



# THE BULLETIN



## Rotary Club of Etobicoke

District Governor: **Brian Thompson**

RI President Gary C.K. Huang

Week April 22, 2015

**Board 2014-2015**

**President: Mark Winson, Past President Michael Bell, President Elect: Jack Fleming, Secretary: Ron Miller,**

**Treasurer: Don Edwards**

**Directors: Donna Cansfield, Gregory Dobson, Gillian Dugas, Ingrid McGaughey, Frederik Martin, Kester Trim, Hugh Williams**

**April 29, 2015 SPEAKER: Banasha SHAH – Families for Children in Bangladesh**

Reporting: Ron Miller

Pictures: Ron Miller & Peter Dusek

**Today's Speaker: Stephanie  
CHRISTENSEN – ShelterBox Canada**



**In the absence of President Mark Winson, the meeting was chaired by DGE Michael Bell.**

Stephanie Christensen is the Operations Manager at ShelterBox Canada. She has been with the organization for a year, and has a background in the humanitarian sector. She has previously worked with a number of organizations throughout East Africa. After working in Kenya during the 2011 East African famine, Stephanie moved to London to complete a Master's degree in International Development and Humanitarian Emergencies from the London School of Economics. She now lives in

Toronto, and is working hard to further the ShelterBox mission here in Canada.

The "mission" ShelterBox is "to rapidly provide emergency shelter and vital aid to stabilize, protect and support communities overwhelmed by disaster and humanitarian crisis".

Stephanie noted that the "iconic green box" that they send are "customized" to where they are going but "typically contain" a disaster relief tent for a family, thermal blankets and groundsheets, water storage and purification equipment, solar lamps, cooking utensils, a basic tool kit, mosquito nets and a children's activity pack. However, sometimes their aid is not packed in boxes but sent in bulk. It is essential to support the needs of those who have survived disasters and this can vary enormously based on the type and scale of a disaster. They also do this to maximise donors' money ensuring that they only send what is really needed and appropriate for the situation and culture.

They are also constantly evolving. There are different needs for different disasters. They sometimes provide midi tents that are a more compact version of the standard disaster relief tent. They are smaller to transport, easier to put up and take up less space, ideal for responses where space is at a premium or where temporary shelter is required for a shorter amount of time, like flooding. They also can deliver "Shelter Kits" containing plastic sheeting, basic tools, rope and fixings that enable families to rapidly provide their own shelter or make repairs to their damaged houses in the aftermath of a disaster.

# THE BULLETIN

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The tents sometimes provide “long term” living. Stephanie noted that many people in Haiti are still living in the relief tents long after the devastating earthquake back in 2010.

In any disaster a large number of people without shelter will inevitably be children. Schools will often have been destroyed along with homes and other buildings. ShelterBox will, therefore, sometimes include ‘SchoolBoxes’ in their aid consignments. These contain essential supplies for teachers, including backpacks, blackboard, paint, chalk, wind-up radio, and other school equipment for 50 children.

Since 2000, ShelterBox has responded to; 270 disasters; worked in 95 different countries; and helped over 1 million people. They respond on average to a new disaster every 2 weeks. ShelterBox continuously monitors disasters thus enabling them to be in a position to respond rapidly, effectively and efficiently when disaster strikes. Every disaster is different so is every ShelterBox response. Sometimes they respond to disasters independently, other times it is on requests for assistance from other aid agencies or government authorities. The common thread is ensuring the response always supports the direct needs of the beneficiaries. To this end, the containers are packed at their headquarters in London then sent to their 12 “strategically located” distribution centres around the world. This allows for them to be able to have “immediate response” to any disaster and to see what type of aid will be the most effective. They work tirelessly to ensure aid reaches the most vulnerable families and communities and always endeavor to deliver ShelterBox aid in the most effective way possible. This can be by road, sea, air or a mix of all three. The strength of their organization is their “enthusiastic volunteers” whose commitment to their cause is what enables them to provide homes for countless communities who survive disasters.

Stephanie wanted to mention Rotary’s relationship with ShelterBox. Since 2012 ShelterBox has been Rotary Internationals “only project partner”. Rotarians around the world support ShelterBox by

being Ambassador Volunteers, SRT’s, donors, and by helping logistically on the ground to help families after they have lost everything in a disaster.

In November, 2013, ShelterBox had their largest response to date when Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines. ShelterBox provided shelter and aid to 7000 families, 6800 tents, 10,000 solar lights, 2300 mosquito nets. More than 100 SRT’s were deployed. Storm resistant shelters were built after the emergency phase for another 8000 families.

In March 2015, Cyclone Pam (a Category 5 storm) struck Vanuatu in the South Pacific, which is one of the poorest countries in the world. 90% of the buildings were damaged or destroyed. ShelterBox is working with CARE. 1000 Shelter Kits plus an additional shipment of 7500 blankets, 1500 solar lamps, 2250 mosquito nets, 260 midi tents and 500 tarps were provided.

In January 2015, Malawi suffered the worst flooding in 40 years leaving 230,000 homeless. ShelterBox distributed 1224 ShelterBoxes, along with 650 Shelter Kits, 500 tarps, 960 luminAIDS (a new more powerful solar lamp), and 20 SchoolBoxes. Stephanie added that “it is still raining” and with many washed out roads they had “great difficulty” to deploy the aid but it was still done in a timely fashion.

ShelterBox is currently deployed in 11 countries around the world; Columbia, Cameroon, Niger, Malawi, Gaza, Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, North Korea, Philippines, and Vanuatu. They are the only organization that has been allowed to operate in North Korea where they have been aiding people displaced by severe flooding.

How can we help? There are a number of ways to get involved with ShelterBox Canada; donate as an individual or as a club; become a ShelterBox Rotary Liaison; or become an Ambassador. Stephanie also wanted to mention the “ShelterBox Hero” program. A ShelterBox Hero is any Rotary Club who makes a commitment to supporting ShelterBox in bringing emergency shelter to families overwhelmed by disaster. There are 2 ways to become a Hero; make a commitment of at least 1 box/\$1200 per year for

# THE BULLETIN

at least 3 years; or contribute 3 boxes/\$3600 between July 1st and June 30th. Our Club has contributed a box in 2013, and 2014 and coincidentally DGE Michael presented Stephanie with a cheque for \$1,000 at today's luncheon which will go towards our 3rd ShelterBox. Stephanie added that our Club will be recognized as a ShelterBox Hero at the upcoming District Conference in October.



Michael thanked Stephanie.

## Rotary Etobicoke funds Mad About Art in South Africa for children living with HIV.



The funding comes from our annual Trump HIV/AIDS walk that takes place this year on Saturday, April 25th. This shows how important our efforts are in raising the money. Our fundraising walk also funds two other HIV/AIDS projects in South Africa. The following is a report to our Club from Liz Brown, Coordinator for MADaboutART in Knysna, South Africa.

### REPORT TO ROTARY ETOBICOKE BACKGROUND

A donation of ZAR5000 was given by Rotary Etobicoke to enable disadvantaged children and youth in South Africa take part in Hero Booking workshops designed to build confidence, confront and overcome barriers to achievement, foster ambition and, above all ... give hope.

### HERO BOOKING

Many young people face psychological and social obstacles that sometimes get the better of them and stand in the way of their goals. Making a Hero Book in a safe space, amongst people they know and trust, helps young people think about these obstacles and

### Birthdays This Week



*Diane IRVINE - April 20<sup>th</sup>  
James SIMON - April 20<sup>th</sup>*

*Best wishes on your Happy Day ...*

# THE BULLETIN

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find ways to deal with them. During the process of making Hero Books, young people are invited to share some of their inner world and life story, which helps others in the group learn more about them. The basic method involves making a book in which they are author, illustrator, main character and editor of a book that is designed to help set goals, and give them power over a specific challenge or obstacle in their life. Making Hero Books is both a process and a product. At the end of the process, each participant has a hand-bound, illustrated storybook of their own making which is a kind of solution-focused mission statement, but one that also documents and reinforces his or her positive solution-building skills. The group and the facilitator enter strongly into each participant's story as friendly and supportive co-authors and editors - but the process goes further than storytelling, to strengthen the wellbeing and the circles of support around each participant and in order to develop heroes, survivors, active citizens and solution-finders. Hero Books are a psychosocial support intervention developed by Jonathan Morgan (REPSSI).

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**This a Thank You (Chi-Miigwetch) from Tracy Sauve, Aboriginal Case Manager at the Winona Center**



*We would like to say  
Thanks*

*From the bottom of our  
hearts and full bellies  
to the Members of the  
Etobicoke Rotary Club  
For the donation of food  
items and stuffed animals  
Much Appreciation and  
Gratitude for your  
thoughtfulness!  
You're a great group of  
people!!!*

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## **50/50 Draw**

**Ralph CHIDO – KING OF CLUBS.** The pot \$600+ continues to grow. As a consolation prize DGE Michael presented him with a box of Lindor chocolates which he in turn graciously gave to our speaker Stephanie Christensen.

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# THE BULLETIN

## Visitors & Guests



### Visitors and Guests:

- ✚ Stephanie Christensen – ShelterBox Canada – Speaker
- ✚ Francis Brunelle – Guest of Maati Lahroussi
- ✚ George McClay – Guest of Maati Lahroussi

### Attendance:

Members 12  
Visitors & Guests - 03  
Total – 15



## HAPPY BUCKS



**Lynn Manwar** – Lynn was happy to say that the pain that she has been in since September has finally disappeared a couple weeks ago.

**Ralph Chiodo** – Ralph was happy to thank the Club for our support of the Tony Pavia event that took place on April 17th. The event was used to pay for the publishing of 2 volumes of Tony's "Focus on Communities" 800 page books of photos and in support of Pier 21. The books are pictures from the community and include pictures from Ribfest. Because of our support Ralph is presenting 2 of the books to our Club which will be on display at the Clubhouse. Ralph added that his was a "very successful night" and took place at the new home of the C.B.A.O. (Calabrian Benevolent Association of Ontario) at Islington & Hwy 7 in Vaughn that his family donated. Ralph was also happy to say that he is leaving for Italy tomorrow and will be visiting our "sister Clubs" in Calabria.

**Theresa Sherwood** – Theresa was happy to say that Andre Dugas and our Rotary Etobicoke "Hands-On" Group made up 100 sandwiches and bottled water that Liz Read will deliver to the 100 participants at today's "Employment and Money Management" Forum being held at Lakeshore Collegiate Institute. This event was organized by Lamp CHC, Toronto Police's DPSU, and the 22 Division Community Police Liaison Committee (and Judy Burnell). The forum is to help parents and youth cope with the struggles of finding employment and managing their money.

**Ron Miller** – Ron said that he wasn't really happy that he will miss the Trump Aids Poker Walk on Saturday, but is happy to say why. He will be in Kitchener at an "annual" reunion with friends that he went to high school with in St. Catharines. They have known each other since Grade 9 (in 1960...you do the math). His friends now live in the Kitchener/Waterloo area and they have been getting together every year since around 1970. There will be a "stand-up" wine tasting of vintage wines on Saturday night with his friends, their families and other friends. Last year almost 40 people attended. Ron added that "he will drink a toast to the members who will be at the walk on Saturday".

**Michael Bell** – DGE Michael was happy to say that his journey towards become District Governor is

# THE BULLETIN

moving rapidly. One of his duties is arranging for the ADG's (Assistant Deputy Governors). One Thursday evening ADG training will take place in Oshawa and Michael is happy to say that Ron Miller has agreed to take on an ADG position

## This Weeks Calendar



Monday, April 27th - Ribfest  
Committee meeting - 6:00 pm -  
Rotary Clubhouse

Saturday, May 2nd - District  
Assembly - 7:30 am to 2:00 pm -  
BMO Institute for Learning (3550  
Pharmacy Ave - Pharmacy/Steeles  
Ave. E.)

Saturday, May 9th - District  
Conference meeting - 9:30 am -  
Rotary Clubhouse

Saturday, May 30th - District  
Conference Meeting - 9:30 am -  
Rotary Clubhouse

## Spirit of Earth Day: Tree planting project stems from surviving a tsunami

*From Rotary International*



Rotary member Gowri Rajan waters a newly planted tree last December in the Kurunegala district of Sri Lanka.

As a child, Gowri Rajan was scared of trees because of the reptiles and insects lurking in their roots, branches, and leaves.

"I wouldn't go near trees," says Rajan. "It's ironic that, later in life, a tree would be the reason I'm still alive."

On the morning of 26 December 2004, a tsunami slammed into Rajan's vacation house on the Indian Ocean in Sri Lanka, where her family and a few friends were staying for the holidays. The water violently crashed through the house, destroying everything inside. "I said my last prayers. I thought this was the end," she recalls.

When the water receded, it swept Rajan with it. But she saved herself by grabbing onto one of the few trees that hadn't been uprooted.

"For 20 minutes I held on with all my strength. I could feel the ocean pulling my body in," says Rajan, who lost three of her friends that day.

# THE BULLETIN

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After the wave receded, she started to swim back to the house through the dark water, to rejoin her family and friends. A second wave came crashing in. A friend was able to reach Rajan and help her climb to the top of another tree. "I was saved by two trees," she says. "It's a miracle I'm still alive."

Now, Rajan is looking for a million people to share their tree stories to raise awareness and money to restore the island nation's trees.

Rajan is a Rotary member and leader in her region, which started the One Million Tree Stories project in December, 10 years after the tsunami. One of the region's Rotary clubs, the Rotary Club of Ibbagamuwa, is playing a prominent role because it had already been working on reforestation. The Rotary members are partnering with hundreds of local farmers, a bank, and government agencies. The Sri Lankan army will help plant the first trees. The goal is to plant 1 million trees this year along the banks of protected reservoirs in the Kurunegala district, in the country's North Western Province, and another 4 million trees over the next five years.

Rotary members and the public can sponsor a tree for 100 Sri Lankan rupees (about \$.75 cents) and are encouraged to tell their own tree stories on the project's Facebook page. "Research shows every human being is emotionally connected to a tree in some way or another," says Rajan. "We want to hear these stories. It will help create a personal connection to the tree you sponsor."

Rajan says 40 cents of each dollar donated to the project will go to The Rotary Foundation, while the remaining 60 cents will be used to buy trees and care for them during their first two years. Every tree will be tagged and entered into a computer system that will enable sponsors to monitor its growth.

## Environmental protection

According to the Sri Lankan government, the nation's forest coverage has declined from 53 percent to 29 percent over the last two decades.

Don Nihal Wanigasekara, president of the Ibbagamuwa Rotary club and the originator of its tree-planting project, says widespread deforestation is contributing to "the destruction of our planet."

"Although the government has imposed laws to control deforestation, more effort must be made to help our country's natural habitat," says Wanigasekara, a mechanical and mining engineer. "Planting one tree has an enormous benefit to the environment," he adds.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, a single tree can absorb a ton of harmful greenhouse gases over its lifetime, produce enough oxygen for four people every day, cool the air as well as 10 room-size air conditioners operating 20 hours a day, and provide an estimated \$273 of environmental benefits in every year of its life. Trees also control storm water runoff and reduce the risks of both flooding and drought. Wanigasekara estimates that Sri Lanka needs a minimum of 20 million new trees over the next 10 years to be able to counter the effects of the carbon dioxide and other gases released into the atmosphere through the burning of fossil fuels.

"Our club unanimously accepted to take on this project because we know how crucial it is to make the environment safer for future generations," says Wanigasekara. "We all have a personal responsibility to keep this planet green. I hope a million trees is just the beginning."

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