

Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon, Bella Vita Restaurant

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OCTOBER IS ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MONTH

Today (Oct 22): **Rebecca Murray** - Dog training tips for a healthy human brain!
Next Week (Oct 29):

CALENDAR OF CLUB EVENTS:

Date	Time	Event	Venue
Oct. 24		World Polio Day	
Nov. 15	5:30 pm – 10:00 pm	District Foundation Dinner in Abbotsford	Quality Hotel - 36035 N Parallel Road, Abbotsford
Dec. 13		Club Christmas Party @ Patrick O'Brien's Home	10328 276 St. Maple Ridge
Apr 30-May 3		District Conference in Harrison Hot Springs	Harrison Resort
June 6-10		RI International Convention in Honolulu	

LAST WEEK'S MEETING

Club president Adrienne Dale presided.

Guest: Chili Yalamanchili

Quote for the Day:



Patrick O'Brien and family took our French exchange student **Marceau Chavanne** to Victoria where, among other things, they attended the provincial Museum where Marceau had an opportunity to see all of the displays, including that of our indigenous citizens.

On Monday Oct. 14 Marceau had a Thanksgiving dinner at Adrienne and Warren Dale's home.



Matt Debruyne thanked guest **Chili Yalamanchili** for his help in distributing the dictionaries to the grade 4 students.

Brian Bekar, while getting his locks trimmed, learned about his barber's extended family, who all came to Canada about three years ago from the middle east with no money, and through their hard work already have bought a condo for the parents, opened a restaurant, and operate a barbershop, all of which demonstrates that immigrants to Canada contribute to our economy and should be welcomed.



Program: Rose Hamilton of SOS Children's Village British Columbia



Rose's official title is the Director of Community Partnerships & Donor Stewardship.

Rose told us about SOS children's Village, both internationally and here in BC, which is also summarized in their website - sosbc.org, as follows:

SOS Children's Village BC is part of SOS Children's Villages, the largest non-governmental, non-denominational child development organization in the world. SOS Children's Villages has existed for 70 years with a presence in 136 countries and 559 Villages, with a seat at the UN to be the voice for the rights of children everywhere. SOS Children's Village BC was founded in 1986 as a grassroots response to deficiencies in the provincial foster care system characterized by frequent placement breakdowns and moves for children and youth, and the separation of siblings into different homes. Even today, the state of foster care remains a "North American epidemic", as described by local former foster child Tom Watson.

Foster children are frequently at risk of emotional disturbances, delayed social development, and poor educational performance. Foster parents who raise these children require ongoing special resources and support. SOS Children's Village BC enhances the development and healing of foster children with a holistic framework that addresses their physical, social, emotional, and spiritual needs. We ensure long term stability with a strong focus on transition to adulthood programming and aging out of care.

The unique Village model is based on SOS Children's Villages founder Hermann Gmeiner's belief that:

- (1) a loving caregiver with trauma training,
- (2) a family-like atmosphere that keeps siblings together,
- (3) a consistent home with subsidized rent, and
- (4) a village - a community of professional support staff

create a circle of healing, hope, and belonging for children in need.

Our wraparound services provide counselling, art therapy, cultural traditions, neurofeedback training, and more to allow youth – many of whom have mental health conditions – to recover from their traumatic past.

These elements are evident in our local Village, located in a picturesque area of Surrey, where the need is most acute. Since its opening in 1999, the 2.5 acre SOS BC Village campus has provided care and support to local foster children and their families; helping to build on individual strengths and cultivate social networks to maximize each child's opportunities for success. We recognize that the Ministry is overworked and underfunded, as are the caring professionals who work in the Ministry and delegated agencies. We as a society have underfunded and overworked them for decades. SOS Children's Village BC took the lead in developing a successful model of care for the troubled provincial child welfare system to emulate – setting the standard for the care of foster children and vulnerable youth in BC.

Vulnerable children and youth, such as those in foster care, often have amazing talents which need to be encouraged and developed. Each kid comes with a unique set of life experiences, and so the plan for their development has to be based on understanding those needs. All too often they don't receive the same opportunities as kids who get to grow up with their bio-parent.

Everyday life can present enormous difficulties for kids in foster care to overcome. They often feel like they don't belong, can't learn, and aren't successful. They are at risk of emotional disturbances, delayed social development, and poor educational performance.

SOS Children's Village BC aspires to enrich the life of every child and family we get involved with. We want kids to navigate successfully through life, so we provide a host of activities and programs that we consider necessary for their positive development.

Our greater Village comprises a total of 12 homes with 15 Caregivers, 40 children, and 5 youth in transition. We own the five foster homes and Village Centre on our wooded 2.5 acre campus, with the other seven homes integrated in the surrounding geographic area. Through a \$450,000 capital campaign from 2014 – 2017, we built five much-needed transition suites for homeless youth who age out of the foster care system when they turn 19.

Rose advised that SOS Children's Village BC in Surrey helped 350 children and 150 families last year.

The Village



It is a Village by name but for the foster children and parents who live here, it is simply referred to as home.

The lush green trees almost exceed climbing heights for the children. Almost! Squirrels run, rabbits will hop in to say hello, and the only sound drowning out the birds are the kids ... and that is most heart-warming sound of all. And then of course there's the healthy competition on the sports court. The kids are out there at every opportunity. Even in the middle of winter they'll be out there shooting hoops.

But more than the five big, beautiful homes and the picturesque setting, the Village represents a unique model of healing. It functions to provide some of the very things that these children have lost. The Village provides a sense of community, connection and belonging, in a system where isolation is all too frequent. This Village shouts to kids in foster care, "You Matter!"

Adrienne's Irish Blessing:



Submitted by Laurie Anderson