



Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon

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OCTOBER IS COMMUNITY ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT MONTH

Happy Birthday

Oct 29 Libby Nelson

Happy Anniversary

Upcoming Speakers:

Oct 27 Brenda Jenkins
Who's Who

Nov 3 Gordy Robson
Who's Who - Part 2

Nov 10 Veteran - Matt Williams
Veterans Meeting at the Legion

LAST WEEK'S MEETING

President **Eric Mollema** presided.

Invocation

Ineke delivered the invocation, reflecting on the gifts of friendship, fellowship, and service that Rotary brings to its members. Everyone possesses special talents and abilities that can be shared with others. She encouraged Rotarians to be fair and kind in their daily interactions, to remain mindful of Rotary's objectives, and to use their individual gifts to create lasting, positive change in their communities.

Guests

District Governor Kathleen Olson,
Rotary District 5050, making her official visit to the club.

Nicole Mirea, a guest of Clint Callison,
was welcomed back for her second visit to the club.

District Governor Kathleen Olson, official visit to our club.

President-Elect (and our club's Poet Laureate) **Mark Forster** introduced our DG, and highlighted her 30 plus years of Rotary service and extensive commitment to charitable and nonprofit organizations.

Kathleen joined Rotary in 1994 as a member of the Rotary Club of Tacoma No. 8, the eighth Rotary club chartered in the world. She served as club president during the 2004–2005 Rotary Centennial year and is now a member of the Rotary Club of Arlington, Washington.

In addition to her Rotary involvement, Kathleen has dedicated more than 35 years to nonprofit leadership and community service. She is a Rotary Foundation Major Donor, Paul Harris Fellow +9, and Foundation Benefactor.

The introduction concluded with a specially written poem welcoming Kathleen to Meadow Ridge:

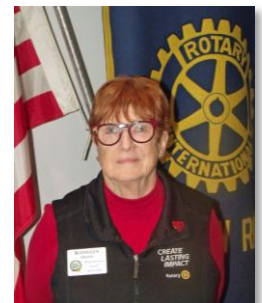
From District fifty-fifty's wide expanse,
To Meadow Ridge you bring your guiding ray,
We greet your visit with a joyful glance,
As midday fellowship begins our day.

With decades shaped by service and by grace,
A heart that champions the weak and small,
You bring your vision to our meeting place,
Answering well the selfless Rotary call.

From sheltering the paws that need a friend,
To guiding clubs across the wide frontier,
Your gentle strength and wisdom will extend
To lead our district through a banner year.

So Governor Olson, proud are we to pledge
Our warmest welcome here at Meadow Ridge!

District Governor's Presentation — Engagement, Collaboration and Lasting Impact



District Governor Kathleen's presentation emphasized the importance of building relationships, encouraging participation, developing partnerships, and demonstrating the extraordinary impact that can result from seemingly small acts of service. **Her central message was that meaningful Rotary projects begin with conversations, grow through collaboration, and succeed when people become personally engaged.**

She observed that great projects rarely begin with a formal committee or a detailed budget. More often, they begin when one person shares an idea with another. She pointed to two successful Meadow Ridge fundraising initiatives as examples: the club's Wine Festival and the Duck Race (the latter of which originated with an idea brought forward by Gordy Roson and has continued for approximately 16 years, generating significant funds for local charitable projects).

A Different Approach to the District Conference

Kathleen announced that District 5050 would not hold a traditional district conference during her year as Governor. Organizing a conference typically requires approximately three years of planning, a substantial volunteer committee, and considerable financial resources. Instead, the District will host a simpler celebration- a District 5050 Ice Cream Social and Celebration (probably on June 19, 1027). Anticipated cost: approximately \$10 Canadian per person. Kathleen noted that attending a traditional district conference can cost members several hundred dollars. She encouraged Rotarians to consider how those resources might instead support local projects, the Rotary Foundation, PolioPlus, or other Rotary priorities.

The Global Neighbour Project — Lesotho, Africa

A major portion of Kathleen's presentation focused on a project that began during her years with the Rotary Club of Tacoma. In approximately 2006, a fellow Rotarian associated with World Vision approached the club seeking assistance with a serious humanitarian challenge in Lesotho, a small mountainous country surrounded by South Africa, that was experiencing a devastating HIV/AIDS epidemic. Kathleen recalled being told that approximately every 16 minutes, someone in the country was either contracting HIV or dying from AIDS-related illness.

Although Tacoma was a large Rotary club with approximately 365 members, the scale of the problem initially seemed overwhelming. The World Vision representative asked members to begin with something simple: give up one Saturday to assemble caregiver kits. The kits contained basic supplies, including notebooks, pens, examination gloves, cotton balls, petroleum jelly, and antifungal cream. These items were intended for community caregivers who had been trained by the Red Cross to visit and support individuals suffering from AIDS in their homes. The supplies were purchased in bulk, assembled by volunteers, and shipped to Lesotho for distribution. What began as a modest Saturday service project eventually grew into the Global Neighbour Project, a five-year commitment involving multiple organizations, that included Rotary clubs in Washington state, World Vision, churches, government representatives, the Red Cross, and Rotary clubs in South Africa.

Educational support: Through a connection with the Weyerhaeuser family, funding was provided to manufacture and deliver wooden desks and benches for children attending five elementary schools. Rather than shipping furniture from North America, materials were sourced regionally and the furniture was constructed closer to the schools.

Clean water: South African Rotary clubs assisted with water projects involving trenches, pumps, gravity-fed systems where possible, and solar-powered equipment. Training and maintenance arrangements were also established to help ensure long-term sustainability.

Healthcare and nutrition: Community caregivers received training and supplies, while families were supported in developing vegetable gardens and improving their access to nutritious food.

Economic development: Small-scale agricultural activities and microloans helped residents establish businesses and generate income.

She emphasized that no single club or organization possessed all the expertise or resources required. The project's success depended on each partner contributing what it could do best. The experience reinforced her belief that Rotary's greatest opportunities often arise when clubs look beyond their own membership and invite others to participate.

District Engagement Initiative - her principal focus as District Governor

Kathleen explained that her principal focus as District Governor is encouraging greater engagement rather than introducing another complicated district program. She encouraged clubs to strengthen existing activities through broader participation and collaboration. She challenged Meadow Ridge members to consider who else could be invited to participate in their projects, including Rotarians who have not recently volunteered, neighbouring Rotary clubs, community organizations, businesses, and other service groups. She also emphasized the importance of sharing Rotary's story. Too often, members of the public are unfamiliar with Rotary's activities and accomplishments.

Prospective members are attracted to organizations that are visibly making a difference, are well organized, and provide opportunities for friendship and enjoyment. She encouraged the club to build upon its successes and consider what additional accomplishments might be possible through new partnerships. Referring to the challenge issued by **Rotary International President Olayinka H. Babalola**, she encouraged clubs to review their best years for membership, participation, service, and community recognition, then strive to exceed those achievements.

Supporting the Rotary Foundation

Kathleen noted that District 5050 currently has approximately 2,019 members and challenged everyone to consider making an additional \$10 contribution. If every district member participated, the initiative would generate additional Foundation contributions of \$20,190. Contributions to the Foundation's Annual Fund help support future district and global grant activities. She described how a portion of invested contributions eventually becomes available to districts for approved projects, while other funds support international initiatives.

[President Eric joked that the DG's promised 20-minute presentation had been delivered in American minutes and should perhaps have been converted into Canadian time.]

Happy and Sad Dollars included:

Mary Robson shared highlights of a recent visit to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, where she attended a local Rotary club meeting. She was particularly impressed by the accomplishments of the relatively small club and described a program designed to assist university students facing serious financial difficulties. The initiative identifies students who may be forced to abandon their education because of family hardship or insufficient financial resources. Sponsors are matched with students, helping them continue their studies and pursue professional careers, including medicine and nursing.

Club Business and Upcoming Events

November 6 — Fundraising Pub Night - at the Legion.

The event will raise funds for the international service initiative in South America. Approximately 40 tickets had been sold, with a maximum capacity of 75. Members were encouraged to purchase tickets, attend the event, and support the fundraising activities. Silent auction items are needed.

November 10 — Remembrance Day Luncheon

The club's luncheon on **Tuesday, November 10**, will be held at the Legion in recognition of Remembrance Day. A military veteran who served in the Middle East will be the guest speaker.

November 20 — Chocolate, Cheese and Wine Evening

Fellowship event scheduled at Mark Forster's home.

December 12 — Club annual Christmas Party

Club Cookbook Project - Fundraiser

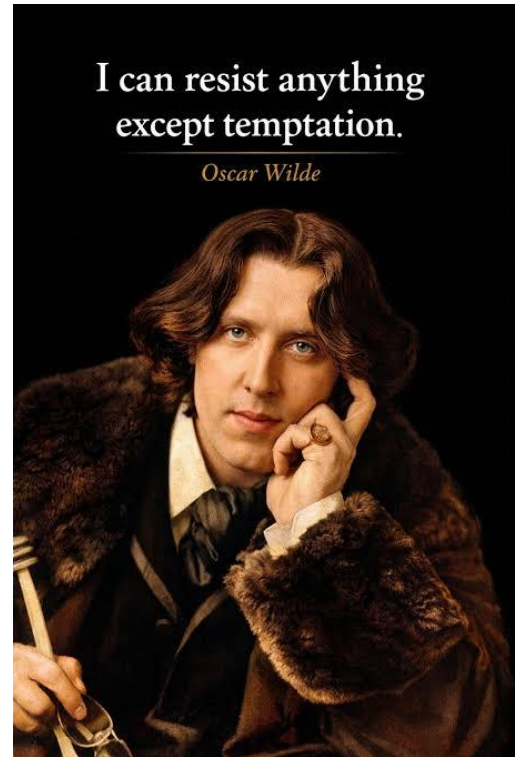
An update was provided on the club's cookbook initiative. The first cooking demonstration and video recording session had taken place the previous Saturday at a member's home, with Sharon preparing the featured recipe. Participants particularly appreciated being able to sample the finished dish following the demonstration.

Alex confirmed that he had received the video files and was working on editing the footage. The intention is to show members the completed or preliminary video, together with the accompanying recipe page, at a meeting within the next week or two, subject to approximately 15 minutes being available on the agenda. The demonstration will help members understand the intended format for their own recipe contributions.

Brenda will be following up with members to collect recipes and coordinate the information required for the cookbook.

Adrian reminded everyone that recipes should be submitted by the end of November.

President's Closing Quote:



Submitted by Laurie Anderson