vie for the Joker. He first had a happy buck to report in that his son had passed his Canadian Securities exam. No happy buck was reported for the draw though as he chose a non-joker card.

We got some club education happening at the next meeting.