



**November 10, 2025**  
**Volume 43 - Issue 11**

***"Together we see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change - across the globe, in our communities and in ourselves!"***

The Rotary Club of Calgary comprises professional and community leaders brought together in fellowship to make a better future.

## UNITE FOR GOOD



Rotary International's theme for the 2025-2026 year

### Birthdays

Keith Visser	November 18
Franco Savoia	November 18
Tom Keenan	November 19
David Leslie	November 19

### Rotary Anniversaries

Randy Borisenko	30 years
Doug McMillan	20 years
Eric Bennett	15 years

### Rotary Meeting on November 4<sup>th</sup>

Diane Macdonald

There was a full house (about 70 people) and lots of positive energy at our regular lunch meeting last Tuesday. President Bill chaired the meeting. After William Friedson played O'Canada and Brian Guichon spoke of gratitude during his invocation, President Bill thanked the front of house volunteers: Patti Dolan and Farai Tonzani on the registration desk, Bob Holland at the door greeting everyone and Paul Gagnon selling 50/50 tickets.

President Bill had a long list of guests to introduce. When he asked for Happy Bucks, he had several respondents. Ann Haessel told us that her piece of art which she had donated to the Twin the Win for Polio event last weekend had been sold for \$600 which will go directly to the

Polio campaign. Michael Broadhurst mentioned that it was great to hear George Brookman on the radio that morning. Bob Ernter, who is on the Small Donations Committee and is the liaison with SAIT for the Lou MacEachern funds administered by Small Donations, told us that 84 students have benefitted from those scholarships since the start of the program in 2006. Lastly, Paul Gagnon shared the good news that he married off a grandson last weekend; the bad news was that it happened on the shores of Lake Minnewanka in a tornado!

Michael Broadhurst reported on three birthdays: Manon Mitchell, Gerard D'mello and Rick Erven.

President Bill then announced that Madeleine King had submitted her name to be considered for the position of District Governor in 2027-2028. The Board approved this and Bill made the motion : "Be it resolved that this club nominates Madeleine King, a member in good standing, for the position of District Governor D5360 for the year 2027-2028; seconded by Paul Gagnon. The motion passed unanimously.

President Bill also announced that the nominating committee has approved Sean Bayliss as their nominee for Club President for the 2027-2028 year. Any additional nominations from members of the Club may be made to the Secretary of the Club by 12 noon on November 18<sup>th</sup>.

Rick Erven encouraged everyone to donate to the Rotary Foundations.

George Brookman told us he wanted 200 cheques for \$300 from us to provide a Merry Christmas to 200 families in our Christmas Hamper program.



Photos: George Brookman urging support for Christmas Hampers; Jason Kenney addressing a packed room; Bruce Graham and President Bill thanking Jason Kenney

Bruce Graham then introduced our guest speaker, Jason Kenney. He mentioned that Mr. Kenney has probably given more speeches than we've had Rotary lunches! He was our province's 18<sup>th</sup> Premier which was just a portion of his 25 years in public life. Mr. Kenney started his address by saying, "Thank you for what Rotary does". He noted that service organizations are being challenged by the loss of community contributions by younger people, partly driven by the reduction of human relationships with the advent of the technology we all use today. He spoke about Alberta's role in the federation. He declared himself a proud Albertan AND a proud Canadian and he sees no conflict in that. He feels that in every relationship there are inequities and imbalances, so what you do is work to resolve them. He gave us a brief history lesson about the development of the roles and relationships within confederation speaking of natural resources and resource development.

He went on to speak about the current situation with a group that is angry about Alberta's role in confederation, but he feels that most Albertans are loyal Canadians. About half our population is from another part of Canada or from another country because Alberta has been viewed as a place of hope and opportunity. He has a concern that, although he estimates only about 5% of people are hard core separatists, polls show that 30 to 35 % of people are frustrated and will identify with separation to send a message. He worries that if enough

people use a referendum to do the same thing it could have drastic consequences. Wall Street is following this and rank this as a geo-political risk at a time that we need investment.

Mr. Kenney was good enough to answer several questions on topics ranging from the recent petition and possibility of a referendum pertaining to Alberta's place in Canada, transfer payments, the use of the not-withstanding clause and supply management. It was a dynamic presentation with much food for thought!

President Bill closed the meeting with his traditional Four Way Test and a toast to Rotary.

The next meeting will be on November 18<sup>th</sup> when the guest speaker will be Greg Van Tighem, the former Fire Chief of Jasper. He will speak about the Jasper Wildfire Response and Mitigation for the Future.

## Announcement of new Club President Nominee

Manon Mitchell  
Chair, President Nomination Committee

It is with great pleasure that we announce that Sean Baylis has accepted the nomination for President Nominee (President for 2027-2028 Rotary year) of our Rotary Club.

Nominations can be submitted by club members to the club secretary (Laurene Wilson) up to November 18. If no nominations from the club are made, the nomination from the committee is the final decision.

Thank you Sean for stepping up to this great leadership role.

Added by COG editor from Sean's public profile on ClubRunner:

Sean has been a member since 2011 and served as Youth Director on the Board for the past 2 years. He ran the club's Stay-in-school program for many years. He was born into a military family in Regina, Saskatchewan. He moved around to many Canadian bases when young including: Moose Jaw, Halifax, Edmonton, and Cold Lake. After graduating from High School in Airdrie, Sean followed his first passion which was working with Children and studied education at University of Calgary. While there, he was elected Academic Commissioner for the Education Faculty. After graduating, he began his teaching career at Calgary Academy, a private school for exceptional students. He taught for 15 years and spent the last few years as an Academic Dean. While teaching, Sean completed a Masters from Walden University and applied his knowledge in incorporating technology into learning applications. He also began to develop a second passion for the Investment and Wealth Management World and started a private equity fund of which he was President of for 10 years. His passion led him to the completion of numerous investment- related courses and finally a career transition into the Wealth Management World. Sean enjoys his new career as he loves to work with families in assisting them in reaching the Financial Goals.


## Our Rotary Christmas Party and Wine Raffle is coming up!


Dennis Tran


December 9th; Reception 6 pm; Delicious Dinner 7 pm; at the beautiful Calgary Golf and Country Club with romantic Christmas lights twinkling outside!

We'll once again be holding our popular Wine Raffle, so please remember to bring a bottle of wine to contribute.

If you happen to forget your bottle, no worries — you can still participate by bringing \$20, which will go toward supporting future fellowship activities and events.

 Tickets are available here: <https://portal.clubrunner.ca/942/Events/rotary-club-of-calgary-downtown-christmas-dinner>

 We're also putting together a Rotary slideshow, so please send us pictures of your Rotary activities and service projects throughout the year — we'd love to include them!

 We're looking for volunteers to help with the check-in table at the start of the evening. If you're available, please sign up here: <https://admin.clubrunner.ca/942/Volunteer/ManageVolunteerContacts?VolunteerSignUpId=0cf3404c-b950-4b84-9865-3c573cbf7cbd&AccountId=942>

## Club Meeting Dates - right up until June 30 - please diarize!

President Bill Hamilton and Program Director Terry McMahon

**Nov 18**

**Dec. 2 and 16**

**Jan. 13 and 27**

**Feb. 10 and 24 - and Feb. 17 CLUB ASSEMBLY**

**Mar. 10 and 24**

**Apr. 7 and 21**

**May 5 and 19**

**June 2, 16 and 30**

## Calgary Downtown Rotary Now a [Nonprofit Chamber Member...](#)

Franco Savoia



Formerly known as the Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (CCVO), the Nonprofit Chamber welcomed Calgary Downtown Rotary as a new member. Patti Dolan attended its AGM on October 29 at The Confluence. President & CEO Angie Gélinas highlighted the organizations rebrand, her appointment in May, and upcoming initiatives: a groundbreaking open-source Data Dashboard launching in November and new leadership programs. With over 30,000 members across Alberta, the Chamber focuses on capacity building, policy, research, and community prosperity. Angie emphasized the Care Economy's vital role—13.6% of GDP and one in 20 jobs. Mayor Jaromy Farkas praised nonprofits' impact and pledged to reduce barriers as Calgary grows toward two million residents.

Hawaii



The next COG issue will be compiled on my i-Phone in Hawaii – hopefully poolside! This is thanks to the free WestJet tickets I won at our club's Christmas Party last year.

If we could delay some articles until the following issue, and if they could be sent to me by Friday, December 5 when we return, I'd be very grateful.

## Evaluating Effectiveness of Organizations & Programs (with an emphasis on addiction & mental health)

Laurene Wilson and Doug McMillan

On October 22nd, the Rotary Club of Calgary Downtown, in partnership with the Calgary Foundation, held a luncheon for those involved in granting from our 12 Calgary Rotary clubs. The Calgary Foundation, through Eva Friesen, sponsored a by invitation luncheon, focused on "Evaluating Effectiveness of Organizations & Programs" (in this case with an emphasis on addiction & mental health).

Marshall Smith, former Chief of Staff for our Premier Danielle Smith and Matthew Blough, Director Evaluation & Learning with the Calgary Foundation spoke at our event. Laurene Wilson, from The Rotary Club of Calgary Downtown, organized the event at the Palliser Hotel. Sixty Rotarians accepted our invitation to attend the event from across Calgary clubs.



I'd like to share with you a quote Matthew Blough referenced at the beginning of his presentation.

**“Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth”** Muhammed Ali

Matthew and Marshall suggested a number of ways philanthropists can support the continuum of care in Alberta.

Matthew discussed the differences between evaluating business & charities, emphasizing that charities exist to serve the community and are not for profit. He highlighted legal and regulatory distinctions including the need for charities to reinvest into their mission and the lower salaries in the non-profit sector. Matthew also addressed the importance of recognizing and mitigating bias in grant decisions. He challenged us all to be aware of our biases including “affinity bias, halo effect, confirmation bias and language and cultural bias”. He introduced the concept of collaborative reporting to enhance transparency and impact among organizations working towards common goals. He explained the benefits of collaborative reporting including seeing the bigger picture, identifying gaps and overlaps while building trust among partners. He shared strategies on establishing shared outcomes: aligning data collection efforts, considering joint analysis & reporting, and incorporating regulatory considerations. He suggested a focus on long-term impact and specifically to look beyond annual grant cycles with support of initiatives that track long-term outcomes.

Marshall recommended we understand the system and learn about the full "prevention to recovery" pathway. Support initiatives that connect different parts of the care system. Ask organizations where they fit in the care continuum. Interact with government officials to understand system needs. Support collaborative efforts by funding collaborative projects across organizations. Invest in prevention. Allocate resources to early intervention programs and support mental health & addiction programs in schools as well as long-term recovery. Be flexible and relationship focused, build relationships with organizations and not just transactional funding. Visit programs, volunteer and attend events.

Marshall suggested some practical approaches to evaluate an organization:

1. Walk the shop floor - visit the organization unexpectedly and observe their actual operations;
2. Engage with clients directly - look for clients who are willing to share their experiences and seem proud of the program;
3. Check admin areas and data collection methods - good programs should have modern data tracking systems;
4. Ask where the program fits in the continuum of care - how they connect with other services before and after their service is provided;
5. Inquire about client intake and follow-up - good programs know where clients come from and what happens to them after leaving their program.

In the past, barriers existed to access treatment, such as cost or capacity. Mental health & addiction were only managed, without a focus on recovery. We are investing in a continuum of services to meet the needs of every Albertan - Prevention, Intervention, Treatment & Recovery. This recovery orientated approach is a monumental shift in how we support Albertans with mental health and addiction challenges.

Both speakers said: **The key is moving from simply writing cheques to being an active, engaged partner in system transformation.**

## Dewey go together? Big Book Sale Sponsorship Opportunities

Steady Pinney

As Rotarians who care deeply about the reading lives of children, here is an opportunity to help young readers reach their potential and associate with growing a thriving, reading community.

Last May, with nearly 200,000 books donated, the Calgary Reads Big Book Sale raised nearly \$544,000 for initiatives that help get kids reading by Grade 3.

These funds get books to families that need them most- extra reading help so kids can shift from learning to read to reading to learn, and advocacy in ensuring each child's right to read is realized. Our contribution to these initiatives goes a long way—but the need is so much greater.

To offset the growing costs of running a book sale and get more dollars to the organizations helping children strengthen their reading skills—the book sale is offering opportunities to sponsor the parking lot, the hospitality room and Spread the Words, our volunteer appreciation event.

Interested in learning more? Contact Steacy Pinney

## Educating African Youth

Diane Macdonald

Thanks to a fund started by a donation in 2011 from the estate of Curly Galbraith, a long-time member of our Club, 72 young people in Uganda are employed in well -paying jobs. They are Ugandan AIDS orphans and similarly disadvantaged youth who were chosen by a committee of Rotarians in Uganda to be supported and mentored through their post-secondary education in trade schools or universities.

A core principle of EAY is to ensure that full funding for each student's entire education is secured before they are accepted into the program. Adequate funds are allocated to cover tuition, books, accommodation, meals and a small stipend for miscellaneous expenses. On average, the annual cost of supporting a student is approximately USD \$850, with most programs completed within three to four years. The program is administered by our Educating African Youth Committee which is a sub-committee of the World Community Service Committee of our Club. The corresponding EAY committee of Rotarians in Uganda oversees the distribution of funds which are sent each semester.

Graduates of the program have begun to give back. Many graduates have been responsible for supporting younger siblings and they began paying for the education of their family members. Now, some of the early graduates are able to contribute to the EAY program itself to help pay for future students. We are hopeful that one day the program will be self-sustaining.

Below are letters recently received from two graduates of the program, expressing their gratitude. To read letters please click Read More to see these under Story Content

We are contributing to lifting a community out of poverty. Our committee currently consists of Diane Macdonald and Bertie Kawooya. If you would like more information about the program (or would, perhaps, like to make a small contribution) just let us know.

[Read more...](#)

## Calgary Rotarians sharing fellowship and service...

Franco Savoia

On Monday October 20, 2025, 20 Rotarians from a number of Calgary Rotary Clubs gathered at Community Kitchen in NE Calgary led by Bill Lawless of the West Club (he coordinates 8 volunteer opportunities to prepare Good Food Boxes-produce). For 2.5 hours Rotarians



chatted and shared as they packaged tomatoes, kiwi and apples. The focus of program falls under RCCD's food security area of focus. It reduces the cost of produce to Calgary families by 50%. Rotary fellowship is intertwined with service. Franco Savoia and Flavio Antonini, exchange student, shared and learned about each other in their mother tongue. Flavio is from Sicily and is adjusting to his Canadian life with his host family. His initial impression that Canadians are too reserved and rule bound. This is one of many opportunities for multi-club service and fellowship. RCCD club members will be invited to participate in the 8 opportunities in 2026.



## Proudly Presenting Our Corporate Members



## Upcoming Events

[November 18-Club Luncheon \(Palliser\) - Guest Speaker Greg van Tighem](#)

133 9 Avenue Southwest

Nov. 18, 2025 12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Mountain Standard Time (UTC-07:00)

[Frank n' Stein \(3rd Thursday\\_\)](#)

CHECK YOUR EMAIL

Nov. 20, 2025

4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

[December 2 - Club Luncheon \(Palliser\) - Dr. Janis Goldie](#)

133 9 Avenue Southwest

*Dec. 02, 2025 12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Mountain Standard Time (UTC-07:00)*

[Frank n' Stein \( 1st Thursday\)](#)

CHECK YOUR EMAIL

*Dec. 04, 2025*

*4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.*

[Rotary Club of Calgary Downtown Christmas Dinner](#)

*Dec. 09, 2025 6:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Mountain Standard Time (UTC-07:00)*

[Save the Date: Christmas Dinner](#)

*Dec. 09, 2025 6:00 p.m.*

[December 16 - Club Luncheon - Guest Speaker Dr. Terry Clark](#)

133 9 Avenue Southwest

*Dec. 16, 2025 12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Mountain Standard Time (UTC-07:00)*

[Frank n' Stein \(3rd Thursday\)](#)

CHECK YOUR EMAIL

*Dec. 18, 2025*

*4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.*

[Frank n' Stein \( 1st Thursday\)](#)

CHECK YOUR EMAIL

*Jan. 01, 2026*

*4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.*

[View entire list](#)

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