**Indigenous Service Committee - Chair John Andras**

The Indigenous Service Committee aims to build relationships with indigenous peoples and groups, and to promote awareness of indigenous history, culture, current issues and contributions to our fellow Rotarians and the community at large. The committee has two areas of interest:

• Education of indigenous children and youth

• Collaborating with other groups that seek to make a difference in indigenous communities.

The Committee participated in several in-kind collection campaigns. We delivered skates to Neskantaga, partnered with the Bridge Prison Ministry, Kawartha Truth and Reconciliation Support Group, Bishops College and The Rotary Club of Sherbrooke to deliver coats, clothing, books, school supplies and sports equipment to over a dozen separate fly-in communities. We are currently working with HIP (Honouring Indigenous People), INAC and other partners to create a transportation chain to facilitate the collection and distribution of in-kind donations for service clubs, church groups, corporations, and schools.

In partnership with HIP the playground we sponsored for Neskantaga last year was installed and is being used by the community.

We provided $3,500.00, in partnership with One Laptop per Child, for computers to replace technology lost in a school fire in Wapekeka.

We sponsored $3,500.00 for the PenPals Art project in Six Nations bringing together indigenous and settler children to create artwork on the theme of reconciliation

We donated $3,000.00 to Bearskin First Nation to help fund a healing retreat for the youth in the community following the suicide of a 10 year old girl.

We provided $2,000.00 to provide ongoing support for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program in Sandy Lake First Nation.

The committee helped support the Rotary Club of Guelph in its successful bid for a $300,000.00 Arctic Inspiration Prize to bring amplification technology to Nunavut schools. We also worked with the Ontario Camps Association to integrate culturally appropriate indigenous teachings and interactions in Ontario summer camps. In partnership with HIP, we hosted a Kairos Blanket Exercise and 37 Rotarians and guests experienced the history of colonialism through indigenous eyes. We also had presentations from 4 Seasons of Reconciliation, First Nations School, and Growing North. All could develop into major projects worthy of consideration by the Rotary Club of Toronto Foundation.

The committee hosted two special Friday Rotary luncheons. On November 27th National Chief Perry Bellegarde presented and on June 24th we celebrated National Aboriginal Day with Dr. Suzanne Stewart as the featured presenter. Both events featured Drums, opening and closing messages Elders, participation by Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Dowdeswell and inspiring messages by two superb speakers. We meet on the first Thursday of each month at Native Child and Family Service Toronto, 30 College Street from 4:30-6:00. New members are always welcome