

Rotary Club of Calgary West  
(A Year of Rotary Fun and Fellowship)

# The Weekly WESTERNER

Box 4572, Station C, Calgary, Alberta T2T 5N3  
Holiday Inn, McLeod Trail, Fridays 12:15 pm

**President:** Karl Herzog **President-Elect:** Sa'adat Keshavjee

**Past President:** Lynne Thornton **Secretary:** Ron Morrison

**Treasurer:** Des DeFreitas

**Directors:** Stan Beveridge, Ron Brookes, Bryden Horwood, Bruce Taylor  
Bernie Ward, David Williams



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It was like déjà-vu. We were back at our old home and it felt like we had never left. **Peter Christensen**, the GM of the Danish Canadian Club was there to greet us at the door. **Neal** was on the bar ready to pour libations for his favorite Friday regular guests. He and **Cindy** were serving our lunch tables like we had never left this establishment. Peter and Cindy even rolled in a piano for our own **Don Axford** to regale us with pre-luncheon tunes, a hearty rendition of *O Canada* led by **Des DeFreitas** with Don on the ivories, all followed by a thankful invocation by **Joe Klassen**.

To top things off and make our return even more homelike, we inducted **David Marshall** back into our club. His sponsor this time around was Joe Klassen. In 1984, David had been inducted into the Rotary Club of Calgary West right here at the Danish Canadian Club. In 1989, David welcomed Joe into the club as his sponsor. David then moved to the Sarcee Club for a while and has re-joined us by having Joe as his sponsor into the club, and inducted back in at the same spot as he was so many years earlier, at the Danish Canadian Club. To make this homecoming even more interesting, our guest speaker, **Bruce Dowbiggin**, commented that when he first moved to Calgary 15 or so years ago, his first speaking engagement was in this very same room at the Danish Canadian Club.

Prior to the meeting starting, there was much activity and fellowship, or as Don Axford calls it, friendship. **Marg Henschel** was on the front desk collecting cash. Marg, it was also announced, will be David Marshall's mentor in the club. (By the time you read this she will be off again in Ecuador!) She was accompanied by **Kurt Schurer** on 50/50 ticket sales. It was a big room (about 60 attendees) this week and Kurt did his best to maximize 50/50 revenue. As a result Don Axford, who was our lucky winner this week, walked away with a cool \$36! **Don Alexander** was proudly handing out Balzac Billy buttons for folks to wear and commented on the Balzac Billy breakfast on Groundhog Day was a huge turnout. Though Balzac has fewer than 50 permanent residents, a crowd of over 100 gathered for the Balzac Billy breakfast in Balzac to learn there would be eight more weeks of winter. Back from his sojourn, **Bill Tapuska** headed up a pre-luncheon meeting of his illustrious Speaker Committee as they continue to plan out our fantastic speaker program for the remainder of this Rotary year.

Also back from absences were **Ron Jones**, who had been in hospital, **Jim Barnes** returning from Mexico, and **Marie Rickard** from Guatemala. Speaking of Guatemala, **President Karl** is still over there so our "stand in" president for the day was non other than Past President and Past District Governor **Steve**

**Rickard.** Steve did a fine job getting the meeting started and rushing everything through to stay on time. Well done, Steve. He introduced his head table in record time with Don Axford and **Duncan Stanners** at either ends of the podium, this scribe as the person introducing our speaker, **Garfield Ganong** who thanked the speaker and our guest speaker Bruce Dowbiggin, whose name PDG Steve was able to butcher as a fine start.

**Marnie Cardel** was greeting all at the front door upon arrival and then introduced our visitors and guests in true Calgary West fashion with our welcome song accompanied by Don Axford on piano.

Steve also read a short homily and tribute to **Past District Governor Bill Gant** who passed away Sunday, January 31. Bill was an amazing Rotarian and he will be missed by us all.

**Ron Brookes** spoke about strawberry shortcakes urging the club members to get out and sell as, at time of writing, there were only at 2100 shortcakes sold. The last year we produced the shortcakes ourselves we made over 3500 and our big years at 5000 and 7500 shortcakes seem to be dwindling. We may need to look seriously at how we can revive this project and make it the money maker we had once hoped. Perhaps this and next year's boards need to really review this project, do a SWAT analysis and find out what we are doing right and continue to do it, and what has gone so horribly astray to have us drop from 7500 to possibly at best 2500 shortcakes and dip in net revenue from \$25,000 to \$10,000 and repair it.

Duncan Stanners gave us a great recap and proposed plan on future hands-on fellowship and community projects from his club survey. We learned that all the club members (and 51% of the club responded to the survey sent out by Duncan) were enthusiastic about such helping hands-on type volunteering projects. It was determined that monthly or quarterly would be a good frequency. It was determined, also, that the members would rather work and help different charities and projected each time versus working solely with just one or two specific ones always. The conclusions were that he and Janet Slemko would put this all in motion to work towards a monthly hands-on volunteer project for club membership/fellowship and assisting the community. Well done, Duncan!

It was noted that **Bob Kerr** would be turning 80 on February 6. Ron Jones was asked how old Bob would be and Ron replied that he could not divulge such information as Bob may want it kept quiet. When asked then what year Bob was born, Ron readily replied 1930, ensuring that he did not let us know Bob's actual age. Happy belated 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, Bob!

**Amy Schalin** then let the club know she was representing her employer, Bow Valley College, on a fantastic partnership project in Mozambique from which she had just returned and will be heading back to Mozambique 2-3 more times this year. What great work and opportunities. Well done, Amy!

Then **Marco**, our exchange student, who is living with Amy and her husband right now, told us the only reason Amy got the job was that the official language of Mozambique was Portuguese and Amy was the only staff member in her department at Bow Valley College who could speak Portuguese and thus a shoe-in for the job. Yikes Marco, have you ever heard the phrase about "biting the hand that feeds you"? You may be eating bread and water for the next several weeks!! Marco also spoke about his break from school during exams and how he passed all of them, his time spent with other exchange students and he thanked **Chris Davis** for the donation of Chris's Air miles to allow Marco to travel to Mexico!

**Bernie Ward** reminded us all that the Integrity Awards were being held on Monday, March 1, and that seating was limited to this annual event that will sell out. So, if you want tickets, be sure to contact Bernie ASAP.

It was noted that on all the tables business cards for the club and brochures about Rotary and our club were available for members to take and hand out to prospective new members. This was all done by our membership committee lead by the absent **Mike French** and his partner in crime, **Stan Cichon**.

Speaking of Stan, he was our illustrious sergeant-at-arms this week. And when PP/PDG Steve invited him to the podium for sergeant-at-arms duties as the first speaker after finishing lunch, Stan was dumbfounded and caught off guard. He expected the norm where the sergeant is called up just before the speaker. Due to being in a fluster, Stan awarded all club members a \$1 credit for the day. He then went on to say he was disgusted at other sergeants (looking directly at this meek and mild mannered reporter) who fined club members for the sake of just filling the coffers for the club. He was so distraught by these past episodes that he suspended any fines for this week. He did though introduce the new “Happy Tooney” opportunity. As he focused on many newsworthy announcements such as the new 12 set of Tiger Woods golf balls now available, he provide the “opportunity” for those related to the story in any way (such as if they were a golfer in this example) to provide Happy Tooney to be so associated. Through this proactive and “encouragement to be happy” approach, Stan’s haul made this reporter’s sergeant collations look like a mere pittance of giving. I am not sure whether to say well done Stan or not.

### **Guest Speaker**

I was then called upon to introduce the speaker, sports columnist for the Globe and Mail, Bruce Dowbiggin. I was told not to do a typical introduction that drones on to seem like a second guest speaker (we all know those introductions and groan through them), but be short and sweet. And thus I was. For those not in attendance, I said, “Many of you probably read this columnist’s rants, or hear him on the radio or see him on TV. If you have not yet had the pleasure, you will probably seek out his column or radio or TV show tomorrow after hearing him today. Here is Bruce Dowbiggin.”

Bruce went on to thank us for the opportunity to speak to us and how his father had been a Rotarian back in Montréal (Where the RI Convention will be held this year. Are you registered?) where he grew up and was schooled. He shamelessly plugged his new book and past books and made sure we were all aware they were available for sale after the meeting and he would be glad to autograph them for people. He also donated a copy to the club for a Dutch auction. At the end of the meeting as the room cleared out, the audience was obviously enthralled with the presentation because there were very few if any books left on his table to autograph or sell.

Bruce spoke about his “rebirth” as a Westerner. He talked about how his friends back in Quebec and his peers in Ontario where he had worked for so many years were dumbfounded by his allegiance to Western Canada. He, his wife and family have truly become westerners and are proud to say so.

He regaled us with a reading from his most recent book about “Canadians cheering for the Ottawa Senators” in 2007 when they were the last Canadian team in the playoffs. It was a witty and hilarious satire on why we as Calgarians should jump on the bandwagon for Ottawa. Furthermore, he read the reply by Sheila Cops who was writing for the Ottawa Sun at the time and how she took everything (as usual) out of context. It was hilarious to hear. Bruce then opened the floor to questions, as he knew there would be many. They ranged from the future of a salary cap in the league, to Iggy’s role or reality in the dressing room, to the Dion Phaneuff trade and more. Again our speaker committee has outdone itself on arranging of speakers for the club this year.

As a background on Bruce here is what I learned about him as well. Bruce Dowbiggin's career is unmatched in Canada for its diversity and breadth of experience. His career has included successful stints in television, radio and print. A two-time winner of the Gemini Award as Canada's top television sports broadcaster for his work with CBC-TV, Mr. Dowbiggin is also the best-selling author of "Money Players" (finalist for the 2004 National Business Book Award) and his new book “The Meaning Of Puck: How

Hockey Explains Modern Canada". His ground-breaking investigations into the life and times of Alan Eagleson led to his selection as the winner of the Gemini for Canada's top sportscaster in 1993 and again in 1996. This work earned him the reputation as one of Canada's top investigative journalists in any field.

After starting in journalism as the Sports Editor of TV Guide magazine, Mr. Dowbiggin began his broadcasting career with CBC Radio in 1984 as the sports anchor for "Metro Morning" and "Ontario Morning". In 1985, he moved on to CBC-TV as the sports anchor for "The Six O'clock News" and "CBC At Eleven" on CBC Toronto. In 1990, he moved to CBC Newsworld where he created and hosted a series of popular programs including "The National Sports", "Game Night" and "Sports Connection". Dowbiggin anchored CBC Newsworld's coverage of the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympics and the 1994 Commonwealth Games in Victoria. In 1998, he was the anchor for CBC Radio coverage of the winter Olympics in Nagano.

In addition to his duties as a sports journalist and anchor, he has also contributed to "The National" and "The National Magazine" on CBC, "The Journal", "CBC Middy", TVO's "Studio Two", CTV's "Canada A.M.", "Flames TV" and numerous other programs in Canada and the United States. In 1996-97, Mr. Dowbiggin co-hosted "Double Play", a daily two-hour radio journal on The Fan 590 radio in Toronto. In 2006- 2007, he hosted the afternoon show on the Fan 960 in Calgary. He continues as a guest host on the Fan 960 Calgary. As well, he has hosted or contributed to a wide range of radio programs including "As it Happens", "Sunday Morning" on CBC Radio and Calgary Flames broadcasts in Calgary.

Mr. Dowbiggin joined the Calgary Herald in November 1998 as the Featured Sports Columnist. Since then, he has been a frequent contributor to CBC TV, CBC Radio, TV Ontario and other outlets. He was also the co-host of "The Things We Do For Love", a lifestyles documentary program on the Life Channel. A documentary film version of his book "The Stick" was produced in 2004. Mr. Dowbiggin's writing career is varied and eclectic. He is the author of the book "The Defense Never Rests" for Harper Collins, an investigation of the NHL Pension Fund Scandal (1993). His next books were the bestsellers "Of Ice and Men" (1998) and "The Stick" (2001), both published by MacFarlane, Walter and Ross. "Money Players" (2003) and "The Meaning of Puck" (2008) were both published by Key Porter books. He has also been a book reviewer for the Toronto Star and the Globe and Mail, and he has been published in newspapers, and magazines ranging from Maclean's to Toronto Life to Elm Street.

His writing also extended to the theatre. His play "Exact Change" was produced by the Tarragon Theatre (1977) and another work, "Cheating", was produced by The Buddies in Bad Times Theatre Group (1978). Mr. Dowbiggin attended the National Theatre School of Canada and worked with the Canadian Opera Company, the National Arts Centre, the Tarragon Theatre and the St. Lawrence Centre. His poetry and prose have also been included in several literary collections in Canada.

After several false stops and questions, Garfield Ganong thanked Bruce, awarded him with our world famous Boltman. As well, Mike Carlin conducted a Dutch auction raising \$50 for the Mexico project though the donation of an autographed copy of Bruce's book. The winner was **Verneil Martin!**

President "du jour" Steve then reminded club members that next week there would be no meeting as we will be out delivering Strawberry Shortcakes, and the following week we will be back at the Holiday Inn with a visit and presentation by District Governor Steve Allan.

#### Coming Events

February 12	<b>No Meeting</b>
February 19	District Governor 5360 – Steve Allen
February 26	TBA
March 5	Roland George – National Energy Board

March 12	Cpl Bill Hamilton and Targo – RCMP Canine Division
March 19	City of Calgary Alderman, Jim Stevenson – the Airport Tunnel
March 26	Sherri Zickafoose – Calgary Herald Crime Beat
April 2	<b>Good Friday – No Meeting</b>
April 9	Exchange Students – Marco and Andrea