

SUMMER 2026



Vol. 03

SUMMER NEWSLETTER



STAMPEDE BREAKFAST RECAP

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

SENIORS RESIDENCE SERIES

GLUTEN FREE IN THE COMMUNITY

TEEN EDUCATION FORUM



IN THIS ISSUE



The Calgary Celiac Association serves our local community through programs of awareness, advocacy, community events, education and research. We are a chapter of Celiac Canada.

CONNECT WITH US

OFFICE HOURS

Tues and Thurs
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Visitors by
appointment only.

GENERAL INQUIRES

403-237-0304
info@calgaryceliac.ca

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OUR TEAM

President Janet Lymer president@calgaryceliac.ca	Secretary Daphne Nakhid	Charity Administrator Dee Murphy
Vice President Bethany Saunders	Directors at Large Kristin Stringer Bob McEwan	Event Coordinator Mainey Cookson
Treasurer Brooke Barrett	Sonya Hope Janice Taylor James Gaby	Bookkeeper Courtney Brown

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MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

It is an honour to introduce myself as President of the Calgary Celiac Association. I am excited to work alongside our dedicated board, volunteers, members and community partners to strengthen support, education and advocacy for everyone affected by celiac disease and gluten-related disorders.



Janet Lymer

We started the summer on a tremendous high with Wendy T's Gluten-Free Stampede Breakfast. Welcoming 1,000 guests to a safe and inclusive Stampede celebration demonstrated what is possible when a community comes together with purpose. Thank you to every volunteer, sponsor, vendor and guest who helped make the event such a success.

Nationally, Celiac Canada continues to ensure our community's voice is heard. On May 5, representatives hosted their third annual gluten-free breakfast and advocacy day on Parliament Hill, engaging Members of Parliament and Senators on issues including the affordability of gluten-free food, tax fairness, delayed diagnosis and access to safe food. Celiac Canada also presented its recommendations to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance as part of the federal pre-budget process. This important work brings the everyday realities of living with celiac disease directly to federal decision-makers.

Closer to home, I look forward to welcoming you to our Annual General Meeting October 21. Everyone is invited to attend, learn more about our work, share ideas and help shape the future of the Calgary Celiac Association. Together, we can build a stronger, safer and more connected gluten-free community.

Janet

UPCOMING EVENTS



CELIAC CALGARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Virtually on Zoom



CALGARY CELIAC TEEN EDUCATION FORUM

6:00 - 7:30 PM

Virtually on Zoom



TEEN COOKING CLASS

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Highwood NW, Calgary



OKTOBERFEST

4:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Craft Beer Market 10th Ave



LETHBRIDGE CELIAC SUPPORT GROUP

6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Lethbridge Main Branch Library



GF MARKET

10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Marda Loop Community



AGM

7:00 PM

Virtually on Zoom

🤠 BUILT ON COMMUNITY: THE 26TH ANNUAL WENDY T'S GLUTEN-FREE STAMPEDE BREAKFAST 🤠

Wendy T's Gluten-Free Stampede Breakfast has become a beloved Calgary tradition, bringing the celiac community together each Stampede to enjoy something many people living with celiac disease rarely experience, a safe, worry-free Pancake breakfast.

It was never about creating the perfect event; it was always about creating a fun & safe experience, one that will live in everyone's hearts long after the event is over.

-Mainey Cookson

This year's event marked a new chapter. With renovations underway at our longtime Marda Loop venue, the breakfast moved to a new location in Parkdale. While a new venue brought its share of planning challenges, it also created new opportunities. The outdoor rink kept everything contained in one space, improving the flow from registration and food service, while a stage for live entertainment added to the festive atmosphere. The feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive. The event was also significant for Mainey (CCA Events Coordinator), who led the planning and coordination of the breakfast for the first time. Organizing an event of this size took

months of preparation, countless conversations with sponsors, vendors, volunteer coordination, site visits, and problem-solving behind the scenes. Her dedication, organization, and calm leadership ensured that every challenge was met with a solution and that the day ran smoothly from start to finish.

Dee (CCA Charity Admin) worked alongside Mainey throughout the planning process, helping with volunteer coordination, communications, ticketing, and all the many details that go into putting on an event of this size. Going into our first year leading the breakfast, there was some nervousness about taking on a 26-year tradition that means so much to the Calgary Celiac community. There was a lot to learn, especially with a new venue and a new ticketing system, and there were certainly a few challenges along the way.

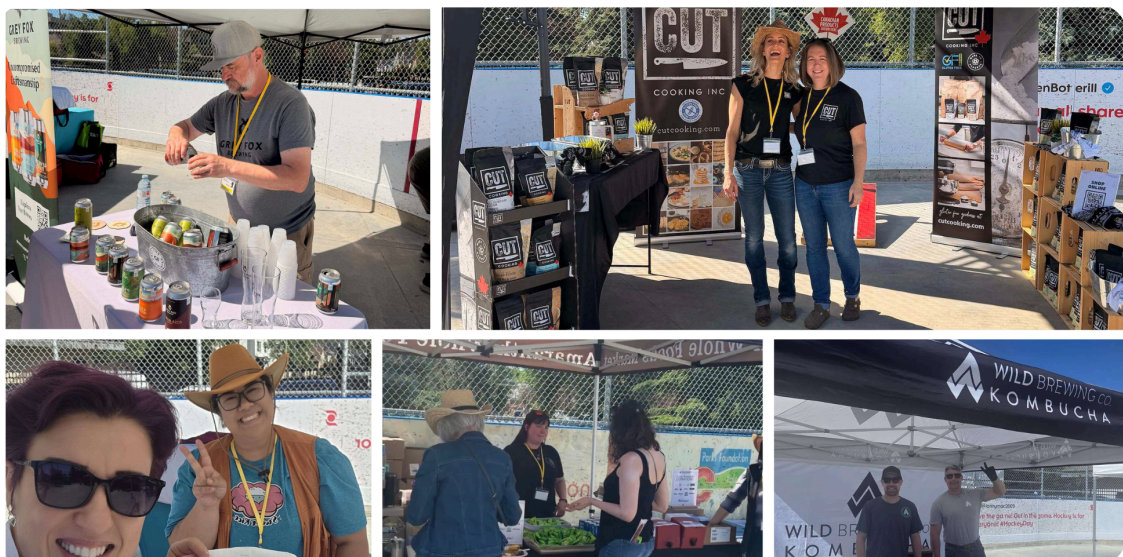


But with the help of Board member Janice and volunteers Wendy and Janine, that gave countless hours in the office, it all came together. Seeing everyone enjoying themselves on the day made all the planning worthwhile. More than 850 attendees enjoyed breakfast, along with over 80 volunteers who helped make the event possible, bringing the total number of meals served close to the goal of 1,000. Of course, none of this would have happened without our incredible volunteers. Approximately 85 people gave their time to help make the breakfast a success, from setup and welcoming guests to serving food and helping everything run smoothly throughout the morning.

We are incredibly fortunate to have volunteers who come back year after year, and many even reach out to us because they want to be part of the event.



Community support also extended to our generous sponsors. Thank you to **CUT Cooking, Amaranth Foods, Sweet Rice, Wild Brewing Kombucha, Grey Fox Brewing, Lokal, Spolumbo's, Harvest Meats, Righteous Gelato, Jack & Annie's** and the **Wildrose Lions Club**. Their support helped keep the event affordable while showcasing the growing number of businesses committed to serving the gluten-free community.



Adding to the celebration this year was live music from Nitelife, who helped create the lively Stampede atmosphere throughout the morning. Their music had everyone tapping their toes, dancing, and enjoying the opportunity to linger and celebrate with the community.

Perhaps the greatest success of the day wasn't the number of pancakes served, it was the feeling of community. Families gathered around the table, newly diagnosed members connected with others who understand their journey, and longtime friends reunited over breakfast. For people living with celiac disease, opportunities to share a meal without concern are rare, making events like this truly special.



Thank you so much for the wonderful Stampede Breakfast. The event was exceptionally well-organized, and we were very impressed with the experience. We look forward to attending again next year.

-Monica and Richard



As we celebrate another successful year, we also honour those who made it possible. What began in 2000 with Betty Saleweicz's vision has grown into what is believed to be Canada's largest gluten-free Stampede Breakfast. In 2013, the event was renamed in memory of Wendy Turnbull, whose passion for the celiac community continues to inspire us. To everyone who attended, volunteered, sponsored, or supported this year's breakfast, thank you. You helped make the 26th annual Wendy T's Gluten-Free Stampede Breakfast another unforgettable celebration of community, connection, and gluten-free living.

Introducing the Calgary Celiac Teen Education Forum

We're excited to announce a new Teen Education group created in response to feedback from our teen survey. Held bimonthly, the group will provide a welcoming space where teens with celiac disease can learn, ask questions, share their experiences, and build confidence in managing their health and gluten-free lives.

Topics will include: Back-to-school success; Holiday survival; Navigating Social events; Sports, travel, and performance; and more!

This forum is separate from our teen social events. Its focus is on education and empowerment - from navigating school, restaurants, travel, and friendships to advocating for yourself and preparing for greater independence.

Most importantly, we want to listen. Teen voices will help shape each session, so the forum continues to reflect what teens genuinely need and want to learn.

The First session will be held on September 23rd from 6:00pm - 7:30pm on zoom.

[!\[\]\(faf942dc3e59ce8eb64b4ac481eca7e0_img.jpg\) Click here to register](#)

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions vp@calgaryceliac.ca



Progress Toward Clearer “May Contain” Labels

By Bethany Saunders and the Education Committee

An international food standards organization has adopted new guidance to help food manufacturers decide when a product should carry a “may contain” warning for gluten.

The goal is to make these warnings clearer, more consistent, and based on the actual risk of gluten cross-contact. This could reduce confusing statements such as “made in a facility that also processes wheat” when the warning is not supported by a proper risk assessment.

This change does not affect the current gluten-free standard. Foods labelled gluten-free must still contain less than 20 parts per million of gluten.

The new guidance is an important step, but it will not change food labels immediately. Individual countries must decide how to include it in their own regulations.

Melissa Secord, National Executive Director, Celiac Canada has recently release a blog post detailing why it’s so important that the Codex Commission formally adopts PAL guidance. [→ Read the blog post](#)

Prefer to listen? This content is also available as a podcast.: [→ Listen to the podcast](#)



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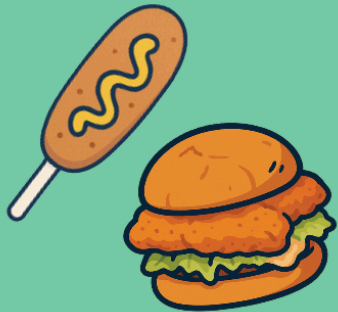


Sweet Rice

FAST FOOD RESTAURANT & DONUT SHOP

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McCall (North)
4204 12 St NE
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Sweet Rice
Oakridge (South)
#9 3109 Palliser Dr SW
Open Wed - Sun

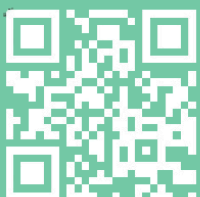


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GLUTEN FREE IN THE COMMUNITY



HULL SERVICES ADDS A GLUTEN FREE SECTION TO THEIR ANNUAL STAMPEDE BREAKFAST!

By Dee Murphy

Hull Services has been bringing the community together for its annual Stampede Breakfast since 1988. This year, they took an exciting step toward greater inclusivity by introducing a dedicated gluten-free section. I spoke with Daniel H. from Hull Services about what inspired the addition and what it meant to the organization.

Hull Services has hosted this breakfast since 1988. What inspired the decision to introduce a gluten-free section this year?

My oldest daughter was diagnosed with celiac disease in December, so gluten-free options are at the forefront of our family's mind all the time. She's five years old and thinks that the Hull breakfast **is** the Stampede. I was discussing the planning with my wife one afternoon and she suggested that we offer gluten-free pancakes at our breakfast. I pitched it to the rest of the committee, it was unanimous: give it a shot.

What does offering gluten-free options say about Hull Services' commitment to welcoming everyone in the community?

We try to create an inclusive environment for all the families and youth we support as well as the staff we employ. Providing food that is safe to eat for as many groups as possible is just an extension of that inclusive effort.

How important is accessibility and inclusion when planning community events like this?

I have been involved in this event for the past 8 years and every year we look at how we can make things more accessible for our guests. From offering more accessible washroom facilities to accessible parking, we want to ensure everyone can enjoy our event.



Were you surprised by the people who were excited to see a gluten-free option?

As a parent of a celiac, I can understand the excitement over a gluten-free option. What I find even more exciting is the commitment to having a gluten-free option that is safe for celiacs. It's common now to see "gluten-friendly" options in restaurants or at events, but quite rare for these options to be free of cross-contact with gluten containing food.

What went into creating a safe gluten-free serving area?

Our primary concern was ensuring that we eliminated or minimized any possibility of cross-contact with gluten containing food. We thoroughly cleaned and prepared the kitchen, sourced gluten-free alternatives, ensured all sausages served were gluten-free, and completed all pancake preparation the day before the event. Gluten-free equipment and serving utensils were color-coded and kept separate, and detailed protocols were developed for both preparation and service. Throughout the process, we worked closely with Celiac Calgary to ensure our approach followed recognized best practices for food safety

**When we first started planning, you stated that you wanted to be the gold standard of gluten-free offerings for stampede breakfasts. Do you feel like you accomplished this goal?**

I think in terms of the food service, safety and protocols, yes, we accomplished that goal. However, we decided not to advertise ahead of time for fear that we would run out of food, which resulted in the turn out for those needing a gluten-free option to be quite low. If I could go back in time, I would have advertised the GF offering so we could have served more in the celiac and gluten-intolerant community. That is on our list of lessons learned for next year.

What advice would you give to organizations that want to make their events more inclusive for people with dietary restrictions?

The first thing I did was get in contact with Celiac Calgary. They are a great resource for support and guidance

What message do you hope this sends to people living with celiac disease or who require a gluten-free diet?

That our society is becoming increasingly conscious of accommodating a gluten-free diet and that increased awareness of the disease and its impacts is what will drive this change even more. Gluten-free alternatives were never something I gave serious thought prior to my daughter being diagnosed. Now that I'm more involved in the celiac community, I take the time to educate people in my life about the disease. in.

Have you heard any feedback from attendees who were able to enjoy the breakfast because of the gluten-free section?

Yes, unanimously positive feedback for the gluten-free section. As I noted, we didn't advertise, so it was a pleasant surprise for many of our celiac guests.

Do you think this is something you'll continue in future years? If so, how will you let the celiac/gluten intolerant community know that you have a gluten free option.

100%. Our event committee agreed that this was something to continue with future breakfasts. Next year, we will include the info in our social media and work with Celiac Calgary to target the information towards the celiac community.

Do you think other large Stampede breakfasts could benefit from offering gluten-free options?

Absolutely! Now that we have done it, I can confidently say that not only is it possible to do safely, but it is also a great way to make a community event more inclusive.

What has been the most rewarding part of seeing this year's breakfast come together?

The most rewarding part for me was seeing my daughter get to fully enjoy the breakfast without packing along a Tupperware of gluten-free food. I can imagine how other celiacs or parents of celiacs feel being able to join in on the breakfast in the same way. Sharing food is a basic human social activity, so knowing that we were able to foster that without othering or excluding 10-12% of the population was very rewarding.





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CHOOSING A SENIORS' RESIDENCE SERIES

PART 1: LET'S WORK TOGETHER!

As we build the seniors program for the Calgary area, we really need the input of members of the community to help with collecting information about SENIORS' RESIDENCES in Calgary and area. Firsthand knowledge is often the best starting point. I know many of you have personal experiences that could help us in developing the best possible resources for the seniors' community.



These seniors' residences would include:

- Retirement Homes offering Independent Living
- Retirement Homes offering some Assisted Living Programs
- Assisted Living Residences and Programs
- Managed Care Residences and Programs.



In these beginning stages, we need people who can offer information about their own experiences of selecting and/or living in seniors' communities, as well as people willing to make inquiries about programs and services offered in local residences. This would aid in developing a checklist of programs and service provided in these residences, including availability of safe gluten free food. As these steps progress, we would need people who could compile the data, leading to a comprehensive list of facilities that meet the needs of an ever-increasing seniors' celiac community.

What we would need from our volunteers would include:

- Time of your choosing to make a few general inquiries about some of these residences and their programs.
- Occasional scheduled Zoom meeting times to chat about the information being collected.
- Submitting timely summaries of the information you've collected.



The landscape of seniors' residential living is changing rapidly. We'd welcome your being a part of mapping these changes and identifying safe destinations as we reach the next stages of our journeys. Join us in being a part of building this very important resource.

In the next newsletter, I'll provide a checklist of questions that need to be asked to make it easier to select the residence that best meets your needs.

JO ANNE

For More information, or to Volunteer, please email: info@calgaryceliac.ca or jamurray825@gmail.com



We Want to Hear From You!

We're still gathering input from seniors living with celiac disease. Your experiences and feedback can help us better understand the needs of our senior community and shape future programs and resources. Click the link below to fill in our survey.

[!\[\]\(95b425611cbd2b8716a140cf67c81822_img.jpg\) Seniors Survey](#)

GLUTEN-FREE AWARENESS TALK

Celiac Calgary is excited to visit the Kerby Centre Adult Day Program, operated by Unison, on Friday, September 25 from 1–2 PM for a FREE gluten-free awareness session for seniors 55+. **Unison at the Kerby Centre is located at: 1133 7 Ave SW.**



We'll be chatting about celiac disease, gluten-free living and everyday food choices, with plenty of opportunity for questions and conversation.

The session is being hosted for Adult Day Program clients, staff and volunteers, but if you're 55+ and interested in attending, please reach out to us. We'd be happy to speak with Unison to see if we can accommodate you.

A great opportunity to learn, ask questions and connect!



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GLUTEN FREE IN THE COMMUNITY

HOW SAIT IS PREPARING FUTURE CHEFS FOR SAFE GLUTEN-FREE DINING



For many people living with celiac disease, dining out can be stressful. Concerns about cross-contamination often mean passing on restaurant meals altogether. That's what makes the Calgary Celiac Association's annual gluten-free dinner at SAIT such a meaningful tradition.

For several years, SAIT's Culinary Arts program has welcomed Calgary Celiac Association members for an evening designed to showcase not only exceptional food, but also the care and expertise required to prepare it safely.

According to Culinary Instructor and Chef Jennifer Kim, the partnership is as valuable for the students as it is for the guests.

"As a school, we value opportunities for students to work with the diverse needs of our guests," she explains. "The industry must cater to the specific requirements of each guest, and this gives students the chance to work outside their comfort zone while learning how to create a safe, thoughtful dining experience."

Preparing for the dinner begins long before the first guests arrive. Although SAIT's kitchens are regularly used to prepare foods containing gluten, the team follows strict cleaning and food-handling protocols to eliminate the risk of cross-contamination. The kitchens are thoroughly cleaned, dedicated equipment is used, and SAIT now has a separate gluten-free fryer to better accommodate guests with celiac disease.

This year's dinner presented an additional challenge as it was held in a temporary pop-up space while the Highwood Restaurant undergoes renovations. Despite the change in location, the standards never changed.

"No matter which kitchen we use, we follow the same protocol to ensure the space is safe for our guests," says Chef Kim. "For us, it's a well-established system."

For Culinary Arts students, the event is also an important learning opportunity. Throughout their program, students spend dedicated time studying nutrition and dietary needs, including celiac disease, food allergies, plant-based cooking, and other specialized diets. Participating in the gluten-free dinner allows them to put that knowledge into practice while developing one of the hospitality industry's most important skills: understanding that dietary restrictions are often medical necessities, not simply preferences.

Chef Kim believes that perspective is essential for every future chef.

"What we do directly impacts the well-being of our guests," she says. "It's important for students to practice these skills before they enter the industry."



She has also seen awareness of celiac disease grow significantly throughout her career and encourages chefs to embrace the challenge of gluten-free cooking. "I think it's more fun to create a menu that's outside your comfort zone," she says. "It pushes you to research, learn, and discover just how many incredible foods are naturally gluten-free."

This year's dinner featured a brand-new menu created specifically for the event, giving both students and instructors the opportunity to experiment with new techniques while providing guests with a unique dining experience.

For Chef Kim, the measure of success is simple.

"Happy students and happy guests- that's the most rewarding part."

Thanks to SALT's continued partnership and commitment to educating the next generation of chefs, Calgary Celiac Association members and guests can enjoy more than an exceptional meal. They leave knowing that future culinary professionals are learning how to create dining experiences that are safe, inclusive, and welcoming for everyone.

Coffee & Donuts:

the **Perfect
Pairing**



Sweet Rice

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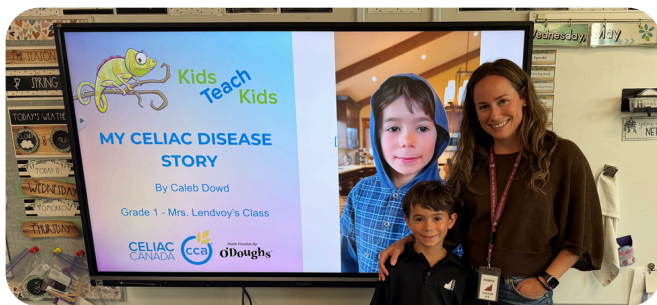
2040 - 2600 Portland Street SE
Calgary, Alberta T2G 4M6

Our Family's Celiac Journey: Empowering Kids Through Knowledge

Celiac disease is part of our family's story. My grandfather was diagnosed first, followed by my mom. Because of family history, my brother, sister, and I were tested and diagnosed.

This past Christmas, our family's celiac story entered a new chapter. Our three oldest children - Liam, Caleb, and Amelia - had been experiencing recurring canker sores, stomach aches, and ongoing digestive complaints. Given my family history, we had already tested the boys for celiac disease several times over the years, with negative results.

This time, however, both boys tested positive, as did Amelia. Ultimately, all three of our older children were diagnosed with celiac disease.



The improvements we've seen since adopting a strict gluten-free diet have been remarkable. After only two weeks gluten-free, Liam looked at me and said, "Wow, my stomach finally feels better. I thought this was just normal." Amelia's appetite has returned and Caleb is sleeping better with fewer digestive complaints.

A positive experience during this transition has been participating in the Canadian Celiac Association's **Kids Teach Kids** program. The program helped them understand what celiac disease is, why they need to follow a gluten-free diet, and how to confidently navigate situations at school, sports, birthday parties, restaurants, and with friends.

They were especially engaged by a wonderful [educational video](#) created by the Canadian Celiac Association that helped explain celiac disease in a way kids can understand. It sparked great conversations at home and encouraged our children to ask thoughtful questions about what it means to stay gluten-free and keep themselves healthy..

Programs like **Kids Teach Kids** are valuable. They move children beyond simply following rules and help them become informed advocates for their own health. Our hope in sharing our family's story is that other families may recognize symptoms, pursue testing when appropriate, and know that a diagnosis can be the beginning of feeling better—not the end of enjoying life.

The greatest gift we can give our children isn't perfect control over their environment—it's the knowledge and confidence to make healthy choices when we're not there.



-Justine

Celebrating the Volunteers Who Make It All Possible

Every year, the Calgary Celiac Association takes time to celebrate the incredible volunteers who give their time, energy, and passion to support our organization and our community. In 2025 alone, our volunteers contributed more than 1,660 hours across a wide range of events and activities.

This year's Volunteer Appreciation Brunch was held at the Hyatt Regency Calgary, it was a wonderful opportunity to say thank you to the people who help make our programs, events, and community initiatives possible throughout the year.

Each year, we have the privilege of recognizing two outstanding individuals who have gone above and beyond: our Volunteer of the Year and Junior Ambassador of the Year. This year's recipients are **Janine Gallagher** and **Ryan McMillan**.

Janine has been a tremendous contributor to our organization. As an active member of our Education Committee, she has helped strengthen our educational resources and shared her knowledge through newsletter articles, Celiac 101 sessions, and grocery store tours, helping individuals and families navigate life with celiac disease. Her positive attitude, reliability, and genuine passion for helping others make her an invaluable part of our volunteer team.



Ryan has been involved with the Calgary Celiac Association since 2021 and has generously volunteered at our Stampede Breakfast, food drives, kids camp, family holiday parties, and numerous chapter events. Always willing to lend a hand, Ryan brings enthusiasm, kindness, and a positive attitude to everything he does. By sharing his experiences and helping others feel understood and included, becoming an outstanding ambassador for our community.

Janine and Ryan are wonderful examples of the many people who give their time and energy to the Calgary Celiac Association. We are incredibly grateful to all of our volunteers for everything they do to support our community and make our work possible.

THE CCA IS SEEKING BOARD MEMBERS!

Have an interest in sitting on the Calgary Celiac Board of Directors? If you would like to be involved in the direction of our charity, please forward your Board Application to info@calgaryceliac.ca.

Click here for the [Board Application](#) or visit Our Team page on the website and follow the link.

The AGM will include the election of new board members, review of financials and year in review. Registration will open in September.

***A valid membership of at least 60 days is required to serve on the Board of Directors and to vote at the AGM.**



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

*Your voice. Our community.
Stronger together. ♥*


WEDNESDAY
OCTOBER 21
2026


7:00 PM


VIRTUAL
VIA ZOOM



STAY INFORMED



HAVE YOUR SAY



HELP SHAPE OUR FUTURE

MORE INFO & RSVP

[CALGARYCELIAC.CA](https://calgaryceliac.ca)



Thank You, Servus Charity Challenge Participants!



On behalf of the Calgary Celiac Association, we want to extend a huge thank you to everyone who took part in the 2026 Servus Charity Challenge!

Whether you walked, jogged, or ran the 5K, 10K, Half Marathon, or Full Marathon, every step helped raise awareness, build community, and support the work of the Calgary Celiac Association.

Together, our incredible community raised an amazing **\$7,981.80** for Celiac Calgary.

Thank you for showing up for our community and helping us go the distance!

Volunteers Wanted

CELIAC CALGARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Are you passionate about advancing Celiac Disease education across all age groups? We are seeking keen, collaborative volunteers to join our education committee.



Want to see what we're all about?
Come check out our next meeting!
September 8 from 7:00PM - 9:00PM on Zoom
Everyone is welcome. Please email:
VP@calgaryceliac.ca for more information.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Peer Support Session

- **What:** Peer Support Session
- **When:** Tuesday, October 7th, 2026
- **Where:** Lethbridge Main Branch Library
 - 810 5 Ave S, Lethbridge
- **Who:** Open to all members of the Celiac community living in or near Lethbridge



This session will provide a welcoming space for individuals and families managing celiac disease to connect, share experiences, and learn from one another. Whether you're newly diagnosed or have been navigating a gluten-free lifestyle for years, your presence and perspective matter.

Lethbridge Gluten-Free Holiday Market by Lokal

-
- **What:** Gluten-Free Fall Market featuring local vendors
- **When:** Saturday, November 7th, 2026 • 10 AM – 3 PM
- **Where:** Excite Lethbridge, 101 Exhibition Way South, Lethbridge, AB
- **Tickets/RSVP:** ➡ [HERE](#)

Join us for the ultimate gluten-free market featuring an array of products and treats, designed to cater to both celiac sufferers and those with gluten intolerance. Every vendor table will be clearly labelled as Celiac-safe, non-celiac, or both, making shopping safe and easy. Local vendors include Grammie's Little Bakery, Modern Whisk, REBEL BADASS BBQ, and more.

MEDICINE HAT: A SPRING FULL OF CONNECTION

The Medicine Hat Celiac Support Network had a busy and exciting spring, with several opportunities for people living with celiac disease and their families to connect, learn, and build community.

In April, Lisa Cerato and Grace Torrance joined the [Bring Back the Porch](#) podcast to talk about living with celiac disease and the growing number of activities happening in Medicine Hat. The conversation was a great opportunity to raise awareness about celiac disease and let the local community know about what's happening in the area.



May brought the return of a much-loved tradition: a gluten-free Pancake Breakfast! Nearly 100 people attended, making it a wonderful opportunity to enjoy breakfast and connect with others in the local celiac community. Pancake breakfasts were held in Medicine Hat before 2020, organized by longtime volunteer Jenna Arsenault, so it was especially exciting to bring the tradition back with the support of local sponsors and volunteers. The group hopes to make it an annual spring or summer event.

A focus group met in May, while an information booth at Medicine Hat Mall provided another opportunity to connect with the local community and gather feedback. Input from the focus group, the mall event, and recent surveys is helping shape plans for future activities.

For those looking to stay connected, the [Medicine Hat Celiac Support Network Facebook](#) page is the best place to find information about upcoming Calgary Celiac Association activities in the area. The page now has more than 700 followers and continues to grow. There is also a separate local [Facebook group, Medicine Hat & Area Celiac and Gluten Free](#), which shares information about restaurants and other gluten-free resources in the area.

Planning is underway for three activities this fall: a grocery store tour, peer support meeting, and social event. Dates will be announced on the Medicine Hat Celiac Support Network Facebook page, which now has more than 700 followers.

Interested in getting involved? If you'd like to help organize activities or be part of the Medicine Hat Celiac Support Network, contact the Calgary Celiac Association office and we'll connect you with the local team info@calgaryceliac.ca

It's exciting to see the Medicine Hat celiac community growing—and there's lots more to come!



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