

Making a Difference



The Rotary Club of Toronto | Marketing & Communications Special Edition

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ROTARY CLUB OF TORONTO CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

An Important Part of our Club's History



In 1951, with remarkable foresight our Club established our Foundation, with Rotarians Frank Young, Neil Petersen, Dr Harry Ebbs, Don Carrick and Hank Langford acting as the incorporators and first board of directors. A number of Club members made donations and provision in their wills for a legacy to the Foundation to help get it established. A major donation to the Foundation was made in the early years by Rotarian Bert Cowan, with specified charities to be supported for 25 years. When this time restriction passed, the Cowan fund became unrestricted and with growth represents a major part of the Foundation's endowment today.

A most significant early gift of \$400,000 was made by the late "Uncle" Wat McClain. It provided the cornerstone funding for the largest project ever undertaken to that time by a single Rotary Club – the Laughlen Centre. More than \$6 million was raised by our Club to build this seniors' residence on Elizabeth Street in downtown Toronto. It operated for many years with Club members and residents serving on the Board. When the Centre was wound up, a substantial part of the funds realized from the sale of its lands came back to the Foundation, to be used for seniors' purposes, in the City of Toronto. The Laughlen Fund now stands at more than \$3 million, enabling the Club's Seniors Committee to do important work with Toronto's seniors, including hosting our annual Seniors Holiday party.

– by Brian Westlake, Rotary member

Rotary Club of Toronto Charitable Foundation in Partnership with Nancy Angel Network Helps to Build Resiliency for Kids Whose Moms Have Cancer

– by Judy Tobe, Development Associate, Nanny Angel Network

Thanks to the support of the Rotary Club of Toronto Charitable Foundation, the Nanny Angel Network (NAN) will be able to reach more moms with cancer across the GTA this year.

Since 2009, NAN has been recruiting and training volunteer Nanny Angels to support children ages 12 and under whose moms are being treated for cancer, are in palliative care or have died. This program is all thanks to business woman and cancer survivor Audrey Guth the founder and president of the Nanny Angel Network.

When Audrey was waiting for her radiation treatment for breast cancer, she met women, sitting with their children on their laps. These women were diminished, many had lost their hair and no longer had the energy to play with their children. Audrey thought how exhausted these women must be and how could these women with cancer recover and look after their children at the same time.



Audrey Guth, Founder and Chair, Nanny Angel Network who established the organization.

Audrey was in a unique position, she owned an agency for nannies. She decided she could fill a critical gap in health care and social services by training Nanny Angels to go into homes once per week and provide routines and fun activities for the children and ensure that moms would no longer have to choose between getting treatment and looking after their children – moms with cancer would now have Nanny Angels who could support families through some of the most challenging times of their lives.

This year, through the generous support of the Rotary Club of Toronto, the Nanny Angel Network will be able to support 100 moms with cancer and 250 children in the GTA.

Each of the families that NAN supports is unique. All of the moms have cancer with breast cancer being the highest at 61% followed by lymphoma at 7%, colon at 6%, leukemia 5%, ovarian at 3% and other cancers at 8%.

For many of the moms that NAN works with, when they get cancer, they work less, or they don't work at all, or a divorce takes place, putting major financial pressures on the mom and increasing the need for the Nanny Angel Network's free program.

There is no other program like the Nanny Angel Network. By recruiting and training women who have childcare experience to provide the program, NAN keeps costs low ensuring more families can have a specially trained Nanny Angel in their home once per week. Nanny Angels are teachers, nurses and social workers who work in these fields, have retired from these fields or are studying for these careers. NAN trains Nanny Angels to work with families where the mom has cancer and trains them to answer children's questions about their moms' cancer and about death and dying.



Volunteer Leigh Scholl who won NAN's Volunteer Nanny Angel of the Year for her outstanding commitment and dedication supporting moms and their children

The program is designed to help moms rest and recover and have peace of mind once per week knowing their children are well looked after. It was also created so moms would no longer have to take their children to treatments and not have to choose between going to appointments and looking after their children, they could rest, recuperate and hopefully recover from their cancer.

The program is intended to give vulnerable children the tools they need to cope with their moms' cancer and help reduce children's fears and anxieties about their moms' cancer and the potential for risky behaviours. The program helps children understand death and dying and build their resiliency in the face of challenging circumstances.

We help many families across the GTA. Each family is different and each family has their own unique needs. Sharmeen's story is an example of how the Nanny Angel Network makes a difference in the lives of families living with cancer.

Sharmeen is a graphic designer who moved to Canada 4 years ago. She found a lump and discovered it was breast cancer. Months into her diagnosis, she also found she was pregnant. With careful monitoring, she began chemotherapy and eventually gave birth to a son. Soon after giving birth, her marriage broke down. Newly single, she faced many challenges. She had five rounds of chemotherapy while pregnant and three more after giving birth. Her family lived in another country and she had few friends and few supports.

She heard about the Nanny Angel Network and found her Nanny Angel to be genuinely caring with her son and became a trusted friend. Sharmeen credits NAN's program for being free for helping her to juggle her work, take on new projects, manage medical appointments and being able to take care of her son.

Sharmeen felt she would never have been able to afford a Nanny Angel and it was only because of NAN's support that she was able to get treatment and undertake everything she needed to do.

On behalf of everyone at the Nanny Angel Network we would like to thank the Rotary Club of Toronto Charitable Foundation for the work you do to make the world a better place and thank you for investing in our program, so that together we can make a difference for families living with cancer.

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**The “BUZZZZZZZZZZ” of the
Environment Committee**



The Environment Committee is a rag-tag, small-but-mighty, bunch of do-gooders that want nothing less than clean air, clean water and rich biodiversity for the next seven generations in this urban jungle. We have a banker, an accountant, a forester, a lawyer, an activist, a management consultant and a future District Governor on the team. And we are holding a spot for you too! Do you want outdoor nature play in parks and ravines for children living in apartment buildings? Do you want everyone to have low-cost easy access to shared tools? Do you want apartment residents in low income neighbourhoods to have access to composting and the ability to grow and access fresh fruits and vegetables? Do you believe in the importance of the Urban Tree Canopy? Do you want abandoned lands in the downtown core to be lush gardens providing food for neighbours? If so come join us and see what all the BUZZZZ is about. (Meetings every second Friday, immediately following the club lunch.)

– by **Alanna Scott**, Chair of The Environment Committee

Marketing & Communications Committee Chair: Sylvia Geist
“Making A Difference” Issue Editor: Sylvia Geist



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Last weeks post reached over
1,040 people within the
same week.



Rotary Club of Toronto “Buzz Group”

- Elizabeth Simmie
- Arash Shahi
- Marcy Berg
- Rudy Haddad

The Rotary Club of Toronto Helps the Transformation of a Vacant Lot into a Vibrant and Productive Farm – by Rachel Kimel and Deena Delzotto

Have you ever thought about what you could do with a vacant piece of land? After years of driving by the same vacant lot, Deena and Rachel, co-founders of Bowery Project, started their non-profit with that very thought. Keen gardeners and active volunteers for The Stop Community Food Centre and Evergreen Brickworks Urban Agriculture, they thought, ‘why don’t we find out who owns this piece of land and grow food there!’

In 2013, Bowery Project was formed after many months of figuring out the best way to create a “mobile urban farm”. Bowery is a not-for-profit organization with a mission to create opportunities for urban agriculture through the temporary use of vacant lots. Our three-fold mission is to transform vacant spaces into vibrant and productive growing places, to engage and educate the community through urban farming experiences and environmental sustainability and to support the Farm-to-Table movement by providing locally grown food to restaurants, residents and community.

Last year, the developer Oben Flats who inspired our concept came to us to do an installation on his site at Sherbourne and Gerrard. We engaged hundreds of volunteers to help build, plant and maintain the container farm and we offered weekly programming to local community groups, the Native Women’s Resource Centre and the Robertson House Homeless Shelter.



It is with the generous support of The Rotary Club of Toronto that we are able to continue to connect community through the power of growing and eating organically grown food in the city. We look forward to having Rotary members join us on the farm, and getting their hands in the dirt!

The Rotary Club of Toronto Helps Build a Tool Utopia

– by **Ryan Dymant**, Executive Director Institute for a Resource-Based Economy



Toronto’s Sharing Economy continues to grow with many options to access the things you need once in a while rather than owning and storing everything. There are thousands of cars being shared through Car2Go and Turo, homes are shared through Airbnb and now, with the help of the Rotary Club, thousands of items are being shared in the Toronto Tool Library’s newest location on St. Clair West.



The Rotary Club of Toronto, President-Elect, Pat Neuman

The Toronto Tool Library (TTL) was originally founded with the simple idea that there were already tools being imprisoned in basements and garages around the city, many of which were used just a few times per year. The TTL decided to ‘free’ these tools and share them with the community. For an annual membership fee of just \$50, members can access hand, power and gardening tools that have been donated by Torontonians. Items such as ladders, wheelbarrows and hammer drills are available, reducing the need to buy and store these items yourself. In addition, this newest location hosts a Sharing Depot, a library of things that has items such as camping equipment, board games, toys and specialty items such as GoPro’s for loans of up to one week. By signing up, members can save money and reduce their environmental impact as sharing reduces the resources required to mine, manufacture, ship and ultimately dispose of these items.

The Rotary Club of Toronto And Rotaract Club helped with the renovations and provided financial support to enable the Tool Library to open their doors in April at 830 St. Clair West. Rotarians helped paint, build shelving and even pick up donations of tools from neighbours and in just over two weeks the newest Tool Library was open to the public. To learn more please visit torontotoollibrary.com or sharingdepot.ca.



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