

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:** Don Edie
Directors: Judy Cochran, Gord Cox, Darren Grierson, Barb Hames,
Ken Montgomery, Drew Turnbull

Together We Are People of Action - Building Community

November 16, 2020 Edition: 54.17 Reporter: Duncan Stanners Editor: David Williams

This was a combination live and Zoom meeting. Thanks to **Gord Cox** for being our host. You can watch a recording of this meeting here:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/I7z1BYcHPJptXBYLtK1ulwv6APmxEI5573xbe1z7XIAL89aVAhJhVleSWvaFndtR.8t1_ZvsU0hgHimmG.

President Bill Fitzsimmons opened the meeting with the message that we will be continuing to hold hybrid meetings, but members are not obligated in any way to attend personally. He announced the creation of an award similar to **Past President Gerry Meek's** award for outstanding club service. After considering names such as the Fitzsimmons (too long) or the Willie (didn't think it appropriate to give members the Willies), he decided on the **Golden Stetson**. The first recipient is Gord Cox for all he does as services director and his help in running the Zoom meetings.



The Weekly Westerner

November 16, 2020

President Bill drew everyone's attention to the Winter Comfort fundraiser which offers puzzles and mugs by talented First Nations artists, along with coffee and chocolates. Please get your orders in right away, and spread the news to family and friends.

Bill Quinney provided our inspirational moment. It is entitled "What I Believe", and was written by his granddaughter. It is included at the end of this report.

Announcements

- **Debbie McMillan** told the story of the chocolates being sold in the Winter Comfort fundraiser. The company was started in Syria 30 years ago. In 2012, the factory was destroyed in the war, and the family came to Nova Scotia where they set up "Peace by Chocolate".
- **Marlene Doherty** announced our Annual General Meeting on Monday November 30, and put out a call for nominees for the positions of president-elect -nominee and two directorships. A survey on service should have been received by everyone. Please complete it by Friday. The bicycle ride for polio has finished, with our club achieving 2,816.4 km, raising \$4,396 which is matched by **PDG Dan Doherty** to total \$8,792!
- **Mike Carlin** spoke about Foundation month, and encouraged us to consider the options of monthly, quarterly or yearly contributions via Rotary Direct. You can direct your gift to the annual fund, polio fund, world fund or disaster relief fund. Gifts to the annual fund are returned 50% to the District for DDF grants. The club will match up to \$300 USD for your donation.

Program

Bill Quinney introduced **Krista Poole** from CanLearn. For all our club has done, including volunteers for the learning program, hundreds of books, funding and the 50/50 draw this year, Krista presented us with the Caroline Myer Helping Hand Award, and thanked all of those who volunteered. Bill announced that we had procured 15 laptops at a good price, and Can Learn will receive five of them.



The Weekly Westerner

November 16, 2020

Marlene Doherty introduced **Cate Rippon** from Never Too Late and **Derek Bechtold** from Catholic Family Services. They were presented with a cheque for \$5,000 from rose sales for the Never too Late backpack program which supports adults wanting to achieve their GED high school diploma.

Cate gave a brief presentation that included the outdoor graduation ceremony we sponsored in the summer, as well as our scholarship recipient and current efforts. She noted that 74% of their graduates go on to post-secondary education. 50% of participants are parents, so there is a very positive impact on their children. Feedback they have received from their students say they feel better about themselves, happy, confident and eager. Derek chimed in with his thanks for all we do.

Marlene then introduced the key speaker for today, **Past President Duncan Stanners**, who spoke about the Honduras Economic and Community Development program (HECD).

Duncan started by wondering if those who don't know him might think that Rotary allows in hippies, or perhaps feel sad that he's undergoing some kind of late midlife crisis with his long hair.

Before the presentation, Duncan dedicated it to his late wife **Jan**, who was passionate about helping Hondurans, and to **Arnoldo Alvarez** who was our project manager in Honduras and had very recently passed away from cancer. Arnoldo grew up in a large family of poor farmers and earned a scholarship in agricultural engineering. For more than 30 years, he has brought clean, sustainable water to over 300 villages, helping thousands of people. One of his key reasons is to keep the young people on the farm rather than have them go to the cities in search of opportunities and end up in street gangs. His wife **Marie Elena** grew up middle class in Honduras and had a cushy job in Washington DC when she heeded a calling to return to Honduras to help the poor. They both truly embody Service Above Self, and Duncan recognised them both with Paul Harris Fellow awards. Marie Elena was attending virtually from Honduras while waiting for the next hurricane to hit.

The HECD was started in 2012 when Duncan joined **Steve Rickard**, microfinance guru from Calgary West, and **Wally Gardiner** from High River to launch a large microfinance program with a target of raising \$1million over a number of years. Calling on an existing relationship with Opportunity International Canada (OIC), we searched for an area that was in Central America where Rotary had a focus and OIC had local operations and thereby chose Honduras.

At that time, Rotary International came out with new guidelines that promoted alignment with areas of focus, real community need, sustainability, measurable goals, collaboration and larger, more impactful projects. The HECD objectives were to increase the access to microfinance and increase service offered to include insurance and savings. Further, we were looking for other sustainable projects we could do there. We wanted to leverage our funding as much as possible and to establish a partnership infrastructure that could be used multiple times over the course of the program.

The Weekly Westerner

November 16, 2020

Reliable, trustworthy partners who can get the job done are a requirement and critical success factor for all international projects. Our partners in microfinance are OI, who have been operating over 30 years and have more than 9.6 million clients in 20 countries and IDH, their local operating partner who have been in business over 40 years and serve over 10,000 clients with 14 branches. Our partner in water is Impact Water, where Arnaldo operated in Honduras and others in other countries. The host clubs in Honduras, who must be in place in order to obtain RI funding, include Real de Minas in Tegucigalpa as well as Danli and Puerto Cortes. There are a large number of clubs in District 5360, as well as some in Ontario, Washington and Edmonton who have participated in the first five phases of the program. Duncan recognised the Rotary Club of Tillsonburg, Ontario who is leading phase six for having about 50 clubs involved. That's real collaboration!

Duncan showed a map to provide the location of the new branches of IDH we have helped establish, and to show where the water projects are.

Duncan talked about the methodology used by IDH. For the poorest people, they form *trust groups* of around 12 people (mostly women) who get small loans and guarantee the loans of other group members. They also receive instruction in 15 modules, not only to teach business skills, but to teach self confidence and other aspects, like how to keep their children out of gangs and how to improve family relationships. This holistic approach makes them more than just lending institution. Having proven success with small loans, some clients go on to *solidarity groups*, groups generally fewer than six who are given larger loans. Finally, there are private loans to small to medium enterprises (SMEs). Because IDH loses money on the trust groups, the profits they make on private loans helps subsidize the capability to offer loans to the poorest of the poor.

Focusing on water over his many years, Arnaldo has developed a methodology called Asset Based Community Development (ABCD). In the world, 50% of water projects cease to function, largely because the villages are not prepared to provide on-going maintenance. Arnaldo has been successful because he set up the villages to succeed and take ownership and responsibility. Villages seek out Arnaldo as news of his success has spread. He requires:

1. They will appoint a water committee
2. They will acquire access to the water source, and protect it
3. They will provide all of the unskilled labour to construct the project
4. They will appoint a plumber to perform maintenance
5. Each family will contribute \$1-\$2 per month to a fund for maintenance
6. They will be trained in sanitation and prudent water usage
7. They will provide him with a signed document agreeing to these terms

Otherwise, he will refuse the project.

Water projects do more than just provide clean water. In one village, the government provided them electricity and built a new middle school. This is important, as prior to this the children had to

The Weekly Westerner

November 16, 2020

walk for miles to the nearest school. Girls in particular, were at risk. In the other village, some 50 families were returning to the village. They were able to build pilas (shower, toilet and sink) for their homes, increase production of loofahs and begin production of passion fruit. Use of water for increased business is paid for by the business, adding to the maintenance fund. Some villages also use the maintenance fund to provide microloans to members for things like new roof, floor or bedrooms.

Duncan showed a slide on fund leverage to illustrate the true power of Rotary. Beginning with just \$10,000, getting support from local clubs, the Alberta government, the federal government, our District Designated Funds (DDF), the Rotary Foundation and Opportunity International, Phase II total funding was \$900,000!

Finally, in a summary of funding raised in all 6 phases, Duncan recognised **Bev Chinnery** in Airdrie for phase I, **Chris Ritter** of Calgary West for phase III, **Ken Montgomery** from Calgary West for phase IV, **Bill Fitzsimmons** from Calgary West for phase V and **John Gilvesy** from Tillsonburg for phase VI for their leadership. The total program has raised \$2.4 million, smashing the target! Duncan also noted that the return on investment for water is 8:1, mostly due to more time for new business and health. Return on investment in microfinance is 6:1 in the first five years, with one new job created for every two loans given out.

Steve Rickard thanked Duncan for his presentation.

Editor's Note: Duncan is the reporter for this meeting. But he was also the presenter of two events, and therefore rather too busy to take note of what Steve had to say. But, what Steve had to say needs to be a part of this bulletin.

Duncan is a leader amongst leaders.

He has moved our club's projects from concept to completion

At Shell he oversaw the department of knowledge management

You would agree that he is able to manage many moving parts

This includes the operators in the field to the fundraising at home.

All of which requires an effective and powerful speaker.

Duncan's passion comes through his voice but is supported by his actions

When currency fluctuations crippled a project, Duncan dug into his own purse.

The Weekly Westerner

November 16, 2020

He graciously acknowledges others but accepts support from first Jan and now Laurie.

Service for Duncan is personal – who else grows their hair for cancer for 2 ½ years?

There is much that should be acknowledged about Duncan and his leadership.

A noble and powerful heart beats in that large chest of his.

And a noble heart is a lodestone that attracts the love of others.

We are blessed to have Duncan as a fellow Rotarian, noble citizen, and friend.

Thank you, Duncan.

Duncan then proceeded with the haircut.





President Bill mentioned the Honduras emergency relief effort. The club will be sending down \$1,000 on Wednesday and invites anyone who wants to add to it to do so by e-transfer to CalgarWest953@shaw.ca.

Bill also noted that our next meeting on November 23 will be a Grey Cup theme, with a tribute to **Ted Valentine**.

Bill Quinney's Granddaughter's Inspirational Moment

"I believe in everyone being able to express themselves as they please. I think everyone should be able to be as authentic and unique as possible without being judged or talked about negatively. A quote I really like is "Don't put people on a pedestal unless they deserve to be there". I really believe in this idea because I tend to value other's opinions more than I should. I think it's important to figure out who deserves value in your life and what opinions you should let affect the way you think. At the end of the day, we are all human and are all learning how to live life together, and placing other's opinions in a high position of value is not a healthy way of viewing yourself. We are all here for ourselves at the end of the day. We are all here to live our lives the best we can. So why would we want to constantly be worrying about what others think of us? There is no right or wrong way of being yourself, so why should someone have the right to tell you who you should be. In society, we often get convinced that someone's opinion should be of a high value even if they treat others with disrespect. Society influences our opinions and will end up blinding you to who someone is just because they are labelled as a good or a popular person so this does not mean they deserve to be valued so much in your life. Something else I strongly think about every day is how important family is and how you should always show love to your family no matter where you are in your life. Coming from a loving family is honestly one of the greatest blessings anyone can be granted with. Your family won't always be there and being grateful and showing them

The Weekly Westerner

November 16, 2020

love is so important. My family has always been there for me, when everything may seem like it's falling apart. They will always be there and love me no matter the mistakes I make. Your friends are rarely gonna be there forever and your family will be there for you forever. I also believe in no regrets because of your mistakes and your faults make you a stronger person. No matter how bad something gets I truly believe it What I Believe always gets better and if you can fight through the bad days you'll come out stronger than before. We are always learning and the experiences we go through teach us life lessons and we learn skills that help us achieve a happier life. If you went through life like it was a breeze then as soon as things get hard you won't be able to overcome the hardships. Everything we go through is a build-up to the amazing person we will be one day.

Coming Events

November: Foundation Month	
2	LCS Presentation of Grants and Projects
9	Phil Levson – Wills -Estates and Rotary Foundation
16	Honduras Water, Haircut Fundraiser, Never Too Late Presentation of Award, Other Service Related
23	Doug Mitchell – Future of the CFL, Former CFL Commissioner and Current Board Member
26	Evening Hybrid Meeting at Joyce on 4th – Peter Boyle, Valour Canada. WW1 thru eyes of 5 soldiers
30	Ken Keeler – GM Calgary Co-op / Days of Giving / Board Election
December: Disease Treatment and Prevention Month	
7	Earl Thiessen , Executive Director of Oxford House (addictions recovery centre)
14	ISC Presentation of Grants and Projects Vote.
21	President Jennifer Jones Rotary International - FIRST Canadian President - Rotary International
28	No Meeting – Christmas and New Year Holiday