

The Weekly Westerner

Box 4572, Station C, Calgary, Alberta T2T 5N3
Grey Eagle Hotel, 3777 Grey Eagle Drive (Corner of 37 St SW and Glenmore Drive)
Mondays 12:10 pm - 1:30 pm

President: Bill Fitzsimmons **President-Elect:** Marlene Doherty **Past President:** Gerry Meek
Secretary: Gail Williams **Treasurer:** Dan Pigeon
Directors: Judy Cochran, Gord Cox, Darren Grierson, Barb Hames,
Ken Montgomery, Drew Turnbull

Together We Are People of Action - Building Community

August 31, 2020 Edition: 54. 8 Reporter: Judy Cochran Editor: David Williams

Fall is soon upon us, but it was pleasant outside today. **President Bill Fitzsimmons** welcomed guests and visitors. The meeting was underway at 12:03 pm with 39 participants on the Zoom call.

Visitors included: **Hyder Hassan**, RC of Fish Creek; **Ben Kormos**, Past President of RCCW and today's speaker; **Sebastiao Vidigal** and **Nelson Leite**, RC of Belo Horizonte Liberdade in Brazil; **Carla Hamarsnes**, Rotary Employment Partnership Program; **Rod McMahon**, recently moved from Nova Scotia; and Ben's wife, **Vivian Morales**.

Announcements

- Carla Hamarsnes is looking for a Rotary rep from our club to work with the committee. The purpose of the committee is to provide employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities and to act as ambassadors for the partnership to their fellow Rotarians, to employers and to the Calgary community. **Alex McFadden** resigned, leaving RCCW as the only club in the District without a rep. Contact President Bill if you are interested.
- **Barb Hames** announced an upcoming social distancing event outside at the **Buckleys'** on September 13, for some fellowship and wonderful music presented by Foothills Brass. Watch your email for all the details.
- **Ken Montgomery** shared some pictures of a cheque presentation made by **Don Edie** to "I Can for Kids". The total amount raised from cherry sales was \$4,000 topped up by \$4,000 match from Save On Foods. Congrats to the fundraising team and thanks for your support!

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- The roses fundraiser is underway. Please do anything and everything you can to get the word out – send it to your book club or to your community association. Sales end September 10. One dozen roses cost \$35.

Gord Cox presented the results of the recent survey sent to all club members. 50 members responded. Watch for details on when and how we may get back to the Grey Eagle. A 50/50 draw may not be feasible with social distancing requirements.

- 1) 80% of members plan to attend physical meetings.
- 2) 58% prefer four people to a table.
- 3) 50% would like two physical meetings per month
- 4) Mixed response on lunch costs. Highest was 40% for \$30 and a 50/50 draw

President Bill reminded us there is no meeting next Monday, September 7, Labour Day. The next meeting is Thursday, September 10 in the evening. **Iqmat Iyiola** will be doing a presentation on social media platforms for the club.

Guest Speaker

Steve Rickard introduced our speaker, Ben Kormos. Ben has a long list of accomplishments as a lawyer, a Rotarian and an individual. Brazil became his passion after a Rotary exchange. He is the “champion of the cause” for the Global Grant Making Clean Energy in the Minas Gerais area of Brazil.

Ben had many of the Grant contacts with him today – Steve and Marie Rickard, Nelson Leite, Past DG, and Sebastiao Vidigal from the Rotary club in Brazil. Other supporters include **Gail Williams** for her sage advice on how to bring the Global Grant to fruition. Also, his wife for moral support.

Ben sees this as his life-work. Starting in 2016, he has gradually done more and offered more to help the people of Brazil, especially students. The latest project offers expanded opportunities to learn a skill, a lower education cost to the student that leads to certification upon completion making the students more employable. To establish a described self-sustaining Making Clean Energy educational project, under a Global Grant. This will, in turn, serve as an exemplar to Rotarians globally. It started with a 40-page project document – light reading, I’m sure!

There are five Rotary clubs involved, both locally and internationally, four educational institutions, and 210 students are directly benefiting with 840 families benefiting indirectly. The students are between the ages of 16-30 years looking for those who are impoverished, needing a helping hand up. Target group includes girls who are interested in STEM. With a growing

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population in the area and a growing use of solar panels, the need was established. The project touches on most of the UN's Areas of Focus. Total project cost is \$88,704 USD funded by Ben himself, other Rotary clubs, plus matching dollars from the government of Canada, District 4760 in Brazil, and the Rotary Foundation. It is those matching dollars that leverage the original donations three or four times over.

The Global Grant was submitted in January, 2020, and, after TRF approval, the project is well underway. The project will span two education years, or four semesters, be self-sustaining and have an intrinsic impact over multiple generations. Twenty photovoltaic (PV) energy plants have been delivered and are operational in the four educational institutions offering the courses. The timing was right to allow for the pre-pandemic exchange rate for the materials. However, due to Covid-19, the classes have had to be postponed. The target date is late 2020, or early 2021, to resume classes. Fingers crossed!

Ben is willing to share as little or as much of his presentation, if you are interested. Here is a video to watch. It can be switched to English to see a transcript:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8thZxifkE2I> Get in touch with Bill or Ben.

Answers to questions

- 1) Due to the penetration of solar energy, has the government offered any subsidy?

The government currently subsidizes by granting the right to connect to the grid and not pay for the grid. This will change in the future to having to charge for PV installation as the price of PV installation is low; return on investment is low; and expansion is rapid.

- 2) Is there a risk of destruction of the panels from hurricanes?

Brazil is not subject to hurricanes. Strong winds, yes, but they are not a danger. The supplier will replace the panels if damaged, but this is not expected to happen.

- 3) Where are the PV panels made?

They are manufactured in China. A plant in Brazil and one in Canada also make them by copying China's technology.

- 4) What is the expected life of the panels?

25 years

Bill closed by thanking all the presenters. Meeting adjourned at 1:12pm.

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Coming Events

July: Stampede Parade and OK Cherries Month	
6	Jennifer McCue, President and CEO of Bethany: Bethany's journey through the pandemic
13	Diversity and Rotary: Rotarian Anila Lee Yen
20	Five Avenues of Rotary: President Bill Fitzsimmons' program for the club.
27	India Sherrett: Olympian
August: Membership and New Club Development Month	
3	No Meeting Civic Holiday - August Long Weekend
5	Evening Zoom Past President's Reflections Series #1
10	Club Engagement F & F Committee update; New Club Developments
17	Water and Sanitation Tal Woolsey - CAWST
24	Club Engagement Updates and Discussions, New Initiatives
31	Ben Kormos: Brazil Global Grant Partnership
September: Basic Education and Literacy Month	
7	No Meeting. Labour Day
10`	Evening Zoom Meeting: Social Media - Facebook use for Rotary format
14	Club Engagement: Service and Social Roundup
21	District Governor Mary Turner
28	Club Assembly
October: Economic and Community Development Month	
5	Ken Keeler, GM Calgary Co-op
12	No Meeting: Thanksgiving
15	Evening Zoom Meeting: Past President's Reflections
19	
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