**EyeOpener
December 7, 2021 – Vermeer’s Dairy**

This Meeting was via zoom

Alan opened with **O Canada** played by the Royal Canadian Navy Stadacona Band.

Odell read the **Acknowledgement of Treaty 6 Land:**

*We acknowledge that the Rotary Club of Camrose Daybreak is located on Treaty 6 land. This is the traditional territory and an ancient gathering place of many Indigenous peoples for thousands of years.

We recognize that we are all Treaty people and have a responsibility to become aware of our shared history, understand the Spirit and Intent of the Treaties and by doing so we can honour the past, be aware of the present, and create a just and caring future built upon Peace, Friendship, and Understanding.*

**Guest Speaker** Jackie introduced Jake Vermeer of Vermeer Dairies.

Jake took Animal Science at Lakeland College. He is treasurer on the Camrose Regional Exhibition Board and is on the Camrose County Development Board. Jake and his parents operate Vermeer Dairy which is located just east of Highway 56 15 minutes south of Camrose. Their farm is 2,500 acres, and they milk about 650 of their 1,300 cows.

His parents originally came from the Netherlands, visited Canada as exchange students and returned to the Netherlands where they were married. With a lack of land to expand there, they emigrated to Canada and established a farm near Redwater with 43 cows. That farm was bought by an oil company as part of the Heartland upgrader site. IN 2009 they moved to the present farm in Camrose.

They have been able to build up their farm because of the supply management system in Canada. They milk at 5 am, 1 pm and 8 pm daily using a rotary 40-head parlour. They produce 24,000 litres daily and sell their milk to the Alberta milk pool while employing more than 15 people. They use many technological and innovative processes to ensure their animals to live comfortable productive lives.

Some of the innovative technology they use:

* Each cow wears a neck band that records movement and rumination. Jake gets alerts if they are getting ill allowing intervention up to 3 days earlier to treat and also can tell when cows are ready to breed. Artificial Insemination from genetically superior bulls and identified strong producer cows help weaker cows deliver better calves.
* A self-propelled Silo King processes and delivers feed to more animals in 40% less time using less diesel by eliminating one of the tractors previously used, part of the initiative to reduce the carbon footprint of the farm.
* The on-farm embryo program identifies their top 5% super ovulating cows allowing the transfer of their embryos to the less genetically endowed cows. This improves their herd producing more milk from less feed.
* They raise their own forage—alfalfa, corn, barley, and canola. They do not produce their own hay. Corn is the best feed for dairy cows, but this area is too cold for normal production. They seed their corn using a special drill from Ireland that covers the corn with a biodegradable film. The film lasts about 5 weeks and increases the growth and maturation rate so that good feed corn is produced in our growing season. Early September frost are not to be feared as in the past.

 They do marketing:

* They offer 2-hour farm tours during the warmer months. They book them directly or through <Farmzy.ca>. They charge adults $20 for a tour as they found if it was free people would book and not show up. Children, school, and group tours are generally free.
* They have started a u-pick corn and u-pick pumpkin business using similar techniques to the forage corn to promote their farm. They may add watermelon.
* They offer school talks via the internet through the Community Marketplace of the Edmonton Public School System.
* They are on social media: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Tik Tok.

Jake asked us to buy milk products with the blue Canadian produced logo. The Canadian government in its latest agreement with the USA has allowed more American milk into Canada. American milk is produced under different rules including the use of hormones not allowed in Canada.

**Food for Thought** Today is the anniversary of the bombing of Pearl Harbour. Larry volunteered for **Food for Thought** next week.

**Happy Bucks were given for:** her marriage and the gift we sent, attending Destiny’s wedding at the Stoney Creek Centre, the Chase the Ace Raffle has now sold over $25,000 in tickets, their time in Mexico on the Pacific Coast, his wife’s milestone birthday.

**Announcements**

* **Chase the Ace**-it is now our club’s turn, we are raising funds for the Flagstaff Food Bank.
* Chris told us of the **Adopt-a-Stocking** program for Augustana students unable to return home for the holidays. Purchase a stocking and fillings (suggested $20-$25) and drop it on Chris' doorstep (3310 61A Street) by December 20th - we will see to it that they are delivered to the Augustana students Christmas morning. The stockings may include anything that is non-perishable and individually wrapped: toothbrush and toothpaste, socks, travel games, Sudoku, crosswords, gum, tea, coffee, individually wrapped candy and chocolate, card games. It should not include food items that are homemade or perishable. **Notify Chris (crebus@cable-lynx.net) with your name, email address and phone number to sign up by THIS FRIDAY (Dec 10).**

*\*\* you may submit a detailed receipt of up to $25 for reimbursement through the ASSET program\*\**

* **December 14** Verlyn Olson will give us an update of the Augustana Viking Hockey Team.

**Reminders of Upcoming Events**

* Joint Executive Meeting Dec 7 6:30 pm via Zoom.
* Board Meetings – December 14 at 8 am, after our regular meeting. Notify Odell about whether you think this meeting is required?
* Joint Meeting on December 20 at the Casino 6:00 pm. We will be following the AB government Restrictions Exemption Program and all guests will be required to show proof of Covid vaccinations. Notify Dan Cole at 432dcole@gmail.com if you plan to attend.
* The Camrose Christmas Hamper program has had more people than expected (300 versus usual 240) sign up for hampers. Donations can be left at the Firehall or the Royal Bank OR Mailed to PO Box 1612 Camrose AB T4V 1X6. Hamper packing will take place Wed Dec 15 and Thurs Dec 16 at the Firehall, deliveries will be on Saturday December 18. To deliver, show up at the Firehall after 9 am and you will be given one or two hampers and toys to deliver along with instructions on the process.

Meeting adjourned with Rob singing the **Four-Way Test**

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