

Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon

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APRIL IS ENVIRONMENTAL MONTH

Happy Birthday

Apr 26: Shashanka Vangari
Apr 28: Peter Boekhorst

Happy Anniversary

Upcoming Speakers:

Apr 22: Installation of Barbara Pope
Ruth Lee - Pathfinders Youth Society

Apr 29: Claire Viktora
Who's Who

May 6: Selina Robinson
Leadership requires Courage

LAST WEEK'S MEETING

President **Laurie Anderson** presided.

Guests:

Andy and Yvonne Berrisford.

Chantal Despot



Chantal is a third-generation notary (the daughter of Michelle Broughton, Notary Public in Maple Ridge), and was herself commissioned as notary in June 2023, when she was honoured to win two awards: Chantal achieved the highest overall marks in all Notarial Statutory Exams of her class, and also received an award for the highest marks on the Property Law exam.

Program: **Ineke Boekhorst** - on a Rotary International Project to bring basic education to Belize

There are approximately 400,000 people in Belize. It was originally called the Colony of the British Honduras, and was granted self-government in 1964. In 1973, its name changed to Belize, and was granted full independence from Britain in 1981. The first major impact Rotary had in Belize was on its prison that is now managed by Rotary under contract with its Federal Government, and supported by the international Kolbe Foundation. Focus was shifted from incarceration to education, and preparing inmates for freedom. Before Rotary became involved, the prison was in horrible condition. The prison Board is now made up of 75% Rotarians, and 25% government appointed members. Rotary previously delivered 'Rachel' and other equipment to help in this process. This is the third year that Rachel equipment has been used in the prison and the 2nd year, bringing them to schools.

Theft of the RACHEL equipment in the schools is rampant consequently the Rachel equipment has to be locked up every evening; blue metal containers are provided to each school, to assist with this issue.

One of the inmates by the name of Dwayne, who is now on parole, was imprisoned for 12 years and taught himself the RACHEL program. Before his parole he assisted at the prison, teaching other inmates; since his release, he has been assisting the teachers at the different schools.

Cisco Woods, our main contact in Belize City and a long-time Rotarian himself, works with MANY other Rotary Clubs and many different organizations as well; Cisco's company constructs roads throughout Belize, but he and his family's mission is to improve literacy and general conditions in the Belizian schools. One of his "other" programs is to find discarded playground equipment, mainly from Canada, and fix it up for use in Belize schools.



Ineke joined a group of 13 Rotarians (including Al Stjernegaard of the Port Moody Club, Peter Tam of the Haney Club, and members from a few other clubs in our area) on a second trip to Belize. The goal this time was to deliver 'Rachel' equipment to schools in very rural areas of Belize and to teach the teachers how to use it with their students. The trip (which lasted from April 2 to April 13) was instigated and arranged primarily by the efforts of the Port Moody Rotary Club that did most of the work in arranging the trip and raising the \$250,000 cost of the project thanks to international global grants from RI, District 5050 and many Rotary Clubs in our region; each contributing \$5000 to the project.

RACHEL (Remote Area Community Hotspot for Education and Learning) is a portable, battery-powered, device that contains copies of educational websites in offline format. This means RACHEL can go anywhere in the world and wirelessly deliver free digital educational content to nearby tablets, laptops, or smart phones with no internet or data plans required. RACHEL has been taken to over 53 countries since its creation, serving students in rural villages, townships, and even prisons. Students in the classroom can be working at different levels, and at their own speed.

Ineke and the Rotary delegation left Vancouver, changing planes in Toronto with snow and freezing weather, and arriving in Belize to be met with 38 degrees-C heat and humidity. When they first arrived, they visited the prison which has a Rotary sign above its front entrance. On April 6 they set out for Punta Gorda, where they stayed for a few days at a local hotel, and visited the Punta Gorda Rotary Club.



They travelled into the jungle and visited about 17 schools to deliver the equipment. (The road was so bumpy that Ineke's digital watch registered about "30,000 steps"!)

At the start of the trip, they took out a bit of time to have some fun in "Old Belize" (which is an "entertainment park", which generally shows Belize City's history; it is an historical and cultural center known for its connection to the country's past as British Honduras). Old Belize offers a glimpse into the country's history and culture, with buildings built in colonial times and including a museum, local arts and crafts, and restaurants featuring Belizean cuisine. The Belize City Rotary Club hosted a "shrimp boil" – that typically involves boiling a mixture of shrimp, other types of seafood, vegetables (like corn and potatoes) in a large pot, over an outdoor cooker. And then there are beans (the musical fruit?), which are served with everything – morning, noon and night.

They also visited Mayflower National Park on their way to Placencia, where they stayed for 2 nights and enjoyed some snorkeling and diving.

Their final destination was Punta Gorda where they conducted a 2 day "facilitation session" with the teachers, who were going to receive the RACHEL equipment. Showing the 34 teachers (from the 17 rural schools) all the possibilities of the Rachel program. Teachers all had the actual use of the RACHEL equipment and were able to "play" on their own, ask questions, etc.



After the 2 days, they delivered all the RACHEL equipment to the 17 schools, which was quite an adventure, as the schools were far apart, very "rural" and mostly in the middle of the Jungle!

Ineke encouraged each of us to participate in an International Rotary project at least once. "It will open up your Rotary experience to the world and you will likely want to do it again!" It will truly show you the "Magic of Rotary"!

Happy and Sad Dollars

Matt collected about \$75 in pledges to help the club's coffers, with about 10 members telling us about the "goings on" in their lives and/or what they were happy about (but no sad dollars this time), including:

Adrienne, Brenda, Clint, Mark Vosper and other Rotary members and their spouses attended the Maple Ridge Community Foundation's "Citizen of the Year" banquet; and Adrienne did a great job of presenting to each of **Kevin and Debbie Nosworthy** a Paul Harris Award from our club.

See the article printed below from the **Maple Ridge – Pitt Meadow News** about the presentation.

Sharon Kyle is off shortly with Ron and members of her family for a week-long cruise to Alaska.

Ineke is happy that Rotary provides great opportunities, such as her trip to Belize.

Laurie had kudos for Ineke,

"our Club's Greatest Rotary Ambassador".

Club Announcements

May 14 – **Winefest**: this is our major fundraiser. Please sell some tickets. Only \$50 for a great evening. Only about 3 weeks to go. Every member is expected to buy a ticket, and to donate one bottle of wine or \$20 in lieu thereof. We purchased some “special wine” and need about \$140 to recover the cost!! We are also looking for silent auction items! Tickets are available through rotarywinefest.ca, or from Centra Law office (only \$50 a ticket).

April 22 – **Barbara Pope** will be installed as the newest member of our club at next Tuesday’s Rotary Club meeting, making Alex and Barbara our second husband and wife team members (after Peter and Ineke).

Today’s Quote by Nelson Mandela:



Today’s contribution from Leslie Michael:

A U.S. Senator called his wife before leaving office, telling her that he was bringing two male colleagues home after work. He asked her to put away all the "Made in China" stuff at home to avoid being accused of not cooperating with Trump, and so she did. When he arrived with his guests, he saw that the door was gone, the windows were gone, and all the appliances, furniture and decorations in the house were all gone, and his wife came out to greet them, completely naked.

Submitted by Laurie Anderson

From the Maple Ridge – Pitt Meadows Newspaper:

Maple Ridge couple honoured for work with Community Foundation



Debbie, Kevin and Adrienne

Maple Ridge Community Foundation President Kevin Nosworthy was shocked and moved to be honoured by a room filled with some of his favourite people, and the feelings were even stronger when they next called up his wife Debbie for her award. One of the highlights of the foundation's Citizen of the Year Awards on April 12, was a surprise award for the popular couple. "I'm a 64-year-old man who had never been speechless before," said Nosworthy, a regular MC at local events. "It totally caught us off guard."

Despite his diagnosis of stage-four cancer, and Debbie having suffered broken vertebrae in her neck, they continue to give their time to the community. Their friends and fellow volunteers wanted to honour that. Rotary past president Adrienne Dale presented each with a Paul Harris award, calling it appreciation for "hard work, loyalty and dedication to this community, both in business and through volunteering. All this, despite his personal health challenges, which crept up unexpectedly in later years."

She noted Kevin has been active with the Chamber of Commerce, a past member of the Rotary club and now as president of the Community Foundation. "I am also a director of the Ridge Meadows Hospice Society, and Kevin has avidly supported our organization and even dolled himself up in lederhosen to MC our very successful Oktoberfest event for several years," noted Dale.

Debbie is involved in many of the same causes. Dale referred to her as a "special lady who has done the talking and the walking, but never been formally presented with a well-deserved award. It's a lady with the biggest smile and the most infectious laugh, who has been the right-hand support for our first recipient, Kevin." She noted they operated Avanti Planning together, providing Chamber of Commerce medical insurance to this community until recently. "She has supported Kevin throughout his role as president of the foundation," said Dale. "When the foundation members were washing cars and selling hot dogs at the Baby Canucks games, she was there."