

FAREWELL TO A GIVING MAN

By Fred Armstrong,

February 22, The Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows Times

On Thursday, right around noon, we got a phone call at The Times that we knew was coming, but didn't want to get. A wonderful man, Ron Hickman, passed away after a long illness that he weathered with dignity, courage and humour.

The guy who should be writing this column is Gord Norrie, who is Ron's best friend. These two gentlemen have enjoyed many adventures together, and I now that many of their favourite moments were when they rode their Harleys around the province on road trips.

Jan Hickman, Ron's wife, did not sit on the sidelines while Gord and Ron made their plans. Far from it. She also had a motorcycle, and was part of many of their best trips. Ron and Jan have always had a special relationship. Their connection was obvious and Ron's devotion to Jan was absolute.

I want to tell you about Ron, or "Rocko" as his friends called him. Ron was a long-time member of the Haney Rotary Club and a past-president. For many years he ran the bar at the annual Men's Night, and was the ultimate waiter at Ladies' Night. It was not possible to have a bad time at any event Ron was at.

In the time I've known Ron I can honestly say I don't know exactly who he worked for, but I know that he was involved in gardening and landscaping. As so often happens in Maple Ridge, circles of acquaintances cross, and I found out that some years back that Derrick Levan has been part of one of Ron's landscaping crews. Derrick's father, Spencer, is one of my best friends, and I heard from Spencer how Ron had befriended Derrick and established himself as a role model in Derrick's life.

Derrick, in fact, called Ron 'Unky Ron,' which is a testament to how close that relationship became. I know that Spencer was grateful that his son was able to connect with such a great role model. Derrick is studying horticulture now, following in Ron's steps, Ron had a way of touching people's lives like that.

Ron used to head down to Mexico to escape the winters, and he'd come back with the darkest tan I've ever seen each spring, and throw himself into his Rotary duties. The best memories I have of Rotary are when our meetings would be reduced to a hail of laughter and giggles led by Ron.

Ron has had to face some tough situations in his life. Serious health issues hit his family, and his positive attitude was tested greatly. He was a pillar for his family as they regained their health, and as he has battled through his health issues they returned the love and dedication.

Ron continued to attend Rotary throughout his treatments, and when he lost his hair due to chemotherapy he was nicknamed the Buddha by fellow Rotarians, much to his delight.

His last days have been spent at our local hospice, surrounded by friends and family. I know the family would like me to thank all the staff and volunteers at the hospice for their support.

I had the opportunity to lunch with Ron a while back, and he knew that life's journey was coming to an end. In addition to his great humour, Ron has always been sentimental. He talked about how much he appreciated all his friends' visits and concern, and was concerned that it was awkward for people trying to say the right things. He spoke about the great love that had surrounded him, and how his wife, children and immediate family had all rallied around him, and how humbled he was at their dedication to helping him.

Next Wednesday there's going to be a celebration of Ron's life at Meadow Gardens Golf Course. I know that his many friends will want to be there. I will miss his laugh, his smile and his impish delight in reminding us all not to get too full of ourselves. Farewell, Rocko. We will miss you.

**Come join us in a Celebration of Life for Ron Hickman
2:00pm, Wednesday February 27th, 2008
Meadow Gardens Golf Club, Maple Ridge**



The Four Way Flasher

Rotary Club of MeadowRidge Newsletter

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February is World Understanding Month



INVOCATION

Feb. 26	Brett Paskar	Mar. 4	Ken Paterson
Mar. 11	Dot Ralston	Mar. 18	Dave Rempel

TODAY'S PROGRAM: Derrick Keist – Speed Watch Program

NEXT WEEK'S PROGRAM: Dean Barbour, Exec. Director of Chamber of Commerce

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

March 1: Gladys Davies

CALENDAR OF CLUB AND DISTRICT 5050 EVENTS:

Date	Time	Event	Venue
April 12		District Assembly	Kwantlen University College, Surrey, BC
May 15		2008 District 50/50 Conference	Holiday Inn, Pine Street, Everett, WA
June 15 -18		Rotary International Conference	Los Angeles

50 / 50 draw - Jackpot at \$640.00 + 1/2 of today's sales, 27 cards left, Jackpot on "Queen of Hearts" only!

LAST WEEK'S MEETING

Our Guests today were Assistant District Governor Denis Boyd, Onorio Reginato, and Rotarian Dick Drew.

Kudos to Patrick, Marco and Dick for the great job that they did on the Shelterbox Event. It was a great success and raised about \$10,000. The Robsons' interview by Bill Good yesterday morning on the event was well done and good publicity for both the program and our club.

Wendy announced that the Ridge Meadows Educational Foundation will be holding their Annual Dinner & Silent Auction on Friday February 29th at the Thomas Haney Centre. The evening will feature a gourmet meal prepared by the culinary arts students, followed by a succession of solo and ensemble musical performances courtesy of the school district music programs. All proceeds to the endowment fund. Tickets are \$50 each with a \$25. Tax receipt issued.

Patrick advised that there will be a tax planning session next week at the Pitt Meadows Golf Course. Please contact Pat for further details.

Terry Becker announced that she has finished her treatments, and will be back with us now for the Tuesday luncheons. Great to see you back Terry!



Our Guest Speaker was Andrew Lenton, President Golden Ears Athletics. Andrew came to speak with the club on the rehabilitation of the MRSS track facility upgrade. Andrew is a teacher within the district.

Currently there is a six lane synthetic track which is a legacy from the 1983 and 1998 BC Summer Games. The track is adjacent to Maple Ridge Senior Secondary and Merkley Park. The track is used by walkers, joggers, runners, elementary schools, and the Golden Ears Athletic Track Club. The track is used for annual events such as the Nick Wilkes Memorial which has 300 Participants. The season runs mid March thru to July, and there are about 30 participants in our area.

They are seeking funding to increase the facility from six lanes to eight lanes with a new higher quality surface and power access. They are also trying to overcome storage access problems. The Pole Vault Pits are currently stored in a 40' container which makes it difficult and timely to set up and take down. There is no pole vault system north of the Fraser River from Port Moody to Harrison with the exception of the MRSS location. The cost for the pole vault mats is \$30,000. These need to be stored and the solution is a rolling storage container which rolls right over the pole vault pit. They have invested in a new adjustable steeplechase barrier for \$7800.

They are seeking a partnership to finance a rolling container at the cost of \$18,000. GEA will add to the project by purchasing new poles, and doing some minor updates to the pit crash mats. The equipment costs are prohibitive – poles cost \$400 - \$500 each.

Andrew advised that Golden Ears Athletics is investing in youth, in sport and in our community. He advised that they would like to make this a Regional Pole Vaulting Training Venue, and asked to be considered for funding by the Sports Banquet Committee. He advised that the venue could be named as the "Meadowridge Rotary Regional Pole Vault Training Program Centre" and that they would be willing to put signage at site that reads "this venue made possible by a funding donation from the Meadowridge Rotary Club".

Gordy asked Andrew to submit a funding application within the month for consideration by the committee.

Our Assistant District Governor, Denis Boyd, advised that there are some organizational changes taking place. We will become part of a new Zone 24 (currently part of 22 and 23).

Submitted by Lynda Lawrence

FOLLOW-UPS OF SHELTERBOX

Following is an email received from Alan Lomax, Executive Director of Shelterbox Canada: (Tom Henderson is the founder of Shelterbox)

From: Alan Lomax [mailto:alan@shelterbox.ca]
Sent: Monday, February 18, 2008 3:47 PM

To: 'Mary Robson' **Cc:** 'Dick Drew'
Subject: ShelterBox

Hello Mary,
Thank you very much to you and Gord for the excellent interview with Bill Good this morning. My thanks also go to the Rotarians of Maple Ridge and Haney for their hard work for ShelterBox Canada this weekend. I have informed Tom Henderson of the great effort put in by you and your colleagues.
Alan Lomax

The box has double duty as crib

January 18th - Rift Valley, Kenya:

In the history of Shelterbox only one other baby has been born in a tent during an 'Immediate Relief deployment'. It has been a proud moment not only for the SRT's but everyone at HQ. Mother Louise Kimani Father Paul Kimani were forcibly removed from the village of Kericho seven days ago and until we gave her shelter they were living rough in the stadium. She gave birth on Tuesday the same day she moved into our Shelterbox tent.



Mother Louise Kimani & two day old Favour 7