Rotary Club of Calgary | Downtown

COG

October 12, 2026
Volume 44 - Issue 8

"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.



Rotary International's theme for the 2026-2027 year

Birthdays

Bill Clapham	October 9
Chris Ward	October 9
Peter McKeen	October 10
Diana Aspe Ayer	October 12
Garry Moyes	October 13
Bob Junker	October 14
Hank Popoff	October 18

Rotary Anniversaries

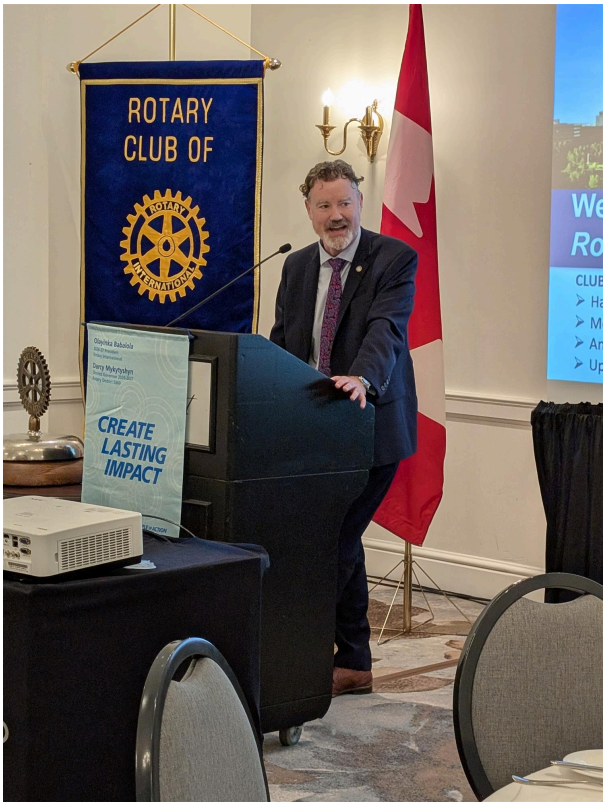
Paul Gagnon	45 Years
Ayodeji Jeje	20 Years

Meeting Recap: Oct 6th 2026

Diane Macdonald

It was a first for President-Elect Sean Baylis who took the chair at our October 6 lunch meeting! Members gathered for Club updates, a look at how the Big Book Sale is supporting young readers, and a timely conversation about the importance of human connection.

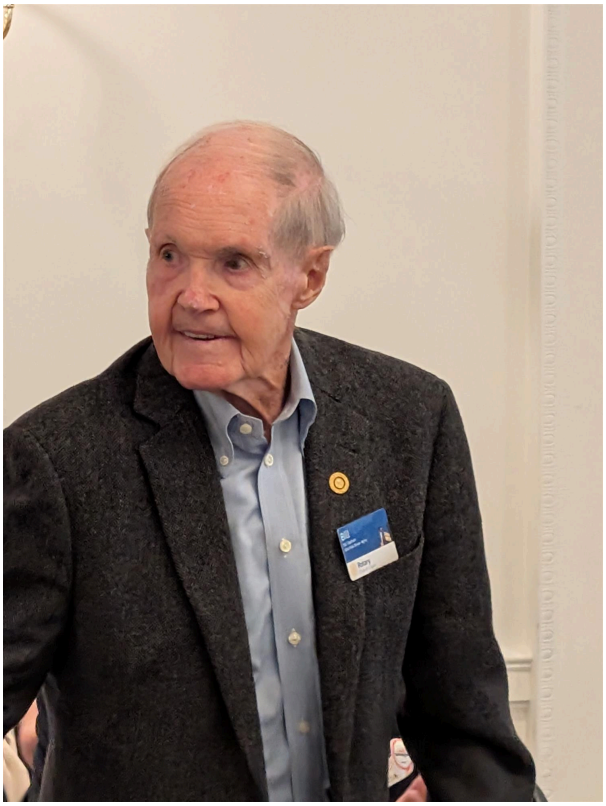
The meeting opened with O Canada, accompanied by William Friedson, followed by an invocation from Franco Savoia reflecting on Rotary and the connections we share. Thank you to Bomo Douglas, Bruce Fenwick, and Dorothy Loucks for looking after Front of House duties.



Club News & Announcements

- **District Governor Nomination:** At its September meeting, the Club Board unanimously endorsed Past President Madeleine King as our Club's nominee for Rotary District Governor of District 5360 for the 2029–2030 Rotary year. Congratulations, Madeleine!

- **Birthday Celebrations:** Seven birthdays were acknowledged, including a special milestone for Bill Clapham, who turns 90 on October 9. Happy birthday, Bill!



- **Rotary Remembers:** The annual event takes place November 11 at the Carriage House Inn. Tickets are available online.
- **Christmas Hamper Campaign:** George Brookman encouraged members to support this year's campaign with a contribution of $300 each.

Literacy Moment: My First Bookshelf

Anne Logan and Anisha Mussa shared how proceeds from the Big Book Sale are helping put books into the hands of young children through the My First Bookshelf program.

Children under five receive a free, personalized book in the mail each month, giving families an opportunity to build reading into their everyday routines. The program also encourages families to visit their local libraries and participate in storytime activities.

It's a wonderful example of how our Club's fundraising efforts continue to support literacy in the community.



Guest Speaker: Pete Bombaci — GenWell, Canada's Human Connection Movement

Guest speaker Pete Bombaci of GenWell spoke about mental wellness and the importance of human connection in building a culture where people, businesses, and communities thrive.

Pete shared the science behind social health, emphasizing that one of the clearest predictors of a long, healthy life is how connected we are to others. Meaningful human connections play an important role in improving both our mental and physical well-being.

He also highlighted the value of face-to-face interactions, noting that they generate nine times more brain activity than digital connections. But even a simple gesture matters. If you're thinking of someone, send them a note or text and let them know!

Pete introduced GenWell, Canada's Human Connection Movement, which works to educate the public about the power and importance of human connection.

The presentation ended with plenty of hugs and fist bumps around the room, a fitting way to put Pete's message into practice!



Next Meeting: October 20

Join us Tuesday, October 20, at the Palliser for our next meeting, featuring a Club Assembly. We look forward to seeing you there!

Rethinking Funding Through Indigenous Perspectives

Patti Dolan

Franco and I attended the Network of Indigenous Funders of Alberta Learning Session in Red Deer on September 29, hosted by the Alberta Real Estate Foundation. The session opened with a smudge and prayer led by Drs. Reg and Rose Crowshoe (pictured) and explored Indigenous worldviews and the concept of “systems poverty”—how systems designed around Western norms can create barriers for Indigenous communities.

A key theme was the difference between oral and written systems. While Western institutions generally rely on written applications and reports, oral knowledge remains an important source of cultural knowledge and validation. We discussed the risk of losing this knowledge as fewer Elders continue to use traditional oral practices.

The session challenged funders to think differently about how they engage with Indigenous organizations, including accepting video or oral applications, using conversational reporting, and offering transcription support. Small-group discussions focused on barriers, opportunities, the levels of change needed, and the supports funders can provide.

It was a valuable opportunity to consider how Rotary can make its funding practices more accessible, respectful, and responsive.



Have You Met John Wilson Yet?

Diane Macdonald

John is new to our Club but not to Rotary. While living in Canmore for 16 years, he was a member of the Rotary Club of Canmore for five years. He recently moved to Calgary and wanted to continue his Rotary journey.

John is originally from Dallas, Texas and moved to Canada in 2008. He is now a Canadian. He had lived and worked in 8 different countries, before his move to Canada. He says that Peru and Portugal are at the top of his list.

John's wife is Catherine (from New York, but he met her in Calgary); daughters are Emma, who is attending the University of Oregon and Sarah, attending Boise State University.

John is an investor who runs a family office located in Dallas. An interesting note: John became interested in Rotary after learning that his grandfather was a Rotarian in Waco, Texas a long time ago.

Welcome to our Club, John – we're delighted to have you with us.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR! Note our new feature!

Hosted by Doug McMillan

Click here to tell us what's on your mind (regarding Rotary)? We'll get back in touch, asking to share it in COG (with possible editing) - or to see if we can fix something.

Do give it a try!

Save the Date: Rotary Remembers 2026

Editor Madeleine King

Join Calgary Rotarians and guests for Rotary Remembers 2026- a special gathering to honour and show our respect for Canada's veterans.

Wednesday, November 11 | 10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.
Carriage House Inn
9030 Macleod Trail, Calgary

Proceeds from the event will be directed to the Veterans Food Bank of Calgary. TICKET LINK HERE

Please save the date.



Proudly Presenting Our Corporate Members

Upcoming Events

Volunteer Event - Home for Dinner - Ronald McDonald Calgary House

Oct. 15, 2026 3:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Mountain Daylight Time (UTC-06:00)

Rotary Luncheon - Club Assembly: Explore, Connect, and Enjoy Lunch with Fellow Members
Oct. 20, 2026 12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Mountain Daylight Time (UTC-06:00)

Rotary Luncheon - What's Next After the Alberta Referendum?
Oct. 27, 2026 12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Mountain Daylight Time (UTC-06:00)

Fellowship Committee Meeting
Oct. 28, 2026 3:30 p.m.

Rotary Luncheon -The complexity of Nation Building Projects
Nov. 03, 2026 12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Mountain Standard Time (UTC-07:00)

Rotary Luncheon - Calgary Public Library looks to the future: a better tomorrow through stories
Nov. 17, 2026 12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Mountain Standard Time (UTC-07:00)

Fellowship Committee Meeting
Nov. 28, 2026 3:30 p.m.

View entire list

COG Staff - July 1, 2024

Editor	Madeleine King: mkingrotary@gmail.com; with Heidi Lacey
Set-up	Diane Macdonald
Publisher	Doug McMillan
Contributors	Club Members ... yes that's you!

Rotary Club of Calgary - Chartered April 1914 as Club #949

Tel: (403) 398-9969 - Fax: (403) 264-2392
www.rotaryclubofcalgary.org - admin@rotaryclubofcalgary.ca
President: Bill Hamilton
District 5360 Governor: Manon Mitchell
Rotary International President: Francesco Arezzo