Rotary Club of Camrose Daybreak

EyeOpener April 13, 2021 COVID Effect on Alberta Tourism

April is Maternal and Child Health Month

Odell opened the meeting with a Melisizwe Brothers rendition of *O Canada* for 12 members and guest Maven Boddy

Alan offered **Food for Thought** on a *New York Times* article on the fate of 13 (10 male, 3 female) Guatemalan migrants seeking a better life in the United States. Their bodies were found, burned in a mass grave, after being ambushed and murdered. State police near the Mexican border have been implicated. Why is the US such a magnet for people of Central America? The US is a job generator, even for illegal immigrants, whereas Central America is rife with corruption and gangs leading to vast unemployment and subsistence farming there. Creating employment in their communities in Central America is the most effective way to solve this migration issue. Microloans to locals have proved effective in this effort around the world. *Namaste Direct* is on the ground in Guatemala and offers a well documented microloan program with effective training and supports for entrepreneurs while providing donors with comprehensive reporting demonstrating effective employment generation and community impact.

Patrice will offer **Food for Thought** next week

**Happy Bucks**

* Interesting new book by Mark Carney – *Values: Building a Better World for All*
* Fully vaccinated
* Social distance visit with Susan and Arnold Malone in Invermere
* UofA Senate is developing a strategic plan with an Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI) lens
* British passport is on the way
* Feyannie won an award for her film in Taiwan
* Able to recertify two propane tanks
* Sad – had to discard some textiles grandmother made

**Announcement**

* Monday, May 10 7:00 pm will be a joint evening meeting with the noon club

**Presentation** – *Effect of COVID-19 on Alberta Tourism*, Maven Boddy

Maven is a fourth year Augustana Campus Social Sciences student with a focus on Economics. Her 2 years guiding white-water rafting for a summer job gave her a front seat to the effect of COVID-19 on Banff tourism. The first year, pre-COVID, there were lots of tourists, especially international and non-Albertan Canadians. Last year, with social distancing, cleaning protocols, travel restrictions, it was vastly different. There were much fewer tourists, virtually all Canadian, mostly from Western Canada. Most guides were still students from around the world so the dynamic between guide and guest changed. There was little need to explain Canadian places and ways to the guests anymore. Conversation pivoted to the land, water, environment, history, animals, etc.

Tourism has been growing over time, reaching 2% of GDP in 2019. Domestic tourism has increased at a greater rate than international tourism. With COVID, international tourism was effectively stopped, while domestic tourism dropped to mid-1980s levels during the initial restrictions, rebounding to 2000s levels during the summer. Tourism faces challenges in changing guidelines, differing provincial protocols, and travel restrictions.

The direct effect on tourism has been less revenue and less employment. The plus side of the coin is an indirect effect in exposing the need for sustainable tourism – ways to meet more localized needs. This includes offering venues/activities for corporate team building or celebrations, self-guided tours for locals such as trivia or themed tours of particular interest to a segment such as history, museums, pubs. The *Adventure Town/Escape Room* tours in Banff and Canmore are examples of new initiatives.

**Reminders**

* Tuesday April 20, 7:00 am Club Meeting – *Policing in Afghanistan*, Dean LaGrange
* Tuesday April 27, 7:00 am Club Meeting – We Are Rotary

Rob closed the meeting with the *Four Way Test*

Morris

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