

Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon, Virtual Meeting

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JUNE IS ROTARY FELLOWSHIP MONTH

UPCOMING SPEAKERS:

June 29: Christian Cowley CEED Centre Society	July 6: Shashanka Vangari Who's Who	July 13: Reem Ghunaim Rotary Action Group for Peace
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OUR CLUB LAST WEEK'S MEETING:

President-elect **Patrick Dobbyn** presided.

About our speaker, Vera Pina Bond - Zajac Ranch

Vera is the Camp Director at the Zajac Ranch. She attended university in Lisbon, Portugal, where she obtained her Bachelor of Science in Psychology, and then her Masters Degree in Psychology at the University of Rome, Italy. (In addition to English, she speaks Portuguese, Spanish and Italian). She spent her first summer off university working as a camp counsellor in the USA; by the end of the summer, she knew she wanted to devote her life to working in the summer camp industry. She worked at 4 different residential summer camps (including in London, England) before combining her degree in Psychology with her camp experience and becoming the Iberian representative for one of the largest summer camp recruitment agencies. Her next adventure took her to New York where she worked as an assistant camp director at a top ranked summer camp. Upon returning to the United Kingdom, Vera implemented the North American summer camp model in a pioneer international summer camp where she spent 5 years as a Camp Director. Vera has worked for the Zajac Ranch camp since April, 2019. As the director, Vera is responsible for overseeing all strategic and operational aspects of its programs, setting goals and objectives, creating new programs to meet the needs of its groups and overseeing the day-to-day operations at the ranch, including staff management, training and recruitment.

About the Zajac Ranch

The Zajac Ranch was founded by **Mel Zajac** in 2004, and since that time has provided camping experiences to approximately 6,500 children and young adults. In addition to its residential summer camps, it offers residential programs to organizations working with Indigenous communities, foster care children, youth at risk, LGBTQ2+, schools and other community groups year-round.

Its Mission is **"to develop and operate an accessible, innovative, and inclusive facility for children and young adults with medical and life-threatening conditions, who would otherwise not have the opportunity to attend camp"**.

Its Vision is **"to provide memorable experiences that empower campers of all abilities to participate, develop lifelong skills, creating lasting friendships, build independence and have fun"**.

The Ranch works with the parents of children to cater to each person's individual conditions. Approximately 70% of the children are on the autistic spectrum, and children with Down syndrome are probably the second largest group. They take in approximately 500 children each summer. One can see the importance of the Zajac Ranch when we learn that only 3% of children with disabilities even participate in regular physical activities (and are often told that "you can't do that because you're in a wheelchair"). At the Ranch, kids are encouraged to step out of their comfort zone and try the various activities, such as swimming, horse riding, archery, and even rock climbing; in addition to traditional camping with campfires etc..



Programming includes therapeutic horseback riding, kayaking, swimming, sports, climbing and ropes courses, crafts, music, and theatre.

For many of the children it is the first time they are in an environment where they don't feel different because they see other children with the same disorder. The goal of the Ranch is not only to give them a fun camping experience, but also to carry that with them throughout their lives so that if someone tells them "You can't do that because you're in a wheelchair" they will be able to say, "Yes I can, because I've done that before".

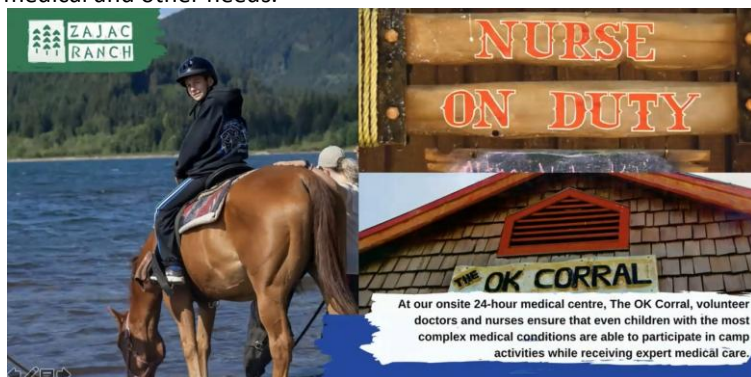


Over 30 diagnoses are typically represented, including spina bifida, Turner syndrome, gastrointestinal disorders, blood disorders, autism, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, Down syndrome, kidney disorders, and visual impairments.

The Zajac Ranch is the only camp that caters to all disabilities. They can do this because of three factors:

Firstly, the camp is designed to be fully accessible (for example, swimming pools are designed for wheelchairs, and they have special wheel chairs with large wheels that can go along on trails).

Secondly, they have a 24-hour medical Centre, that is staffed with volunteer doctors and nurses who can cater to each individual child's medical and other needs.



Thirdly, they have a high staff ratio of 1 staff to 3 children, and even sometimes 1 to 1 where a child needs 24/7 care and attention.

There are approximately 53,000 Children in British Columbia with disabilities, and there is therefore a large waitlist for children wishing to come to camp.

Questions from our members:

How is the camp funded? Generally the camp pays 50% of the cost of the child's attendance. The additional funds come from donations, as well as operating the camp "off-season" to accommodate weddings, corporate meetings, community groups, etc., and these off-season funds that are generated are used to pay for the summer camps. However, no child is turned away if the child's family cannot afford to contribute to the cost (they find a way to accommodate them).

What are the ages of the persons attending the camp? The kids' camp accepts ages 7 to 17 years. There is also accommodation for young adults who are 18 years+ (this group includes persons who may be even in their 40s or 50s but still have the mental age of a child).

Has the road from Dewdney Trunk Road into the camp improved? That road (under the provincial government jurisdiction) and is basically a logging road. Unfortunately (despite constant pleas to the government) it is still in a dangerous and rough shape.

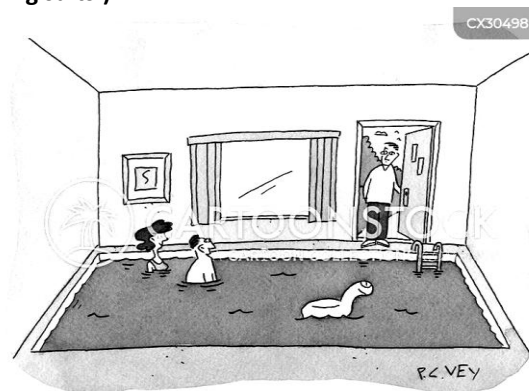
Happy and Sad dollars:

Dave Rempel and **Laurie Anderson** are happy to be back. Laurie thanked Deborah for taking over the notes for the bulletin during his recent absence from the meetings.

Ineke and **Libby** also welcomed Laurie back.

Ineke and **Peter** are extremely happy that they have bought a house, a bit to the south of Dewdney Trunk Road and approx. 288th St., overlooking Hayward Lake, and located not far from Matt and Lynda DeBruyn's house and the Zajac Ranch). "It is secluded, but we will love it and plan to invite the club to have a fire side there", said Ineke.

(Word has it that Peter was tired of looking after their outside swimming pool in their old house in Pitt Meadows, so they were careful not to buy a house with an outside pool. Bring your swimming suits.)



"It came with the house"

Deborah Hyslop also "bought a house", but only during a "massively multiplayer online role-playing game" to keep her brain active; but in real life is looking for employment (that will hopefully use her communication skills) which she can resume following completion of her chemotherapy.

Fine Master **Lynda Lawrence** gave us some interesting history about Rotary and the Catholic Church.

The problem seems to have started in Spain in 1928 when the church criticized and condemned Rotary for showing a concept of life of service without reference to church teaching. It seems that the church believed it was a secret society with quasi-religious overtones. For whatever reason, the Vatican took up the reins and in 1929 it issued a decree that "it is not expedient" for Catholic priest to participate in Rotary either as members or guest. This decree and its application was worrisome to many Catholics in Rotary not the least of which was then RI President Tom Sutton who was himself a Catholic. By 1933 priests were allowed to use their discretion about attending or even joining Rotary. The uneasy peace continued until 1951 when yet another Vatican decree warned Priests that they should not join Rotary and that the faithful should be aware of seditious and suspected organizations. But the world was changing and the decree caused an immediate angry response from, among others, the then-Catholic and RI President Arthur Laqueux. Gradually there was a thaw in the relationship between the church and Rotary. In 1970 Pope Pius VI addressed Rotarians in Italy and in 1979 Pope John Paul II spoke at the Rotary International convention in Rome praising many of Rotary's humanitarian programs. Later, Pope John Paul II accepted a Paul Harris Fellowship and a World Understanding and Peace award from Rotary. Finally, before becoming Pope Francis, then-Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio accepted an honorary membership in the Rotary Club of Buenos Aires.

Starfish Pack Program

Ineke reported that June 22, 2021 is the last day for packing food for the program this Rotary Year, and the program will resume in the fall. Our club had budgeted \$70,000, but the actual cost came in at \$63,350.31. 4445 packs were sent out during the year over a period of 36 weeks. Because of COVID, the club was unable to get the help of the church and therefore the program was completely carried out by our club members.

Membership Committee

Deborah advises that a membership committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 14 at 5:30 PM. New members or guests are invited to attend this virtual meeting, so contact Deborah for further information about how to connect up.

Quote for the Day:



Submitted by Laurie Anderson