

ROTARY CLUB OF NANAIMO

“C O G S”

Volume 97, Number 35

4,765th Meeting

Friday, March 31, 2017



Attending Friday's meeting were members of the Vancouver Island Compassion Dogs organization, left to right, Stephane Marcotte and his companion Sarge; Brian Cameron with his dog Trooper; Barb Ashmead, CEO of the organization; and Jean Devost with his compassion dog Tui.

Photos by Ian Williams

**Club Meeting Friday at 12:00 p.m.
at the Coast Bastion Inn
CLUB OFFICERS 2016-2017**

President ----- Debbie Narver
Vice President ----- Carey McIver
Secretary ----- Bob Janes
Treasurer ----- Lynne Pankratz
President Elect ----- Jane Currie
Immediate Past President ----- Lila Tanner



**Serving Our Community Since
May 1, 1920 - Charter Number 43**

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Meeting Notes from March 24th, 2017

By Mike Herold



The meeting today was presided over by **President Debbie Narver** and a very nice invocation was delivered by **Lynne Pankratz**.

Our audio system crashed prior to O'Canada so the club did its best Acappella.

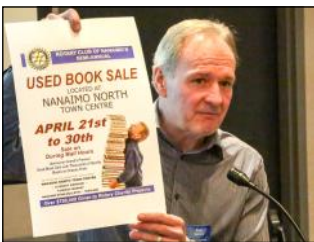
Bruce Gordon introduced our visitors and guests including **Jean Devost** and **Stephane Marcotte**, guests of **Joan Ryan** and our guest speakers **Brian Cameron** and **Barb Ashmead**. There were no visiting Rotarians this week.

Yvan Gosselin said he had no news on the health of the club and it was noted that club member **Ed Borisenko** was back home from the hospital.

President Deb read a thank you letter from **Travellers Lodge** for the recent generous donation of \$40,000 from our Rotary Club. Than you Rotarians!

Announcements

Announcements included a note from **Dave Hammond** that the Centennial Committee will meet at Maffeo Sutton Park after next Fridays meeting to review our project in the park.



Bob Janes reminded club members to pick up posters for the upcoming book sale to put in your offices, car windows etc. and **Janeane Coutu** thanked Bob for printing up the posters at his office at no cost to the club. The book sale committee is



asking club members to talk to any businesses in key locations in the north end and to put up our large book sale signs since the City will no longer allow signs on City property. Email any leads to Janeane. The book sale is April 21-30th and the April 21st club meeting will be canceled.

Sgt-at-Arms

The ever humble **John Heisterman** was Sgt-at-Arms and was helped by his buddy **Bruce Samson**. John said that he did not have a lot of trash on club members but did collect money off **Frank Shoemaker** by telling five kids and one adult that John was having breakfast with at the local Tim Horton's that they were in bad company eating with John.



To raise some money John auctioned off an Elephant Garlic for \$6.00 to **Yvan Gosselin**.

John also asked what he thought was a difficult question about what March 20th

was and **Behzad Forghani** correctly said it was the Spring Equinox with 12 hours of daylight and 12 hours of darkness.



Happy and sad bucks were next with **Dave Hammond** giving a happy buck for getting to eat at the Bees Knees with **Behzad Forghani** as the host. He also indicated that he thought **Janeane Coutu** was less bossy now that she was 50 years old.



Behzad had a happy buck to be back in Nanaimo and said that he missed the club. He said that the Equinox is the Persian New Year and he celebrated by going fishing with his daughter at Colliery Dam and catching a trout.



Douglas Anderson said that **Brenda Grice** and the Shoemakers attended an Oak Bay Rotary function, **Susan Gerrand** had a sad \$5.00 for broken cam shaft in their motor



home, **Mike Knutsson** joined the *Loaves and Fishes Board*, **Charlotte Mougeot** celebrated her 30th wedding anniversary and is on the board of *Canadian Artists*.



Joan Ryan had a happy buck that the latest *Seniors Connections* newsletter is out and **Gunter Raedler** gave a \$20.00 thank you to **Yvan Gosselin** for looking after water problems in his garage. I always knew that Gunter couldn't control his water at his age.

Frank Shoemaker had a happy \$6.00 for



his sixth month anniversary of still being with us after a heart attack.

Janeane Coutu won the table stakes – what's new?

No one claimed the draw for the Ace of Spades.



Vancouver Island Compassion Dogs

By Janeane Coutu

Joan Ryan introduced our guests from **Vancouver Island Compassion Dogs**, **Barb Ashmead**, CEO along with three



program participants and their dogs; **Stephane Marcotte & Sarge**, **Brian Cameron & Trooper**, and **Jean Devost & Tui**. Joan reminded us that when the dogs are wearing their vests they are working so approach cautiously and ask their handler's permission before touching the dog.

Vancouver Island Compassion Dogs Society (VICD) is a non-profit organization that matches rescue dogs

to veterans with **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**.

They received their charitable status number 4 years ago and receive the majority of their funding from **Legion Command**, **Wounded Warriors Canada**, and the **Strathcona Rotary** club. They also hold their own fundraising events and receive donations from the general public.

Barb had previously worked with service dogs for sight impaired people and was asked if she could train a PTSD dog. The rest, as they say, is history. Traditional service dogs are bred and raised as a puppy with service in mind. VICD finds and adopts suitable rescue dogs from various shelters, and as Barb jokes, they take the self-interested dogs that flunk out of traditional service training. They learned early on that a fully trained dog tended to isolate their handler so they changed their process. Now they do an interview with the veteran, introduce the program, and then do a dog pairing where they meet a few different dogs to choose their match.

The training is a comprehensive 52 week program that allows the veterans and their dogs to work and learn at their own pace, and is responsive to the individual needs of each veteran. Training is designed to help veterans create a lasting, bonded partnership they refer to as a Team. They provide the veteran with everything required to participate in the program without incurring any personal costs. Everything from dog food and veterinary care to fuel for driving to the twice weekly classes held in Qualicum Beach. VICD estimates that the cost for each team is \$15,000 over the course of the year-long program. At the end of training, the dog is sold to their handler for \$1. But the relationship with VICD continues with an after-care program and mentor program.

They also have a mental health advisor on staff to assist

"One of the most beneficial effects of a compassion dog is the ability to ... distract my mind from venturing deep into the past traumatic memories or experiences. It allows me to see a light when I am covered in darkness."

— one of our Veterans

with the transition and pressure of appearing in public with a service dogs. Many of the guys suffer from isolation, and being with the dog in public often attracts attention and questions which can be stressful.

We heard from **Brian Cameron**, who has 28 years of service in the Canadian Military. He was diagnosed with PTSD in 2000, and traces his trigger point to a 1993/1994 combat tour in Sarajevo. Brian's dog Trooper is a 3-yr old chocolate lab that was rescued in Port Alberni and put into foster care with Barb and VICD.



The Team of Brian and Trooper trained for 20-25 hours a week for 52 weeks, and are certified through the BC Government which allows her to go anywhere with Brian. He said prior to Trooper, he made every excuse to NOT leave the house.

Brian said it was surprising how many people don't know what PTSD is, and often is asked why he has a service dog. He explains it as "fight or flight", it feels like a shot of adrenaline, rapid breathing, body tenses, anxiety attack, numbing, desire to just leave the situation. The Lymbic system in the brain is not filing memories away properly. Senses are triggered that bring up the experiences in that part of the brain and it brings forward the "fight or flight" response. He can get that feeling just by thinking about a situation.

As an example, going into a mall or Wal-Mart would trigger a reaction like flashbacks, nightmares, hyper arousal, and even avoidance. When Trooper hears anxiety or stress in his voice, she gets up and distracts him to change his thought process. She helps him manage his triggers and symptoms. There are things he can teach her – such as fetching meds, or to wake him up when the alarm goes off. And there is bonding, an attachment between the two because of the long relationship during training. Now when she hears him having a nightmare, she comes and wakes him up gently by licking his face.

Brian has been dealing with PTSD for 21 years, and the past two years he has had the dog have been the best of his past 21 years.

There is a 1-year waiting list to get into the program and

GUESTS, BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

By Bob Janes

Guests of Rotary:

Barb Ashmead, Qualicum
Stephane Marcotte &
Sarge from Victoria
Brian Cameron & Trooper
from Comox
Jean Devost & Tui, from
Nanaimo

Birthdays:

Eric Brand on April 5th

Wedding Anniversaries:

Susie & Chris Stephens, 2
years on April 4th

Club Anniversary:

Brent Stetar, 14 years on
April 4th
Dave Connolly, 33 years
on April 6th

E.& O.E.

they only anticipate this will increase as awareness of their organization grows. They have 2 veterans from Nanaimo in the program and a 3rd in process. There have been 29 people in the program and they have 11 graduates.

During the question period we learned that after graduation the team checks in monthly in person and annually retests. All participants in the program have to be in therapy as well as the dog training program – it's a very important part of the program. During the day at home, the dogs take the vest off and are a playful member of the family. Vest on and they are at work, vest off is play time.



Joan Ryan did double duty and also thanked our speakers for sharing with us this amazing program helping out Military veterans. She presented Barb and Brian with a Rotary hand-made pen.

VICD finds and adopts suitable rescue dogs from various shelters for our program.

Our professional training program has been designed to help veterans create a lasting, bonded partnership we affectionately call a **Team**.

DATES TO REMEMBER

April 1—Celebrating 100 years of the Rotary Foundation starting at 6:00 pm at Beban Park. Several PHF pins to be awarded.

April 21 to 30—Rotary Used Book Sale, Nanaimo North Town Centre. Sign up on-line today—*many hands make light work!*

May 4, 5, 6, 2017—Spirit of Rotary DTA & Conference, Suquamish, WA. More details at www.rotary5020.org

May 13—Oceanside Rotary James Bond Night, 007 Moonraker. Beban Auditorium. Dinner, auction, dancing. Tickets \$125/ea.

Your help is needed!

Volunteer Cashiers (43)
and Table Workers (67)
are required for the upcoming
Rotary Book Sale

The Rotary Club of Ladysmith presents

Rotary Evening of Celebrations

In support of Disaster Aid Canada and Eradicating Polio

April 22, 2017
Aggie Hall, Ladysmith
Doors Open at 6:30 pm
Tickets \$20

Appetizers included
Cash bar — Beer & Wine
Live and Silent Auctions

For tickets, contact Don at 250-924-8831

disaster aid canada
global emergency relief

Rotary
Club of Ladysmith

WEEKLY CLUB PROGRAMS & MEMBER DUTIES

MEETING DATE	March 31st, 2017	April 7th, 2017	April 14th, 2017
GREETERS	Mikel Knutsson, Dave Connolly, Susie Stephens	Moe Lessan, Doug Cowling, Lila Tanner	GOOD FRIDAY
CASHIER	Henry Jiang	Brent Barootes	
SGT-AT-ARMS	Dave Hammond	Bruce Samson	
INVOCATION	Joan Ryan	Dave Connolly	
HEAD TABLE	Pres Debbie, Aleksander Udev, Behzad Forghani, Eric Brand, Susie Stephens, Dave Connolly	Pres Debbie, Janice Perrino, Joan Ryan Susan Gerrand, Janeane, Brent Stetar, Fay Laing, Moe Lessan	NO ROTARY MEETING
INTRO GUESTS	Susie Stephens	Brent Stetar	
INTRO SPEAKER	Behzad Forghani	Joan Ryan	
PROGRAM	EATING FOR HEALTH & WELLNESS <i>Aleksander Udev</i>	Nanaimo Hospital Foundation Update <i>Janice Perrino, CEO</i>	
THANK SPEAKER	Keith McFarlane	Susie Stephens	