



Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon

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FEBRUARY IS PEACE BUILDING AND CONFLICT PREVENTION MONTH

Happy Birthday

Happy Anniversary

Upcoming Speakers:

Feb. 24 Tim Watkins from MHWP Law Some interesting estate cases	Mar. 3 Jenny Schroeder Cythera House	Mar. 10 Aminah Work BC Centre
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LAST WEEK'S MEETING

President **Alex Pope** presided.

Invocation/Inspirational thought (**Andy Berrisford**) – reminding everyone of the values that underpin both Rotary and community service: “As we gather here today, we confirm our commitment to one another as friends and family: to treat all people fairly, to be honest in everything we say or do, to help others in need, and to be the best that we can be.”

Guests:

Kris Harrison
Warren Dale

Program - Charlene Reaveley Children’s Charity Society

Introduction of the Guest Speaker

Adrienne Dale introduced **Jennifer Reaveley** (sister-in-law of Charlene), describing her not only as a valued community member but also as a professional and volunteer dedicated to supporting families in crisis. Jennifer is a registered nurse with over 20 years of experience, including time spent working in intensive care. Through her professional work and personal experience, she became deeply connected to the mission of the Charlene Reaveley Children’s Charity Society (CRCCS). She now serves on the board in multiple capacities, including as Treasurer and Program Director. Her work focuses on counselling programs and ensuring that grieving families have access to meaningful support. Jennifer’s commitment stems from personal tragedy and from witnessing firsthand how devastating loss can be, particularly for children.

Jennifer Reaveley’s Presentation

Jennifer explained that the CRCCS is founded on one simple but profound belief: **No child or family should have to navigate grief alone.** Loss touches families of every background, income level, and circumstance. It often arrives unexpectedly, leaving families disoriented and overwhelmed. As communities grow, so does the number of families facing sudden tragedy.



CRCCS exists to ensure those families are not left unsupported. The charity was established in 2011 and is a registered nonprofit in good standing with the Canada Revenue Agency. Over time, its reach has expanded throughout British Columbia, including northern communities, Vancouver Island, and the Interior. Today, the organization supports over 500 families across the province.

The Story Behind the Charity

On February 19, 2011, Charlene Reaveley (sister-in-law of Jennifer) was driving with her husband, Dan, when she witnessed a single-vehicle accident on the Lougheed Highway. Acting instinctively, Charlene stopped to offer help—an act that reflected her character and compassion. While assisting at the scene, she was struck and killed by a drunk driver who fled in an attempt to avoid consequences. Charlene left behind her husband and four young children, aged two, four, six, and ten. The tragedy shook the community. Many remembered Charlene as the “Good Samaritan” who stepped forward to help someone in need. What was less visible to the public, however, was what followed in the months after her death.

Dan Reaveley found himself navigating unimaginable grief while simultaneously trying to guide his young children through their own trauma. During this time, he discovered how limited and difficult to access grief support services were—particularly immediate, specialized counselling for children. In the midst of profound loss, Dan chose to channel his grief into purpose. He envisioned an organization that would ensure no family experiencing sudden tragedy would have to endure that journey without immediate support. From that vision, the Charlene Reaveley Children's Charity was born.

Core Services: Immediate Grief Counselling

Jennifer emphasized that the heart of CRCCS is its free, immediate counselling program for grieving children and families. Grief does not wait for paperwork approvals, government processes, or insurance claims. Access to public mental health services can take months. For a family in crisis, even filling out forms can feel insurmountable. CRCCS steps in to remove that burden.

Upon qualification, each immediate family member receives up to 10 one-on-one counselling sessions with a professional who specializes in grief, trauma, and loss. Families may choose among certified counsellors, psychologists, or psychiatrists depending on their needs. The cost of providing this service ranges from \$1,200 to \$2,000 per child. Jennifer explained that most of the families served are navigating life with one surviving parent and multiple children. Every child experiences grief differently. Some may require trauma-focused therapy; others may benefit from different therapeutic approaches. CRCCS ensures children are matched appropriately and receive individualized care. Importantly, the organization strives never to turn a child away.

In addition to counselling, CRCCS provides several complementary services:

- **Post-secondary bursaries** for children pursuing higher education.
- **A lending library** offering books and grief resources for both children and adults.
- **Camp funding**, including support for attendance at bereavement camps where children can connect with peers who understand their experience.
- **An annual toy drive**, helping bring moments of joy during difficult times.

These services reflect a holistic approach to healing. Grief impacts not only emotional well-being but also educational pathways, social development, and financial stability.

Funding Model and Organizational Structure

Jennifer made it clear that CRCCS is entirely community-funded. The organization receives no corporate sponsorships, government funding or grants. It is 100% volunteer-run. Directors contribute their time, expertise, and often personal resources to sustain operations. Every dollar donated goes directly to programming and the families served. While the organization's reputation has grown steadily, referrals now exceed financial capacity. Increased awareness—through schools, funeral homes, counsellors, the BC Bereavement Helpline, and the Ministry of Children and Family Development—has resulted in greater demand. This growth presents both a success and a challenge.

Question and Answer Period

How do families learn about the charity?

Primarily through word-of-mouth, referrals, school counsellors, funeral homes, and the BC Bereavement Helpline. Marketing efforts remain modest due to funding limitations.

Do you collaborate with hospice organizations?

Yes. The charity has worked with Crossroads Hospice and has spoken at hospice programs. They have also engaged with the Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce to raise awareness.

Do you serve families outside the Tri-Cities?

Yes. While the charity began in the Tri-Cities following Charlene's passing, it now serves families across British Columbia.

What are the eligibility criteria?

Applicants must:

- Be residents of British Columbia
- Have experienced the loss of a parent or sibling
- Have children in the family

Club Announcements

A Wine Fest Committee meeting - February 20 at 10:30 a.m., via zoom.

A Pub Hub social gathering - Thursday February 26 at 5:30 p.m. at Jimmy Mac's Pub in Langley, 19935 96 Avenue.

Happy and Sad Dollars included:

Thankful for Sharon's weekly leading of "O Canada"!



Very happy about the Valentine's dinner (Feb 14th) at Mark and Pauline Forster's home was such a success, and that so many of us were able to attend. Thank You to those organizing the event, especially Mark & Pauline for their hospitality and wonderful hosting/cooking skills!



So happy about the recent Rotary service trip to Ecuador attended by Ineke, Yvonne and Clair (presentation to follow in April), which the participants said was absolutely AMAZING! Thankful that Rotary provides the opportunity to visit other countries and work together with Rotarians from all over the world to help make this world a better place.



President's Closing Quote

My son asked if training to be a locksmith would be worth it.

I told him, "Of course, that'll open a lot of doors for you"

Submitted by Laurie Anderson