



WEEKLY UPDATE



Rotary Club of Etobicoke

District Governor: Ted Koziel

RI President: Sakuji Tanaka

Week March 06, 2013

Board 2012 - 2013

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

Speaker: March 13, 2013 - Classification Talk Drew Claxton

Today's Speaker - Alan Harman ALMA Children's Education Mission South America



Andre Dugas was asked to introduce Alan Harman.

Allan is the Founder and President of the Alma Children's Education Foundation. He is a Director and Senior Investment Executive at ScotiaMcLeod where he has managed socially and environmentally responsible portfolios since 1987. He has been involved in social purpose organizations in a variety of senior roles for over 20 years. He is a founding member of the Social Investment Organization and sat on their original Board of Directors. He sat on the Board of the Canadian Environmental Industry Association and hosted a series of public seminars entitled "Investing in the Environment" in the 1990s. Along the way he became one of the original subscribers to the

Jantzi Research Inc. database on corporate ethics and a "Partner" of that organization. He currently sits on the board of Variety Village. Alan has been involved in a variety of charities and in 2009 founded the Alma Children's Education Foundation, a Canadian registered charity that supports micro-philanthropic education initiatives in South America. The Alma Foundation improves the lives of economically impoverished families in Latin America by investing in their children's education. It enables local social entrepreneurs to deploy effective initiatives aimed at improving the quality of early childhood education in their communities.

Its "Guiding Principles" consist of a "grassroots" approach, encouraging local engagement, engaging donors, microfinance and micro-philanthropy, direct investments, multiple outcomes, sustainability, and performance management.

Alan he has been directly involved with a number of charities over the years and Alma is the 5th one that he has started himself. He founded Alma in 2009 after an extensive trip through Central and South America. He was struck by the poverty and grace of the children he met there and formed Alma to help improve their lives. After consulting development specialists in South America and in Canada, it was decided to focus their efforts on providing education services to young children (early childhood education -- ECE). They believe that an investment in ECE has the highest social return on investment.

The initial focus was on Peru which Alan says is one of the poorest yet "most wonderful" countries. There was an obvious need here. He said that while he was traveling through Peru

WEEKLY UPDATE

trying to learn “everything possible about the country”, he was treated “so well” by everyone, and it was “such a wonderful experience”, he wanted to give back to them what he could.

There were other charities there but he didn’t want to work through them since they had high “overhead” and used much of their money raised to pay for administration. Their program management was also “not what he wanted”. One program had hired someone from Harvard to manage the program. Alan said that more people would have attended if the program had been administered locally.

Alan noted that Alma means “soul” in Spanish. They listened to the people in the communities and choose education (especially early childhood education) as their focal point. They felt that this had the most “social return”. Improving the quality of early childhood education in these “economically marginalized” regions is helping families overcome social and economic hardship.

They are using a “micro-philanthropic” model partnering with local social entrepreneurs on small, high social return, grassroots education initiatives. They have no overhead and do not pay intermediaries. They have hired a program director there and he is the only employee. Their funds are invested, consistent with their “Guiding Principles” to maximize social returns on capital.

Alan said one of the problems faced is that the language in the remote parts of Peru they are working in is “Quechua” and not Spanish which is spoken in the majority of the country. There are “cultural” differences as well. They have a training program for teachers to teach math in Quechua.

Another problem is nutrition. Many of the students have a 1 to 3 hour walk to school (mainly in the high altitudes in the mountains of Peru). Their main diet is potatoes. Lack of nutrition affects the child’s ability to learn. They have built a few greenhouses to grow vegetables and they helped construct a trout farm. They also gave seminars in nutrition and got the parents to assist in the cooking. They

would serve the trout 3-5 days a week to the children and any leftover fish were sold. This also gave the project some financial sustainability. However, Alan explained that it had been a “bumpy ride”. The trout farm had been operating “nicely” then 1 year later 1000 fish were missing. They found out that the Principal of the school had been stealing the fish. They also have had some “natural disasters” such as mudslides that have wiped out some of the greenhouses. There also have been some other problems such as the locals “not taking full ownership of the project”. It runs smoothly then when the teachers leave on their 1-2 month breaks the project “falls apart”. Alan says it is something that they can’t quite understand why the locals haven’t fully taken to the projects.

However, Alan says they have now hired a local to manage the trout farm and things are now once again “going smoothly”.

One of the other nutrition/economic programs they are assisting with is raising guinea pigs. In Peru, guinea pigs appear on “fancy” menus in restaurants. Since guinea pigs are easy to breed, they are getting the locals to raise them. The program started with 30 families in a community (with kids in the school) getting 10 guinea pigs each to breed. They are used as food for the kids and the excess can be sold (except 10% of the guinea pigs are returned to the program). They are also teaching the community to raise chickens. Alan said that a local mayor expressed that this was the “most successful NGO project in the area”.

Alma is also helping children with “special needs” by supporting the “Kiya Outreach Program” whose goal is to improve the quality of life for the children and their families through social assistance and regular visits by improving health, hygiene, family income, and living conditions. Kiya Survivors is a British-Peruvian charity operating educational facilities for children with special needs and those who have suffered abuse and abandonment. The Rainbow Centre was the first facility opened by Kiya, in 2002, and is the only school dedicated to special needs in this area of Peru. Survivors support 140 children

WEEKLY UPDATE

and their families from villages as far away as 50 kilometers.

Alma has been involved in 2 projects in Bolivia where girls who have been victims of “human trafficking”, are getting technical training” in computers and beautician skills.

Gill Dugas thanked Alan for his presentation and said she was “greatly impressed” by his candor about the problems and frustrations that the projects have faced from time to time. She was also happy to see that even with these setbacks he continues to be very enthusiastic and dedicated to continuing the great work he has started.

New Member Induction - Jack Fleming



President Hugh introduced our new member Jack Fleming, who is actually a former member of the Club. Ron Miller gave Jack his membership card, his Club badge, and the New Member Information package. Michael Bell presented Jack with his Rotary pin.

Paul Harris Recognition - Michael Bell:



Lynda Ryder presented Michael Bell with his “single ruby” Paul Harris pin in recognition of Michael donations to Foundation.



Guests

- ➔ **Alan Harman** - ALMA - Children's Education Foundation Mission – speaker
- ➔ **Brock Buchanan** – former member
- ➔ **Liz Reid**

Club members – we were **16** today

Total attendees - **19**

Birthdays This Week



Carol Weber - March 09
Jim Woodside - March 10
Cy Garland - March 11
Sharon Lee - March 12

WEEKLY UPDATE

Secretary's Corner

By Ron Miller

Following announcements were made

1. "Coal", Avery Magnus' new alert dog, who is arriving on Tuesday that our club helped fund. We will be presenting the cheque to Avery's mom Jennifer. (picture of Coal below).



2. Stu Sherman, President of Broad Reach, a sailing organization for at-risk / disadvantaged youth. We will be presenting a cheque from the club in support of their programs.



Rotary Club of Toronto - Centennial Gala

The Rotary Club of Toronto Centennial Gala will be held Thursday, May 23rd at the Fairmont Royal York. Tickets are \$225/person and are available online at www.torontorotary.com

Wednesday, March 27th - Magoanine Cocktail Fundraiser in aid of the Magoanine "B" School Water & Sanitation Project - 7 PM - Bernadette

and Nigel's (437 The Kingsway - near Islington)
Tickets \$55/person - Contact Nigel Brown

(NOTE: The regularly scheduled luncheon meeting on March 27th will be cancelled)

Saturday, April 27th - Trump Aids Poker Walk (Toronto Beach waterfront) - 9:00 am - 1:00 pm. Contact: Michael Bell

Saturday, May 4th - District Assembly - 8:45 AM - BMO Institute for Learning. This is an opportunity for all Rotarians (especially our newer members) to learn more about what Rotary is "all about" and what we do. For information please contact Ron Miller.

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

HAPPY BUCKS



Jim Woodside - Jim was happy to say that he and his wife June will be married 50 years in April. They are planning a trip to New York City, which is where they spent their honeymoon and thought it would be a good time to "go again". Congratulations to June and Jim.

Gillian Dugas - Gill was happy to say that they had a "full team" of volunteers for their "painting project" tomorrow (Thursday) at "Youth Without Shelter". They will be painting a bedroom on the "emergency side" for 3 youths. It will be a full day project and they will also help with the lunch. She said that besides Andre and herself, Lynda Ryder, Michael Bell, Theresa Sherwood and Maati Lahroussi would be helping out. Gill was also happy to say that she was looking to get a team together for March 19th to go to the Yonge Street Mission to help cook and prepare meals for youths 16 to 25 at the shelter (10 am to 2:30 pm). She says it will be "lots of fun". They have a "wonderful" pro chef and

WEEKLY UPDATE

to contact her if you want to be part of the team. In addition, Gill was happy that the Board approved \$300 to help buy socks for "at-risk" youth. She was very pleased to see Judy Burnell at today's luncheon since Judy has become "Gill's hero". Judy has been working hard to see if she could find a source for the socks that would allow us to buy "more socks for the buck". Judy has found a real deal of 3 socks for \$1.10 and these are very good quality socks. Good job Judy. Gill says that half of the socks will go to the Yonge Street Mission when she visits them on March 19th. The other half will be taken to the Big Ideas Forum on March 20th when the new 22 Division Superintendent Frank Bergen will talk to the Club. Also that night there will be a representative from the Light Patrol which has a bus that travels around giving clothes and food to the homeless. Gill added that if members have socks they want to donate to bring them along to our meetings.



50/50 Draw

Today's 50:50 Draw **Andre Dugas** ticket was drawn out of the bag and he pulled the **Ten (10) of Hearts**.

JOTTINGS FROM THE BOARD March 04, 2013

By Michael Bell

President Hugh has reviewed the qualifications with Secretary Ron and our club qualifies for the Presidential Citation again this year. Congratulations to all of our club members who helped us to achieve this goal. Well done!

Our new club banners were a great help at the Community & Government Services Fair held at Cloverdale Mall on Saturday February 23rd. Thank you to all club members who turned out to help that day.

The following expenditure was approved from the Community Services

Committee: up to \$3,000.00 for Anduhyuan
(Aboriginal Women's Shelter Toronto)

\$2,610.00 Stonegate Ministries

(25% of total cost for kitchen cooking equipment)

\$1,000.00 - St. Margarets Out of the Cold Program

\$1,000.00 - St. Matthews Out of the Cold Program

\$1,500.00 - Training Renewal Foundation

(to cover cost of 5 low income adults GED testing)

\$300.00 - Light Patrol (Socks for the Homeless)

\$500.00 - Service Dogs by Warren Retrievers

(towards purchase of a dog for type 1 Diabetic child)

The following expenditure was approved from the International Committee:

\$3,000.00 - Nutri-biscuits Project

(with the Rotary Club of Colombo Regency, Sri Lanka)

\$139.00 RADAR

(Rotary Action for the Development of Aids Responses)

The Board has set the date for our next meeting to April 8, 2013



Reporting & Pictures Courtesy: Ron Miller