

Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon

President:	Alex Pope	Phone: 604-465-1535	E-mail the President
Secretary:	Debbie MacRae	Phone: 604-649-8962	E-mail the Secretary
Editor:	Peter Boekhorst	Phone: 604-476-0010	E-mail the Editor

**UNITE
FOR
GOOD**

JULY IS MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH MONTH

Happy Birthday

Happy Anniversary

Upcoming Speakers:

July 15:	July 22:	July 29: Yvonne Berrisford Who's Who
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LAST WEEK'S MEETING

President This meeting was the first meeting of the 2025 – 2026 Rotary year, with our new President **Alex Pope** presiding (and on July 10 was Vice-President Eric Mollema's birthday).

Special Guests: **Chris Miley** and **Emilie McMahon**

Chris Miley has been the fire chief in Pitt Meadows for approximate 1 ½ years. Every year the Pitt Meadows Fire & Rescue Service offers a Youth Fire Academy program in partnership with the local school district to introduce students to a career to the fire service and to provide real-life work experience. The Youth Fire Academy provides secondary school students with an immersive experience in the world of firefighting, including training, community interaction and exploration of career pathways. Many graduates have expressed an interest in pursuing a firefighter career and many have succeeded in doing so.

Our club provides a **bursary in the amount of \$1,500 to a student to attend the Youth Fire Academy**, and Chief Miley introduced this year's winner of the Meadow Ridge Rotary bursary, **Emilie McMahon**, to the club, and presented her with her graduation certificate from the program.



Today's Program: **Pratham Gidda – RYLA**

Our New Generations **Chair Sharon Kyle** introduced our club's delegate Pratham Gidda who attended RYLA May 29- June 1st at Stillwood Camp in Chilliwack B.C. and who told us about his experience at RYLA.

RYLA, or Rotary Youth Leadership Awards, is an international program run by Rotary Clubs to encourage and develop leadership skills in young people. It provides a structured environment for youth to build confidence, learn leadership techniques, and participate in community service. It is a global initiative with Rotary Clubs worldwide organizing RYLA events. **Pratham** is 22 years old and is investigating becoming a member of a Rotaract Club. RYLA specifically targets young adults. Key Aspects of RYLA include development of skills in communication, problem-solving, conflict management, and ethical leadership. RYLA emphasizes teamwork and collaboration through various activities and group projects. The program aims to boost participants' self-esteem and confidence in their abilities, and encourages participants to get involved in community service and become active citizens. RYLA also reinforces Rotary's values of service above self, integrity, and international understanding. It is a transformative experience that equips young people with the tools and confidence to become effective leaders in their communities and beyond.

Pratham was an excellent and confident speaker and showed us pictures that he took at this year's program. They broke off into groups of four participants. One of the persons in Pratham's group was from Mexico and could speak very little English; so they all participated in assisting her in communicating. He was impressed by one of their speakers urged them "to be a ripple in the water". "Be the first ripple in the water, and be the instrument of change".



Pratham said he learned a lot about himself, also. They learned about their own characteristics – if Pratham were a dog, he would be a golden retriever - not a talker, and a little bit dominant, but also compassionate. It is common at RYLA events to encourage everyone to hug one another; but Pratham and many other participants (both male and female) were not comfortable with this practice. He also found the accommodation not to be great. However, they learned how to stand up and take leadership positions. He was glad to learn about fellow RYLA participants. He is looking into joining a Rotaract Club, and has chosen an Abbotsford Rotary group to connect with.

Chantal, one of our newest club members, stated that she went through the RYLA program about 14 years ago. Her mother Michelle Boughton (who is a Rotarian) signed her up, and although Chantal said that at first she didn't want to go, she did go - and found it a great experience.

President Alex Pope spoke about the Rotary International Convention in Calgary that was attended by seven members of our club, namely, Alex and Barbara Pope, Ineke and Peter Boekhorst, Yvonne Berrisford, Laurie Anderson and David Rempel.

Highlights of the convention included:

Geena Davis who spoke in person about her work to increase and improve the roles for women and girls - and her lifelong effort to stop being "epically polite."

[She said: "I've spent most of my adult life advocating for women and girls to reach their full potential in various ways." "Raising girls to be polite, to please, to not use their voices, is crushing." Davis, who starred in the movies "Thelma and Louise," "A League of Their Own," and many more, described how her profession taught her self-confidence. "Becoming an actor gave me an unexpected opportunity," she said. "You've heard the expression 'Fake it till you make it.' In my case, it's been, 'Act it, and you might just become like that in real life.' I've been surprised along the way by how the parts I've played have led me to becoming a much bolder person." Davis also talked about how, when her daughter was a child, she noticed disparities between male and female characters in children's media and delved into the data. "By feeding our youngest kids a seriously imbalanced world from the beginning," she said, "we unwittingly have trained generation after generation to see women and girls as less important than men and boys." She said recent U.S. data shows there's gender parity in lead characters, and urged Rotary members to think about how women and girls are represented in their clubs and their communities. "We can create what the future looks like".]

Dr. Rosemarie Truglio, Senior Vice President of Global Education at **Sesame Workshop**, discussed raising healthy, happy children. She shared insights on parenting, focusing on embracing mistakes, praising effort, and fostering curiosity and joy in children. She emphasized the importance of allowing children to make mistakes and not feel bad about it.

Bill Gates (appearing via video) talked about the renewed commitment from Rotary and the Gates Foundation to raise up to \$450 million over the next three years to support the global effort to eradicate polio.

Alex attended a "fellowship of genealogy". Alex said he was an adopted child and did not meet his birth mother until later in life, and through that fellowship connection met a member (relative) of his birth family.

Ineke Boekhorst also spoke about the Convention, including her stay in Calgary with Rotary's Recreational Vehicle Fellowship of Rotarians, that included members from Texas, England, Australia, but mostly from North America, who share a love for camping and recreational vehicle travel. Prior to the commencement of the Convention, Ineke and Peter visited the Bow Falls (a scenic waterfall located on the Bow River in Banff National Park), and the dinosaur museum at Drumheller. She was impressed by the fact that the city of Calgary was "all about Rotary" with Rotary signs throughout the city, and on buses and trains. She said that approximately 15,000 Rotarians attended the convention.

Happy and Sad Dollars included:

Mary Robson presented a picture of past member Dr. Marco Terwiel with Matt DeBruyn.

Ineke Boekhorst said she and Peter have sold their home in Mission, and are happy to be moving back to Maple Ridge where they will be closer to our Rotary meeting place and the communities where they have lived and worked for so many years.

Adrienne Dale, our Club Services director, is pleased that we have six Rotary members who have joined (or rejoined) our club. The new members will be inducted into our club by our new Assistant Governor Peter Tam on July 22, 2025.

Chantal Despot is happy to be one of those persons being inducted on July 22 (and is proud to be a third-generation Notary Public in our community).

Fine Master this week was Ineke, who fined everyone who did not know that this Rotary Year's new theme is "Unite for Good". "Unite for Good" serves as a reminder that by working together, Rotary members can achieve more than they could individually. This theme is intended to inspire 1.9 million volunteers across 46,000 clubs in 200 countries. It also aims to enhance public recognition of work and its impact on communities worldwide.



Epilogue

President Alex Pope wore to today's meeting his white (plastic) Stetson cowboy hat that he bought in Calgary, interchanged with his Scottish red plaid beret cap, for good measure.

In honour of Alex's headgear, our own Poet Laureate, **Mark Forster**, wrote the following poem (which Mark says "is best recited with a twang, a wink, and a well-timed hat tip"):

"Rotary Hat Etiquette (For City Folks and Cowboys Alike)"

Now folks, I've seen some sights in life —
From cattle drives to Kathmandu,
But nothin' stirs confusion
Like what your hat says 'bout you.

Here at this fine Rotary meeting,
With members far and near,
There's cowboy hats from Calgary
And tams from Scotland's cheer!

But there's rules for wearin' headgear
If you want to earn respect—
So gather close, take heed, dear friends,
Or face a fashion wreck.

First off—don't wear your hat inside,
Unless you're robbin' trains.
If we're indoors at a banquet,
Take it off—or face the pains
Of every Past President present
Who'll glare across the floor...
Next thing you know, you're chairing
R.Y.L.A. camps forevermore.

Tip your hat to every lady
(And gents too—it's polite).
It's not just cowboy etiquette—
It keeps your conscience right.

Tip it for the keynote speaker,
For the Greeter at the door,
And even for the Treasurer—
Yes, even her — (I swore).

And never grab another's hat—
That's Rotary Rule #3.
Right between "Don't double-dip"
And "Don't hog the carver-y."

A hat ain't just a topper—
It's memory, dust, and pride,
And if you grab it without askin'?
Best go find a place to hide.

Now tilted low? That's classic grit.
You're serious, lean, and wise.
Might be here to build some wells,
But you look like you wrangle spies.

Tipped back? Relaxed, cool-headed—
You've chaired a dozen years.
You show up just for fellowship,
And maybe two free beers.

Flat and straight? You're all in.
You've got a plan, a binder, too.
You quote the Four-Way Test in sleep—
And dream in "Avenues."

But wear it backwards at a session?
Oh Lord, don't even try.
You'll cause a small commotion
And make the SAA cry.

And if an Interactor films it—
You're doomed to TikTok fame:
"Rotarian loses fashion sense,
And maybe half his brain."

So wear your hat with Rotary pride,
And do it with some flair—
From cowboy brims to Scottish tams,
Just don't mess up your hair.

And if someone asks, "Where you from, pard?"
You just grin and say with might:
"I'm from the club that tips its hat—
And gets things done just right!"

So friends, now tip those brims and smile,
To Service, Love, and Grit—
And always wear your hat with class...
Or get volunteered to sit. 🤖