

BCAA

Moving British Columbians *Forward*

+ BEST OF
MEXICO
SMART
HOME
TRENDS
CANUCKS
ON THE RISE

BCAA GO

Our
final
issue

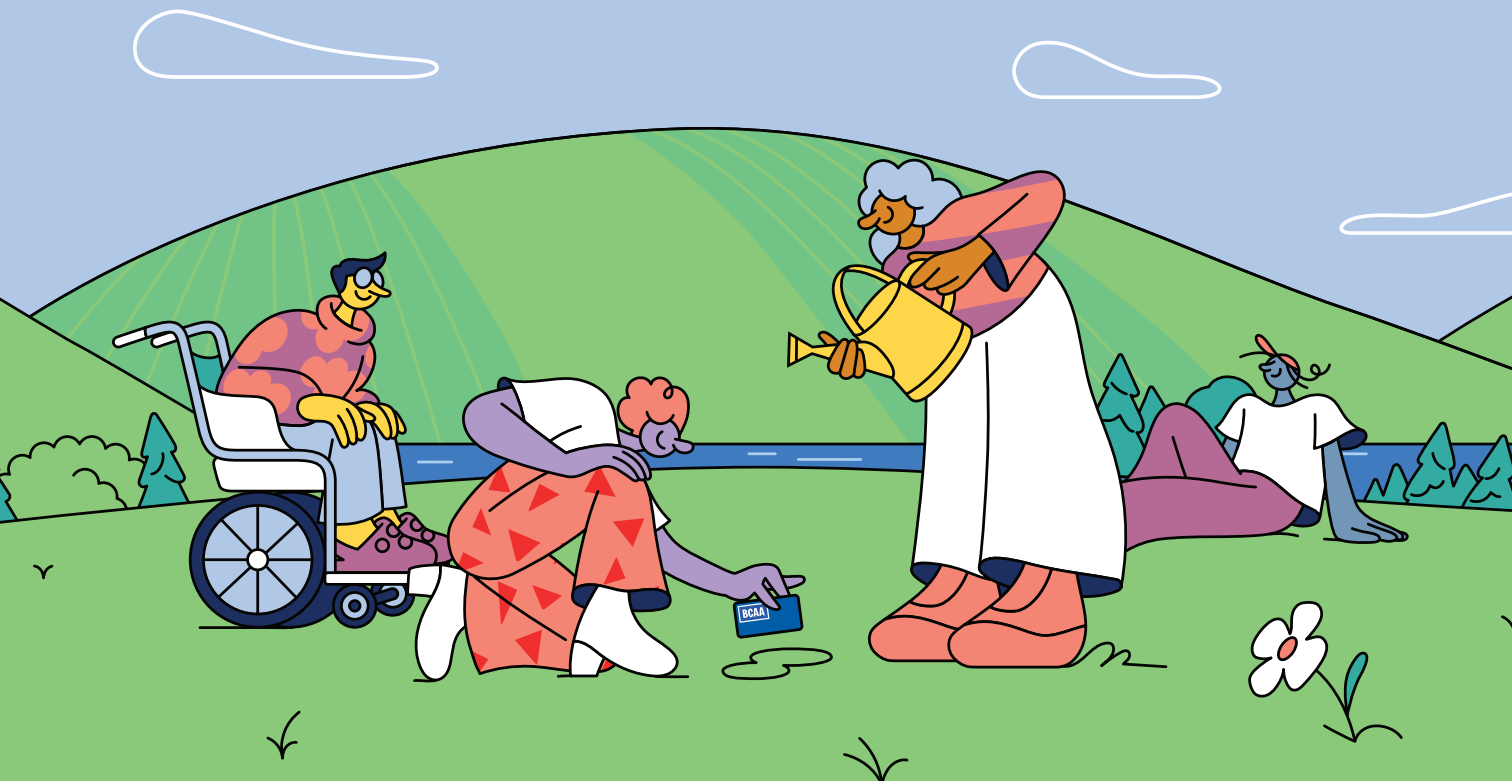
Introducing

BCAA GO!

A Membership for the next generation

We believe in the power of community.

That's why we invest over \$1 million into BC communities each year to help pave the way to a more protected, resilient and inclusive BC.



Moving British Columbians forward.
Learn more at bcaa.com/community

BCAA

Features

- 8 Canucks on the Rise**
It's a new era for the team, set to entertain – on the ice and in the stands.
- 10 Say Hello to BCAA GO**
A new Membership designed for the next generation of British Columbians, who want to move better & save more.

Travel

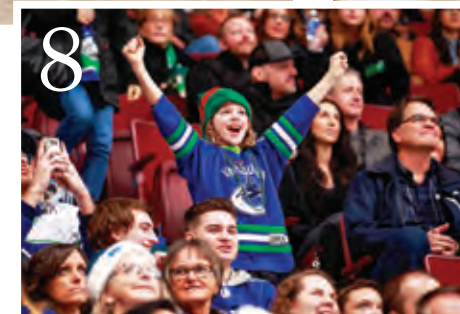
- 16 Mexico 7 Ways**
Because whether you're snorkelling, surfing, or just in it for the food – one vacation does not fit all.

Home

- 21 The Smarter Future of Home Security**
From AI to next-level robots, these are the trends set to make our homes safer.
- 25 Get Ready for Storm Season**
Six steps to protect your property from wind, hail and heavy rain.

IN EVERY ISSUE

- 4 Your BCAA**
Farewell to *BCAA Magazine*. And see you soon online!
- 5 Leader's Corner**
Focusing on what matters to British Columbians.
- 6 Seasonal Savings**
The best Member deals on gifting.
- 26 #BCAASavetheDay**
How BCAA partners with United Way BC to strengthen communities.



On the cover: Hello, BCAA GO! This new BCAA Membership is set to connect with young and car-free British Columbians.



Farewell to BCAA Magazine

Well, this is it, folks – we’re officially saying goodbye to *BCAA Magazine*. It’s been quite a journey. What started in 1915 as *BC Motorist*, the official Member magazine for motoring enthusiasts, evolved into *Western Canadian Motorist*; then the lifestyle-focused *Westworld* in 1975. And finally, most recently, the *BCAA Magazine* you know today.

It was after much consideration that we decided this would be our last issue. Times and reader preferences have changed. Today, Members read our content almost entirely online – on social media, in our monthly emails and in the *bcaa.com* blog. This means it’s time for us to evolve again, in order to continue delivering timely, informative and enjoyable reads, while also meeting our environmental impact goals.

While the twice-yearly print and online magazine formats will no longer exist, we’ll be bringing you more of the stories you love, year-round. You can sign up for our monthly emails, follow us on social media or visit *bcaa.com* for the latest BCAA blogs.

Wherever you find us – near home or beyond – BCAA will still be here to keep you moving forward.

FIND US



To find your nearest BCAA Service Location, visit: bcaa.com/contact or call: 1.888.268.BCAA (2222)

For Roadside Assistance, dial *222 on your cellphone within Canada, or download the BCAA mobile app: bcaa.com/app

WRITE US



BCAA
4567 Canada Way
Burnaby, BC
V5G 4T1

Email: bcaamagazine@bcaa.com

FOLLOW US



BCAA

EDITOR KIRSTEN RODENHIZER

SENIOR ART DIRECTOR SCOTT LAURIE

PRODUCTION SUPPORT TECHNICIAN INA BOWERBANK

BCAA MAGAZINE MARKETING

MANAGER CREATIVE SERVICES ERIN TARAMPI

DIRECTOR BRAND EXPERIENCE & MEMBERSHIP MARKETING
JAMES McDERMOTT

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT & CMO BRENT CUTHBERTSON

PUBLISHED BY



CANADA WIDE MEDIA LIMITED | canadawide.com

CEO & GROUP PUBLISHER RYAN BENN

GROUP VP, PUBLISHING & OPERATIONS NINA WAGNER

GROUP VP, FINANCE CONROY ING, CPA, CMA

VP FINANCE SONIA ROXBURGH, CPA, CGA

GROUP VP, EDUCATION & ADMINISTRATION JANE GRIFFITHS

MANAGER, HR & ADMINISTRATION AVA PASHMCHI

VP OF SALES ANNA LEE

GROUP DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS DEVIN STEINBERG

EXECUTIVE CREATIVE DIRECTOR RICK THIBERT

DIRECTOR OF CIRCULATION TRACY McRITCHIE, BBA

ERP SYSTEMS ANALYST EILEEN GAJOWSKI

ACCOUNTING TERRI MASON

CIRCULATION KELLY KALIRAI

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT HANNA DEWAR

PUBLISHER EMERITUS PETER LEGGE, O.B.C., LL.D (HON)

ADVERTISING IN BCAA MAGAZINE DOES NOT INDICATE
AN ENDORSEMENT BY BCAA

© CAA, CAA Plus, Away From Home, CAA Plus RV and Approved Auto Repair Services are trademarks owned by, and their use granted by, the Canadian Automobile Association. BCAA and CAA trademarks are owned by, and use is granted by, the Canadian Automobile Association.

© AAA, CampBook, Show Your Card & Save, TourBook and TripTik are trademarks owned by, and their use granted by, the American Automobile Association.

BCAA Magazine is published two times a year by Canada Wide Media Limited, #130-4321 Still Creek Drive, Burnaby, BC V5C 6S7. Phone 604.299.7311. Copyright 2023. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without written permission.

Send change-of-address notices (both old and new address), the covers of undeliverable copies and subscription orders to: *BCAA Magazine*, 4567 Canada Way, Burnaby BC V5G 4T1 or telephone 1.888.268.2222. Printed in Canada by Mitchell Press. ISSN 0316-0315.

Publications Mail Product Sales Agreement #40065475.

The statements, opinions and points of view expressed in articles published in this magazine are those of the authors, and publication shall not be deemed to mean that they are necessarily those of BCAA, the publisher, editor, Canada Wide Media Limited, or BCAA Holdings Ltd. The publishers cannot be held responsible for unsolicited manuscripts and photographs.

BCAA acknowledges that we operate and support Members and customers on traditional and contemporary territories of First Nations across what is known today as BC. BCAA is headquartered on the lands of the haŋq̓m̓iñ and Skwxwúmesh speaking peoples, known today as the City of Burnaby.



BCAA President & CEO Eric Hopkins shares a passion to make a positive impact in BC; (below) BCAA Insurance teams were in West Kelowna this summer to assist with wildfire relief efforts.

Focusing on What Matters to British Columbians

Our Senior Claims Manager, David, was in West Kelowna this summer helping our home insurance customers in the wake of historic wildfire devastation. Sometimes there’s no substitute for being there in person to help.

Not only was David doing an awesome job to expedite claims and answer questions about coverage – he was there listening to people’s stories, pointing to other local sources of support, reminiscing and sharing local memories and experiences. David and our team showed up not just as insurers, but as neighbours and fellow British Columbians.

And that’s what it comes down to for all of us at BCAA. We hear you when you tell us your experiences, and what matters, because we’re right here with you, living in BC. And when we feel a shift in our province, we shift what we do, too.

When wildfires hit, we were ready for this moment as an insurer. We paid claims, checked in on evacuated customers, donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to relief efforts and offered BCAA locations as donation centres. But we

also wanted to do more to tackle the longer-term reality of BC’s increasing wildfire risk from climate change. So, we entered a partnership with FireSmart™ BC, investing in its Home Partners Program, which offers home assessments with recommendations for wildfire mitigation. FireSmart BC has had triple the number of requests for home assessments since we partnered, and we’re excited to see how far we can go together to build more wildfire-resilient communities.

Another example: when we saw that BC leads Canada in the adoption of electric vehicles, we knew we should lead the charge, or so to speak. We assembled information and a buyers’ guide at bcaa.com/ev for those exploring this

new world. We also looked to our own operations and services, investing in electric roadside assistance vehicles, more electric Evos and taking Evolve E-Bike Share into more communities.

Recently, we’ve all shared the same worries about the high cost of living. It’s tough to manage right now, and many British Columbians are finding it impossible to get ahead. We see Members leaning more heavily into some of our rewards and savings, and that got us thinking. How could we put valuable BCAA savings into the wallets of more British Columbians?

So, cue another radical move. For the first time in our history, we’ve launched a new BCAA Membership option for those who don’t own a car, focused instead on access to Member savings, to take the edge off rising costs. You can read more about BCAA GO on p.10 of this issue.

This passion our BCAA team feels, as British Columbians, to make a positive impact for our province drives everything we do. I’m proud and excited that we’ve introduced

voluntary Impact Targets to track and measure BCAA’s impact in the areas of People, Planet and Prosperity. These targets ensure that we focus on what matters to British Columbians, and that everything we do has purpose beyond profit.

This winter, you’ll be able to learn more about the breadth and scope of our impact as we share our

first annual Impact Report. I look forward to presenting this new perspective of BCAA, and how we make a difference for British Columbia.

Eric Hopkins
BCAA President & CEO



BCAA.COM FALL/WINTER 2023 5

Seasonal Savings

BCAA MEMBER DEALS & MORE

The Art of the Present

What makes gift-giving most memorable in your world? An experience your giftee will savour, or a thoughtful item they'll use and treasure? We've gathered the best Member savings on both. For more deals on great gifts and experiences – and the latest limited-time offers – visit bcaa.com/rewards.

Gifts



HAPPY FEET

Earn CAA Dollars® on footwear, with 8% back at **Crocs**, 6% at **ALDO**, 6% at **DSW**, 5% at **Ecco**, 5% at **Foot Locker** and more online



SELF CARE AT HOME

10% off when shopping online at **Escentis**



COZY LAYERS

10% off in store and online at **RW&CO.**



SPARKLY THINGS

15% off regular-price jewellery in store at **Paris Jewellers**



THE COOLEST TECH

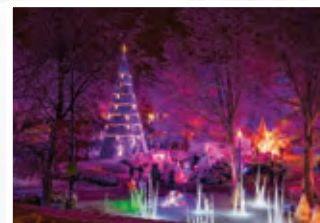
Up to 20% off in store and online at **The Source**



FUN TOYS & GAMES

Earn 3% back in CAA Dollars at **LEGO** and 10% back at **Puzzle Master** online

Experiences



PNE WINTER FAIR PRESENTED BY BCAA

30% off online; event runs **Dec. 8-23**



CULTURE FOR DAYS

15% off at **Britannia Mine Museum** and \$2 off admission at the **Vancouver Art Gallery**



PURE RELAXATION

15% off Thermal Journey or 10% off Thermal Journey + Massage at **Scandinave Spa Whistler**



FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT

Up to 30% off Movie Night Bundles at **Landmark Cinemas**



SUMMER ALL YEAR LONG

10% off at **Victoria Butterfly Gardens**



FOREST ADVENTURE

10% off one-day passes at **Capilano Suspension Bridge**

GIFT EXTRA SAVINGS WITH EVO CAR SHARE

Grab a new Evo Membership and 75 driving minutes for \$5. Already a Member? Get 25 driving minutes for \$10. Plus, BCAA Members get 10% off every Evo trip! evo.ca/shop



Hopes remain high for the 2023–24 hockey season, and the Vancouver Canucks are pushing to deliver, under the leadership of head coach Rick Tocchet and Assistant General Manager Cammi Granato (below).

Canucks on the Rise

It's a new era: inside the season with Head Coach Rick Tocchet and Assistant General Manager Cammi Granato

BY LUCAS AYKROYD

After a few lean hockey seasons, optimism is on the rise, and the Vancouver Canucks are poised to deliver – with blazing speed, big body checks and beautiful goals. Paired with recent renovations and enhancements at Rogers Arena, great entertainment awaits.

On the ice: bringing the thrills

As an NHL hockey star, Rick Tocchet never backed down from a battle. As the new head coach of the Vancouver

Canucks, this three-time Stanley Cup winner is determined to help his club build toward its first championship win ever.

“We have a lot of excited guys who want to change the narrative,” says Tocchet, who was hired in January and posted a winning record to finish off the 2022-23 season. “It won’t happen overnight, but

guys are pulling the same way.”

Hopes are justifiably high for young offensive superstars like Swedish scoring leader Elias Pettersson and smooth-skating American defenceman Quinn Hughes, who

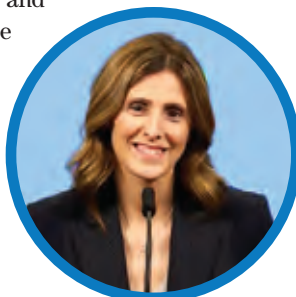
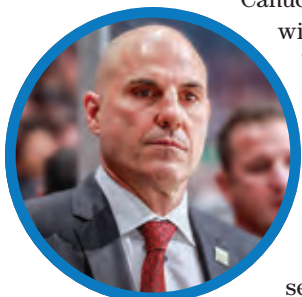
first donned their Canucks colours in the 2018–19 season.

Recently named team captain, Hughes is one of hockey’s smartest players. He’s twice set Vancouver’s single-season points record for defencemen, and could break his own mark again this year. “He’s a hockey nerd,” says Tocchet. “He wants to talk about his game and isn’t afraid to take criticism. He shows up for practice early. He’s doing the little things leaders do.”

Meanwhile, Pettersson – 2019 NHL Rookie of the Year – always dazzles fans with his creativity and power. In February 2023, he wowed the league by winning Hardest Shot at the NHL All-Star Weekend in Florida, with a 103.2 mile-per-hour bullet.

Tocchet says he loves Pettersson’s attitude: “For him, it’s not just about individual goals – it’s about team goals.”

Canucks Assistant General Manager Cammi Granato, who captained the 1998 US Olympic women’s hockey team to gold, before joining the organization’s front office in 2022, knows what a winning environment feels like.



“With the speed and talent of our players, we have a really dynamic team offensively,” says the Hockey Hall of Fame inductee. This season, she’s laser-focused on player development, with first-round picks like forward Jonathan Lekkerimäki and defenceman Tom Willander on her radar.

“We know it’s a journey, and we have to take steps to get there,” she says. “But this season, we believe we have a playoff team.”

In the stands: a new arena experience

Excitement about the season goes beyond the on-ice action. Granato, for one, is excited about recent renovations at Rogers Arena, the Canucks’ beloved home and site of the 2010 Olympic gold medal game.

Hockey diehards and casual fans alike will appreciate the arena’s huge new video board (120 square metres per side, versus 32 square metres for the previous incarnation) with sharper images and richer colours.

In addition, a new video “ring beam” encircles the bowl, and 64 digital video screens now grace entrances to the seating area. It’s an adrenaline-laden feast for the senses, with theme nights, giveaways and musical performers adding to the fun all season long.

Speaking of feasts, the Event Level Club, an exclusive 60-seat restaurant with à la carte dining, is another tantalizing addition to the game-day experience. Positioned right between the home and visiting team dressing rooms, it’s an ideal place to enjoy a hearty steak, salad, and glass of wine before puck drop.

The rink itself – including boards, benches, and penalty boxes – has also been upgraded to gleaming perfection. And come summer 2024, the upper and lower bowls will get brand-new seats. “It all just shows that we’re committed to making the organization top-notch,” says Granato. “I think particularly with the Event Level Club, it’ll be exciting for fans to be able to see players walk out.”



Canucks fans will love recent upgrades to Rogers Arena, including a huge new video board; (below) defenceman Quinn Hughes was named team captain in September.



MEMBERS SAVE

BCAA Members save up to 30% on single-game tickets to the Vancouver Canucks, Abbotsford Canucks and Vancouver Warriors lacrosse. (Some conditions and game exclusions apply – see bcaa.com/canucks for full details). Plus, save 10% on gear at the Canucks Team Store.

Throughout the 2023-24 season, BCAA will also be offering exclusive Canucks contests and experiences. Sign up for BCAA monthly emails and follow on social for the latest. bcaa.com/emails

Say *hello* to BCAA GO



A new BCAA Membership designed for the next generation of British Columbians who want to **Move Better & Save More**



It's a coming-of-age tradition in BC: gifting a shiny new BCAA Membership to a young family member, as they set off on the road to adulthood.

Until recently, this milestone typically went hand in hand with the recipient getting behind the wheel – and often, getting their own set of wheels. But young British Columbians today own fewer vehicles than any of their predecessors. They're also getting around differently than previous generations, preferring to hop in car shares, take transit, cycle, walk, and more.

"BCAA has been around for 117 years helping British Columbians move forward. For a long time, that has focused on the roadside. But younger British Columbians just don't have the same relationship with automobiles that their parents or grandparents did," says BCAA President and CEO Eric Hopkins. "They're moving, connecting and living their lives differently."

In the face of these changes, BCAA is evolving, with a new offering aimed squarely at a new generation of Members: young people who don't own a vehicle, and may not drive at all. Priced at \$4 a month, BCAA GO is now BCAA's entry-level Membership, packed with everyday-saving potential.

This new tier lowers the barrier to entry, while connecting more meaningfully to

the daily lives of young people, says Brent Cuthbertson, BCAA Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer.

"We know that fewer and fewer young British Columbians are going to own a personal vehicle. But at the same time, they still want to move around on their terms. They want to experience everything the province has to offer, and beyond, and they want to stretch their wallet," says Cuthbertson. "BCAA GO is our answer to those needs, focusing away from vehicle ownership and Roadside Assistance. This is about building a Membership for the next generation of British Columbians."

Connecting with the GO generation

The road to BCAA GO began with a couple of key questions: if a potential Member doesn't own a car, what do they need from a BCAA Membership? What matters most to young British Columbians?

Market research confirmed that British Columbians aged 20 to 34 are driving less; getting around more and more by cycling, walking, transit, and car shares. The latter came as no surprise, since BCAA's Evo Car Share and Evolve E-Bike Share have skyrocketed to success in several BC urban centres over the past few years. It was clear that discounts on Evo and Evolve

"We know that fewer and fewer young British Columbians are going to own a personal vehicle. But they still want to move around on their own terms."

***–Brent Cuthbertson,
BCAA Senior Vice President
& Chief Marketing Officer***



Recently BCAA has expanded its Evo Care Share to Evolve E-Bike Share – BCAA GO Members save when joining, and on minutes.



Hello, discounts on dining! BCAA GO Members save at Original Joe's, Freshslice Pizza, New York Fries and more.



BCAA GO helps Members explore BC on their own terms. Getting 3¢/L off on gas, at Shell locations, doesn't hurt either.

“I like the idea that by joining you are supporting local – homegrown BC businesses and people.”

–Ben, 30, Metro Vancouver

should be part of the BCAA GO package – but Roadside Assistance could be available on demand; only if and when they needed it. Then there's inflation. Young British Columbians are among the hardest hit by steep increases in the cost of living, and most are paying rent, at unprecedented prices. “The cost of living has been soaring year by year, in BC and across Canada. Young people are hard-pressed by that feeling the most,” says Cuthbertson. With this in mind, GO is BCAA's most affordable Membership ever: “We think of it as an everyday life hack, because at only \$4 a month, it has the potential to help you save hundreds of dollars a year.” BCAA GO comes packaged with a bundle of savings and rewards (see the list opposite); the “life hacks” that stack up to help young people get the most out of life in BC. “In our research, people told us they want to save on dining, entertainment and experiences in general – experiences are very important. And gas, as well, because sometimes they do have access to a vehicle, and everyone is sensitive to fuel prices,” says Cuthbertson. Young Members also want to share the wealth locally. “I like the idea that by joining

you are supporting local – homegrown BC businesses and people,” said Ben,* a 30-year-old participant in BCAA's market research leading up to the launch of BCAA GO. Of course, safety is in the mix with any BCAA offering: “People want to get the most out of what they're doing every day, and enjoy it, but they also want to stay safe, and have support there when things go wrong,” says Cuthbertson. This is why BCAA GO Members can easily upgrade to a Basic Membership if they run into trouble in a vehicle. “It's Roadside on demand, essentially,” Cuthbertson says. And, if insurance or towing become higher-priority down the line – as often happens later in life – it's easy to upgrade at that time, and get all those savings and benefits, too.

More Members for a better BC

What does all of this mean for current and longtime BCAA Members? Existing BCAA Membership tiers won't be changing. Basic, Plus and Premier Members will continue receiving the same higher level of service and savings they've come to rely upon, from Roadside Assistance and towing to insurance discounts.

Move Better, Save More, Do it Together

Here's how Members can save more than \$1,000 a year for less than \$4 per month with BCAA GO

Move Better

- ✓ **Free Evo Membership & 10% off Evo driving rates** – up to \$80 in savings value per year!
- ✓ **Save 3¢/L on fuel & more at Shell stations** – save over \$138 a year!
- ✓ **Access to on-demand Roadside Assistance**, including Bike Assist.

Save More

- ✓ **Save over \$1,000 a year** on everyday essentials, experiences, travel, dining & more with BCAA Rewards.
- ✓ **Save up to 20% on the best perks Vancouver & Victoria have to offer** with Evo Extras when you sign up for a FREE Evo Membership.
- ✓ **Earn up to 10% in CAA Dollars®** when you shop at select partners.

Do it Together

- ✓ **VIP access to Member pop-up events** at your favourite BC brands.
- ✓ **We reinvest over \$1,000,000 a year in community programs.**

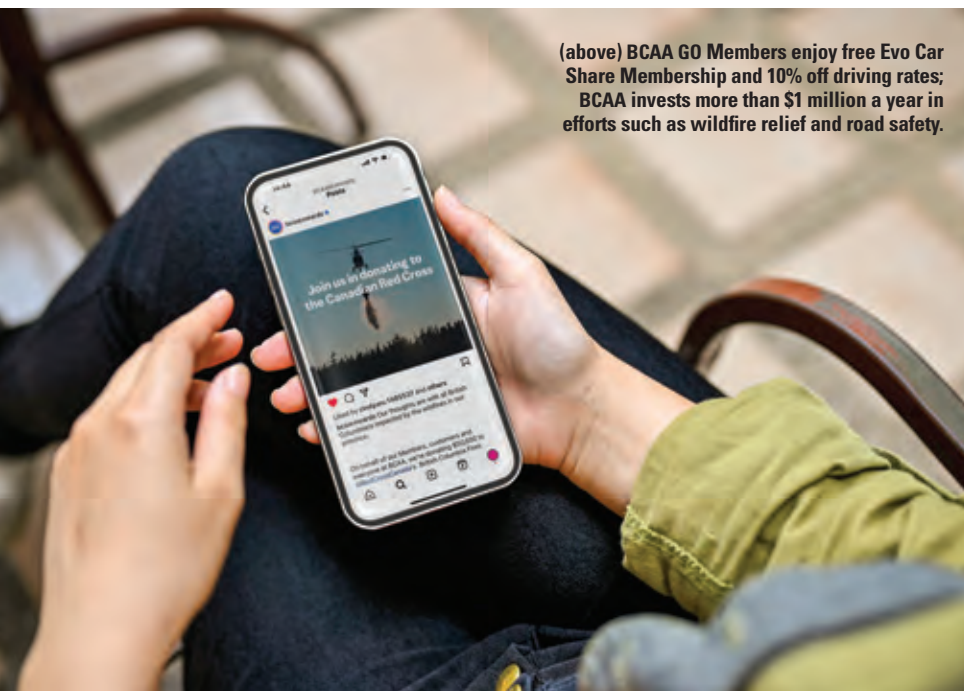
*For full BCAA GO Member benefit details visit bcaa.com/go



BCAA Members get free beverage upsizes at Blenz Coffee locations, and 10% off food.



(above) BCAA GO Members enjoy free Evo Car Share Membership and 10% off driving rates; BCAA invests more than \$1 million a year in efforts such as wildfire relief and road safety.



“We’ll still have the same number of service vehicles out on BC roads, helping people on the roadside when they need us most,” says Hopkins.

But a new generation of Members coming onboard is a big benefit for the group as a whole, because it expands the Membership pool, empowering BCAA to deliver more of everything it does. That means a future filled with more services, more savings and even more helpful community contributions across the province, from advocating for road safety and vehicle electrification to wildfire relief, United Way donations and more. BCAA invests more than \$1,000,000 each year to help protect BC communities and pave the way for a safer, resilient and more inclusive future.

“We’re a company that does good, so to be able to do good on a larger scale – just imagine the amount of positive change we can make in communities across the province, together,” says Hopkins. “That’s why we often say we’re creating a movement that’s eventually going to touch all corners of the province. We’re striving for that.”

Moving forward, together

Ultimately, BCAA GO should be a helping hand for young people, according to Hopkins. A way for BCAA to be there for them, the way it has been for previous generations.

“A lot of our Members joined us when they were really young, because their parents encouraged them by saying, hey, here’s a Membership that’s going to help you and keep you well-protected on the road,” he says. “This is the next version of that, for the next generation.” One that’s helping them save on the ways they want to move and connect – to the tune of \$1,000 a year in savings, for only \$4 a month.

Adds Hopkins: “It may not be based on all of the same things, but at the end of the day, it’s the same idea: to help them save and move better within the province, and beyond.” ■

PEACE & JOY

(AND 24/7 ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE)

Gift a card that *shows you care.*

SAVE \$20

ON A
BCAA PLUS MEMBERSHIP

bcaa.com/gift

Limited time offer valid for new Members only when purchasing a Primary/Associate Plus or Premier Membership. Not available if joining at the side of the road or any renewal. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Subject to change without notice. Other restrictions may apply. Refer to Membership Terms & Conditions at www.bcaa.com for full details. BCAA and CAA trademarks owned by, and use is authorized by, the Canadian Automobile Association. 266-23

TRUE CLAIM #986

The Thunder Shower

Rest assured, you’re insured with BC’s Most Trusted Insurance Brand*

BCAA Home Insurance paid out on 95% of claims for fire, water, weather and theft¹. See terms for details.

*BCAA, in association with CAA, was chosen as the #1 Most Trusted Insurance Brand by British Columbia participants in the 2023 Gustavson Brand Trust Index. ¹From 2019 to 2020, BCAA paid out an average 95% of home insurance claims related to fire, water, and theft. Past performance is not a guarantee of future results. Home Insurance is sold through B.C.A.A. Holdings Ltd. dba BCAA Insurance Agency, a licensed insurance agency, and underwritten by BCAA Insurance Corporation.

Home Insurance

bcaa.com/home



MEXICO 7 WAYS

BECAUSE ONE VACATION DOES NOT FIT ALL

BY KELLIE DAVENPORT



The underwater Eden of Cozumel's Palancar Reef.

SNORKEL IN COZUMEL

WITH BRIGHTLY HUED CORALS, sponges and sea life, Cozumel has been a mecca for divers and snorkellers since the 1960s when Jacques Cousteau first dipped a flipper in its crystal-clear water.

Situated near the Great Mesoamerican Barrier Reef, the world's second-largest, Cozumel was first settled by the Mayans, who used the island as a ceremonial centre and commercial port. With about 88,000 residents, the city welcomes millions of underwater visitors every year.

Though I've been enough times to be an honorary Cozumeleña, this visit is my first with my dad and newbie snorkeller, Alexander. To see the spectacular reef up close, we hop on a small charter boat, which delivers us a few kilometres offshore to the 5.6-km Palancar section of the reef.

On his debut open-water snorkel trip, my brave dad enthusiastically drops off the side of the boat and is first in

the water. As we skim along the gently undulating surface following our guide, it's easy to see why locals call Palancar the "underwater Garden of Eden." Through the shockingly clear water, we glimpse bright red, orange and fluttering fan-like coral, just some of the reef's 60-plus coral species.

Colourful angelfish dart around as if playing an epic game of tag. A critically endangered hawksbill turtle glides peacefully through the water beneath us. I flinch a little when I spot the spiky fins of a venomous lionfish just a few feet away. Beautiful – from a distance!

Though we don't see them on our trip, eagle rays, moray eels and nurse sharks often frequent Palancar.

After climbing back onto the boat, Dad and I giddily skim the sea-life chart to identify everything we saw. Like Cousteau, we are both hooked on this spectacular reef.

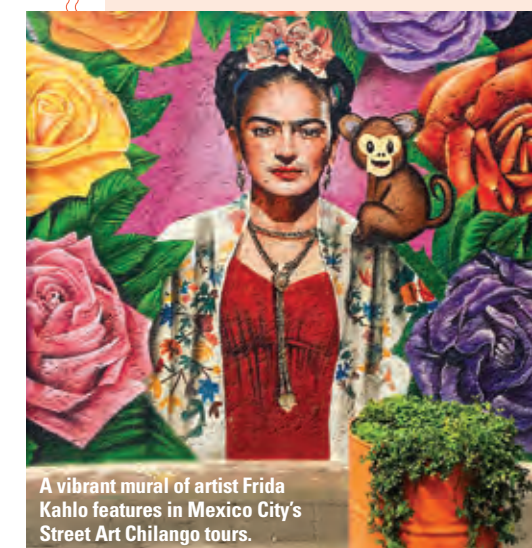
TRAVEL

MUST-SEE ART WALKS

1 If you're passionate about street art, **Mexico City's Street Art Chilango** offers the top tour in town. Every Saturday, artists from this collective guide graffiti lovers through the narrow lanes of Roma to reveal colourful, thought-provoking murals.

2 On the Pacific Coast, **Mazatlán's refurbished Old Town** is best described as tropical neoclassic meets 1950s charm. Once a month, galleries and shops in *el centro histórico* host a self-guided art walk to showcase local painting, printmaking, sculpture, jewellery and photography.

3 Every Thursday night, **Playa del Carmen** becomes an open-air art gallery. **Art in 5th Avenue** presents the work of both up-and-coming makers and internationally recognized artists. Genres range from traditional Mexican folk art to modern photography, making it the ideal place to purchase a meaningful, one-of-a-kind souvenir.



A vibrant mural of artist Frida Kahlo features in Mexico City's Street Art Chilango tours.

TIP!

Wherever you're headed, check travel safety advisories before you go: travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories

Sayulita's gentle breaks are ideal for beginners and advanced surfers; (below) Sayulita Surf School is one of several spots to learn, in this beach town near Puerto Vallarta.



LEARN TO SURF IN SAYULITA



Sergio and Patricio Gonzalez

"WITH SMALL WAVES and a sandy bottom, we have the perfect conditions here," says Patricio Gonzalez, pro surfer and co-owner of **Sayulita Surf School**, one of several schools in this charming beach town north of Puerto Vallarta. The lifelong surfer and Sayulitan offers some insider tips for beginners.

What do you love most about surfing?
It helps me relax. When I focus on riding waves, I forget about any other problems.

Why did you start the school?
I founded it with my brother, Sergio, to teach beginners who have zero knowledge about the sport. But we also offer advanced lessons.

Where do you start with surfing newbies?
On the beach, we practise basic moves: paddling, how to stand up and keep your balance on the board. We also teach newbies how to fall properly, which is very important. And we go over some "don'ts" – like don't float your board sideways in front of you, as a wave could catch it and hit you.



Any tips for paddling out?
With your chest up, centre your body on the board; paddle with cupped hands and don't drag your feet, which will slow you down.

What about standing up?
Pop up with spread feet, slightly toward the front with knees bent. But we remind guests that everyone falls – even the pros!

OFF THE BEATEN PATH

Venture beyond tried-and-true resort towns to see different sides of Mexico

SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE

If you prefer culture to coral, make tracks to this artsy enclave in the central highlands. With colonial architecture and a pink cathedral, the city is a UNESCO World Heritage Site rich in history and charm. Beyond the gallery scene, you can visit an olive oil farm or ride in a hot air balloon.

ZIHUATANEJO

Located southwest of Mexico City, Zihua (as it's known to locals) boasts the same white-sand beaches as neighbouring Ixtapa – without the crowds. The narrow cobblestone streets of the former fishing village hide charming restaurants and artisan studios, and anglers still gather daily on the beach to sell their catch.

ISLA MUJERES

Just across the bay from Cancun, this island (pictured below) feels a world away from the notorious party town. Coral beaches lend a European vibe and the calm water welcomes divers and snorkellers. Head to one of many fish joints along the port for some of Mexico's freshest seafood.



Puerto Vallarta is an adventure mecca, with outfitters offering rappelling, zip-lining and more.

VALLARTA ADVENTURES

ZIPPING ALONG IN A CATAMARAN, a loud voice booms from above: "WHALE! Starboard side!" Glancing down from my seat at the stern of the boat, I see the distinct outline of a massive humpback whale about 10 feet away. As her back slowly rises out of the water, a tinier form surfaces – a baby humpback.

This rare sighting of mother and calf kicks off my week of adventures around Puerto Vallarta, a city known equally for its quaint cobblestone streets and awe-inspiring natural wonders. As the whale family slowly dives into the dark water and drifts out of sight, our captain explains that we are on the tail-end of humpback calving season in the Bay of Banderas, so we're lucky to see them on this late-March visit.

The day after my fortunate whale sighting, I set out to explore Vallarta by land, air – and mule. My day tour with Vallarta Adventures starts with a speed boat ride to Boca de Tomatlán, a hidden beach about 45 minutes south of Puerto Vallarta.

From there, my group takes a 4x4 into the Sierra Madre Mountains, where we climb on mules for a short trek into the jungle.

After about 30 minutes, a towering zip-line platform rises above the forest canopy, and I bid adieu to my new equine friend. Safely strapped into my harness, I get ready to make the leap – or step – to soar over the treetops, some 300 metres above ground. Though it's not my first zip-line ride, it is the highest. After a few initial terrifying seconds, the ride is thrilling and the views are spectacular.

Back on the ground, the adventure continues with a rappel down a small waterfall. The simple drop is manageable, even for an inexperienced rappeller like myself. I soon realize slow and steady is the secret to success. My tentative steps are rewarded on the ground with a swim around the natural river pool. Floating on my back, staring up at the bright blue Mexican sky, I can't wait to see what day three in Vallarta has in store.



RESORTS FOR FOODIES

WALDORF ASTORIA LOS CABOS PEDREGAL

This luxe resort showcases the best of authentic Mexican cuisine. Chef Manuel Huerta infuses dishes with his native Guanajuato flavours, perfectly presented in the nine-course taco tasting. Thirsty holidaymakers can visit the Agave Study, an alfresco tasting room and bar dedicated to rare tequilas and mezcal.

GRAND VELAS RIVIERA MAYA

This family-friendly property proves all-inclusive can also be gourmet-inclusive. Internationally acclaimed chefs, including Maître Cuisinier de France Michel Mustière and *Iron Chef Canada* winner Xavi Pérez Stone, prepare Mexican, French, Italian and Asian-inspired cuisine. The resort's signature restaurant, Cocina de Autor, earned the coveted CAA/AAA Five Diamond Award, making it the first all-inclusive restaurant to receive the honour.

HOTEL SAN CRISTÓBAL

Located about 75 km north of Cabo San Lucas, this Todos Santos hotel offers all the Baja flavours without the Cabo crowds. Benno, the property's onsite eatery, specializes in classic Mexican cuisine infused with authentic flavours. Head chef Alberto Collarte recently launched a new menu spotlighting local seafood. Standout dishes include whole shrimp served alongside chione clams, mussels, garlic and bombay rice, or the catch of the day with lentil salad (above).

MEMBERS SAVE

Heading on a getaway? Pack BC's Top Choice for Travel Insurance, starting at only \$20 per trip. Kids are covered FREE and BCAA Members save 10%. bcaa.com/travel

THE SEVEN MOLES OF MEXICO

MOVE ASIDE SALSA AND GUAC! When it comes to authentic Mexican cuisine, it's all about mole (MOH-lay), a rich, complex sauce consisting of up to 40 ingredients, with flavours ranging from sweet to spicy. The states of Oaxaca and Puebla claim to be the origin of mole, but other regions have also evolved their own versions.

1 Originating from Puebla in south-central Mexico, **mole poblano** consists of 30 ingredients, including chillies, dried fruits and nuts. Regional variations also add almonds, olives and capers.

2 Commonly served in Mexico City, Veracruz and Guadalajara, **mole verde** gets its vibrant green hue from pumpkin seeds, cilantro, tomatillos and jalapenos.

3 **Mole negro** (a.k.a. black mole) is one of the most popular options throughout the country owing to its classic sweet-spicy taste. The Oaxaca recipe relies heavily on chocolate and spices like cloves, cinnamon and cumin.

4 Made with a base of rich beef stock and charred ingredients, **chichilo mole** is the perfect complement to braised meat dishes.

5 An Oaxacan staple, **mole Amarillo** is made with yellow chillies but contains no chocolate. The yellow colour and texture resemble Indian curry.



6 Popular in Oaxaca, Morelos and Jalisco, **mole Coloradito** is a sweet red version with the same base as poblano but with mashed sweet plantains to make a thicker sauce.

7 Another unique combination from Oaxaca, **mole Manchamantel** infuses fruity pineapple and plantain with the bitter flavours of chorizo, tomatoes and ancho chillies. ■

HOME

The Smarter Future of Home Security

As you arrive home, facial recognition and geofencing work together to deactivate your alarm and unlock the front door. Lights turn on, music streams, and your smart purifier kicks on to cleanse the rush of outside air, as your robot security drone settles back into its cradle – ushering you into an atmosphere of safety and calm. All without touching your smartphone or shouting commands at Siri, Alexa or Google. ►

By Janet Gyenes



This scenario might sound futuristic. But smart-tech companies are already leveraging artificial intelligence (AI), apps, robots, drones and other types of advanced monitoring to make our homes and apartments safer than ever before. And on the horizon are even more connected, intelligent and personalized home ecosystems.

Read on for a rundown of the major trends set to enhance home security, now and in the near future.

Next-generation robots

It's hard to believe the original smart-home robot, the Roomba, was introduced back in 2002. But like any gadget or device, robotic assistants are getting smarter and tackling multiple duties, from cleaning and companionship to remote monitoring.

One example coming to market: a new rolling robot helper from Amazon. Astro, whose name is a tribute to the dog in *The Jetsons*, has a built-in telescoping camera and uses “computer vision,” a type of artificial intelligence that recognizes visual data. Astro networks into smart-home systems, responds to commands and can be used remotely as a roving security guard.

Similarly, home security provider Ring has come out with a drone called the Always Home Cam, which homeowners can remotely control to fly around their home. “It can look if the stove is on, or see if you’ve left a window open or a door ajar,” says Erin Lawrence, consumer technology expert with *techgadgetscanada.com*.

Both gadgets are currently available by invite only, but anticipated in broader release soon.

The Internet of Things

As more physical objects become networked, allowing greater communication between devices, the easier it is to create a seamless system within your home. Known as the Internet of Things (IoT), this phenomenon is making traditional appliances and gadgets smarter and more connected. Today, there are more than seven billion connected IoT devices, expected to grow to 22 billion by 2025, according to experts. Everything from smart TVs and vacuums to doors and lighting are networking to become remote-controllable security features, essentially.

How can you automate everything without spending too much time swiping and tapping? Most security systems and



(Opposite left) Smart security cameras blend into modern decors, with ever-increasing cloud storage allowing for automated AI-based analysis of visual data; (clockwise from left) Ring's new Always Home Cam drone flies autonomously to offer remote monitoring of an entire space; Amazon's rolling robot helper Astro offers security and companionship; smart gadgets such as fridges are becoming networked elements in holistic and remote-controllable security systems.



devices are compatible with at least one or two centralizing home-software platforms, such as Google Home, Apple Home Kit and Amazon Alexa. Or, there are third-party apps such as Home Assistant and IFTTT (If This Then That) that integrate apps and services from different providers.

AI and machine learning

Advancements in AI have captivated the world’s attention lately. At the same time, cloud-based storage is enabling larger volumes of security video and data to be collected and retained for analysis. This means video is no longer solely for remote or real-time surveillance. Instead, AI pattern recognition – a type of machine learning that uses algorithms to analyze data, images and more – can automate security

features and integrate elements such as geofencing; or pre-programmed virtual boundaries surrounding your home.

For example, if an unknown vehicle pulls into your driveway, it could be cause for concern – or just a delivery driver dropping off a package. Now your system can automatically tell the difference. “Making those alerts smarter and more relevant to people . . . and having the ability to differentiate the type of motion and activity that’s happening on cameras, is a huge leap forward,” says Lawrence.

MEMBERS SAVE

Installing a home security system can qualify you for home insurance discounts. BCAA Home Insurance offers savings for a variety of home-safety systems, including monitored alarms, fire sprinklers, automatic water shutoffs and others. Plus, BCAA Members save up to 20% on BCAA Home Insurance. [bcaa.com/home](https://www.bcaa.com/home)



Biometric devices such as the fingerprint-enabled Eufy Video Smart Lock (left) are harder to hack than other systems; smart air purifiers, like this LG AeroFurniture model, can be pre-programmed and operated remotely.



Biometrics

Smart doors, doorbells and locks are now going beyond basic keyless entry to integrate fingerprint, voice, face and eye recognition. Since biometrics are completely unique to each individual, they're harder to hack than traditional keypad and app-based systems. And there are no worries about misplaced phones, forgotten passwords or key codes, because recognized occupants can always get inside.

Often, these gadgets can be wired right into your home's electrical system by a professional electrician – even in older homes – so there's always power or battery back-up in case of emergencies.

Advanced climate control and sensors

Carbon monoxide, formaldehyde, pollen, particulates from forest fires – concerns about health hazards and allergens aren't new, but now there are more all-in-one sensors integrated into home security systems, providing comprehensive protection.

"You can get air-quality sensors that will monitor the temperature and particle matter in the air in your house," says Lawrence. Air purifiers can be set up to automatically run, and if they detect particulates or pollen, they'll cycle up higher to clean the air.

"Some of the newer options out there are [integrated] flood or freeze sensors," says Lawrence. "They're little pucks that you put around your house, so if you have a leak in your

water heater or laundry machine it's going to catch it and alert you right away. . . . They're a small price to pay for a big piece of insurance for your home."

Smarter humans, too

Technology may be securing our homes physically, but there's still the risk of data breaches, cautions Lawrence. "Having complicated passwords is a small but really effective step in helping to keep things secure," she says. She also suggests using two-factor identification, and resetting security codes at least annually.

Because, as our homes get smarter, not only will their systems learn our routines and adapt to them – it won't be long before they're anticipating our safety needs and well-being, too. ■

PROTECTING MORE HOMES FROM WILDFIRES

BCAA has teamed up with FireSmart BC on the BCAA FireSmart Initiative, expanding FireSmart's Home Partners Program into more communities to increase our province's resilience to wildfire. The program provides free professional home assessments to help reduce the risk of damage or loss. Plus, homeowners can be eligible to receive a discount on BCAA Home Insurance. [bcaa.com/resilience](https://www.bcaa.com/resilience)

TIP!

In a severe storm, stay away from windows and shelter in a basement or interior room. [getprepared.gc.ca](https://www.getprepared.gc.ca)



Get Ready for Storm Season

Don't leave your home at risk of storm damage this winter – here are six steps to protect your property against heavy winds, hail and water

Storm damage can be devastating to a home. Leaks, floods, heavy rains and damage from high winds can all result in costly repairs.

According to the Insurance Bureau of Canada, 2022 was the third worst year for insured losses in Canadian history, resulting in \$3.1 billion in damage. Not only did 2022 see more extensively damaging storms and severe weather incidents, but there was also an increase in the frequency of costly storms across the country.

What can you do? Here are six ways to protect your home and wallet from storm damage.

1. Inspect the roof

Problems with your roof can lead to leaks, especially during a bad storm. So, you'll want to inspect your roof, eaves and downspouts to check for any damage – before and after a deluge. Clear any debris or blockages and replace any weak shingles. If issues necessitate getting up on the roof with a ladder, use caution. Better yet, call in a pro for help.

2. Test your sump pump

A good sump pump, found in many basements, will help keep your home dry in case of heavy rains and floods. Test your sump pump each spring to confirm it's working well, and clean out any dirt, gravel or debris. Consider installing a battery backup, too, so you know it will function even when the power is out.

3. Consider the trees

Take some time to care for the trees around your yard. When a storm strikes, dead or cracked trees, and branches hanging over the house or growing near powerlines,

could cause damage. Keep an eye out for mushrooms or discoloration around the trunk, as well, as these can signify a tree is in trouble. If a tree causes concern, call a certified arborist to inspect, prune or remove it as needed.

4. Check structures

Inspect any fences, sheds and detached garages regularly. Make sure to fix any broken boards or anything that could come loose during high winds. Also, check the siding on your house or garage and replace any damaged areas.

5. Keep your eye on the forecast

You never want a big storm to catch you by surprise. If possible, subscribe to weather alerts and when severe weather is forecast, take time to store or secure items like patio furniture, trampolines and barbecues.

6. Review your insurance

Check your home insurance policy to confirm what's covered before storm season starts and consult your provider with any questions. Detached buildings such as garages and sheds, are typically covered for their full value, while trees, shrubs and outdoor plants are often covered up to a specified limit. If a storm knocks out power for an extended period, your policy may provide coverage for spoiled food in your fridge or freezer.

You'll also want to review your auto insurance policy, because one powerful storm can cause thousands of dollars in damage to a vehicle. Comprehensive auto insurance policies usually protect against hail damage. But if a storm is in the forecast, park your car in a garage or consider investing in a portable vehicle shelter. ■

#BCAASavetheDay

United We're Stronger

How BCAA partners with United Way BC to support local communities

BY NEETI KHULLAR, CAMPAIGN MANAGER, UNITED WAY BC



Child Passenger Safety Instructor Colleen Blundell uses a doll to demonstrate how to properly secure a child in an infant seat as part of BCAA's Community Child Car Seat Program.

United Way and BCAA have a lot of history together – with a relationship that has been going strong for more than 25 years.

In that time, we've come to see BCAA as a key partner in our mission to strengthen and support BC communities. United Way BC (UWBC) serves more than four million people, through programs geared to urgent response, children, youth, seniors, poverty, mental health, and food security.

If you're reading this, thank you! As a BCAA Member, you may not even realize you play a part. But you truly do – and a significant one – thanks to BCAA's financial, volunteer and other contributions on your behalf.

For instance, each year, BCAA matches all of its employee donations to UWBC, through an annual workplace giving campaign.

For the past 11 years, UWBC and BCAA have also collaborated on the BCAA Community Child Car Seat Program, which provides parents and caregivers in need with safe new child car seats, along with education on safe installation and usage. Over the past decade, BCAA has

donated more than 14,000 car seats through the program.

Beyond these ongoing commitments, BCAA has always been there when UWBC asks for help in times of crisis, stepping up with volunteers, financial support and goods in kind. For example, BCAA donated hundreds of blankets to UWBC's wildfire relief efforts in Kelowna this past summer. And during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when local food banks were under pressure, BCAA lent its vehicles and staff to help deliver PPE and food.

It's been a great quarter-century working together, and we look forward to more in the future – with a shared commitment to building stronger, healthier and more vibrant communities. ■

HAS BCAA SAVED YOUR DAY?

Share your story and you could win a \$50 gift card from a Rewards Partner. Tag #BCAASavetheDay on social, record a video or email us: bcaasavetheday@bcaa.com

Travel coverage that keeps you afloatie.



Enjoy your trip with BC's top choice for travel insurance.

Get emergency medical coverage, 24/7 virtual care & more.

bcaa.com/travel



Travel Insurance is sold through B.C.A.A. Holdings Ltd. dba BCAA Insurance Agency, a licensed insurance agency, and is underwritten by BCAA Insurance Corporation. Insurance claims are administered by Orion Travel Insurance Company and its subcontractors, Active Care Management (2018) Inc. and Global Excel Management Inc. Policy terms and conditions apply. Visit bcaa.com/travel to learn more. BCAA and CAA trademarks owned by, and use is authorized by, the Canadian Automobile Association.

Renew ICBC Autoplan Online



When it's time to renew your car insurance, BCAA has you covered. Just choose BCAA as your preferred broker when you renew online for expert advice from BC's Most Trusted Insurance Brand.*

Renew online at **bcaa.com/car**

You can also call us at 1.888.268.2222
or visit your local BCAA Service Location.



BCAA Optional Car Insurance and Autoplan are sold through B.C.A.A. Holdings Ltd. dba BCAA Insurance Agency, a licensed insurance agency. BCAA Optional Car Insurance is underwritten by CAA Insurance Company and Autoplan is underwritten by the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia. The ICBC Autoplan logo is a trademark of the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia, used under license. BCAA was chosen as the #1 Most Trusted Insurance Brand by British Columbia participants in the 2023 Gustavson Brand Trust Index. 283-23