



Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon

President: Brenda Jenkins
Secretary: Libby Nelson
Editor: Peter Boekhorst

Phone: 604-816-6961
Phone: 604-868-4674
Phone: 604-462-0377

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



FEBRUARY IS PEACE BUILDING AND CONFLICT PREVENTION MONTH

Happy Birthday

Happy Anniversary

UPCOMING SPEAKERS:

Feb 06: Lynda Lawrence Hawaii and Who's Who	Feb 13:	Feb 20: Sean Hogan and Danielle Mullen Rotary Friendship Exchange Program
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RI PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I am enthused and encouraged by your embrace of mental health initiatives throughout the Rotary world. More than 1,000 of you have responded so far to an ongoing survey by the Rotary Action Group on Mental Health Initiatives, offering your feedback on what Rotary can do to improve the personal well-being of members.

The top suggestions are illuminating. Rotary members are asking for more fellowship, camaraderie, conversation, cohesiveness, and connection. They also want more recognition, validation, and integration. They are seeking more service opportunities, and they want more wellness activities, including mental health speakers, awareness efforts, and education.

Our members not only appreciate the greater focus on mental health, but they also believe that making more of the Rotary experience will materially improve their lives. I find it interesting that members are not asking anything dramatically new of their club — rather they want more of what we do best. For example, connection can be improved during meetings simply by assigning seating once each month to encourage people to speak with someone new.

Here are some great ways that we can help achieve these results and make Rotary more appealing to those considering membership. First, we need to acknowledge the importance of increasing belonging in our clubs and to encourage Rotary members to make the most of every opportunity for new and stronger connections. Public health experts worldwide are concerned about increasing levels of loneliness — the U.S. surgeon general has even declared it an epidemic. Mental health experts agree that finding groups and clubs around common hobbies and interests is a strong way to create greater connectedness. This is what Rotary is all about. We need to make

sure all of our members are fully engaged and that our communities are better aware of this inherent strength.

Second, if your club has found new ways to build connection, please share your stories with us at mindhealth@rotary.org so we can make them more broadly known within the Rotary world. Your good ideas might inspire others. Post your service project stories on Rotary Showcase.

And finally, I encourage you to share feedback from surveys like this with your club and bring forward your own ideas to improve your club experience and meet your peers' expectations. The journey we have begun is about more than mental health. It is about taking advantage of the full strength of our wonderful organization and helping all members feel that they are part of a community that cares deeply about their personal well-being.

Everything you do to strengthen connections in Rotary, with each other and the people we serve, also helps improve mental health. And everything we do to improve mental health helps strengthen those connections. Let's continue this virtuous cycle.

R. Gordon R. McNally
President 2023-24

LAST WEEK'S MEETING

President **Brenda** presided.

Guests:

Heather Treleaven, coordinator of the Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows and Katzie Seniors Network

Gwen O'Connell, Pitt Meadows Councillor, and member of the Seniors Network

Ernie Daykin, former Mayor of Maple Ridge, and member of the Seniors Network



About Isobel

The **Office of the Seniors Advocate** is an independent office of the B.C. provincial government created in 2014 acting in the interest of seniors and their caregivers. The office monitors and analyzes seniors' services and makes recommendations to government and service providers to address systemic issues in five areas: health care, housing, income support, community support, and transportation. Prior to her appointment as the Seniors Advocate, Isobel served on a number of national and provincial boards and commissions, including the BC Medical Services Commission, the Canadian Homecare Association, BC Care Providers, BC Care Aide and Community Health Worker Registry, and the Capital Regional District Housing Corporation. Isobel also served on the University of Victoria's Board of Governors.

Isobel Mackenzie has over 20 years' experience working with seniors in home care, licensed care, community services and volunteer services. Isobel led B.C.'s largest not-for-profit agency, serving over 6,000 seniors annually. In this work, Isobel led the implementation of a new model of dementia care that has become a national best practice, and led the first safety accreditation for homecare workers, among many other accomplishments. Isobel has been widely recognized for her work and was named B.C. CEO of the Year for the not-for-profit sector and nominated as a Provincial Health Care Hero. Isobel received both her undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Victoria and has a Certificate in Health Care Leadership from the University of Toronto.

Isobel's Presentation

Isobel began her presentation by saying that she speaks to a number of service Clubs, and thanked Rotary and other service groups for the work that we do in our community. (She joked that someone told her "Kiwanis" was an aboriginal word meaning "I wish I was a Rotarian").

Long-term care

For purposes of government assistance, **"seniors" are classified as persons 65 years of age and older**. In BC we have over 1,000,000 seniors, out of a total population of about 5,000,000 residents. 95% of seniors live independently in private dwellings, and 5% live in assisted living facilities and long-term care homes. 80% of seniors actually own their own home. Persons who are seniors and are renting are the most vulnerable. Of seniors who are 85 years or older, 9% live in assisted living, and 13% are living in long-term care. That leaves 78% of seniors who are 85 years or older living independently in private dwellings.

In British Columbia, almost all public long-term care is subsidized regardless of income, with the maximum required payment of about \$3,800 per month. Government assistance for long term care is based upon income, and not on the value of capital assets that the person owns. This means that a person who has millions of dollars in assets but low income can still qualify for government assistance. (If they go into long-term care, they do not have to sell their assets to pay for the entire cost of it.)

The average age of residents in long-term care is 83 years old. 32% of those residents are totally dependent on staff for their activities of daily living, such as bathing, dressing, and getting out of bed. 28% of residents have severe cognitive impairment.

Home Care

Many seniors cannot afford the rising costs of housing, food and other essentials, which is particularly challenging for seniors living on fixed incomes. Most seniors do not have a private benefits plan and must pay out-of-pocket for the total cost of dental care, hearing aids, vision care and other necessary health care expenses because the B.C. provincial government does not fund them. (Other Provinces do fund all or part of these costs). The Seniors Advocate continues to hear from older people who are concerned about their income security as they age. It is proving increasingly difficult for low-income seniors to afford healthy meals and a growing number are turning to food banks for help.

The average income of all employed persons in BC is approximately \$48,000 per year. The median income, however, is \$33,000 per year. (Median income is the income amount that divides a population into two equally-sized groups, half having an income above that amount, and half having an income below that amount). 25% of persons in BC live on less than \$22,000 per year.

Home support is often a lifeline that keeps seniors from moving into long-term care. The provincial home support program provides assistance with bathing and daily personal care and help with more complex tasks such as catheter care, oxygen therapy and management of medications. One of the most significant challenges of the home support program in B.C. is the cost of the assessed fees that clients must pay which can be a significant financial barrier for many seniors. **Most provinces do not charge for home support, but B.C. does charge and is the most expensive.** British Columbia charges the highest amount of all other provinces for government paid homecare. A person with an annual income of \$29,000 has to pay \$9,000 for homecare. However, in BC there is no government subsidy for homecare, which forces people into long-term care homes. Isobel thinks that long-term care is over-subsidized, and says that the Office of the Senior Advocate calls on the provincial government to eliminate or drastically reduce the home support fees for seniors.

Dementia

6% of seniors have been diagnosed with dementia. (As we have approximately 1,000,000 seniors in BC, that means that approximately 60,000 seniors have been diagnosed with dementia). Of the seniors who are 85 years or older, about 20% have dementia. On the positive side, this means that 80% of seniors who are 85 years or older do not have dementia, and Isobel observed this is a relatively small number. Isobel pointed out that people of any age can make bad decisions. She cautioned that we should not assume that just because an older person does not agree with something (or does not agree with you) then they are suffering from dementia.

Other Miscellaneous Data

In B.C., the average life expectancy is about 83 years.
85% of seniors have driver's licenses.
41% of seniors are community volunteers.
14% of seniors are employed.

Happy and Sad Dollars

Walter is happy to report that the duck race license from gaming has been received. We do not yet know whether, and how much, we will receive. (FYI – “The Community Gaming Grants program distributes \$140 million annually from commercial gambling revenues, to not-for-profit organizations. Grants support the delivery of ongoing programs and the completion of capital projects that directly benefit communities throughout B.C.”)

President **Brenda** advised that this year our Duck Race sold \$91,940 worth of tickets, and challenges our club to make it \$100,000 in 2024.

Ineke noted the Article in the News about the Seniors Christmas luncheon that our club participated in. The following picture and article in the News said:



Hundreds of seniors enjoyed a free Christmas lunch in Maple Ridge. About 300 attended the Seniors Christmas Lunch at Maple Ridge Alliance Church, put on by Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Community Services and the Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Katzie Seniors Network. Guests were treated to a turkey dinner with all the fixings, live entertainment, and event gifts. Meals were prepared by Vino and his team at the Salvation Army Ridge Meadows Ministries and Meadow Ridge Rotary donated the food and gifts – even preparing the gift bags.

Raj's son Etienne will be going with a group to Malawi, Africa, in conjunction with Canada Vision Care, which is a charitable organisation that provides eyecare in the 3rd World countries. The group consists of current and past faulty members, practising optometrists and current students in the Faculty of Optometry at the University of Waterloo, together with 2 students from the Faculty of Science at UBC, Raj's son being one of them. Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world: 178th out of 189 nations. They are going to the capital city of Lilongwe to provide eyecare supplies and care needs to those who are unable or have no access to eyecare. They will be in the city for a week.



[Interesting Fact: As many of us are aware, the service Clubs of Lions International are perhaps best known for supporting the visually impaired. Unfortunately, because of government funding cuts, the Lion's Sight Conservation project in Jamaica was cancelled, but at the request of the Lion's Club of Montego Bay, four recent graduates from the University of Waterloo School of Optometry offered to step up and continue the project in 1981, which has since blossomed into Canada Vision Care, a full-fledged registered charity organization that spans the world and has performed services valued now at more than \$60 million since 1981.]

Club Business and Announcements

The **Wine Fest committee** has set the date of this year's event at May 15, 2024, and are close to confirming a location for this year's important club fundraiser.

150 years ago on September 12, 1874, a group of settlers met at John McIver's farm and decided that they should incorporate and become a municipality. This year's BC Summer Games will be held in Maple Ridge on the 150th anniversary of the founding of the municipality.

Our guest **Ernie Daykin is Vice-President of the 2024 BC Summer Games**, working alongside Laura Butler (who is also the executive director of the Ridge Meadows Hospital Foundation). Ernie advised that they are looking for volunteers, so anyone who has a few hours are encouraged to give a few hours of their time for this event. Said Ernie, "We will find you a job that fits your time, interests and talents".

President Brenda's Quote for the Week

Submitted by Laurie Anderson



CLUB CALENDAR:

Mar 2, 2024 - **Grants Management Seminar**
Silver Reef Casino Resort

Apr 13, 2024 - **District Assembly** - Kwantlen Polytechnic
Langley Campus - new location!

A Bit of Interesting Club History

The following is a copy of a year-end summary of our Rotary Club's achievements for the 2005-2006 year, when Brian Bekar was President, and six others of our current members served on the executive, namely Sharon Kyle, Ineke Boekhorst, Walter Volpatti, Debbie MacRae and Dave Rempel.

Sadly, former Club Presidents Bob Shantz and Stan Wade have since passed away, and are deeply missed as a part of our Rotary family.

Dave Rempel, who found a copy of this document among his papers, suggested we print it in our 4-Way Flasher. Peter was the original editor of this document, and still has it on his computer.

We will have an original printout for the 2005-2006 executive, and for anybody interested (no cost!).

Please let editor Peter Boekhorst know: [E-mail the Editor](#)