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Casino ... Save the Date

January is Rotary's Vocational Service Month, a great time to start leveraging vocational service in club projects and activities.



## 2025-2026 Officers and Directors

Wayne Wiebe, President  
Keith Wellon, President Elect  
Rob Wolfson, Past President  
Dale Perret, Secretary  
Vlad Sasarman, Treasurer

Bev Tonkinson, International Service  
Dean White, Youth Service  
Ted Wada, Community Service  
Neil Beatty, Club Service  
Brennen Pell, Club Operations  
Peter Bickham, Club Financial  
Sharon Fraiman, Membership  
John Charrett, Rotary Foundation

RI President Francesco Arezzo  
Rotary Club of Ragusa, Italy

District 5360 Governor Manon Mitchell  
Rotary Club of Calgary Downtown

## Calgary Civic Symphony and Christmas Music District Governor Manon Mitchell



Our DG Manon Mitchell was introduced by Tammy who highlighted that Manon came west in 1980 in an IT career, joined Rotary in 2011, and currently is championing two global grant projects. She has 4 children and two 2 grandchildren.

Manon's presentation today was all about music. She told us all about the Calgary Civic Symphony (in which she has been performing since 1983) which began in 1976 and has been part of Calgary's arts and culture community for nearly 50 years. It rehearses weekly and performs five concerts each season at the Jack Singer Concert Hall.



The "Civic" is committed to providing mentorship and growth opportunities for musicians at all stages of their musical journey, and also providing accessible and affordable opportunities for our community to enjoy the music they create. Their next performance is scheduled for February 22nd, 2026 at 2:30pm at the Jack Singer Concert Hall. It is entitled "An Afternoon at the Opera" and features acclaimed Canadian tenor David Pomeroy. Check out their website at [www.calgarycivicsymphony.ca](http://www.calgarycivicsymphony.ca)



Manon then proceeded to play her violin for a series of Christmas carols with all in attendance singing along. She was very kind to say we sounded great.

Manon was thanked by Past President Rob who thanked her for all she has done (and continues to do) for Rotary, both internationally and in our community. Rob noted one of her favourite anecdotes, developing a habit of saying 'yes' when asked to help or join.



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President Wayne called our meeting to order at 12:15, welcoming all in attendance and leading us in singing O Canada. It was also notable that DG Manon played her violin during our anthem, a unique experience.

Tammy then presented a bottle of BC wine to President Wayne in recognition of his hard work as our President.



### Indigenous Fact

by Keith Wellon

There are over 600 First Nations across Canada, including over 200 in BC. In Alberta there are 48, and their Treaties (6, 7 and 8) and their traditional territories cover the whole province. While they all have some things in common such as belief in the Creator and respect for Mother earth, they are also different in many ways

such as history, language and culture.

### Sunshine Report

George reported that he has spoken to Garth Plunkett and his surgery was completed on the previous Tuesday. Approximately 85% of his tumor has been removed, and he will be scheduled to commence radiation therapy in the new year. He is currently recovering at home and in good spirits.

He also reported that Jim Thompson remains unable to walk due to ankle issues.

We wish Garth and Jim the best for a speedy recovery and we look forward to seeing them soon at our meetings.

### Club Business

We had 30 attendees at our meeting today which included 4 guests: our guest speaker, District Governor Manon Mitchell, Shrel Gelfand and Patricia Allen, both guests of Sharon, and Reg McLellan, guest of Pam. Our guests were introduced by Ron May and welcomed with our 'Welcome to Rotary' song.



Wayne thanked Paul for being our scribe today. He also thanked Ron May for being our Greeter and making everyone feel welcome, and Paul Hussey for organizing our greeters and set up. In addition we also wish to thank both Neil and Peter for operating our payment system.

### Classification Talk



#### Rob Dempsey

Rob recently joined our Club and today was his opportunity tell us about himself. He started off by highlighting the fact that he is a Saskatchewan Roughrider fan, which we will forgive him for. The fact that he is a CFL fan is the most important thing.

He was born and raised in Montreal and moved to Calgary in the mid seventies. He spent time in Saskatchewan and met his wife and raised their children while in Regina. He and Charlotte have two daughters and one grandchild.

He was in the coal business, moved to Saskatoon and finally to Calgary. He joined Hewlett Packard in 1983 and became a cyber security guy. In this field he travelled extensively.

### Members Minutes

#### Special Presentations

Tammy presented a flower arrangement to Stephen and Anne Pick in appreciation for their preparation and publishing of their award winning Arch newsletter (more recently in an e-Arch format).



Photos courtesy George Van Schaick

### Chase the Ace

Our daily winner was Bev Tonkinson who is currently in Mexico. We currently have 17 players playing this month. There will be two draws in January. Our Club earned \$68 on today's draw. There are 45 cards remaining in our deck, and the pot is \$531.



### Annual General Meeting

Secretary Dale prepared a detailed hand out for our AGM and passed it out to each table prior to our meeting. The agenda covered all necessary information including

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confirmation of proper notice, sufficient attendees to form a quorum and motions to approve said agenda and last year's draft minutes. The info package also included a copy of the latest reports on our Youth Services directorship, Community Service, local donations, International Service projects, Club Financial, Membership, Treasurer's update including our June 30th, 2025 financial statements, and our President's report.



Rob reviewed the info package and carried out the required motions. He noted that our new Board for 2025/2026 has been filled and invited those in attendance up for a group photo. Keith will be our new President. Our President Elect will be Sharon. Our new Secretary will be Tammy, our new Directors will be Rob Dempsey, Al Holt, with Dean White and Brenden Pell agreeing to stay on the Board for an additional term. Thankfully Vlad will stay on as Treasurer.



## One of Our Projects

We had a Mexican Rotary Club arrange for this acknowledgement of Rotary. I am sure the kids won't forget 'Rotary'!

*Graham Boone*



Special thanks to Dale for preparing the excellent information package for our use during this year's AGM and to Rob for leading us through it.

### Guest Speaker

Our guest speaker today was District Governor Manon Mitchell, who was introduced by Tammy.

### Dates to Remember

January 6th Regular Meeting at the Carriage House  
Our speaker will be Michael Spears

We will be holding an evening Pub Get Together in January with further details to be provided.

Wayne asked everyone to stand and join in reciting Rotary's 4 Way Test.

Rotary's Theme this year is 'Unite for Good'. Have a great Rotary week! Meeting adjourned at 1:20pm.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



## A Get-together in Mexico

We're staying with the Swans for a few days. Janet and Hank are on a cruise and joined us today in Mazatlan.

*Bev Tonkinson*



**Things to Ponder** — When you are bored just think about a few things that don't make sense ... like :

- Why is the letter W, in English, called double U? Shouldn't it be called double V?
- Every time you clean something, you just make something else dirty.
- 100 years ago everyone owned a horse and only the rich had cars. Today everyone has cars and only the rich own horses.
- If you replace 'W' with 'T' in "What, Where and When", you get the answer to each of them.



### Vocational Service Month

January 2nd Michael Spears — Original Rotary Story, Rotary International Fact, our Club Facts  
 January 16th Spencer Tonkinson — Real Estate 2025 Summary

### Peace Building and Conflict Prevention Month

February 3rd Cameron Henki — Habitat for Humanity  
 February 17th Sharon Fraiman — MADA

### Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Month

March 3rd Emily Braun — Distress Center

### Environmental Month

April 7th Thomas Cell — Prostate Cancer

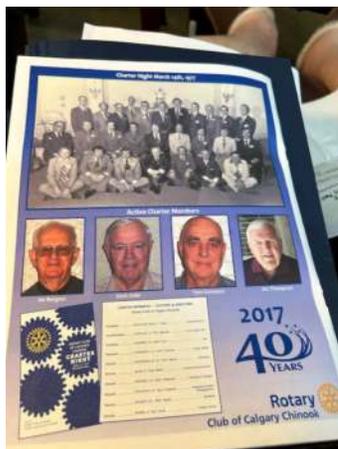
### Youth Service Month

May 13th & 14th Casino volunteers needed — Elbow River Casino



## Did You Know? Jim Thompson, President 81/82, Charter Member

### MY CLUB, THE ROTARY CLUB OF CALGARY CHINOOK



Having provided a simplified review of the club's history since inception in 1977 to date in the past two installments, this is the third and final installment from this, the last surviving Charter Member.

I ended the last installment referencing the 1996 RI Convention held in Calgary, which, by all reports was the biggest in attendance, and most financially successful of all the conventions to that date. I also touched on

our Rotary Nature Park. Rotary parks are known throughout the world wherever Rotary is present. Our Nature Park will be part of this worldwide Rotary effort.

As the club moved on after the '96 convention, our membership grew to a level that enabled us to serve the growing activity at Spruce Meadows more efficiently. Travelling members of our club did make-up meetings all over the world, and we were no exception. Judy and I enjoyed visiting such places as New Zealand Australia, France, England, Japan, etc., always with a club banner in hand, and enjoyed the opportunity of meeting other Rotarians. Make-ups were important to the club still, as default in attending Rotary could have you removed from the roster. We were still hosting exchange students, but finding it more difficult as our club members aged, and high school students were more difficult to place, so billeting outside of the club became necessary.

2003 was a rough year for this Rotarian, having to have surgery to replace both my knees and my left ankle was fused. Recovery was perfect so I resumed most activities except downhill skiing. Our Club Memorial Board was growing as more and more active members began to pass away through natural causes, and as this column is complete, that Memorial Board is now full of the names of a lot of great Rotarians.

RI was constantly changing and gradually pulled away from compulsory attendance, the classification process, and other

previous rules. In 2000 when the world was hit with COVID, Rotary had some serious decline in overall attendance and expansion. Our club had made up a membership of about 100 active members at its peak, and was reduced to closer to 30 members during the COVID times, as we continue to recover and new presidents are added annually. It was generally felt that we are still a very viable club with room to grow, and many ways to serve the community both locally and internationally.

I have enjoyed my 50 years in Rotary when I look back on our slow recruiting start in 1976, towards full RI charter, with our charter received in 1977. My family has been affected in a positive way with my involvement in Rotary, with both our sons being in the RYLA program, and a granddaughter in the Early Start program.

I am most proud of the development of our Rotary Nature Park, which I launched while president and CEO of the McKenzie Meadows golf course. I am proud also to have sponsored somewhere in the order of 30 members, both in our club and others. I hope to continue to be reasonably active, having been appointed as an Honorary Life Member several years ago. I hope that my current mobility issue will enable me to do so.



The FOUR WAY TEST of Rotary has served me well, both in business and in my personal life. May it continue to guide the Rotarian members of our club and others in "Service Above Self"!

## Casino Volunteers

We are booked for our casino on **May 13th and 14th, 2026** at Elbow River Casino. Please block these times in your calendar so you can be available to volunteer.



This is Chinook Rotary's major project to raise money for our charitable commitments. Further details will be provided by Bruce Bohnet and Joe Hooper.