



**November 24, 2025**  
**Volume 43 - Issue 12**

***"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**

Dennis Tran	December 1
Charles Pratt	December 6

### **Rotary Anniversaries**

Dan Hays	55 years
Gerard D'mello	10 years
Helen Hu	10 years
Diane Macdonald	5 years

### **November 18<sup>th</sup> RCCD Meeting: Were You There?**

Doug McMillan

The meeting of the Rotary Club of Calgary Downtown was brought to order by President Bill Hamilton with Michael Pierson leading on the piano as we sang O Canada. Charles Pratt gave the invocation reminding us of the need to bring peace, friendship and hope to those less fortunate. Bill welcomed the 40-45 members and guests and thanked "front of the house" volunteers: Ann Haessel, Trevor Axeworthy, Ann Logan, and Bomo Douglas.

"Happy Bucks" included the success of Red Hat Day and the Polio Plus evening plus an announcement by DG Manon Mitchell that her last District Club visit would be the next day (with husband Kurt Kowalski expressing his pleasure at being her "chauffer". Although none were present for their birthday recognition by Michael Broadhurst (see earlier in COP for names), "Happy Birthday" was sung with gusto.

ADG Pat Neuman presented a certificate of appreciation for our contributions to Polio Plus and a banner recognizing RCCD as the #1 donor club in the District. Rick Erven noted that November was Foundation Month; members can/should donate to the Rotary Foundation or the Calgary Rotary Clubs Foundation.

President Bill indicated that there were no further nominations for President Elect (President for 2027-2028); Sean Baylis was congratulated and wished well for his anticipated continuing Rotary contributions.

Joe Fras spoke about our Legacy Project (see separate article in this COG). Ann Logan indicated the success of the Early Childhood Literacy events Oct 4 & 5<sup>th</sup> which included a "Neighborhood March for Reading". George Brookman reminded members that donations (Recommended \$300 per person) are necessary for the continuing success of the Christmas Hamper Program. President Bill reminded members of the Rotary Club of Heritage Park "chicken and pie" fundraiser (Contact Roger Sonntag at [roger@rksonntag.ca](mailto:roger@rksonntag.ca) to order).

After introduction by Brian Guichon, Greg van Tighem spoke about the 2024 Jasper fire. Brian was born and raised in Calgary (graduate of St. Mary's High School) and was Fire Chief in Jasper for 23 years as well as a Rotarian (leading a Group Study Exchange in 2012). He was called back into consultative service by Jasper Park Lodge with the fire (actually 4 fires) starting July 22, 2024.

At the time of the fire, Jasper Fire Department had a permanent staff of 6 and 25-30 volunteer firefighters. However, contributions from Parks Canada, the Province of Alberta and others were very important.

The "stage had been set" by a pine beetle infestation which killed trees (making wood very flammable) and lack of previous natural fires which for centuries had burnt underbrush). Some Fire Smart programs were in place but when lightning struck in several places the situation quickly became overwhelming (although firefighters responded within 8 minutes of the first report).

The evacuation of approximately 5,000 permanent Jasper residents and another 20,000 visitors (scattered throughout the park) was hampered by the fire blocking two of the three main roads in and out of Jasper. Greg showed pictures of the devastation that burned 350 structures (820 housing units) and left the city without power for over 3 weeks. Most of Jasper Park Lodge was saved with a good prior Fire Smart program which included sprinklers (other buildings were also protected in a similar manner).

People (including Rotarians) throughout the country stepped up to assist. Rebuilding is now occurring with non-combustible materials.

Brian thanked Greg indicating that a donation was being made to Wellsprings in recognition of Greg's contribution to our meeting.

President Bill reminded all of the Club Christmas Party (1800 for 1900 December 9, 2025 at the Calgary Golf and Country Club). He presided over the 50/50 draw. Trevor Ironside had his ticket drawn but, alas, did not find the white marble and had to settle for chocolates. With a pot now worth ½ of \$1079, there likely will be a lot of interest at our next meeting Dec 2, 2025 when the keynote speaker will be Dr. Janis Goldie, President and CEO, Alberta University of the Arts (AUArts) speaking on 100 Years of Creativity – Celebrating the Legacy and Future of AUArts.



Photo (Thanks to Ian Diaz): Assistant Governor Pat Neuman and Pres. Bill



Photo: Pres. Bill, Brian Guichon, and Greg van Tighem





Photo: Pink Hat Day - Dorothy Loucks (wearing hat), Joe Fras and Angeline Hayes

## Rotary Flames Sport Zones Project: Progress Update

Joe Fras

It is my pleasure to give you a brief progress update on our current Signature legacy project, the Flames Rotary Sports Zones.

To quickly refresh your memories, this Legacy project was formally approved by a membership vote at our Club meeting on June 10, 2025. This \$3.7M project is the result of a collaboration with the Flames Foundation, Rotary Downtown, Rotary Stampede Park and the Parks Foundation. Our financial commitment is for \$1.0M paid over 4 years beginning in June 2025.

The project calls for the construction of uniquely designed Sports Zones in four selected deserving neighbourhoods. These Sports zones are an innovative all-season youth-orientated sports courts facility that will be used as outdoor hockey rinks in the winter, and basketball/ ball hockey in the summer.

These new facilities will be supported by after-school programming that is offered at no cost to the kids. The constant theme here is to provide an opportunity for spontaneous and unstructured play at an affordable price, at a neighbourhood location that kids can walk or bike to.

Now for progress update...

The March 2025 plan called for building the four facilities between 2025 and September 2027 with the first facility planned for Pineridge completed this October, two more completed in 2026, and the fourth completed in 2027. Because of delays in the City development and construction permit approvals and project tendering, Pineridge did not get built this year. It is now scheduled for an early 2026 spring start (April 1) The second sports zone, slated for Sunalta community, is planned for an early summer (July 1) 2026 construction start. The third sports zone is slated for the Crossroads community (Mayland Heights) with an early spring 2027 construction start, and the fourth facility planned for Cedarbrae to have an early summer (June 2027) construction start.

As each sports zone is completed, there will be a formal Grand Opening public event organized by the Flames Foundation. This event will give us the opportunity to promote Rotary Downtown's long and impressive record of community giving, thereby enhancing our Club's brand awareness in the Calgary community.

## Congratulations to Peter Harrison

Madeleine King

Our Club members are proud to recognize Youth Director Peter Harrison for being highlighted by Rotary International in a new series about the stories of Rotarians.

View his short video [here](#).

## Club Meeting Dates - right up until June 30, 2026 - please diarize!

President Bill Hamilton and Program Director Terry McMahon

**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**

## Proudly Presenting Our Corporate Members



## Upcoming Events

### [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.*

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

CHECK YOUR EMAIL

*Jan. 15, 2026*

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

[View entire list](#)

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## COG Staff - July 1, 2024

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Club Members ... yes that's you!

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