



Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon

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NOVEMBER IS ROTARY FOUNDATION MONTH

Happy Birthday

Nov 22: Laurie Anderson Nov 23: Lynda Lawrence

Happy Anniversary

Nov 26: Matt & Lynda DeBruyn

UPCOMING SPEAKERS:

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| Nov 22: | Nov 29: Mark Vosper BCSPCA | Dec 06: Nicole McDonald Mayor of Pitt Meadows |
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LAST WEEK'S MEETING

Clint Callison presided.

Foundation Chair **Debbie MacRae** gave us a "Rotary Foundation Moment".

WHAT IS A PAUL HARRIS SOCIETY MEMBER?

The Paul Harris Society recognizes people who commit to contributing US\$1000 or more each year to the Annual Fund, PolioPlus, or an approved global grant. The Society's purpose is to honour and thank people for their generous and ongoing support of The Rotary Foundation. Paul Harris Society contributions count toward several different kinds of individual recognition, and members receive a chevron-style pin and a certificate. Members are also registered in the Paul Harris Society Report.

WHAT IS A POLIPLUS SOCIETY?

This Society is a District program to promote individual giving to the PolioPlus Fund. To belong, you commit to donating \$100. USD or more per year and pledge to do so until polio is completely eradicated. It is as simple as that! We cannot express how important it is to keep funding the polio eradication program. It has been a long battle, but we need to finish the job. In 1985, we promised the children of the world that we would eradicate this devastating disease of Polio from the face of the earth. Rotarians are people of integrity, and we keep our promises. All donations will receive a 2 to 1 match by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation making this an even better opportunity, as well as receiving Paul Harris recognition points for your donation. (Of course, you will receive a tax deductible receipt direct from The Rotary Foundation (Canada). To become a member, go online at www.rotary.org/donate under featured causes, select the Polio Fund. Click on recurring donation and make it annually for \$100. USD or more.

Speaker: (via Zoom) Eva Cowley

– Her Student Exchange Experience

Eva was introduced by Ineke Boekhorst:

Eva Cowley is a current UBC student completing a Bachelor of International Relations and Master Management dual degree. She participated in the Rotary Youth Exchange Program in 2017, living in Taipei for 11 months while attending a local high school and Mandarin language learning course at the National Taipei University of Education.



Following her exchange, she was admitted to the United World College Maastricht in the Netherlands to complete her secondary education amidst a cohort of 200 international students from over 100 different nationalities. Her experiences abroad have been an incredible motivation for her to continue learning about the world and hopefully drive positive change both at home and overseas.

Eva's presentation:

Eva showed pictures of her trip in 2017. When Eva arrived in Taipei in August 2017, she was immediately struck by two things: it was very hot (always in the 80's) and the food was incredible. When learning the Chinese language, initially the conversation usually centered around food, which sometimes resulted in some confusing answers on her part. When someone asked her what she would like to eat, she thought they said "are you hungry", and her answer "yes" was not exactly responsive to the question.

After the first two months, she met a lot of friends with whom she enjoyed many large traditional Chinese meals. She participated in various cultural activities and visited many cultural monuments. She also met other exchange students. There were about 200 Exchange Students in Taipei.

She enjoyed travelling with her second host family, and had the opportunity of staying in a Buddhist temple for about a week, which gave her a different perspective on life.

She made many lifelong friends, and her trip to Taipei 2017 started a tradition of meeting, on New Year's, with a number of friends which she has met throughout the world. Creating friendships around the world has been a meaningful result of her student-exchange experience. As a high school student in Taipei, she attended classes from 7 AM to 5 PM five days a week, and remains in contact with friends that she met there. She was the only foreigner in her high school class and got a lot of practice in the Chinese language (but admits that in the first day of school she didn't know what was going on). Outside of school, she spent a lot of time and travel with her host family. She saw a lot of the country, its landscapes, city, and people, which opened her eyes to the world, and inspired her to look outwards.

The hardest part of her exchange experience was saying goodbye. She now has learned to say "see you later" instead of "goodbye". Her student exchange was the first time she stepped out of her comfort zone. "I haven't gone back to the person I was before.... I looked outside my borders and I have never looked back". When asked what Eva would say to parents who are thinking of sending their children on an exchange visit, she replied "It may be scary, but your child will have support from the host family, and they will have the opportunity to learn more from the experience".

Eve's mother (in a brief appearance on Zoom) said, "the new perspective on life that she learned and the people she met was great..... The opportunity to know people around the world".

Happy and Sad Dollars included:

David Macpherson: the Salvation Army Christmas kettle program is underway, with David got decked out in a Santa Claus suit.



Also, one of his daughters has announced that David and his wife will become grandparents for the eighth time (hopefully, unlike his seventh grandchild who arrived at home before they got to the hospital, this one will be more patient about making an entrance into the world).

Sharon Kyle: told us about STEP, which is an acronym for Short Term Exchange Program. This is a short-term, family to family exchange program, in which a student is paired with another student in another country. See below for a more detailed explanation from our Rotary District 5050.

And **Brenda** (who claims to be almost old enough to receive the OAS) suggested Rotary should also have an exchange for persons her age (would she call it Almost Seniors Seeking Overseas Lodging Exchange?).

Libby noted that our Starfish Backpack program is almost out of funds; the cost per student is \$575 per year and we currently give out 200 food packs per week. This generated some immediate donations of \$575 from some of our club members at the meeting. Aimee Robson has started a GoFundMe for this program only a few days ago and it has already generated about \$2,900. This has already raised enough money for five backpacks, but also has generated awareness in the community of the need for these funds.

Fine Master Lynda garnered some money in the way of fines from all club members who hadn't yet shared the link with family or friends regarding the Starfish program, or who didn't know the difference between Armistice Day and Remembrance Day. [Armistice Day is also referred to as Remembrance Day, but they are not the same thing which can be confusing. Armistice Day is always on November 11 and was initially used to pay respects to the fallen. On November 11, 1918, the agreement between the Allies and Germany to cease hostilities was signed in Compiègne, Northern France, coming into effect at 11am on that day – on 'the eleventh hour, of the eleventh day, of the eleventh month'. Remembrance Day was adopted during World War II by many nations as a way to pay tribute to those from both conflicts.]

About the Rotary Short Term Exchange Program (STEP):

District 5050 recently resumed its participation in the STEP program. Its first exchange was with France during the summer of 2018, and in 2019 participation increased to three students. The District hopes to grow the program methodically, increasing as interest and its capacity to arrange and manage exchanges grows. Participants must be aged 15 to 19 years, and unlike the Long Term Program, participants are permitted to have graduated from high school. The students live together with one student's family for the first half of their exchange, and then switch to live together with the other student's family for the second half of the experience. STEP exchanges can last for several days up to several months. Most STEP exchanges occur in the summer, but they may occur at any time of the year. If accepted into the program, there is an administrative fee payable to the District Committee which covers administration and training costs. This program is fully funded by the student and their parents. The cost is approximately \$2,000 US to take part in the program. The key to a successful STEP exchange is the successful matching of students and families. Travel arrangements are the sole responsibility of the families involved. Initial interviews with the Club are held in September-October. If initially accepted, the student will then complete the specialized online STEP application, and the family will begin undergoing the Host Family vetting process. All requested application materials must be submitted to the District STEP Coordinator no later than December 31st. An orientation is held for students and parents in January. Students should expect to be matched with their host families by May the latest.

Submitted by Laurie Anderson