

Paul van der Wel, CESO President & CEO, travelled in late October to Honduras and Guatemala to review operations and meet with Graciela Galeanos Burgos, CESO Country Representative, other local CESO office staff, CESO clients and key Canadian and local officials. This was an important visit as CIDA has placed greater emphasis on Latin America as a Canadian aid recipient. See page 4 for more about the trip.

Photo: From left to right is Paul van der Wel, Graciela Galeanos Burgos, and Mr. Napoleon Pineda, CESO client and owner of Reposteria El Hogar in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.



President visits Honduras and Guatemala

VA uses Canadian methods to help Russian NGO

By John L. Gibson

In the Russian city of Chelyabinsk, about 1,000 people a year access the services of a non-profit organization that provides social and cultural rehabilitation support to blind and visually-impaired people and their families.

With a staff of 25, the Chelyabinsk Regional Rehabilitation, Cultural and Sport Centre of All-Russian Society of the Blind organizes festivals, competitions, concerts, parties, intellectual games, sport events and other activities aimed at enhancing the integration of blind and visually-impaired people into society.

The organization's operations and ability to access necessary funding, however, are hurt by the lack of legal status and the absence of government initiatives and support for the social and cultural rehabilitation of disabled people.

In this context, the Centre requested

the assistance of a CESO Volunteer Adviser (VA) to assess its current operations, introduce the techniques of Canadian organizations working with people with disabilities, develop new methodologies for assisting the blind and visually-impaired, develop a strategic plan to improve the organization's efficiency, and elaborate a strategy for attracting business sector support for their activities.

CESO sent Joan Clasen, a VA who retired in 2006 from a lifetime of managing social agencies in Manitoba. Since she joined CESO in 1996, Joan has completed a number of International assignments and several National assignments with Aboriginal communities in Canada.

Joan travelled from her Winnipeg home to Chelyabinsk, located at the boundary between Europe and Asia in the southern Ural Mountains, and home to more than one million people.

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Unique credit union for the residents of remote Bearskin Lake

In July of 2005, the Wasaya Group Inc. of Thunder Bay, representing a partnership of 10 First Nation communities, set out to examine the potential of establishing an Aboriginal credit union in Northern Ontario.

Ultimately, the remote community of Bearskin Lake First Nation, a community of 400 residents located 425

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VA uses Canadian methods to help Russian NGO

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"It took me a while to get my head around the Russian concept of rehabilitation for people with disabilities," said Joan. "The focus seemed to be on the 'quality of life,' such as music, art, drama, social interaction, dance, etc."

"The North American model is based on getting people back into the work force. They do that also, but in sheltered workshop settings—something we don't see here any more. In Canada, these workshop settings are integrated and make a fair profit that is then used to support the services for the people with disabilities."

During her 16 days in Russia, Joan reviewed the organization's programs and made recommendations on their expansion as well as adding new programs focusing on youth. She held meetings with sister organizations; presented and discussed various rehabilitation models; provided samples of public information literature on working with the blind, samples of adaptive equipment, and contact with an organization that provides free in-service training to staff over the internet; discussed short-, medium- and long-term funding options; provided recommendations on accessing international funding and presented a funding proposal format.

"The short-term success was the enhancement of programs," says Joan. "I had the opportunity to interview a number of clients and talk to them about what additional things they would like. From this, an exercise program was started just as I was leaving, as well as some programs for the youth with a focus on everyday life skills such as cooking, make-up,

shopping, etc."

Because transportation was an issue for many of the clients, Joan suggested they bring in vendors to sell clothes and other basic items the clients would need. They could then shop while attending other programs at the centre. This, too, had started before she left but needed to be expanded.

"We did a lot of talking about generating additional funds and came up with a strategy, which will take time to put into place," said Joan. "Another longer term goal was to hold staff meetings to review each client, looking at them from a holistic view—housing, work, transportation, shopping, social needs, family connections, etc.—and pulling together the resources available from both the Centre and other organizations to meet those needs. I know they were looking at starting this."

Everyone was pleased with the success of the assignment, but Joan was sad to say farewell to the wonderful people she met in that faraway part of the world.

"One of the highlights—though not part of the assignment—was being a part of their celebration for International Day of Women. We, here, just pay



Clients of the Chelyabinsk Regional Rehabilitation, Cultural and Sport Centre at a social event.

lip service to this day but in Russia it is a national holiday with lots of recognition of women both in the work force and in the family."

"I hope to gather my female friends this next year and duplicate the celebration I experienced while in Russia." ■

Meetings in Russia

Jeffrey Edelson, CESO's Contract Director for Europe, and Irina Edilova, CESO's Program Manager for Europe, travelled to Russia from Sept. 30 - Oct. 6 to:

1. Define requirements of OPORA RUSSIA and Academy Of Entrepreneurship.
2. Lead a roundtable discussion/presentation organized by the Vladimir Chamber of Commerce.
3. Review pending activities and outline program adjustments. ■



At a meeting with OPORA RUSSIA, the All-Russian non-governmental organization of small and medium businesses, clockwise from bottom left are: Konstantin Petrakov, Chief International Department, OPORA; Alexander Sergeev, CESO Country Representative in Russia; Irina Edilova; and Jeffrey Edelson.

Unique credit union for remote Bearskin Lake

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kilometres north of Sioux Lookout, was chosen for the pilot project.

The project was given a huge boost Dec. 4, 2007, when the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) announced a grant of \$345,500 over three years.

Working in partnership with Northern Lights Credit Union and Credit Union Central of Ontario, the Wasaya Group and its social economic division, Wasaya Wee-Chee-Way-Win, will use the grant to pilot the credit union and provide financial education in Oji-Cree.

Once evaluated, the model may be replicated in other First Nations communities in Northern Ontario.

The name of the new credit union is Anishinabe Shooniyaawakamik (People's Money Place) and CESO Volunteer Adviser Duncan Newman is among those with good reason to celebrate this unique venture.

"It was after the Wasaya Group passed a resolution commissioning a pre-feasibility study that CESO was contacted for assistance with the project," explained Duncan, a chartered accountant. "My background involves senior financial executive experience with the Canadian Credit Union movement and I was assigned to provide consulting and advisory expertise."

It was also Duncan's first assignment for CESO. "I was very excited to participate in a project having the objective of bringing social and economic benefits to remote First Nation communities," said the Wasaga Beach, ON, resident.

In March 2006, the pre-feasibility study recommended the establishment of the credit union and several options for its development were identified.

"Significant FN (First Nation) consultation emphasized that financial services to the remote Northern Ontario FN communities was a high priority and to expedite this initiative we agreed to seek out a credit union partner that supported the project," said Duncan.

In December 2006, the Wasaya Group endorsed affiliation with Northern Lights Credit Union with its head office in Dryden and branches throughout Northern Ontario.

The pilot project will require considerable financial support for the translation into Oji-Cree of credit union marketing material, Internet support, acquisition of capital items and operational support at Bearskin Lake.

"We prepared an OTF grant application and we were gratified when the OTF Board of Directors approved 100 per cent funding support for the pilot," said Duncan. "I will continue my involvement as a consultant and monitor to the project. CESO's ongoing support has been greatly appreciated and with the success of the pilot, I look forward to the roll out of the financial services throughout Northern Ontario Aboriginal communities." ■



At the celebration of the official awarding of the \$345,500 grant for the Aboriginal Credit Union project, from top left are: Dorothy Watson of the Credit Union Stanley Central of Ontario; Doug Robinson, CEO of Northern Lights Credit Union; and Chief Rodney McKay of Bearskin Lake. From bottom left are: Stanley Sainnawap, President of Collaborative - Wasaya Wee-Chee-Way-Win; Tom Kam, President of Wasaya Group; and Donna Gilhooly, Provincial Board Member of Ontario Trillium Foundation.

CESO President visits Honduras and Guatemala

Paul van der Wel's recent fact-finding trip to Honduras and Guatemala, the first visit to the region by a CESO President in 15 years, signals CESO and CIDA's growing commitment to Latin America as an aid recipient.

During the Oct. 28-Nov.3, 2007 trip, Paul was accompanied by Graciela Galeanos Burgos, CESO's Honduran Country Representative, and her assistant, Nicolas Aumond.

The group travelled to the Honduran capital city of Tegucigalpa and to San Pedro Sula, as well as to Guatemala City, the Guatemalan capital. They met the following groups to discuss future CESO activities:

- Representatives in CIDA's Tegucigalpa office
- Norman Garcia, Director of Trade, Investment and Competitiveness, and ex-Minister of Industry;
- Dr. Mario Contreras, Dean of Science at El Zamorano, an agricultural undergraduate university;
- Patricia Ahern, Country Program Director, CARE activities in Central America;
- José Casteda, President, Chamber of Commerce Central America;
- Ricardo Vinelli of Ojojona Foundation;
- Napoleon Pineda, CESO client and local bakery owner;
- Dr. Adolfo Martinez of FHIA, a not-for-profit research organization with a mission to improve the income of farmers in Honduras;
- Kenneth M. Cook, Canadian Ambassador to Guatemala.

Agriculture is an important industry in Honduras and El Zamorano University has a 4,000

hectare research farm. Dr. Contreras sought assistance from CESO to develop a sustainable environmental course and an energy savings plan for the campus. CESO has worked with El Zamorano for 10 years and will continue to do so.

The CESO visitors also met with Dr. Martinez of FHIA, which has various departments, forestry, bananas and plantains, fruits and vegetables, cacao, coffee, etc. Their funding comes from: 30% research, 20% farm extension, and 50% specific projects.

FHIA calls upon CESO VAs to assist with projects in the general agricultural areas, including vegetable crop production, energy projects in rural areas, and with governance work.

The Chamber of Commerce Central America, a new partner for CESO, works in poor, rural areas of Central America. At present, they have 16 projects reaching 600 entrepreneurs. CESO's work forms a good synergy with this partner, which fits well with CIDA's framework.

CESO VAs have done impressive work in Honduras. For instance, Napoleon Pineda owns a bakery company in Tegucigalpa and has received assistance from various VAs during the past eight years.

His bakery has grown from 67 to 97 employees, and now includes a central bakery and six stores. This is a good example of sustainable work by CESO.

Paul and Graciela travelled to Guatemala City to meet with Ambassador Kenneth M. Cook and CIDA staff to evaluate future CESO expansion into Guatemala.

In Honduras, CESO has excellent potential for expansion of our programs in governance and agribusiness, and small business development. Guatemala will remain on our radar, but CESO will wait to begin work there until political and security conditions have become more stable.

The entire trip was very helpful and demonstrated that the trust of clients and partners is essential to our program expansion in Central America. ■

Press conference: CESO in Benin



CESO's new Country Representative in Benin, Pierre Dovonou Lokossou (left) organized a press conference on October 11, 2007, to highlight the commencement of CESO's operations there. In the photo, to the right of Pierre, are Mr. Dramane, representative from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Alain Vienne, Director, Support Unit of the Canadian Cooperation, and Martial Dansereau, the first CESO VA to undertake an assignment in Benin. See more information on page 5.

CESO in Benin

CESO began operations in the West African country of Benin in the summer of 2007. Pierre Dovonou Lokossou, a very dynamic person with impressive program development skills, was hired as Country Representative.

Before joining CESO, Pierre was Director of *Fondation de l'Entrepreneurship du Bénin* (Entrepreneurship Foundation of Benin) a non-governmental, non-profit organization that promotes the emergence of a dynamic private sector in Benin. At the same time, he was Director of *Place du Québec* which is managed by the *Fondation* and works to promote social-cultural and economic endeavours. In addition to French, Pierre is fluent in English and Spanish.

Since Pierre began working for CESO, he has generated more than 20 assignments and formed partnerships with sound institutions such as the Centre Songhai (agribusiness), Consortium Alafia (microfinance), *Fondation Espace Afrique* - (bio-agriculture) and PAPME (microfinance).

To introduce CESO, Pierre successfully organized a press conference in the Benin capital of Cotonou and invited local representatives from the Ministry of foreign affairs, CIDA, and journalists from the major media outlets.

CESO is off to a great start in Benin. ■

Working with Aboriginal entrepreneurs is a labour of love

By John L. Gibson

A team of CESO Volunteer Advisers (VAs) has been involved in an exciting project to help Aboriginal entrepreneurs take their place in the economy of British Columbia and allow society to benefit from their dynamism.

The project took place over 32 weeks after CESO was engaged by the Tree of Life (ToL), an Aboriginal self-employment program in Surrey, with 12 candidates seeking counsel and advice on establishing 11 new businesses.

ToL had developed a three-phased program: development of a business idea; development and assessment of a business plan; and provision of mentors to work with the entrepreneurs.

The candidates had very diverse business propositions and CESO National Services provided VAs with the expertise to address each of their individual needs.

To start, the CESO team assisted in reviewing the business plans and attended a two-day business review panel meeting. The review panel did not accept all the plans of all the candidates and ended up with eight.

As mentors to the budding entrepreneurs, the VAs introduced new/improved operating procedures; new/improved financial and/or accounting practices; improved use of financial information for planning and decision making; established new partnerships/joint ventures; and provided new market opportunities and ways of assessing the marketplace.

In a report at the conclusion of the assignment, CESO was praised for

its sensitivity on this project and the positive effect that had on the student's success.

The mentoring process met with varying degrees of success. Some students changed direction midway through the training while others became more confident and successful.

ToL executives described CESO as "an excellent organization providing professional services" and expressed a high level of satisfaction with CESO support and VA assistance.

As frequently happens on CESO assignments, some of the volunteers ended up feeling they received more than they gave.

"I loved this assignment," said one of the VAs, adding that the entrepreneurs were wonderful to work with and she intends to stay in touch with them. "I can honestly say I got as much or more than I gave in this assignment." ■

CESO Client Corner

Client Testimonial:

"I found CESO to be an excellent organization providing professional services.

CESO provided the cultural sensitivity involved in working with the Aboriginal community. The students were comfortable with their VAs which led to their growth and development."

*Christine Pollack,
SEEDS - Aboriginal Self Employment
Program
VAs mentored 7 businesses during
start up, Spring to Summer 2007*

Operations Centre Wine and Cheese / Festive season activities across Canada

By Josie Marchese

As CESO's 40th year drew to a close, a number of events were held across Canada. Volunteer Advisers (VAs) in parts of Southern Ontario have been without a CESO Club for many years so a Wine and Cheese was planned in Toronto on November 23, to bring them together with some board members and key Operations Centre staff for a CESO Birthday celebration. More than 150 people attended the event.

Presentations were made by Keith MacDonald, the past-Chair of CESO's Board, and Paul van der Wel, CESO President and CEO. Ruth-Claire Alinas served as emcee for the evening.

Eddy Robinson of MorningStar River, a Toronto-based Native Drumming Group, treated the audience to a spiritual Aboriginal song and drumming performance. The UnitedSalseros Performance

Group raptured the audience with their graceful footwork. To celebrate CESO's work in the Philippines, Toronto-based dance group, Folklorico Filipino, submitted a video on Philippine traditional dance. In the end, a wonderful time was had by all.

On December 7th, Operations Centre staff and in-house volunteers, were joined by regional staff from across the country for a festive season luncheon. Attendees were treated to entertainment by Nicole Gold, CESO's Roster Manager, and her singing troupe, as well as Daryl Bone, Regional Manager, Manitoba and N.W. Ontario, who inspired his audience with song and melodic guitar and harmonica playing.

In BC, the Vancouver/North Shore CESO Club celebrated with a holiday luncheon.

Saskatchewan office staff were joined by VAs as they attended a play put on by the Saskatchewan Native Theatre Company.

About 30 people joined in the festivities at the Manitoba office where staff hosted a VA open house.

In Quebec, the Montreal CESO Club held a five to seven cocktail event. Later, more than 40 people were treated to a buffet in the CESO office.

In the Atlantic, an open house was planned for the New Year. ■



Eddy Robinson of MorningStar River at the Wine and Cheese.

AWFT Update

Status of Women Canada Agreement & NWAC Partnership

Aboriginal Women facilitating the Aboriginal Women for Tomorrow (AWFT) Program

By Delia Scribleac

In June 2007, CESO submitted a preliminary proposal for funding the Aboriginal Women for Tomorrow (AWFT) program to the Women's Partnership Fund, Status of Women Canada (SWC) for a three-year contract of \$450K. Formal approval of the preliminary proposal was received in early September. Development of the project activities and evaluation framework followed and at the beginning of November the Contribution Agreement was signed by CESO and SWC. The project duration is 2007-2010.

A core component of the SWC funding is a capacity building and program delivery partnership between CESO and the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC). Through discussions between the two organizations, the delivery of an AWFT Train-the-Trainer session for NWAC Employment Counselors was determined to be the starting point for capacity building, providing the Employment Counselors with an in-depth understanding of the AWFT program, and the knowledge to deliver the program to their clientele. The train-the-trainer session took place in Ottawa on October 10-11 and was conducted by a team of Volunteer Advisers (VAs) from Ontario and Quebec: Marjorie Hibberd, Joan Gillespie, Jean-Louis Castonguay and Raymond Busbridge.

Following this training session, Rita Lynn Emerson, Executive Director of Mother of Red Nations Women's Council of Manitoba, decided to join CESO as a VA and to become a facilitator for the AWFT Program. Rita delivered her first session on November 13-16, 2007 to the women of the Mother of Red Nations.

This is the first time that an AWFT workshop series has been delivered by Aboriginal women facilitators. ■

They came to teach and learned to listen

By VA Dale Riddell and VA Dave Schellenberg

When two Winnipeg CESO Volunteer Advisers (VAs) flew 1,200 kilometers NE of Winnipeg, Gillam, Manitoba, was their destination. Gillam has some 1,200 residents nestled on the Nelson River with three world scale hydro electric dams harnessing huge volumes of water flowing north to Hudson Bay.

First Nations people living in the town and on the Fox Lake Reserve just outside of Gillam, had invited CESO to give those eligible for the Indian Residential School program some options for the use of the settlement funds issued by the Canadian Government.

Fox Lake Cree Nation has a number of members who were taken from their parents as young as five years of age and forcibly confined for years in Federal Government residential schools. The goal of changing the children's culture was all too often carried out with harsh discipline and physical and emotional abuse of the worst kind. Nurturing, basic family love, or the teaching of useful life skills was all too rare.

Ten community members consisting of Elders, community leaders and ordinary people, participated to learn more about options for banking, investing, business entrepreneurship, frauds and scams, and wills and estates. Chief George Nepean came to show his support.

After the information session, the real value came in private conversations where heartfelt comments were expressed about their childhood experiences and their genuine desire as proud and caring people to do something meaningful with the compensation for themselves, their people, and the next generation in their families. "The more we listened, the more we learned" said Dale Riddell a CESO volunteer. VA partner Dave Schellenberg said "the experience of listening and trying to understand truly enriched our knowledge as some of the First Nations people talked about healing and quietly shared their dreams."

The Winnipeg CESO office had invited Debbie Cielen, a Senior Resolution Health Support Worker with the Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre of Winnipeg, to



Pictured is Mary Beardy, Fox Lake Cree Nation organizer.

open the session in Gillam. Debbie was present throughout the session for private counselling and help in dealing with emotions, program application or support in maneuvering through the compensation program. Debbie's empathy and professional training was key in building trust and confidence as she explained we were there to help by offering options and to genuinely listen.

The program evaluations indicated a high degree of satisfaction that met the survivors' expectations.

Organizer Mary Beardy asked CESO to consider delivering a similar presentation in Winnipeg for First Nations members who reside there. The participants expressed their gratitude and asked for 60 program manuals to pass around to their friends and families...a gesture that told us they thought it was all worthwhile. ■

For information on CESO's Indian Residential School (IRS) Program and a list of upcoming workshops in your areas, visit the CESO Web site at www.ceso-saco.com and click National Services, then Aboriginal and Programs.



VA Dale Riddell and Fox Lake Cree Nation participants.

Staffing update

Linda Jane Liutkus

Linda Jane Liutkus is the new Evaluation and Policy Manager for the National Services Team.

Linda recently completed an internship with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Tajikistan working as a Monitoring and Evaluation Assistant. In this post, she carried out project monitoring and evaluations as well as program reporting dealing with issues of children's and women's health, education and protection. Prior to her work with UNICEF, Linda spent time working and carrying out research with Ecuador's indigenous peoples, evaluating the national government's Intercultural, Bilingual Education programs. Her experiences have also included working with indigenous groups in Guatemala and Peru as well as with a local NGO in Nepal, focusing on community economic development projects. Linda also has extensive experience in the field of research. She has carried out research for the Participatory Development Forum in Ottawa and the University of Havana in Cuba. Both research projects focused on evaluating government

policies and projects and their effect on community participation.

Linda has a Bachelor Degree in Anthropology from Saint Francis Xavier University and a Masters Degree in International Development Studies from Saint Mary's University.

Linda's interest in international development has kept her travelling, studying and working overseas for the better part of the last decade. She is eager to apply this knowledge to CESO's work in Canadian communities.

Cecilia Chiang

Reporting to Azhar Nawaid in MIS, Cecilia Chiang joined CESO as the Oracle Developer on October 29, 2007.

Prior to joining CESO, Cecilia worked as an Oracle Developer for BBM Canada where she contributed to building and supporting in-house applications developed using Oracle Tools for measuring TV and Radio audience ratings. Her career also involved developing a Data Warehouse on the Inventory system for Bombardier, Regional Aircrafts Division. She was responsible for transforming and loading the Inventory data from the

Mainframe system into the Oracle Data Warehouse.

On the personal side, Cecilia dedicated part of her spare time volunteering in Mon Sheong Long Term Care Centre assisting the residents with their scheduled activities.

Accredited with a Bachelor Degree in Computer Science, Cecilia will definitely be suited for offloading the Roster Database and Applicant Tracking System from Cognos to Oracle and all of the other applications that follow.

Alberta and Western Arctic Region Office Announcements

Debra Duguay, who ably served CESO as Office Manager in Edmonton for almost 18 years, was promoted to the position of Regional Manager, effective December 3, 2007. Debra is very knowledgeable about CESO, its local clients and volunteers and is a tremendous asset to the organization. CESO is fortunate to be able to reap the rewards of her long-standing dedication.

Raelina Jobin, who joined CESO as Secretary/Receptionist early in 2007, was promoted to Acting Office Manager effective December 10, 2007.

Gale Lee

Gale Lee was promoted to the position of Program Manager, Asia. In addition to the Philippines, Gale is also responsible for CESO's work in Sri Lanka and China.

After joining CESO in February 2007 as the International Co-ordinator, Asia, Gale quickly became the Project Manager responsible for the Philippines program.

Boasting several years of international experience as a Foreign Service Officer in Guyana, Canada and Belgium, Gale has worked at both the bilateral and multilateral levels in the field of international relations, trade and development. She studied in Sweden, Belgium and Canada and has a Master's Degree in International Development and a B.A. (Honours) in International Relations. ■

Departures

- Pam Koch, Contract Director, Asia and Americas
- Sam Lafford, Regional Manager, Atlantic
- Audrey Redman, Administrative Assistant, National Services ■

Update your volunteer file information

- Do you have a new e-mail address or a change in your personal information?
 - Do you want to add to your skills classifications?
 Roster Services keeps your personal information up-to-date. Please e-mail any changes to volunteers.toronto@ceso-saco.com. ■

VAs in the Media

If you've been interviewed by the media, invited to speak about your CESO experiences, or are the recipient of an award, we would like to share the details with our readers.

Mail your news clippings to Josie Marchese (700 Bay Street, Suite 700, Box 328, Toronto, ON, M5G 1Z6 or by e-mail at jmarchese@ceso-saco.com) and contact her with the details of your award or speaking engagement. Tell us the name of the award and why you received it. Also tell us where you spoke and to how many people. ■

In Memoriam

Our condolences go to the family of the following CESO volunteers who recently passed away:

- Alain Albagli** of Nepean, ON
- John Dueck** of Winnipeg, MB
- Ernest Henry Dyck** of Winnipeg, MB
- Helmuth Fuchs** of Willowdale, ON
- Nicholas Johannesma** of Pickering, ON
- Ian Seddon** of Winnipeg, MB
- Donald Stockton** of Guelph, ON
- Douglas Thomas** of Brights Grove, ON
- Michael Walker** of Bayfield, ON

Their friends and associates will miss them. ■

CESO Clubs

Vancouver Island

Tom Robertson, Co-chairperson
tom.robertson@shaw.ca
 Previous Co-chairs: Bill Feyrer and Adrienne Kemble
By Adrienne Kemble:

Tom Robertson is the new Vancouver Island CESO Club co-chairperson. He replaces Bill Feyrer, who worked for several years in this capacity and will now be devoted to his Rotary club. Tom is a new member with a great deal of relevant experience and will work with me, Adrienne Kemble, the previous co-chair from Nanaimo.

All our meetings in the past few years have been in Victoria, but with many up-Island members, we hope to have a meeting in the mid-Island area to attract VAs from that part of the world.

Surrey/White Rock

Dean Struble, Chair
 604-536-6983
strubled@shaw.ca
 (Chuck Belotte is Vice Chair)
 The club will continue to meet the third Tuesday of the month from February to June and September to November for 2008. We meet at the White Rock Library, 15342 Buena Vista Ave, from 10:00 AM to noon; speakers will be arranged.
 The Club will hold a Holiday Season Luncheon, Sunday, January 13, 2008.

Vancouver/North Shore

Priidu Juurand, Co-Chair
 604-872-6001
priiduj@shaw.ca
 The Club meets on the second Tuesday of the month at the West Vancouver Library.

Southern Alberta

Jack Heynen, President
 403-243-1269
 Fax: 403-243-3437
heynenj@telusplanet.net
 Our luncheon-meetings will be held the first Monday of October, December, February, April and June. For additional information e-mail Jack Heynen.
 The executive for 2007-08 is as follows: Jack Heynen, President; John Skelton, Vice-President; Tony Strickland, Secretary; and Bertha Davis, Treasurer.
 Directors are Francine Beland and Henry

Murzyn. Past President is Eldon Loucks.

Northern Alberta

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ottawa@ceso-saco.com
 The Ottawa Club normally meets monthly for a luncheon. Seats should be reserved at least one week ahead by calling the CESO Office - 613-236-7763, voice-mail extension 306.

Mid-Ontario

Soren Sondergaard, Chair
 519-821-9296
odin@golden.net
 At our fall meeting, in Puslinch on October 18, CESO President and CEO Paul van der Wel attended, and gave an inspiring talk to the group.
 There will be a spring 2008 lunch meeting, speaker to be announced.

Niagara

Helen Johnson, President, Secretary and Treasurer
 905-892-2937
helenj@vaxxine.com
 The club meets for lunch at a St. Catharines restaurant.

Montreal

Herbert Cohen, President
herco00@hotmail.com

Saco Est du Québec

Jean Morand, President
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jeanmorand@videotron.ca
 Office: 3100, avenue du Bourg Royal, 2ième étage, Beauport, QC, G1C 5S7

VA Asiedu receives Chinese Friendship Award

CESO Volunteer Adviser, Dr. Samuel K. Asiedu, Professor of Plant Science, Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC) was among 50 experts from 20 countries honoured with the Friendship Award, the highest Chinese honour awarded to foreigners.

The award ceremony took place September 29, 2007, during the 58th anniversary celebrations of the founding of the Peoples Republic of China. The State Administration for Foreign Expert Affairs (SAFEA) coordinated and hosted the event.

Dr. Asiedu was recognized for having, since 1997, shared his expertise in potato technology with rural communities through research and training. In collaboration with the Dryland Agroscientific Research and Extension Centre (DAREC), Dingxi, Gansu Province, the potato research program focuses on micropropagation, varietal development, crop management and storage.

The ceremonies were graced by the presence of Premier Wen Jiabao who congratulated and thanked the award winners and invited them to a National Day Banquet event of the 58th Republic celebration.

There, Vice-Premier Zeng Peiyan personally presented the Gold Medals and plaques to each recipient at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

Dr. Asiedu said, "Overall, the high level recognition of my small international potato development contributions was a humbling experience of a lifetime that I am still savouring." ■



Dr. Asiedu receiving the Award from Vice-Premier Zeng Peiyan.

Yes, I will Contribute to CESO

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I am donating by: cheque MasterCard VISA

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Expiry Date (mm/yy) _____

Name on the credit card _____

Signature _____

Send in your contribution:

BY MAIL TO: 700 Bay Street, Suite 700, Box 328, Toronto, ON, M5G 1Z5

(Please make cheques payable to CESO.)

BY FAX TO: 416-961-1096

ON-LINE AT: www.ceso-saco.com - Click DONATE

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