



Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon, combined Real-Virtual Meeting

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## MARCH IS WATER AND SANITATION MONTH

### Happy Birthday

Mar 11: Patrick O'Brien

### Happy Anniversary

### UPCOMING SPEAKERS:

Mar 08: Ahmed Yousef Ukrainian Community Assistance	Mar 15: Denise Trotter & Dwight Ballantyne Dwight Ballantyne Project	Mar 22: Mike Jennings The Men's Shed Association of BC
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### OUR CLUB LAST WEEK'S MEETING

President **Chili Yalamanchili** presided. (This is the first meeting conducted by Chili in his new capacity as club president for the remainder of this Rotary year, following the resignation of Patrick Dobbyn.)

[WorkBC Assistive Technology Services](#) - speaker **Nate Toevs**

#### About our speaker:



Nate fills the role of Employer Outreach Developer at the Neil Squire Society, and the marketing manager for WorkBC Assistive Technology Services. Utilizing his long-standing background in retail, wholesale and business to business sales and marketing activities, he is tasked with educating businesses in BC about the Society's programs and how they benefit working and volunteering people in the province.

Nate joined the Neil Squire Society team in 2015 and loves the work in the community, and enjoys helping companies and people achieve all they can. He is going around to Rotary clubs to spread the word about the Society's programs.

#### About WorkBC Assistive Technology Services and the Neil Squire Society

WorkBC Assistive Technology Services is operated by the Neil Squire Society. Assistive Technology Services is available to individuals who have a work-related barrier due to a disability or a functional limitation. This may, for example, include barriers related to traveling to and from the workplace. It provides assistive technology or supports to individuals with disabilities to assist them to gain and sustain employment or community attachment.

The Neil Squire Society has been revolutionizing the lives of Canadians with disabilities since 1984 through accessible technology. The organization was established when 21-year-old Neil Squire was left a brain-stem tetraplegic after a car crash. Seeing he was unable to speak or move his arms and legs, Neil's family and a group of professionals in Vancouver created a ground-breaking "sip-and-puff" device allowing him to communicate by using his breath to type Morse code. Soon thereafter, Bill and a small group of volunteers began teaching other rehabilitation patients to use computers to enhance their independence. This marked the creation of the Neil Squire Society's first program, Computer Comfort. After Neil's death in 1984, the group decided to name their new organization in his honour.

The Neil Squire Society believes people of all abilities should have the opportunity to live, work and play without barriers. Its work is focused on four distinct areas: Innovation, Digital Literacy, Employment, and Assistive Technology. They create affordable assistive technology devices that give people with disabilities greater control over their lives, offering programs that teach people with disabilities how to use technology and succeed both at home and in the workplace. They provide ergonomic solutions and access to assistive technologies that remove barriers for people with disabilities.

Neil Squire Society is the Canadian leader in Assistive Technology, from innovation right through to trialing and implementation. They enable people with disabilities to achieve their goals, reach their full potential and continue living life to the fullest. They put a priority on collaborating with community, industry, and government. Under the leadership of Neil's relative, Doctor Gary Birch, the Neil Squire Society has grown and thrived. What began in 1984 as three people in a small Vancouver office has grown to more than 15 offices with a collective staff of 100 across Canada. Dr. Birch advanced the organization by connecting business, innovation, and social purpose.

The Neil Squire Society offers several programs:

**Employment Programs** help people with disabilities to prepare for, obtain and maintain employment, and is designed to develop the skills to help individuals achieve their employment goals.

**Computer Tutoring Programs** offer one-on-one computer tutoring at no cost to qualifying participants, as well as providing refurbished computers for the home, if needed, and ongoing technical support. This program is available to persons with disabilities online anywhere in Canada, thereby allowing for a flexible learning schedule without having to leave the person's own home.

**Assistive Technology Programs** connect people with disabilities who need assistive technologies to the makers of those products. They also provide ergonomic and assistive technology assessments for home, school or the office for individuals with physical and other disabilities. Another program is dedicated to the prevention and treatment of hearing loss, and has a fully equipped hearing health centre in the greater Vancouver area. WorkBC Assistive Technology Services provides funding for supports such as assistive devices, equipment and technology, ergonomic and restorative supports, communication and hearing devices related to work, workplace access and modification, and vehicle modifications. Services are provided to employers, employees, and self-employed individuals located in all communities in British Columbia, either in-person, via outreach, or virtually.

Supports available through WorkBC Assistive Technology Services include:

- Ergonomic supports (e.g., ergonomic furniture, lighting systems)
- Assistive devices, equipment and technology
- Restorative supports (e.g., canes, crutches)
- Attendant services related to work (e.g., assistance with mobility)
- American Sign Language (ASL) interpreting and captioning services
- Communication and hearing devices related to work
- Workplace access and modification
- Vehicle modifications

**Happy and Sad Dollars included:**

**Dave** – “*everything old is new again*” - The refugees leaving Ukraine (as a result of the attack on the country by Vladimir Putin) has made Dave sadly reminiscent of the time following the second world war when Dave's mother and father and children became refugees to escape being attacked by the Russians.

**Lynda** – “*the cat came back*” - Her dear cat passed away, but she got a new kit to take its place.



“Our Secretary Lynda had some sad news of her own. She had a dear cat that finally left her home.

But a new kit came back the very next day. The cat came back, it just couldn't stay away.”



**Fine master - Mike Davies –**

**First fine:** He caught those of our members attending our meeting via Zoom “virtually off guard” by fining anyone (i.e., the Zoomers) who did not stand during the singing of “Eh Canada”.



**Second fine:** What is Rotary's theme for the month of March?

The Rotary theme for March, **Water and Sanitation**, asks us to focus on the life changing improvements that we can make through these international projects to provide a more readily available and healthy supply of water to all people.



## Announcements:

**Ineke** received a reminder from the Rotary club in Amsterdam to consider remaining a Supporter Club by making a donation of €200 to help “End Plastic Soup” by supporting this initiative. That Rotary club made a presentation to our club on Zoom a couple of years ago, telling us about this program to help the environment. Our club has agreed to make the donation again. The following is a brief reminder of the program as found on their website:



EndPlasticSoup is an initiative of Rotary Clubs of Amsterdam (D1580), started in 2018. Within a year it has brought about great enthusiasm and a lot of activities amongst 60 Rotary and Rotaract Clubs in the Netherlands, in Germany and in Europe.

EndPlasticSoup is creating awareness, setting up local actions, connecting Rotary internationally, across generations. Our goal is using our Rotary network to have a real impact and to help realize the required changes to prevent plastic waste ending in nature and to remove plastic from our environment.

EndPlasticSoup is connecting Rotarians and other activists internationally; it offers a platform to existing organizations that are fighting plastic waste and opens up (local) initiatives all over the world.

## Sunday Morning Walks

Our club will also “get environmental” during our Sunday morning walks by picking up discarded masks and other garbage along the way.



## Club Social - April 3 - bonfire at Matt and Lynda's

### **The Matt's coming back – (we thought he was a goner)**



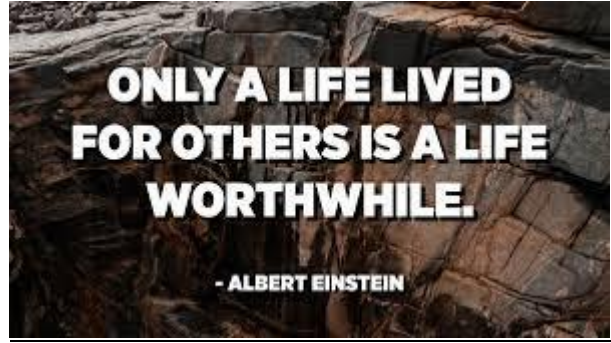
Old Matt DeBruyn had troubles of his own.  
He had to go south and be away from home.

But he listened to his sweetie and went south (not west)  
and travelled to the sunshine with the one he loves the best.

He tried and he tried not to go far away,  
But the Matt's not back, cause he's not the final say.

Wait!! The Matt's coming back!! He just couldn't stay away!!  
What's his plan now for returning? Well, I cannot say.  
The plan just hit a curve, and it jumped off the rail,  
And the Matt has now survived to tell the awful tale.

## President's Quote for the Day



Submitted by Laurie Anderson