

## Today's Program

Trish Long, Campaign Director

## Host

Kevin Power,  
Vice-President and  
District Tree Initiative

## Topic

Tribute to Highway  
of Heroes

## Location

The National Club,  
303 Bay Street



Trish started her career as a financial advisor before becoming a development professional in the non-profit sector. Her specialty has been to help get big projects off the ground. She ran the \$55 million campaign

for Evergreen Brick Works, launched a national major gift program for Crohn's and Colitis Canada, and directed the development team at the Pembina Institute, a clean energy think tank, through a significant period of growth. In a volunteer capacity, Trish is a steering committee member for a new charity called Shift, which is encouraging Canadian pension funds to disclose and adapt to climate risk.

## Notice Of Annual General Meeting

The Club's Annual General Meeting for the purpose of the approval of the audited Financial Statements for the year ended June 30, 2017 will be held during the regular lunch meeting on Friday, December 1, 2017 at the National Club. The Club's Financial Statements will be available for pick up at the Rotary office.

The Club's Annual General Meeting (part 2) for the purpose of electing a Vice President and four Directors for a three-year term commencing July 1, 2018; a Treasurer for the year 2018 2019 year and the election of Auditors; will be held during the regular lunch meeting on Friday, January 12, 2018.

## Roadmap to 2020, Update # 6 - Do you have programming skills?

The Club Assembly was held last week and it was a lot of fun. Prince Kumar facilitated our first foray into the new world of Google for Nonprofits. Brent Thomas had developed a survey application which we accessed through our phones or tablets. We all connected to the National Club Wi-Fi and the survey was completed by each of the Club members. This process gave everyone an opportunity to prioritize the initiatives for the Roadmap to 2020, based on their own perspective. Everyone had a voice. It was simple and interactive and the outcomes were posted 'live' on the screen at the front of the room.

## Next steps: WE NEED YOU!

We are now in the process of developing similar forms to streamline our processes for sign-up sheets for our fundraisers, volunteers for sweat equity projects and other applications. We need *'Forms gurus - members who are familiar with a little bit of programming to create some logic in the forms templates, when needed.'*

In the meantime, have a look at one simple form to provide electronic and direct feedback to the Club Executives anytime you like - go to: [survey.rotarytoronto.com](http://survey.rotarytoronto.com)

If you can help, please contact Prince Kumar or Barbara Thomson.

## DARZEE: Changing Lives One Stitch at a Time

- by Karen Scott



Last week our speaker Julie Mahfouz Rezvani talked about the DARZEE Pilot Program, which was launched in February 2017. Darzee, which means "tailor, seamstress and stitch" in Arabic, Hindi, Persian and Urdu, is dedicated to helping newly arrived refugee women develop and hone their sewing and marketing skills as a means of earning income and supporting their families.

More than 80 refugee women applied for the program, supported by the Alkhayyat Foundation Canada and COSTI, an immigrant settlement service agency. Twenty, some from as far as Kitchener and Uxbridge, were selected for the program, which ran each Saturday from February through April. The DARZEE ladies hail from all over the Middle East - Syria, Iraq, Libya, and Egypt.

The women all came with different levels of sewing skills and experience. They all want to utilize their skill-set, create and sell their own products," said Mes Amis' Executive director. "We guide them where they can get cheap, quality materials. We teach them about marketing, pricing and professionalism and skills they need to run a successful business." Under the supervision of industry professionals, for the duration of the program, Darzee participants were hard at work learning how to create patterns, mend, hem and fine stitch and offer alterations to the community at large. 18 very proud and happy women graduated from the program.

The DARZEE women have launched a line of products to celebrate Canada 150. DARZEE was also selected to participate in the creation of pillows for "Dream Variations", one of the top Nuit Blanche 2017 exhibits. At the beginning of November, hand-crafted Christmas ornaments went on sale at Holt Renfrew.

For more of the story, go to the following link: The Toronto Star <https://goo.gl/Ri2bfK>



DARZEE ladies hard at work during the pilot program.



## December Birthdays

- 3 Fabio Ventolini
- 5 Peter Simmie
- 6 James Burnett
- 9 John Farrell
- 13 Ed Ryder
- 16 Mary Lach
- 17 Eckhart Mehler
- 18 Alex Brown
- 22 Bill Empey
- 23 Hedley Hunter  
Chantelle McDonald
- 24 Peter Love
- 31 Rudy Haddad

## What You Missed November 24, 2017

- by Luba Rascheff



The lunch was an opportunity to welcome our entire Syrian Family. Father Muneer al Zahabi gave a short speech thanking the club for their sponsorship and saying how important it is to them to become good Canadians.

Today's guest speaker, Julie Mahfouz Rezvani, is passionate, committed, dedicated and devoted. Co-founder and Executive Director of Mes Amis Canada, she started this not-for-profit organization with neither money nor charity status. It was her desire, drive and determination—as well as the ability to leverage the power of social media—that enabled her to, thus far, help over 3,000 Syrian refugees.

Julie's strong desire to help stems from the fact that she was herself an immigrant to Canada and understands first hand the assimilation problems faced by immigrants. It's not merely a matter of meeting the refugees' material needs, Julie explained; immigrants must assimilate to life in Canada. "Canada must become home because if they don't integrate, they don't make it."

With only clothing and good will, Julie soon discovered that, despite a mixed reaction to the government's decision to take in 25,000 Syrians, most Canadians were touched by the tragic images they saw on television and started to form groups to sponsor refugees, which would become a model for private sponsorship.

The bags of clothing she started collecting for distribution soon became thousands of bags of clothing because Canadians had a longing to help. This endeavour began before the Syrians arrived in January, 2016.

The fact that most Canadians spend at least 40 minutes per day on Facebook meant that Mes Amis Canada's public Facebook group quickly ballooned from 200 to 10,000 members! This was followed by finding three partners - Jewish, Christian and Muslim organizations - evidence that compassion transcends religious boundaries and brings people together in a time of need.

Mes Amis Canada opened their first Refugee Shop in Scarborough where refugees could shop for free. They were able to choose clothes from off the racks that fit them—both in style and size—something which gave them back their sense of dignity. Major news stations like CNN, BBC and Al Jazeera started following the initiative's progress on Facebook and the organization was able to start fundraising.

Mes Amis Canada became an officially registered charity, partnered with St. Michael's Hospital, and began running eye clinics, highlighted in last week's Voice.

Another initiative was Darzee, which means "stitch"—a program for newcomer women with sewing skills. A more detailed article appears in this issue. Mes Amis Canada has helped over 3,000 refugees and certainly won't stop there.

The Ace of Clubs Draw had \$1,268. Rudy Haddad had the winning ticket and generously gave his bottle of wine to guest speaker Julie Rezvani.



Our al Zahabi family with Newcomer Committee members

## Upcoming Speakers & Events

### December 2017

- 8 Seniors Christmas Party
- 15 Club Christmas Party
- 22 & 29- NO MEETINGS – enjoy the holidays!

### January 2018

- 5 NO MEETING
- 12 Angie Draskovic, Yonge Street Mission
- 19 Patrick Boyer, former MP, Historian
- 26 Dr. Ernie Seaquist, The Search for New Worlds Like the Earth

### Events

December 2 - Children's Christmas Party

**Editor of the week**     **Editor for December 8, 2017**  
Brian Porter             Brigitte Bogar

**What You Missed Reporter for December 1, 2017**  
Glenn Davis

**Propose a Speaker – Contact**  
Mario Voltolina, Chair - mario.voltolina@gmail.com  
Tel: 416-720-7236

**Submit an article to the Voice Newsletter**  
therotaryvoice@gmail.com

**Editor-in-chief**  
Maureen Bird

## Your Fellowship and Entertainment Events

Please join us through the Holiday Season!

### December 2017

**Aga Khan Museum Visit**, Sunday December 10, 11.00 am, contact Rohit Tamhane or Brigitte Bogar for more info.

**Christmas Caroling indoors at St. Michael's Hospital**, Monday December 11, 6 pm, speak to John Joseph Mastandrea for details.

**Toronto Swedish Singers Christmas Concert**  
Sunday December 17, contact Lorna Johnson or Brigitte Bogar for more info.

### January 2018

**Polish dinner** Tuesday January 16, 2018 at CAFÉ POLONEZ, sign up with Mary Lach

**Whisky night at Feathers**, Tuesday January 23, 2018 contact Brent Thomas for more info.

**JOIN ROTARY NOW!**

[www.rotarytoronto.com](http://www.rotarytoronto.com)

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