

# Leading realtor goes back to sales



**DAVID  
PARKER**

AROUND TOWN

**H**ard to believe it's been 10 years since **David Wallach** came to Calgary and joined what was then known as **Torode Realty**. I remember writing he had moved here from Israel where, besides running a successful insurance brokerage, he was president and general manager of a professional basketball team.

His impact on the commercial real estate company is quite remarkable in that he became a partner in 2001 when he and eight colleagues invested in the company, and president of Torode Realty in 2003. In 2004 they purchased the remainder of the shares still owned by **John Torode**.

He continued on as president and since then has steered it through a name change to **Barclay Street Real Estate**; took over the Vancouver office and opened an office in Edmonton; became the only Canadian representative of **Oncor International**, an organization of privately owned real estate companies; and launched a property management division two years ago that has since tripled its business. But Wallach loves selling and has stepped down from the presidency to focus with his fellow team members **Doug Grinde** and **Michelle Pink** on investment sales. They have been successful in a number of major transactions, including the sale of Avenida and Bonavista shopping centres, Temple Plaza in the northeast, and the Net Safety building.

They recently closed on the sale of Liberty Crossing Shopping Centre in Red Deer.

The leadership reins have been passed to **Dan Harmsen**, who is now responsible for the direction of the seven partners and total of 33 staff in Calgary plus the offices in Vancouver and Edmonton. His appointment is a good indicator of the type of environment Barclay Street offers its staff, as it is only seven years since he began with the firm as an assistant to **Richard Lewis**, who is now living in High River and associated with **Houston Realty**.

Harmsen joined Barclay Street from **HSBC**, where he was employed in commercial lending, attracted by a role that would offer him more scope to be a significant member of the business community.

He has been with Barclay Street for almost eight years and a partner

for four specializing in office leasing. Harmsen intends to continue leasing and has in his portfolio a 60,000-square-foot lease assignment in the future office tower at Canada Olympic Park, 15,000 square feet in Dominion Place across from the Calgary school board offices under construction on 12th Avenue S.W., and a total of 40,000 square feet over four floors of the 10-storey tower on the northeast corner of 5th Street and 11th Avenue S.W.

In the northwest sector of the city, he has listed 20,000 square feet of office space and 6,000 square feet of warehouse space in the UBG building facing onto Deerfoot Trail from Skyline Business Park.

**Prime Minister Stephen Harper** appointed **Hugh MacDiarmid** as president and CEO of Atomic Energy Canada a year ago after he had a 30-year career with a broad range of executive and professional experience focused on technology-intensive businesses and transportation-related industries.

On Feb. 3 MacDiarmid will address a Calgary Chamber of Commerce/

Van Horne Institute luncheon at the chamber. His topic, Seizing the Opportunity: Canada's Nuclear Future, will include a discussion of nuclear power in the energy mix and how Canada is uniquely positioned to take advantage of the immense economic benefits it offers.

On my visit last June to **McAra Printing** to write a piece about the celebration of its 100th anniversary in business, marketing director **Graham Smith** told me it planned to produce an appointment book in collaboration with the Calgary Sketch Club, that was also started in 1909.

McAra photographed submitted artwork by club members and two full-colour reproductions are printed across from each week's diary. McAra gave copies away as corporate Christmas gifts and the 1,000 copies it donated to the sketch club were sold at \$10 each. It was a sellout at its December meeting, so the club benefited to the tune of \$10,000.

In early November, **Unni Soelberg-Claridge** threw a great party in the

penthouse of the Fairmont Palliser to celebrate the 20th anniversary of her company, **EventPlan**.

In her remarks she mentioned that her husband, **Frederic Claridge**, had been offered the opportunity to transfer to London, with **Worley Parsons Komex** where he has served as director of environment and water resources. Decision made and they are both off to London for a couple of years.

Tough to operate a successful business from that distance, so Soelberg-Claridge has sold EventPlan to **Susan Ross**, a colleague who is also a certified meeting professional who owns and operates **Meeting Solutions**.

**Karen Barry of K.J. Barry Commercial Real Estate** is back from a Toronto trip where she became chair-elect of the Canadian Commercial Council of the Canadian Real Estate Association that represents 6,000 commercial real estate agents across the country.

DAVID PARKER APPEARS TUESDAY, THURSDAY AND FRIDAY. HE CAN BE REACHED AT 403-830-4622 OR E-MAIL INFO@DAVIDPARKER.CA.