

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

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

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President Lynne kicked off the meeting with a comment on the recent election. She thanked those who voted and said that those who didn't vote had no right to complain! Next she mentioned **Dan Doherty** and his crew who were in Ensenada, Mexico, building houses. Dan and some of his crew have been taking Spanish lessons prior to leaving in order to better communicate when they got there. Apparently Dan sent an email entirely in Spanish!

Joining President Lynne at the head table were **Steve Rickard** (introducing) and **David Elson** (thanking) as well as our guest speaker, **Alex Counts**, and two of Alex's associates, **Margo Purcell** and **Chris Dendy** who is the national director of Results Canada.

Don Axford led us in the singing of our national anthem. Don recently had a successful eye operation.

Roger Joki gave the invocation.

The head table then led the stampede to the buffet table!

Holland Berry introduced our visitors and guests.

Because of his Microcredit contacts, Steve Rickard was able to get Alex Counts to come to our meeting to address us. Alex is the President of the Grameen Foundation which provides innovations in the area of microfinance to move people out of poverty. Alex is in town to address the Results Canada annual Calgary meeting on Saturday.

Today is **Marg Henschel's** birthday. Happy Birthday Marg!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The club assembly held last week was a success despite the comparatively low attendance of 34.

The Millennium Club's October 22 meeting is cancelled because they are having their Black Tie Bingo on Oct 23. Hopefully some of our members will be able to attend this.

The CWRC Christmas Party is scheduled for November 14 at the Calgary Country Club. Ticket prices are \$60 a head and can be obtained from **Stan Cichon**.

Bob James of the Centennial Club promoted his club's Anna Marie Kaufman Concert to be held on November 12. Anna Marie Kaufman is an Alberta born opera singer who is currently based in Germany. This looks to be an enjoyable and memorable evening for us "bel canto" fans!

Frank Burns announced that our outward bound exchange student, **Emily Halloran**, made it to Brazil OK and is doing well.

50/50 DRAW

Ron Staughton won the 50/50 draw of \$26. Congratulations Ron!

SERGEANT AT ARMS

Charles Buchanan was the meanie this week! He adopted the superficial guise of a nice guy and still got me for \$2. A steel fist in a velvet glove is our Charles!

PROGRAMME

Steve Rickard introduced our guest speaker Alex Counts of the Grameen Foundation. Alex has had over 20 year experience in Microcredit and has worked with Dr. Mohammed Yunis, the creator of Microcredit and the 2006 winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. Alex has recently published a book **Small Loans Big Dreams** on how Microcredit is changing the world.

Fighting global poverty is an enormous challenge but Microcredit offers one of the best hopes for matching the sheer magnitude of this global problem. According to the Microcredit Summit Campaign, 113 million people are already receiving these essential financial services. By rapidly scaling up microfinance and other poverty fighting initiatives, we can spare millions from living in miserable conditions. Alex gave the example of "mud cookies". These are cookies literally made of mud which are consumed by starving people in Haiti. They taste terrible and have little or no nutritive value but they do quell hunger pangs.

Alex gave us several examples of Microcredit successes, such as the village telephone system where one person acquires a cell phone and then permits her friends and neighbours to use it for a modest fee. This makes telecommunications widely available at a low cost. Had this existed in Rwanda it's likely the slaughter there could have been prevented.

Alex's book was auctioned off Dutch Auction style by President Lynne who did a passable imitation of Mike Carlin in the process! Much to my surprise, I was one of the winners!

David Elson thanked Alex most eloquently and provided him with his Boltman.

Programme

October 24: Major Harold from the Military Museum.