

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

The Weekly WESTERNER

Box 4572, Station C, Calgary, Alberta T2T 5N3, La Joie de Vivre, Fridays 12:15 pm

President: Lynne Thornton **President-Elect:** Karl Herzog

Past President: Garfield Ganong **Secretary:** Ron Morrison

Treasurer: Mike French

Directors: Stan Beveridge, Garth Evans, Mark Ferguson, Margot McDermott,
Marie Rickard, Jim Walker

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At the welcoming table, **Clarence Buckley** and **Jim Barnes** almost made one feel good about giving up \$20 for the meeting.

David Williams, standing close to the rack of badges, was mistaken as being the greeter, but closer examination revealed he was merely fiddling with an iPod-like device with limited success.

[**Publisher's Note:** I was not "fiddling"! I was browsing the Kuk Sool video segments on my Zune (NOT iPod) to show **Karl Herzog** some self-defence techniques called too kis (that's Korean!).]

A whole lot of microphone testing was going on with seemingly greater success.

Another good crowd: someone counted 67 including 13 guests, with good fellowship and lots of good conversation raising the pre-meeting decibel level.

In keeping with the Grey Cup weekend, diehard Stampeder fan **Ted Valentine** was seen trying to pass off **Charles Buchanan** as Henry Burriss. No one bit on that! Charles is better looking.

President Lynne, trading in her trademark wide-brimmed hat for a Calgary Stampeder cap, started the meeting right on time and, while fighting off the pesky gremlin in the microphone, led all in a rousing cheer of GO STAMPS GO!

Don Axford, caught up with the occasion, with added gusto, led us in an upbeat tempo version of "O Canada".

Frank Burns blessed the meal, and a good meal it was, with veggie soup, salad and a different but tasty variation of beef stroganoff, finished off with cherry crumble. **Chris Lee**, of course, commented how good the cherries were!

President Lynne cut into the fellowship sharply at 12:40 by introducing our head table: **Mike French**, **Bill Lawless** and **Bryden Horwood** on one side, with special guests from Winnipeg, **Gail and Alex Zahradnitzky** on the other side. Gail and Alex have been involved in the Guatemala project helping with securing CRCID matching grants from the Canadian International Development Agency.

Kurt Schurer introduced the 13 guests and visitors including former member **Elizabeth Gibbs**, guest of **Des DeFreitas** who afterwards got a lot of hugs from the guys (Elizabeth, not Des).

Announcements

President Lynne remarked upon the wonderful Christmas Party at the country club and thanked the organizers, **Stan Cichon**, **Verneil Martin**, **Jane Beveridge**, **Eileen DeFreitas** and **Margot McDermott**. And another first by Calgary West! The inaugural “So You Think You Can Dance Competition” won in spectacular fashion by **Dan and Marlene Doherty**.

Exchange student **Valerie** reported on another busy week: Christmas party, Feed the Hungry, Flames game, band concert, and bull riding championships! All that activity and Valerie still keeps getting great marks in school!

Garfield Ganong proposed a motion to the club that the name of Mike French be advanced as our club’s nomination for the position of Rotary District Governor. It was carried unanimously by a show of hands.

Bill Tapuska, momentarily abandoning his task of reporter, announced that tickets for the 11th Annual Rotary Family Christmas brunch will go on sale at next week’s meeting: adults \$25, children 12 and under \$15. The place is Pinebrook Golf Club on Sunday, December 21, at 11AM. Entertainment afterwards by the 35 member large “Rhythm of the Rockies” featuring our own Eileen DeFreitas.

If Heritage Park is on your agenda during the 12 days of Christmas, be sure to stop at **Sam and Betty Switzer’s** General Store and Confectionary, just opened last week.

Dan Doherty reported that **Robyn Braley** is out of hospital, recovering at home and would like to hear from us.

John Rymes and President Lynne attended this year’s annual “Connie Rymes Award” at Mount Royal College, which was given to a student whom Lynne describes as a “delightful young lady”.

It was reported that about 450 meals were served last Sunday at our annual Feed the Hungry event. Chris Lee was heard to remark that the smaller than usual number was probably due to his cooking.

An unhappy note from past president: **Cam Wright** has announced that he and **Carol** have moved to Osoyoos, BC, and would be resigning from our club to join another club in the sunny Okanagan.

Sergeant-at-Arms

Derek McClary declared the Christmas party was a great success and fined everyone who didn’t make it. He inexplicably stumbled on **Ron Jones’** name and quickly reached into his own pocket to calm the growing cries for a self-fine.

Steve Rickard anteed up “Happy Bucks” of \$5 for a Micro Credit workshop, followed in order by Elizabeth Gibbs who was happy to be present, Ron Jones on Mike French’s nomination and Dan Doherty on two RYLA graduates going to Birmingham for the RI Convention.

Brent Barootes reminded everyone to register for the District Conference: \$199 per person before the end of November, \$100 of which will be deducted from the next years’ Rotary dues.

50/50 Draw

And, in keeping with being the hospitable club for which we are noted, we allowed visitor **Don Humphreys** to abscond with \$32.50!

Guest Speaker

Mike French introduced Bill Lawless. Bill is our International Director and went to Guatemala with Clarence and **Evelyn Buckley**.

Bill went on to overwhelmingly demonstrate that our very best presentations are often given by our own members.

Bill started by turning on an assisted listening device to help a guest of his. He spoke about the project entitled "Building Basic Education in Guatemala". There are 63 villages in need of school classrooms. The village of Los Chivitos was selected as the initial project. Two classrooms and a playground were built with funds supplied: \$10,000 from Calgary West Rotary, \$5,000 from the Rotary Club of Canmore and \$13,500 supplied by CRCID.

[**Publisher's Note:** CRCID stands for Canadian Rotary Collaboration for International Development. For more information, the website address is www.crcid.org.]

The inauguration was on October 1, 2008, and a plaque was given to our club to commemorate the event.

In the Los Chivitos region, the illiteracy rate is about 75%. Families average five to eight members in size. Crowding in classrooms is "unbelievable" often in makeshift rooms or in "lean-tos" in unsafe and "deplorable" conditions.

The plan is to complete 12 classrooms in the next three years, including water filtration in each classroom. The budget is projected to be \$300,000 over the next three years with Calgary West supplying \$15,000, Canmore \$10,000, Wild Rose \$30,000 and the rest from CRCID.

Accountability for budget, equipment and banking is done by the Rotary Club of Guatemala, and the villages would provide the labour and ongoing commitment.

There will be an opportunity for more of our members to go to Guatemala early in 2010.

In response to a question, Bill indicated that the children were beautiful, happy, wanted to learn and especially wanted to learn more about Canada.

Bill was thanked by Bryden Horwood. Bryden also made special note of our guests who were connected to this project: Jan Townsend, founder of "Hearts and Hands" and a Rotarian from Canmore, **Doug Jones**, also a Rotarian from Canmore and a Director of "Hearts and Hands", Alex and Gail Zahradnitzky from Winnipeg, who put together the funding through the "Ripple Effect Program" working with CRCID and a network of Rotarians and authorities in Guatemala.

And of course, our own Evelyn Buckley, who, along with Clarence, has also been actively involved and recently visited the site.

All of these guests came to hear our Bill and were not disappointed.

A very good meeting, November 21!

Next week: a secret mystery speaker. Don't miss it!