

# OPERATIVE REPORT

WINTER 2009



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## 2009 AGM ELECTS FIRST NURSE



Genelle Leifso  
Perioperative Nurse  
Vancouver

CNIS held its 15th Annual General Meeting in Vancouver on November 28. 7 board members were present, as well as CNIS international director, Dr. Ronald Lett, vice-president, Phil Hassen, Surgical Associate Dr. Robert Taylor and Obstetrical Associate Dr. Lorraine Woolford. Genelle Leifso RN, MSN, CPN(C) was elected to the board. Genelle has been a perioperative nurse for more than 25 years, working and teaching across Canada and in Cambodia. This year, Genelle facilitated the pilot of SSSL nursing workshops in Addis Ababa and is presently writing the nursing manual that will accompany the course.

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## RE-ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS



Dr. Tarek Razeq  
Trauma Surgeon  
Montreal



Khwezi Mbolekwa  
Health Administrator  
Prince George



Linda Akagi  
Clinical Pharmacist  
Vancouver



Dr. Paul Moroz  
Paediatric Spine Surgeon  
Ottawa

## CONTINUING BOARD MEMBERS



Doug Wallis  
Chartered Accountant  
Vancouver



Dr. Jan Christilaw  
Obstetrician & Gynaecologist  
Vancouver



Dr. Andrew Howard  
Paediatric Orthopaedic Surgeon  
Toronto



Dr. Gwen Hollaar  
General Surgeon  
Calgary

## CNIS INTRODUCED IN ZAMBIA

The first ESS Providers Course in Zambia was held in Mongu from Oct. 26 - 30. CNIS Surgical Associate joined a group of surgeons and nurses from Kelowna, who through strategic contacts with Zambia have formed the Okanagan Zambia Health Initiative (OkaZHI). The participants were a mix of physicians, clinical officers, medical licentiates and nurse practitioners from Western Province. Dr. Silumesii, CEO of the Lewanika General Hospital, opened the course with Zambian television and radio present. 2 BC nurses who had previously worked in Mongu developed a concurrent training program for nurses. No sooner had the course begun when a young man was brought in with a large fishing spear embedded in his lung. The only chest tube in Western Province sat in the bottom of CNIS' teaching bag... The patient with a spear survived and turned out to provide not only a great stimulation for the skills learning course, but also a perfect model for the nurses inservice on chest-tube care! Dr. Andrew Silumesii's parting words were, "We will forever be grateful for the opportunity we have to



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L-R: Dr. Bill Nelems, Dr. Glynn Jones, Lianne Jones, Dr. Andrew Silumesii, Dr. Gary O'Connor, Dr. Robert Taylor and Jessica Barker.

collaborate with such wonderful people. The CNIS course was simply a master piece and our memories of it remain engraved on our minds. "

## MALAWI: 10 YEARS OF ESS

Malawi has completed its 10th year of conducting ESS Courses. Dr. Robert Taylor helped establish the course and returned the 6th time after 6 years this September. The Medical College in Blantyre, which is growing rapidly, renewed its commitment to ongoing partnership with CNIS. Since instituting the ESS course into its curriculum, the College has grown from 20 to over 50 students per year. The Department has Malawian surgeon staff and the number of surgical trainees has increased. The skills lab on the hospital campus hosted the ESS course. This lab is a direct outgrowth of the Medical Colleges' involvement with CNIS' skills training initiative. After ten

years, there has been positive change. The original group of certified instructors was limited to 2 nationals, while the majority of the current group of instructors are Malawian. The group includes 19 faculty, not only from Blantyre, but also from Lilongwe, Zomba and other districts. It is this continuing partnership with a growing, maturing national medical program, and knowing that we are a small, but integral part of its growth that brings meaning to our work.



© R. Lett

The conference room in the upgraded Addis Ababa University Surgical Skill Lab. Laparoscopic Towers Donated by Stortz Inc.

## UPDATED SURGICAL SKILLS LAB HANDED OVER TO DOS AAU

Completing his 2-year contract as Director of the Addis Surgical Skills Lab, Dr. Ronald Lett officially handed the upgraded lab over to Dr. Abebe Bekele, the Assistant Director on Nov. 10. The CNIS upgrade included office construction, furnishing, computers, video connections with sophisticated software editing programs, and for the lab itself, high quality metal cupboards and teaching aids such as video cameras, digital camera, lap top computer and LCD projector. During his time as director, Dr. Lett piloted two new courses: the Surgical Skills for Africa Residents and the Safe Surgery Saves Lives Nursing Course. Two ESS and one Trauma Team Training Instructors courses and 3 ESS Providers courses were held. IPIFA and ACCESS international meetings were hosted. The lab has benefited from the contributions of laparoscopic towers donated by Stortz Inc. In addition to CNIS courses, the lab will be used for laparoscopic, urology, gynaecology and anaesthetic training. Dr. Lett will continue to reside in Addis and direct CNIS' programs in Africa from Ethiopia.

## ESS NEWS

### Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

ESS has been running in Dar for 6 years. The last Instructors course was held in 2006. To maintain the program, 2 Instructors courses were conducted in October 2009, certifying 17 new instructors and re-certifying 12 instructors. Dr. Naboth Mbembati is the ESS Patron and Dr. Laurean Rwanyuma is the ESS Director in Dar es Salaam.

### Mbarara, Uganda

The ESS program has continued here for 9 years. The third Instructors course was conducted in August. On October 12- 16, ESS Director Dr. Grace Ruhinda and Patron Dr. Deo Bitaharo conducted a Providers workshop for 32 students.

### Awassa, Ethiopia

Dr. Zoe Parr is the fourth Calgary Surgeon to teach ESS in Awassa. From September 21 - 25, 22 students completed the course. The ESS Patron in Awassa is Dr. Yifru Berhan and The ESS Director is Dr. Abera Gobeze.

## 2009 AGM (cont'd from page 1)

During the AGM, audited financial statements were received and accepted. CNIS' overall expenditure for the June 30th year-end was \$1,646,243. Manning Elliot was reappointed as auditors for next year.

Dr. Mensur Osman Yassin was awarded Honorable Lifetime Membership for his contributions to CNIS, as head of the department of surgery at Gondar University, Dean and ESS Patron from 2002 - 2009.

Subsequent to the AGM, a board meeting was held. Dr. Tarek Razek was reelected board chair. Khwezi Mbolekwa was elected Vice Chair. CNIS' Committee chairs are Doug Wallis - Finance, Dr. Andrew Howard - Programming and Dr. Paul Moroz - Public Engagement.

A strategic planning meeting was held on Saturday afternoon and Sunday, based on the 2010 - 2014 proposal, which will be re-submitted to CIDA.

## SAFETY BELTS FOR PALM TREE CLIMBERS



Tanzanian palm tree climber tests safety harness that CNIS brought from Canada.

Each month, Muhimbili Orthopedic Institute, the site of the Injury Control Center - Tanzania, receives seriously injured climbers who have fallen from palm trees while harvesting coconuts. This is a leading cause of paraplegia in Tanzania. Drs. Respicious Boniface and Ronald Lett went with a palm tree climber and a Tanesco power pole climber to field-test the use of safety belts. The power pole man instructed the palm tree climber in the use of the belt. The climber was very happy with the security he felt at the top, when they are at highest risk of falling.

Dr. Boniface will investigate local procurement of belts and test the belts on a group of Palm Tree climbers to see if the enthusiasm is shared by others. Subsequently the use of the safety belt will be evaluated to determine if falls with serious injuries can be reduced.

## CNIS PORTRAITS

### Meet Lorne Braun

#### CNIS Program Associate

**Lorne received a 10-year pin at the CNIS open house for his numerous important contributions to the CNIS success.**

**Q:** When did you get involved with CNIS?

**A:** In 1999, CIDA requested that I assist CNIS with their reporting to CIDA.

**Q:** What is your role with CNIS?

**A:** I write proposals to funders, do reporting to organizational donors, write agreements between CNIS and its partners in North America and Africa, update the policy manual and update the strategic plan.

**Q:** What is your most rewarding moment with CNIS?

**A:** Evaluating the CNIS peace building work in Northern Uganda in 2006, seeing changed lives as a result of our work.

**Q:** What other international activities are you involved with?

**A:** I do consulting with various other Canadian NGOs, am on the CCIC Ethics Review Committee, and am a volunteer



Treasurer and an International Council member of Initiatives of Change, a Geneva-based trust building network.

**Q:** How would you like to see CNIS evolve?

**A:** To develop additional strategic partnerships in order to leverage its skills and assets.

**Q:** What would you like Canadians to know about CNIS?

**A:** CNIS provides value for money and has the potential to help transform health care in Africa, with specific benefit to women and children.

## ALL WE WISH FOR IS A SAFER WORLD

The holiday season is upon us. This year, Muslims celebrate Eid al-Adha on Nov. 27, the day after pilgrims conduct Hajj, the annual pilgrimage to Mecca. The Jewish festival of Lights, Hanukkah, comes this year on Dec. 12 - 19. Western Christians celebrate the birth of Christ on Dec. 25, while Orthodox Christmas is celebrated on Jan. 7.

CNIS offers you a way to share gifts with meaning while supporting international surgery. Our **Gifts of Safety** are accompanied by a personal card, which we will send to your chosen recipient. This year, we feature 3 Gifts of Safety:

1. First-Aid kit for a primary school in Africa - \$ 85
2. Essential Surgical Skills Manuals for an African medical student - \$39
3. Shipment of 10 new surgical books to Africa - \$20

You will receive an official tax receipt and a notice that the card has been sent. For more information, please email [office@cnis.ca](mailto:office@cnis.ca) or call our office at 604-739-4708 | [www.cnis.ca](http://www.cnis.ca)



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Injury Control Centre - Uganda and CNIS deliver first aid kits to primary schools.

## ON THE CUTTING EDGE

- **CIDA meetings** - Dr. Ronald Lett briefed Margaret Biggs, CIDA president, on the CNIS' 5-year CIDA Proposal in Dar es Salaam on September 29th.
- **High Commission** - Dr. Tarek Razek, CNIS board chair, met with the Canadian High Commissioner, Robert Orr on October 27. to update him about CNIS activities in Tanzania.
- **CIDA extension** - A 2-month \$99,960 extension on the CIDA contract was approved on Nov. 27. The current contract now ends on Feb. 28. 2010.
- **Ethiopia Opening** - Lorne Braun, CNIS Program Associate, was at the official launch of Initiatives of Change-Ethiopia at the African Union in Addis Ababa on October 16.
- **Southern Sudan** - Dr. Gwen Hollaar was participating in a surgical education camp in Southern Sudan in November, followed by a Hernia Course in Rwanda in December.
- **Taraxca helps Uganda book project** - CNIS thanks Taraxca Jewellery for donating 1870 \$ to ship new surgical books to Uganda. From, Oct. 13 - Nov. 13, \$2 from every sale over \$20 was donated from their stores.
- **Bethune 2010** - The 10th annual Bethune Round Table will be held at the University of Calgary May 14-16 2010. Please send abstracts to [ois@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ois@ucalgary.ca) by January 31st, 2010.
- **SURG 510** - Surgical Care in International Health is being offered in January 2010. For additional information contact the Branch for International Surgery at [international.surgery@ubc.ca](mailto:international.surgery@ubc.ca) or call 604 875 5372.
- **Intercontinental TTT Instructor course** - Using Skype and Web cam, the Nov. 27 workshop in Vancouver was linked to Guyana, South America. 6 TTT Instructors were certified in Vancouver and 3 in Guyana.
- **Donner support**- CNIS would like to thank the Donner Canadian Foundation for donating \$51,500 towards our injury prevention and surgical care work in Tanzania.
- **WEB LAUNCH Dec. 13** - On December 13. at 13.00 hours, CNIS new web site will be launched. The more user-friendly and dynamic site was made possible thanks to a team of IT, graphics and flash volunteers. We welcome your feedback. | [www.cnis.ca](http://www.cnis.ca)

### CANADIAN NETWORK FOR INTERNATIONAL SURGERY

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### JOIN CNIS OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

INDIVIDUALS: \$50 (Regular) | \$25 (Student)  
ORGANIZATIONAL: \$500

CNIS IS A REGISTERED CHARITY.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND SUPPORT**

**Patron:** Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mich elle Jean, Governor General of Canada

**Chair:** Dr. Tarek Razek

**President:** Dr. Ronald R. Lett

**Vice-President:** Phil Hassen

**Manager:** Elizabeth Schaefer

**Accountant:** Doreen Grossman

**Program Associate:** Lorne Braun

**Surgical Associate:** Dr. Robert Taylor

**Obstetrical Associate:** Dr. Lorraine Woolford

**Internet Technology Coordinator:** Timothy Steeves

**Public Engagement Coordinator:** Karethe Linae

**Vancouver Office Assistant:** Grace Green

**Addis Administrative Assistant:** Netsanet Sileshi



**CNIS DONORS:** Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Harbinger Foundation, Donner Canadian Foundation, Ethiopian North American Health Professionals Association, CNIS Organizational and Individual Members and Friends of CNIS.

**YOUR CONTRIBUTION IS MUCH NEEDED & GREATLY APPRECIATED!**