

# ROTARY NEWS

RCCSP Weekly Bulletin January 8th, 2026  
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**Welcome to the January 8th meeting of the Rotary Club of Calgary at Stampede Park. My name is Gordon Weicker, and I am honored to be your President for 2025/2026.**

**Please join me in the singing of O Canada and Rotary Grace.**

Head Table (L-R) : Bryan Walton, Martha Hall Finlay, Lisa van Hemert,  
President Gordon Weicker, Don Bacon, Ken Copithorne



**Presentation:  
Martha Hall Finlay**

**January 22nd  
Robbie Burns  
Day**

**Next Week  
January 15<sup>th</sup>  
AGM**

Click [HERE](#) to register for upcoming Meetings.

Click [HERE](#) to watch the meeting video.



**Bryan Walton** introduced our guest speaker Martha Hall Findlay. **Bryan** highlighted her extensive background in public policy, law, and international relations. She currently serves as Director and Palmer Chair in Public Policy at the University of Calgary's School of Public Policy, is a member of the Institute of Corporate Directors, part of the expert group on Canada-U.S. relations, and a senior advisor at Tenno. The introduction noted her previous experience as a two-term Member of Parliament, her work in the private sector as an international corporate lawyer and senior executive, and her wide-ranging expertise.



Martha Hall Findlay thanked the club for the invitation and shared her personal connection to Rotary. She spoke about the current global and political landscape, describing these as “interesting times” marked by geopolitical instability, changing U.S. politics, global conflicts, and rapid technological change, particularly with artificial intelligence. She emphasized that Canada cannot be complacent and must make smart, timely policy and economic decisions.

Martha discussed Canada-U.S. relations, noting that while challenges remain, opportunities also exist—particularly in energy exports, trade diversification, Arctic sovereignty, and strengthening Canada’s role internationally. She highlighted risks related to global conflict, AI, and weakening rule of law in some jurisdictions, while also pointing to Canada’s strengths: stability, ethics, and resilience. She concluded on a hopeful note, encouraging Canada to use current challenges as an opportunity to improve decision-making, strengthen economic foundations, diversify trade, and prepare for the future for the benefit of the next generation

**Lisa van Hemert** thanked Martha Hall Findlay and highlighted her impressive career path, noting her ability to balance education, family, and multiple professional roles across law, politics, industry, and academia. **Lisa** commended her work ethic, leadership, and respected reputation across the country.



**President Gordon** announced that we will be making a \$100 donation the CRCF in recognition of Martha’s amazing presentation.

Click [HERE](#) for the photo gallery

## Announcements

### COMMUNITY KITCHEN VOLUNTEERS

Rotary and Community Kitchens in (NE Calgary) are looking for volunteers for January 19<sup>th</sup> and February 24<sup>th</sup> . These three-hour shift requires a volunteer to be on their feet three hours and to fill food hampers. Over the years our rotary club has contributed 3-5 volunteers per shift to this charity. Your help will be greatly appreciated. If you can make it, please respond to [rjakubec@shaw.ca](mailto:rjakubec@shaw.ca) and I will put you name on the list. Thanks, **Rick Jakubec**

-January 19<sup>th</sup> 5-8 PM  
-February 24<sup>th</sup> 1-4 PM

### URGENT VOLUNTEER REQUEST FOR CASINO (JANUARY 22 AT ELBOW RIVER CASINO)

I hope this message finds you well. I am reaching out to kindly request your assistance in helping us find volunteers for chip runners (2), morning shift, and a cashier position (1) during the afternoon shift on January 22 at the Elbow River Casino.

Anar Dharshi  
Assistant- Executive Director  
Calgary Rotary Challenger Park  
**email: [info@challengerpark.com](mailto:info@challengerpark.com)**  
**phone: (403) 250-2707**

# Announcements

Best wishes in the new Rotary Year.

I thought an update on the Ukraine support front was due, as your Rotary Club supported these efforts in the past.

I just recently returned from Ukraine and Warsaw, where I visited the hospital projects District 5360 Clubs are involved in . A very busy trip to five hospital where funding is going for rehabilitation efforts.

While in Europe, I also addressed information conferences with many Dutch Rotarians wishing to participate . This looks promising.

Last year several Rotary Clubs in the Calgary area cooperated to raise funds for electrical generators needed in Ukraine. Rotary Sweden matched us and together we purchase 310 generators that were distributed via Rotary Clubs help in Lviv. We did this predominantly with the help of Ukrainian Association of Calgary by holding an Opera night at Cardell theatre

With the extreme bombing of the electrical grid by the Russians , the need is greater this winter, so we will attempt our third Opera night. We set a target of \$ 100,000.00 to be matched by Rotary Sweden, ( they beat us last year ). Currently the target has reached 75% completion. The first truck load is on its way. Our 2025-6 Opera night will be February 7 this year. This is the major fund raiser used for the purchase of generators.

I include a picture of a children's home receiving a generator last year, and President Zelensky visiting our first major hospital on completion. Pass on if you wish.

You have been your Club Champion towards Ukraine Support. If there is interest in participating and enjoying a Night of Opera, please let me know. Your partnership is important .

Gerry Darichuk  
Coordinator  
Rotarians Supporting Ukraine  
[gbdarichuk@shaw.ca](mailto:gbdarichuk@shaw.ca)

## • ★ • ★ • ★ • ★ • ★ • **ABIGAIL MCISAAC MONTHLY UPDATE** • ★ • ★ • ★ • ★ • ★ •

Hello Rotary another month has come and gone! I say this every time but I truly can not believe how fast everything is moving. It feels like it should still be October but instead it's already January! This month a lot has happened as it's been Christmas. During the beginning of the month I went with one of the other exchange students and our host families to a Christmas market, it was lots of fun, and was definitely a bucket list activity. This month I also celebrated my 100th day in Italy, to celebrate I made a cake to share with my host family. This month we also celebrated Christmas. It was not too different from the Christmas I celebrate in Canada but some parts were not the same, for example they don't celebrate Santa, instead they have a Christmas witch who comes and brings stockings full of candy. She comes on the 6th of January, the day the three kings came, instead of coming on the 25th of December. My host sister told me that she thinks the holiday here in Italy is mostly about food, which I could believe because we had a huge meal for lunch and dinner on the 24th, 25th, and 26th. After Christmas we went to the mountains, and I had lots of fun, it was very nice to see the snow. My host dad had also taken me to go downhill skiing for the first time.

Of course it was difficult at first and I fell quite a few times, but it was so much fun, definitely the highlight of this month, and so I hope that's not the last time I go skiing. Thank you so much, Happy New Year! I can't wait to see what 2026 will bring!



## VR sponsorship request

At the Rotary International Convention (with about 16,000 attendees from all over the world) this past summer 2025 in Calgary, I was super-impressed by the VR experience demonstrating the PolioPlus Campaign in action in a marginalized country.

Rotarians have played a leading role in almost completely eliminating Polio from the world, through donations and global collaboration:

*Over 3 billion Children Immunized; Over \$3 billion raised by Rotary for Polio Eradication; 21 million Children Saved from the Paralysis of Polio; 1.6 million lives saved thanks to the Polio Vaccines*

But we need to be persistent in finishing the job. That's why education and funding continue to be vital.

Our Rotary District (#5360) comprises 47 clubs throughout Southern Alberta and into Western Saskatchewan. We host annually a District Conference for approximately 600 Rotarians and partners. The District Governor Manon Mitchell asked me to see if we could arrange for the VR experience to be provided at our District Conference next May 1-3 at Red Deer, Alberta.

She and I have initiated a conversation with Brian Skalak of [rem5vr](#), the creators of the Polio VR experience. Their explanatory website is well-worth watching. Please be sure to find the right-facing arrow to take you through the slides.

[https://www.canva.com/design/DAGuMzUg91g/5lfzBIRviRIYQkMrWQ9a\\_w/view?utm\\_content=DAGuMzUg91g&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link2&utm\\_source=uniquelinks&utlId=h13770c6542](https://www.canva.com/design/DAGuMzUg91g/5lfzBIRviRIYQkMrWQ9a_w/view?utm_content=DAGuMzUg91g&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=uniquelinks&utlId=h13770c6542)

**We need sponsorship of \$5,000 USD to make this happen. We have received pledges of \$2,000 USD already – so need the remaining \$3,000 USD. We are reaching out to you to ask for your funding support please?**

For \$5,000 USD we would be able to purchase 5 headsets, adapted for immediate use ( secure head fittings and quality audio etc.) along with use of the company's free software/programs. The headsets will become the property of District 5360 and be administered out of the Rotary Challenger Park location.

Our initial proposed use will be at the District Convention in May 2026 hosting approximately 600 registrants. Not only could these headsets be used with the recently District approved Rotary Outreach Initiative under Cam Stewart, we also believe it can be usefully experienced for High School students especially through our Interact Clubs and for university students in our Rotaract Clubs, in meetings of our International Exchange students as well as at meetings of our 47 Rotary Clubs. Our members and our youth are a community of leaders and change-makers committed to building a brighter future for all.

**Your sponsorship would be visibly recognized with gratitude through each of those opportunities.**

For further information and questions: Madeleine King, Assistant Governor Rotary District 5360

Email: [mkingrotary@gmail.com](mailto:mkingrotary@gmail.com);

Voice & text: 403-400-4404



**Rotary**

Club of Calgary  
at Stampede Park



**Closing:**

**Next week: January 15<sup>th</sup> - AGM**

**The week following: January 22<sup>nd</sup> - Robbie Burns Day**

**Closing words:**

Life is precious; one day you're here and the  
next you're gone, so may we be  
remembered not just for what we did, but for  
how we made others feel....and how often

we laughed together.  
Please think about that as we

“Unite for Good”



# Calendar

## JANUARY

January 1<sup>st</sup> - No Meeting

January 8<sup>th</sup> - Martha Hall Finley

January 15<sup>th</sup> - AGM

January 22<sup>nd</sup> - Robbie Burns Day

January 29<sup>th</sup> - Colin Knoll



January

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

## FEBRUARY

February 5<sup>th</sup> - TBD

February 12<sup>th</sup> - Valentines

February 19<sup>th</sup> - TBD

February 26<sup>th</sup> - TBD



FEBRUARY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12 	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
1	2	3	4	5	6	7