Embracing the deep freeze of winter

Edmontonians flock to Alberta Ave to celebrate winter and local cultures

January in Edmonton is in the grip of winter. With spring not even a glimmer on the horizon, it’s easy to understand the desire to hibernate and emerge when the snow melts. But on Alberta Avenue, winter brings the annual Deep Freeze Festival, now in its ninth year.

At its core, Deep Freeze is about embracing and celebrating winter. Where else will you find the Deep Freezer race, where two people push a deep freezer on skis while three inside the freezer? Or a winter bocce ball tournament? Finding winter. Where else will you see fairies and other magical creatures? At the annual Deep Freeze Festival, everybody has a place to go warm up, and have warm food, or go inside and hear some music, but you still have to walk [outside] from place to place. There are things to do while you are walking, and things to see. That’s the goal. To make sure people are outside,” said Argy-Burgess.

The festival has events and activities for people of all ages to enjoy. Adults always seem to enjoy the popular ice bar behind the Alberta Avenue Community League. For kids, there is a snow kingdom, a friendly dance with live music at The Nina Haggerty Centre on Saturday night, a family-friendly movie shown on Saturday night, a local music group and a tourtière (a traditional Francophone meat pie) competition held at The Reuse Centre. For kids, there is a variety of ways, like the new Fairy Door competition. Local artists will design and decorate a small door (12 to 15 inches), then placed throughout Alberta Avenue. The Reuse Centre will offer a workshop on making wind chimes, which is something traditional folklore says attracts fairies and other magical creatures.

For those wanting to take a break from the outdoors, the Carrot has a curated show of Ukrainian and Francophone visual art focusing on a winter theme. A Ukrainian wheat weaving workshop will be held at The Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts, and a tourtière (a traditional Francophone meat pie) competition held on Sunday afternoon. And of course, hungry festival goers can buy food inside Alberta Avenue Community League.

Further information
Deep Freeze: A Byzantine Winter Festival Jan. 9, noon to 11 pm Jan. 10, noon to 6 pm 118 Avenue, between 90 and 94 Street
Free admission, but donations accepted. Food and drink items will work on a ticket basis.
For more information, including a full schedule of events, visit deepfreezefest.ca.
Passing the reigns
Butte Travel now under the care of a new owner and a manager

REBECCA LIPPIATT
780.477.3561
11733 95 ST
118 Avenue. Silver will change the business name to the strip mall on the corner of 95 Street and Peter Goldring. In 1972, Woudstra moved the business to Alberta, where the first owner once lived. The business will continue to offer trusted advice and travel services.

Owner Henry Woudstra is retiring from Butte Travel. Daryl Silver, an owner of Butte Travel, is taking over after 55 years in the travel business. Silver, an owner of several travel agencies, and Pearl Seaker, as manager, will continue to offer trusted advice and travel services.

Butte Travel is named after Picture Butte in southern Alberta, where the first owner once lived. The business was originally in the building previously occupied by Peter Goldring. In 1972, Woudstra moved the business to the strip mall on the corner of 95 Street and 118 Avenue. Silver will change the business name to Continental Travel, but will continue to offer the same service in the same location, with the same phone number.

Butte Travel caters to the international traveller. Many customers have been European Canadians travelling to see their families. With the changes in immigration, Seaker and Silver said they expect to be helping more people travelling to Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.

The travel agents create relationships with their clients that extend over the years. They provide advice on everything from what resorts will best suit their needs to assistance on meeting dietary needs to providing help with visa requirements. “Great travel agents coddle their customers, build up trust and friendship over the years,” said Silver.

Butte Travel fills needs that cannot be addressed through online travel booking. A family might spend $40,000 on a trip, and they need to know their schedules are coordinated and everyone is cared for. When a large family is booking a holiday and coming from different destinations, a travel agent can make sure the family is sitting together on the plane. Travel agents have more refined capabilities than trips booked online. Silver said clients come to travel agents and “trust the advice they get, trust the office to get them where they are going, and back them up if there are any issues while they are travelling.”

Prices through Butte Travel are comparable or even lower than what cannot be found online. Silver and Seaker said they look forward to serving the community and providing travel expertise. Woudstra will continue to be involved in the business to provide stability and trust.
Playing hockey from the heart
Neighbourhood hockey player inducted into Hockey Club Hall of Fame

MARLENE SALMONSON

Alberta Avenue resident Roger DeJordy has many fond memories of playing wingman in the American Hockey League (AHL) for the Hershey Bears. Now, he can add another memory. On Dec. 20, DeJordy was inducted into the Hershey Bears Hockey Club Hall of Fame.

DeJordy, a native of St-Hyacinthe, Quebec, played for the Hershey Bears from 1962-1970. The 1966-67 period was a big one for DeJordy as he made club history by being the first player ever to reach 50 goals in a single season (he scored 52). He ranks fifth in the Bears’ history for career goals (222), seventh in games (531), and is tied for seventh in points (448). He spent his AHL career with the Edmonton Flyers. In those days, DeJordy said, “I had ham and eggs three times a day. Then they encouraged me to say, ‘same as him.’ That’s how I learned English.”

Hockey has been at the center of his life since childhood. His parents owned a grocery store located across the street from a skating rink, and growing up the young DeJordy even wore his tin pan to school.

His hockey career spanned from 1955-1971 and enabled DeJordy to meet some famous people, such as Miss Pennsylvania and Bob Hope. Highlights include winning the Calder Cup Championship with the Bears in 1969, and the day that he scored against his brother Denis, who became an NHL goalie. “I kept that puck!” DeJordy said with a smile.

Five years ago, DeJordy and Denis visited Hershey on a bus trip. “Seeing the park and remembering what happened 35 years ago. Everywhere I looked, remembering.”

DeJordy remembers how he would wait for someone else to order and then he would say “same.” “I had ham and eggs three times a day. Then they encouraged me to say, ‘same as him.’ That’s how I learned English.”

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Five years ago, DeJordy and Denis visited Hershey on a bus trip. “Seeing the park and remembering what happened 35 years ago. Everywhere I looked, remembering. It was an emotional time.”

After hockey, DeJordy managed the NAIT ice arena for 27 years, and he has an ongoing collection of 600 hockey pucks. When asked how his acceptance speech was going, DeJordy said, “They told me to just speak from the heart.” From a man who played hockey from the heart, that should be one amazing speech.

Asked if he had anything to add, he said, “Yes! Go Bears go!” A fan of the Hershey Bears, as always.
CONSTANCE BRISSENDEN

Two of the original founders of Deep Freeze Festival were ice sculptors. Today, ice sculptures are one of the festival’s major draws.

Several years ago, the ice making and sculpting team of Barry Collier and Stephen Chung were hired to take the Ice Promenade even further. Together, they continue to oversee the transformation of the parking lot of the Alberta Avenue Community League into the Ice Promenade, an ice wonderland, created by many talented sculptors.

The fun begins when over 100 blocks of ice, each weighing 250 pounds, are deposited in the lot. Around 30 blocks are available to the eight to 10 competitors vying for top spots in an intense 24-hour carving competition. By noon on Jan. 10, the carving must be finished so patrons can vote on their favorite sculptures. By 3 pm, three winners are announced in the community centre. Collier said he believes he inherited his love of everything wintry. His mother, Ellen, is Gwich’in from the Mackenzie Delta, one of Canada’s coldest places.

“All my life I’ve been dealing with stuff that’s cold,” he recalled. “When I was growing up, it was hockey and other winter sports. When I started in business, I worked in an ice plant for 33 years, manufacturing and selling packaged ice to convenience and grocery stores.”

In 1990, he added ice carving to his skills. He is largely self-taught. By his fourth month creating ice carvings for special events, he was swamped with orders.

By 2010, Collier launched Ice Works with Stephen Chung, another master carver. A few years ago, they joined forces to bring out the details.

There’s a vast creative difference from logos: Fairies, Elves & Ogres...Oh My!! The theme allows Collier’s creativity to soar. “I can go wild with my ideas when I’m sitting in a freezer doing my carving,” he said. “Carving for the festival takes it one step further since carvings must be completed within 24 hours. I enjoy working under pressure. It’s a hard-core rush.”

Speed doesn’t affect quality and may even enhance it, he said. “I see the finished image lurking in the ice. Sometimes I use a marker to shape it on the block. I use a chainsaw to cut away the non-essential ice. Then I use various drill bits or an old-fashioned hand chisel to bring out the details.”

Collier’s works for corporate functions, weddings, anniversaries, conferences and banquets. “Ninety per cent of my business carvings are logos. In winter, I decorate them with fancy elements like snowflakes, highlighted with colour.”

He admitted his love of ice makes him different. “I like the peace and quiet when I’m sitting in a freezer doing my carving,” he said. “I enjoy working under pressure. It’s a hard-core rush.”

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Collier and Chung will create an elaborately carved ice bar for the beer garden, with all-ice lounge furniture, as well as an ice slide for children.

Would he give up the cold and the pressure? Surely not. At 53 years old, he said, “I’m not stopping. This is my semi-retirement. I enjoy it too much.”

For festival producer Allison Argy-Burgess, the carvings bring out the beauty of Alberta’s winter. Last year, the festival attracted between 22,000 and 25,000 people to the Avenue.

“Everything at the festival has an art focus, incorporating ice and snow. The dazzling ice carvings are such a big draw,” said Argy-Burgess.
New year’s resolution to get in shape?
Here are five at-home exercises to keep you fit this year

**Squats**
(3 sets of 15 reps)
Start with your feet hip-width apart, toes facing forward or slightly pointed outward.
Squat down, making a 90-degree angle and keeping most of your weight in your heels. Push back up to starting.

**Lunges**
(3 sets of 20 reps, 10 on each leg)
Start with your feet hip-width apart and step back with your right leg into a lunge. Slowly lower your right knee to the ground while keeping most of your weight in the front leg. The front leg is always the working leg and should carry most of your weight. Push your back leg up to starting position with your feet side by side. Repeat 10 times, then switch legs.

**Lateral lunge**
(3 sets of 20 reps, 10 on each leg)
Start with your feet shoulder-width apart, placing a towel under one foot. Push out laterally with the leg that has the towel. While the leg is stretched out to your side, your stabilizing leg will bend, pushing your hips and butt back. Once you hit a 90-degree angle with your stabilizing foot, slide your extended leg back to the starting position. Repeat 10 times, then switch legs.

**Leg curls**
(3 sets of 15 reps)
Lie on your back. Position your feet hip-width apart with a towel underneath your heels. Push your hips up so you create a straight line from your knees to your shoulders. Slowly extend your feet out, keeping your hips pushed up. When you feel you are going to break that straight line, bring your feet back into starting position. Repeat.

**Plank**
(3 sets of 15 reps)
Lie face down with your legs straight out behind you and a towel placed under each foot.
Push yourself up and keep a strong line from your head to your heels. Once you’re stable, slide your legs out, making a wide stance and bring them back in. Repeat.

Rest for one minute at the end of the three sets, then move on to the next exercise. Once you have completed all five exercises, you’re done!

If you want to really push yourself, cut out the 30 seconds rest between sets. Do three sets in a row, then rest one minute before moving on to the next exercise. This is a fun 45-minute routine, so plug in your music, grab water and a towel, and get ready to sweat. For best results, perform this routine three times a week.

For many of us, every year comes with a few more pounds of flesh. The holiday season in particular with its plentiful parties and family gatherings around tables of food can lead to tighter pants and bigger numbers on the scale. Here are five exercises you can do at home to get into better shape and health this year.

Do 15-20 repetitions of the exercise as indicated below. This is one set. Rest for 30 seconds, then do a second set. Rest for 30 seconds. Do a third set.

[Images of people performing exercises]
Facing the truth
Breaking up isn’t easy, but it doesn’t always have to be bad

Most of us have experienced a break up and I’m sure we could all agree it is far from wonderful. There are so many factors, feelings, and memories involved, especially if you’ve been together for a long time.

My most recent relationship had been on and off, but the latter part of it lasted for just over a year and a half. I thought the second time around was going to be different. We would be able to fix the issues we had before, laugh and share our time while planning our lives together to potentially form a future as a solidified couple.

I knew things weren’t going well, but decided to believe things would get better. All over, we had our ups and downs and were able to maturely communicate about our feelings and deal with situations as they arose. I started to come to terms with the relationship, realizing it wasn’t what I thought it was going to be like the second time around and accepting it.

But I could feel that he seemed distant, distracted and busy.

One night I went over to his apartment where we drank champagne and toasted his recent career and personal success. That’s when it all happened. I was hit with the big question that made my heart feel as if it went right into my stomach and my throat began to squeeze closed. He looked at me with a serious, kind look and said something along the lines of “Are you happy in our relationship?”

Pausing for a moment, I looked up to the ceiling and recalled all our memories over the years while he waited for a response. Whether I wanted to accept it or not before, I knew deep down this was it. This was how this chapter was going to come to an end.

Less than an hour later, I showed myself out of his apartment, stepping out as a single lady. During our discussion, we talked about how it hasn’t been working out for a while now and how we should both focus on ourselves. If the time was right in the future, we could meet up and start again but right now, things weren’t going well and we both knew it.

To date, this has been one of the most mature break ups I had ever been through and for that I am thankful. And who knows what will happen? We might stay apart or end up together.

All I know is that each time I go through a break up, I can’t help but feel that I am left with a little less of my heart.

Remembering the Village of North Edmonton

Packingtown employed 2,500 men and women during the peak years

CHANTAL FIGEAT

I first heard of the Transit Hotel when I arrived in Edmonton and was looking for a temporary place to stay. Afterwards, when I found an apartment, I would pass by the hotel on the bus. I often thought that there had to be a story behind this large old commercial building situated at a crossroads.

Sure enough, the Transit Hotel, built in 1908, was in the centre of the village commonly known as Packingtown. This settlement was renamed and incorporated as the Village of North Edmonton in 1910. Today only a few commercial buildings remain, but North Edmonton was once a hub for the meat packing industry.

Annexed to Edmonton in 1910, North Edmonton grew to a population of 3,000 and boasted a school, hospital, post office, police force, and streetcar service. Much of North Edmonton’s growth was due to the efforts of American businessman Patrick Dwyer. He funded many early commercial buildings, including the Transit Hotel. The Transit sported conveniences such as electricity, hot and cold running water and telephones.

“The chap that built the Transit Hotel, Patrick Dwyer, he lobbied the Swifts out of Chicago to come and build a plant here,” said Deanna Fuhlendorf, chair of the Fort Trail Historical Foundation.

The meat packing plant was built on Norton Street, now 66 Street. This venture was the first of three meat processing plants in the area. P. Burns and Company built their plant in 1911. In 1935, Canada Packers constructed a modern facility.

“(The) Canada Packers logo itself really made you proud to be a Canadian. (They) employed over 11,000 people in Canada,” said Fuhlendorf. The plant was an economic boon to the local community, as it provided employment during the tough Depression years.

The iconic terra cotta smokestack is all that remains of the Canada Packers building. “They forgot about us,” said Fuhlendorf. The smokestack, originally part of the power system, is now designated as a historical resource.

Fuhlendorf grew up close to Packingtown. She said she remembers seeing the workers leaving the plant for lunch. “They looked like little penguins,” recalled Fuhlendorf.

The City of Edmonton plans to erect an interpretive centre around the old Canada Packers smokestack in 2017. By then, the Northeast Transit Maintenance facility will be built at the former Canada Packers site. The facility will be named Kathleen Andrews Garage after the first female bus driver in Edmonton.

For those interested in learning more, the foundation published a book called The Village of North Edmonton, available for $20. Funds raised will be used for the production of a 1913 map of North Edmonton. The map and the stories will be placed in the Village Square at the Station Pointe subdivision.

To buy a copy or to find out more, contact the Fort Trail Historical Foundation at 780.472.2562.
COMMUNITY CALENDAR
For the communities of Alberta Avenue, Delton, Eastwood, Elmwood Park, Parkdale-Cromdale, Spruce Avenue and Westwood.

RAT CREEK PRESS • JANUARY 2016

CALENDAR & CLASSIFIEDS

COMMUNITY DANCE CLASSES Mile Zero Dance Society offers an introduction for free community dance/movement classes that can come to YOU. We have highly skilled instructors who can provide an in-class program or workshop to your community. Email us at lalondekenz@ hotmail.com or call 780.719.6585.

THE CARROT’S POETRY NIGHT Jan. 5 from 7-9:30 pm at The Carrot (9351 118 Ave). Enjoy a night out with an encouraging crowd.

JOIN EMOC’S GLOBAL SINGERS Eat a delicious lunch, learn new songs, and enjoy live music from people. Thursdays from 12-1 pm, Room 2-4, Mennonite Centre (11735 85 St).

KITCHEN PRAYERWORKS COLLECTIVE A new program using One serving meals $3. Trish 780.897.6825 or email carolinelalond@hotmail.com

FREE COMMUNITY ACCESS Use any of the amenities at the rec centre on Saturdays from 5-7:30 pm accompanied by adults.

GROWING TOGETHER GROUP A community to belong in...a community for fathers to talk about important in life. Meets the last Wednesday of each month. 780.934.3209.

ST. FAITH AND ST. STEPHEN Two Traditions – One Faith. www.avenuevineyard.com

St. Stephen: 780.422.3240
12317-82 St.             780.474.4830
Sundays at 11 am
11:00 am - Mass, Sunday Main Celebration
4:00 pm - Mass, Saturday Vigil of Sunday
8:30 am - Low Mass
10:30 am - High Mass;
Sundays at 11 am
4:30 pm - High Mass;
Weddays at 7:00 pm

SUNDAE FESTIVAL
Come to the library to enjoy ice cream and enjoy artistic panache and authentic cultural heritage winter games and fun. Don’t miss out on this amazing weekend, right here in our neighbourhood! The fun starts at noon both days! Fireworks display Saturday at 6 PM at 11828 85th Street.

COFFEE WITH COPS Join Cst. Thomsen to chat about neighbourhood concerns. Jan. 5 from 10-11:30 am at The Carrot (9351 118 Ave).

THE CARROT STAGE Sebastian 780.878.8265.

Free group music lessons Saturdays from 9 am – 12 pm at The Nina (9225 118 Ave).

Wednesdays from 6:30-8 pm at 81 St & 111 Avenue (6516 118 Ave).

Leisurely activities for women who have completed breast cancer treatment. Jan. 11 from 6:30-10pm at the Delton Rink (11335 85 St).

Tuesdays from 6:30-8:30 pm at 12502 - 81 Ave.

WINTER GAMES Winter games and fun. Don’t miss out, bring friends, try things new! Pop-Up makerspace.

SHERRIF ROBERTSON PARK 81 St & 111 Avenue unsupervised snow bank open

ALBERTA VENUE RINK 93 St and 118 Ave

Snowbank rink open weekdays 3-6 pm; weekends 1-6 pm. Check Facebook or call 780 477 5056 for opening date. Skates available to borrow during Deep Freeze Festival Jan 9 & 10.

Babes in Arms A wonderful casual parent group Friday mornings from 10 am to 12 pm at Norwood Child and Family Resource Centre (9156 114 Ave). Enjoy our indoor play space and meet new friends in this unstructured group for parents and children. Snack included. Mondays from 10 am – 12 pm (9156 114 Ave).

TEEN LOUNGE Join other kids in the program room to play video games, make a DIY project, meet friends or just hang out.

SINGERS Enjoy a night out with an encouraging crowd.

JOIN EMOC’S GLOBAL SINGERS Eat a delicious lunch, learn new songs, and enjoy live music from people. Thursdays from 12-1 pm, Room 2-4, Mennonite Centre (11735 85 St).

NASHVILLE SONGWRITERS ASSOC INTERNATIONAL (NSAI) Jan. 28 from 7:30-9:30 pm for poetry night. A wonderful time to share your work and enjoy a night out with an encouraging crowd.

JOIN EMOC’S GLOBAL SINGERS Eat a delicious lunch, learn new songs, and enjoy live music from people. Thursdays from 12-1 pm, Room 2-4, Mennonite Centre (11735 85 St).

GIVE YOUR CHILD A HEAD START Free preschool program for ages 3½ - 5 runs four half days a week at Norwood Child and Family Resource Centre (9156-114 Ave). Free busing, nutritious snack, health and dental services, and a high quality child-focused program. Taking registrations for fall 2015: 780.471.3737.

BOARD GAMES NIGHT Games provided or bring your own games. Jan. 26 from 7-9 pm at The Carrot (9351 118 Ave). Sponsored by NNA.

DEEP FREEZE FESTIVAL Volunteer with us! The Freeze is coming! Email deepfreezevolunteers@gmail.com for more info or visit deepfreezefestival.com/volunteer.

ST. ALPHONSUS CATHOLIC CHURCH 11828 85th Street    780.474.5434
Service Times:
Sunday Worship:
8:00 am – Low Mass
9:00 am – Morning Prayer
10:30 am – High Mass
7:00 pm – Evening

ST. FAITH: 780.477.5391
Morning Prayer Friday at 9:00 a.m.
1:30 pm – Sunday Worship
1st Sunday - Worship in the Common 3rd Sunday – Traditional
2nd Sunday - Aboriginal
4th Sunday – Traditional

ANGLICAN BAPTISMS ON ALBERTA AVENUE

FATHER CLUB A place for fathers to talk about guy stuff and do guy things. Support and childcare included. Jan. 10 from 5:30-7:30 pm at Norwood Centre (9156 114 Ave). Register: 780.471.3737.

CARDINALS COMING OFF THE ICE Come to the library to enjoy ice cream and enjoy artistic panache and authentic cultural heritage winter games and fun. Don’t miss out on this amazing weekend, right here in our neighbourhood! The fun starts at noon both days! Fireworks display Saturday at 6 PM at 11828 85th Street.

DISSOLVED BAPTIST CHURCH

[Image 50x49 to 126x76]

DISSOLVED BAPTIST CHURCH

[Image 50x49 to 126x76]
Ten years later

2016 will be the tenth year of the Avenue Initiative Revitalization.

Looking back, it’s easy to see many successful changes. New streetscaping, store front facades, and increased lighting have improved the look. An active connected community along with a vibrant growing arts scene is changing the perception of the area. House sales and renovations are noticeable throughout the community. Everyone has a role to play in revitalizing a community - shop local, be a good neighbour, and get involved.

Judy Allan, Avenue Initiative Revitalization Coordinator - Contact 780.496.1913 or judy.allan@edmonton.ca

Meet Gurjeet Sangha, the newest N.E.T. (Neighbourhood Empowerment Team) member from the Northwest EPS division. N.E.T. works to enhance safety in your community. Their work is based on community needs and safety concerns.

Gurjeet is a social worker. She previously worked for Alberta Health at the Glenrose Hospital with seniors. She’s excited about her new position. “What attracted me to N.E.T. are the innovative models they use to deal with crime and safety issues.”

Gurjeet will be working to engage residents, build positive community partnerships and strengthen community resiliency. She would love to talk to you about your concerns and discuss ideas on how to enhance safety in the community.

Contact 780.499.8987 or gurjeet.sangha@edmonton.ca.

Change is the only constant on the Avenue with new businesses opening, others closing, and buildings getting facade facelifts.

In 2015, several new businesses opened. These businesses include Alberta Avenue Medical Clinic in the old Shoppers Drug Mart location, Samosa Cafe on 94 Street, Caribbean’s Finest restaurant on 88 Street, Gifted Hands Hair & Fashion on 84 Street, and Go Cafe behind the Wee Book Inn on 84 Street.

Two long time businesses closed. Henry Woudstra of Butte Travel retired after 55 years in business and sold the business. Dimitri of Modern Vac also retired after 30 plus years in business.

ABC Weddings & Rentals completed a facade improvement. The 7-Eleven removed their gas pumps and completed a fantastic interior renovation. Now Qi Creative & Tae Kwon Do is in the midst of adding a second storey and overhauling their building at 94 Street.

Watch for the new business website launching in January 2016 where you can keep up to date and learn more about area businesses at www.alberta-avenue.com.