

ROTARY CLUB OF NANAIMO

“C GS”

Volume 98, Number 10

4784th Meeting

Friday, September 8, 2017



Rotary Exchange Students: Lee Pin-Chen (Coco) -Tiachang Taiwan, Beatriz Ferrari Pilla (Bia) - Adamantina Brazil, Peter Bartok - Debrecan Hungary. Rebound Students Morgan King presented her year in Italy and Samuel Muir presented his year in Switzerland.

photo taken August 29, 2017, Ian Williams

Club Meeting Friday at 12:00 p.m.
at the Coast Bastion Inn
CLUB OFFICERS 2017-2018

President ----- Jane K. Currie
Vice President ----- Carey McIver
Secretary ----- Bob Janes
Treasurer ----- Lynne Pankratz
President Elect ----- Charles Ramos
Immediate Past President -- Debbie Narver



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

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MEETING NOTES - Sept. 1, 2017

By Charles Ramos

President **Jane Currie** called the meeting to order, and led the singing of the national anthem.

David Woodward delivered an insightful invocation.

Visiting Rotarians and Guests

Joan Ryan called for visiting Rotarians. There were none.



Guests **Barbara Procter-Hartley** and **Sylvia Hansen** were introduced by **President Jane**.



Thomas Deschutter was introduced by **Dave Hammond** and **Charles Ramos** introduced his wife, **Sari Saunders**.

Announcements

Joan Ryan announced that the Youth Committee's fundraiser was very well-attended, and was a great success, raising over \$3,000 for the youth exchange program.

Janeane Coutu announced that the booksale is about a month away, and it's time to sign up. The signup sheet is available under

UPCOMING EVENTS on the [website](#). It's requested that each member of our club serve at least three shifts. As always, sorting help is gladly welcomed.

Sergeant at Arms

Joan Ryan was today's Sergeant at Arms. She levied some fines, billed everyone else for incorrect answers to a Renaissance quiz, and called for Happy and Sad bucks.

Happy and Sad Bucks

Douglas Anderson reported that member **John Heisterman's** claims to destitution may be accurate, as he (John) was observed in downtown Nanaimo expending great effort to retrieve a dime from a gutter.

Dave Hammond gave happy (?) bucks that his daughter has moved back home

Jane Currie philosophically noted that while observing recent back to school shopping, the parents are often quite stressed, while their young children are thrilled with the simple things like multicoloured erasers.

Joan Ryan said it is wonderful to welcome the exchange students at the airport.

Charles Ramos gave happy bucks for his family's month away in Peru and Galapagos, and mentioned that he may be obsolete at work, since his engineering firm picked up its biggest job to date in his absence.

Janeane Coutu won the table stakes.



Joan Ryan's draw for the Ace of Spades was unsuccessful.

Speaker Recap – **Friday Sept 1, 2017**

Submitted by Brent Barootes

This week's speaker was already familiar with our Rotary Club. As a member of the Board of Directors for the Nanaimo Branch of the SPCA she attended the session that the SPCA presented in July. **Laura Shanner** PHD was aptly introduced by Joan Ryan who chose to introduce the topic for this program rather than Laura herself leaving that to Laura to do.



As Laura noted, in addition to her volunteer role at the BC SPCA she is also leading the United Way campaign at VIU where she teaches in policy and medical healthcare and ethics. Prior she was teaching at the University of Alberta in Edmonton in the faculty of medicine in this same subject area and prior to that in philosophy at University of Toronto. During her learning years while obtaining her degree she looked into becoming a researcher but after several medical test cases she determine policy and ethics around medicine was what she was truly suited for!

Laura provided a terrific presentation on medically assisted suicide or assisted death. The topic as she noted is personal but also critical for all of us to understand., She provided a wealth of content and information on defining the topic; defining the circumstances, the Supreme Court of Canada rulings on this and the present-day world in Canada around assisted suicide and the lingering issues around this topic. I have done my best to capture the learnings.

It is important to understand that the term we use so often "euthanasia" actually means "a good or better death". The thought process behind euthanasia and assisted suicide is the turning point between trying to save the life of a person and understanding they are dying. It is critical to be able to draw the line as to knowing that "we can no longer save this person's life" to how can we assist

them to live out the last of their days in a comfortable and best-case scenario circumstances.

There are really two types of euthanasia. There is active euthanasia. This is where we actively assist someone to end their life before they naturally will pass. Passive euthanasia is when we no longer provide support to assist them in living such as no treating something further or taking them off life support systems. This is where they will pass naturally but we have removed the supports they have had to remain to this point.

It is also important to recognize that there is what is referred to as "Terminal Sedation" which happens often in our healthcare system. This is where drugs are continually provided to take away pain and such consciously or unconsciously knowing that as we supply more painkillers we are actually taking them to an drug overdose level which will stop them from breathing. (+The example of a son sitting next to his dying mother's bedside in a hospice room very 20 seconds hitting the morphine button to provide her with more painkillers knowing in turn it will help her to pass... even though that over 18 hours of continually sitting there and pushing the morphine button every 20 seconds.)

As Laura noted the real question around this topic is coming to the conclusion of when do we conclude that it is time to stop trying to save someone and begin to help them through their final parts of their journey. Often it is called "rational suicide" whereby there is really nothing else we can do for this person and they are in pain and discomfort. But it was noted that all other ways to assist a person must be reviewed before "suicide" becomes the answer. As people try to commit suicide there are often other issues. If we can solve those issues (depression, pain, etc.) in a reasonable way then suicide is not the answer she says. But when life as it is becomes intolerable then that is where suicide (assisted or not) becomes a viable option or should be. It is no longer a criminal offence to commit suicide in Canada, but it was a criminal offence to assist

someone in dying. This is where the courts became involved.

The precedent setting case for the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) came in the Rodriguez case in 1994. The Charter of Rights was the focal point and the entire SCC agreed that if it was not illegal for an able-bodied person to commit suicide then a person unable to commit suicide themselves was being denied this right and freedom and that was against the Charter. The courts agreed. It was in violation of the Charter but they cannot change law, just determine it. So the federal government had to do something about it. This was then not dealt with by government so a second case came to the SCC which resulted in the SCC mandating the government to write new law. This came to be in April 2016.

When it comes to a terminally ill person who is close to death there is strong rationale for assisted suicide. The court cases really looked that those suffering intolerable life and pain and can speak for themselves and need assistance for this to happen. As well there are those that are not "terminally" ill but will at some point come to be there but at that point may not be capable to do it themselves and thus assisted suicide is needed... but cannot be delivered if they are not "terminal!"

The SCC 2015 case around Carter though also needed to protect the rights of those who would need this assisted suicide as noted above but could not manage it when the time was imminent. As a result, people may choose to take their own life before their time. So in essence by not allowing these people their rights to have such assistance the government was motivating people to take their own lives prematurely!

So the law has come down to basically say the following:

- Sec 14: "No person is entitled to consent to have death inflicted on them..." which ensures no one can such or force someone to die... doctors and such can advise and educate but the decision is that of the individual and

they can withdraw that consent to die right up to when they are scheduled to die

- Those that assist in a suicide (doctors, nurse, pharmacist, family etc.) are no longer criminal in their acts and cannot be prosecuted
- People must be residents of Canada for this to happen so to avoid the "death tourism" scenario that the Netherlands have encountered
- Must be 18 years old and capable of making health care decisions
- They have a "grievous and irremediable medical condition"
- Voluntary request for assisted dying "that, in particular, was not made as a result of external pressure" and
- They give informed consent to receive medical assistance in dying after having been informed of the means that are available to relieve their suffering, including palliative care.

But that opens other doors of issues. What about children under the age of consent (18) – can they no speak for themselves if they fully understand the circumstances? Does this block their rights and freedoms? What is a "grievous and irremediable medical condition" and is there a determination between terminally is to receive assisted dying or can non-terminally ill patients who are leading an intolerable lifestyle eligible. (Or like in Quebec does the paraplegic have to go on a hunger strike because he is not qualified to receive assisted dying as he is not terminally ill. But by going on a hunger strike he shuts down his bodily functions which makes his case terminal and voila... he is now eligible.) Many questions and probably several more court cases before this is all worked out considering that it is no longer "criminal" to provide assisted dying is specific circumstances based on federal law... but the provincial government mandate health regulations – doctor licensing, rules, protocol etc. Yes... many more questions.



you are good (or not) with assisted dying... is that directive strong enough to surpass the laws or is that a violation of our charter of rights as well.

Laura was thanked by **Doug Cowling** who provided her with a handmade pen by Club member Allan Smith. We also hope to have Laura back to present again on the topic of medical directives – their role and importance. The membership committee might also look into reaching out to Laura as she may be a terrific Rotarian!

And finally, two other points that Laura raised in regard to “confusion” are around mental health and medical directives. In the cases of persons with mental health issues... how does this apply? Where is consent? Are they capable of making a decision? And what if you have a medical directive saying

Attendance

Attendance for Sept. 1 was 42%

Birthdays, Anniversary

Birthdays:

Stephens, Susie Sep 12

Spouses Birthdays:

Forghani Targhi, Shirin
Forghani Targhi, Behzad Sep 11

Club Anniversary

Tanner, Lila 16 years Sep 14

DATES TO REMEMBER

Oct 13-22 - Rotary Fall Book Sale at Nanaimo North Town Centre.

WEEKLY CLUB PROGRAMS & MEMBER DUTIES

Meeting Date	September 8, 2017	September 15, 2017	September 22, 2017
Greeters	Geoff Clay, John Shillabeer, Mike Herold	Dave Connolly, Carlene Shaw, Egon Holzwarth	Janeane Coutu, Frank Shoemaker, Bob Janes
Cashier	Mike Minhas	Mike Minhas	Mike Minhas
Sgt at Arms	Raedler	Dave Hammond	John Heisterman
Inspiration	Denise Wittkofski	John Woychuk	Wahid Ali
Head Table	Pres. Jane, Adrienne Dartnall, Ross White, Hwney Jang	Pres. Jane, Douglas Anderson, Joan Ryan	Pres. Jane, Brent Barootes, Peter McCully, Bob Janes
Intro Guests	Christine Parsons	Peggy Richardson	Guenter Raedler
Intro Speaker	Ross White	Douglas Anderson	Brent Barootes
Program	Adrienne Dartnall KIDS - making a difference in southeast Asia	Rotary Videos - Introduction of Exchange Students	Karen Fry - My journey as a female firefighter
Thank Speaker	Hwney Jang	Joan Ryan	Bob Janes