



Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon

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MARCH IS WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE MONTH

Happy Birthday		Happy Anniversary	
Mar. 11	Patrick O'Brien		

Upcoming Speakers:

Mar. 10	Aminah Work BC Centre	Mar. 17	BC MLA Lawrence Mok	Mar. 24	Brian Lott Personal Chef to Nelson Mandela
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LAST WEEK'S MEETING

President **Alex Pope** presided.

Guest

Warren Dale

Program Presentation – Cythera Transition House Society



What is Cythera House?

“Cythera is an anti-violence society that supports adults, youth, and families impacted by abuse. We provide safe, inclusive spaces and holistic services that empower individuals on their path forward, offering counselling, transition housing, affordable long-term living spaces, and advocacy. With a dedicated team highly trained in areas such as domestic violence, sexual abuse, sexual assault, and gender-based violence, we approach every interaction with sensitivity, care, and confidentiality.”

Call 604-467-9966 to reach Cythera Transition House and 24-Hour Support Line anytime of the day or night. Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Counselling Services & Administration Office is located at
22768 119th Avenue, Maple Ridge, BC V2X 4L2

Phone: 604-467-9939. Hours of Operation: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday: 9:00 am to 4:30 pm. Wednesday: 11:30 am to 7:00 pm.

Our speakers today were **Jas Rai** and **Jan Schroeder**, who provided an overview of Cythera’s work within Maple Ridge and surrounding communities. Cythera operates several programs supporting women, and children impacted by gender-based violence.

Cythera’s Programs that are offered:

1. Transition House (First-Stage Housing)

- Safe, confidential location in Maple Ridge.
- Provides emergency shelter for women and children fleeing domestic violence.
- Residents may stay up to 30 days (flexibility applied based on circumstances).
- Focus on immediate safety, stabilization, and individualized support planning.

The house operates as communal living:

- Private bedrooms
- Shared kitchen and common areas
- Capacity may exceed 12 residents depending on family configurations
- Creative room allocations when necessary to accommodate larger families

Women often arrive with minimal belongings and limited financial resources. Support workers assist with:

- Safety planning
- Financial planning
- Housing applications
- Emotional support
- Referrals to community services

2. Counselling Centre

- Individual counselling for women and children
- Children’s therapeutic groups
- Stopping the Violence counselling
- Outreach services
- New social enterprise initiative (Lira Counselling Services)

All services are self-referral and trauma-informed.

3. Second-Stage Housing

- It is funded by BC Housing
- Length of stay is up to 12 months (flexible when needed).
- Rent geared to income (approximately 30% of income).
- As of the latest report, 82% of women successfully transition into second-stage housing.

New Development (Opening is expected in November, 2026):

- 33 total units in Maple Ridge.
- 14 second-stage units (upper floors).
- Remaining units designated as affordable housing for women and children.
- Programming to foster community connection and long-term stability.

The long-term model:

1. Emergency Transition House
2. Second-Stage Housing
3. Affordable Housing
4. Sustainable Independence

Identified Need: Wellness & Community Experiences

A key funding gap identified by Cythera is funding for:

- Recreational activities
- Family outings
- Gift cards (movies, zoo, WildPlay, restaurants)
- Sports equipment
- Social connection opportunities

Jas Rai shared a powerful example of a mother overwhelmed in communal living who was given a donated movie theatre gift card. The emotional relief and gratitude demonstrated the profound impact of small gestures of normalcy.

Cythera requested:

- Gift cards for family activities
- Ongoing financial support for recreational and wellness programming

Q&A Highlights

- Thrift Store? Permanently closed during COVID. Community interest remains high.
- Clothing Donations? Limited storage; small quantities accepted when space permits.
- Age Limits? Youth under 19 accepted; collaboration with the Ministry of Children and Family Development, where required. Flexibility applied to avoid unsafe discharges.
- Services for Men? Cythera currently serves only women and children. Acknowledged community need for male services; discussion ongoing at organizational level.

Important Note:

The Transition House address is confidential. Donations can be arranged through Community Services, where a tracking system ensures ethical distribution.

Cythera's Impact in 2024:

- Responded to **910 crisis & support calls** through Cythera's 24-hour support line.
- Provided **shelter to 58 women & 42 children** staying at Cythera Transition House, offering to them nurturing care, counselling, and essential support to individuals and families staying at Cythera Transition House.
- Extended its **services to 544 women and children** through inclusive, holistic programs designed to support those who have been impacted by violence and abuse.

Happy & Sad Dollars

Sharon Kyle's niece and husband with their two 8- and 12-year-old children in are sequestered in their apartment in the city of Doha, in Qatar, in the midst of the current regional instability in the Middle East (where he is currently employed). Iranian missiles have been aimed at Qatar. There are no airplane flights that are currently leaving the city, and it would be a risky 17-hour car ride to get to safety in Saudi Arabia.

Eric and Urma Mollema are planning to visit to a Rotary Club in Serbia when they visit that country this coming May.

Ray Peterson was saddened to learn of the passing of a dear friend that he had known for about 60 years.

Clint Callison was very happy that his daughter has been accepted for enrollment in all 4 of the colleges that she applied to, including her application to the Royal Military College of Canada. (As one of our members quipped, "She will be a really busy girl".)

Libby Nelson is pleased that she has found a suitable assisted living facility to move into, but not happy that there has been a Flu outbreak reported at the group home.

Some happy dollars were also given in appreciation expressed to our guests from Cythera House for the important work they are doing.

Fine Master at work

This week's fine master levied a fine of one dollar (\$1) on any club member who has a surname that (according to Google) is (90+% of the time) more likely to be the 'given' (or first) name of a person of the opposite gender.

For example, fine master **Laurence Anderson** fined **Lynda Lawrence** for having the surname of Lawrence (and she did not get off the hook even though one is spelled with a "u" and the other is spelled with a "w").

Other offenders (and their famous namesakes) who had to shell out a dollar (\$1) were:



Adrienne Dale (cf. Dale Carnegie)

Sharon Kyle (cf. Kyle Broflovski of the animated sitcom South Park



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Libby Nelson (cf. Nelson Mandela)

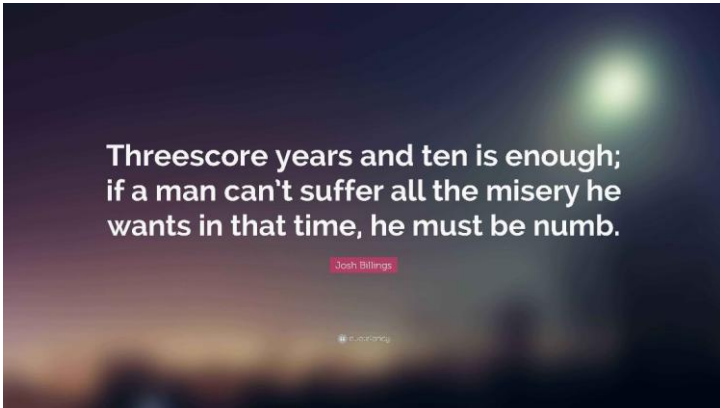


and Nelson Rockefeller),

The Fine Master also levied a fine of \$1.00 on anyone who had the audacity to be under the age of 70

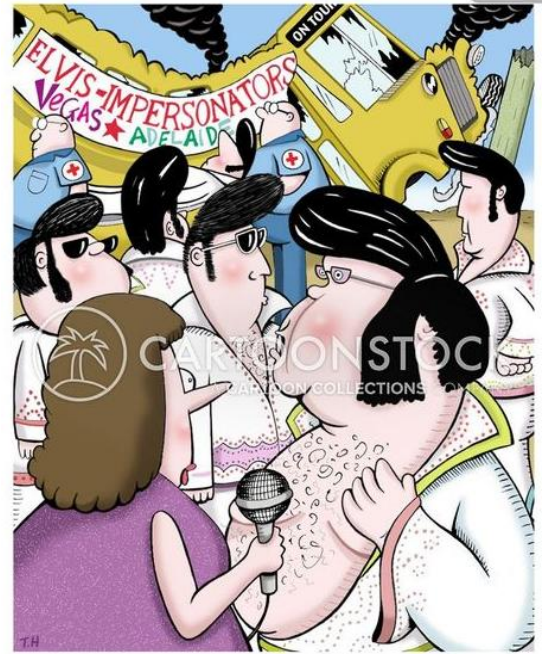
("three score years and ten") - see the wisdom (warning?) in Psalm 90:10 of the King James Version of the Bible – "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."

TRANSLATON:



President's Closing Quote

**Did you hear about the bus load of Elvis impersonators that crashed on the way to Las Vegas?
Nobody was injured, but they were All Shook Up.**



Submitted by Laurie Anderson