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Beautifying communities and alleys

People needed for local Animate the Avenue Alleys project



Andreas' completed garage is an example of the project. | Supplied

STEVEN TOWNSEND

Wesley Andreas has set his mind on beautifying and connecting the communities that surround Alberta Avenue. He's focusing on the alleys in particular.

"We thought maybe we could do something more colourful," he said. Andreas is the founder of the Animate the Avenue Alley project. He started last year with a project on his own fence and garage. "We had been wanting to paint our garage anyway, so we used it as an opportunity to do something interesting with our garage painting, rather than just repainting it white."

Following the success and positive feedback Andreas received, he wanted to expand the project and use it as a way to connect the communities surrounding Alberta Avenue.

"It's about getting people connected with each other in the neighbourhoods. I think some people come to this area

for festivals, but they only see the commercial street, and they don't really spend a lot of time in the neighbourhoods. They might have some perceptions about the neighbourhoods that we can maybe change by showing something positive."

Andreas found the opportunity to connect with people through the collaborative network at Make Something Edmonton and a project they are working on called 100In1Day. On June 4, the organization has set the goal of completing 100 small projects in one day. They'll bring together hundreds of Edmonton artists and volunteers to work on those projects to improve the city.

Andreas said he wants to see 10 Animate the Avenue Alley projects this year. If you are thinking about getting involved but worry you might not have the talent, don't fret.

"Some people might feel that it is sort of intimidating to come

up with an artistic project if you don't feel like you're creative yourself," Andreas said. "I would say I am creative; I am not an artist. I figured if I can do it, other people can do it too. They might just need some support."

Knowing that finances may be a barrier for some people, Andreas contacted the city and Arts On the Avenue to see if they could help.

"We are providing funding to purchase supplies, up to \$100, to help offset the cost of doing the project," Andreas said.

"I am hoping that once people see it and experience it, maybe it will expand to other areas," said Judy Allan, the city's revitalization co-ordinator for the area.

Animate the Avenue Alley Project will be holding an inspiration and brainstorming meeting on May 2 at 7 p.m. at The Carrot.

"We are going to have artists, more team members and get people to start planning out their projects," said Andreas.

If you are interested in taking part in the project or becoming a volunteer, email Andreas at Animate.The.Alley@gmail.com.

Steven is an Edmonton native, community organizer and small business owner. His twitter handle is @grimacstv.

ANIMATE THE AVENUE ALLEYS

AnimateTheAlleys/
Brainstorming &
inspiration meeting

May 2, 7 p.m at The Carrot
(9351 118 Avenue)

More information: Animate.
The.Alley@gmail.com

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City councillors vote to extend moratorium

Administration will once again consult with five neighbourhoods

TALEA MEDYNSKI

On April 12, city councillors voted to extend the moratorium on using city money for non-market and affordable housing in five neighbourhoods.

The moratorium began in 2012 when the Alberta Avenue, Eastwood, Queen Mary Park, Central McDougall, and McCauley neighbourhoods protested over the amount of social housing in their neighbourhoods. After that, the city consulted with them to determine housing needs and opportunities.

In March, city administration released exemptions to the moratorium for council to consider, which included projects like small-scale non-market housing and seniors' housing.

John Whittaker from the Edmonton Coalition on Housing and Homelessness (ECOHH) asked council to ease the moratorium and supported the exemptions. "The moratorium is not a solution, housing is." He said all forms of

housing are important, from supportive housing to market housing.

Cam McDonald, executive director of The Edmonton Inner City Housing Society (EICHS) added, "The moratorium is a bit of a divisive issue, but there is some support for well thought-out affordable housing."

Several community members disagreed with the exemptions.

Cris Basualdo, an Alberta Avenue resident who has spoken up on the issue for many years said, "With these exemptions, our community will be the fall back as they've always been."

Gerard Forget, another Alberta Avenue resident, remarked, "The recommendations from the executive committee are not complete. The five neighbourhoods in question are still saturated with non-market housing. There is still no mention in the report that non-market housing will be spread throughout the city."

The five neighbourhoods currently have the majority of the city's social housing. Coun. Scott McKeen specu-

lated the reason non-market housing has traditionally gone in those neighbourhoods are because "community-wide, politically, it's the path of least resistance."

"It's about the level of poverty in these communities, more so than the amount of non-market housing," said Coun. Ben Henderson, and he added that the objective is to get back to a balanced neighbourhood.

Now city administration will again consult with the five neighbourhoods and develop a new report, due back by December 2016. During that time, administration will work with the neighbourhoods "to consider possible mechanisms for city housing interventions to lead neighbourhood revitalization and lessen the concentration of poverty."

"The next report is an opportunity to work with residents to directly address the issue of poverty which has been a concern raised by all of the moratorium communities for a number of years," said Jessie Singer, a housing planner

with the city's sustainable development department. "Hopefully we'll at least be able to get the groundwork laid for the next step."

The moratorium will remain until the report is complete and approved. Then administration will recommend if the moratorium should be lifted along with any modifications. The city will also look at other neighbourhoods for affordable housing and work on citywide strategies.

The council's decision is a positive development, said Brendan Van Alstine, president of Alberta Avenue Community League.

"Overall I'd say I'm pleased. While the league definitely isn't opposed to all of the exemptions that were proposed, we were concerned that they were quite sweeping and not very well defined."

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



The housing moratorium will remain in place until a new report is completed this December. | Karen Mykietka

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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.

GOALS

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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I ♥ my RCP

Housing grants still available for homeowners

Funding helps homeowners explore options and generate extra income

TALEA MEDYNSKI

Homeowners considering building a separate suite or needing to make essential home repairs can still access city housing grants.

Throughout 2016, funding is available from the city's Cornerstones II grant program, which includes the Secondary Suites, the HOPE program, and Curb Appeal grant.

The HOPE program provides one time grant assistance up to \$20,000 to help eligible homeowners bring their homes to a minimum standard of health and safety.

The Secondary Suite program provides up to \$20,000 to help property owners upgrade an existing secondary, garage or garden suite or build a new one.

The Curb Appeal program covers 50 per cent of costs, up to \$1,000 for improving a home's exterior.

"We would love for eligible applicants to come forward and take advantage of funding in the program," said Judy Downey with the city's housing programs.

While basement suites are fairly common, garage and garden suites are also an option.

James Kirkland, owner of Construct Design & Build, built a new garage and garage suite on his Parkdale property last March. The suite, on the top floor of the garage, is about 480 square feet.

"I always wanted to do it. I believe in higher density," said Kirkland, who applied for the Secondary Suite grant and received the full amount. His garage and garage suite cost over \$100,000. He said a secondary suite in his home would have been cheaper, but the garage suite was nicer. Besides, access to his basement is in the

middle of his house and secondary suites require a separate entrance.

Kirkland said some people build a garage suite as an investment, but others want to live there when they retire or have it for family. While he built everything new, he said homeowners with existing garages should build suites to the side. "The existing garage can't usually handle another floor."

Building the suite was a learning experience. "There was so much code involved," he said. "Now I understand it better, but it was complicated. There's a lot of information you have to know to make it work."

Garage suites are located above, to the side, or in the back of a detached garage. Entrances are external and separate from the vehicle entrance or are through an indoor landing. They also have a separate kitchen, bedroom and bathroom, which means installing infrastructure for water, sewer, gas, and electricity.

Garage and garden suites need proper permits and appropriate zoning. Development and building permits must be in place before building or applying for funding.

Homeowners must be registered on the property title, live in the main residence, and sign an agreement to rent the suite for five years to tenants within an income threshold. Homeowners who sell the home before that time is over or who don't abide by the agreement pay back the grant.

Downey said the city is happy to give presentations at community leagues.

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



James Kirkland built his garage suite last March. | Karen Mykietka

HOUSING GRANTS

Grant funding requests: 311.
 Land use & permits: 311 or 780.496.5959
edmonton.ca/hope
edmonton.ca/secondarysuites
edmonton.ca/curbappeal (only applicable to Alberta Avenue & Eastwood)

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Seva Food Truck brings meals and mentorship

Sikh principles of selfless service and food help local students

PATRICIA DUNNIGAN

A buzz of excitement spreads through the halls of Spruce Avenue School as Jessy Nerval rushes by. "Is it hot lunch day?" someone asks. And like the pied piper, students follow him to the gym.

The kids know the drill. Within 10 minutes, 15 tables and 150 chairs are set up. A queue stretches to reach the chickpeas in spicy gravy and basmati rice served by four volunteers. Today's meal is donated by All India Restaurant and Sweets, one of a handful of contributors.

Seva Food Truck, organized two years ago by Nerval and a band of college-aged helpers, isn't an actual truck. It's a hot lunch delivered to three schools (Spruce Avenue, Calder and JD Bracco) where students are often hungry and even homeless. Education Minister David Eggen, aware of these challenges, thought that Seva would be a good fit.

Joanne Harle, Spruce Avenue School's principal, is full of praise for the generosity and goodwill that flows from the initiative. "I can't imagine my own teenagers reaching out like that," she said. "I'm just amazed at their dedication and skillful organization. At first they came weekly, but we had to reduce it to once a month because the gym class gets shortened to set up for the meal."

Seva Food Truck uses healthy food to launch its goal of mentorship and positive role modeling for kids who might not get it at home. Nerval derives his inspiration from the Sikh principles of seva (selfless service) and langar (free meals served to all, regardless of class, race, religion, or other social divisions).

The idea of Seva came up in conversation with Nerval's father one night after dinner. The first initiative was a summer food tent on 96 Street across from the Bissell Centre. By speaking to homeless adults, Nerval learned that problems often started in childhood. He decided to put Seva's energy into prevention at a younger age. It's clear this mentorship is ongoing when Harle shares troubling news about a student Nerval has mentored. "He could use some support right now. You've been such a good influence on him and he trusts you."

To prepare for this role, volunteers take the mentor training program through Big Brothers and Sisters.

"I recently lost my job but I'm glad to have more time to work the lunch program," said Tej Sangha, one of the 50 volunteers. "I've been doing this for two years and it's very rewarding."

Megan Haggerty, one of the school's teachers, and Emily, a gregarious student in grade nine, sum up the feeling. "We're super impressed with Seva—the food they bring is yummy."

Plates, glasses and utensils get stuffed into a garbage can, and kids turn it into a game of how high the tower can be stacked before it topples. The tables and chairs are stacked and the gym empties. Within 45 minutes, there are 150 full tummies. Nice work, Seva.

Patricia Dunnigan lives in Alberta Avenue with her husband Aydan. She is writing a book of short stories. She is a member of the Saint City Writers and has works published in two anthologies.



A Seva Food Truck staff member talks to students. | NeetNiz Photography

SPICY CHICKPEAS - KULWANT GREWAL

Ingredients

3 cups cooked chickpeas
1 onion, chopped
6 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
6 slices of ginger (1 inch diameter chunk of ginger), peeled and finely chopped

½ tbsp salt
½ tbsp turmeric
½ tbsp cayenne
½ tbsp ground cumin
½ tbsp kasoori or methi
½ tbsp spicy spaghetti seasoning
½ tbsp ground coriander

1 tsp cinnamon
3 tbsp crushed tomato
1 can chicken broth

Fry onion in oil until brown, then add ginger and garlic. Add all spices and mix well.

Add the crushed tomato and chicken broth. Then, add cooked chickpeas and let simmer. Serve on basmati rice.

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Recognizing art, courage and innovation

Sebastian Barrera receives award for his work on KinArt Ravine project

STEVEN TOWNSEND

Sebastian Barrera is a doer. Despite obstacles, he finds a way to make projects he has a vision for happen.

On April 21, he received the Courage to Innovate Award at the Mayor's Celebration of the Arts for his work on the KinArt Ravine project, a series of more than 60 murals lining the Kinnaird Ravine trail.

The award recognizes artistic risks and innovation that "results in a unique and distinctive project."

The KinArt Ravine project isn't Barrera's first social project.

"I am from Chile; we don't have funding for that. When you try social projects you are never funded, because there is no funding." Barrera learned to be innovative in his approach to community projects. He knew it was possible to get things done without the funding we have become so accustomed to here.

Many people in the community consider Barrera a leader, but he sees himself as a facilitator of discussions.

"One of the things that I am trying to encourage is that it is not my leadership, it is true I have a vision, but I also have a lot to learn. I tried to be a leader, but I failed by not giving the people the opportunity to take ownership. I believe that I have learned a little bit more and now I try to facilitate discussions."

His first project was Creart, which offers free music and art classes to anyone interested. It started while Barrera was playing guitar on the front steps of his Parkdale-Cromdale home. People would approach him

and ask if he could teach them guitar. Barrera wanted to share his skills with others, so he approached the community league and asked if he could use the space to teach.

The first time he held a class no one showed up. Undeterred, Barrera pushed forward and as his community connections grew, so did Creart. The program is now flourishing at Parkdale-Cromdale Community League.

When working at Boyle Street Community Services, Barrera created the KinArt Ravine project which gave kids

a positive experience through art and expression.

"We need places for expression, whatever that expression is, let people express. Let's take the sadness, the anger, let's take it all and challenge our minds to be better."

Let us all have the courage to innovate in our own way.

Steven is an Edmonton native, community organizer and small business owner. His twitter handle is @grimacstv.



Sebastian Barrera has initiated successful community projects. | Supplied



Barrera initiated the KinArt Ravine project. | Jacob Bos

Alberta Avenue offers Nordic walking lessons

Explore your neighbourhood, learn a new sport, and get fit

TALEA MEDYNSKI

Community residents have the opportunity to try out urban poling this summer and fall.

Urban poling, also known as Nordic walking, utilizes ergonomic walking poles. According to Valerie Parr, the organizer, "urban poling combines the upper body technique of cross-country skiing with the lower body technique of walking." The exercise provides a cardiovascular workout and helps

improve posture.

"I've done a few sessions now," said Parr, adding that she gets an excellent workout. "You have to keep the proper technique in mind."

Parr responded to a call out from the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL), which invested in sets of the Nordic walking poles. Alberta Avenue Community League was one of the six community leagues that were interested.

She received training and is offering four four-week sessions from May until October. Eight spots are available for each group, which will meet two times a week (Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday) for one hour. The sessions are available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

People participating will first need to complete a health self-assessment.

"You may need to get a doctor's permission or clearance,"

said Parr. She added that the first day of each session involves watching a tutorial video and practicing.

Parr explained that pole walking is a chance for people to meet neighbours and explore the community.

"We'll take neighbourhood routes," she said, explaining that everyone will meet at Alberta Avenue Community Hall before each walk. "Hope to see you out walking, it's worth it!"

Email Parr at vsuparr@gmail.com with the subject "Urban Poling" for information.

INTRODUCTION TO URBAN POLING

**\$20 league members
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Available sessions:
May 9-June 3
June 13-July 8
July 18-August 12
September 12-October 7**



Valerie Parr with a set of Nordic walking poles. | Talea Medynski



Valerie demonstrates the proper technique for urban poling. | Talea Medynski

EDITORIAL

Bringing the budget home

Six lessons to learn from the provincial government

KAREN MYKIETKA

Making a budget is hard; following one is even harder. Try creating a budget when you have to guess your income for the year. That's the position the provincial government is in when it forecasts the price of oil and the US dollar.

In mid-April, the NDP unveiled their 2016-17 budget of \$51 billion in spending with a \$10 billion deficit. Here are some lessons from that budget.

Cutting expenses will never fix a revenue problem.

Government expenditures didn't suddenly skyrocket. Oil revenues dropped by 85 per cent from \$8.9 billion to \$1.4 billion. That's an income problem. Either Albertans need to change their expectations of the government's function and purpose or they need to be willing to support the government in finding new revenue in the form of increased taxes.

If your family income goes down, you need to proportionally cut discretionary spending, but you can't cut basics like housing and food. Perhaps you can reduce them, but they will always be a significant and necessary expense. You will always need a certain income just to cover living expenses.

Trim the fat; every little bit helps.

The NDP budget freezes salaries for government agencies, boards, cabinet ministers, political staff, and senior public servants. Twenty-six agencies, boards and commissions are being dissolved to save \$33 million over three years. Supply budgets have been decreased by two per cent.

For some families, reducing costs means less eating out, fewer or no vacations, and no

new large purchases. Families whose incomes already do not allow for such luxuries might need to cut cable television, phone, car use, or even the grocery budget.

Sometimes you have to spend money to save money.

The province is putting more money into affordable housing. Research shows people who have stable affordable housing cost the system less in other areas. Midwifery funding has increased. Every course of care provided by a midwife instead of a doctor saves the health-care system money.

Many energy efficiency upgrades can produce good payback for families. Investing \$300 in a new low-flush toilet will save substantially on your water bill. Spending a little now on dental care can save you a lot of money in the future (and give you better health).

Debt isn't always bad.

The NDP budget includes \$34.8 billion in infrastructure projects over the next five years. This is for needed things like schools, hospitals, bridges and roads. Not only will the projects create jobs, they will also cost less to do now because of low interest rates and construction and labour costs.

A house mortgage is a huge debt but can be cheaper than renting and builds equity. Getting a line of credit for home repairs is better than letting your house deteriorate. Student loans are usually necessary for post-secondary education. These can all be good reasons to go into debt.

Don't live off credit.

The government is borrowing money for day-to-day operating costs for the first time since 1994. It's one thing to go into

debt for investments like capital projects, but to do it for daily operating costs is not good and should be a short-term emergency measure only. The problem is it easily becomes a habit.

The basic common sense wisdom is "Don't buy stuff you cannot afford." But even that has been twisted so it needs to be clarified with "Make sure you have the money, then buy it." If you don't have the money to cover your basic living expenses, then get creative and make hard choices. Do not make a habit of using credit.

Decisions should be based on guiding principles.

The provincial government provides health care, education, social services, roads, law enforcement, a judicial system, recreation, and so on for Albertans. This need or expectation of our government hasn't changed. So why would or should they cut these services?

If your family is under budget constraints, do you just give the boot to members who are costing more than they are bringing into the family financially? A family provides food and shelter and takes care of its members. Having insufficient income to do so doesn't change that function.

As Premier Rachel Notley said, "There are some difficult decisions that need to be made." That's true for government, Albertans, families and individuals alike.

A busy woman of many jobs, Karen spends too much time in front of a computer. In the past 20 years, she has lived in Eastwood, Alberta Avenue and now Parkdale, meeting awesome people everywhere she goes.



RCP HISTORY

Why is this newspaper called "Rat Creek Press"?

Several local organizations began a newsletter in May of 1999. They decided to run historical stories on the front page, and in keeping with this, the founders chose a historical name—Rat Creek—for the newsletter. In 2004, the newsletter was recreated as a community newspaper. Rat Creek Press Association was incorporated as a non-profit in September of 2005.

Rat Creek was once part of a larger water system in this area and was fed by sloughs and wetlands upland and ran downstream into the North Saskatchewan

River. The creek ran where Norwood Boulevard runs today through the Kinnaird Ravine to the river. Local trappers called it Rat Creek for the muskrat living along its reaches.

When Norwood School was built in 1909, some students had to cross the creek to get to the school. As the city developed, parts of the ravine and creek were used as a dump. The creek was filled in by land developers McDougall & Secord in an attempt to modernize the area. The Kinnaird Bridge on 82 Street between 111 and 112 Avenues spans what remains of Rat Creek.



Budgeting can mean making difficult decisions. | Pixabay

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Transportation for interactive communities

Edmonton's roads are a battlefield between drivers and transit

AYDAN DUNNIGAN-VICKRUCK

These days, one gets the impression that the city's planning council is filming a Western shoot-em-up inside city hall, with one angry hombre sauntering up to another and pronouncing, "This town ain't big enough for the both of us."

Motorists against Edmonton Transit System, private against public transportation.

The showdown happens about 20 times a day whenever the LRT crosses 111 Avenue or Princess Elizabeth Avenue, forcing traffic backups on either side.

Transit users had been complaining for the past two years about the delays to the NAIT LRT. Now that it's up and running, drivers are complaining about the delays to traffic.

Is this a Mexican stand-off or time for a shout out?

Truth is, the city does not seem to be able to accommodate both interest groups, and space is not the reason. Public and private transportation do run at cross purposes to each other.

North America has always had a car fetish. Cars are the most convenient, fast and sanitary means to travel in the city. I test this theory out regularly in the winter when I don't want to cold-start my car. Instead, I wait 15 minutes for a bus, cramming next to someone who does not place the same value on personal hygiene as I do.

Automobiles have become a symbol of our independence, freedom, and social status. This obsession has directed our city design. Street grids transition seamlessly into main arteries in and out of the core which feed into highways.

Whenever our convenience is compromised by a new LRT line, "point of privilege" driv-

ers are in an uproar. Imagine the indignation, having become accustomed to having the right of way, to wait five or 10 minutes while an LRT interrupts our schedules. Instantly this becomes a social crisis, overshadowing critical issues like potholes and snow removal.

We have presumed cities belong to the automobile, not to people. This vision is currently being challenged. We are now increasingly considering quality of life as a social phenomena, not simply a matter of enshrining individual privileges and conveniences. This incorporates exploration of how we live together in a community, and priority to public transportation as more efficient and cost-effective.

Cars and a street system enabling drive through, non-stop traffic are now being considered an impediment to healthy urban life. Consider development of the Ice District in the city centre and the revitalization of the nearby Quarters. All this is designed to make downtown more people friendly. Attractions are accessible on foot or by transit, increasing attendance at special events and heightening profitability of ancillary commerce.

However, these adaptations also impede car access to and through the city core. We cannot have it both ways. To make neighbourhoods liveable and appealing requires density and diversity. This involves people from different demographics moving and mingling, stopping to window shop, chat, eat or attend a concert. Community-building stuff. This is what makes urbanites happy and makes communities work.

Cars create exactly the opposite dynamic. When you are driving, you are not interacting with anyone, other than per-

haps the person in the next lane, and then only to raise a finger or shout. Vehicles impede the type of civic interaction that we actually need to be facilitating, such as pedestrian walkthroughs.

The issue then is not about space for both cars and transit, but about our vision for happy communities.

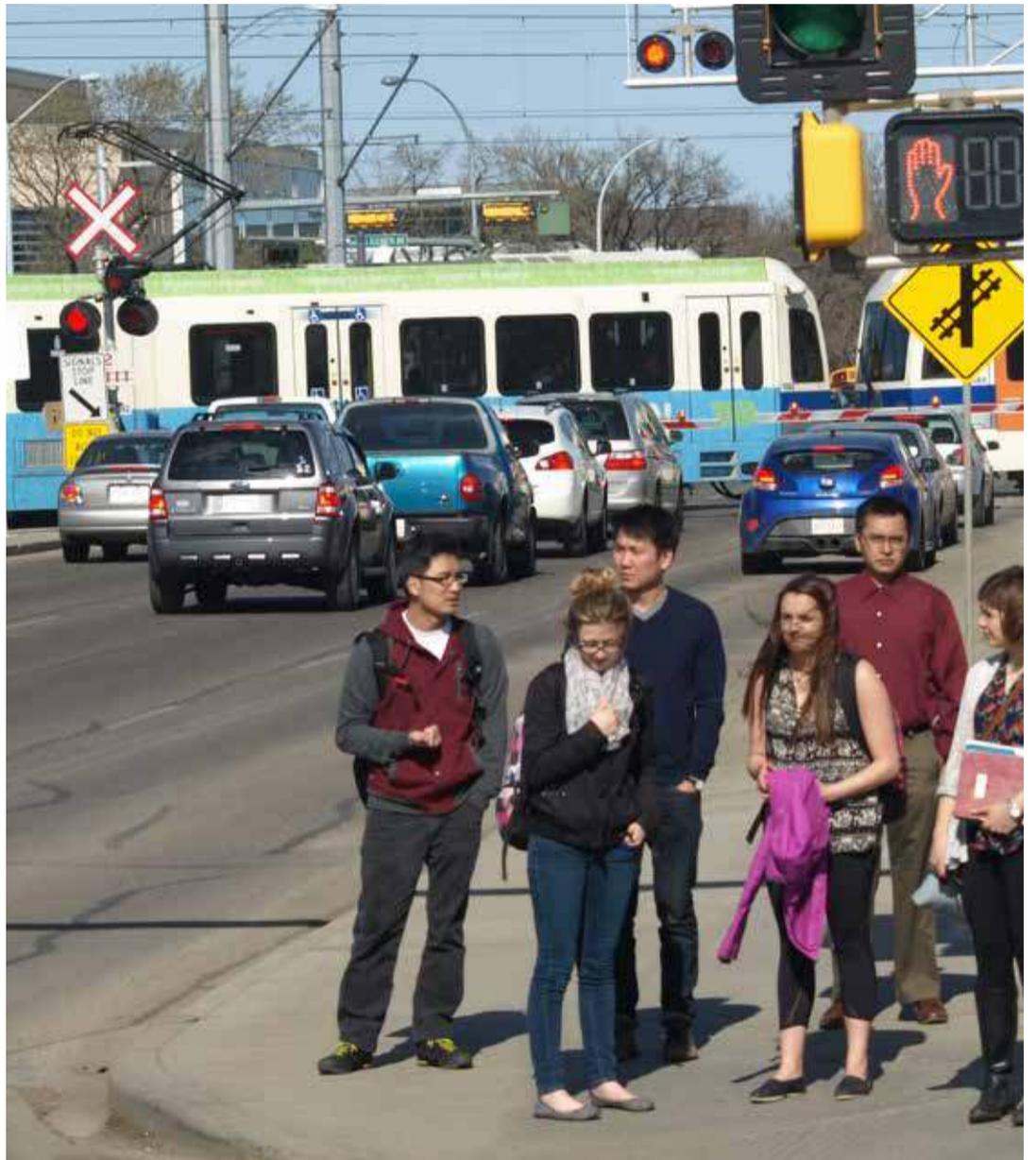
Do we want to maintain our city as a thoroughfare where people drive from one end to

the other without slowing down or interacting? Or do we want a more metropolitan view where people park their cars to walk, shop and mingle?

In upcoming articles, I will discuss examples of cities and neighbourhoods, including Alberta Avenue, which have made strides in transitioning from automotive culture to that of interactive communities. I will also search for examples of

where they have managed to keep buses running on schedule and ensure everyone aboard adheres to publicly acceptable hygiene standards. Not sure what success I will have. Stay tuned.

Aydan is a social worker, blogger, tango dancer, outdoor enthusiast and co-parent with Patricia to 8 children and 16 grandchildren.



Public and private transportation run at cross purposes to the other. | Aydan Dunnigan-Vickruck



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Sunday Worship:
8:30 am - Low Mass
9:00 am - Morning Prayer
9:30 am - High Mass
7:00 pm - Evensong

St. Faith: 780.477.5931

Sunday Worship:
Morning Prayer Fridays at 9:00 a.m.
11:00 am - Sunday Worship
1st Sunday - Worship in the Common
2nd Sunday - Traditional Anglican
3rd Sunday - Aboriginal Form
4th Sunday - Traditional Anglican

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Sundays at 10:30 am

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Saturdays - Free English Conversation Café for immigrants

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Eph. 4:32, 1 Th. 5:11a

12317-82 St. 780.474.4830

Sunday School 10:00 am
Sunday Worship 11:00 am
Wed. Study/Prayer 6:30 pm

ST. ALPHONSUS CATHOLIC CHURCH

11828 85th Street 780.474.5434

Service Times:

7:30 am - Mass, Tuesday to Friday
4:00 pm - Mass, Saturday Vigil of Sunday
11:00 am - Mass, Sunday Main Celebration

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Celebrate Cameroon's culture on May 21

Enjoy a day of dancing, soccer, and food

DAVE VON BIEKER

"Every single Cameroonian knows two things. First thing: how to dance. The second thing is how to play soccer," says Raymond Kampoer, beaming with pride.

Kampoer moved into Parkdale two years ago with his wife Micheline and two children. During the upcoming Cameroon Day celebrations, his rich, diverse culture will be on display in Edmonton.

Since 1972, Cameroon Day has been celebrated on May 20 to commemorate Cameroon becoming a unified nation. Before that, the small West African country was a federation of states. After the Second World War, the country was divided up between the French and the British. To this day, French and English are still spoken in Cameroon. The cultural diversity reaches beyond language. Cameroon boasts almost 300 distinct ethnic groups, staggering for its size. These groups have unique dances, dishes and

dialects. Kampoer explains how this diversity is both a weakness and a strength.

"When it comes to living abroad, you see how all those ethnic groups start fighting each other because people don't identify themselves first as Cameroonian. They define themselves first as members of this group or of that group."

Among roughly 500 Cameroonian immigrants living in Edmonton, Kampoer estimates there may be 50 separate ethnic groups. "Bringing all of those people together is very difficult," he said, "because they don't have the same aspiration."

Kampoer knows this challenge well. He volunteers about two hours every day for the Cameroonian Association of Edmonton. He maintains the website, where you'll find event listings, information on Cameroon, photos, videos and even a marketplace for Cameroonians to sell and trade goods with each other. He said he hopes this site is the first place Cameroonians go when they move to Edmonton, seek-

ing a small piece of home. It's the type of site that would have helped Kampoer when he moved to Canada with his family in 2012.

Cameroonian men take considerable responsibility for their family, so the move weighed heavy on Kampoer. Difficulties began before they left Cameroon, with a two-year paperwork process. Things became even more challenging when their first destination, Fredericton, New Brunswick, did not pan out due to lack of work. They are happy to be building a home here in Edmonton but still face many hurdles.

In Cameroon, Kampoer worked in supply chain management. His wife is a thermal engineer. Their qualifications do not translate directly in Canada, so they've had to start over. The Kampoers have overcome language barriers, financial struggles, and cultural isolation, but there are other challenges they haven't had to face. Some immigrants lack family support. Some are unable to

find a decent job.

For all of these hardships, Kampoer said he believes Cameroonians have much to offer.

"The strength is that when you bring all those people together, as has already happened here in Edmonton, you are just blessed," he said. "You're going to see the way people from this area are dancing or singing is completely different from that other area. Even the traditional dishes are different."

Cameroon Day celebrations will share this rich culture with the rest of Edmonton. On May 21 (the Saturday nearest Cameroon Day), expect a big soccer game in the early part of the day. Festivities kick off at 7 p.m. at Alberta Avenue Community Hall. Traditional dance performances from Cameroonian groups will be the entertainment while guests share a generous spread of food. Later, two DJs will take the stage as the real party begins, lasting until 2 a.m. In Cameroon, these parties can go right on

into the morning. Tickets to the event are \$20 and everyone is welcome. Kampoer said he hopes to see people unfamiliar with Cameroon experience this cultural array.

Yet some important faces will be missing. Kampoer's extended family is still in Cameroon, where family means everything.

Cameroon Day will ease that homesickness for a night, and offer Cameroonians a time to shine together. For those of us born in Canada, this is an opportunity to pause and appreciate a diverse, beautiful culture.

For up-to-date information on Cameroon Day and the Cameroonian Association of Edmonton, visit www.cae-ace.ca.

Dave holds a Bachelor of Theology and is Artistic Director of the Bleeding Heart Art Space. He lives in the inner city with his wife, two children and dog.



The Kampoer family: Raymond and Micheline with their children Donald and Candace. | Supplied



The celebrations will include a soccer game. | Supplied

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Saturday, May 7, 2016
& Wednesday May 13 5-7pm
Alberta Avenue Community Centre
9210-118 avenue

Findina Nemo

Drive-In On The Ave is back, and wetter than ever!

free!

May 28 at Dusk (10 PM)
Alberta Avenue Community League
parking lot (9210 118 Ave)

Growing the best garden, up or out

Three tips to ensure gardening success

NIKKI-KARYSSA SCOTT

While it never really feels safe to start planting in Alberta, thanks to our unpredictable weather, it's hard not to be excited with the summer-like weather we've had. With the crocus emerged and lilies not far behind, now is a great time to be out in the garden, elbows deep in cool soil. It's not too late to start some seeds indoors if you couldn't decide on what to grow and don't want to purchase starter plants. It's best to start small when deciding what to plant. Many gardeners plant more than they need and end up wasting food and feeling overwhelmed. Keep in mind that vegetables such as tomatoes, peppers, and squash keep pro-

viding throughout the season, so you may not need many plants. Other vegetables, such as carrots, radishes, and brassicas, produce only once.

No matter how big your vegetable garden is, what you grow it in, or what you plant, there are three basic requirements for success:

Full sun. Most plants need at least 6-8 hours of direct sun. Vegetables that don't get enough light won't bear as much and will be more susceptible to insects or diseases.

If you don't have a spot in full sun to plant a garden, you can still grow many leafy vegetables such as lettuce and spinach. And cool-season varieties such as peas may do better in part shade in hot summer climates.

Plenty of water. Vegetables aren't very drought tolerant and will require a steady supply of moisture, provided by you if Mother Nature fails to come through. For in-ground crops, that may mean watering every other day. Raised beds drain faster and may require watering every day.

Good soil. As with any garden, success usually starts with the soil. Vegetables and flowers do best in moist, well-drained soil rich in organic matter (such as compost or peat moss).

When planning a vegetable garden, remember: the closer your garden is to a source of water, the easier it will be for you. Additionally, maximizing space will provide a nourishing harvest all summer long.

By using vining crops like pole beans and snap peas when planting a garden, you can make use of vertical space and boost yield per square foot. Vertical gardening is great for families with limited or shared outdoor space and grows plants up instead of out. They are maintained with the use of trellises, fences, containers or even vertically stacked pots.

Growing in containers and using trellises is a great way to maximize space if you live in an apartment or townhouse complex. By growing tall narrow climbing plants, such as squash, pole beans, and tomatoes, their space is maximized. Vertical gardens also allow city gardeners to promote plant diversity, even in the smallest of areas.

With vertical gardens, you can reign in plants to smaller, easier-to-care-for spaces. Plus it's easier to harvest the plants at waist height or higher.

Whether you are a seasoned gardener or just beginning with a few plants, May is the perfect month to sow seeds, transplant seedlings, and imagine the possibilities of the coming harvest.

Nikki-Karyssa grew up in the Okanagan Valley working in orchards and vineyards before moving to Edmonton in 2007. She received her BSc in Production Horticulture in 2012. She lives in Alberta Avenue and is the plant growth manager at the University of Alberta's research greenhouse.

Garden event's been Bloomin' for 10 years

An idea to bring community together has blossomed

KEVIN WONG

That Bloomin' Garden Show and Art Sale, which started with a focus on back alleys in 2007, is celebrating its 10 year anniversary this May.

"It started from a revitalization working group," said Karen Mykietka, the producer of the show. A group of like-minded people sat down 10 years ago and brainstormed a project that brought beatification to back alleys.

Little did they know back then that this small project would draw many neighbours together and create a lot of life-long friends.

Local sculptor Ritchie Velthuis has been involved with

the garden show since its inception. He said he remembers the project created an opportunity to meet and visit neighbours. "That's ultimately what it was supposed to be about; just getting people in the neighbourhood talking and getting to know each other, and through that [process of] building a community, a natural revitalization happens."

What started as a back alley initiative has now bloomed into one of the most unique community-oriented garden and art shows in the city. That Bloomin' Garden Show and Art Sale features different products and art from talented local artists and artisans. You can choose from anything like paintings, sculptures, and garden decor

to glasswork, pottery, and birdhouses. Your mother may appreciate you taking her there and possibly getting her a gift for Mother's Day, just saying.

Aside from being an unique garden show which brings community together, it's also a full-blown tour for your senses: the delicious smell from the scrumptious brunch or lunch prepared by Creative Quality Catering intertwining with floral fragrance from the local greenhouses.

Then there's the melody composed from local musicians and children's laughter. And of course there's the beautiful plants from Prairie Gardens and Dina's Greenhouse and a compost sale to fulfill your garden needs. If that's not enough, you

can even taste different honeys and experience a traditional Japanese tea ceremony at the show this year.

If you own a pair of rubber boots or a bow tie and are feeling fancy, you should definitely check out the Rubber Boots and Bow Tie Garden Party in June. Music, wine, food, sculptures, neighbours in rubber boots and bow ties: what else would you need for a fancy garden party?

See you there!

Kevin is a self-proclaimed foodie with a very punny sense of humor, who will possibly be your next best friend. Twitter handle @keviowrongyeg.

BLOOMIN' GARDEN SHOW & ART SALE

May 7, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Alberta Avenue
Community Centre
9210 118 Ave

RUBBER BOOTS & BOW TIE GARDEN PARTY

June 25, 7:30 p.m.
Tickets \$10 in advance;
\$20 at the door.

Buy online at
albertaave.org
In the Alberta Avenue
Community Garden
9210 118 Avenue



Stuart Ballah



Lorraine Shulba



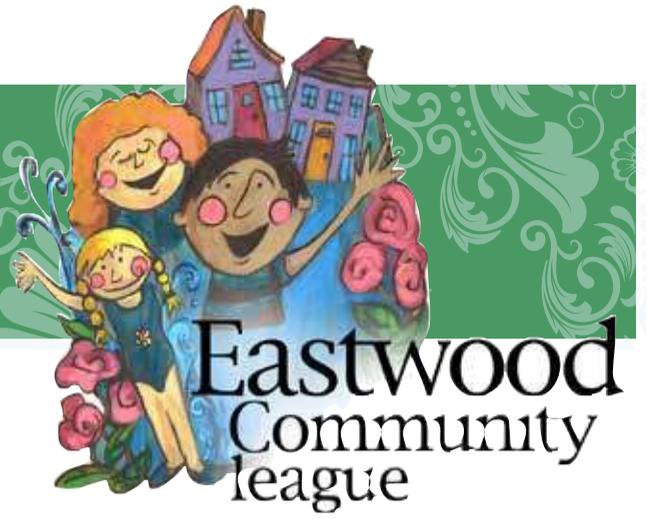
Stuart Ballah, Lorraine Shulba, Ritchie Velthuis & Karen Mykietka have all been involved in the event since it began 10 years ago.



Art has always been part of the show. | Lorraine Shulba

your eastwood news

This page sponsored by Eastwood Community League



Connect with Eastwood!

Hall: 11803-86 St Phone: 780.477.2354

Email: ewcl@shaw.ca

FB.com/edmontoneastwoodcommunityleague

Twitter @EastwoodCL



We Need YOU!

The league is off in a new direction, integrating its society status with a more focused approach to community needs. But we need help from all of you. There are vacancies on the board for official positions, but more importantly, we need the input of our fellow residents. Contact the board if you are interested in becoming a block coordinator, are interested in one of our upcoming activities, or would like to start your own social group using our society's status for support. Follow league events and news on Facebook and twitter, and contact us through email for quick response.



Eastwood Community Garden

For all those who love to garden, who want to grow their own food, or who want to learn and interact with fellow gardeners and enthusiasts, the Eastwood Community Garden is expanding! The garden currently has eight large planters and is located just north of the Eastwood Community Hall next to the rink shack (119 Avenue and 86 Street). There is access to water and tools.

This year, we plan on expanding the garden to include a storage shed for tools, seeds, and other gardening accessories, as many planters as are required, and two new garden sites in our community. The Native Plant Growers Society and Spruce Permaculture are partnering with Eastwood to help expand the gardens, to educate people on horticulture and composting offering valuable information and education on all things plant-related.

If you would like to use a space, please get in contact with us. Gardening is free to all community league members who are paid-up in membership fees. A series of workshops as well as a special presentation are coming up so stay connected with the community for these dates and times. We will also need some volunteers to help construct new planters for the garden.

Further, this year in the autumn we plan on holding the first Eastwood Cider Day where we encourage people to bring out their apples and pears to be pressed and pasteurized into home-grown, non-alcoholic cider. This opportunity helps use the often-neglected fruit on the trees in the neighbourhood, to teach young people skills related to healthy living and nutrition, and to encourage new networking circles within our community and with surrounding communities. We are seeking help coordinating this activity.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Soccer

Did you know that Eastwood is part of the Edmonton Minor Soccer Association, Division North? Our community is in partnership with Delton Community League, to make the most of the opportunity for people to participate in this classic sport. Contact Laura Cassady at Delton Community League for further information (soccer@deltoncommunity.com; 780-982-5823). Though registration for this year is past, there may be some spaces for a few participants. Soccer teams are for boys and girls aged 3 to 16.

Soccer is an excellent past-time, and not just for children. Eastwood has access to six fields within our community, and their regular usage helps to encourage a healthy, vibrant community. We are looking to start adult sessions for soccer, both for men and women.

Eastwoodfest

The festival has moved to June 4 and is becoming larger with several kiosks of clubs and societies for all age groups and activities throughout the day. To ensure a smooth

festival, we are looking for 10 people to help at various times of the day with aspects of the festival. If you are able to volunteer for a few hours that day, please contact the league.

Dogs

This year, Muttstock will once again be a big event in our community. July 9th from 12 – 8 p.m. will be packed with food, entertainment, educational sessions, vendor stations for all sorts of dog-related products and services, and a way to celebrate the pets that make up an important part of our community. The festival is held at the dog park section of Eastwood Park, to the east of the rink shack on 85 Street and 119 Avenue. The event is hosted in partnership with Greater Edmonton Animal Rescue Society.

Eastwood is also pleased to be offering, for the first time, community-sponsored dog training classes. These classes will be held regularly at the Eastwood Community Rink, and are open to any community league member from Eastwood and surrounding communities.

Eastwoodfest

Saturday
June 4, 2016
Eastwood Park
11803 - 86 St.

We Need VOLUNTEERS!

10:00 - 5:00 pm
FREE Community Festival!

Join us at Eastwood Festival for a free morning yoga class, live music all day, free activities and demonstrations for the family, vendors and food trucks.

Come meet your neighbours and get to know your community better!

Eastwood Community League

NORTHLANDS Live Music|Archery|Horse & Carriage Rides|Edm. Historical Society|Live Performances|Stilt Walking|Ball Hockey

Chasing the puck as a robocam operator

Closing the chapter in the old barn

STEPHEN STRAND

Wake up. Get up. Go down rink side. Skate up. Suit up. Warm up. Game time!

The whole world watches men skate around, competing to put a puck in a net guarded by a padded wall of a human. Many have made a fine living following the puck, chasing it back and forth from one end of the rink to the other.

Thousands have also seen my work although they don't know it. I chase the puck too, but I do not have dreams of becoming an all-star or representing my country. No one knows my name. It is never chanted, cheered, or jeered. When I do my job correctly, I go unnoticed.

I am a robocam operator. My camera is hidden high up on a pole behind the glass, up above the goaltender. I operate it remotely, hidden in the bowels of Rexall Place. The camera is near where the Oilers warm up pre-game without equipment or skates. They kick a soccer ball back and forth. A misplaced kick lands the ball in my lap. I'm startled when this happens (at least once a day on game days) and there is laughter at my surprise. I hand the ball back to Taylor Hall, Jordan Eberle or whoever comes to me red faced and apologetic, like a child who has hit his ball over the fence and into the neighbour's yard.

Many have made their careers inside of Rexall Place. Their whole careers have spanned within the 40 plus years this building has stood as the home of the

Edmonton Oilers. Everyone I work with has stories of their own. Run-ins with famous faces in some of their more private moments. Runny stories recalled at family gatherings. And everyone's heart has been broken at least once in the dark depths of this building.

Throughout the season, we spend many long days hidden from sunlight and fresh air to prepare for that night's game. Everything has become familiar and the building feels like home. At every turn, we know which face to expect and with whom we can joke.

Because of the work we do inside this building, many of us have been able to build a life. Due to its close proximity to Rexall Place, my wife and I bought our home in Alberta Avenue.

Times are changing with the Oilers

moving from their old home in Rexall Place into their new home. Yet it feels as though our memories will be locked away in this time capsule.

April 6 was the last time the Oilers played professionally in the old barn. Like our childhood homes, pieces of us all will remain there. And like all childhood homes, Rexall Place will have helped shaped each of us into the people we have become.

Stephen works in broadcasting and writes for fun. He can be seen walking through the neighbourhood on his way to work at Rexall Place or Northlands Park with a bag covered in pins and filled with books and notepads.

The rich and spiritual path of Paganism

Coming out of the (broom) closet

AMANDA SOKAL

I was your typical cradle Catholic. I was baptised, had my first communion and my confirmation, and went to a Catholic school for my entire education. I went on religious retreats, you name it.

But something was missing. It felt... routine. Like a habit you get into. I'd heard of people who had this great feeling of love or peace whenever they entered the church. I felt none of that. I wanted to feel that.

When I left home, I put aside the church but still continued to call myself a Catholic, be it a lapsed one. Then one day I was in a thrift store and I found a book called *Simple Wicca*. It intrigued me, so I thought I'd read it. Well, as Oprah would put it, that was my "aha!" moment. Everything that I believed didn't fit in with Christian dogma fell into place here. The more I read, the more I felt that feeling I was searching for. That peace, that love, that "rightness". I found my home, and I had to learn more. I devoured every book I could get my hands on, and Google became my best friend.

I learned if you ask 20 pagans what

Paganism is, you'll get 25 answers! That's one of the beauties of Paganism; you're free to follow the path that works best for you. But Paganism is simply an umbrella term covering many different religions and belief systems.

Paganism is a spiritual way of life and its origins are rooted in the ancient nature religions of the world. Pagans view the Earth as a sacred living being and worships it as such. They worship many deities, both masculine and feminine. The Sacred Feminine is an important aspect of Paganism, no matter which branch one follows. Just as Christianity is a broad term that encompasses different branches like Catholic, Protestant, Baptist, Pentecostal, so too does Paganism. Under that umbrella, you have Wiccans, Druids, Norse/Asatru, Shamans, Neo-Pagans and Eclectic Pagans, just to name a few.

If you'd like to learn more, please join me at The Carrot on May 14 at 4:30 p.m.

Amanda is a budding entrepreneur, a practicing Wiccan, a gardener and an herbalist working to obtain a degree as a Naturopathic Practitioner.



The pentagram symbolizes the four elements: earth, air, fire, and water with spirit at the top, guiding all. The circle around the pentacle symbolizes the unity of all. | Pixabay

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Highlands Lawn Bowling Club open house

Welcoming club seeking members of all ages

TALEA MEDYNSKI

For outdoor-loving people, lawn bowling is an opportunity to get some exercise and enjoy the summer.

“On a summer evening, there’s nothing better than to come out and throw a few bowls,” said Gary Schwandt, vice president of Highlands Lawn Bowling Club.

The nearly century-old club is located at 113 Avenue and 62 Street and is holding its open house on May 29. Schwandt explained the open house is an opportunity for people to take in a quick lesson and learn more about the sport.

“We take you out on the green and teach you the proper way to stand, the way to hold the bowl,” said Schwandt. Lawn bowling is often considered a sport for seniors, but the club has a 15-year-old member as well as some members in their 30s. Schwandt said that the sport is for “ages 9 to 90.”

One of the members is blind with some remaining vision. Her son coaches her when she competes. “She is the Canadian champion in her division,” said Schwandt.

Lawn bowling is similar to curling and is simple enough to play, with the point being to roll the bowls as close as possible to a jack, a small white ball. Bowls are weighted balls designed to curve as they move. Commonwealth Lawn Bowling Club and Royal Lawn Bowling Club are the other two clubs in Edmonton and are also holding open houses on May 29.

During the open house, people can sign up to become a member. Membership is

\$50 for the five-month season, which runs from May to the end of September. The equipment is free to use for members and new members aren’t expected to learn the sport on their own.

“Once you sign up, there are three coaching lessons we like you to take.”

Besides the initial lessons, regular coaching sessions are on Wednesday evenings. Cecilia Gillespie, a Canadian pairs champion, coaches members.

“We’re lucky enough to be coached by the very best,” said Schwandt, and added that other trained club coaches are available.

Lawn bowling is on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings as well as Wednesday and Saturday mornings. Members aren’t placed on specific teams; every night the teams change. Members also don’t have to bowl every day. “You can come when it’s convenient for you,” said Schwandt.

The club has a relaxed approach—members can bowl for fun or they can compete. For those interested in competing, there are club competitions and provincial competitions, which lead to nationals.



Gary Schwandt demonstrates how to play lawn bowling. | Talea Medynski



Highlands Lawn Bowling Club has been around since 1918. | Supplied

HIGHLANDS LAWN BOWLING CLUB

11333 62 Street

Open house May 29
10 a.m. to 4 p.m

your neighbourhood... your community league!

Westwood

12139 105 St
westwoodcommunity2@gmail.com

Now taking rentals.
Special member rates.
westwoodcl.ca

Spruce Avenue

10240 115 Ave
spruceaveleague@shaw.ca

Walk n learn about Polish
history, May 7, 10 am. Meet at
west doors of NAIT HP
Centre bldg

Delton

12325 88 St
admin@deltoncommunity.com
Mother's Day Event May 8
from 10 am - 2 pm.
Paint Party May 28.

Elmwood Park

12505 75 St
epcl@shawbiz.ca

Spring BBQ & Safety Fair,
May 7 from 1-4 pm

Eastwood

11803 86 St
ewcl@shaw.ca

Check our Facebook
page for news.

Parkdale-Cromdale

11335 85 St
pccl.info@gmail.com

Help us create our 2016-17 action
plan. May 26, 7-9 pm.

Alberta Avenue

9210 - 118 Ave
info@albertaave.org

Compost Sale, May 7
from 10 am - 4 pm.



WHERE NEIGHBOURS MEET
and GREAT THINGS HAPPEN
EDMONTON FEDERATION OF COMMUNITY LEAGUES

EFCL

Forming a vibrant and connected community

Delton Community League has dedicated members

DAVE VON BIEKER

It's hard to talk about Delton Community League without introducing you to Walter (Wally) Gurba. Now 81, Gurba has been league president for 25 years. In the 70s, when the building went up at 88 Street and 123 Avenue, Gurba was there. He's been there more than 40 years, working in the shop or flooding the ice with the league's Zamboni.

That's right, Delton has a Zamboni. Its origin is one of the many stories Gurba will tell you with a wry smile.

The league has plenty of which to be proud. Modern LED lights brighten a large hall and spacious dance floor. There is a stage, a kitchen, and plenty of seating. The community gathers here during holidays like Mother's Day and Halloween. They also come together for less happy occasions.

Chris Nozack, a member of Delton's executive, recently died from cancer at 52 years old. Walter and his wife Lil said 300 people gathered in the hall to celebrate Nozack's life. The mood lightens as Tyler, their grandson, shows me a funny video of industrial strength potato mashers hard at work to prepare that feast. The Gurbas know that community forms through both joys and hard-

ships.

Gurba offers me a tour of the league. On our way towards the downstairs pool table, I notice a stack of neatly folded soccer jerseys.

Soccer is one of Delton's most vibrant programs, with three fields connected to the league and many young players involved as soon as the fields are ready.

Green Shack programs and city-run day camps round out the league's summers.

When we head outside toward the rink, Gurba's face lights up. Delton may have the finest outdoor ice in the city thanks to that Zamboni. Gurba recounts the journey of the Zamboni from a now-defunct Sportex rink. He laughs in disbelief at the bargain they scored and how before he knew it, he was teaching himself to operate a Zamboni. During winter, floodlights keep the pristine ice open all evening, with heated change rooms waiting for crowds of sometimes 60 skaters.

Delton owns their building and is financially secure. Everyone involved is a volunteer, and that includes Gurba's 40 years of service. With finances in order, they don't rely on outside rentals. It is the members who use and care for this space, and the members who step up whenever volunteers are needed.

Since Gurba won't acknowledge his accomplishments in Delton, others have had to. He was recently named an ATB Home Ice Hero.

I ask Walter and Lil what's kept them here so many years. There's always more work to do, they say. Things to clean and things to fix and things get ready. Their community needs them. It's as simple as that.



Walter Gurba with his family. | Cindy Gurba



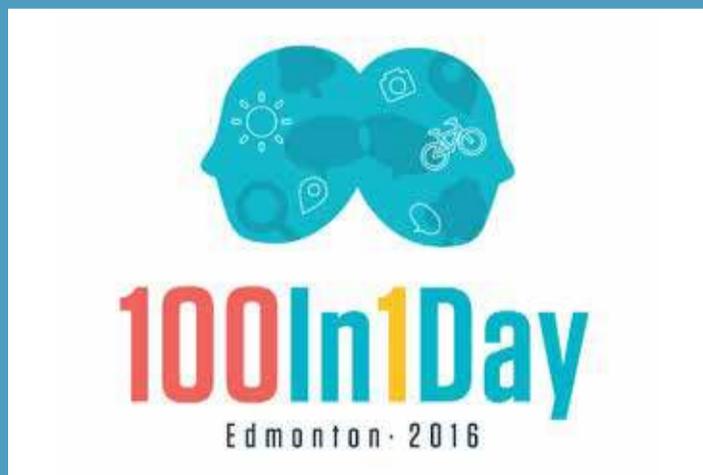
Delton Community League president Walter Gurba operates the Zamboni. | Cindy Gurba

DELTON COMMUNITY LEAGUE

12325 88 Street
780.477.3326

admin@deltoncommunity.com
deltoncommunity.com
fb.com/deltoncommunity

Animate The Avenue Alleys



Interested in back alley murals, poetry, colourful painting of fences, gates & garages? Animate the Alley is coming to the seven Ave communities leading up to the citywide 100in1Day on June 4.

Information session May 2 from 6-8 pm at The Carrot.

More info: Animate.The.Alley@gmail.com.

Project details: <https://www.makesomethingedmonton.ca/projects/1121-AnimateTheAlleys/>

Clean up your alley, park or block

A simple and easy way to beautify your neighbourhood is to do a clean up. Pick up garbage and debris, haul away large items, rake leaves, pull weeds, clean up graffiti.

If you are interested in doing a clean up, there are resources available.

Clean up kit
- email info@albertaave.org

Big Bin Events to drop large items
- edmonton.ca/waste

Small sparks grants
- avenueinitiative.ca

More info contact Judy Allan
780.496.1913 or
judy.allan@edmonton.ca



EYES On The Street



ISSUE

Large item pick up cancelled due to lack of volunteers

The City of Edmonton holds Big Bin events to collect household items that regular waste collection cannot pick up. However, many people have no way of getting items to the Big Bins. For the past 10 years, community volunteers have borrowed and rented trucks to clean up the back alleys.

Because of demand and overuse, a per item charge was implemented a few years ago. The event, however, was still run by volunteers. Last year, registrations were double what was anticipated and there were not enough volunteers. This year, the 15 volunteers needed couldn't be found, so the event has been cancelled.



ORGANIZE A BLOCK CLEAN UP

- Look at your back yard/alley area. Is it clean and tidy? Is it safe and secure? Does it need lighting? Could you beautify it with flowers? Or do something fun to animate the space?
- Do you or your neighbours have large items that need to be hauled away? Find someone on the block with a truck, help load up the stuff and drop it off for free at a Big Bin event.
- Is there graffiti on your block? Round up some neighbours to do a graffiti clean up. Kits are available from Capital City Clean Up.
- Get kids and neighbours out doing a block clean up. Pick up garbage and debris, rake leaves, and pull weeds.
- Organize a fun work day to spruce up your block or help a neighbour in need. Paint fences, plant flowers, and trim hedges.
- Reward yourselves with some fun. Consider a barbecue, campfire, s'mores, or yard games.

If you are organizing a clean up or helping neighbours, there may be resources available, such as clean up kits or a Small Sparks grant. Contact Judy Allan at 780.496.1913 or judy.allan@edmonton.ca.

2016 Big Bin events in North Edmonton
Big Bin events were created for household items too large for regular collection, such as furniture, appliances and electronics. No hazardous waste is accepted, so be sure to take any to an Eco Station. If you have items that are in good condition and can be reused, you can donate them. Goodwill Industries of Alberta will be on site at select Big Bin events. Their trucks will accept gently used clothing and housewares. All events run from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

May 7 & 8: Castle Downs (11520 153 Ave)

June 4 & 5: Commonwealth Stadium
(112 Ave & 90 St)

June 18 & 19: Woodcroft (13915 115 Ave)

June 25 & 26: Rexall Place (Wayne Gretzky Drive S & 119 Ave)

Aug 27 & 28: Clareview Recreation Centre
(3804 139 Ave)

Sept 17 & 18: Commonwealth Stadium
(112 Ave & 90 St)



RESOURCE

It's block party season!

Hopefully you are getting out and enjoying some of the amazing weather we have been having. As you spend time outdoors, make a conscious effort to chat with and get to know neighbours.

Wonderful things happen when neighbours connect:

- You meet interesting people and develop new friendships.
- You create a sense of community and belonging.
- You know people nearby who can help you when needed.
- You and everyone on the block are safer.

Block parties are awesome, but don't wait for a formal party to visit with neighbours. Take those opportunities that arise for a chat or create your own opportunities. Got perennials? Offer to split them. Enjoy campfires? Invite some neighbours to join you.

If you are planning a block party, connect with your community league. They may have resources for you, and they can access City of Edmonton funbags and equipment through their community recreation coordinator. You can make league memberships available at your event.

And good news—closing the street for your party is now free! The City of Edmonton is waiving the \$100 fee but you need to give transportation two-weeks notice along with written approval from the neighbours affected.

Tents & other resources: albertaave.org

Fires: albertafirebans.ca

Neighbourhood Block Party Kit: edmonton.ca/blockparties

Neighbourhood Engagement Toolkit: edmonton.ca/engagement

CommuniTEA Infusion Van: [FB.com/groups/communittea](https://www.facebook.com/groups/communittea); communitainfusion@gmail.com; 780.619.4277.

RESOURCE

Getting Help



Community, social services info & referral
CALL 211 or visit ab.211.ca

Critical nearby resources
linkyeg.ca

City of Edmonton
Info on programs & services
CALL 311 or visit
Edmonton.ca/311.

Health Link Alberta
24-7 health advice and information
CALL 811 or visit
MyHealth.Alberta.ca

Library outreach social workers
Highlands Mondays 1-5pm
Abbottsfeld Tuesdays 10am-6pm
Sprucewood Thursdays 10am-6pm
Stanley A Milner Daily

Community Safety Liaison - Gurjeet Sangha
780.499.8987 or gurjeet.sangha@edmonton.ca

Community Building Social Worker - Lise Robinson
780.944.5570 or
lise.robinson@edmonton.ca

REPORTING PROBLEMS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

9-1-1
Emergencies and crimes in progress. Immediate response from fire, ambulance or police required.

Edmonton Police Non-Emergency
780.423.4567 or #377 from mobile
edmontonpolice.ca or use EPS App

Community Liaison Constable
jeff.thomsen@edmontonpolice.ca

Voicemail:
780.391.4551
Community-related questions and concerns.

Report a John
780.421.2656 with licence plate and details. Or visit **How do I...at edmontonpolice.ca**

Crime Stoppers
1.800.222.8477
tipsubmit.com/webtipsstart.aspx
Report crime, suspicious activity or tips.

All reports anonymous.

SCAN
1.886.960.7226
Report properties used for ongoing illegal activities.

City of Edmonton
311 or use 311 app
Visit Edmonton.ca/311
Report bylaw issues or concerns on roads, sidewalks, traffic signs, litter, graffiti, parks, trees and more.





WHAT'S ON IN MAY

EVENTS

BLOOMIN GARDEN SHOW & ART SALE

Saturday, May 7 from 10 am to 4 pm at Alberta Avenue. More: albertaave.org

COMPOST SALE

Saturday, May 7 from 10 am - 4 pm at Bloomin Garden by the Alberta Avenue Community Garden. 30 L bag \$6 or 2 for \$10. Check albertaave.org for further sale dates.

ELMWOOD PARK SPRING BBQ & SAFETY FAIR

Free food and fun with activities and games for the kids. Saturday, May 7 from 1-4 pm. 12505 75 St.

ULTIMATE GARAGE SALE

Saturday, May 7 from 9 am - 4 pm at The Carrot.

LOOKING FOR LITTLE POLAND

A Jane's walk through Spruce Avenue. Saturday, May 7 from 10-11:30 am. Meet at the west doors of the NAIT HP Centre building. East side of 106 Street, just north of Princess Elizabeth Ave.

MONSTER PRO WRESTLING

Saturday, May 14. Doors open at 6:30, show at 7 pm. Tickets \$20. Monsterprowrestling.com.

CAMEROON NATIONAL DAY

Saturday, May 21 @ 7 pm at Alberta Avenue. Tickets \$20 includes buffet. Buy online: cae-ace.ca

DRIVE IN MOVIE

Saturday, May 28 @ 8 pm in the Alberta Avenue parking lot. Movie: Finding Nemo. Admission by donation. LAWN BOWLING OPEN

HOUSE

Sunday, May 29 from 10 am to 4 pm at Highlands

ENTERTAINMENT

BOWLING

Retro 5 pin bowling everyday 10 am - 10 pm at Plaza Bowl (10418 118 Avenue).

KARAOKE

Wednesday to Saturday from 9 pm to 2 am at Mona Lisa's Pub.

POETRY NIGHT

Last Thursday of the month, 7:30-9 pm at The Carrot.

LIVE MUSIC

Fridays, 7:30 pm at The Carrot. Cover: \$5.

OPEN MIC

Original music, poetry, comedy and more. Saturdays, 6:30 pm at The Carrot.

SAVE THE DATE

ANNUAL GARAGE SALE
June 4 & 5 from 10 am to 4 pm at Parkdale Cromdale. Vendors needed. Call Margaret @ 780.479.8134.

EASTWOODFEST
June 4 at Eastwood Park (119 Ave & 86 St)

ANIMATE THE AVENUE ALLEYS
June 4

BRIDGE SONGS TEN
June 18, 7pm at St. Faith's. Tickets: bleedingheartartspace.com

BBQ BIRTHDAY PARTY
June 25 from 12-3 pm at The Carrot.



FREE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Go to ratcreek.org for more information

ESL & LANGUAGE

CREE CONVERSATION CIRCLE

Free drop-in program by the Canadian Native Friendship Centre. Mondays 6-8 pm at Highlands Library.

PRACTICE ENGLISH

Conversations about many different topics using library materials. Mondays 7 pm at Sprucewood Library.

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.

ESL PROGRAM

Including free parent & tot classes. Wednesdays & Fridays 9:15-11:15 am at Parkdale-Cromdale. More: Sarah 780.887.6825 or sarahdelano@hotmail.com.

ENGLISH CONVERSATION CIRCLE

Drop in and practice your English (LACE program). Fridays 10:30 am at Highlands Library. More: 780.424.3545.

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

Third Wednesday of every month at St Faith's. \$3.00 per meal serving. Space for 6-8 people. More: Amanda 587.930.8238.

PARENTS & PRE-SCHOOLERS

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.

RHYMES THAT BIND

Rhymes, finger play, songs and simple movement games. Wednesdays and Fridays from 11:30 am - 1:30 pm. More: Sarah 780.887.6825 or sarahdelano@hotmail.com.

BABES IN ARMS

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

SPRUCEWOOD LIBRARY

Sing, Sign, Laugh & Learn, Sundays 2:30 pm and Tuesdays 10:30 am. Baby Laptime, Mondays 10:30 am. Family Storytime Wednesdays 6:30 pm. More: 780.496.7099.

HIGHLANDS LIBRARY

Family Storytime, Mondays 10:30 am. Sing, Sign, Laugh & Learn, Wednesdays & Thursdays 10:30 am. More: 780.496.1806.

CHILDREN

LEGO AT THE LIBRARY

Design and build a lego creation. Ages 6-12. Second 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

SMART SPACE

Do homework, work on projects, or learn about tech gadgets and other online tools. Ages 13-18. Thursdays 4-5 pm at Highlands Library.

TWEEN LOUNGE

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

TEEN GAMING

Hone your skills by playing some of the best games out there! Thursdays 6:30-8:30 pm at Sprucewood Library.

ADULTS

SITTING MEDITATION

A period of mindfulness meditation in the Buddhist tradition and a short reading and group discussion. Tuesdays 7-8:30 pm at Parkdale-Cromdale. More: charlesmorrow@yahoo.ca.

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_side@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

POP-UP MAKERSPACE

Robot challenges, Makey Makey hacks, DIY music, Art and 3-D design. Try things and make fun stuff. Saturdays, April 23 &

May 21 from 2-3 pm at Highlands Library. All ages.

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 WORKSHOPS

Dive into the wonderful world of art with FREE all-age workshops Tuesdays 6:30-8 pm at Parkdale-Cromdale.

FAMILY ART NIGHT

A variety of free art activities for school age children accompanied by adults. Wednesdays 6:30-8 pm at The Nina.

MUSIC LESSONS BY CREART

Free group music lessons Saturdays at Parkdale-Cromdale. Voice 10-11 am, guitar 11 am-2 pm, and violin from 12-1 pm. More: Mackensie@cheftthemusical@gmail.com.

FREE REC CENTRE ACCESS

Free access to Commonwealth Recreation Centre on Saturdays from 5-7 pm for members of participating leagues. 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

Welcome to Parenthood



Looking for PARENTS expecting their first baby and MENTORS who are a friend, family or neighbour of a first time parent

Researchers with the Welcome to Parenthood - Alberta study want to know how to best support families who are becoming first time parents.

Connie Sunshine
Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society
11666 – 95 Street
Connie.sunshine@bentarrow.ca



Wesley Andreas, who describes himself as creative but not an artist, shows how he started with a garage and a vision. | Supplied

Brian Mason, MLA

EDMONTON-HIGHLANDS-NORWOOD



Ph: 780-414-0682
6519 112 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta

Search for "Brian Mason Edmonton" on Twitter and Facebook



edmonton.highlandsnorwood@assembly.ab.ca

- Renovations – Additions
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efgreen@shaw.ca
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