



The Weekly Westerner

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

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It was Robbie Burns day at Calgary West!! **Bob Kerr** was wearing his finest Scottish tartan and cut a splendid sartorial figure. Following *O Canada* and the grace by **David Marshall**, Bob launched into the **Ode to the Haggis** in fine style – and without notes. Of course, the deal is, even if he forgot most of the words and bluffed his way, we wouldn't know the difference because it isn't written in English as we know it! However, that said, it was a fine rendition and we all loved it.

The haggis was formally and properly “piped” in with **Don Axford** on the keyboard and the whole kitchen staff of the Holiday Inn proudly accompanying that fat and smelly sausage. They had gone to some trouble and created it just for us. The only thing it lacked was a thorough dousing of fine Scotch whisky. Oh well.

Following a lunch of soup, sandwiches and haggis, **President Grant Ritchie** introduced his head table: **Helen King, Joy Johnson-Green, Frank Burns, Ted Valentine and Jim Willson**. Visitors and guests were welcomed.

Robyn Braley told us the CTV special on Rotary will air in February. He'll remind us of the date as we get closer. An interesting note for a future programme at Calgary West is in two weeks: the **Senior Vice President of TransCanada Pipelines** will be the speaker. It is a lucky coincidence that he was booked some time ago, before the XL pipeline was “turned down”. Stay tuned and mark **February 3** on your calendar. Bring a friend. Bring a future Rotarian.

Strawberry Shortcakes is on for February 14 again, thanks to **Ron Brookes** for stepping up and taking over from **Marnie Cardell** who is looking after some urgent family matters. We will be assembling the cakes at the Danish Canadian Club on Feb 13th in the afternoon and evening and delivering on the 14th. Please be prepared to lend a helping hand.



Karl Herzog's Motive Action casino is February 18th and 19th. He's still looking for volunteers on that Family Day weekend.

Tim Anderson won the 50/50 for the second week in a row. There is luck in the water on the west side countryside!

THE WORLD'S NEWEST ROTARIANS

What a special day! Two dynamic and interesting women joined Calgary West.

Jim Willson introduced **Gail Williams** (Trust Services), originally from Edmonton and raised with five brothers, so you know she's feisty! She's been in the trust industry for ages and retired in 2011. She loves travelling, cooking, golf, and service to others. Gail was first introduced to Rotary through a friend who persuaded her to travel to Africa to participate in a Polio Plus immunization day. She's worked with Girl Guides and is already signed up to do the house build with **Dan Doherty** in Ensenada in the spring.

Dick Brown introduced **Wynn Carr** (Realtor), originally from Liverpool, England, and immigrated to Calgary as a teen. Wynn was a paralegal in the oil and gas industry, and graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Calgary. She worked with Remax for 12 years, being very active with the Children's Miracle Network. Wynn just recently transferred to Sotheby's International. When she's not tied up selling high end homes, you could find her involved in her hobbies of painting, photography, cooking and travelling with her husband, Angelo, and as a volunteer tutor to kids in grades one and two for Calgary Reads.

Ted Valentine gave the charge and Gail and Wynn were presented with their brand new Rotary pins and name tags. Welcome!

Ted Valentine pulled double duty as he was also the sergeant-at-arms for the day. However, he was more into celebrating birthdays and **Bryden Horwood** and Helen King were recognized for their birthdays in January. In advance of his February birthday, Ted was promoting having your photo taken with **Bob Kerr** in celebration of Robbie Burns. **Joe Klassen** was missing in action, and that was too bad because it was his birthday on Friday the 20th.

GUEST SPEAKER

Frank Burns was delighted to introduce Dr. Joy Johnson-Green. Joy is the Executive Director of **Sonshine Community Services**, a facility providing assistance to victims of domestic violence. Joy's previous life includes the executive director of the Calgary Women's Shelter and she was recognized as the "Inspiring Person of the Year".



Domestic violence can happen at any level of society, at any social or economic level and in any culture. We all probably know someone who has been affected by the problem. Alberta has the highest rate of domestic violence in the country. The city of Calgary has been assisting women and children through the longest established network. Calgary city police respond to 30,000 calls a year involving physical assaults, plus there are the verbal abuse cases and the financial abuses. Eighty-five percent of the cases are against women, but men are also victims.

There are two levels of women's shelters. The first is an emergency shelter where typically a woman and her children flee to for protection from an enraged partner who is threatening her and the children. This shelter can only accommodate the family or the single woman for 21 days. That is often not enough time for healing, counselling, finding new and safe accommodation, and perhaps finding a new job.

Sonshine Community Services is the second level of assistance. A woman and her children can live safely with Sonshine for up to a whole year in an independent living unit. While she and her children are there, they receive counselling for all aspects of life, mentoring, education and generally raising her self-esteem in a safe environment. The children also receive counselling to try to break the cycle of children who have seen and experienced abuse becoming abusers themselves. Children will tell it like it really is when mom is still in denial and tell what they saw and experienced. Over time, children become immune to the physical and mental pain and anguish. Sonshine Community Services works with the kids to re-programme their responses and re-educate them for more appropriate behaviour.

Domestic violence and abuse is the single biggest reason for homelessness in women. Sonshine is a physically safe building with cameras everywhere, double doors in the entryway and lots of police protection. Women are urged to not return to their homes to pick up "stuff" because it has proven to be very unsafe with unpredictable behaviour from the remaining partner. The average woman in this situation attempts to leave the relationship seven times before she is successful at making a good break.

Breaking the cycle is a very big part of the work Sonshine does. To that end, they are actively working with the school system to begin teaching the kids at the elementary level the concept of respect – respect for themselves, for others, and for different ideas.

In the questions following her presentation, Joy, an immigrant herself (albeit a long time ago), was adamant that people coming to make a new life in Canada must understand that it is a privilege, not a right, and we must teach them what is acceptable, what the rules are and what are the consequences if those rules are broken. It is not acceptable to bring customs that involve abuse of any sort, to anyone, to Canada.



Helen King had the privilege of thanking Dr. Johnson-Green for her passion and dedication and a very moving talk. Dr. Joy was delighted with her new desk ornament, our world famous Boltman.

Coming Events

January 27	Jody Hoad, PR specialist: the art of public engagement (government/industry)
February 3	Paul Miller, SVP Oil Pipelines, TransCan, Keystone
February 10	Dr Sam Lee, University of Calgary research: Alcohol, the Good, Bad, Ugly.
February 17	Classification talks
February 24	Din Ladak, CEO Catholic Immigrant Service
March 2	Tent Field Trip, Tsu T'ina First Nations Reserve
March 9	Peter Menzies, CRTC Commissioner
March 16	Karl Herzog, Organiser of Rotary Everest Trek 2012
March 23	
March 30	Kimberly Cornish, Permaculture Project, Eastern Namibia/Botswana
April 6	Meeting Cancelled
April 13	
April 20	Assembly
April 27	Four Way Test