

Big Book Sale Celebrates 20 Years of Uplifting Young Readers

Give your books to a good cause...and then re-stock at this one-of-a-kind community sale

CALGARY—As thousands of readers eagerly await opening day of what could be the biggest used book sale around, [Calgary Reads Big Book Sale](#) just needs one thing: a lot of books.

The 20th Calgary Reads Big Book Sale runs May 10-20 at the Calgary Curling Club, offering 175,000+ books across almost every genre imaginable, most for just \$2 or \$4. Since it's the 20th sale, the festivities and giveaways will be even more special—and it starts with the community donating books to fill this year's 325 tables.

"People just can't believe how many books we have and what great shape they're in," says Manon Mitchell, who speaks for Rotary Club of Calgary, now in its second year of stewarding the sale and distributing proceeds. "The more quality books we have, the more we raise for early childhood literacy—so we're incredibly grateful for donations. If you're not reading it again, here's a great way to help a child."

The 10-day book drive kicks off Friday, April 26 at the Curling Club. Donations there are best, but readers can also donate at three Stuff-a-Truck events.

How to donate books:

- April 26-May 5 at Calgary Curling Club (720 3 Street NE) [view hours](#)
- Sat. April 27 12- 3 at Jayman BUILT (3132-118th Ave SE)
- Sat. April 27 10-1 at Melcor YMCA (8100 John Laurie Blvd NW, upper lot)
- Sun. April 28 10-1 at Rundle College (7375 - 17th Ave SW)

What kind of books are accepted? Gently used bestsellers and new releases are especially in demand, and the sale also has sections of audiobooks, DVD's and collectibles. Visit the website to see the list of what [not to donate](#) (uni textbooks, we're looking at you).

Before it was also a book sale, Calgary Reads was an early literacy non-profit. When the first sale was held in 2003, it was with the wild hope of raising a few hundred dollars to help cover the cost of its one-to-one tutoring programs for struggling young readers in grades 1 and 2. That year, the community's donated gently used books raised \$5,000.

"We were so thrilled," recalls Steacy Pinney, Calgary Reads' founder, recalling the little white tents pitched in the CBC Calgary parking lot. It was the beginning of something big: a beloved book sale that has grown and grown and grown.

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Last year, the 19th sale raised \$501,000—thanks to the nearly 200,000 donated books and the more than 14,000 shoppers. (There was no sale in 2020 because of covid and in 2021 there was only a Little Big Book Sale.)

These days, Calgary Reads Big Book Sale proceeds benefit several early childhood reading initiatives. [Early Talks](#), led by YW Calgary, guides caregivers in improving back-and-forth talk with infants and toddlers. At Big Brothers Big Sisters of Calgary and Area, mentors take [weeread.ca](#) training so they can help kids strengthen reading skills. [Book Bank](#), [Little Red Reading House](#) and [MRU Reads](#), have also been among sale proceed recipients.

“Here we’ve grown this incredible community of passionate early literacy supporters and book sale volunteers who continue to give time to make this sale possible,” says Pinney, of the sponsors, partners and nearly 1,200 volunteers who will help sort and sell donated books this year. “Over the last 20 sales, we’ve raised \$3.5 million and we’re just so thankful because the need is still so great to ensure children get the help they need learning to read by Grade 3.”

Jayman BUILT, Stuff-a-Truck host and sale sponsor, encourages Calgarians to donate books and shop the sale, and enjoy reading time at home.

“Reading is the foundation of all learning,” says Jay Westman, Chairman and CEO of Jayman BUILT. “With more books at home and a home that promotes reading together, we can help more children enjoy a bright start in school and in life.”

How to shop the sale

- [By appointment](#), \$5 event fee, May 10 & May 11
- Without appointment, \$3 event fee, May 12-16
- Sale days (BOGO, Fill-a-Box and Free Day) May 17-20

For hours and everything to know, visit www.bigbooksale.ca

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ABOUT CALGARY READS BIG BOOK SALE

Now in its 20th year, the Calgary Reads Big Book Sale allows thousands of Calgarians to discover pre-loved books among every genre and help local children become joyful, confident readers. In 2023, more than 14,000 people purchased nearly 200,000 books and raised \$501,000 to help fund critical early literacy initiatives led by YW Calgary, Book Bank, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Calgary and Area, Mount Royal University and more. www.bigbooksale.ca

For more information or to arrange interviews, please contact:

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Photo and video files [here](#)

Social toolkit with posters, branded images and videos [here](#)