



Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon

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## MAY IS YOUTH SERVICE MONTH

### Happy Birthday

May 31: Susan Pynn

### Happy Anniversary

June 2: Mark & Pauline Forster

### Upcoming Speakers:

May 27: Katelyn Bissat  
NatureKids BC

June 3: Marjolein Lloyd  
Shelter Box

June 10:

### LAST WEEK'S MEETING

President **Laurie Anderson** presided.

Guests (not including speakers)

**Andy and Yvonne Berrisford**

**Chantal Despot**

**Kathy Henderson**

Program: RACHEL – the next phase

Al Stjernegaard and Brian Wormald



**Al Stjernegaard** is the past president of the Port Moody Rotary Club (2012/2013), and a past Assistant District Governor (2019/2022). Al and Brian have now visited Belize on five occasions.



**Brian Wormald** is past Director of Environmental Services of the Port Moody Rotary Club, and is active in his community with numerous environment engagement groups (and he has a passion for older cars, especially Pontiac). Brian is originally from Australia, and moved to Vancouver in 2006. He has been a volunteer for most of his youth and adult life in various capacities for a wide range of organizations – in

several countries, including a child health program with Rotary visiting in Africa.

Past phases: Both Al and Brian are well known to our club, having talked to us on several previous occasions about the Port Moody Club's international project that it spearheaded in Belize, and that our own club has participated in and contributed to financially. Ineke has travelled to Belize twice with the Port Moody group. The Belize project started in 2018, and involved the Belize Central Prison which is run by the Belize Rotary Club. During the Covid epidemic, the Rotary club of Belize City and the Port Moody Club obtained a Rotary Global Grant. This funded the purchase and installation of computer labs for the prison in Belize utilizing the RACHEL device. RACHEL was introduced into the prison system by Rotary, and that (together with other programs now active in the prison) has helped reduce recidivism from 84% to 16%, and helped over 450 prisoners to learn how to read or to improve their reading skills. We know from past presentations that RACHEL stands for "Remote Area Community Hotspot for Education and Learning", and is a portable, battery-powered device that contains copies of educational websites in off-line format that can deliver digital educational content to laptops. The program is used in over 53 countries.

The next phase was a follow-up education and literacy project. (Belize is a small economically challenged country in Central America, where 50% of the children live in poverty, facing substantial barriers to education. Only 45% of children attend secondary school at all.) In the spring of 2023, a RACHEL lab was established in a learning resource centre accommodating up to 15 students at a time, which enabled

the school to target literacy and educational support to at-risk groups and to students, and to allocate limited resources to areas where the needs are most acute. To strengthen the basic education and literacy needs in Belize, the plan then provided RACHEL-based learning labs to schools lacking critical learning resources. (A learning lab that each school received included a RACHEL server, 20 Chromebooks, headphones, a large monitor (TV screen) and a secure lock box storage unit/cart.) Ineke travelled with other Rotarians to Belize in early 2024.

In 2025, Ineke again joined a group (of 13 Rotarians this time) where they delivered equipment to remote small communities on muddy jungle roads. (Brian Wormald related that some problem with one rental car was fixed with duct tape). One of the prisoners in the Belize prison, after being released on parole, became a major facilitator of the program, and can be called upon to help the locals if there is a problem with the equipment.

In 2026, the Port Moody Club will again be applying for a global Grant, and they are again looking for global Grant partners and travel-team members, as they plan to help 10 to 20 schools, depending on the level of funding. They are planning to focus on the Stann Creek District in Belize and are looking to raise approximately \$5,000 per school. Girls reaching the age of 13 often drop out of school for cultural reasons, and the group is hoping to help out with some cultural education in that department. Al and Brian said that the persons that they met in the villages were very friendly and self-sustaining people. They encourage Rotarians to join the next trip which will be a great hands-on experience where participants not only get a chance to “do good in the world” but also experienced local culture, meet the local people and children, and even have fun for a few days at a resort as an engaged Rotary tourist.

#### Club Announcements

**Lynda Lawrence** (co-chair of the **2025 WineFest** with **Debbie MacRae**) gave a brief report on our major fundraiser which was held on May 14, 2025. It cleared approximately \$28,000 – one of the most successful Winefests that we have had in its long history.

**2025/2026 Board of Directors Installation Lunch** - if you haven't already signed up for yourself and guests to attend this event which will be held on Saturday, June 14 starting at 11 AM, please contact Adrienne, and pay for your guests' tickets via e-Transfer to Walter.

**Passing of Pat Bond** - it was with sadness that we learned of the death of Pat Bond who died of cancer. Pat's Rotary journey began in 1995 when she joined the newly chartered Rotary club of Cloverdale and later transitioned to the North Delta Rotary club, then to the Pacific Northwest Passport Club, and then back to North Delta in 2022. At the club level, she served as club president three times, and also as club secretary, club treasurer and club foundation chair. At the District level, she served as District Executive Secretary from 2016 to 2025 as well as took on the role of District Treasurer in 2023 – 2024. She will be remembered for her friendly disposition and ability to remember the first names of Rotarians that she hadn't seen for a long time.



**Submitted by Laurie Anderson**