

Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon, Virtual Meeting

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APRIL IS MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH MONTH

Happy Birthday	Happy Anniversary
Apr 28: Peter Boekhorst	Apr 21: Buzz & Karin Bezuidenhout

UPCOMING SPEAKERS:

Apr 27: Induction of Shashanka Vangari Dr. Frank Ervin - Quality Improvement in Health Care	May 4:	May 11:
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OUR CLUB LAST WEEK'S MEETING:

President **Clinton Callison** presided

Program: Francis Mai - Rod Tuggerz Fishing Adventures

Brenda Jenkins introduced Francis Mai

Francis is an extraordinary person! Brenda calls him her son and she is his adopted mum.

He is one of those guys who actually gets conservation, he gets the environment, he gets working hard and also having fun. Francis also works as a realtor with MacDonald Realty.



About Rod Tuggerz:

Rod Tuggerz does sturgeon conservation, fishing and FUN!

They offer World class guided sturgeon fishing adventures in Beautiful British Columbia, Canada! www.rodTuggerz.com

Francis' Presentation:

Francis came from Vietnam at a very young age. His dad was part of the war. His family fled the civil war and took off on a boat with the whole family of 10 (he has 8 siblings) and the story goes that they were almost killed by Filipino pirates but made it to the Philippines and stayed at the refugee camp until they were sponsored to come to Maple Ridge when he was very young. He does not really remember too much about those early days.

Once he was in Canada he was very poor, really did not have a lot. The family got some work berry picking and the fishing started when he was a kid. When he was a little kid his dad came home and had some fish in the garage. Francis thought the fish looked dark almost black but now as he has learned about fish and fishing he recognizes that his dad was catching chum salmon also called dirty dogs. Since the family was poor it was a way for them to survive

and Francis has come to respect that his dad was willing to do what it took. That is how the kids got into fishing. They did not have money to do other things so every summer, or winter or whatever it was, he spent time with his dad fishing.

Some of Francis' first memories were of his dad taking him to the log floats in the Fraser River to fish. His mom always worried that something would happen to little Francis who was only a few years old but his dad took him along to go sturgeon fishing. Back then you could keep them! He believes the limit was one per year....most folks did not follow the strict letter of the law on that. People not following those rules contributed to where we are now. Today the sturgeon are endangered. Many people do not even like the fact that you can catch and release them.

Part of what Rod Tuggerz and a few other companies do, is to tag the sturgeon as they are caught and released. Right now that is the best way, the length and girth of each fish is recorded as well as if they have any injuries from the last time they were recorded. You can go online to see the results of the tracking, you can see how much they have grown in the last year or where they have moved from where they were caught last. You can even sponsor a sturgeon. Sponsors enjoy looking at the online database to see how their sturgeon is doing and how much it grew.

There are struggles with commercial netting and indigenous people netting because netting is not selective. All fish are caught up in the nets. People working to catch salmon in nets often catch sturgeon in the nets to and sadly the sturgeon end up dying of suffocation. Another thing that happens is that salmon fishers do not take the sturgeon out of the net right away because they are focused on maintaining the netting set for salmon.

Rod Tuggerz participates in raising public awareness and the conservation tagging effort in order to give back to the environment and the river that provides so much to our region. They feel it is very important to protect the sturgeon because they have been around as long as dinosaurs without change. They are one of the

only species that has not changed the way they look and how they live right up until today. If you ever get a chance to go to Sunshine Coast, maybe 20 minutes from Gibsons, there is a sturgeon farm there. They got a sturgeon from one of the aquariums and began a farming program. If you go out and order caviar or sturgeon as a menu item it is coming from a sturgeon farm.

Sturgeon is not ready to spawn in the wild until it is about 16 years old. In a farm where they can control the water temperature, the sturgeon can spawn as early as 13 years. When they do spawn one sturgeon can produce up to half a million eggs. In the wild you might have five that survive out of half a million eggs because of how the Fraser river is, the water, freshet (the melted snow pack from the mountains) and all of the predators looking to eat small sturgeon or eggs. That is why the existing population is so important for us to protect.

Sturgeons are not weak fish, they are very hearty and they have survived since the time of dinosaurs. The way they feed, they have very small eyes, like the tiniest eyes ever and they are in one of the dirtiest rivers so they can not see food. They also have whiskers like catfish, really big whiskers. Their mouths are like large suckers and they have no teeth at all. They look like a shark with cartilage that goes down from their head as their spine and they can smell bait or food from two to three hundred yards away. So when an angler wants to fish from a boat or shore, you place the baits down and in the Fraser river there are currents, could be fast, could be slow, it could change but once the bait is dropped the water takes the scent to the sturgeon 200 to 300 yards away. Sometimes the fish come right away but if they are a good distance it can take up to 45 minutes before the sturgeon follows the scent up to your boat.

We have world class sturgeon fishing in our backyard. Before the COVID restrictions came into place, people from all over the world would come to fish for sturgeon in the Fraser River. There is a sturgeon fishery in the US that is open for two to three weeks a year and people can keep fish that are between three and four and a half feet long. At that size they are still juveniles and not spawning yet. The adults who are reproducing are protected. Other than that there are no other fisheries worldwide. There are farms in Russia but not too many others.

It is very important to protect them because they play a big part in the Fraser river ecosystem.

Francis showed us a Global News clip centered around his experience catching a golden sturgeon.

Sturgeons have a hard skull like head made out of cartilage and panels on either side of their spines that are normally grey. Francis caught a sturgeon with a genetic mutation that no one had ever recorded before the head and back panels of the fish appeared to be gold!

As far as he knows no one has caught that fish again. Francis had not yet started tagging fish so he wasn't able to tag the golden sturgeon.

We also watched a video about what a Rod Tuggerz outing looks like. The trips are a great way to bring people together, whether families or co-workers. When they first started the company and over the last few years they have had the opportunity to donate trips for charity fundraisers. They gave a trip to Langley Hospital for an auction to extend the emergency unit and they have also

participated in a fundraiser for a charity in Vancouver providing limb lengthening for kids.

The videos we watched are available on the Rod Tuggerz site.

Sharon asked, what does sturgeon taste like.

Francis said the taste is close to the taste of halibut, or a mixture between halibut and lobster. It really depends on how it is cooked.

Announcements from Committee Chairs and members:

Dave Rempel regarding the **Winefest** - there is a committee meeting tomorrow and also a reminder that he can see that nine of our members have bought tickets.

Dinner tickets are from five restaurants: Kingfisher, Boston Pizza, Big Feast, Chameleon and Ban Chok Dee - dinner tickets include a bottle of wine and also access to the Gala on May 1. We now have twenty sponsors but would like more if you can be a sponsor or know someone who would be a good sponsor let's get moving on that. The silent auction has started. The Gala looks great with presentations from a restaurant on food preparation, a winery on how to tell the differences in wine and presentations from past recipients of the proceeds of the event. Additionally we will have music and our emcee will be Fred Armstrong.

We need more ticket sales!! **Clint Callison** asked that each member either buy or sell four tickets to this event.

Clint Callison reminded that the Club Executive meeting is tonight at 5:30pm

Ineke Boekhorst mentioned that we have a silent auction for the **Winefest** running now and you do not need to have a ticket at all. You can go RotaryWinefest.ca, click the silent auction tab and make your bid then if someone outbids you there is a notification system you can sign up for to be notified.

Happy and Sad:

Brenda Jenkins has a happy dollar to announce that she will donate a Rod Tuggerz trip for the Winefest silent auction.

Clint Callison has a very sad 10 dollars. One of his dearest cousins, 43 years old with three little kids, has recently been diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumour and dealing with that has been really horrible. Clint said he can't even imagine and one never expects someone that young to have something like that happen to them.

Walter Volpatti along the same line as Clint's comment, Walter has had two wake up calls in the last month. In his group of friends who he went to University with and who lived in the same apartment building, one has had open heart surgery last month and is having a long recovery from that and he just had a call that one of his best friends had a brain aneurysm two weeks ago and is also in recovery mode. 10 sad dollars.

Dave Rempel two sad dollars recognizing the impact of the huge building fire in Langley yesterday.

Matt DeBruyn has five happy dollars, last Saturday night Lynda and he were downtown across the street from Cordiero's restaurant and twenty five minutes after they were there a shooting occurred, one guy killed by bullets and another guy killed by the getaway car.

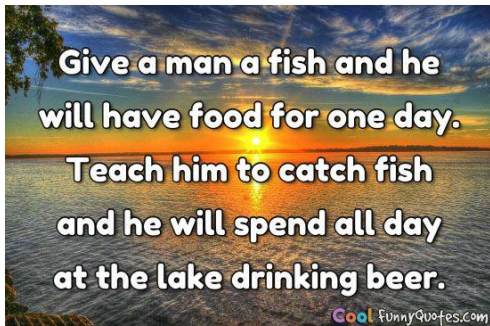
Finemaster Eric Mollema showed a series of photos of antique implements for us to identify. They all appeared to be antique kitchen tools.



We all shouted out our guesses as he rolled through the assortment. There were lots of laughs and lots of wrong guesses. We managed to get a few of them right.....then Eric pointed out that in the upper left corner of each slide was the title also known as the answer to his question!

“For plain common stupidity everyone should put in a buck!” said Eric!

Clint’s closing quote:



Submitted by Deborah Hyslop