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Plaza Bowling rolls into a new era

New owner brings changes, but keeps retro decor



Terry Stride (left) is handing over Plaza Bowling Co. (104 St & 118 Ave) to his son, Trevor Stride (right). | Dave Von Bieker

DAVE VON BIEKER

Not every family can work together, but the Strides have had a lot of practice through owning and operating Plaza Bowling Co. for 58 years.

Now after 40 years, Terry Stride has handed the keys to his son Trevor. “I think it’s fabulous,” the senior Stride said. “I have to, probably at times, just force myself to step back and let him do what he wants to do—the same thing that my dad did.”

When Terry’s father Lawrence offered him the job in 1977, he recalled, “I thought I would try it for one year and I’m still here.”

Lawrence Stride opened the lanes in 1959, with investment from his own father, making Plaza Bowl a family business spanning four generations.

Two years ago, the elder Stride

was toying with retirement. The prospect of losing all this history woke his son to the possibility of a new future with Plaza Bowling Co.

That future is now, and the son has brought big changes to the lanes.

First, there’s hand-picked craft beer from four Alberta brewers. Second, marvellously melty gourmet grilled cheese sandwiches have brought focus to the food. Third, indie music provides a new soundtrack. Add some flat screen TVs for the big game, and you have a winning combo.

Not everything is changing. “It’s such a time warp when you come down here, in a good way,” the younger Stride tells me. Original hardwood benches and retro drapes are still intact. “This is a beautiful space, and there’s no need to change any of that,” he said, “but we really wanted to focus on the social end of bowling.”

Promotions like The Afternoon, where beers and games are just \$4.95 each until 5 pm, make the bowling lane an affordable place to socialize.

The sandwiches alone are worth a trip. I order the classic, with two-year aged cheddar oozing between slices of crispy sourdough from Alberta Avenue’s Popular Bakery.

“It’s just taking great ingredients and letting them do the work,” said the younger Stride. He was an early partner in Famoso, learning from their success. “For me it was about acquiring a skill set and really making sure I had a really good foundation and then trying to do my own thing.”

The new direction is already working.

“I’ve been blown away by the way people have responded, and how quickly the city’s mobilized and started making their way down,”

said the younger Stride. His father agrees: “I’m just ecstatic that it’s happening!” It’s here that the pride of a father kicks in. “Right now he’s blowing the doors off!”

Some day soon, the elder Stride will end his final shift and walk out the front door, leaving nearly 60 years of history behind. Had his son not carried on the Plaza legacy, “it would have been such a different experience,” he reflected. “I think it would be a combination of shock and sadness. But now—this is just nothing but good time right now.”

Find hours and rates on the new website at plazabowlingco.ca

Dave holds a bachelor of theology and is artistic director of Bleeding Heart Art Space. He lives in the inner city with his wife, two children and dog.

INSIDE

CITY ELECTION
Learn about the candidates in your ward >> P2

MARCH FESTIVALS
Read about a new play at SkirtsAfire & celebrate the Irish at Serca >> P4-5



EDITORIAL
Sierra Bilton explores solidarity on International Women’s Day >> P6

MENTAL HEALTH
Get some tips for mental health resources >> P7



BUSINESS
Curious about end-of-life concierge services? Read more >> P10



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Candidates declare intentions for election

October city election already has candidates lining up

TALEA MEDYNSKI

Although the Edmonton municipal election isn't scheduled until Oct. 16, some candidates have already announced their intentions to run in Ward 7 and Ward 2.

"I'm looking forward to it, I'm certainly excited about it," said Ward 7 Coun. Tony Caterina.

Caterina said he is running again and there are initiatives he wants to see through, like the Norwood Boulevard corridor, repurposing of Northlands, completion of Borden Park, and Stadium Transit Oriented Development (TOD).

Caterina said he plans to keep addressing safety and security of the Coliseum and Stadium LRT stations by adding more security

officers. Another focus is infill and neighbourhood growth. Caterina said some election issues may involve safety and policing, Northlands' future, neighbourhood renewal, and development of a new transit garage along Fort Road.

Mimi Williams, a consultant, declared her intention to run for council on Feb. 12.

"I've lived in or around Ward 7 since '94. I've watched us grow, watched us take setbacks. I believe the residents of this ward deserve someone who lives in the community and hears them," said Williams.

Williams said she plans to focus on openness, transparency, and accountability.

"I'm concerned there's been a lack of transparency in city hall," she said.

Another issue is Northlands'

future.

"I believe Northlands has been a good neighbour and an important part of our community. I want to make sure the communities surrounding Northlands have a strong voice on city council."

Williams also discussed having more women on city council and said out of 265 people who've served on council, 29 have been women and three have been non-Caucasian.

"Overall, it's important for all of us to see ourselves in our democratic institution," she said.

Kris Andreychuk is a supervisor of community safety for the city and a supervisor of NET (Neighbourhood Empowerment Team) social workers. In addition to working in the 118 Avenue area, he lives

in the community.

Andreychuk said he wants to focus on crime prevention, social justice, and representation.

Andreychuk added [he'd] "like to do a lot of things, and they all start with listening." He explained some people in the ward have said they want more small businesses and tighter bylaws to "discourage absentee landlords and derelict housing."

He explained Ward 7 communities may have issues, but they also have potential.

"There's lots to be proud of, but that pride needs to be put to work in order to bring this to life."

In Ward 2, Coun. Bev Esslinger said she is planning on running. She said she's feeling positive about the upcoming election and is encouraging

more women to run.

Esslinger said some of her focuses include traffic safety, lobbying for a northwest LRT line, and the Blatchford redevelopment.

"We're creating a very green community and transforming the land into a great development," said Esslinger.

She said some election issues may include densification of mature neighbourhoods and traffic and safety.

Shelley Tupper is also running for Ward 2, but wasn't reached in time for publication.

Candidates have until Sept. 18 to file their intentions to run for council.

Talea is the Rat Creek Press editor. She loves sharing the stories of our diverse neighbourhoods.



Coun. Tony Caterina will once again be running for Ward 7. | Supplied



Kris Andreychuk, a supervisor for NET and community safety, will be running for Ward 7. | Arda Ozum



Coun. Bev Esslinger is planning to run again for Ward 2. | Supplied



Mimi Williams, a consultant, announced her intention to run on Feb. 12. | Abdul Malik

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ABOUT US

We are a non-profit community newspaper serving Alberta Avenue, Delton, Eastwood, Elmwood Park, Parkdale-Cromdale, Spruce Avenue, and Westwood. The opinions expressed in the paper are those of the people named as authors of the articles and do not necessarily reflect those of the board or staff.

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Build Community, Encourage Communication, Increase Capacity.

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Our writers vary from trained journalists to community residents with varying backgrounds. We strive to be a place where individuals can learn new skills and acquire experience—whether in writing, editing, photography, or illustration. We welcome letters, unsolicited submissions, and story ideas.

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Community Liaison Constable is all ears

Constable Freddie Challenger says he is here to listen

HAMDİ ISSAWI

Community Liaison Constable (CLC) Freddie Challenger wants neighbourhood residents to know he's available to talk and to listen.

Assigned to the F3 district, which includes Alberta Avenue, Westwood, Elmwood, Eastwood, Delton, Parkdale, and Spruce Avenue, Challenger is responsible for working with the community to find lasting solutions to crime and disorder.

"The liaison constable is the middleman between the Edmonton Police Service and the community," Challenger said. As such, he acts as a point of contact for residents, neigh-

bourhood businesses, and social agencies.

"Say somebody calls in concerned—they see somebody who is living in a house and it looks like the house is falling apart. I'll go there with Alberta Occupational Health and Safety and, if they're on [Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped], go there with AISH to make sure that they're getting their payments," he explained.

Formerly a patrol officer in the district, Challenger started as CLC last June, but he is no stranger to the role. Before moving to Edmonton, he served as a community constable in Australia.

"Mostly just being an ear,

because lots of people have concerns," he said. "And it might not be police related to the point where people need to go investigate it. So just being there and listening to what they have to say."

Challenger said he is impressed with the level of engagement he's seen from the communities, but there is room for improvement. One of his goals is to foster a greater sense of community consciousness, starting with neighbourhood awareness.

"Making people aware of their surroundings, aware of what's happening with their neighbour, because I find that a lot of people don't communicate with their neighbour as

much," he said. "The more people know each other, then there are more eyes out there that are willing to call in if they see something that's out of the ordinary. If everybody is just keeping to themselves, then it makes our job a lot harder."

That said, people should still report complaints and emergencies using designated channels for an appropriate response.

"When you go through the complaint line and 911, that's our way of collecting data for our stats so we know that there's an issue in that neighbourhood."

However, Challenger is accessible. On the first Tuesday of every month, The Carrot Café hosts Coffee with a Cop, where

community members can speak with Challenger from 10:30 am to noon.

Through these sessions, he said he hopes to clear up some misconceptions people have of the police.

"I'm approachable," he said. "And I'll listen to what you have to say."

Hamdi is a journalism student at MacEwan University. He cut his teeth as a contributor on Terra Informa, an award-winning, environmental news magazine. He's also written for The Gateway Online and The Griff. Find Hamdi on Twitter @hamdiissawi.



CLC Freddie Challenger invites community members to join him at The Carrot on the first Tuesday of every month. | Hamdi Issawi

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SkirtsAfire premieres a new play

The Mommy Monologues explores facets of modern motherhood

HAMDIISSAWI

Like a prism to light, the main stage production of this year's SkirtsAfire HerArts Festival presents 10 unique stories from as many local writers on the topic of motherhood.

Directed by Glenda Stirling, The Mommy Monologues premieres at the Alberta Avenue Community Centre Cabaret Theatre and runs March 2-12. The two-hour show, written and performed by women, features one song and nine monologues in genres ranging from comedy to thriller.

Stirling, who also wrote a piece for the production, said not all of the pieces are delivered from a mother's perspective.

"In several of the pieces, they're not mothers. They're people who don't have chil-

dren, which is interesting given that it's called The Mommy Monologues, but not everyone's a mommy," Stirling said. "Some of the [characters] are speaking about their own mothers, some of them are speaking about the things that are hard about children, or being unable to have children," she added.

Festival director Annette Loiselle came up with the idea for the show and commissioned the pieces after discovering a 2015 study that found women occupy less than 35 per cent of key creative roles in Canadian theatre, despite making up the majority of audiences.

A mother herself, Loiselle said the theme is based on women who spend more time focused on their children than themselves.

"I wanted to be able to create

a story that would service those women in our audience that are hungry to see their own stories not the stage," Loiselle said. "I really was excited by the idea of bringing so many writers together. There's a lot of very talented women writing in Edmonton so I wanted to involve as many of them as I could."

One of those women is Nicole Moeller, an award-winning playwright and writer of The Mothers, a one-woman play Stirling directed in 2015. For The Mommy Monologues, the women reunite to tell the story of a pregnant and unprepared woman reflecting on the memory of her mother for guidance.

"From the way her mom can hold a wine glass to how her mom can always have dinner on

the table," Moeller said. "The piece is about not knowing your own mother and never really being able to, and never being able to live up to your own mother or how we think our mothers were."

Tickets are \$22 and \$17 for students and seniors. Groups of 10 or more are eligible for discounts and should email brianjang@gmail.com. Organizers invite those looking for lighter fare to attend Her Night Out events on March 3-4, where a \$25 ticket includes wine and popcorn. March 10-12 is pay what you can at the venue for admission.

The festival has also partnered with Women's Initiative Edmonton to host a panel for International Women's Day after the March 8 show. Moderated by Dr. Cristina

Stasia, director of instruction at the University of Alberta's Peter Lougheed Leadership College, the discussion will focus on women as leaders.

Hamdi is a journalism student at MacEwan University. He cut his teeth as a contributor on Terra Informa, an award-winning, environmental news magazine. He's also written for The Gateway Online and The Griff. Find Hamdi on Twitter @hamdiissawi.

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See ad on p.12



The Mommy Monologues features nine monologues and one song. | Lorraine Shulba

(From left) Coralie Cairns, Mary Hulbert, and Chantelle Han star in The Mommy Monologues. | BB Collective

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Serca Festival shows love of Irish influence

Enjoy Irish arts and culture at long-running local festival

AYDAN DUNNIGAN-VICKRUCK

Liz Hobbs is an incredibly busy woman. Organizing festivals is her main gig, but she also directs theatre productions, writes, acts, and is currently the artistic director of the Serca Festival of Irish Theatre.

During the time I was tracking her down, Hobbs was in and out of the province. In and out of Edmonton. She was coordinating the Silver Skate Festival Folk Trail, then up to Kinuso (near Slave Lake) to audition 200 kids for Fiddler on the Roof, then back to work on the Chinook Festival.

But from precisely 3:00 to 3:30 pm on a Thursday, Hobbs had time to talk to me about the Serca Festival of Irish Theatre.

"I have some Irish roots

entangled with all the rest of my family background and have just recently visited Ireland, so have a fresh appreciation of Irish theatre and music," Hobbs said. "Much of it goes unrecognized as Irish although it may play the world over. Samuel Beckett and Oscar Wilde, for example, are two prominent Irish playwrights."

The festival is held from March 16-19 at Alberta Avenue Community Centre. The timing cleverly folds around St. Patrick's Day, which will certainly intensify the celebrations.

For those unfamiliar with the festival, Serca is the celebration of Irish theatre, music, dance, and poetry in a variety of formats. It started out on the Ave in the old Western Cycle building in 2010 and 2011, then was moved to La Cité Francophone

for two years, then ended up back on the Ave.

Since 2010, the festival has featured six original Edmonton created works and 15 Irish works, along with Irish music, dancing, and poetry.

This year there are two theatre shows including a new production called I heart Alice heart I. The second production, Waiting for Godot, is a timeless classic by Samuel Beckett and produced by One World Theatre out of Seattle, which has been playing to rave reviews.

Festivalgoers can also check out two cabarets and two ceilidhs. The cabarets venture on the risqué side with one recommended for ages 14 plus and the other with definite adult content. But there's also plenty of entertainment for families and the two ceilidhs will be an

afternoon and evening of fun for everyone with music, dancing, refreshments, and everything else Irish.

Hobbs explained Irish influences can be felt throughout Canada and the world.

"A fascinating example is Métis fiddling from Irish/Cree traditions. There are some very local, contemporary Edmontonian Irish performers and compositions who reflect this blend of old and new," Hobbs said. "The Cunningham Family Band will represent Irish/Cree musical traditions. Spoken poetry features great local compositions and performers. Then there is the ever-present blend of dance, Irish brew, and good humour that will permeate the weekend."

Hobbs suggested visiting www.sercafest.com for an

updated schedule.

"In the meantime, stay in suspense. It will be fabulous fun for the whole family."

Aydan is a social worker, blogger, tango dancer, outdoor enthusiast and co-parent with Patricia to 8 children and 16 grandchildren. He's also a resident of the 'hood and loving it.

SERCA FESTIVAL OF IRISH THEATRE

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Waiting for Godot is one of the theatre productions playing at Serca Festival. | Truman Buffet



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EDITORIAL

Choosing to stand up and be bold for change

Solidarity is a choice on International Women's Day

SIERRA BILTON

The wave of political populism currently sweeping the West is increasingly beckoning a response, especially when moral values are challenged.

Though many struggle with appropriate responses, solidarity has proven to be an accessible and powerful one. Solidarity refuses to normalize actions with which we disagree and generates momentum behind a cause.

On Jan. 21, thousands gathered at the Alberta Legislature on a frosty Saturday afternoon as an offshoot of the Women's March on Washington taking place the day after President Trump was sworn into office.

The march in Edmonton, along with others across the world, was in protest of a blatant disregard for women's rights and other minority rights that many fear will only continue under the current American administration. Ten marches

were planned in Canada alone.

Men and women at marches across the globe rallied in the spirit of equality and inclusivity in cities like London, Berlin, Sydney, Paris, Nairobi, and Cape Town. Those attending gathered as a reminder that the rights and freedoms we hold must not be taken for granted. Men and women stood in solidarity with those striving for equality around the world.

Over a century ago, Canadian women marched for equality, voting, and labour rights. Since then, women's rights throughout the world have undoubtedly improved in many areas. But this is not to say that the work is over. The World Economic Forum predicts the gender gap will not close entirely around the world until 2186. We can strive for better.

The marches demonstrated support for women in America and across the world. We stand with women in India fighting the high incidence of sexual violence, with women in Russia

facing a new law decriminalizing domestic abuse. We stand with women in Saudi Arabia who voted in elections for the first time ever in 2015, and with young girls in the U.S. watching disrespect of women on television.

Whether these examples represent a leap forward toward equality or a step back, they all warrant solidarity and support. The only difference is when regression occurs, action must be taken. Positive progress should be celebrated and rigidity or regression must be actively challenged.

March 8 is International Women's Day and given the current socio-political environment, what more reason is there to show your support?

In the past, this day has served as a catalyst for positive change and reminds each of us that we all have power to act boldly and pragmatically for equality. Solidarity is an active decision to move forward and continue striving for gender parity in all

areas of society both abroad and at home, where there are still patterns to be challenged.

In Canada, the glass ceiling of equal pay remains unshattered. As reported by *The Globe and Mail*, women take home 73 cents for every dollar earned by men, even when a woman's education level is higher than their male counterparts. The article adds that while women make up 48 per cent of the Canadian workforce, less than half a percent of them hold senior management positions.

Canadians cannot help but be influenced by what happens in the U.S. The nationalistic protectionism that has settled there has the potential to influence the political climate here as we already see with certain emerging candidates. This ripple effect is seen throughout the world, spreading even faster with increased access to information online and subsequently impacting perspectives globally.

We can support several goals to reach gender equality. Some

of those highlighted under the United Nations sustainable development goals include: striving for equal education access, ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health services, raising aspirations for young girls, empowering mothers, getting women into leadership positions, and stopping violence and sexual harassment.

With such strong international ties within Canada, we know the struggle for equality around the world on a personal level. This year, in the spirit of International Women's Day, #beboldforchange and act with courage together with the women of the world to strive for global equality.

Sierra is a communications student specializing in journalism at MacEwan University. She has a particular love of the art and culture found nestled in Edmonton's Alberta Avenue communities and beyond.



The Edmonton march saw roughly 2,000 participants at the Alberta Legislature. | Hank Vlietstra



VOLUNTEER WHERE THE HAPPY IS!

Northlands Volunteers play an important part at many of the events our city loves, including K-Days, K-Days Parade, Canadian Derby, Canadian Finals Rodeo, Farmfair International and the upcoming K-Days Rodeo! To learn more about our volunteer program and how you can participate, visit our website northlands.com/volunteer or contact us at volunteer@northlands.com.

 **NORTHLANDS**
northlands.com

Taking care of your mental health is crucial

Why mental health is worth caring about every day

STEPHEN STRAND

For the past seven years, Bell has promoted mental health awareness by encouraging people to talk about it.

Once a year on Jan. 25, Bell donates five cents for every text, phone call, and conversation on social media with the hashtag #BellLetsTalk to mental health initiatives.

According to the Canadian Mental Health Association, 20 per cent of Canadians will experience a mental illness and all Canadians will be indirectly affected through friends, family, or colleagues.

But mental health is important to consider every day.

According to Franki Harrogate, a mental wellness coach, "Mental illness can be best described as any prolonged mental state which interferes with a person's typical daily functioning."

This mental state includes our ability to reason with the world around us, function in our jobs, and interact with others. Mental health issues result from any number or combination of

factors, such as genetics, environment, personality, or childhood experiences.

"That said," Harrogate explained, "environmental factors like workplace bullying, harassment, and/or toxic relationships can exacerbate an otherwise mild condition."

Harrogate added that "Mental health also has an affect on the immune system...and new research indicates that depression may even be influenced by a decreased immune system, which is thought to influence the type of feedback loop that makes depression an ongoing problem."

Mental illnesses are treatable and Edmonton has a number of resources. If you need urgent help, call 911 or the Crisis Support Centre distress line at 780.482.HELP (4357). Someone will answer 24 hours a day. Edmonton has locations for free drop-in single session counselling. Intern therapists offer guidance and resources. You can also call 211 for referrals for therapy options and resources.

"Finding a therapist is like finding a good pair of shoes:

don't just go with the first ones you see because they may not fit," Harrogate said. "Finding a therapist who 'clicks' is essential."

Harrogate advised checking a therapist's or organization's website for information about therapeutic orientations, specializations, values, or processes.

"In particular, therapists should explicitly state their education in and experience working with specific groups or issues," said Harrogate. Many therapists also offer sliding scale fees (lower fees depending on income) upon request. Some organizations, such as The Family Centre, offer lower fees.

"Alberta Health Services will cover some portions of doctor-referred mental health services, and many private plans also usually have a portion of coverage. Check with the necessary organizations to ascertain what you may be able to access," said Harrogate.

Support is also important, especially in relationships.

"Part of being in a relationship is connecting emotionally with our partners, and mental illness can interfere with that connec-

tion, resulting in an interruption of support just when it's needed," said Harrogate.

Mark Stefanishyn, a relationship coach, said when in a relationship with someone who has a mental illness, your role is to make them feel safe around you.

"You have to take a step back and be like, 'OK. Is there anything I'm doing that could be feeding into this problem?' And if there is, I need to find a way to stop." He said it's best to put your needs aside to help the person in need, to an extent.

"Relationships take work. Relationships take energy to run well. If you don't have the energy to sustain that, it can come crashing down on you all at once," said Stefanishyn.

He promotes self-care to keep relationships alive.

"You're not going to have the energy to come home and talk about whatever problem you have and you are just going to let it simmer and build into this pile of resentment," he said. "Self-care is the act of cultivating the amount of energy you have so you can do things."

Harrogate agreed.

"Remember that you need to put on your own oxygen mask first. It's impossible to tend to anyone else's needs when we've worked ourselves into the ground."

Stephen works in broadcasting and writes for fun. He can be seen walking through the neighbourhood with a bag covered in pins and filled with books and notepads.

RESOURCES

Call 911 in an emergency.

Canadian Mental Health Association: 780.414.6300 (211) is a 24-hour referral line

Crisis Support Centre 24-hour distress line: 780.482.HELP (4357)

Drop-In Single Session Counselling (free): 780.424.6103

For a list of resources, including affordable therapy: edmonton.cmha.ca/211-resource-lists/, then click Resources for Mental Health www.informalberta.ca - search counselling services & enter city or postal code



Hugging regularly brings health & happiness

Physical contact helps us bond with our loved ones

AYDAN DUNNIGAN-VICKRUCK

Science backs up what we all know intuitively: touch not only feels good, it is essential to our emotional and physical well-being.

Touching is fundamental to human communication, bonding, and health. It calms cardiovascular stress. It evokes safety and trust. It stimulates the brain to release feel-good chemicals that we produce naturally to encourage such behaviour (serotonin, dopamine and endorphins).

What happens if we put more of ourselves into the experience and add hugging to our touching repertoire? The brain instinctively mixes in oxytocin, aka, the bonding drug—another chemical critical to emotional well-being. This is the same chemical that flooded our systems when we first emerged from the womb and were laid on our mother's breast. And it continues to connect us emotionally, empathetically, and intuitively with snuggle-buddies at any life stage.

But nurturing touch is more than just a chemical reaction with a momentary pleasant feeling. It is encountering another in the most intimate and vulnerable manner. Whenever we

enter the heart space of another person, we share a delicate, emotionally, and energetically charged part of ourself. One should never enter this space without permission or in fact, invitation. To do otherwise is to violate personal boundaries with potentially harmful effect. It requires the negotiated consent of both partners, predicated on noble intent and positive emotional regard for the other.

Strangely, just as we are discovering how important person-to-person contact is, marketers are trying hard to create a lifestyle where physicality and sensuality is optional or redundant, even irrelevant or harmful. We are encouraged to spend our face-to-face time on Facebook and touch time with touch-sensitive tablets. We text instead of talk, and take virtual-reality vacations instead of getting outside and smelling the roses. Anything God can do, Samsung can do better, apparently. We are imitating the social systems of Androids. Not surprisingly, as physical nurturing decreases, mental health disorders increase.

I come from a family of huggers, each with our own style and technique, sometimes sensitive and respectful, other times bullish. But we keep at it, trusting that good intentions

will win the day.

My daughter is an over-the-top (literally) Tigger-hugger, bounding across the room and catapulting into your arms (if her trajectory is correct). One has to be properly braced to absorb such a missile and prevent injury. It helps that she is usually screaming with anticipation as a warning.

My brother is a New Age hugger. He takes hugging religiously as he does all matters of care and self-improvement. According to the hugging manual, a hug should be on the opposite side we normally hug on, heart to heart or left breast to left breast, and last at least 30 seconds to stimulate the beneficial chemical reactions. Do you have any idea how long 30 seconds is in hug time? After about 15 seconds, I begin to squirm and anxiously check my watch over his shoulder. Fortunately, by the time it gets to the full 30 seconds, my brain has kicked in with all those feel-good chemicals and I am starting to bliss out.

My mother was the model of enthusiastic hugging: She was the original smother-mother. No one knows how long her hugs would have gone on if you didn't break free just before you felt you might suffocate. This was very comforting when you

were a child and knew how to respond to breasts pushed in your face, but it became increasingly awkward as you moved into adolescence.

These days I typically self-identify as a tango hugger, since I dance tango regularly and the embrace is central to the dance. Like my brother's New Age hugs, there are rules and procedures on how you line up, lean, hold on, and so on. But instead of a 30 second full-on, non-stop hug, tango is three minutes of stop/start, connect/disconnect hugging. You end up with something like a dozen quick hugs by the time the dance is over. The trick to keeping the dance elegant and pleasurable is to sensitively negotiate each of these mini-hugs which requires skill, attunement, and patience.

Then there are the unorchestrated, right-out-of-the-blue hugs that break all social protocol. A few Christmases ago, I was stocking up on spirits at Lucky 97. The inner-city clientele is sketchy at the best of times (which these weren't), but it is always a great place for bargains.

This time I got more than I bargained for. As I was checking out, a woman entered the store through the exit door and walked toward me.

"I have something to give

you," she said, "that you will never forget."

She had a layer of street life on her so I was expecting the worst. "Like what?" I thought. "A social disease?" As she moved in, I put my whisky down and checked my wallet. I didn't know what was coming, but I didn't plan on paying for it.

"It looks like you need a hug," she said, and she enveloped me in this huge, heartfelt embrace. I melted. As she left, I was more than a little dumbfounded, in part because I felt like I really had needed a hug.

I think I had the decency to say thank you. I can only hope. In any event, like she prophesied, I have never forgotten her gift.

But of course, there are no hugs better than two grandkids crawling over you, unless it is three. Totally chaotic, crazy, and plain feel-good fun. Manuals and dance lessons be damned. Bring the kids over anytime.

Aydan is a social worker, blogger, tango dancer, outdoor enthusiast and co-parent with Patricia to 8 children and 16 grandchildren. He's also a resident of the 'hood and loving it.



Hugging is a great way to express affection. | Pixabay

Taking some time to focus on self-care

The importance of tending to your own needs

RCP CONTRIBUTOR COLLABORATION

Life gets busy and it's easy to neglect yourself when caught up in the endless responsibilities, social events, or problems. Yet, it's crucial to take some time for self-care. Read some ideas from Rat Creek Press contributors.

My self-care involves a number of things: reading, spending time with my partner, eating favourite foods, listening to relaxing music, finishing assignments on time, volunteering, and ensuring I'm caught up on bills and appointments. Self-care has two sides for me: indulgent stuff and necessary tasks which feel good to check off as "complete."
Franki Harrogate

When my partner Larry Loyie died, I made sure I did not face my grief alone. Whatever life deals you, if it feels like it's too much, find a support group, a psychologist (like I did), or other professional help.
Constance Brissenden

Maintaining mental health for me involves hanging with people who allow me to speak my mind and encourage me to limit venting to less than five minutes and nudge me back to positivity if I do fall into a negative trend.

Walking and physical activity is also a huge part of my well-being. I often solve many personal dilemmas while tromping down a sidewalk or through a field of snow. Even doing errands on foot invites that quiet space between stops into a meditative state.
Rusti L Lehay

I recently discovered the meditative power of weightlifting. I know I "should" meditate every day, but somehow finding 10 minutes of calm amongst the chaos of preparing lunches, driving kids to school, and getting my work done seems impossible.

I was recently diagnosed with arthritis and decided to give weightlifting a try. When I am lifting, the only thing I have the energy to focus on is my breath and the muscle I am working. For 50 minutes, all of the monkey-thoughts that skitter through my mind disappear. I am calmer, less scattered, and (I hope!) my bones and muscles are getting stronger. On those days, my pain goes from a seven to a two on a 10-point scale. Weightlifting, it turns out, is both a meditation practice, an exercise regimen, and pain relief.
Rebecca Lippiatt

Drink a cup of tea (zero or low caffeine) before bed to help you sleep. Be mindful and present. Wake up every morning and cover your eyes, take a deep breath through your nose, wiggle your toes and tune into what you hear. Note your senses and appreciate your body. Pay it forward—mental well-being can come from caring for others as well.
Sierra Bilton

Self-care is actually a really precarious and dynamic process for me. It includes seeing a therapist with significant experience with people who have been through trauma and who is extremely protective. It includes listening to new music that really makes me feel engaged. It includes going to the gym, going for walks, being honest, seeking out mentors, colouring to rest my mind, or doing yoga on Saturday mornings. It means only drinking good tea and coffee, eating chocolate or candy if that is what I want, avoiding situations that might make me feel grim and depressed, and asking for help, A LOT. These things help me keep my head above water.
Nicola Dakers

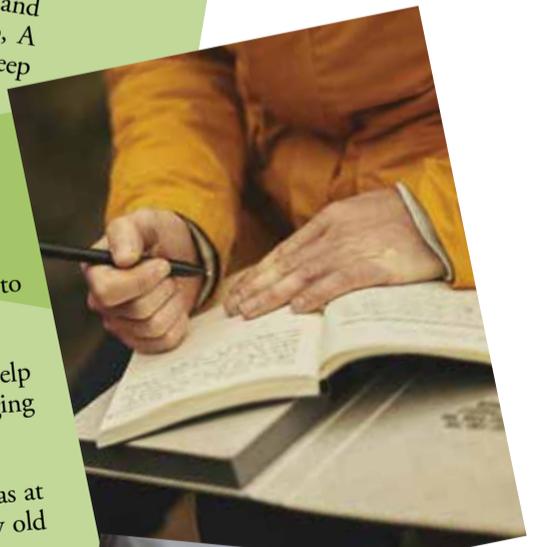
A big part of my mental health journey has been realizing it is part of overall physical health, because my brain is a physical thing. I began working out regularly about three years ago and the positive changes in my energy levels and my mood have been dramatic. Even with a busy schedule, I've maintained this discipline (most days) by subscribing to daily online fitness video routines that I can do in my living room before the kids wake up. Taking care of my body is so connected to taking care of my mind, and by extension, my spirit.
Dave Von Bieker

Life has a way of dishing out multiple stressors at once, so in those times, I learned to make a list of them and address the ones I have power to change.

Gardening, a walk in the woods or by a body of water or under the night sky help me to put my problems into perspective and see the big picture through the changing seasons.

Taking a warm bath with the door closed helped me during the years when I was at home with small children (after they were in bed). It still feels comforting in my old age, especially on cold days when my joints hurt.

Talking to a friend, writing in a journal, and seeing a counsellor at times of need. Like most people, I carry wounds and losses over which I have no power. On tough days, I find support by repeating The Serenity Prayer like a mantra and practicing gratitude.
Patricia Dunnigan



Terminally ill have options with new business

A Long Kiss Goodbye has end of life concierge services

REBECCA LIPPIATT

Karen Gunn is intimately acquainted with death. She lost her mother when she was six years old.

"I lived my whole life with people being sad for me," Gunn said.

Later, while working as an Intensive Care Unit (ICU) nurse, she nursed her second mother (stepmother) through cancer until she died. She said her personal and professional experiences taught her there is a better way to move through the stages of death, or as Gunn said, "living until we die." This experience led to her creating A Long Kiss Goodbye.

Gunn offers a variety of services, such as helping families with pre- and post-mortem

care and organizing culturally appropriate end-of-life rituals. She also coordinates home-based palliative care, car service, funeral home tours, and mini life-celebration documentaries to provide the family with memories of their loved ones.

Going through the process of losing a loved one is overwhelming for families. Gunn guides families through practical issues like meeting with doctors. She said most people forget what is said at these meetings, and she will chair a meeting with the family and keep notes.

Patients with a terminal diagnosis often want to pursue their bucket list. Depending on the state of their health, Gunn can help them fulfill their wishes. Gunn talks about one man who was diagnosed in British

Columbia but wanted to die in Saskatchewan. He was transported by ambulance.

"Wouldn't it be wonderful if he had been able to take a limo, accompanied by a respiratory therapist and nurse, with doctors on standby, on his last journey?" Gunn asked.

Another service Gunn offers is planning pre-death celebrations. Rather than (or in addition to) having a funeral, a pre-death celebration can include family and friends saying to their loved one all the things they would say at the funeral.

"It is sad, it does suck. Then, let's make a plan to live until we die," she said.

A Long Kiss Goodbye also has a gift shop. Gunn explained when people hear that a friend or family member has received a terminal diagnosis, they want

to help but are often uncertain what to say or do. The products are based on her experiences working in ICU. Gift baskets include socks and toques for patients, brain game books, head scratchers, and items to boost people's spirits, such as a rubber chicken. The store also offers care packages, chemokits, books, and what Gunn calls "common sense cards" which are more honest than typical cards. For children who have lost a parent, Gunn created a treasure chest for family and friends to share memories with the children.

Gunn's services start at \$50 per hour and Alberta Health covers additional services, such as palliative home care. Private insurance may cover alternative health care services.

Learn more by attending

Death, Wine and Chocolate on March 3 from 7-10 p.m. Participants can expect wine-glass painting, chocolate desserts, and discussion. Tickets are \$35.

Rebecca has been a full-time photographer for the last nine years and is a mother to two boys and stepmother to two girls.

A LONG KISS GOODBYE

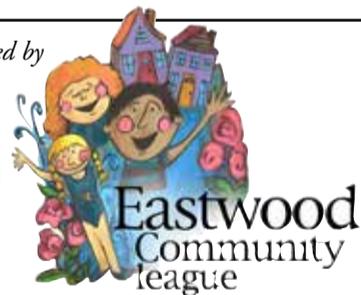
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PH: 780.756.7500
HOURS: SERVICES
24/7 BY PHONE
STORE: TUES-FRI 10
am-6 pm, SAT 10 am-4 pm,
CLOSED SUN & MON
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Karen Gunn, a former ICU nurse, in her newly-opened store, A Long Kiss Goodbye, on Fort Road. | Rebecca Lippiatt

your eastwood news

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YOUTH SOCCER REGISTRATION

We have partnered with Delton Community League to form children and youth soccer teams from our community areas. The soccer teams will play in the north division of the Edmonton Minor Soccer Association, a non-profit, community-based program geared towards bringing sports into the lives of youth. We believe soccer can give every kid in our community the opportunity to build new friendships, learn new skills, and develop themselves.

To find out more, visit deltoncommunityleague.com or email soccer@deltoncommunity.com. Register by bringing your community membership card to Delton Community Hall (12325 88 St) on:
 Saturday, March 4, 11 am-2 pm
 Monday, March 13, 6-8 pm
 Thursday, March 16, 6-8 pm

11803 86 St 780.477.2354 ewcl@shaw.ca

MUTTSTOCK FESTIVAL IS APPROACHING

Be prepared to let the dogs out on July 8 for the third annual festival for dogs and dog-lovers alike. The festival brings the community together behind Eastwood Community Hall for face painting, music, balloon artists, and all sorts of doggy activities, including a spray park for the dogs. This is a spectacular event to check out!

The Muttstock group is a non-profit founded to raise money for canine rescues and related non-profits supporting the well-being of dogs. If interested in getting involved or supporting the organizers, check out facebook.com/muttstock.

WEB NEWSLETTERS AND MEMBERSHIPS

The Eastwood community board is going to start emailing people newsletters about what is happening in our great community. If you are interested, please send your name and email to ewcl@shaw.ca. You

can also provide your email and set up the opportunity to buy a membership to access many great community benefits. Memberships are \$5 for individuals or \$15 for families. Give us a call or email us to make an appointment.



Volunteer & Notices

HELP WITH BLOOMIN GARDEN

Every May, Alberta Avenue puts on a fantastic garden and art market. Do you have a little time to spare? Join the organizing committee: bloomin@alberta-ave.org or 780.477.2773.

DO YOU LOVE COFFEE? COMMUNITY? ARTS?

Volunteer as a barista at The Carrot! If you'd love to learn coffee art and the ins & outs of being a barista or just want to get involved in the community, contact Meaghan: volunteer@thecarrot.ca.

CHALK ARTISTS WANTED

Seeking Edmonton chalk artists to submit their work and play on Alberta Ave! Interested artists, email artsadmin@artsontheave.org

OPEN MIC HOSTS & SOUND TECHS

Two spots open for hosts to make stage welcoming at the Carrot on Saturdays, 6:30-9:30 PM. Also seeking sound techs, either skilled or willing to be trained. volunteer@thecarrot.ca

KEEP NORWOOD PARK SAFE & CLEAN

Norwood Child & Family Resource Centre is looking for volunteers willing to spend a little time in Norwood Square Park every morning ensuring it is clean and safe for children to play. Call Will 780.471.3737 ext 291.

CASINO VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Help Norwood Neighbourhood Association on June 4 & 5. They fund many great local projects. norwoodnna@gmail.com

your community league!

Parkdale Cromdale Community League

Join the movement: pccl.info@gmail.com

small community BIG IDEAS



Interested in gardening?

The Alberta Avenue Community Garden is taking applications for the 2017 season.

Apply online:
<http://www.albertaave.org/community-garden.html>
 or call the office 780.477.2773.

Applications from outside the Alberta Avenue neighbourhood will be considered the first week of May.

SPRUCE AVENUE COMMUNITY

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 780.471.1932
spruceaveleague@shaw.ca
spruceavenuecommunity.com

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Tuesdays & Thursdays from 7-8 pm
 March 14 to June 1
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 Register: info@westwoodcl.ca or call 780.474.1979

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 12505 75 St | epcl@shawbiz.ca | elmwoodparkcommunity.org

Visit our website to find more info about our ongoing initiatives, including **Abundant Community** and a **drop-in play program**.

League memberships are free. Contact us!

We are hiring! Apply for our Child and Youth Program Facilitator position

OUTDOOR SOCCER REGISTRATION

Registration Opens Jan 15th!
 Please **pre-register online** at the EMSANORTH.COM

Attend a payment session to complete registration: Feb 19th 11 am-2 pm; March 4th 11am-2pm; March 13th 6-8 pm; March 16th 6-8 pm

Delton Community League
 12325 85 Street 780.477.3326
www.deltoncommunity.com

Gérard Forget is a man with many roles

Local resident enriches community with his passions

ADAM MILLIE

Gérard Forget looks across the ice rink at his garden plot. One can imagine his mind is underneath the snow, working into the dirt with springtime dreams of peas, corn, and beans.

Forget coordinates the Alberta Avenue Community Garden-Jardin Communautaire Alberta Avenue. At this time of the year, he plans the garden and finds gardeners who want to share their passion with their neighbours.

"We are one of only two bilingual gardens in the Edmonton area," said Forget.

A Franco-Albertan, Forget grew up on a farm near Peace River. He and his wife Jocelyn have three daughters and six grandchildren. He is educated in agriculture and business administration, two skills he used as a producer to bring his goods to market across northern Alberta.

"I know my weeds, I know my pests, I know different things so that if a plant doesn't look right, I know how to find the information. I know my soils. Before we started, we got a soil test so we have a clue what we should be adding. We were very low on organic

matter, so we've been adding that for years," he said.

Since his retirement as manager of La Cité Francophone in 2011, he is busier than ever. Not only does Forget attend to his arugula, he's an active community league director, a long-term festival volunteer, and a founding member of the Société de Radio Communautaire du Grand Edmonton, a group committed to bringing francophone community radio to Edmonton.

"The community radio should be on the air in plus or minus one year. There's still a lot of work to do, and we got to find people with the knowledge that we need to do that."

Forget also plays guitar and piano everyday. I'm told he picks up a harmonica occasionally, is a self-taught musician, and regularly plays with friends.

"We play every two weeks at the hall during the wintertime. We have a jam session and we have a big group of people," he said.

He explained community gardening is a great option for people. "If they don't have enough space in their backyard to [grow] a big enough garden for what they want...or they live in an apartment and they want to grow things for fresh food."

The community garden helps Forget enjoy his third passion: engaging with people. He has a gift for connecting with people of all ages, backgrounds, and walks of life.

"I like to meet people, I'm a socializer. I like to meet new people and talk about music, gardening or a little bit of politics, community organizing, it's the same thing all over. I like to make connections, I'm a connector."

This intergenerational socializing is what makes community gardening so much more than a food plot. Talking to a neighbouring gardener about food is a powerful tool in building community resiliency. It engages everyone in an activity where traditions are passed, food is grown, and communities are built.

"From very young to very old, it goes right from teenagers to seniors, we have everybody," he said.

Forget leads a diverse group of gardeners, bringing his agricultural training and gardening experience to a community of gardeners with horticultural practices from around the world. This wide range of experience expands everyone's knowledge base.

The Alberta Avenue

Community League is currently accepting applications for garden plots. Apply online at albertaave.org or in person during office hours. Priority is given to previous gardeners and Alberta Avenue residents. Gardeners require a league membership (\$20 for a family or \$10 for a single membership), a \$20 plot rental fee (includes tilling), and a volunteer commitment of four hours.

Adam works as a mechanic and lives in Alberta Avenue.

"Forget leads a diverse group of gardeners, bringing his agricultural training and gardening experience to a community of gardeners with horticultural practices from around the world."

Gérard Forget's many interests help the community grow. | Adam Millie



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1PM - 5PM			THE KEY OF SHE AT THE CARROT 1:00pm - 3:00pm THE CARROT SKIRT DESIGN GALLERY 1:00pm - 4:00pm CABARET THEATRE FAMILY SHOW - CALLIE MONTGOMERY 1:30pm - 2:30pm NINA HAGGERTY GALLERY A PLACE FOR PROSE 3:00pm - 5:00pm NINA HAGGERTY GALLERY	FAMILY SHOW - CALLIE MONTGOMERY 12:00pm - 1:00pm NINA HAGGERTY GALLERY THE KEY OF SHE AT THE CARROT 1:00pm - 3:00pm THE CARROT THE MOMMY MONOLOGUES 1:30pm - 3:30pm CABARET THEATRE PEEP SHOW! UNSUSPICIOUS 3:30pm - 4:45pm NINA HAGGERTY GALLERY
5PM - 9PM	OPENING CEREMONIES 5:00pm - 7:00pm NINA HAGGERTY GALLERY A-LINE VARIETY SHOW 7:30pm - 9:30pm CABARET THEATRE FAIR PHYLLIS 7:00pm - 10:00pm ALBERTA AVENUE COMMUNITY LEAGUE OUTDOORS WEST	THE KEY OF SHE AT OTTO 5:30pm - 6:30pm OTTO FOOD AND DRINK WORDS UNZIPPED 7:30pm - 8:30pm NINA HAGGERTY GALLERY THE MOMMY MONOLOGUES 7:30pm - 9:30pm CABARET THEATRE FAIR PHYLLIS 7:00pm - 10:00pm ALBERTA AVENUE COMMUNITY LEAGUE OUTDOORS WEST	THE KEY OF SHE AT OTTO 5:30pm - 6:30pm OTTO FOOD AND DRINK PEEP SHOW! MATARA 7:30pm - 9:00pm NINA HAGGERTY GALLERY WOMEN'S CHOIR FESTIVAL 7:30pm - 9:00pm ST. FAITH'S CHURCH THE MOMMY MONOLOGUES 7:30pm - 9:30pm CABARET THEATRE FAIR PHYLLIS 7:00pm - 10:00pm ALBERTA AVENUE COMMUNITY LEAGUE OUTDOORS WEST	
9PM - 11PM		FRIDAY NIGHT CABARET LISA BAKER/KING OF FOXES 9:45pm - 11:00pm CABARET THEATRE	SATURDAY NIGHT CABARET AUDREY AND THE CRASHERS 9:45pm - 11:00pm CABARET THEATRE	

VENUE INFORMATION

NINA HAGGERTY GALLERY
9225-118 Avenue

CABARET THEATRE
Alberta Avenue Community League
9210-118 Avenue

THE CARROT
9351-118 Avenue

BEDOUIN BEATS
11805-94 Street

OTTO FOOD AND DRINK
11405-95 Street

ST. FAITH'S CHURCH
11725-93 Street

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A labour of love for the benefit of all

Hubert Hollingworth is part of our local history

CHANTAL FIGEAT

Hollingworth's Studio no longer exists, but photographer Hubert Alan Hollingworth left a legacy.

As a photographer, he documented life in Edmonton over three decades. As a volunteer at the City of Edmonton Archives, he also made huge contributions.

"He was quite instrumental in doing so much of the work in the early archives," said Kathryn Ivany, City of Edmonton archivist.

Hollingworth was born Feb. 8, 1912 in Lloydminster. According to Alberta on Record, in 1903 his family sailed from England to settle at the Barr Colony in Saskatchewan, which was founded by Anglican minister Isaac Barr.

According to R. Allen in *The Social Gospel and the Reform*

Tradition in Canada, this group of about 2,000 middle-class English immigrants was part of a social movement that believed urban decay caused poverty and immorality. Farming was a route to social reform.

But the utopia wasn't perfect. Many people left the colony because of hardship and strife. As *Alberta on Record* states, Harry Hollingworth, Hubert's father, took a job with the Atlas Lumber Company and the family moved to Edmonton.

Hollingworth began learning photography at the age of 12 while he apprenticed with Bell Studios in downtown Edmonton.

The apprenticeship blossomed into a career, with Hollingworth eventually owning Hollingworth's Studio.

The 1939 Henderson's City Directory lists the studio at 11759 95 Street. The site of the studio is now at the south

end of the parking lot beside Downtown Auto on Alberta Avenue.

In *Portraits of a Time*, Lawrence Herzog explained how Hubert and his wife Violet lived at the rear of the studio and Violet helped in the dark room. But by 1940, the building was vacant. Hollingworth had left for wartime service as an aerial photographer.

After the war ended, Hollingworth took photos for McDermid Studios, the *Edmonton Journal*, the *Edmonton Bulletin*, and also helped found the Edmonton Camera Club. Hollingworth's photographic style wasn't artistic, but it was well-composed and journalistic.

According to Alberta on Record, Hollingworth worked for the federal government from 1954 to 1976. After retiring, Hollingworth volunteered at the City of Edmonton

Archives. He also donated his collection to the archives and copied and catalogued the items.

Ivany explained Hollingworth's collection "was one of the first ones that we had online."

Hollingworth contributed a lot during his time at City of Edmonton Archives.

"He would do all the dark room work for us," said Ivany. "He set up the programs that we used for the reference cards before digitalization."

His collection of about 3,000 items is a valuable historical resource documenting life in Edmonton and the surrounding area during the 30s, 40s, and 50s. The collection is mainly photographic, but there are also films and short texts.

"His collection is hugely important to documenting the early history of Edmonton," said Ivany.

Many of his photos and films provide public information. Subjects included newsworthy events such as fires, parades, sports, or royal visits. The working class hero was a favourite subject.

Ivany added that Hollingworth's collection is "also useful because it documents the city's growth and the downtown area specifically." Included are more personal photos of his family.

Hollingworth died in 1988, but his legacy continues.

Chantal has worked in publications production for the government and has taught overseas in South Korea. She loves the ethnic diversity and history in Alberta Avenue and enjoys sharing it with the community.



Hollingworth proudly poses in front of his studio at 11759 95 Street in 1939. The woman behind him is likely his wife Violet. | Hubert Alan Hollingworth.

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The work really is never done on a farm

What it means to work on an organic farm in Colombia

RUSTI LEHAY

Farming in Colombia so near the equator sheds a whole new meaning on the cliché, “early to bed, early to rise.” The sun sets around 5:40 and rises 12 hours later, give or take a few minutes. I cannot recall the last time I was asleep by 7:30 p.m., let alone night after night. I’m here working as a volunteer.

Here we rise around 5:30 in the morning. The other workers and I are often picking blackberries before 8:00, stretching plastic over the gulupa vines, tying cloth twine around the top sagging branches of the tree tomatoes, or weed-whacking jungle-like vines between orchard rows with a spinning steel blade.

The amount of manual labour it takes to produce these tropical fruits is eye-opening and makes me wonder how North Americans can ever have a true sense of appreciation.

After lunch when the storm clouds roll in, the patrona (boss) calls siesta time if the rain pummels down. If it is a mere sprinkling, work often carries on. Cindy Jensen, the Canadian who bought the farm here when her inheritance allowed for nothing meaningful in Canada, loves everything about Colombia.

The first day I arrived, I picked beans with farm manager Nidia Urrego’s entire family. Jensen and Urrego argued over who is the real patrona. The next day, I removed damaged leaves from the the gulupa rows

and wrinkled fruit. Flies lay eggs in the flowers that open for only one day. Those eggs are then trapped, hatch inside the fruit, and larvae destroys the fruit from the inside. Jensen goes up and down the rows spraying a molasses mixture (toxic to the flies) into the flowers, which protects the fruit.

Then there is plastic to stretch from one end of the row to the other. After that, each supporting post requires us to tie a string to another string inside the folds of the plastic and stretch it taut across the rows. Hard to imagine how Urrego transformed a jungle into approximately 840 gulupa plants in less than a year. I have only had to perfect my granny knots for an average of 10 posts per 120 rows. I am nowhere

near done.

After the gulupa are momentarily maintained, I attend to neglected tree tomatoes by clearing the surrounding soil of debris and inserting a rotten banana near the “trunk” to replenish needed potassium. When disease attacks, workers slice the damaged stock, rub a sorrel leaf on it, and leave it on the cut edge as a healing balm.

Back to the gulupa to track down bees leaving holes in the flowers that then do not close properly to create the environment for the fruit to grow. These gulupa vines will continuously produce fruit for at least three years, requiring a gentle gloved harvesting every week. Soon the gulupa will require bi-weekly harvesting.

If any of the gulupa do make

it to Edmonton, most people, unaware of its delicacy, will pass on the \$3 per fruit cost. After tasting them, I can heartily suggest they are worth every penny. Imagine a pomegranate but juicier, easier to eat, sweeter, and with a hint of mango-like flavour.

To me, gulupas will forever taste like the musicality of the Spanish language, the kindness of the people, and the warm Colombian rain and sun with a tinge of perspiration on my lips.

A member of the Professional Writers Association of Canada since 2003, Rusti has been writing professionally since 1999. Her favourite word activity is immersion editing with memoir writers.



Nidia and Cindy stretch out greenhouse plastic to shelter fruit from direct rain and sun. | Rusti Leahy



Writer Rusti Leahy stands by crates of blackberries ready to be sold. | Supplied



The setting sun on one small part of gulupa orchard. | Rusti Leahy



WHAT'S ON IN MARCH

Brought to you in partnership with NorwoodNeighbourhoodAssociation.ca

COFFEE WITH COPS

March 6, 10-11:30 am | The Carrot (9351 118 Ave). Chat about neighbourhood concerns with Cst. Challenger.



SKIRTSAFIRE FESTIVAL
March 9-12. Skirtsafire.com | Alberta Avenue

SERCA FESTIVAL
March 16-19. Sercafest.com | Alberta Avenue



FINANCIAL WELLNESS

March 17, 10 AM | e4c HUB (10215 97 St). Learn about budgeting. For info or to register: 780.424. 2870.

WINTER GREEN SHACK

Enjoy games, crafts, sports, outdoor cooking, and more! Free drop-in March 4-30. Tuesdays & Thursdays 3:30-6 pm and Saturdays 1-5 pm. Spruce Avenue (102 St & 115 Ave).



ENTERTAINMENT

PRO WRESTLING

First Saturday of the month. | Alberta Avenue. Tickets: \$20. More: monsterprowrestling.com.

5 PIN BOWLING

Every day, 10 am-10 pm. | Plaza Bowl.

KARAOKE

Wednesday to Saturday, 9 pm-2 am. | Mona Lisa's Pub.

LIVE MUSIC

Fridays, 7:30-9:30 pm. Cover: \$5, children free. | The Carrot.

OPEN MIC

Saturdays, 6:30 pm. | The Carrot.



SAVE THE DATE

BOARD GAME CONFERENCE

April 8-9 | Alberta Avenue. Gobfest.ca

PENNY CARNIVAL

April 22 | Alberta Avenue

FINANCIAL WELLNESS

Savings: April 13, 10 AM. Debt, credit, and payday loans: May 19, 10 AM. For info or to register: 780.424. 2870. At e4c HUB (10215 97 Street).



FREE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Go to ratcreek.org for more information

ESL & LANGUAGE

PRACTICE ENGLISH
Conversation circle. Mondays 7-8 pm at Sprucewood Library. Fridays, 10:30 am - noon at Highlands Library.

CREE LANGUAGE
Conversation circle by Canadian Native Friendship Centre. Mondays 6-8 pm at Highlands Library.

ECALA ENGLISH
For community integration Mondays and Thursdays from 11:15 am to 1:15 pm at Parkdale-Cromdale. More: Sarah 780.887.6825 or sarahdelano@hotmail.com.

BOOK CLUB
For literacy learners, Fridays 10 am to noon at Parkdale-Cromdale.

GLOBAL VOICES CHOIR
An informal way to practice English. No experience with singing or English is required. Lunch is provided. Thursdays noon - 1 pm at Mennonite Centre. More: Digna 780.424.7709.

CONVERSATION CAFE
Practice speaking English and learn about Western Canadian culture. Childcare provided. Saturdays 10-11:30 am from mid-September to end of May at Bethel Gospel.

LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION FOR NEWCOMERS TO CANADA (LINC)
More: Edmonton Mennonite Centre 780.423.9522 or info@emcn.ab.ca

FOOD & SUPPORT

PRAYERWORKS COMMON
Hot complimentary meals & warm friendship at St. Faith/St. Stephen. Thursday drop-in 10 am - 2 pm. Friday community supper, 5 pm. Saturday breakfasts 8:30-9:30 am. More: 780.477.5931.

COLLECTIVE KITCHEN
Cook with friends, try new recipes, help your food budget at St. Faith/St. Stephen. Cost: \$3. Second Tuesday: 1-3:30 pm. Trish 780.464.5444. Third Wednesday, 5:30-8 pm. Amanda: 587.930.8238.

PARENTS & PRE-SCHOOLERS

COW BUS
Edmonton Literacy Classroom on wheels every Friday from 8:30-10 am at Parkdale hall.

GROWING TOGETHER
A free drop-in group for pregnant women and women with babies up to 3 months of age. Free resources including milk coupons and prenatal vitamins. Tuesdays 1:30-3 pm at Norwood Centre. More: 780.471.3737.

STAY AND PLAY
Free indoor play space and unstructured group for parents and children. Snack included. Mondays 10 am - noon at Norwood Centre.

MULTICULTURAL RHYMES THAT BIND
Pre-literacy program for families with babies & children pre-kinder age. Mondays 9:30-11:30 am at Parkdale-Cromdale. More: Sarah 780.887.6825.

BABES IN ARMS
A wonderful casual parent group Fridays 10 am - noon at The Carrot.

SING, SIGN, LAUGH & LEARN
Mondays and Tuesdays 10:30 am at Sprucewood Library. More: 780.496.7099. Wednesdays and Thursdays at 10:30 am at Highlands Library. More: 780.496.1806.

CHILDREN

LEGO AT THE LIBRARY
Design and build a lego creation. Ages 6-12. Third Saturday of the month 2-3 pm at Highlands Library.

GIRL GUIDES
Girl Guides meeting Mondays from September to June at St. Andrew's. More: 39thedmontonguiding@gmail.com or 1.800.565.8111 (answered locally).

YOUTH

EVIL GENIUS CLUB
Robot battles, Arduino hacks, DIY music, art, Minecraft, photography, 3-D design and printing are just the beginning for this club of maniacal makers. Fridays, 4-5 pm at Highlands Library.

TEEN LOUNGE JR
Play video games, make a DIY project, or just hang out. Thursdays, 3:30-5 pm at Sprucewood Library and 3:30-4:30 pm at Highlands Library.

TEEN LOUNGE
Play video games, make a DIY project, or just hang out. Thursdays, 6:00-8:30 pm. at Sprucewood Library.

ADULTS

ADULT COLORING
Coloring and creativity. Books, felts and pencil crayons provided or bring your own. Second Wednesday of month, 7-8 pm at Highlands Library.

AVENUE BOOK CLUB
Meets the last Wednesday of each month 7 pm at The Carrot. More: Lorraine 780.934.3209.

COMMUNITY ART NIGHT
Free art workshop for adults. Tuesdays 6:30-8:30 pm at The Nina.

NASHVILLE SONGWRITERS ASSOC INTERNATIONAL (NSAI)
Second Monday of the month 6:30-10 pm at The Carrot. RSVP: Colleen_col_kside@hotmail.com

SENIORS

NORWOOD LEGION SENIORS GROUP
Darts and pool, Tuesdays at 10 am; Cribbage, Wednesdays at 1 pm at Norwood Legion.

PARKDALE SENIORS SOCIAL
Bingo, snacks and conversation. Mondays 10:30 am - 1 pm at Parkdale. More: PCCL.info@gmail.com.

SENIORS BREAKFAST & SOCIAL (55+)
Join us for breakfast, visit, play cards, or billiards. Wednesdays 11:30 am - 12:45 pm at Crystal Kids.

FAMILIES

BOARD GAMES NIGHT
Plenty of games to choose from or bring your own. Last Tuesday of the month 7 pm at The Carrot.

FAMILY ART NIGHT
A variety of free art activities for school age children accompanied by adults. Thursdays, 6:30-8 pm at The Nina.

MUSIC LESSONS BY CREART
Free group music lessons Saturdays at Parkdale-Cromdale from 10 am to 12 pm. More: creartedmonton@gmail.com or 587.336.5480.

FREE REC CENTRE ACCESS
Free access to Commonwealth Recreation Centre on Saturdays from 5-7 pm for members of Elmwood Park, Spruce Avenue & Westwood and on Sundays from 1-3 pm for members of Alberta Avenue, Delton, Parkdale/Cromdale. Eastwood does not participate.

LOCATIONS

Community Leagues - see page 12
St. Faith/St. Stephen Church 11725 93 St
Highlands Library 6516 118 Ave
Sprucewood Library 11555 95 St
Norwood Family Centre 9516 114 Ave
Carrot Coffeehouse 9351 118 Ave
The Nina 9225 118 Ave
Norwood Legion 11150 82 St
Crystal Kids 8715 118 Ave
St. Andrew's Church 8715 118 Ave
Bethel Gospel 11461 95 St
Mennonite Centre 11713 82 St



arts on the ave
PUB & PAINT NIGHT

FUNDRAISER
Food, drink and fun (painting optional!)

SATURDAY, MARCH 11
5:00 PM – 11:00 PM

The Studio
11739 - 94 street

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→ Craft Beer & Wine* ←
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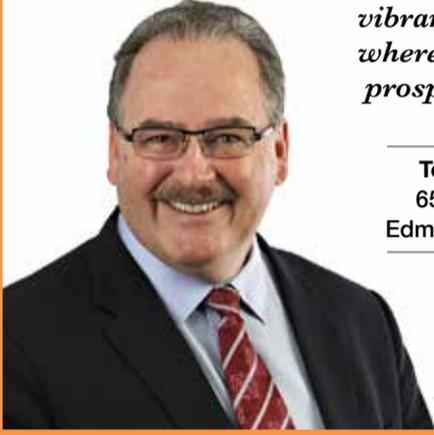
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