



THE ROTARY CLUB OF NORTH VANCOUVER WHEEL SQUEALS



January 19, 2009

Written by Jim Cuthbert

Multitasker Joy Jones graciously met Club members and guests as we entered the ground level banquet hall at Cheers. After a warm welcome, Joy collected our dinner fee and provided each with a raffle ticket.

Enjoyable fellowship began immediately in the comfortable atmosphere of the dining room. President Norm convened the meeting and directed Norman Thomson to lead a rousing rendition of *O Canada* which he did, one of the best ever in the lower dining hall!

John Ward gave a thoughtful invocation.

Guests

Soon President Norm asked for the introduction of guests:

- Mara Creighton (daughter of Neil C.)
- Aymeric Dietrich - our Youth Exchange Student from Switzerland
- Richard Smith - 2009 GSE representative bound for England
- Tevis Michaud - a potential new member and another of the Michaud clan
- David Steverding - Vancouver City Police, guest speaker
- Pat Fast
- Naomi Yamamoto - President/General Manager, North Van Chamber of Commerce and candidate for BC Liberal Party nomination in North Van-Lonsdale
- Jim Branson and wife Pat Ferguson

Announcements

During a delicious meal of rack of lamb or salmon, President Norm led off the announcements:

- Duck Splash - Jeff gave an update on plans for ticket distribution and the first meeting of his committee
- Duck Splash - Bob McKilligan announced Save on Foods have committed \$500 in gift certificates
- Norm informed us that an Exec meeting was to be held after the regular meeting
- Brian Hooshi told us about the Mar 15th 2nd Annual Iranian Festival at Mahon Park. Last year's festival attracted 10,000 people, 70 local and national businesses, live entertainment and more.
- Erin Huxley's talk on the Forum for Young Canadians will be rescheduled

Guest Speaker Naomi Yamamoto

Naomi Yamamoto - Jim Isman introduced Naomi who has an exemplary record of extended public service on the North Shore and a successful small business career. Naomi provided a helpful overview of the organization and workings of the North Vancouver Chamber of Commerce including its role in ensuring a thriving economy and providing tourism services. The Chamber was formed the year after our Rotary was formed in 1905. Naomi also briefly described her plans to seek the Liberal nomination for the North Vancouver-Lonsdale riding in the May provincial election. She fielded several questions.

Sergeant-At-Arms

After all present had a raffle ticket, the draw went to Neil Creighton who tried to select the Ace of Spades but missed.

Sgt. Sommerfeld secured a loonie from all members, except Neil McDonald, for stumping us with the name of the great Rotarian gathering location at Birmingham and other international Rotary conferences.

Numerous happy/sad dollar announcements followed.

Tonight's Feature Speaker - David Steverding - Youth Drug Addiction

Bud had the pleasure of introducing his son-in-law and Vancouver Police Officer David Steverding. David was a previous RCNV member for 5 years, brought Operation Red Nose to the North Shore, graduated from university in political science and worked in a senior capacity with ICBC.

Soon after graduating from the Vancouver Police Academy, David was posted to Vancouver's Down Town East Side (DTES) where he works as part of a dedicated, skilled and effective team of professional policemen responsible for public safety and helping the less fortunate. He describes himself as an expert on misery.



David presented on his team's daily work in the DTES and provided an intriguing insight into the plight of many young adults caught up in the devastating drug scene. He did this by giving us glimpses into the personal lives of drug addicts and traffickers caught up in a destructive lifestyle leaving them in a terrible state.

The DTES (Skids) has 16,000 residents of which 4000-6500 may have substance abuse issues. The Skids accounts for 12% of Vancouver's crime on only 1.8% of the municipal land. Most if not all addicts have pleasant personalities but for whatever reason have

been caught up in the destructive world of substance abuse. David and his team literally save the lives of these our fellow urban citizens and offer them opportunity for healing if they can break away from the drugs' addiction. Many are motivated to help others avoid falling into the same trap and freely let themselves be photographed for this cause.

One in 6 DTES residents has an addictive personality. Cocaine, heroin and crystal meth are the hard drugs of choice. Residents can easily be seen openly doing drugs. There has been an increase in serious infections associated with drug use. The frequently discussed 4 pillar approach to the drug crisis apparently has resulted to date in one pillar and 3 toothpicks. The needle exchange has become a needle give-away program with its critics.

While fielding questions, Brian offered well considered solutions including more abstinence, expanded de-tox programs, greater access to counseling, more treatment services with increased government recognition (e.g. critical role mental illness, including mood disorders, plays in the drug dilemma) and funding, and better public education and awareness (more tools like *Through the Blue Lens* film).

President Norm appeared overwhelmed by Brian's talk but was able to effectively thank David and presented him with a Polio Eradication Certificate representing immunization of 20 children against polio.



Toast to Rotary International - Catherine Michaud

The Four Way Test - President Norm

Adjournment - Hearing there was nothing further for the "Good of Rotary", President Norm adjourned the meeting and wished one and all a "Good Rotary Week".

Future Programs & Events

Jan 26th Robbie Burns Night (partner evening)
Feb 2nd GSE 2008 Outgoing Team (Deneka et al) – Tanzania Documentary

Wheel Squeals - Editor for a Day / Proof Reader

Jan 26th David Spears / Peter Chapman
Feb 2nd Peter Chapman / David Spears

