

Rotary District 5040-2022 Conference Peace and Conflict Resolution/Prevention

Rotary encourages conversations to foster understanding within and across cultures. We train adults and young leaders to prevent and mediate conflict and help refugees who have fled dangerous areas.

We present a series of fireside chats highlighting perspectives from a former District sponsored Peace Scholar, a consultant with Mediators Beyond Borders International and the Chief of the Lheidli T'enneh Nation.

Notes on the panel session at the District Conference in Prince George, BC May 20-22, 2022.



Metis Lorelei Higgins, wearing her garb as the current "Mrs. Canada", talks to Lheidli T'enneh First Nation Chief Dolleen Logan about Truth and Reconciliation

- Education is very important, both to Rotary and to Lheidli T'enneh First Nation. It is not true that all education is fully funded by the government and the community puts a priority on ensuring those who aspire are supported in their endeavours. Lheidli T'enneh First Nation Chief Dolleen Logan said her community is proud of the level of achievement attained and dismissed the doom and gloom stories about First Nations members not graduating and listed achievements.

- One of the big challenges to every Indigenous community is self sufficiency, In other words, economic development. Chief Logan mentioned they have bought out their forestry partner and are the sole owners of the company, meaning they can plan for growth and better define their future.
- The Chief was surprised and pleased at the world-wide work completed by Rotary every year. She wanted to learn more.
- When it comes to reconciliation, understanding and learning about the history of the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation is the first step to building relationships. It was only 100 years ago when the railway caused them to be disposed of their historical village (now the Lheidli T'enneh Memorial Park) and relocated to Shelley. They have a challenge in this location because the Fraser River bisects the community, It is difficult to deliver services.

- The Lheidli T'enneh Memorial Park contains an active cemetery for community members.
- There is a lasting impact to the community due to residential schools. Education has never been more important.
- Having two Indigenous women from different groups – Chief Logan and Lorelei Higgins -- talking together in community is an important act of reconciliation between Indigenous peoples.