



The Weekly Westerner

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

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Calgary West went on a “field trip” to the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) over in Bridgeland.

President-elect, **Don Bateman** was chairman for the day and did a super job on very short notice. **Robyn Braley** led us in *O Canada* and **Ted Valentine** followed with a grace for the day including a PS “Bless the lunch for this bunch”. Lunch was soup and a variety of deli sandwiches in a bright and sunny south exposure room with noisy Rotarian conversation.

Marie Rickard passed on the info from the Rotary club of **Calgary Crowchild Urban Spirits** as they are presenting the **Trelawny Male Choir** touring western Canada. The choir has performed at venues such as the Sidney Opera House and the Esplanade Theatre in Singapore with performances benefitting local charities. The Trelawny Male Choir is performing in Calgary, October 10, at Knox United Church, a splendid acoustic venue. The proceeds of the concert will benefit the **Curley Galbraith Global Memorial Fund**. Tickets are \$20 before October 10 and \$25 at the door. Doors open at 6PM with the concert starting at 7PM. Knox is located at 506 4th Street S.W. Contact crowchildrotary@gmail.com for tickets or www.crowchildrotary.com for ticket information.

“Beer for a Year” is coming to a close. **Bill Quinney** reminded us we need to turn in any unsold tickets next week. The draw is soon.

Mr. Micro Credit, Steve Rickard, is looking for more support from interested Rotarians in the newest extension of Microcredit as we know it. It’s called “social business” where all the profits go to projects to help the poor through education, clean water and health care. Devastating poverty can be further altered through this new Microcredit initiative called social business. The Calgary Microcredit Conference 2011 takes place Saturday, October 1, at the Danish Canadian Club, 727 11th Ave, S.W. Tickets are \$90 and include lunch. For more info, or to register, go to: www.calgarymicrocreditconference.com. The day features renowned international speakers and should be very interesting.



With the weekend blitz for the **Calgary Food Bank**, **Joe Klassen** has identified an urgent need by the Food Bank for help in packing boxes and loading shelves. Calgary West is assisting with volunteers. Our first call is for Wednesday as there have been a couple of cancellations from the volunteer pool. Come to sort and pack from 8:30 to 11:30 AM at 5000 11th Street S.E. Call Joe for further clarification.

Our “5 in 1” membership initiative is coming along. **Garfield Ganong** says he has three or four teams registered so far. The rest of us are working on it, getting organized. Honest!!!

Robyn Braley had a report from our project in Guatemala updating us on their progress. There have been a couple of glitches with weather and roads, but nothing to stop the progress.

A reminder: our **assembly will be October 21**, at the Holiday Inn at our regular luncheon meeting. That should ensure a good turn out and a good time constraint.

By the time this Westerner reaches you **Larry Doyle** and his merry crew will have cleaned up the ditches of our section of Highway 1 west of Calloway Park. They had a terrific day, weather-wise.

Larry is also in charge of **golf**: the last game slated for October 3, tentatively at McKenzie Meadows. While Larry is off on holiday, **Mike Carlin** is organizing the day.

SPEAKER

Robyn Braley introduced **Cathy McFee**, Executive Director of Calgary’s **CNIB**. Cathy gave us a bit of the history of the CNIB, started by Colonel Baker who returned from WWI blinded. He realized returning vets needed support if they had suffered from the effects of mustard gas (and other causes) from the war. Now the CNIB is a “nationwide community-based registered charity committed to public education, research and vision health for all Canadians” with 60 offices across Canada.

Cathy said 75% of all vision loss is preventable. **Regular maintenance and screening** with your eye doctor is critical for prevention. The CNIB educates on genetics, prevention and lifestyle changes like quitting smoking and diet to prevent diabetes. Through education, the CNIB is creating a national voice to break down barriers of discrimination, because every 12 minutes someone becomes vision impaired, the most common cause being AMD (age-related macular degeneration). That number is set to double in the very near future as the baby boomers get to be a “certain age”. New treatment for AMD is reducing the devastating effects of sight loss.

At present, one million Canadians have vision loss. CNIB provides support services to this community - 10% of whom are totally blind and 90% of whom have some vision. They also work closely with the Children’s Hospital, providing support and rehab to children and their



parents. The CNIB is funded 25% by the government and the remaining 75% through private and corporate donors. About 16% of that comes from the United Way.

About 80% of what we normally learn comes through our eyes.

TOUR

Our first stop was an intriguing space for kids. Ted Valentine tried out a bench that made different sounds, and Don Bateman tried his hand at the big yellow barrels with Xs and Os on them for a game of “noughts and crosses”. There were library books with pictures, braille and regular script. A blind parent could read to the child and the child could follow along with the pictures and text. There’s a toy lending library, descriptive videos where the action is described, lots of bright colours, a place mat set up with knives and forks, bowls, plate and mugs – all sorts of daily living tactile settings, plus a fabulous outdoor playground.

We stepped outside into a “fragrant garden”, established in 1996 so the trees and bushes are mature, the perennials well established and the annuals winding down. The pathways are smooth and well defined. All the plants can be touched, smelled and listened to as the breeze ruffles through the leaves and the sweet sounds of a waterfall indicates the end of the path. The public is welcome any time.

A suite is set up for support in learning daily living skills in the kitchen to work with a real stove, sink, microwave, cutlery drawer, a special timer - you name it, it’s there. The next room has a bed to learn how to make a bed, iron clothes, use a sewing machine, a place to organize day to day things like the sock drawer. Really basic tasks we don’t give a second thought to as we are sighted, but difficult and frustrating with limited, or no, vision.

There’s a craft room where people produce neat projects for themselves, family or for sale at a crafts fair. A computer room houses about a dozen computers. Large screens are available, as are Braille overlays for the keyboards, scanners, printers, and voice activated computers. A store on the main floor boasts a wide variety of useful devices from magnifiers of every shape, size and description, for all kinds of applications. We spotted personal grooming devices, kitchen aids, sunglasses, games, large print calendars and address books, all for sale.

The range of counselling services are amazing. There’s a fit for all ages, all difficulties, for people with vision loss and for the people they live with. There is support for the family, seniors, employment support and mentoring, intervention for the deaf and blind person to help with shopping, getting to the doctors, using the transit system. Independent living is a goal and the CNIB works to help manage the essentials with safe and effective methods.

The CNIB is an amazing resource in our community. If you know of someone who needs assistance, it’s worth investigating, because a tour and a meeting with the very helpful people there would indeed “open your eyes”!



My group’s guide was **Pam Swann**, who worked with us last Christmas as we sold the beautiful balsam wreaths. She was full of useful information and so patient with our questions. It was a terrific experience. Thanks to Robyn Braley, **Marg Henschel** and Don Bateman for putting it all together.

Don did a super job of thanking all the CNIB staffers and Cathy McFee for their efforts on our behalf.

Coming Events

	New Generations Month
September 23	Pam Swan: Field Trip, CNIB
September 30	Alex Counts, President, Grameen Foundation USA
	Vocational Service
October 7	Dr Elizabeth Cannon, President, University of Calgary
October 14	Inbound and Outbound Students
October 21	Assembly
October 28	Everett Andrews, Magician Extraordinaire
	Rotary Foundation Month
November 4	District Governor Mike French
Sunday, November 6	Feed the Hungry, St Mary’s Church
Thursday, November 10	All clubs Remembrance Day ceremony at the Ogden Legion. Lt Governor Ethal will be the speaker.
November 11	Meeting cancelled
November 18	Calgary Rotary Foundation: Dan Doherty
November 25	Grey Cup Weekend – Special Program
	Rotary Family Month
December 2	Bill and Maxine Lawless: Guatemala
December 9	RYLA Presentation: Report from participants
December 16	Special Program – TBA
December 18	Rotary Family Christmas Brunch, Pinebrook Golf Club
December 23	Meeting Cancelled
December 30	Happy New Year – Special Program