



## News & Notes from The Marquis Project, July, 2014

### Annual General Meeting, June 19, 2014

Thirty Marquis members gathered on a rainy Thursday night in June in the Elephant Room at Brandon University to attend the annual meeting and to celebrate the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Marquis Project. Marquis President Al Friesen provided a brief overview of Marquis since it was founded in 1979, and drew attention to the display of historical documents and artifacts lining the walls of the meeting room. Friesen also reported on a very successful year of school programming and community engagement, continuing partnership with a local organization in Tanzania, and exciting financial developments.



Marquis members register and mingle before the start of the June 19, 2014 AGM

### From Humble Beginnings

As for the beginnings of Marquis, it was the vision of a small group of activists in southwest Manitoba back in 1979 to create an organization that would educate students in schools and adults in the community about the developing world. They also envisioned an organization that would create partnerships with grass roots organizations in the global south to improve the lives of villagers who have the same hopes and dreams that we have. The founding members of Marquis could hardly have imagined the local and global impact that The Marquis Project would have. Over the years Marquis has engaged many thousands of students and hundreds of teachers in southwestern Manitoba addressing

curriculum outcomes related to social justice, fair trade, and environmental sustainability and global citizenship. In collaboration with other local groups, Marquis has worked with southern partners in El Salvador, Uganda and Tanzania to improve the lives of thousands of youth and families through mentorship and training. And through all of these initiatives, Marquis has been at the forefront in educating and engaging the public in Brandon and southwestern Manitoba communities to think globally and act locally. Indeed, over the past 35 years, Marquis has lived up to its motto of “linking Manitobans with the developing world”.



Founding member David McConkey stands in front of the first Marquis office, 220-8<sup>th</sup> Street, Brandon



Founding member and first Executive Director, a younger Zack Gross, at work in the Marquis office

### **Education Programming Report**

The Marquis Education Program Facilitator, Samantha Dellezay, reported that Marquis had exceeded its goals by engaging over 1,600 students and prospective teachers in curriculum-based development education in southwest Manitoba schools. Fifty five classroom presentations were made in 31 schools in 9 school divisions and in the Faculty of Education at Brandon University. This work is fully funded by Manitoba Education through annual grants of \$30,000, and we are deeply grateful for this support and the confidence of Manitoba Education in Marquis’ ability to assist with curriculum implementation. We are also pleased to report that we had a recent meeting with James Allum, the new Minister of Education & Advanced Training, to apprise him of the work of Marquis and we look forward to continuing this important partnership in education under the new Minister.

### **Fair Trade Initiatives Report**

Mireille Saurette, Marquis Vice-president, reported on the very successful Fair Trade initiatives that culminated in the recent declaration of the City of Brandon as a Fair Trade Town, only the second Manitoba city to achieve this recognition. The support of Mayor Sheri Decter Hirst and Council to

promote fair trade has been phenomenal. Under Mireille's leadership, a Fair Trade Town Steering Committee was formed with representatives from various local organizations promoting fair trade. A very successful Fair Trade Fridays campaign promoted fair trade in local coffee houses, restaurants, and to the general public. Fair trade coffee was served at a number of community events. There are currently 38 stores and restaurants in Brandon that carry hundreds of fair trade products.



The Fair Trade display table at the June 2014 AGM



Sign and historical documents on display at 2014 AGM

### Financial Report

Treasurer David Gamey provided a very encouraging financial report. A copy of the Financial Statement 2013-2014 Fiscal Year will soon be posted on the *Library* tab on the Marquis website. David reviewed the positive results of restructuring the line of credit and converting it to a loan last year. Marquis now has a great start in repaying the long-standing debt and has not needed to rely on a reduced line of credit. Gamey also reported that a bequest of approximately \$18,000, designated for education, has been left to Marquis by the estate of former member Cristine Winkler. There will be a formal announcement when these funds are received and they will be invested with growth used for educational programming.

Finally, David shared the exciting news that Marquis recently received an offer from a generous donor, who wishes to remain anonymous, **to match up to \$10,000** in funds raised by December 1, 2014, to help retire debt incurred during past financially challenging times and to support Marquis programming. Since receiving this offer Marquis has already paid \$2,260 towards the loan which includes two regular monthly payments and a voluntary payment of \$1,500 thanks to generous donations. Furthermore, another anonymous donor has offered **\$1,000 toward this match!** Marquis invites you to help maximize on this generous offer by making a donation which will be matched by the anonymous donor. Please see last page of newsletter for details and how you can contribute.

### **By-law Revision**

It was noted that the Marquis By-laws (Constitution) had not been revised since 1993. The proposed changes reflect a re-organization and re-numbering of the Sections and Clauses for clarity; updated language; and several additions to streamline process and/or reflect long-standing practice. These changes have been approved by the Board of Directors. The revised by-laws were approved unanimously by the membership.

### **Elections to the Board of Directors**

The following five board members have one year left in their terms: David Gamey, Manuel Godoy, Naomi Leadbeater, Zack Gross, and Mireille Saurette. Board members Kim Burgess, Drew Caldwell, Al Friesen, and Michelle Lemoine completed their terms and were re-elected to new two-year terms. In addition, Laurie Bachewich and Carissa Taylor also completed their terms but did not seek re-election. The board and membership expressed their appreciation to Laurie and Carissa for their work on behalf of Marquis and wished them well.

Following the AGM, the board selected the new Marquis Executive: President – Naomi Leadbeater; Vice-president – Kim Burgess; Treasurer – David Gamey; Secretary – Michelle Lemoine. Mireille Saurette takes on the position of Chair of the Fair Trade Steering Committee.



Refreshment table, June 2014 AGM



Part of historical display at June 2014 AGM

### **Highlights, Cautions and Dreams – A Look at Marquis at 35**

Following the business portion of the meeting Zack Gross, former Marquis Executive Director, and Curt Schultz, former President, co-facilitated an interactive session of member reflections "Highlights, Cautions & Dreams: A Look at Marquis at 35". Small group discussions went well beyond nostalgia and past lessons learned to expressing renewed optimism and excitement about the future of Marquis beyond 35 years. Thanks to Zack and Curt for facilitating this engaging discussion.

Following are some **quotes from members** reporting to the plenary after group discussions:

- “Marquis gets people to come out of the woodwork and help out in tough times”.
- “Remember when we had a 17 year-old President? (Heidi Kruck) That was amazing!”
- “Meeting former BU President, John Mallea, at Wildflower recently, he asked about Marquis, and a moment later pulled out his cheque book and made a donation right there in the restaurant”
- “A guy from CIDA came out to do an inspection, and while walking downtown with me (Zack) 3 people stopped and donated money to Marquis. The CIDA official then arranged an extra \$10,000 based on need and community support!”
- “I remember the youth internships funded by HRDC. A lot of those young people are now in their 30’s and have chosen career paths with connections to international development and rural development”
- “All the years in the Worldly Goods store were highlights”
- “In 1995 Paul Martin slashed the budget and we went from 11 to 3 staff – but we survived!”
- “In any organization, there’s always fear of complacency. We have to guard against losing momentum of Marquis’ presence in the community”
- “I am concerned about the next provincial election. Perhaps the new board should look at ways to engage the Opposition should the government change. We need continued support, our work is non-partisan”
- “Hey – look what we can do! We can do anything. The sense of empowerment will always fuel the dreams of the organization”
- “I dream about working with the Aboriginal community. It’s an issue that deserves advocacy and one we’re in a good position to address”
- “I would like to see Marquis engage more with educational institutions such as ACC and BU”
- “I dream of the day when Marquis won’t have to go around begging for funding!”



Enjoying refreshments & networking, June 2014 AGM



Reminder of the Worldly Goods store

## Anonymous Donor offers to match up to \$10,000 raised for Marquis!

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Marquis invites you to help maximize on this generous offer by making a donation which will be matched by the anonymous donor. You can donate by signing up for monthly debits to your account, by mailing a cheque or by donating online via PayPal or major credit card. Visit the Marquis website and click on the *Donate* tab for details. All donations and memberships qualify for charitable tax receipts.

Marquis is planning several events and a fall appeal to raise funds for this match. Keep checking this site for details by late August! With your help, we can retire the long-standing debt by December 1, 2014 and turn our focus to what Marquis does best – linking Manitobans with the developing world through school programming and community engagement.

### From the archives ...



Former Marquis volunteers Dorothy Weston and the late Richard (Dick) Dryden at Marquis table in Shoppers Mall Brandon, circa 2005