



Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon

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OCTOBER IS COMMUNITY ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT MONTH

Happy Birthday

Oct 22 Andrew Berrisford

Happy Anniversary

Upcoming Speakers:

Oct 20 D5050 Governor - Kathleen Olson
Visit to our Club

Oct 27 Brenda Jenkins
Who's Who

Nov 3

LAST WEEK'S MEETING

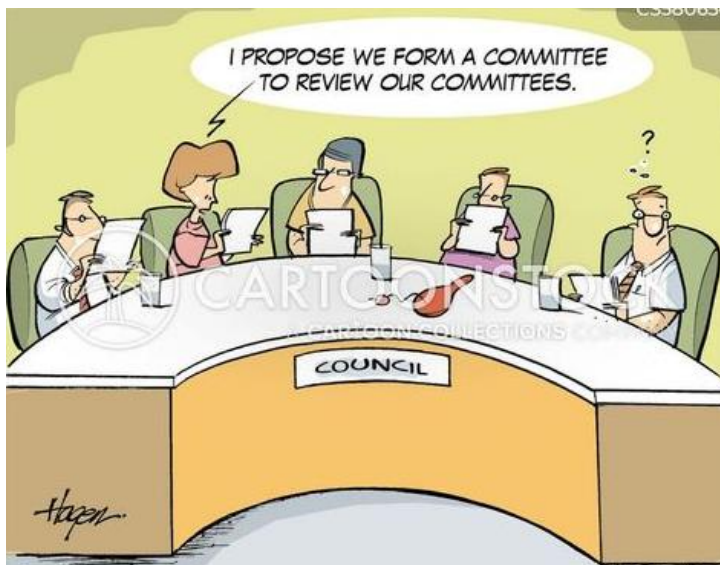
President **Eric Mollema** presided.

Guests:

Lynda Debruyn

Program

The meeting was a business meeting. Directors and committee chairs were asked to provide brief updates on their activities, finances, projects and plans. The main portion of the meeting was devoted to reviewing the future of the Duck Race, including ticket pricing, online sales, prizes, the 50/50 component, community-group participation, volunteers and the possibility of changing the format of the event. The following is a brief summary of a few of the committee reports, followed by the Duck Race discussion.



Committee Reports

The **Vocational Service Committee** reported that 14 students qualified for bursary assistance, with funding of approximately \$1,000 per student. Thirteen recipients have already received their funding. I also reported on discussions involving the local Hospital Foundation and Simon Fraser University's new medical school. The medical school has approximately 48 students in its first year, including a student from Maple Ridge. The hospital foundation is investigating opportunities to establish scholarships for medical students, with the estimated cost being approximately \$31,000 per student per year. The possibility of Rotary working with the hospital foundation and other Rotary clubs to establish a significant scholarship was discussed. An important component of the proposal is the opportunity for a percentage of scholarship recipients to complete internships or residencies in the Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows area. Members noted that this would be a long-term project, potentially taking several years before the full benefits would be realized. However, the potential to encourage physicians to establish long-term practices in the local community makes the initiative worthy of further investigation. The committee will continue discussions with the hospital foundation and other potential partners.

The **Community Services Committee** has reviewed approximately 44 applications so far this year and has been meeting approximately twice a month to keep up with the volume of requests. The committee's mandate is to support organizations and initiatives within the Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows community, and the committee continues to assess applications and determine where Rotary funds can have the greatest local impact. Continuing areas of support include:

- The Food Bank
- The local fair
- Historical societies

- Community organizations
- Local charitable initiatives
- Individual community needs

The **International Service Committee** reported on several projects. The committee's approximate annual budget is \$12,000, with approximately \$2,000 raised directly from club members. Earlier in the year, members contributed approximately \$1,200 toward ShelterBox assistance following flooding in Venezuela. The club contributed approximately \$1,000 to a global eye-care project; and approximately \$1,000 toward a maternal-health project in Nigeria.

Ecuador remains the committee's major international initiative. Members who travelled to Ecuador previously observed firsthand the conditions in local schools, including a lack of books. The current project is therefore focused on establishing small libraries in schools. The District has provided approximately US\$2,300, and other matching contributions have been secured. The club's remaining commitment is approximately \$1,100. Members were reminded that international service provides an opportunity to experience Rotary's work firsthand and that every Rotarian should ideally participate in an international project at least once.

The **Youth Services / New Generations Committee** reported that the club has reserved and paid for two students to attend each of YAIL and RYLA. If the club does not fill these opportunities directly, students from outside the club's immediate membership network may be identified to participate. The club is also discussing the possibility of sponsoring an international exchange student for 2027–28, in cooperation with the Haney Rotary Club.

Membership Report: The club currently has approximately 34 members, plus two honorary members, for a total of approximately 36. There are currently no confirmed prospective members actively progressing through the membership process. Members were encouraged to invite prospective members to meetings so that they can experience Rotary firsthand. President Eric encouraged members to become involved with committees. Many committees need additional volunteers, and members can learn more about opportunities by speaking directly with committee chairs.

Duck Race — Major Business Discussion



The largest portion of the meeting was devoted to the future of the Rotary Duck Race. Members agreed that the event needs to evolve because the current format requires a significant amount of volunteer time and administrative work. The discussion covered several areas.

Committee Formation

Members were invited to join a Duck Race planning committee. It was suggested that the committee should consider involving representatives from the community groups that participate in selling tickets. This would allow Rotary to receive direct feedback from the organizations that actually conduct the ticket sales and would help ensure that future decisions meet their needs.

Ticket Pricing

A major discussion concerned whether the ticket price should remain at \$10 or increase. Options discussed included: \$10 per ticket - \$15 per ticket - \$20 per ticket - Multiple-ticket packages - Online packages such as 3 for \$20 or 5 for \$30

Supporters of a price increase pointed out that the current \$10 price has remained unchanged for many years and that increasing the price could significantly improve revenue without necessarily reducing total sales. Others expressed concern that the economy is difficult for many families and that moving directly from \$10 to \$20 could discourage some purchasers. There was considerable support for investigating a hybrid pricing structure, particularly if online sales could offer multi-ticket discounts. The committee will investigate the options and obtain feedback from the community organizations that sell tickets before a final decision is made.

Online Sales

There was strong support for moving toward an online/electronic ticketing system. The potential advantages discussed included:

- Less cash handling
- Less administrative work
- Easier tracking of sales
- Reduced need to distribute and collect paper tickets
- Easier participation for community organizations
- Ability to purchase tickets from home
- Potential integration with a 50/50 draw

The committee will investigate available electronic platforms and determine the best approach.

50/50 Draw

Members agreed in principle that a 50/50 component should be investigated. The preference expressed was for the 50/50 to be conducted electronically rather than through a traditional paper-ticket system. A barcode or electronic code could potentially be incorporated into the Duck Race ticket-purchase process, allowing purchasers to participate in the 50/50 throughout the race period.

The committee will investigate the legal and gaming requirements before implementation.

Prize Structure

Members agreed that the prize package needs significant attention. There was concern that the current major prize of approximately \$15,000 is not as attractive as the prizes offered during earlier years of the Duck Race. Past races had featured substantially larger and more exciting prizes, including vehicles. Members felt that better prizes would make the event easier to sell, particularly if the ticket price is increased. The committee was encouraged to investigate opportunities for businesses to donate or sponsor prizes.

Community Group Participation

The club recognized that the Duck Race has traditionally provided an important fundraising opportunity for community organizations. Any changes to ticket pricing or the sales process should therefore be discussed with the participating groups. The proposed approach is to ask the organizations directly:

1. Would they support an increased ticket price?
2. Would they prefer electronic ticket sales?
3. Would they still be willing to participate?
4. What would make the system easier for their volunteers?

Members felt that obtaining this feedback is essential before finalizing the new format.

Timing and Location

The current August timing has advantages because schools and many youth organizations are still active in the spring and early summer, while the current timing provides an opportunity for participating organizations to sell tickets. September was suggested as another possibility, but concerns were raised about school schedules and other community activities. If an in-person component is retained, Memorial Peace Park was suggested as a possible location, potentially in conjunction with another major community event or market. The committee will investigate possible dates, locations and event formats.

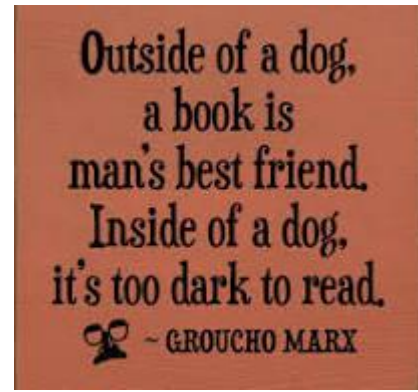
Key Duck Race Directions and Conclusions

While several details remain to be finalized, the discussion established several important principles:

- The Duck Race should continue to be a major Rotary fundraising event.
- The event needs to become less labour-intensive.
- Electronic/online sales should be seriously considered.
- A 50/50 component should be investigated.
- Prize values should be improved.
- Community organizations should be consulted before major changes are made.
- Community representatives may be invited to participate in the planning committee.
- Ticket pricing requires further study rather than an immediate final decision.
- The committee will develop recommendations for the club.

Members were reminded that the objective is not simply to preserve the event exactly as it has always been, but to create a sustainable, attractive community fundraiser that requires less volunteer effort while maintaining or improving the funds available for Rotary and participating organizations.

President's Closing Quote



Submitted by Laurie Anderson