



Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon

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OCTOBER IS COMMUNITY ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT MONTH

Happy Birthday

Happy Anniversary

Upcoming Speakers:

Oct 6	Chris Diersch "Cycling without Age"	Oct 13	No Speaker Business Meeting	Oct 20	D5050 Governor Visit to our Club
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RI PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

99.9 percent is not 100 percent



Aminu Ahmed Tudun-Wada knows what polio takes from a child. He contracted the disease as a young boy in Kano, Nigeria, and was left paralyzed.

Decades later, when Nigeria was struggling to eradicate polio, Aminu decided that he would use his experience to help protect other children.

He brought together polio survivors and began going door to door, talking with parents about vaccination. The survivors told their stories. They showed families the effects of polio. And they urged parents to make sure their children never had to go through the same experience.

By 2021, the Polio Survivors Group that Aminu founded had grown to more than 400 members. Their work helped Nigeria reach a milestone that once seemed impossible: In 2020, the World Health Organization certified Nigeria, and the entire African region, free of wild poliovirus.

I think about people like Aminu whenever we talk about ending polio. Eradication is about children who will never know what it means to lose the ability to walk. It is about parents who will never have to watch a healthy child become paralyzed by a disease that vaccines can prevent.

And it is about making sure the people who remember polio become the last generation that does. Rotary has been part of this fight for more than four decades. Together with our partners, we have helped vaccinate more than 3 billion children, contributed more than \$3 billion to the global effort, and reduced cases of wild poliovirus by 99.9 percent.

But 99.9 percent is not 100 percent.

Wild poliovirus remains endemic in Afghanistan and Pakistan. As long as it circulates anywhere, children everywhere remain at risk. And even after wild poliovirus disappears from a country, we must maintain strong immunization and surveillance systems so the virus cannot find a way back.

Aminu could have looked at his own experience and asked, "Why me?" Instead, he asked a different question: "How can I make sure this does not happen to another child?" That is the spirit we need now.

The final mile of any journey can be the hardest. But we have walked too far, worked too hard, and protected too many children to stop here. Let us remember why we began. Let us listen to those who have experienced polio.

Let us be the generation that creates lasting impact and ensures no one ever experiences polio again.

YINKA

President, Rotary International

President **Eric Mollema** presided.

Program: Discussion About the Future of the Duck Race –
Conducted by Chair Libby Nelson



Today's meeting was devoted to a detailed presentation and discussion regarding the future format, organization and sustainability of the Meadow Ridge Rotary Duck Race.

The presentation was based primarily on the results of a member survey, previous Duck Race committee discussions, and historical information about changes that have been made to the event. The presentation was intended to reflect the responses received rather than advocate for a particular outcome.

Survey participation

There were 21 responses from 34 club members, representing approximately 62% participation. The survey results indicated:

- Strong support for continuing the Duck Race.
- Considerable openness to changing the way the event is delivered.
- Concern about the amount of work required from Rotary members.
- Concern about volunteer availability and workload.
- Recognition of the Duck Race's importance as a community fundraising and visibility event.
- Interest in examining different race formats and potentially different locations.
- Significant openness to a race that does not necessarily involve releasing physical rubber ducks into the river.

The central issue is not primarily whether the Duck Race should continue, but how it can continue while becoming more manageable and sustainable for Rotary volunteers.

What members value about the Duck Race

1. Opportunities for local youth and seniors' organizations to raise funds.
2. Rotary's visibility and profile within the community.
3. The fundraising opportunities provided to participating organizations.
4. The community nature of the event.
5. The tradition and recognition associated with the Duck Race.

Potential Changes to the Duck Race

Alternative race format suggestions included:

- Continuing with the traditional river Duck Race.
- Dropping ducks from a helicopter.
- Conducting a Duck Race in a swimming pool.
- Having municipal representatives participate in catching the winning ducks.
- Creating a completely virtual Duck Race.
- Combining physical ticket sales with an online race.
- Replacing the physical duck release with a digitally generated race and online draw.

Some of these ideas were described as preliminary concepts rather than developed proposals.

Potential race-day changes

One proposal was to move toward a more conventional public event, potentially at Memorial Peace Park, with a large screen displaying a digitally generated Duck Race. This could potentially reduce the physical requirements associated with the current river race while maintaining a public gathering and community celebration. Another consideration was whether all of the children's activities and other race-day attractions are necessary.

Volunteer Workload

Volunteer workload emerged as one of the most important concerns. Approximately 20 volunteers are involved in various race-day activities and associated transportation and preparation. The workload is not limited to the race itself. A significant portion of the workload occurs before and after race day for:

- Moving equipment from storage.
- Duck preparation and numbering.
- Transportation to and from Maple Ridge Park.
- Setting up and dismantling the event.
- Ticket handling.
- Supporting children's activities.
- Managing sales locations.
- Assisting participating organizations.
- Administrative and financial work.

Members discussed reducing the physical work required of Rotary members and increasing participation by volunteers from outside the club.

Previous Duck Race Improvements

The meeting reviewed several changes already implemented to improve the operation of the event:

- The number of available tickets was increased to approximately 11,000, allowing participating organizations to receive tickets earlier and return unsold tickets, providing greater flexibility and reduced some administrative pressure.
- Reduced cash handling by transfer funds through cheques and E-transfers.
- Business locations were established as ticket payment/drop-off points by participants.
- Use of "Square" for some venue-based ticket sales, providing an additional payment method for members selling tickets at public events.

Members noted that the majority of tickets are still sold directly through participating organizations, families and personal contacts.

Ticketing and Fundraising Options for future sales included:

- Reducing the number of physical tickets.
- Increasing the ticket price to approximately \$20.
- Offering online ticket sales.
- Combining physical and online ticket sales.
- Allowing participating organizations to receive credit for online sales generated through their fundraising efforts.
- Exploring different ticket pricing structures.
- Adding a 50/50 raffle to the Duck Race.

The potential 50/50 raffle generated interest but also raised questions about whether adding another fundraising component could make the event and its advertising more complicated. Members agreed that these concepts would require further investigation before any decision could be made.

Participating Community Organizations

An important point raised during the discussion was that the Duck Race is not simply a Rotary fundraiser. A major component of its value is the opportunity it provides to community youth and seniors' organizations to raise money. Members discussed the importance of obtaining input directly from the groups that participate in the Duck Race. Suggestions included creating a more direct communication process between the future Duck Race committee and participating organizations. Rather than having formal representation from every organization on the committee, which could become unwieldy, the possibility of having designated contacts or representatives communicate with the committee was discussed. This would allow Rotary to better understand:

- What participating organizations need.
- What works well with the existing system.
- What creates problems for them.
- How changes to ticketing or the race format might affect their fundraising.

Location Discussion

The suitability of Maple Ridge Park was discussed. Members noted that the park has become increasingly busy, which creates logistical challenges for the Duck Race. There was discussion about other possible locations. Albion Park was specifically considered, but members familiar with the area indicated that it presents challenges, including deeper and faster water, river access, safety concerns, difficulty observing the race, and potential requirement for additional safety measures, demonstrating that Albion Park would not be a practical Duck Race location. The consensus of the discussion was that alternative locations should be investigated, but there are significant practical differences between Maple Ridge Park and other possible sites.

Attendance and Community Visibility

Members discussed how many people actually attend specifically to watch the Duck Race. Estimates varied, with some members suggesting approximately 100 spectators, while others noted that many people watching the race are already at the park for picnics or other activities. This raised an important question about whether the event should be redesigned to create a stronger destination event that attracts people specifically for Rotary's Duck Race.

Formation of a Future Duck Race Committee

A major conclusion from the discussion was the need for a new committee or working group to investigate the future of the Duck Race, and the importance of having people with direct experience of the event involved in the process. It was suggested that approximately five experienced members could form the core of the future committee, while additional members and volunteers could participate as needed. There was also discussion about the need for a committee chair, and Libby is retiring from that position. Members emphasized that the committee should not simply choose a new race format based on personal preferences. Instead, it should investigate the practical requirements, costs, volunteer requirements, fundraising implications, safety considerations and community impact of each option.

The committee should also consult with:

- Current Duck Race volunteers.
- Participating community organizations.
- Members with lottery and financial expertise.
- Members familiar with ticket sales.
- Potential venues and service providers.

Proposed Timeline

A proposed timeline was presented for consideration, as follows:

October–November: Establish a committee and investigate potential formats and locations.

November 17: Provide information to the club regarding the options being investigated.

December: Present approximately two or three viable options to the club for further discussion and potential decision-making.

December/early January: Finalize the direction sufficiently early to allow the necessary lottery licensing and event preparation to begin. The timeline is important because the lottery licence application and other preparations require lead time.

It was clarified that the proposed timeline was a working suggestion and had not been formally approved by the existing Duck Race Committee.

Role of the Existing Duck Race Committee

It was clarified that the existing Duck Race Committee had not submitted a unified recommendation for a new format. Some members of the existing committee had provided input, particularly those who work directly with participating community groups. Members who have worked directly with the community organizations possess valuable practical knowledge and should be consulted before major changes are made. At the same time, members recognized that the future direction of the Duck Race ultimately needs to be a club decision, rather than simply a decision made by a small group of people who have traditionally organized the event.

Key Conclusions from Duck Race Discussion

The lengthy discussion produced several clear themes:

1. There is strong support for continuing the Duck Race.
2. The major concern is the workload and sustainability of the event.
3. There is openness to changing the format.
4. There is openness to investigating alternatives to the current river race.
5. Volunteer recruitment needs to improve.
6. Participating community organizations should have meaningful input.
7. The existing Duck Race volunteers' experience should not be lost.
8. Alternative locations should be investigated carefully.
9. Online ticketing and other technology should be examined.
10. A future committee should develop practical options for the club to consider.
11. A decision needs to be reached early enough to allow lottery licensing and adequate preparation.

The discussion ended with a strong recognition that the Duck Race remains an important Rotary community project, but that its organization needs to evolve if it is to remain sustainable.

Happy and Sad Dollars:

Andy reported that **Yvonne** was improving while still receiving hospital/ICU care. Further investigation was underway regarding the cause of her medical emergency.



Mark Vosper recently returned from a trip to the United Kingdom and enjoying time with family, but happy to be back in Canada.

Ineke said that she and Peter had finally receiving a long-awaited City Renovation Permit after more than a year, but the house will be a mess for a while. They are temporarily staying at a campground during the renovation and are hoping to have the work completed before family members arrive from Holland (but that appears very unlikely).

Eric is happy that members should now have their new a name tags that are designed to hang around the neck but sad that, unfortunately, 2 members were "missed" in the issuance of the new tags.

Upcoming Events

- Thursday Oct 8 – 5:00 to 6:00 pm - Club Board Meeting.
ACTION ITEM: All directors must submit their written reports to this meeting for presentation to the DG on October 20.
- Thursday Oct 8 – (6:00 to 9:00 PM) - The “Good, The Bad and The Ugly” - is a Pub Night at the Ranch Bar & Grill, 21973 - 132 Avenue, a fundraiser for the Rotary Club of Haney, to raise much needed funding for initiatives like its Lunch Bag Program, youth leadership opportunities, and exchange programs. General admission with buffet is \$75.
- Oct 20:
District Governor Kathleen Olson Official Visit to our Club.
- Friday Nov 6 (5:00 – 8:00 PM): Our Club's International Committee Fundraiser at the Maple Ridge Legion.
Tickets are \$35 (includes a burger and beer). This event supports member travel expenses to the international service project in Ecuador, and will feature a silent auction and a 50/50 draw. Each member is asked to sell at least two tickets, one for themselves and one for another guest, and is encouraged to sell additional tickets whenever possible. Also, each member should donate one silent-auction item (the goal is to have 35 auction items).

President's Closing Quote:

I haven't talked to
my wife in a week.

I didn't want to
interrupt her.

Submitted by Laurie Anderson