



THE BULLETIN



Rotary Club of Etobicoke

District Governor: **Brian Thompson**

RI President Gary C.K. Huang

Week April 29, 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

May 09, 2015 SPEAKER: Hugh WILLIAMS & Ribfest Team – RIBFEST INFORMATION SESSION

Reporting: Ron Miller

Pictures: Ron Miller & Peter Dusek

Today's Speaker: Banasha SHAH – Families for Children in Bangladesh



Banasha was born in London, England but came to Canada as a child and has spent most of her life in Toronto. She studied at Trinity College, University of Toronto. She is an actuary, a financial advisor and mother of 3. She first learned about Families for Children (FFC) about 20 years ago when she heard about the good work Sandra Simpson was doing with orphans around the world. Over the years, Banasha and her family have assisted FFC in raising funds and

awareness, and recently, she has made 2 trips to India to volunteer on the ground.

Banasha began by saying that Families for Children (FFC) is a non-profit, non-sectarian organization that exists to fulfill the needs of children and young adults with physical and/or mental disabilities. By providing housing, education, special medical care and vocational training, FFC helps these individuals to reach their full potential and live with dignity in a loving environment. FFC was founded in 1971 by a Canadian, Sandra Simpson, who still runs the orphanages from Montreal. Banasha found out about FFC 20 years ago and "knew immediately that she would become involved".

FFC has over 450 children / young adults residing in India and Bangladesh, 1/3 of which have "special needs". They receive education, nutritious food and health care. The monthly costs for running the FFC facilities in India and Bangladesh costs around \$30,000 Canadian each.

FFC Dhaka (Bangladesh) – FFC Dhaka began in 1971 after Bangladesh gained its independence from Pakistan. The new state endured poverty and famine. Foreign adoptions were banned and FFC grew. There are 2 "baby homes" in Dhaka. All the children in these two homes have been completely abandoned and are considered to have no families. Most were brought in as tiny, high risk babies, and they are mostly girls. Education is a "top priority". FFC has opened a school on the premises for the Baby home children. They have 36 children with special needs with all different needs both mental and physical. They provide the children with physiotherapy 2 times a week to those who require it. There are very few places in Dhaka that cater for

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the needs or wellbeing of special care children. They have a school within the home that caters for nursery to Grade 2, and children in Grade 3 to Grade 10 attend outside school. The school provides computer training for all of our children. Thanks to funding from the Retired Teachers Association, FFC has been able to set up a Montessori classroom for about 20 students. The children from the orphanage have learned to respect the order and routines of the class, to take turns, and to trust that they would have a chance to do what other children were doing. Some FFC children attend college due to grants. They have 8 Art Students who are deaf that are now in their 4th year. They also have the opportunity to take part in different "cultural events".

Banasha wanted to mention the Rotary Grant application that was made to our Club. The request included repair to their van used to transport children to school, cultural events, medical appointments, etc. was in great need of repair (\$952), a back-up electrical supply (\$760), therapeutic equipment for their special needs students (\$634), teaching materials (\$158). The application was sent to our International Service Committee (ISC) and it was approved in its entirety. Banasha said that they were "overjoyed" when they heard the news.

FFC India - FFC India is located in Podanur Junction, near the city of Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu State, in south India. The homes are comprised of 6 houses on 3 campuses, which are all owned by FFC. There is also a large Special Care Center for children who are mentally and or physically handicapped including a number with cerebral palsy, post-polio children, and those with a variety of special medical needs. Excellent locally hired Special Educational teachers are employed to care for these children. FFC also offers vocational training for destitute women and certain of the older children who have not made it through the regular school system. In 2013, the House of Hope was opened across the street from this centre that offers training in cooking, their upcycling and paper projects, a class for rudimentary learning and afternoon outdoor sports. Recognizing that they had a small group of children who would not be accepted into the regular school system because of their physical issues, FFC started a small

kindergarten class in 2006. As the children grew, so did the school, and in 2008 a new building was constructed with donations from two generous Canadian families. In 2010, the kind donation from Webkinz allowed them to add a second storey and in May 2013, the formal registration of the FFC Elementary School was completed.

In 2014 our Club funded another grant request from FFC and Banasha was happy to report how the money was spent. Thanks to our "timely" donation, new computers and other pieces of equipment were purchased to replace the current outdated and broken machines, allowing for much smoother operations in the office and other areas. This has been a tremendous help in allowing the staff to work more efficiently in taking care of the more than 300 children and adults at the FFC site. For the Special Care children in particular, the new equipment makes it much easier for staff to keep their detailed medical records. Kalai, now has her master's in business administration and basically runs the office like a well-oiled machine. Thanks to the Rotary Club grant, having working office equipment makes record-keeping and all their other work possible.



The Rotary Etobicoke grant also allowed for the construction of a new washroom. This new and accessible washroom was badly needed and allows for easier access for the Special Care adults who live here and work in the nearby buildings. The grant also allowed FFC to renovate a storeroom and turn it into the perfect home for the five young women with disabilities. Banasha added that the Rotary Club

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of Etobicoke has continued their support by showcasing the Women's Co-op items and in particular the recycled sari scarves at their events. They have made more than \$700 in sales in the last few months. FFC is very grateful to the Rotary Club of Etobicoke for their generous and enthusiastic support. Banasha brought with her today some of the scarfs and their "up-cycled" hats.

The hard-working Up-Cycling team has come up with another great idea. They are again making good use of old, used and cast off clothing, saris, and dresses, and using them to create new products. This time they are working on producing a line of very fashionable and colorful hats that are perfect for a day out in the sun.



Gill Dugas thanked Banasha and presented her a cheque for \$2,500 to cover the van repairs, back-up electrical, therapeutic equipment and teaching supplies. Gill said "so much pride knowing what our money has achieved in India and Bangladesh".

Seneca School



On April 21st Rotary Etobicoke delivered children's books, interactive books and toys, DVD player, children's DVDs, pop-up flowers, bears and puppies to Seneca School. Some of bears and puppies will be shared with Central Etobicoke High School.

Central Etobicoke High School – Cheque Presentation



On April 24th Rotary Etobicoke presented a cheque for \$500 to Central Etobicoke High School to help facilitate a Community Resource Fair.



50/50 Draw

Bob MAXWELL – ACE OF HEARTS. The pot \$600+ continues to grow. As a consolation prize President Mark gave Bob a Lotto 649 ticket for tonight's draw for the approximately \$18 million jackpot with the proviso that if Bob wins ½ comes back to the Club..

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Visitors & Guests



Visitors and Guests:

- ✚ Banasha Shah – Families For Children – Speaker

Attendance:

Members 11
Visitors & Guests – 01
Total – 12

HAPPY BUCKS



Gill Dugas – Gill was happy to thank the members of the Club who participated in the Rotary Trump Aids Walk last Saturday (April 25th). Gill along with the other Rotary Etobicoke Team members; Mark Winson, Michael and Jo-Ann Bell, Lynda Ryder, Michael Lu, Mega Sharma and Andre Dugas walked 5 km to raise funding for HIV/AIDS Projects. Gill wanted to thank all of the Club members who pledged money to the Team. 75% of the money our Club raised will go to HIV/AIDS projects in South Africa and 25% will go to Casey House, a hospital offering compassionate care in Toronto. Rotary Clubs in District 7070 hold this important fundraiser every year. Our funding to South Africa supports children living with HIV/AIDS through art programs, educational programs, away camps, and counselling. In addition to these programs, our funding helps provide a meal each day for hundreds of children and weekly food parcels for dozens of families. Gill was also happy to say that 5 of our members; Mark Winson, Stephen Mbonye, Michael Lu, Andre Dugas and Gill have

volunteered to help support the Dorothy Ley Hospice's "Hike for Hospice" on Sunday, May 3rd. Gill says that our members will likely serve as "route guides (marshals)" to give directions and "cheer on" the hikers. Gill also wanted to remind those attending the Pinehurst Club's Sleeping Children around the World (SCAW) breakfast is on Wednesday, May 6th at 7:00 am at the Royal York Hotel. 10 members of our Club will be attending. As well, Hands on Etobicoke will be preparing dinner for the 60+ residences and staff at Youth without Shelter (YWS) on Thursday, May 7th which is "always a great event". And finally, Gill was happy to say that the Club will be distributing Mother's Day gifts (that were donated by Hallmark) to 4 or 5 shelter locations during the week of May 4th in the hope that they will bring "a little happiness to the families on this special day".



Michael Bell – Michael was happy to say that we are in the "last days of the end of Polio...We are that close". To celebrate this District 7070 has created the "End Polio Now Club" to show our District's support for the fight to end Polio. Members can join the club by making a commitment of \$US100 yearly until Polio is eradicated. So far, 4 of our Club members have enrolled in the End Polio Now Club; Mark Winson, Lynda Ryder, Bob Maxwell, and Ron Miller. Michael added that the EPN Club pins have now arrived and he was happy to present one to each of them.

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Mark Winson – Mark was happy that the Montreal Canadiens had won their first round of the playoffs. Mark is a long-time Canadiens fan. He was also happy his daughter Emily had finished her 2nd year at Guelph with an 87.4% average (Commerce).



It's the Toronto Ribfest Brew-Haha – and we'd love you to come!

This Weeks Calendar



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

Monday, May 11th – Board Meeting – 6:00 pm (for food) 6:30 pm (start of meeting) – Rotary Clubhouse

Wednesday, May 13th – Ribfest Committee meeting – 6:00 pm – Rotary Clubhouse

Monday, May 25th – Ribfest Committee meeting – 6:00 pm – Rotary Clubhouse

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

The Rotary Club of Etobicoke invites its membership to a sneak peak of this year's Toronto Ribfest program on Wednesday May 20 at the Bier Markt Queensway, 199N Queen Street, Etobicoke. Cocktails begin at 6:30, with opening remarks and program launch at 7:00 p.m. There will be plenty of time to mingle and celebrate the start of summer and of this multi-day music, food and family fun festival.

2015 is shaping up to be the most ambitious Toronto Ribfest ever, with more to do, see, hear and taste! This year, we have increased our fundraising goal -- more than it's ever been. For us to achieve this goal, we are planning a new and exciting program to draw people to Ribfest. We'd like your help to celebrate and promote this year's Toronto Ribfest.

The Brew-Haha will be an opportunity to announce that the Toronto Ribfest is once again the recipient of the 2015 FEO Top 100 Festival and Event in Ontario award -- for the fourth year in a row!

So at this Brew Ha-ha there will be much to celebrate – Top 100 Festival, a new and exciting program for this year's Toronto Ribfest, all the people behind the event and the good work out in the community that is supported by this annual event. We look forward to seeing you there!

Please RSVP to Ruth Williams, Brew-Haha Cheer Leader at RIBFESTGALA@gmail.com. You are also welcome to call me at 647-745-7701 or at work, 416-326-8503.