

## My Football Career

Tom Higgins, Former CFL Head Coach



Bart introduced our speaker, Tom Higgins. Tom opened his remarks by outlining a philosophy which he learned from one of his mentors and early coaches, Lou Holtz. Talent determines what you can do, Motivation determines how much you are willing to do, however it is Attitude which determines what you actually accomplish.

Tom was born in New Jersey and was fortunate to have the opportunity to play many different sports. He was a high school football standout at Colonial High School and played nose guard at North Carolina State University. He was an All-American and was a starter in four consecutive bowl games. He was also an All-American wrestler at NC State.

After graduating in 1976, Tom attempted to enter the NFL but was not selected in the draft that year. He instead played in the CFL with the Calgary Stampeders for 3 years. In 1979 he was signed by the Buffalo Bills and played one year in the NFL, before returning to the Saskatchewan Roughriders.



After retiring as a player, Tom began coaching at the University of Calgary, winning the 1983 CIS title in the second of his three years as assistant coach under Peter Connellan. In 1985 he joined the Stampeders coaching staff, serving in many different capacities including defensive line coach, offensive line coach and offensive coordinator until becoming Assistant Head Coach in 1993. In 2001 he became the Head Coach for the Edmonton Eskimos, leading the team to the playoffs in each of his four seasons. In 2002 and 2003 they won division titles, and won the Grey Cup in 2003. In 2005 he returned to the Stampeders as Head Coach, holding this position for three years and making the playoffs in each. He was fired after a first round loss during the 2007 playoffs.

Tom served as Director of Officiating from April 2008 to December 2013. This was a tough job as teams are always upset about officiating. Tom's advice to team management consisted of reminding them that Coaches rarely have perfect games, and players rarely play perfect games, so it's not reasonable to expect officials to be perfect either. He urged management to work on having their players know the rules and then do their best to follow them. He related a story about a game in Montreal when the officials called a penalty for too many men on the field during a field goal attempt. Turned out through viewing replays, that there had only been 12 after all ... they had made a mistake. Tom was livid, told the crew that they simply couldn't make this kind of error. Last play of the game, another field goal attempt, again the officials called a too many men penalty, only this time they were correct and replays backed them up. To say the officials were nervously awaiting the replay evidence was an understatement.

Tom was hired as Head Coach of the Montreal Alouettes in February 2014, a year which saw a historic season, starting 1 - 7, turning the team

*cont'd on page 5 ...*

### In This Issue

- 1 November 20h**  
Tom Higgins, Former CFL Head Coach  
My Football Career
- 2 Meeting Minutes November 20th**
- 3 Youth Services News**  
Networking Meeting November 22nd
- 4 What's Up !!**  
Meeting Minutes November 20th cont'd  
Rosebud Theatre Trip
- 5 My Football Career cont'd**  
Annual Holiday Party  
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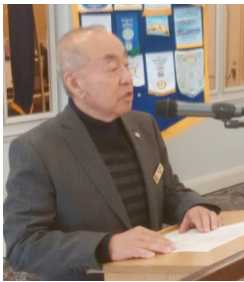
P.O. Box # 42041  
Southland Crossing RPO  
Calgary, Alberta T2J 7A6  
gaudetco@gmail.com  
www.RotaryChinook.ca

**Rotary**  
Club of Calgary Chinook





Our two Greeters today were Al Pettigrew and John McBean who provided a warm welcome to both members and guests.



President George started our meeting at 12:15. He introduced O Canada with Ruth Wylie on the piano, followed by Rotary Grace.

Pres George noted that Paul Gaudet would be today's Scribe and then called on Al to introduce our visitors and guests. Today we

had a total of 55 in attendance, which included 5 guests and one visiting member, Bill Skinner from the Rotary Club of Heritage Park. Our guests included our speaker Tom Higgins, Stan Schwartz and Larry Charter (guests of Bart Dailley), Darlene Whitmore (guest of George Kimura) and Enrica Boson (guest of Kathryn Breaker).



George called on Pat Hutchinson for our Sunshine Report and "all is sunny" was the report received. Our members would appear to be doing well.



## Minute Men:



• Tom Sorenson reported that he and George had recently attended St. Mary's University in order to present our \$2,000 Bursary to the latest winner of the Father Greg Award, the 10th time this award has been presented since it's inception. It was a wonderful evening and the recipient was delighted to receive the Bursary.

- Anthony Tonkinson reported on two items:
  - firstly, on our planned bus trip to the Rosebud Theatre on Saturday, December the 15th (sign up sheet circulating)
  - secondly, regarding the Rotary Foundation. We are encouraging our members to donate to our Rotary Foundation as part of their annual giving plans.



- Bart Dailley advised that we are still looking for volunteers to help fill our commitment to Operation Christmas Child, being held this year on Wednesday, December 5th from 12:30pm to 3pm. It's a fun afternoon of filling shoeboxes for children in need.

• Rob Wolfson asked any members who have yet to turn in their Grey Cup Pool tickets to please do so prior the end of this week so he will be ready prior to the actual game on Sunday. He also noted that our "Friends" event is being held this week at Limerick's, on Thursday, November 22nd at 5:30pm.



President George recognized Wayne Wiebe who has been an outstanding member since his induction in 1981, having been introduced to Chinook Rotary by Norm Moro. Wayne has been active in many Rotary



initiatives and has been instrumental in leading our Community Service activity to new levels. Wayne is a Paul Harris Fellow and has held Board positions on four different occasions during his 37 years of membership. Congratulations Wayne!





RYPEN promotes personal growth, connections, and leadership in a safe environment by providing challenging opportunities and tools to empower youth who have demonstrated courage and perseverance in their daily lives.

RYPEN Camp is one of the programs with our Fairview School Educational Partnerships. In September Sanjana Vadupu and Oyin Adabs, both grade 7 girls, attended. Our last year's students Andre Ciupa and Dhanya Koshti also attended as counsellors. Andre and Dhanya are now in high school at Dr EP Scarlett.

**The full article and photos on this year's camp experience can be found on our Club website under the Youth Services tab.**



## Fr Greg McLellan Memorial Bursary

St. Mary's University held their Annual Awards Ceremony on Wednesday November 7th. The Father Greg McLellan Memorial Bursary was presented by our President, George Kimura.



The Bursary was established in the spring of 2013. It is in recognition of Fr. Greg who was the Charter President of the Rotary Club of Calgary Chinook. The Club was chartered on March 14, 1977. Fr. Greg passed away January 30 2013 at the age of 89 years.

The bursary is awarded to a 2nd year on the basis of financial need and community involvement. The value of the award is \$2,000.

This year the recipient was Nicole Baker. She is the sixth recipient of the award.

*Tom Sorenson*

## Networking Meeting November 22nd

It was a great night at Limerick's. While we did not have any new potential members, it was still a great relaxed Rotary get-together, with members present from multiple clubs, including the past DG and the DG Elect. Plan on coming out to the next networking night and share your Rotary experience, network, or just interact with fellow Rotarians in a relaxed setting. AND, bring a guest!





## Rotary Foundation Month

November 27th

Ellen Humphrey, Prez and CEO, Calgary Library Foundation

— It's a Crime Not to Read Program

## Disease Prevention and Treatment Month

December 4th

Club Christmas Party

December 6th

Cribbage Club @ Horton Road Legion — contact Peter Bickham

December 11th

Tom Keenan, U of C Professor — The Invasion of Privacy and Loss of Intimacy

2019

## Vocational Service Month

January 8th

Kelly Grams, New Project Developer, Sewing Seeds Canada

January 10th

Cribbage Club @ Horton Road Legion — contact Peter Bickham

January 15th

Mark Stinson, Communications Director, Calgary Pickleball

January 22nd

Club Assembly

January 24th

Cribbage Club @ Horton Road Legion — contact Peter Bickham

January 29th

Martin Parnell — Afghanistan Marathon



## Meeting Minutes

.... cont'd from page 2

Bill Churchward won the draw for our "Chase the Ace" raffle and subsequently picked the 3 of Spades. He won the daily amount and the Ace Pot grows.



Paul Gaudet was the Sergeant at Arms and proceeded to fine all those who had not attended our "Rotary Remembers" event on November 11th. He also fined all those who had not voted in our recent Olympic Games Plebiscite, as no matter which side one supported, it is important to be part of the decision. Paul reminded everyone how much fun the day trip to Rosebud was and

recommended that everyone consider attending. Lastly he noted the numerous activities we were undertaking during December, including the Salvation Army Kettles, Samaritan's Purse, Ronald McDonald House and our Christmas Party, and proceeded to fine anyone who had not signed up for at least one of these activities. Under the "Good News/Bad News" section, Dave Wylie noted that he had today received his winner's pot from our first "Chase the Ace" raffle two weeks ago.

Bart introduced our speaker, Tom Higgins, as a man from New Jersey, the son of an NFL veteran. Tom was a standout in High School football and moved on to North Carolina State where he was an All American as a linebacker. He played for the Buffalo Bills in the NFL, and the Stampeders and Saskatchewan in the CFL. He has coached all areas of football including positions with the Stampeders, Eskimos and Alouettes. He has two Grey Cup rings and two Coach of the Year titles. He has been a CFL General Manager, and for 6 years he was the Director of Officiating in the CFL. He is 100% football and is our Grey Cup guest!

President George thanked our speaker by presenting him with our certificate noting a donation to help eradicate Polio in the world. He noted that next week's speaker would be Ellen Humphrey, President and CEO of the Calgary Library Foundation speaking about their "It's a Crime not to Read Program". He then closed our meeting at 1:30pm with a hearty "Go Stamps Go" and wished everyone a "good Rotary week".

## Rosebud Theatre Trip

Anthony Tonkinson

**Rosebud Theatre**

**Saturday, December 15th**

**Cost \$90.00 per person.**

This includes Coach, buffet lunch and the play  
**"Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Christmas Carol".**

Depart The Carriage House at exactly 10.15am. We have to be in Rosebud in time for lunch. The play starts at 1.30 and ends at 3.30. We should be back in Calgary by 5pm.

There is limited space, 30 seats (out of 54) are already taken. Couples only. If you want to book as a single I will try and find another single. This will originally be exclusive for Chinook members and friends. I will then offer it to Fish Creek, and then if there is still space, to Calgary Rotarians on WhaZUP!

If the coach company cancels because of weather conditions, I will refund that portion of the ticket. Rosebud does not refund but will offer us tickets for a later date, probably in the Spring. In case of cancellation, you will be phoned early Saturday morning.

Any questions please email  
 Anthony at 44tonk@gmail.com



around to a 9 - 9 second place finish, hosting a play off game and defeating the BC Lions, subsequently losing in the division finals. In August 2015, the Alouettes ownership relieved Tom of his coaching duties.

Tom's long and productive coaching career in the CFL produced three division championships and one Grey Cup. He relates that throughout his career he had been cut or fired a total of 10 times, and throughout everything he has kept the same positive attitude. He is a big believer in a team approach. It's not about this player or that player, but rather the team. During his coaching career he never gave a game ball to a player, choosing to emphasize the team's efforts and results.

On the subject of Grey Cup games, Tom spoke of working with Doug Flutie during the early 1990s when the games were so cold and difficult for everyone. Doug's hands basically froze. In 1993 Calgary had one of the best teams ever but couldn't beat the Eskimos in the division playoffs. He highlighted that the mindset for the big game was a challenge to manage as there were so

many distractions. The feeling of being happy to have reached the Grey Cup had to be put aside in order to focus on getting the job done.

Tom thanked Bart for asking him to speak and providing the opportunity to look back over his career. He then opened the floor to questions including why so many teams seem to struggle in Montreal (too many distractions for the players) and whether Bo Levi could make the NFL (lots of factors to consider including opportunity, health (he's good enough to play in the NFL, and lots more money to be had at that level).

He again thanked us for allowing him to talk about his career and his belief in the importance of having a positive attitude.



## Annual Holiday Party!

Tammy Truman



**Please RSVP by November 27th, along with cash payment of only \$50 per person**

Attire: Christmas Party Wear ... bring out your dazzle!

Libations are not included in this price, but full wine and spirit bar available at all budgets. The bill for the cocktail hour must be paid at the bar. When dinner starts, the liquor bill is per table.

Once I have an official head count, I will try my best to accommodate group seating of 2, 4, 6 or 8. Please send those requests by email as well.

If you have an extra bottle of wine, spirits or other item you feel would be enjoyed by those attending, I would love to accept your donations. These will all be set up at a table, and raffle tickets will be sold at a cost of \$20 for 20 tickets. If your ticket number is called, you have the chance to come up to the table and pick your desired item.

Let's hope that we don't have the worst snow storm of the year on this date!  
Looking forward to a great night!

Questions ... please email [tammy\\_truman@cooperators.ca](mailto:tammy_truman@cooperators.ca)

### ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

Dec 4/2018  
6PM Cocktails (No host Bar)  
7PM - 4 Course Dinner  
Various main course options to choose from.  
Music by the one and only  
Chance Devlin playing for singalong, listening and dancing.

Toscana Grill  
1B 8330 Macleod Trail

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Fax: 403.298-4044  
Toll Free: 1.800.372-9274  
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403 614 3224  
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