



WEEKLY UPDATE



Rotary Club of Etobicoke

District Governor: Ted Koziel

RI President: Sakuji Tanaka

Week January 09, 2013

Board 2012 - 2013

President: Hugh Williams, Secretary: Ron Miller, Treasurer: Don Edwards

**January 16, 2013 7.00pm Crooked Cue: Big Ideas Forum - Dr Kirsty Duncan -
Developing North Etobicoke**

**Today's Speaker: Sandra Laurin
- A Photographers Journey
through Human Trafficking in
Asia**



Nigel Brown introduced Sandra.

Sandra is a retired teacher who is pursuing her passions of travel and photography. She lives in Etobicoke and has 3 sons and 5 grandchildren who are the joy of her life. Recently she has realized that her photographs can bring awareness of social problems confronting children in countries around the globe. As a traveller, she prefers to volunteer and live for a short time within remote communities so she can freely photograph the people going about their daily lives. Sandra is a photographer and adventurer who has travelled to 54 countries to photograph the people, their culture, customs,

and the environment. She has designed travel itineraries to South Africa, Namibia, and Botswana, as well as trips to Egypt, Morocco and Peru. As a volunteer teacher, she lived and worked in developing countries and in First Nations communities in Northern Canada where she was able to interact with locals and share in their daily lives and celebrations. She focuses on capturing the universal emotions of love, joy, pride, and friendship, to illustrate that we all share the desire to live in peace and love with our families and friends.

Sandra said she was happy to be here today and wanted to thank Hugh and Ingrid for inviting her and that Ingrid was responsible for her introduction to Rotary.

In May of last year, Sandra travelled to Thailand with a National Geographic photographer to visit the Hill Tribes in Northern Thailand. They landed in Bangkok then traveled to Chiang Mai. From there she trekked to 5 remote Hill Tribe villages. These villages were far off "the beaten track" and were only accessible by foot. The first village where she stayed was a 10-hour trek through very hilly terrain.

Sandra noted that most people are not aware of the extent of "human trafficking" in Northern Thailand. She says the scenery there is very beautiful and it is known as the "Land of a Million Smiles". Everyone likes to have their pictures taken. Despite the beauty of the landscape and the smiles of the people, there is a dark undercurrent of fear, abuse and abandonment. Within the Hill Tribe communities, human trafficking is a common reality.

In Thailand, parents love their children and want the best for them. They want them to be

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educated. The government pays for 12 years of education, however many cannot afford the required uniforms for children to attend school. They are very family oriented and older people are taken care of by their families.

However, since the Hill Tribe members are actually displaced persons, mainly from Burma, Tibet and China, they are not recognized as citizens of Thailand, they have no nationality and no legal rights in the country in which they live. These poverty-stricken communities are exploited, abused and neglected. Adults and children are sold into forced labour and the sex trade. Children are especially vulnerable as their families and communities are unable to provide for their safety and well-being.

They live in these very remote communities, only accessible by foot. Their houses are constructed of bamboo and palm leaves and are mainly on stilts survive floods. These people are content to live in the hills and do not want to integrate into the Thai society. Labour here is difficult and they grow meagre crops of tea, corn and rice. They see no need for education. There is no tradition of education. However, now the younger people want a different life. They want to learn but there are no schools. In this culture, parents would sell a child to benefit the family. In many cases they feel that this giving the child a better opportunity, however most of these children end up in sweat shops, forced labour or in the sex trade.

The international sex trade consumes the lives of many throughout the globe, yet none are more acutely impacted than those who are in the highest demand, children with girls as young as 4 are sold into the sex trade. Young boys are vulnerable as well. For these children, human trafficking, rape, fear, abuse, abandonment and slavery are all part of their daily realities. Many will die, some will become non-functional adults, and a few will be rescued from their abusers and given a chance to live their own life.

Human Trafficking is illegal in virtually every country; however greed, slack enforcement of laws, government and police corruption, a plentiful supply of new poverty-stricken children to abuse, and the selfish, hedonistic

desires of abusers perpetuate the practice. The UN has tried to help with the signing of the Palermo Protocol in 2000 to prevent, suppress, and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children. However it has had little effect. In Thailand alone, approximately 800,000 children are forced into the sex trade per year.

The fortunate children are rescued and placed into loving communities that can again teach them how to trust others and rely on themselves. The photographer Sandra accompanied to Northern Thailand is Mickey Choothesa. He is the Founder and President of COSA (Children's Organization of Southeast Asia) and operates the Baan Yuu Suk shelter for girls in Chiang Mai. COSA is a NGO dedicated to the prevention of child trafficking and sexual exploitation in Southeast Asia, while also helping those rescued from those conditions to live a safe and stable life. It is working to give girls a sustainable future by education and learning life skills. COSA operates from a community development approach, targeting prevention at a local level and enabling intervention before the child becomes a victim. To achieve this, COSA has adopted a receptive policy between COSA and target communities. A strong relationship with community leaders and 'at risk' families is essential and allows COSA to maintain open communication with target areas at all times. Their physical presence enables COSA to monitor target areas in addition to gaining trust, understanding and respect from community members. In working with local organizations, community groups and schools, COSA is able to aim towards **prevention through education** and empower families to collaborate in order to provide a save future for their children. COSA is able to: to provide short term emergency housing when needed; provide shelter to victims or children at risk when needed; help every rescued child become a Thai National; provide social services in target areas; provide medical and health care services to remote villages.

The Baan Yuu Suk shelter for girls houses 17-20 girls. Baan Yuu Suk translates as "peaceful home" and that is just what they aim to do by providing the girls with a safe home, a solid

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education, and vocational skills for the future, and encouragement to follow their dreams and hope for a better future. COSA arranges for all of the girls to attend local schools, striving to foster a sense of inclusiveness in their community. COSA takes pride in creating a home at Baan Yuu Suk and providing each girl with individual encouragement, attention, and the best opportunity for a safe and healthy future.



Ingrid McGaughey thanked Sandra for her very insightful presentation. Sandra will have an exhibit at Lakeshore Arts Centre from March 9 to April 11 "Behind the Land of Smiles...Human Trafficking in Thailand".

Rotary Day at the Toronto



Marlies

President Hugh announced that there will be a special Rotary Day with the Toronto Marlies Hockey Team on Saturday, February 2nd at Ricoh Coliseum (3 PM). District 7070 has a whole section of tickets of which our Club has 30 to sell. Tickets are \$30 each. \$7 of every ticket sold goes to PolioPlus. The Marlies are playing their "arch-rivals" the Hamilton Bulldogs (farm club of the Montreal Canadiens).

It should be great fun. Contact Alex Woda or President Hugh for tickets.

Visitors & Guests



Visiting Rotarians

- **George Hurst** – Rotary Club of Toronto Leaside
- **Mir Hussain Dost** – Rotary Club of Krishnagri, India (District 2980)

Guests

- **Sandra Laurin** – Speaker
- **Liz Read** – Guest of Sandra Laurin
- **Florian Hammerbacher** – Guest of Nigel Brown
- **Jack Fleming** – Former member of the Rotary Club of Etobicoke who is looking to rejoin the Club.

Club members – we were **12** today
Total attendees – **18**

Birthdays This Week



Greg Dobson - January 6th
Lynda Ryder - January 8th
Doug Hartry - January 11th

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Rotary Etobicoke Wins 100 in 100 Pocket; \$2,500.00

From: Ted Koziel
[mailto:tkoziel@northernalarm.com]
Sent: January-10-13 9:06 AM
To: 'Hugh Williams'
Subject: 100 in 100

Hi Hugh

I am happy to report your club has won 1st prize of \$2500.00 in the final draw of the "100 Rotarians in 100 Days" campaign.

I would like to visit your club in the near future to present the cheque to you and your membership. I will check my schedule and send you a date which I hope will work for both of us.

Congratulations!

Ted Koziel DG

Congrats to everyone especially Michael for his great job as Membership Director and Ingrid for single-handedly bringing in several new members.

Secretary's Corner

By Ron Miller

Following announcements were made

- **January 14, 2013 7.00 PM** - International Services Committee Meeting - Nigel & Bernadette's Residence.
- **January 16th, 2013 7.00 PM** - Our next "Big Ideas" meeting will feature Club member Dr. Kirsty Duncan, MP who will talk about her "big ideas" for North Etobicoke - 7 PM at the Crooked Cue (Note: The Wednesday, January 16th regular scheduled luncheon meeting has been cancelled).

- **February 2nd, 2013** - Rotary Day at the Toronto Marlies - 3 PM - Ricoh Coliseum - there are 30 tickets available @ \$30.00/each - contact Alex Woda or President Hugh
- **March 27th, 2013** - Night of 1000 Cocktail-sticks Magoanine Fundraiser - Nigel and Bernadette's - Further details to come.

Please put all these dates in your diaries and let Ron know any make-ups/meetings you have attended - THANK YOU!



Lynda Ryder - Lynda was happy that Bob Maxwell had been released from hospital yesterday and he was doing well. She was also happy that she had \$3 for Happy Bucks which "she didn't have to borrow and that there were no pennies included".

Frederik Martin - Frederik was just happy to be back at a meeting. He can't remember when he was here last.

Nigel Brown - Nigel was happy to see George Hurst from the Leaside Rotary Club here today. He was even happier that George presented him with a cheque for the Magoanine Project. Nigel added that along with the cheque from Leaside, he had also received checks from the Stratford RC (D7080), Toronto RC, Nipissing RC (D7010), and the Alliston RC for a total of around \$10,500. To date Nigel says the project has raised around \$48,000 which is around ½ of the total (not including the Global Grant). Nigel also wanted everyone to mark Wednesday, March 27th on their calendar as everyone is invited to Nigel and Bernadette's that evening for the "Night of 1000 Cocktail-sticks Magoanine Fundraiser". There will be a nominal cost but details are still to come. However, Nigel assures everyone that the caterer has already been arranged.

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Michael Bell – Michael was happy to be back at Rotary as it has been a long break since our last regular meeting. He was also happy to say the Ribfest Committee met last evening and he is very excited about the plans for “where we are going and what we are doing” at this year’s event. Michael also wanted to remind everyone that our meeting on Wednesday, January 23rd will be our annual “Robbie Burns” luncheon. Michael said that at last year’s RB luncheon “there was no scotch”. This year however, Michael has promised a treat. Thanks to one of our Ribfest vendors Michael received a 40 oz bottle of Johnny Walker “Blue Label” which he is bringing to the luncheon. Michael also wanted to add to Nigel’s “Night of 1000 Cocktail-sticks” announcement by saying that Nigel will receive a “Paul Harris” recognition” that evening.

Kester Trim – Kester was happy to say that a lot of people helped raise a lot of money this year for the Salvation Army. He was happy to thank the members of our Club that helped with the kettles. He thinks that our Club and the Salvation Army have a great association with each other. Kester was also happy to say that he finally got to meet Frederik Martin.

Ron Miller – was happy to say that if anyone was a “Led Zeppelin” fan from years ago, they might be interested in the fact that they were honored at the annual Kennedy Center Awards ceremony in December. There is a great video of Heart (Nancy and Ann Wilson) doing, what Ron thinks, is one of the best “covers” of “Stairway to Heaven” at the ceremony which brings Robert Plant (Led Zeppelin’s lead singer) almost to tears. Also, the drummer is Jason Bonham, who is the son of the late Jon Bonham (LD’s original drummer). It is really fantastic and worth a look. You can either goggle “Heart play: Stairway to Heaven” or go to;
<http://www.nationmultimedia.com/video/7511>



50/50 Draw

Today’s 50:50 Draw **Andre Dugas** ticket was drawn out of the bag and he pulled the **Ace of Clubs**.

Reporting & Pictures Courtesy: Ron Miller