

The Roundtable

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Bangor Area Breakfast Rotary Club

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Water and More in Nicaragua

Unless you are involved in mission trips or aid work, Nicaragua may not often be on your radar screen. Emily Hewes raised our awareness this morning of the significant ongoing work of the Council of Protestant Churches in Nicaragua. Ms. Hewes, introduced by **Lisa Wahlstrom**, is Development Director for CEPAD USA, a US-based non-profit that supports the work of CEPAD in Nicaragua

Ms. Hewes described the geography of Nicaragua and showed brief videos of interviews with farmers and housewives whose lives have been transformed by soil improvement and water. The country's aridity prevented much sustainable food and livestock. In one example, Ms. Hewes told of the village of Sompopera that is thriving because of CEPAD's help in structuring a potable water regimen that enables villagers to grow crops and raise livestock.



Ken Nagle, Emily Hewes, Lisa Wahlstrom

CEPAD was founded in 1972 after a major earthquake destroyed much of Managua. Rescue operations led to the development of ongoing help for the region through CEPAD. In 2000, the organization committed to world-wide economic development. It approaches village problems in three stages: leadership development, women's economic development, and environment and food security. Villages choose their

own leaders who each are trained over a period of five years.

Nicaragua has the highest teen pregnancy rate in South America. Ms. Hewes described how CEPAD's economic development program for women trains them in

business administration, workshops to help them make items to sell in their communities, and to earn money for their families.

“In the rural areas, farmers grew corn, beans and sorghum- a lot of carbohydrates,” Ms. Hewes said. “They relied on the ‘slash and burn’ style of agriculture. They would burn a forested area and use the ashes to fertilize the soil. When that soil became exhausted, they would move to another area and do the same thing, causing deforestation. CEPAD showed techniques to improve the soil and reduce the ‘slash and burn’ style of farming.

Ms. Hewes cited how climate change is seriously affecting rural areas. “Those villages would have six months of rain and six months of dry spells. Farmers worked in cycles. Those weather patterns have disappeared.” She noted that CEPAD has a good working relationship with the Nicaraguan government.

Information about CEPAD is available at www.cepadnica.org.

A gray day’s agenda

There was sunshine in the meeting room, though, for **President Kristy Kimball’s** reminder that we are all invited to the monthly board meetings. The next one will be Wednesday, April 12 at 7 am. at LINKS Web Design, 735 Main Street in Bangor. (The Salk polio vaccine, tested on April 10 by Dr. Jonas Salk, was declared safe and effective on April 12 in 1955. *Polio Plus* keeps that work going.)

Ken Huhn’s Rotary Moment highlighted international club activities as shown in a calendar published in *The Rotarian*. **Bob Leavitt** celebrated successful cataract surgery in both eyes that will give him wonderful vision for his trip to The Masters in Augusta, Georgia this weekend.

Greg Urban won a whopping \$7 in the weekly drawing. The Joker’s Wild cash cache will be drawn at the annual meeting.

Lisa Wahlstrom told of an adoption ceremony through the Good Samaritan Agency. A family adopted a foster child, and the courtroom was full of happy people. After the ceremony, Lisa said the judge told the 3-year-old boy, “I have something for you.” He pulled out two stuffed animals, and the new family member chose one of them.

Les Myers- April 6, 2017



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