



Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon, combined Real-Virtual Meeting

President: Chili Yalamanchili
Secretary: Lynda Lawrence
Editor: Peter Boekhorst

Phone: 604-463-4851
Phone: 604-868-4674
Phone: 604-462-0377

[E-mail the President](#)
[E-mail the Secretary](#)
[E-mail the Editor](#)



MARCH IS WATER AND SANITATION MONTH

Happy Birthday

Mar 21: Debbie MacRae

Happy Anniversary

UPCOMING SPEAKERS:

Mar 15: Denise Trotter & Dwight Ballantyne
Dwight Ballantyne Project

Mar 22: Mike Jennings
The Men's Shed Association of BC

Mar 29:

OUR CLUB LAST WEEK'S MEETING

Brenda Jenkins presided.

Speaker: **Ahmed Yousef**



Ahmed is a counsellor of the city of Maple Ridge. He was born in Egypt and raised in the US. He has lived and worked in several countries, including the USA, Egypt, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, and of course Canada, and has visited more than 30. His background includes five years working with the U.S. Department of State and Department of Commerce in Kuwait, including experience working in conflict zones.

He met his wife while she was teaching in Abu Dhabi. Ahmed and his wife moved to Maple Ridge in 2010 to raise their family; they have twin 11-year-old daughters and a nine-year-old son. He is a director at large of KidSport BC, the Friends In Need Food Bank, and the Ridge-Meadows South Asian Cultural Society, and has been affiliated with Hope for Freedom Mat Program, Scouts Canada and Operation Red Nose. He has a bachelor's degree in Political Science, and a Masters degree in International Relations. He currently runs his own business, and is a hard-working community volunteer and advocate.

Today's Topic: Local Assistance with the Ukrainian Crisis

Ahmed and other community members got together to form a grassroots organization to help out Ukrainians who are leaving Ukraine to escape the Russian bombing of that country and hoping to come to Canada. Most of the people they hope to help wish to return to their homeland if and when conditions improved to make that possible, but until that occurs the plan is for them to come to Canada made under special arrangements that the government of Canada is planning to implement. Locally, through the food bank, they have food for the displaced persons covered, but are working on arrangements to organize the supply of clothing, accommodation, job opportunities, childcare and language opportunities and transportation.

Currently the main hurdle is to set up a system for the collection of funds (which will be needed to pay for the various expenses which will be incurred by the grassroots organization) and be able to issue charitable receipts in order to encourage donations. They're looking to our club to see whether we can accommodate them in using our Club's charitable foundation as the vehicle to collect funds for this purpose.

Secondly, they are also lobbying the government to make arrangements to allow the displaced persons to be processed into Canada on an immediate basis as the matter is very urgent and they can't wait for months to let this happen while the displaced persons are stuck in refugee camps.

Lastly, they are setting up shelters in Poland near the border, which consist of two shelters (40 feet by 20 feet in size, with concrete floors, heaters, and army rations) that will accommodate up to 400 persons over the next two weeks. These are being installed overseas in the next five days. They have already found accommodation in Maple Ridge for about 140 persons. They are in a process of establishing a website, and in the meantime they are on Facebook (see: [Ukrainian welcome wagon in BC](#)).



[ShelterBox Canada](#)

Ineke read a note contained on the website of [ShelterBox Canada](#), that says in part as follows:

ShelterBox's team in Poland is preparing the support those impacted by the Ukraine crisis. We will be sending aid, and are working to understand the type of emergency shelter and essential aid items affected people will need most.

We're preparing items like mattresses for people living in 'collective centres' like schools and sports centres in western Ukraine. We're also planning aid packages of shelter kits with tools and rope, hygiene kits, solar lights and water carriers to help people survive as they are forced to live in damaged buildings.

People who have become refugees in neighbouring countries are on the move and will not be able to carry additional items. So, we're looking at providing the most essential items that people can carry with them, such as hygiene items and warm winter jackets, as well as the possibility of cash assistance to help people meet their emergency shelter needs.

Our club will purchase one or more shelter boxes to support the need in Ukraine, and members of our club donated funds at the meeting to contribute to this cause.

Quote for the Day



Submitted by Laurie Anderson