



Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon

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JULY IS MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH MONTH

Happy Birthday

Happy Anniversary

June 30: Clint & Cheryl Callison

Upcoming Speakers:

July 29: Yvonne Berrisford
Who's Who

Aug. 5:

Aug. 12:

LAST WEEK'S MEETING

President **Alex Pope** presided.

Invocation: given by **Brenda Jenkins** -

"We give thanks for the opportunity to be a Rotarian.
Rotarians dig wells from which we will never drink.
We vaccinate children we will never meet.
We restore eyesight for those who will never see.
We build houses we will never live in.
We educate children we will never know.
We plant trees we will never sit under.
We feed hungry people regardless of race or politics.
We know real happiness can only be found by helping others.
For this opportunity we give thanks."

Guests:

Michelle Oleschak (invited by Adrienne)
Michelle and Gordon Broughton (parents of Chantal Despot)
Liza Afanassieva (business partner of Chantal)

Installation of New Members and Rotarians

Assistant Governor **Peter Tam** assisted with the installation of four new members of our club: **Chantal Despot, Kathy Henderson, and Andy and Yvonne Berrisford.**

Chantal Despot

Chantal was sponsored by Clint, but he was unable to attend the meeting. Chantal was therefore introduced by Laurie:

"I have the privilege of introducing Chantal to you. Chantal Despot - her last name spelled d-e-s-p-o-t. To learn about Chantal, I went on the Internet and Googled her name. The first thing that I learned is that a despot is



"a person who holds absolute power, typically one who exercises it in a cruel or oppressive way." I guess she can blame her husband Ivan for having to live with that surname. I guess we can blame her mother Michelle for Chantal's interest in Rotary. Her mom has been a member of the Haney Rotary since 2007. Rumour has it that about 15 years ago, back in 2010, Michelle signed up Chantal for RYLA without telling her; and when her mom told Chantal what she had done, Chantal didn't want to go at first - but was then glad that she did. In 2010 Chantal went to Tanzania to do some volunteer work and coordinated with the Haney Rotary club to donate several thousands of dollars to a special needs school in that country. In 2013 she became a founding member of the Tri-Cities Rotaract Club where she served as Social Chair and President over the years. By 2013, she became a RYLA Facilitator. (A Facilitator is an older student or young adult who has previously participated in RYLA, and volunteers to guide and support a small group of high school students through the RYLA camp weekend.) Of course, by 2015, Chantal became Head Facilitator, and served as the Ridge Meadows Youth Impact Summit Head Facilitator in 2015 and 2016.

Chantal attended Simon Fraser University where she received her Bachelor of Arts and then Masters in Applied Science. She was commissioned as a Notary Public in 2023, where she was honoured to win two awards - the highest overall marks in all notarial statutory exams of her class, and also the highest marks in the property law exam. Chantal is a third-generation notary, who (along with her fellow notary Liza Afanassieva) purchased her mom's notary practice in Maple Ridge, where they practice under the name of "Ridge Notaries". Their offices are on 227th St. between Lougheed highway and Dewdney Trunk Road.

Chantal has a daughter, Mila, who will have her first birthday on August 1, 2025.

On Chantal's membership application form there is a section entitled "Tell us about your interests and hobbies". She said

"Exploring nature, family history research, and spending time with family and friends". Under the section entitled "Tell us what areas of service you are passionate about", she said "I love working with youth and seniors.... I enjoy speaking to seniors and giving pro-Bono presentations on wills and powers of attorney and representation agreements"

Kathy Henderson

Kathy Henderson was sponsored by Matt Debruyne, who has met with her and says she will be a great member of Rotary. Matt was sorry that was unable to attend the meeting due to a medical procedure, and therefore Kathy was introduced by Ineke:



"Kathy was born into the medical world. Her father was a doctor. She became a nurse at the Ridge Meadows Hospital, where later in life she changed careers and joined the administration and headed up two departments, here in our Fraser Health Authority where she worked for 30 plus years.

She has two children (Ryan and Alisa) and happy to also be a grandma - and loves babysitting her grandchild.

Kathy is now retired and loves to get involved in volunteering, and wants to help people, and to advocate for the underprivileged, especially children. She has many interests, including wellness and health, travel, social events, fashion, gardening and history. One of her friends suggested joining Rotary.

AG Peter Tam installed Chantal and Kathy with the following words:

"It is a true honor and privilege to stand before you today, representing Rotary, as we welcome new members into our global family. Today marks a milestone. You are not simply joining a club—you are becoming part of a worldwide movement of over 1.4 million leaders and changemakers committed to service above self. You are linking arms with men and women of action who are building peace, fighting disease, supporting education, protecting the environment, and improving lives in communities across the globe—and right here at home.

Rotary is not a place; it's a purpose.

It is not just a network; it's a commitment.

And - it is not about titles; it's about service, fellowship, and integrity.

By choosing to join Rotary, you are choosing to lead—not by words alone, but by action. You are affirming your dedication to making a difference and to uplifting those who need it most. I encourage you to participate fully: engage in service projects, build friendships, take on leadership roles, and bring your own ideas, passions, and expertise into this ever-evolving organization. You will find that what you give will come back to you many times over—in growth, fulfillment, and in friendships that last a lifetime. Rotary's strength lies in its diversity—in professions, in cultures, in perspectives—and you now become a vital thread in this tapestry of service.

- Together, we imagine a better world,
- Together, we make it real.
- Together, we Unite For Good

So today, I welcome you not just into Rotary—but into a lifelong journey of purpose. We are proud to have you with us. Congratulations and welcome to Rotary!"



Andy and Yvonne Berrisford

Andy was born in Cape Town, South Africa in 1956. Andy says his dad "was a wanderer", so he grew up at several different places in South Africa, including St Helena Bay, Worcester, and Johannesburg. He completed high school at Worcester and got a job as a student technician with Eskom, the electric utility, near Johannesburg. After completing his training, he joined the Electrical Measurements team at Eskom's Research & Development Division.

Yvonne was born in Johannesburg, South Africa, and grew up in Durban. She met Andy in Hillbrow, a residential neighbourhood of Johannesburg. They must have been destined for each other, because they met in October, 1981, became engaged in December, and got married in February 1982. They bought a small house in Kempton Park and raised 3 children there. (Kempton Park is located about 30 KM north-east of Johannesburg.)

In 1994 South Africa abolished apartheid and "a new chapter for the country began, under the wise leadership of Nelson Mandela", says Andy. "Unfortunately, he left office after a few years and his successors were not of the same character. It became clear that the future of our family was in peril and we had to leave the country."

Andy and Yvonne immigrated to Toronto in April, 2000, and lived in Guelph (**) for 4 years. Andy says that he then "got a much better job at BC Hydro", and so they moved to Burnaby in 2004. In Burnaby Yvonne had a neighbour, Coreen. When Coreen moved to Port Moody, Andy and Yvonne followed her in 2016. Says Yvonne, "My neighbour becomes my best friend, and 6 years ago she became my sister-in-law." It was there, in Port Moody, that they (along with Andy's brother and his wife) joined Rotary.

Andy retired from BC Hydro at the end of 2019 as COVID hit and their youngest son died of cancer. In 2022 they decided to move to Maple Ridge; and "Here we are", says Andy.

(**) For those of us geographically and historically challenged, Guelph is located roughly 70 km west of Downtown Toronto. Guelph, like New Westminster in BC, is known as "the Royal City" - "Guelph" was named in 1827 to pay tribute to the reigning British monarch, King George IV, who was a member of the House of Guelph, and "New Westminster" because Queen Victoria chose the name in 1859 after her favourite district in London, Westminster.)



AG Peter Tam installed Andy and Yvonne (who transferred in from the Port Moody Club) with the following words:

"It gives me great joy—as your Assistant Governor— to welcome you, Andy and Yvonne, to the Meadow Ridge Rotary Club, honouring the continued commitment of seasoned Rotarians who have already demonstrated what it means to live by our motto: "Service Above Self". You come to this new Club not as strangers, but as fellow travellers on the same path—a path of service, fellowship, and ethical leadership. You're bringing a wealth of Rotary experience that will enrich this Club. This moment marks more than a change in club affiliation - it's a recommitment. A renewal of your pledge to be people of action. To serve your community and the world through your time, your talents, and your passion. As members of this Club, you carry forward the legacy of your previous service while helping to shape a fresh chapter of Rotary in this community, and help steer the Club's mission and projects to future successes. Rotary's strength lies in continuity through change. And today, you become the bridge between Rotary's proud past and its promising future. On behalf of Rotary International and District 5050, I thank you for your unwavering service and warmly welcome you into your new club family. May this transition energize your journey, deepen your impact, and expand your joy in Rotary. Congratulations—and welcome."

Mark Forster, the new chair of our Membership Committee, said that Ineke, Laurie and Lynda have volunteered to be on this Committee, and he welcomed anyone else who may be interested in doing so to contact him. To welcome our new club members, Mark also prepared (with the help of an AI program), and read out, the following poem incorporating this year's Rotary theme, "Unite for Good".

Unite for Good – A Poem for New Rotarians

Welcome, dear friends, to our circle so wide,
where kindness and service walk side by side.
You've joined more than meetings, more than a name -
you've entered a family, a purpose, a flame.
Here in Meadow Ridge, our roots grow deep,
In hearts we have touched, and promises we keep.
From lending our hands to standing with pride,
we serve side by side with purpose as guide.
We Unite for Good, across every divide,
no mountain too steep, no ocean too wide.
With fellowship first, and service our way,
we brighten the world a little each day.
And oh, don't forget our great Duck Race delight -

a flurry of feathers, a comical sight!
They paddle with purpose, each yellow and proud,
cheered on by a generous Meadow Ridge crowd.
But behind every duck is a cause we embrace,
as laughter and charity share the same place.

Then comes the Wine Festival, flowing with cheer,
where vintners and neighbours all gather each year.
With glasses held high and good will in the air,
we toast to the causes we lovingly share.
Each sip supports projects, both local and far -
proof that service can sparkle like fine Pinot Noir!
You'll find laughter in projects, meaning in tasks,
and Rotarians ready—no need even to ask.
From food banks to youth, from peace to clean water,
we act with resolve—every son, every daughter.

The Four-Way Test guides all that we do:

Is it fair? Is it just? Is it honest and true?

Will it build better friendships, and good will extend?

Does it help? Does it heal? Will it uplift or mend?

So welcome, new members, your journey's begun -
in the light of our motto: Service Above Self—we run.
The badge that you wear is not just a pin,
it's a symbol of service, of heart, and of kin.
Together we rise, with hope understood—
for you've joined a club that Unites us for Good.

Happy and Sad Dollars included:

Chantal and **Kathy** were happy to have been welcomed into our club today, and **Michelle** was also happy to be here for the occasion with Gordon and Liza.

Mary Robson was happy to report that **Lynda Lawrence's** hip replacement was successfully completed, and that Lynda was released from hospital on the same day as the operation! She is now recuperating at Robson's.

Grandpa **Gordon Broughton** was happy to report that he just learned that his granddaughter Lila had just taken, solo, her first two steps.

Ineke Boekhorst, who finished the move to their new house in Maple Ridge last week, was very happy to have that over with - but even more pleased that Eric Mollema and Mark Forster came to help and moved two very heavy mattresses to the dump. To show her and Peter's appreciation, she donated \$100 in their names to the Rotary Foundation.

Yvonne and Libby were happy to have sold 5 books of Duck Race tickets (that's 50 tickets, folks!) on the weekend while at one sitting at table in front of a local shopping centre.

Laurie was happy that we have such great new members installed and transferred into our Meadow Ridge Rotary Club.

Alex was happy to have attended, along with both Canadian and American Rotarians, the induction of our new District Governor Isabelle Hayer at the Peace Arch boarder facility which is so situated that neither Canadians nor Americans had to cross the boarder in order to meet together.

Club Announcement:

District Governor Isabelle Hayer's official visit to our club is scheduled for **August 26**. Let's have a great turnout to welcome her.

Submitted by Laurie Anderson