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Mum(mers) is the word

KAREN VIRAG

It is a long way from Elizabethan England to modern-day Edmonton, but the mummers' play at the Deep Freeze Festival allows us, for a short time anyway, to bridge time and space and partake in an ancient theatre tradition.

Mummers' plays date to 16th century Britain, where groups of people, usually disguised, went from door to door on holidays—especially Christmas—performing traditional plays called mummers' plays. The word mummers has nothing to do with mummies. Rather, it derives from an old Germanic word for muteness—early mummers' plays were performed exclusively in pantomime.

Mummers' plays feature characters from folktales, such as trolls, and stock characters, such as St George, a damsel in distress, a powerful sorcerer or wizard, and a fool.

Thematically, mummers' plays tend to be allegories about good and evil, death and resurrection. According to Matt Leavitt, a graduate student in anthropology at the University of Alberta who has studied mummery, "Some scholars believe that the constant theme of death and resurrection stems from ancient paganism. Its performance at Christmas demonstrates its compatibility with Christian themes but does not necessarily imply any formal connection."

One unusual element in

mummers' plays is a man dressed as a woman.

"Cross-dressing is common in these plays," explains Leavitt, "Again, nobody knows why exactly. It may be strictly pragmatic and due to the old English custom of all-male casts, but it might also be more demonstrative of the topsy-turvy nature of major holidays, especially those that correspond with turning points in natural cycles: that is, the winter solstice."

"During these times, according to some scholars, people believed that the world was in a state of flux, which allowed for behaviour that otherwise would be prohibited, such as cross-dressing, and that also included a level of lewdness that would not be tolerated at any other time. Others believe that the man-woman character represents the natural unity or visceral connection between the sexes."



CAST OF KNIGHTY KNIGHT PERFORMED AT DEEP FREEZE 2009



SCENE FROM TOM FOOL PERFORMED AT DEEP FREEZE 2010

Though the tradition of mummery is far less common than it used to be, it does still exist, especially in parts of England, in Newfoundland, and, for the last couple of years, in Edmonton. Outside. In January.

Arts on the Ave president and executive producer of January's Deep Freeze Festival Christy Morin first had the idea to stage a mummers' play as part of Deep Freeze several years ago. It seemed like a natural fit with the festival's Byzantine theme, so Morin approached local actors/directors Mark Henderson and Randall Fraser, who agreed that a mummers' play, written in rhyming couplet, replete with period costumes and staged outdoors in January, would be a fine addition to Deep Freeze. And so work began.

The result was *Knights Knight*, which was staged in January of 2009 and was a resounding success. It was followed by the equally amusing

Tom Fool in 2010. This year the festival theme is "midwinter merriment in the land where time stood still," and the play will incorporate or reflect this theme somehow. Because the play is written in the week leading up to the festival, the storyline and the title are still to be revealed.

When asked what he likes about mummers' plays, Fraser says: "The elevated 'Elizabethan' mode of speech and the way it contrasts with the actual dialogue, with the bad rhymes and the bad puns." He adds, "Mummers' plays are full of physical comedy, slapstick and bawdy humour. And they play to all audiences—the kids love them and so do the adults, but for different reasons."

Traditionally, mummers' plays were vehicles to criticize rulers and contained subtle political commentary. The Deep Freeze mummers' play carries on this fine tradition. Says Fraser, "We usually get

in at least one joke about the mayor's office," but he is quick to add, "a good-natured, joke, of course."

This year's play will be staged on Saturday, January 8, at 2 pm and 9:30 pm; and Sunday, January 9, at 2 pm.

And this year for the first time ever, there will be a mummers' play competition in which the public is invited to write and perform their own 15-minute mummers' play. To help them, there will be workshops on how to write a mummer's play, what kind of costumes to make and so on. The top three plays will win \$500, \$300 and \$200, respectively, and there will also be a people's choice award.

If you are interested in participating go the AOTA website (www.artsontheave.org) or call Randall Fraser at 780-241-1120.

Writer and editor Karen Virag is a member of the board of Arts on the Ave.

DEEP FREEZE
A BYZANTINE WINTER FESTIVAL
January 8 & 9 2011
9210 - 118 AVE
deepfreezefest.ca
ICE SKATING ★ ICE SLIDE ★ ARTS MARKET ★ MELT THE DEEP FREEZE DANCE ★ OLDE TYME CURLING

venue initiative revitalization
YEAR END REVIEW
update 2010
Old Cycle Building
continues moving forward
Check It Out!
2010 Avenue Initiative
Year End Review
Inside *The Rat Creek Press*

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OUR MISSION

The mission of the Rat Creek Press Association is to highlight community news, activities, and recreational opportunities as well as local residents and businesses to support the growth of a strong, vibrant, well-connected community.

ROAD CLOSURE NOTICE

Deep Freeze Festival road closure in effect from Sat, Jan 8 at 8am to Sun, Jan 9 at 8pm.

118 Ave will be closed from 91 St to 94 St for the festival
DETOUR: Use 117 Ave or 120 Ave between 90 St and 95 St.

ETS Buses #5 and #8 will be using 117 Ave between 90 St and 95 St.

Festival parking available behind ATB Financial (88 St and 118 Ave), the Alberta Avenue Community League parking lot (access from the north on 93 St), St. Faith's Church (92 St & the alley north of 117 Ave), parking lot on the corner of 95 St and 117 Ave.

Over 10,000 people came down to the festival last year. If you can walk or take transit, please do.

EDITORIAL

In gross economic terms published yearly by the City of Edmonton, our community is one of the poorest in the city. In housing, employment, and median income, we consistently rank near the bottom of the list. While the statistical results are no doubt accurate, we take exception to the narrow scope of what is considered important to the "well-being" of a community. Un-noted in development plan after development plan is that the Alberta Avenue area would consistently rank at the top of the list in a local industry worth millions of dollars each year.

We are rich in volunteers. However, it's not enough to merely detail the monetary value of free labour that fuels

our festivals and community programs. It's not enough to enjoy the physical improvements crystallizing in our neighborhood. It's not enough to say "Thanks" to those that have fueled the changes we see around us. Our organizations that exist only by the grace of generosity need to focus on investing that success back into our volunteers.

There is no better example than the *Rat Creek Press*. We only publish on the strength of our contributors, and as the new year gets underway, it seems appropriate to outline a few initiatives

underway to repay our volunteer debts.

The RCP will have several literature pages dedicated to publishing both first-time and established writers and poets in our community. While this will remain in (the near future) unpaid submissions, we are planning on publishing a year-end *The Best of the Rat Writers* book where royalties will return to the writers.

For those who are more interested in feature and investigative news gathering, the RCP editorial staff will provide free writing workshops and pre-submission

editing for those who wish to freelance their articles to publications that pay for submissions. We'll hone your skills, sharpen up your articles, and then shepherd you through the freelancing bureaucracy. We'll work hard to establish publishing agreements with other outlets and introduce you to established journalists to provide further mentoring opportunities.

And lastly, plans are underway to throw a big Rat Party in the springtime for all our contributors. We'll drink. We'll dance. We'll stuff you full of food. But above all, we'll let you enjoy an evening when the weathervane swings in the other direction, and the RCP volunteers for your benefit.

"We only publish on the strength of our contributors"

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Indy comments not balanced

For the first time I can recall I am very disappointed in the *Rat Creek Press*, specifically in regards to a short article (with residents' comments) on the Edmonton Indy. Wow, it appears I live in the only bastion of Indy race supporters in the whole of the Rat Creek's community market. I live a block north of Alberta Ave Community Hall.

It's obvious the author chose only to print comments supporting their view. I've attended the Indy...as have two others on my block that I know of. Of the people I've talked to, and I am quite involved in my immediate neighbourhood, there are a few people for the race, some vehemently against, and the majority I'd say are ambivalent.

One of the comments

made over and over I find laughable is the noise throughout the three day event (out of 365), which seems to be very disturbing to the author (I surmise because they've picked out so many of these complaints).

So if I wasn't a music lover, I would guess I would have right to feel the various festivals in the area are an intrusion on my privacy. My gosh, Kaleido Festival is nothing but three days of "annoying" music!!! (I say this with tongue firmly in cheek).

I've always thought the *Rat Creek* to be a pretty decent little community newspaper...one of the best in Edmonton. Please don't let it become nothing but a mouthpiece for the editorial staff's personal view.

Bob Todrick, Alberta Avenue

Thanks to the kind people

The majority of the people in our city are nice, friendly and generous. It's been proven over and over to me when there is a need.

More than a month ago a friend asked me to go to a concert with her at the Lions Club. My friend had bought the tickets and so I offered to take her for dinner. After we finished our meal, the waitress brought the bill, but then came and took it back. I asked her why, and she said the lady sitting across the aisle wanted to pay for it. I went over to her and she simply said she wanted to. I thanked her and went back to my seat. Neither my friend nor I knew her. How nice was that?

A few weeks later I went to get some groceries never thinking to check first how much

money I had. When I went to the till I found that I only had ten dollars. I told the cashier to stop because by then the bill was already over thirty-five dollars. The nice lady behind me offered to pay for my groceries. In shock once more, I hold her I couldn't allow her and I thanked her. The nice cashier sorted out ten dollars worth of groceries and I went home.

My nephew from Calgary came up to see the Grey Cup game and he lost his wallet. After he returned home he got a phone call from a nice person from Edmonton telling him that he found his wallet. What can I say?

Irma Andre, Parkdale

More Parkdale Memories

I read the article in the December issue about Parkdale memories. The article was written by Marlene Hansen, the granddaughter to Frank and Florence McCoy. If this is the McCoy's I think it is they were my neighbours years ago.

I have lived in the Parkdale area my whole life and attended

Parkdale School grade one through nine. My dad has lived in the neighbourhood since he was six years old in the same house; the same house I live in now. I also purchased a house across the street. The people next door were the Carmicheals and her name was Sadie. I think this might be the Sadie C men-

tioned in the article.

My dad has told me many stories of the area and in particular the 88 street and 116 avenue block. He has told me of horse drawn wagons down the front, Alberta Bakery which owned two garages down the street (which are still standing), street cars on 118th Avenue,

coal mines across the street, dirt roads and ditches for the water.

I too have seen many changes.

Albert Tandy, Jr., Parkdale

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Do we need a Development Review Committee?

DAWN FREEMAN

The Avenue Initiative Steering Committee is proposing a Development Review Committee be organized to deal with development issues in the community. Committee members would learn about the planning and development process and how to represent the community's interests.

"A development review committee would ensure a strong and knowledgeable voice in the planning and development arenas to help make sure things [that are not part of the communities plan] are not just slipping through," says Judy Allan, former Avenue Initiative Coordinator.

The committee members would ideally come from all neighbourhoods involved in the Initiative and would be responsible for looking at development as a whole throughout the community.

"Many people have worked hard on these issues for many years," says Allan, "and it's a time-consuming process. It would be great to be able to spread the load amongst more people."

Allan hopes this committee

would be a legacy that could live on within the community league system after the Revitalization Initiative in the Avenue area is finished.

A development review committee is not a new idea, says Cris Basualdo, resident and chair of the community organization Community Action Project (CAP).

"In the past, neighbouring community leagues here were part of Area 4 Council under the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues and often partnered on development and other issues."

She believes any development committee should be resident-driven and separate from the City, as well as committed to reaching out to residents to get them involved and teach them how to work in the system.

But how would a development committee know what decisions to make on behalf of the community?

"A review committee would have to act more like a watchdog then decision-making body," says Karen Mykietka, president of the Alberta Avenue Community League, meaning they would alert the community,

gather input and guide residents in how they can respond.

Several Area redevelopment Plans (ARPs) are already in place with the City to guide development decisions including the Norwood Neighbourhood Improvement Plan, the Alberta Avenue/Eastwood Consolidation ARP, and the Parkdale ARP, as well as overlays such as Mature Neighbourhoods and Second-hand stores. And the Avenue Initiative Revitalization Strategy has a section on developments community would like to see.

Unfortunately, the ARPs may be outdated and not always adhered to, says Basualdo. She thinks new community consultations are needed to decide what residents want, and once the plan is approved, she would like the City to respect it by not allowing variances to it.

Basualdo believes development needs to be looked at holistically at a planning level, "There needs to be more understanding given to the impact development brings to a neighbourhood as well as the City as a whole."

A huge challenge to a system Mykietka describes as "reactionary."

Troublesome alleyway transformed

On December 9, a merry band put up Christmas lights behind an apartment building at 12035-82 Street creating a festive community gathering place. Residents came out and celebrated with bannock roasting, marshmallow roasting, free drinks donated by a local Mac's convenience store, and music by CommUnity Drumming.

Area residents wanted more lighting to address the undesirable activity taking place in the alley behind their home.

"Instead of installing flood lights, we approached local businesses to donate outdoor holiday lights," said Kris Andreychuk, Community Capacity Builder with the City of Edmonton. "This is another example of com-



LIGHTING UP 82 ST CROWD

munity involvement being at the heart of positive change."

Canadian Tire and City Lumber each contributed \$1,000 towards the purchase of lights for the alley, the City of Edmonton Avenue Initiative kicked in \$2,000, and Great Canadian Roofing donated staff time and a bucket truck to get the job done.

Changes are afoot at the Alberta Avenue Farmers' Market

CARISSA HALTON

Since Spring 2009, farmers, producers and artisans have hawked their wares at the Alberta Avenue Community League. One of the few year-round markets in Edmonton, the market will kick off 2011 with a newly formed, community-led steering committee and later opening hours.

"Market hours on Thursdays will run from 5 to 8 p.m. The hours have been shortened but pushed later to accommodate farmers who work weekdays and customers who work late," says Kerrie Miller,

Interim Market Manager. "We want to make the market a destination event for everyone. We're working on developing a concession serving local, seasonal food at afford-

able prices and planning special events geared towards children, including cooking classes, stories, games, and crafts."

A successful year-round market offers many benefits. The social benefits to Alberta Avenue residents include increased foot and vehicle traffic (and enhanced security) on the Avenue. It also could be a

critical community hub: a place to bump into neighbours and friends, reinforcing existing networks and developing new ones.

Markets also allow customers access to healthy, sustainable products. "We want to provide access to farm-fresh products, home-made baking, and unique artisan goods," says Miller. "In 2011, our aim is to increase the number of consumable products at the market to increase the frequency of customer visits."

Ultimately, a vibrant market enhances farm sus-

tainability, local economy and food security. "Already there are several producers who epitomize sustainability," Mary Ellen Grueneberg of Green Eggs and Ham points out. And as the customer base grows, there will be more.

The market is taking a Christmas break, reopening with the new hours on January

13. The planning for 2011 continues with wagon rides in January, a Spring Celebration party in May, and perhaps even a community food table where Alberta Avenue residents can sell their garden produce for fair price.

This will be an



MARKET PIE

exciting year for the Alberta Avenue Farmers' Market. If you have a grocery and gift budget, consider spending it in the neighbourhood while you meet the producers of your products and make friends along the way. If you are interested in volunteer opportunities or have further questions, contact Kerrie Miller at: market@albertaave.org.

New vendors are being introduced to the market every week. For the most up-to-date list of vendors, see the website at <http://www.albertaave.org/market.html>.



MARKET CHEESE



MARKET EGGS

PETER GOLDRING
Member of Parliament
Edmonton East

The Gift Of Life Renewal

In 2008, 4,330 Canadians had health needs requiring an organ transplant, but only 2,083 transplants took place. Two hundred and fifteen people died on the waiting list. Canada's organ donation rate is behind that of countries such as the US, Italy, Belgium and Spain.

Those needing a transplant come from all walks of life. They can be your neighbour, your friend, your child, or in my case my sister Sue. A proud and accomplished person, she has for years been dialysing for hours daily, never complaining and always remaining upbeat. A wonderful anonymous donor has given her a gift of freedom, of renewed life normality, a kidney which allows her the fullness of daily being.

This gift, a Godsend to my eternally grateful sister, is also a true blessing to her loved ones and friends who have silently prayed for this liberation for her. My thanks to the medical doctors that perform such miracles, to the many that give of their time to engage people to consider such a legacy of continued life and a special thank you to the donors and their families who selflessly contribute this extraordinary gift, most often in moments of deep sadness. May this generosity, this giving of life renewal, be repeated many fold.

While some organ donations are from living donors, I would especially encourage people (and their families) to donate their organs after death, when they no longer need them. It's such a simple act, but it can have a profound effect on those waiting for transplants.

Organs from one individual can be used in eight life-saving procedures such as heart transplants, and a further 50 people can have their lives improved through donations of tissue or organs.

I think we should all be encouraged to help others in this fashion. What do you think?

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Councillor Tony Caterina

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FROSTY



SHINNY AT ALBERTA AVE



ee Hey, Kid Stop throw ing snow balls at me!!

WINTER FUN

BY THORIN, AGE 7

WHITE, SPARKLING SNOW
 ICICLES GLITTERING IN THE SUN
 NOISY KIDS, SNOWBALLS THROW
 TUMBLING, SLIDING, HAVING FUN
 ENJOYING THEIR TIME, WELL IN PLAY
 ROLICKING CHILDREN ON A WINTER'S DAY



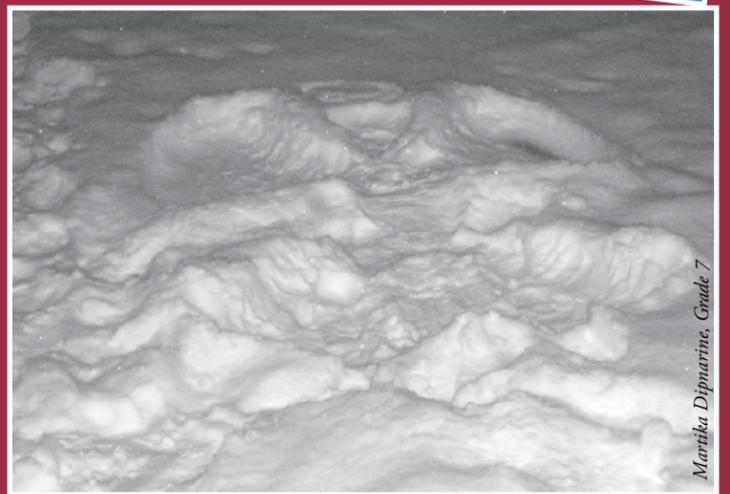
Gala Freeman Peters, Grade 5

SHINNY AT ALBERTA AVE



Rebecca Lippatt / Dagonoff Photography

WINTER SNOW ON TRUCK



Martika Dipmarine, Grade 7

SNOW ANGEL



WARM UP TO WINTER WINTERLIGHT JAN 8 - MAR 5

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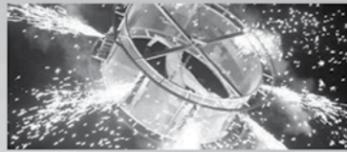
DEEP FREEZE FESTIVAL
 Jan 8 - 9
 Various venues along 118 Avenue
 Produced by Arts on the Ave
deepfreezefest.ca



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 Jan 13 - 23 Monday-Friday 2pm-10pm
 Saturday & Sunday 10am-10pm
 Old Strathcona \$5/adults-\$2.50/kids
 Produced by the Old Strathcona Business Association
iceonwhyte.ca



FLASHPOINT
 Saturday Jan 22 6:45-8pm
 Edmonton Ski Club
 Produced by the Edmonton Arts Council
winterlight.ca



ILLUMINATIONS
 Saturday Jan 29 4-10pm
 Churchill Square
 Produced by the Edmonton Arts Council
winterlight.ca



COMMON GROUND
 Feb 4 - 5 Friday 6-8pm
 Saturday 11am-8pm
 Giovanni Caboto Park
 Produced by the Edmonton Arts Council
winterlight.ca



SILVER SKATE FESTIVAL
 Feb 18 - 21
 Hawrelak Park
 Produced by the Silver Skate Festival
silverskatefestival.org



FAMILY DAY
 Monday Feb 21 12-4pm
 Churchill Square
 Produced by the Edmonton Arts Council
winterlight.ca



MILL CREEK ADVENTURE WALK
 Feb 25 - 26 4-10pm
 Mill Creek Ravine Park
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 Saturday Mar 5 4-10pm
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AN AVENUE HOMESTEADER WITH CARISSA HALTON

A Cook-a-Thon Experiment

In our house, the witching hour begins at four p.m. Perhaps you know the hour - when the pitch and volume of the kids' whining turns up a notch. When your spouse stomps about the house suddenly noticing the mess. When you start slamming cupboard and fridge doors moaning, "How can the shelves be so full with nothing to eat?"

Welcome to "Low Blood Sugar Hour." As a way to combat this time of day, and save some money, three of us gathered in my mom's kitchen to cook for a month. We surrounded ourselves with recipes, pots, and ingredients, and cooked from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. with short breaks for lunch and supper.

Here's a review of the experiment that hopefully inspires you to try it too.

The Rating
 7/10: Success with room to improve

The Experiment
 On Thursday morning, my friend Katy Spane and I choose recipes and developed our shopping list. Instead of dictating a full month of recipes, like many cookbooks do, the website Frozen Assets provided cooking mini-sessions of four to six similar dishes. This allowed us more control over what we would be cooking and so more control over our budget. A quarter of the recipes we chose were chicken, another quarter were pasta recipes, and half were bean.

On Friday night, Katy and I shopped. We hit the Italian Centre, then Costco, then finally Superstore. Hands down, the Italian Centre offered the best deal on cans of tomatoes, cans of beans, pasta packages and vegetables. Not only were the prices the best, they packaged it all for us and packed the boxes into our car. At Costco



AVENUE HOMESTEADER PREP

we bought our chicken, at Superstore we bought most of our cheese. The total number of hours we spent shopping was just over two - and the next hour was spent unloading it all!

On Saturday at 10 a.m., Katy, my mom Terri, and I started chopping and slicing. Thanks to a friend's food processor, the 30 lbs (!!!) of onions cut with fewer tears and cabbage and cheese grated with ease. We hadn't realized how important our equipment



would be. The food processor was a necessity and good knives were essential. Thankfully Terri had a number of extra large metal bowls which we filled with chopped ingredients, ready for measure into pots. Since we were multiplying every recipe by three, we used all of our largest pots

to capacity. Around noon we started to cook; each of us was responsible for one mini-session of recipes which meant there were lots of hands and feet in the kitchen. We ate a Hollywood Pizza delivery supper and finished cooking around 9 p.m. It took an hour to clean up.

The Stats
 12 hours = average time spent per person on planning, prep, cooking and shopping
 19 = Recipes completed (multiplied each by 3)

120 = Servings made per family (each recipe served 6)
 \$200 = total cost per family
 \$1.65 = cost per serving

Success
 Pulling out a tray of stuffed manicotti, stuffed florentine shells, chicken chili, spinach quiche and lime marinated chicken has cut some of the stress of the supper hour. We don't eat a frozen meal every night, but probably every third night.

It is critical the recipes have lots of variety, and our choices did. I had frozen meals to share with friends who had babies. The cost per meal was exceptional for the variety. I cut our family's supper budget by at least a third - maybe even half. There are lots of leftovers for lunch (and sometimes supper) the next day.

Room to Improve
 While many of the meals have been good, about a third haven't been to my taste. Next time we'll use a website that allows us to pick each recipe specifically, then collates the shopping list. This will cut down on our planning time and limit the food wastage.

We need better freezer methods. We used freezer bags for most things, but some casseroles were frozen in dishes that did not stand up to being stacked (and froze together in blocks!)

Some of the recipes didn't freeze as well. Macaroni from the freezer to the pot is rather nasty.

The benefits are many and the problems surmountable. We'll be doing this experiment again in January, perhaps buying fewer beans - and more elk from Christine at the farmers' market.

If you have a resource or story to share, comment on my blog at <http://avenuehomesteader.blogspot.com>.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

for the neighbourhoods of Alberta Avenue, Delton, Eastwood, Elmwood Park, Parkdale-Cromdale, Spruce Avenue and Westwood

Listings for free events and programs as well as volunteer opportunities. Submit online at ratcreek.org.

ART & THEATRE

ARTIST OF THE MONTH

See the works of Dorothy Loh from the Nina Haggerty Centre at The Carrot (9351 118 Ave) in January.

ARTS NIGHTS AT THE NINA HAGGERTY

Come out for a FREE evening of art making ranging from clay building to printmaking and everything in between. Community Night: Tuesday from 6:30-8:30 PM and Family Night: Thursdays from 6:30-8:30PM at 9225 - 118 Avenue. RESUMES JAN 11. Limited space so please phone ahead to register: 780-474-7611.

DROP-IN GROUPS & PROGRAMS

FAMILY GYM NIGHT

Mondays & Wednesdays from 5pm-6pm at the Alberta Ave gym for parents and children under 12 years. Get a little exercise and tire out the kids. Various toys and equipment available e.g. basketball, floor hockey, soccer, dodgeball, parachute games and more. Free but must have membership from any community league.

BOOK CLUB

Tuesday, January 4, 7pm. Book: *Amber Spyglass* by Philip Pullman. Come and join us at The Carrot Coffeehouse (9351 118 Ave). Lively discussions, humor, and enlightenment! More info: Ann 780-752-4867.

ENGLISH CONVERSATION CAFE

Every Saturday morning, 10:00-11:30 AM at Bethel Chapel (95 St & 115 Ave) for those who need to practice their new-found English language skills. Free child care provided.

PRACTICE ENGLISH @ YOUR LIBRARY

Mondays at 6:30pm at Sprucewood Library (95 St & 116 Ave) from Jan 10 to Feb 14.

PARKDALE-CROMDALE SENIORS GROUP

Mondays from 10am to 2pm at 11335 85 St.. Join us for bingo, coffee and snacks.

SENIORS DROP-IN

Wednesdays from 11:30am-12:45pm at Crystal Kids Youth Centre (8718 118 Ave).

CRYSTAL KIDS YOUTH CENTRE

Mon to Thur 12pm-8pm, Fri 3pm-10pm, and Sat 1-5pm at 8718 118 Ave. Youth program for ages 6-17. More info call 780-479-5283.

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Open Tues-Fri 1pm-10pm & Sat 2pm-6:30pm. Offers drop-in groups and programming throughout the week, free public access computers, information and resources, the 3rd largest queer library in Canada and meeting space for community groups and events. 9540 - 111 Avenue, 780-488-3234, www.pridecentreofedmonton.org

TECH BOOT CAMP

Explore new online resources in media, music, video, mashups and blogging. Plus, take a deeper look at some sites you already know, like Facebook and Google. Tuesdays, 4:30 from Jan 11 to 25. Wednesdays, 4:30 from Jan 12 to 26. Thursdays, 3:30 from Jan 13 to 27.

TEEN GAMING

Fridays, 6:30pm for ages 12 to 17 at Sprucewood Library (95 St & 116 Ave) on Jan 7, 14, 21. Hone your Guitar Hero or Dance Dance Revolution

skills, or choose from plenty of other Wii and Playstation games.

SING, SIGN, LAUGH AND LEARN

Tuesdays, 10:30am at Sprucewood Library (95 St & 116 Ave) until Dec 21. Parents will learn strategies to engage their children and enhance their communication and development through repetition, visuals and movement. Suitable for all children up to age three.

TIME FOR TWOS

Wednesdays, 11:00-11:30 from Jan 12 to Feb 16. Wiggle, move and learn a new tune or two.

STORY STOP

Thursdays, 10:30am at Sprucewood Library (95 St & 116 Ave). This quick 15-minute storytime features stories, rhymes and songs - fast and fun for the whole family.

PARKDALE-CROMDALE LIL SPROUTS PLAYGROUP

Fridays from 10 am to 12 pm at 11335 85 St. Come join our playgroup! A place where parents can meet and children can play. Bring your snacks, ideas and sense of adventure! For more information, email info@parkdalecromdale.org or phone 780-471-4410.

BABES IN ARMS

Fridays, 10am to 12pm at The Carrot Community Arts CoffeeHouse (9351 118 Ave). Come and connect with other parents in the community. More info: 780-471-1580.

ENTERTAINMENT

THE CARROT COMMUNITY ARTS COFFEEHOUSE

9351 - 118 Avenue
THURSDAYS: Zoomers (Boomers with Zip!) Open mic 1-4 pm
FRIDAYS: Live music, 7:30pm-9:30pm; \$5 cover charge. Jan 7 Daylan Wizniuk; Jan 14 Micheal Reinhart, Tom Linsino, Ingrid Galin; Jan 21 Will Cramer
SATURDAYS: Open mic 7:30pm-9:30pm; Music, spoken word, comedy.

SPORTS & REC

YOGA AT ALBERTA AVE

Restorative: Mondays, 6:30-7:45pm from Jan 3 to 31 (no class Jan 24). Cost: \$20. Yoga for all: Mondays, 6:30-7:45pm from Feb 7 to Mar 14. Cost: \$30. Daytime Yoga: Fridays, 10am-11:15 from Feb 4 to Mar 11. Cost: \$30. Instructor: Melanie Ustina. Required: Any league membership. Call 780-477-2773 to register.

TAI CHI

Tuesdays, 6pm-7pm from Jan 11 to Mar 1 at Alberta Avenue (9210 118 Ave). This ancient art form improves strength, flexibility and general health through fluid movement and controlled breathing. Instructor: Jodi Doesburg. Cost: \$40 plus league membership. Call 780-477-2773 to register.

FITNESS BOOTCAMP

Tuesdays & Thursdays 6pm to 7pm from Jan 11 to April 21 at Alberta Avenue (9210 118 Ave). Drop-in for \$15/class or \$280/person. Contact Candace Ph: 780-445-5191 or E-mail: candacetaha@yahoo.ca

ZUMBA FITNESS

Wednesdays 7pm-8pm from Jan 12 to Mar 16 at Alberta Avenue (9210 118 Ave). Zumba fuses hypnotic Latin rhythms and easy-to-follow moves to create a one-of-a-kind fitness program that will blow you away. Cost: \$90. To register call Aura 780-908-2584.

YOGA IN PARKDALE

Tuesdays at 7pm starting Jan 18 at the Parkdale-Cromdale hall (11335 85 St). Cost: \$60 for 6 classes. More info: info@parkdalecromdale.org.

FREE SKATING LESSONS

Fridays from Jan 14 to Mar 4 at Spruce Avenue Community Rink (10240 115 Ave). 4 and 5 year olds skate from 4-4:45 pm and 6-12 year olds 5-6pm. Helmets can be provided however you will need to provide your child's skates. If you can not afford skates a referral can be made to Sports Central. Call Verna at 780-479-8019 to register.

LEARN TO SKATE

Saturdays from Jan 15 for Feb 19 at Parkdale-Cromdale Rink. Ages 4-6 between 11am-11:30 and ages 7-12 between 11:45-12:30. CSA helmet and community membership required. More info: info@parkdalecromdale.org

OUTDOOR COMMUNITY RINKS

Buy a community league membership and receive skate tags which allow you to skate for free at any community league rink. Alberta Avenue (9210 118 Ave): Mon-Fri 4pm-8pm unsupervised skating/no indoor access; Sat & Sun 1pm to 6pm rink shack/concession open. Parkdale (11335 85 St): Tuesdays & Thursdays 5pm-9pm and Sundays 2pm-6pm. Spruce Avenue (10240 115 Ave): call 780-471-1932 for schedule.

PRESCHOOL GYM

Saturdays, 11am-11:45 from Jan 29 to Mar 12 (no class Feb 19) for 3-5 year olds at Alberta Ave. Cost: \$30. Instructor: Sara Hendricks. Call 780-477-2773 to register.

FREE INDOOR PUBLIC SKATING DROP-IN

Offered year-round at City of Edmonton indoor arenas. Supervised by ice marshal. No sticks or pucks allowed. Search "shinny hockey" at edmonton.ca for times. Grand Truck (13025 112 St) on Sundays 1-2pm; Oliver (10335 119 St) on Tuesdays 6:15-7:15pm; Russ Barnes (6725 121 Ave) on Wednesdays 6-7pm; Westwood (12040 97 St) on Saturdays 3:15-4:15pm.

CRUD DOG WALKING GROUPS

An excellent opportunity to meet your neighbours (and their canine companions) as well as spend some quality time walking around the neighbourhood. Monday evenings: 6:30pm in front of St. Alphonsus Church (118 Ave and 85 St). Please note: if the temperature is below -15 degrees with a wind-chill, the dog walk will be cancelled.

FREE SWIM FOR ALBERTA AVE COMMUNITY LEAGUE MEMBERS

Sundays from 12pm to 2pm at Eastglen Pool (11410 64 St). Show your league membership card.

GIRL GUIDES AND BROWNIES

Mondays at 6:30pm at St. Andrew's Church (8715 118 Ave). If you're a girl looking for fun, friendships, and new challenges, Girl Guides of Canada - Norwood District has a spot for you! Sparks (K-Gr 1), Brownies (Gr 2-3), and Girl Guides (Gr 4-6). For more info, call Jean 780-469-4487 or Angel 780-642-0879.

VOLUNTEER

BE A SNOW ANGEL

Shovel snow for a neighbour who needs help. Nominate your good neighbourhood for Mayor's recognition and a chance to win great prizes. www.edmonton.ca/snowangels or

call 311.

RINK HOSTS NEEDED AT AB AVE

Hang at the Alberta Ave rink and serve hot chocolate. Hosts needed for Saturdays and Sundays from January to March, shifts are 1pm to 3:30pm and 3:30pm to 6pm. Call 780-477-2773 or email info@albertaave.org.

HELP AT EDMONTON'S COOLEST WINTER FESTIVAL!

Volunteer at The Deep Freeze Festival, January 8 and 9 and experience arts / sports / and frozen fun on 118th Ave. Enjoy volunteer perks including yummy eats and an exclusive volunteer party! For more info. on volunteer opportunities email: deepfreezevolunteers@gmail.com

HANG AT A GALLERY

Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts is looking for individuals willing to share 2-4 hours a week as gallery attendants. Gain experience working in a gallery setting, while supporting your neighborhood arts scene! For more info, contact Anna at volunteer@nina-haggertyart.ca

BE A COFFEE BARTENDER

Learn how to be a barista and make lattes and other coffees, then hang out at a cool coffee shop for 3 or 4 hours and visit with the interesting people who stop in. Drop by: The Carrot Community Arts Coffeehouse at 9351 118 Ave, call 780-471-1580 or visit www.thecarrot.ca.

DRIVE A SENIOR

Be a volunteer driver who spends 3-4 hours once a month to drive an elderly senior to medical appointments, banking and/or shopping. Gas reimbursed. Call Bev at 780-732-1221.

UPCOMING EVENTS

STORIES FROM THE HEART OF THE CITY

Thursdays, Jan 20, 1:30pm at Sprucewood Library (95 St & 116 Ave). Come tell your story and hear stories about interesting people.

NAME THAT TUNE

Thursday, Jan 27, 7:30-9:30pm at The Carrot (9351 118 Ave). Bring a team or come by yourself.

SNOW BALL FUN

Celebrate winter fun at Parkdale-Cromdale's Snow Ball on January 23. Join us from 1pm-5pm at both Sheriff Robertson and Sheila Bowker parks for some hot chocolate, skating, sleigh rides, and snow castle building. Check www.parkdalecromdale.org for more information.

COLLECTIVE KITCHEN

Parkdale-Cromdale Collective Kitchen continues in the new year. For just dollars a person, learn how to make delicious meals from a Red Seal Chef and wow your family. Email info@parkdalecromdale.org for more information.

NOTICES

FREE SAND FOR SLIPPERY WALKS

All Edmonton Community Leagues should have a green box of sand near their building. This sand is provided by the City of Edmonton for the public. If a box is empty, call 311 and report it. Leagues/addresses can be found at www.efcl.org.

BABYSITTING COURSE

Covers basic child care, first aid and the importance of play. Certificates awarded upon completion. For ages

11-16 years. Jan 28 & 29, Friday at 6pm and Saturday at 9:30am at Sprucewood Library. Register online epl.ca or call 780-496-3678.

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Parkdale-Cromdale Community League is hiring a part-time hall caretaker and rental manager. For more information or to submit your resume, email info@parkdalecromdale.org.

SPRUCE AVENUE COMMUNITY LEAGUE

Ice rink, skating lessons, family day event and more. Hall located at 10240 115 Avenue, phone 780-477-1932. For memberships call David at 780-477-6716. For more info go to www.spruceavenuecommunityleague.blogspot.com

THE CARROT TAKES A HOLIDAY

From Dec 24 1:00pm to January 3, 2011. Merry Christmas From The Carrot Family to Yours!

WRITING HELP & FEEDBACK

Would you like feedback on your creative writing? Do you have writerly impulses but don't know where to start? Do you long for a lively discussion on semi-colon usage? Drop in or make an appointment with Jocelyn Brown, writer-in-residence for the Canadian Authors' Association. Jocelyn will be "in residence" at the Nina Haggerty gallery every Tuesday and Wednesday from 11am-2pm. To submit your work online or make an appointment, go to: <http://www.canauthorsalberta.ca/writers-in-residence>

COPS AT THE CARROT

Join EPS members every Tuesday morning from 9:30 to 11 am for open and direct access to the EPS members working in your community. Bring your questions and comments or come in for a visit and coffee.

PARKDALE GARDEN COMMITTEE

We are open to suggestions for workshops, whether it be canning, fall gardening, pruneharvest tips, etc. Contact info@parkdalecromdale.org or phone 780-471-4410.

STITCH AND CHAT

Looking to restart. Contact info@arsontheave.org if interested.

MUSIC INSTRUCTION

The joy of music instruction in your own home! Connie Collingwood, A.R.C.T., is accepting a few new students in your community. Piano, Keyboard, Music Theory. Call 780-490-1922.

Church services

Avenue Vineyard Church

A friendly, informal, non-judgmental and safe place to grow spiritually. Traditional Christian values in a non-traditional way.

8718 118 Ave (Crystal Kids building)

Sundays at 10:30 am
www.avenuevineyard.com

Bethel Gospel Chapel

A Bible-based, multi-ethnic fellowship
11461 95 St. 780-477-3341

Sunday meetings:
9:30 AM - Lord's Supper
11:00 AM - Family Bible Hour
Saturdays - Free English
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Nice Neighbour Recognition Award for December

Long time Eastwood residents, Don and Liz Smith grew up in the neighbourhood and have a reputation as being the eyes and ears of the community. They inform neighbours of upcoming events and activities, as well as watch out for any untoward activity. It is not uncommon to find Don and Liz helping out neighbours with everything from shovelling snow and rounding up wandering puppies to participating in community events. If something needs doing, they always step up to lend a hand. This couple leads by example with their efforts to make our neighbourhood a better community.



Alice Greenshield

For details on the CRUD Nice Neighbour Recognition Awards along with other community building initiatives visit www.crudedmonton.org.

Happy Holidays!



We have just finished the fall sitting of the Legislature, and it is clear the Stelmach government has no plan to fix the health care crisis. I have been advocating for very clear solutions:

- Open the East Edmonton Health Centre urgent care facility to take the pressure off the ER in the Royal Alex.
- Consult the public instead of having backroom discussions on health care reform.
- Commit to publicly funded, publicly administered, and publicly funded health care.

As always, feel free to contact my office with any questions or concerns.



Your MLA, Brian Mason
Edmonton Highlands-Norwood
6519 - 112 Avenue

www.brianmason.ca ph: 780.414.0682

GOT COMMUNITY NEWS?!

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ATTENTION SHUTTERBUGS!

Love taking pictures?

Send your shots of community events or interesting local features to editor@ratcreek.org



Do you know someone who makes your neighbourhood a better place to live?

Then why not nominate them for the monthly **Nice Neighbour Recognition Award**.

For further details contact CRUD.

COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO URBAN DISORDER
T: 780.996.4728 | email: info@crudedmonton.org

www.crudedmonton.org



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