



Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon

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APRIL IS MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH MONTH

[Happy Birthday](#)

[Happy Anniversary](#)

UPCOMING SPEAKERS:

Apr 18: Induction of Leslie Michael	Apr 25:	May 02: Andrea Stiller District Youth Exchange Coordinator
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LAST WEEK'S MEETING

President **Chili** presided.

Guests: (apart from our speakers)

Laila Robson - daughter of Aimee Robson

Ron Langley - (maker of bird condos – see picture below)

Leslie Michael - (to be inducted next week)

Program:

Port Moody Education and Literacy Global Grant for Belize

Speakers: **Al Stjernegaard, Brian Wormald, and Glenn Brown** (Port Moody Club)

For several years, members of the Port Moody Club were joined by other club members to go to Belize (which used to be known as British Honduras). English is the official language. Projects including building houses, and sending containers of medical and school supplies with the help of Global Grants. In total they sent approximately nine containers.

Our speakers told us about their latest international project in Belize, that started in 2018, and involved the Belize Central Prison which is run by the Belize Rotary Club. There is a large Rotary sign on the outside of the prison, and the four-way test is displayed on the inside walls. There is one Prison in Belize for all types of prisoners, be they murderers, thieves, detained immigrants, males or females. Most people in the prison cannot read or write, and when they were released from the prison, they had no skills and little hope for the future. The Rotary club in Belize, with the help of the Port Moody club and a Global Grant, wanted to try to change that through a computer-based education and literacy program, known as RACHEL.

A Belize newspaper article described it as follows:

Mar 9, 2023

Belize Central Prison Receives 240 Chrome Books from Port Moody Rotary Club



This afternoon, the Belize Central Prison received two hundred and forty Chrome Books from the Port Moody Rotary Club in British Columbia. It was the final phase of an ongoing educational program that the club helped to set up back in 2018. The program has aided hundreds of inmates who have passed through the doors of the facility to enhance their educational capacity, giving them a better chance to become self-employed upon re-entry into society. News Five's Marion Ali was on hand for the handing over and filed this report.

Today, the inmates at the Belize Central Prison became beneficiaries of a sizeable donation. They received two hundred and forty Chrome Books that are being used as part of the facility's educational program.



Avil Steadman, Director, Education & Rehab., Belize Central Prison

"The Chrome Books have educational material on it and we have four or five different levels on it. We have the phonics and the literacy level, then we have the beginners which is the equivalent from standard one to standard three. We have the intermediate, which would be like standard four to standard six and we have the advanced level, which would equal to a first or second form student and then we have vocational." "Education is key because education helps them to change their mindset the way they look at themselves, also boost their self esteem to say you know what, I can learn, I can be a better person and by giving them education it takes them to that level where it helps reduce the crime."

The Chrome Books are from the Port Moody Rotary Club in British Columbia, represented by Allan Stjernegaard. They have been assisting the people of different walks of life in Belize for several years now. But some years ago, they decided on helping the prisoners with education and today's donation marked the completion of that project.

Allan Stjernegaard, Representative, Port Moody Rotary Club, British Columbia



"I met Cisco Woods, who is a local Rotarian and we started discussing the larger problems in Belize and we talked about literacy, education and gangsters – the need to break the cycle of poverty and crime and we started talking that maybe the prison would be a good place to start with the literacy program, so we went away and did some research and we came up with the RACHEL program, which is published by World Possible, so we collaborated with that, got back to Belize and did a test run and then we did the big roll-out you see here."



The RACHEL program is used extensively in prisons around the world and Stjernegaard says that their rotary club is of the belief that teaching people to read enables them to develop skills that can help them in life. Demas Mendez shared that the educational program has helped him develop his reading skills immensely.

Demas Mendez, Inmate, Belize Central Prison



"I didn't know about computers, so right now it's a lot better for us because in society we didn't know about it, so I came to the prison and learn a lot. I'm in the class of phonics to learn to read and write a little more cause when I was out there I didn't love school."

The inmates engage in literacy at different stages. Some who have never or hardly attended school in their childhood are just learning to read. Patrick Robateau, a fellow inmate, is the program's facilitator at the remand section.

Patrick Robateau, Inmate, Belize Central Prison



"They have a lot of different programs on there that we didn't see here before. And for me being here for over twenty-one years, I have seen the drastic change in education on a whole. So it is a far way step up now than it was back then. The guys them – some of them dropped out of school, so individually, each person has a headphone, each person has their own laptop so they learn at their own pace and own time."



Altogether, the Chrome Books are valued at eighty-seven thousand U.S. dollars, but the value of the gift goes far beyond the dollar figure. And the success rate is measured by the inmates' completing their time behind bars, according to Avil Steadman, the prison's Director of Education and Rehabilitation.

Our speakers advised us that the program in Belize has been widened to encompass vocational and practical content, such as carpentry and other trades, so that inmates will be employable and have a better chance of staying out of gangs.

Happy and Sad Dollars

This week **Matt** garnered happy and sad dollars from at least a dozen members and guests, including:

Aimee's daughter Laila is going back to England to finish her schooling.

Leslie Michael was an example to us all, having sold all his Wine Fest tickets.

Libby has become a happy great grandmother.

Sharon's granddaughter has undertaken a 281 km two-week trek from Portugal to Spain.

Ineke complimented the Port Moody club's great Belize program.

She also thanked Ron for making, and Sharon for painting the bird house/condo, which they have donated as a silent auction item for the Wine Festival.



Wine Fest Report: from Ineke & the entire 2023 Rotary WineFest Committee

Very excited to tell you, that the 2023 Rotary WineFest is almost here!

Date is Wednesday May 10th, 7-9:30 pm, Centre Court-Haney Place Mall

A wonderful variety of Wineries & Breweries have committed to provide you with a great selection of tastings. Additionally, an awesome assortment of local restaurants will serve you delicious food and live entertainment is just adding to this already fabulous environment!

All we need to do now is sell tickets; did you get your tickets yet?

Tickets are only \$55 each or 2 for \$100, for a fantastic evening out right here in beautiful Maple Ridge

Tickets available at RotaryWineFest.ca, or in person at Centra Law Office (#102 - 20110 Lougheed Hwy, Maple Ridge)

Well, Rotarians and non-Rotarians, we are ready to welcome you and your friends; please feel free to invite anyone and everyone, who you would like to share this great annual event with.

Right now, you can also place your bids in the Silent Auction (RotaryWineFest.ca/Auction); about 60 fabulous items, all donated by local businesses and individuals

Rotarians, as each year, we would like to ask each of you to donate a bottle of wine towards the Silent Auction(or \$20 and we will purchase the wine for you!); please bring to our weekly meeting.

Share this year's Wine-Fest poster on Facebook, post in a prominent location and/or forward to friends and family. As each year, we hope to raise much needed funds for Youth, Seniors, Arts & Culture in our community and really look forward to see all of you May 10th!

Submitted by Laurie Anderson

Wine Festival
and Craft Beer Tasting
Rotary Club of Meadow Ridge
*Join us for international wine & beer tasting,
silent auction, great live music and local culinary delight!*

Wednesday, May 10, 2023 7:00pm - 9:30pm
Haney Place Mall, Maple Ridge

Tickets \$55 ea. or 2 for \$100

For tickets call Ineke Boekhorst: 604-462-0377
or Dave Rempel: 604-462-7563

For online tickets, and Silent Auction: RotaryWineFest.ca
Proceeds to support Youth, Culture and other Rotary projects in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows

Thank you to all sponsors who make this event possible!

Sponsors: TD, Falcon Homes, Tri-Tel Mortgage, Empire, Edward Jones, Johnston Meier Insurance Agencies Group, RE/MAX, MCD, Mark's, The News, Centra Lawyers, Haney Builders, Co-operators, CIBC, Seville Mortgage Corporation, Robson & Associates Consultants, MNP, CIBC, Oliver Gilbert Wood Gundy, West Coast Auto Group, Lone Palm.

Click on the picture above to download the pdf file.