



The Four Way Flasher

Meadow Ridge Rotary Club

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Website: www.MeadowRidgeRotary.ca

Meetings: Tuesday 12pm, Bella Vita Restaurant

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JANUARY IS ROTARY AWARENESS MONTH



TODAY: Ineke Boekhorst -
Downtown Maple Ridge Business Improvement Association (DMRBIA)

NEXT WEEK: FRCC - Steve DeCosta

Happy Anniversary

Happy Birthday

Jan. 11: Marco Terwiel
Jan. 13: Matt deBruyn

Jan. 10:

Jan. 17:

Invocation	Ken Paterson	David Rempel
Note Taker	Adrienne Dale	Mike Davies

CALENDAR OF CLUB AND DISTRICT 5050 EVENTS:

Date	Time	Event	Venue
Jan. 24		Fireside Meeting at Patrick O'Brien's	

LAST WEEK'S MEETING

Happy/Sad

- Angie is very happy to be the proud owner of a 15 week old English Bulldog.
- Brian Johnston is happy that his arm is fixed and although sore he can wave again.

Mike Davies was **Fine Master**, fining people who had made and already broken New Year's resolutions, who weren't wearing both pin and badge, and who couldn't answer three questions relating to The Rotarian and Rotary Canada magazines. Who knew there was a limited edition Rotary ketchup!

50-50 – the winning ticket was held by Urma but she didn't draw the lucky lady.

Reminders that the District Assembly is upcoming and the District Conference. We also have a Fireside later this month at Patrick's home.

The combined Haney Club / MeadowRidge Club booklet has now been published. There are enough copies for everyone although all the information for our Club is also available in the DaCdb system. If you lose your printed copies additional ones can be purchased for \$5.00 each.

Rotary Moment: Mark Forster

What is Comely Bank? It's the original home of Paul and Jean Harris. The house was sold after Paul's death in 1947 and went through several owners but it was bought in 2005 and is currently being restored by donations given to the Paul and Jean Harris Home Foundation which is looking for \$3,000,000.

The January edition of The Rotarian reports an international survey for knowledge about Rotary and what it does. The results are often surprisingly poor. What would the results be of a similar survey in Canada? What do we, as Rotarians, do to promote? Mark pondered upon how many have plaques, certificates, Rotary marked items around our homes that are visible to visitors and are conversation pieces.

50 / 50 draw - Jackpot at \$703.00 + 1/2 of today's sales, 28 cards left, Jackpot on "Queen of Hearts" only!

Keynote Speaker: Don McLean – A Walk Down Memory Lane.

“My name is Don, and I am a recovering politician”.

Don has been involved in politics locally for twenty years now and has attended a lot of Rotary meetings in that time which he has always enjoyed and valued. He recalled watching television several years ago about a young girl in Africa who wanted to go to school, but as her village had no easily available source of clean water she was needed to walk for four hours there and back bringing water daily for her family. We take things like fresh water for granted, it's so easy for us to come by. \$250-\$275 will buy a well for a village. Rotary was able to provide that well and so both provide clean, fresh water but also to give her a chance to go to school, as literacy is another major aim of Rotary.



But back to politics and Don admitted he's had no urge to vote on anything for about a month now. And he's learnt that in a marriage it's always a tied vote, and the man always loses.

Don was born 63 years ago, in Waltham, Mass although his family is from PEI. He did move back with his family to Canada, to Toronto in particular, and then moved out to BC in 1971. In 1983 he and his wife were looking to buy a house. A neighbour referred them to Maple Ridge as being best for house prices and on one of their trips house hunting they turned north along Harris Road thinking it was just another street in Maple Ridge – but it was a good wrong turn.

21 years ago Don joined council. He'd got involved with Danny Sharpe, a local businessman and Rotarian, starting work for him in 1985. He originally was interviewed by Danny at the Pitt Meadows Council Chambers at the old council table. They briefly reviewed Don's qualifications before Danny launched into a detailed Who's Who of Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge. Danny was Pitt Meadows Mayor at the time. Suddenly Danny cut short the conversation saying he had an appointment and left. Two days later Don got a call from the manager of Danny's insurance office saying that Don had been hired although Danny hadn't told Don that, and it was over a month before Don even found out what he was getting paid. As Don worked in the insurance agency he saw Danny come into the office, sometimes happy, sometimes very unhappy. It was clear that politics could do this to you. Over time Don wanted to get involved in the local community. A neighbour suggested that he join the volunteer fire department, which didn't entice Don. Nor could he coach minor sports not having any kids of his own of the right age. But politics seemed possible, especially to get to really know people on a personal level which is something that makes small town politics so different from politics in the big cities.

In 1988 Danny retired from his position on Pitt Meadows council. Don didn't run immediately, waiting until 1990 when he was elected at his first attempt as Alderman. Don carried on in that role for nine years.

During his time on council there have been issues that really galvanized the community. One that springs to mind was the debate around Swan-e-Set. There was a petition to “Save the Polder” signed by 13,000 when the population of Pitt Meadows was only 14,000. That petition had signatures on it of people

from as far afield as Maple Ridge and Europe. What bears remembering is that there is rarely a “wrong” answer to any of the issues. It's all a matter of perspective and point of view.

Don has now been mayor for a further 12 years. In 1990 Pitt Meadows had 10,000 people. Now it's at 18,000. It doesn't seem a lot in absolute numbers but it makes the City one of the fastest growing in the Province proportionately. People now move to Pitt Meadows as they find it safe, clean and with amenities. Don is proud that people have those reasons, those are his true legacy. It's meant great changes in Pitt Meadows. They ripped down Hales Lumber. They built a McDonalds. People driving along Lougheed now know that there is a community “down there”. Commercial development has been significant. First Meadow Town Mall in with its 40 acres brought an ability to shop locally and employs 1,000 people, often young people now able to work near their homes. We are on the edge of increasing that with development along the north side of Lougheed Highway. There are several hundred acres of industrial land also being developed making Pitt Meadows a complete community with 1,000s of extra jobs.

There has been lots of residential development but it doesn't pay its way. For every \$1.00 earned in residential taxes there is \$1.25 or so spent in services. Businesses don't use the library, the ice rinks, or swimming pools. Don forecasts that the next ten years will bring even greater growth despite the geographical limitations that squeeze Pitt Meadows between the rivers, the ALR and Maple Ridge.

Questions?

Are you really going to step away from politics here?

It's important once you leave something like council really to do that. The next council doesn't want or need you sitting in the corner second guessing their decisions. Don will still read the local papers and isn't expecting to disappear. He's been asked to join a number of local / regional boards but for the next six months he and his wife want to have some time together.

What's on your bucket list?

Don is still running his insurance agencies; he is ‘test driving’ retirement. But traveling will be a big part of the next months. There are more Canadians in Phoenix than Pitt Meadows. Don is looking to travel to Central and South America, Europe, Vietnam. Volunteering also plays a big part in Don's plans. He's not ruling out joining a Rotary club.

Amalgamation of Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge?

The “A” word.

The Pitt Meadows Mayor's office has a total budget of \$120,000. Would there really be any savings from amalgamation? There would still be the same need for services and lots of services are already jointly operated. Would Pitt Meadows raise taxes 10-15%? Would Maple Ridge cut taxes 10-15%? There is also a different culture in the communities. Maple Ridge is very influenced by British and other Canadian culture. Pitt Meadows is very Dutch. So although it could happen it's not a burning issue and there are examples of other communities, such as Langley and the Township, or North Vancouver and the District that coexist.

Submitted by David Riddell