

Highlights of the Thursday, 16 October, 2025 Weekly Meeting

President Maureen, welcomed everyone to the Kiwanis Club of Brantford's meeting for Thursday, 16-October, 2025 and Guest Speaker Becca McLellan, Executive Director ~ Kids Can Fly.



President Maureen called Faye Prince to present the 50/50 Draw with Leo Vos and Nancy Thompson holding potential winning tickets. Good fortune smiled today because, an enthusiastic, Nancy Thompson was able to find the "Joker" and won the jackpot. Congratulations and good luck next week.

President Maureen called Leo Vos to come forward as this week's Funmaster.

Funmaster Leo Vos opened with a story about a book of Puns that he had, many years ago, and luckily found a copy of it more recently. The book was written by Himie Koshevoy in 1969 and was collection of puns, humorous jokes and wordplay by author Himie Koshevoy. Koshevoy was a Canadian newspaper columnist, editor, and humorist. The book name is, "Himie Koshevoy's Treasure Jest of Best Puns".

Leo, well-known for his puns presented the following:

- A monastery in the English countryside has fallen on hard times, and the monks decide to open a fish-and-chips restaurant. The establishment soon became very popular, attracting people from all over.
One city fellow, thinking himself clever, asked one of the brothers standing nearby, "I suppose you're the 'fish friar?'"
"No," answered the brother, straight-faced. "I'm the 'chip monk.'"
- A young Mom and Dad, where having difficulty finding a name for their new baby and didn't want to use any of their families or trendy children's names so that named it 7 ¼.
Why you asked, because, "they just pulled it out of the hat".



Birthdays and Anniversaries

None today

Leo called for any Happy Stories.

- Bob Saunders was back from his “vacation” in the BGH and was looking good.
- Karen Adams was on Rogers TV program, talking about the Kiwanis Club of Brantford and specifically mentioning the Youth Writer’s Contest with the Prizes awarded at a ceremony at Brantford Public Library on Saturday November 15th.
- Ken McNaughton indicated that he and Robin would be vacationing in Europe next week and would be back in December.
- Leo Vos thanked everyone who has volunteered for the Halloween at the Village again this year. It will be held on Saturday 25-October, 2025 9:30AM to 1:00PM. Lots of chocolates have been donated again this year.

President Maureen thanked Funmaster Leo and called Joanne Murray to introduce our guest Speaker today.

Joanne Murray welcomed Becca McLellan, the Executive Director of Kids Can Fly, who will share with us information regarding the Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library in Brantford.

Joanne gave us a brief background saying that Becca McLellan is the Executive Director of Kids Can Fly as of September 2022. Prior to this, the role was held by Founder, Sharon Brooks, who retired after an impressive 21 years leading the organization from its infancy. Becca has a background in not-for-profit leadership and administration, and is passionate about community leadership and impacting young people. As a mom of three and a long-time resident of Brantford, she is excited and determined to serve the local community through facilitating children’s wellness programs and parenting supports in collaboration with the fantastic Kids Can Fly team.



Becca McLellan thanked Kiwanis for asking her to speak about Kids can fly and was welcomed by whole-hearted applause.

Becca started with her story and her personal experience. As a youth she was not encouraged to learn how to read, in fact it was discouraged. She was urged to get married, raise a family and take care of the home, but she found a bigger world in Books and at the library.

Through the books she realised that there was a bigger and very different world out there. When she finished public/high school and went to Laurier, this became her exit from her past life and led her to the new life she was imagining. This different life involved the eventual separation from her family and in 2022 she joined the Kids Can Fly team here in Brantford.



About Me

- Executive Director at Kids Can Fly since September 2022
- MA graduate (2025) in Social Justice & Community Engagement at Wilfrid Laurier University
- Mom of 3 + a husky
- Devoted to building up, Brantford-Brant County



Becca gave some details about the history of Kids Can Fly

- Founded in 2001 (Brantford)
- Led by Sharon Brooks for 21 years.
- Working Board of Directors
- 200+ volunteer positions annually
- Meeting the needs of the community
- Adapting & evolving programming.

Becca gave us the outline of the current programs and initiatives, working within the community, adapting constantly for today and the future needs. Becca briefly described each of the event shown below.

Early Childhood Education

Becca ended by giving us some further details about the Kids can Fly -Brantford-Brant organization

- +1000 children this year, are receiving books from the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, with 100 children on the waiting list.
- The mandate of Kids Can Fly is to help ALL children maximize their potential. We base what we do on the research of the late Dr. Fraser Mustard.

The foundation of his research is that a baby's brain is only 20% wired at birth and their experiences (or lack thereof) during the first six years of life set the stage for lifelong learning, health and well being. We also believe that parents are a child's first and most important teachers and therefore we strive to help provide nurturing and learning for parents so they can do the very best job possible.

Kids Can Fly is a catalyst for change, filling gaps in the community as they appear in order to advocate for children and families.

- In the 2023-2024 year, Kids Can Fly is proud to have mailed out 26,611 books through Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. In January, we celebrated a significant milestone: we mailed out the 250,000th book to a local child.

Becca McLellan finished her presentation by answering a number of questions from our members and was thanked by a great round of applause by the members. This, was followed by an Official thanks from the Club by Karen Adams.

The podium was handed back to President Maureen who thanked our speaker Becca McLellan.

President Maureen called for Committee Reports and Announcements:

- Nancy Thompson noted that we have our next Special weekly meeting at the Sherwood Restaurant Tuesday 21- October-2025.
- Randy MacKenzie asked that any volunteers for Ghost Encounters - Haunted Hayride and Barn - Brantwood Farms, Saturday 18, October. Contact Randy.
- Trivia Thursday November 20 get your teams ready. Contact Leo.

President Maureen, thanked all members and guest Becca McLellan and wished them well.

President Maureen asked If there was anything else for the good of Kiwanis, seeing none, she adjourned the meeting with the ringing of the Bell.

