



# RAT CREEK PRESS

ALBERTA AVENUE • DELTON • EASTWOOD • ELMWOOD PARK • PARKDALE-CROMDALE • SPRUCE AVENUE • WESTWOOD

SERVING 12,500 COMMUNITY MEMBERS

WWW.RATCREEK.ORG OCTOBER 2016

## Revised Northlands plan underway

Ice multiplex and festival site still being explored



Northlands' debt to the city from building the Expo Centre in 2009 has been deferred for a year. | Kate Wilson

### KATE WILSON

As Northlands' future continues to unfold, city council has taken up the baton. In late August, Mayor Don Iveson released a go-forward blueprint, with council poised to build on Vision 2020, Northlands' initial plan for revitalization.

In a press conference, Iveson said the question looming over council's decision is Northlands' debt to the city for Expo Centre, completed in 2009.

"I believe Edmontonians would not support forgiving a debt this large. Nor do I think it is fair to expect residents to pick up the tab without a solid plan in place going forward," Iveson said.

But he said he stands by Northlands and is unwilling to toss the whole plan. Iveson has asked administration to create a new re-development proposal that includes integration of the Expo

Centre, Shaw Conference Centre and an interface with surrounding communities. Council has offered Northlands' board a year deferral on the debt, with the possibility of a further year.

City coun. Tony Caterina said Northlands needs time to reinvent themselves. "Council's decision to defer Northlands' debt payment for the next year gives both them and the city time to formulate plans that will benefit both Ward 7 and the city as a whole," Caterina said.

At the heart of Vision 2020 are three major upgrades: repurpose Rexall Place into a two-level multiplex arena, transform Northlands Park into a major festival site, and convert Hall D at Expo Centre into a 5,000 seat concert hall. These upgrades were pegged at \$165 million.

But in late August, city administration gauged the actual cost to be \$230 million. Northlands is also

exploring the creation of residential and retail space in its campus area to seamlessly integrate with 118 Avenue.

The business community and citizens had their say at an Aug. 31 public hearing. While there was support for an ice multiplex, there were concerns about negative impacts on the neighbourhood, especially around noise from the festival site.

Caterina said while Vision 2020 hasn't been supported in its entirety, the re-purposing of the Coliseum and Northlands Park were seen as necessary.

"It would not be in the best interest for the surrounding area, nor for the city, to have the site sit stagnant and become derelict," Caterina said.

Joachim Holtz, executive director of Alberta Avenue Business Association (AABA), said businesses benefit from Northlands. He agreed the site shouldn't lie dormant.

"Having Northlands moving

forward as a sustainable going concern would be seen as a positive thing for us," said Holtz.

Lori Coté, Northlands' public relations manager, said the board will continue to work with city council.

"We believe in what is in the best interests of the city as a whole, including integration of Expo Centre with the Shaw Centre," she said.

City administration has been asked to deliver options for the ice multiplex and the convention centre in early 2017.

*Kate took up the reporter's pad and pen while living in northern Alberta. The writing bug stuck, and the next 20 years were spent covering everything from local politics to community happenings. She lives in Alberta Avenue with her daughter.*

## INSIDE

### DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Possible changes to garage suites >> P2

### LEARNING ENGLISH

Discover how second-generation Canadians teach ESL >> P4



### COMMUNITY STORIES

Two local art projects explored personal and shared stories >> P5

### EDITORIAL

Mimi Williams discusses why it's important to support Northlands >> P6



### THANKSGIVING MEMORIES

A holiday experience transformed >> P12



CHECK OUT OUR GREAT NEW WEBSITE  
RATCREEK.ORG

FB.COM/RatCreekPress  
@RatCreekPress

## RAT CREEK PRESS

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

*Gathering of Minds*

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30<sup>TH</sup>

- Mark your calendar!  
Food! Fun! And Friends!

YOU can share thoughts & ideas with us. WE will share opportunities with you.



# Proposed changes to garage and garden suites

Council approval means no community and neighbour consultation

ADAM MILLIE

On Sept. 14, city council's urban planning committee heard presentations from community groups, developers, and construction companies on proposed changes to garden and garage suites.

The proposed regulations will change the size and shape of the suites and remove the ability of neighbours to oppose them.

Proposed changes will increase allowable height and width. Garden and garage suites will have similar maximum dimensions. These new rules will make suites easier to build with conventional building materials and will collapse the two categories into one, now called lane-

way suites.

Developers and construction companies said they need clear regulations that strictly define what is and is not allowed without a variance. Discretionary uses require the development officer to make interpretations of the bylaw on subjective matters such as neighbourhood character. A discretionary use follows a legal procedure that can include consultation with neighbouring property owners and the community.

This interpretation and consultation is cumbersome to developers, and makes it difficult to give solid answers to their clients. They requested regulations that made these suites permissible, which would mean that as long as the laneway suite was built to proper dimensions, there would be no consultation with

neighbouring properties or community leagues.

Representatives from various community leagues and the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL) spoke to the matter. Strong argument was put forth to retain the suites as a discretionary use. Concerns were raised about privacy, lighting, pedestrian access, and neighbourhood character.

The garage and suite bylaw was enacted within recent memories and council was accused of a bait and switch, first allowing a contentious form of development as a discretionary use, then making that use permissible. Mike Sacha from EFCL described the change as a "fundamental betrayal of process" and that these suites need community input. The

committee disagreed with Sacha.

The committee voted to approve the changes. Though the issue has passed the urban planning committee, it is now headed to full council for a vote.

If city council approves the changes, neighbouring property owners and community leagues will not be able to provide any input.

With these new regulations, infill could be of significantly higher density. This, along with coming changes to the Mature Neighbourhood Overlay (MNO), mark a significant departure for the development process.

*Adam works as a mechanic and lives in Alberta Avenue.*

# City reviews Mature Neighbourhood Overlay

Revised document may broaden uses of residential properties

ADAM MILLIE

City council is revisiting the Mature Neighbourhood Overlay (MNO) document, which went to a public hearing at city council's urban planning committee on Aug. 31.

The MNO is a planning document governing the development of residential properties in central neighbourhoods of Edmonton generally built before the 1980s. It includes regulations that prescribe minimum setbacks, landscaping, and sizes and shapes of infill construction.

While this document regulates a collection of seemingly minor things, collectively they create a robust, prescriptive solution to what is and is not allowed in mature neighbourhoods. The document is being reviewed as a means of resolving a number of issues that have surrounded infill construction in recent years. It

would seek to end barren walls facing the street and would ensure landscaping includes a minimum number of shrubs and trees.

At the heart of this exchange is the ability of community leagues to oppose development that does not fit the existing land uses. The revised MNO will likely broaden the permissible uses of residential properties throughout the city and reduce the types of discretionary uses of these properties. This will reduce the influence of the leagues on the development process and provide more certainty to infill developers as to what is and is not allowed.

Opposition to development is one of the few real "powers" that has been devolved to the leagues, and the revised MNO will reduce the influence they can wield in the political sphere. Essentially, without the variances required on most infill developments and their associated Subdivision and Development Appeal

Board (SDAB) hearings, community leagues become a social club with political clout only coming from their ability to mobilize their communities rather than gaining clout from a legal and administrative capacity.

At the Aug. 31 hearing, submissions were heard from a wide range of stakeholders. Representatives from several community leagues, construction and development companies, and concerned homeowners provided insight as to what they would like changed in the MNO.

Developers and construction companies focused on ensuring that there will be consistent permitting, with clearly stated rules for what is and is not allowed. This change would allow them to communicate expectations clearly to their clients with respect to timelines and with reduced intervention from the city in developments which are clearly inside the regulations.

Matt Crowley of Ottewell Community

League said better communication is required from development officers and he asked that rationale be included when decisions are made. He also said there are privacy concerns with two and three storey buildings in neighbourhoods primarily comprised of bungalows.

Mayor Don Iveson countered that while the privacy concerns were valid, density of those neighbourhoods do not meet the density targets set out by the city. Iveson noted that new suburbs are double the density of Ottewell.

The MNO was sent back to administration for review and amendment, and will return to city council in the fall for debate. Look for these proposed changes through CityofEdmontonInfill.ca or through an open house.

*Adam works as a mechanic and lives in Alberta Avenue.*



Front driveways are generally not allowed in mature neighbourhoods. | Karen Mykietka

RAT CREEK PRESS ASSOCIATION 9210 118 AVENUE, EDMONTON, AB T5G 0N2 | T: 780.479.6285

#### 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.

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jessica MacQueen, Sue Allebone, Patricia Dunnigan, Aydan Dunnigan, Henri Yauck, Rob Bernshaw. The board may be contacted at board@ratcreek.org.

#### PRODUCTION STAFF

PUBLISHER Karen Mykietka info@ratcreek.org  
EDITOR Talea Medynski editor@ratcreek.org  
DESIGNER Lorraine Shulba design@ratcreek.org  
ADVERTISING ads@ratcreek.org

#### CONTRIBUTORS

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.

#### COPYRIGHT

Copyright of articles, letters, photographs, and other online materials submitted and published by the Rat Creek Press in print or online remains with the author, but the Rat Creek Press may freely reproduce them in print, electronic and other forms.

#### DELIVERY

The paper is delivered by Canada Post to all houses, apartments, and businesses in the seven neighbourhoods listed above including those with no unaddressed mail notices. For the most part, delivery begins on the last Wednesday of the month.

RATCREEK.ORG

I ♥ my RCP

# New task force targets problem properties

Residents more enforcement and resolution is needed

**KATE WILSON**

Getting resolution to a problem property with issues ongoing for four years is itself a problem.

“There are people dealing drugs out of the house. I’m still calling things in,” said a McCauley resident about a neighbouring rental property. “You call 311 and are told it’s not their department. You spend half the day, who the blazes do you call?”

The Sept. 14 round table discussion focused on problem properties. The meeting was sponsored by Alberta Avenue Revitalization, McCauley Revitalization, Queen Mary Park/Central McDougall Revitalization and Jasper Place Revitalization.

Another barrier for residents is the personal risk in citing a landlord.

“We have our hands tied because we get pulled into court,” said a participant. “We have to deal with this on a

consistent basis ... and we get threatened by these gangs.”

The discussion forum was set up to hear solutions.

“We want to ... hopefully increase people’s repertoire of tools,” Jane Molstad, McCauley Revitalization coordinator, told participants. “We want you to share some tools with us so we come away with some solutions.”

John Lazaruk, team lead with the city’s community standards branch, said residents are part of the solution.

“We need to know where and when they are. You’re going to know better than we do,” Lazaruk said.

Edmonton police, bylaw enforcement, housing, sustainable development and Alberta Health also attended.

A McCauley resident expressed his frustration that the city is still asking for input. He said he expected to see some outcomes or measurements.

“What’s missing to me at this workshop is what the city has

done in the last six months. I came here to know what has been accomplished.”

City council set up the problem properties task force last year, spurred by concerns over rundown properties, rentals and rooming houses that create hot spots for crime. The task force takes a collaborative approach, shown to be effective for chronic or long-standing problems. Another change is ticketing on the spot.

“It works when we go out as a team,” said Lazaruk. “Illegal suites, fire code infractions, violating safety code, structural problems. We want it to be a ticket issue right away, not a warrant.”

A team can include representatives from police, Alberta Health, city codes, and residential compliance.

Brent Craig, development compliance supervisor, said ticketing on the spot has changed attitudes of violators.

“Three months ago, we increased fines to \$1,000 for

the first infraction, right away. It changed our whole method.”

He’s issued about 45 tickets in the last three months.

Rebecca Johnson, environmental health officer, does inspections in poorer neighbourhoods, typically rental housing.

“I feel the task force is going to work, because it puts tools in our toolbox and the right people are now involved. With the team approach, we’re not just piecemealing,” she said.

Participant suggestions included better measurements of outcomes, mapping out strategies for various violations with a corresponding contact for each complaint, and political pressure by calling their MLA or ward councillor.

Adam Millie, Alberta Avenue Community League development director, said he felt the discussion had merit, but the issue with problem properties is far from resolved.

“I think it was well attended, but the city needs to bring

stronger enforcement, particularly with respect to repeat offenders.”

He said it appears to still be in the consultation stage.

“Outcomes are what we’d like to see. There are good people, but at the end of the day, properties are not being closed,” said Millie.

Lazaruk is working with 311 to have all calls come through his office. He would also like more authority to enforce.

He asked for patience.

“The coordinated approach to problem properties, they do take time but we’ll be methodical,” he wrapped up. “We will get to them.”

*Kate took up the reporter’s pad and pen while living in northern Alberta. The writing bug stuck, and the next 20 years were spent covering everything from local politics to community happenings. She lives in Alberta Avenue with her daughter.*



Residents talk with John Lazaruk, problem properties task force team lead, at a Sept. 14 workshop. From left to right: Doug Piquette, Claire Gavin, John Lazaruk, Tamie Perry, and Adam Millie. | Kate Wilson

**LOVE YOUR community newspaper?**  
**Don't keep this secret. Tell someone!**



<p>size 5.625 x 2.25"</p> <p><b>\$95 colour</b> \$75 B&amp;W</p> <p><b>Image builder</b></p>	<p>size 5.625 x 7.5"</p> <p><b>\$325 colour</b> \$250 B&amp;W</p> <p><b>1/3 page tall</b></p>	<p>size 3.625 x 7.5"</p> <p><b>\$225 colour</b> \$175 B&amp;W</p> <p><b>1/5 page tall</b></p>	<p>size 1.75 x 2.25"</p> <p><b>\$40 colour</b> \$30 B&amp;W</p> <p><b>Thumbnail</b></p>	<p>size 9.5 x 2.25"</p> <p><b>\$250 colour</b></p> <p><b>Front PageBanner</b></p>
<p>size 9.5 x 7.5"</p> <p><b>\$500 colour</b> \$400 B&amp;W</p> <p><b>Half page ad</b></p>	<p>size 5.625 x 5"</p> <p><b>\$225 colour</b> \$175 B&amp;W</p> <p><b>1/5 page square</b></p>	<p>size 9.5 x 5"</p> <p><b>\$325 colour \$250 B&amp;W</b></p> <p><b>1/3 page banner</b></p>	<p>size 3.65 x 2.25"</p> <p><b>\$65 colour</b> \$50 B&amp;W</p> <p><b>Business card</b></p>	<p>size 9.5 x 2.25"</p> <p><b>\$150 colour</b> \$125 B&amp;W</p> <p><b>Banner</b></p>
			<p>size 3.625 x 5"</p> <p><b>\$125 colour</b> \$100 B&amp;W</p> <p><b>Double business card</b></p>	

**Refer new advertisers & earn 10% cash on the value of the initial ad sale!**

**RATCREEK.ORG**

# The gift of teaching English to newcomers

Second-generation Canadians come full circle

## SIERRA BILTON

As the demand for people to speak and write English continues to increase worldwide, so does the demand for English as a second language (ESL) instructors.

Parkdale resident Mazalari Alfazema said demand is especially acute with Syrian refugees. Although Alfazema was born in Canada, she grew up immersed in two languages other than English or French: Chisena (a local dialect from the Zambezi Valley of Mozambique) and Swahili. Both of her parents emigrated from Mozambique to escape civil war that began in the 1970s.

As a second-generation Canadian, Alfazema said she felt compelled to teach ESL with Edmonton's Language Instruction for Newcomers to

Canada (LINC) program. She now works with Catholic Social Services doing English language level assessments to place students in classes. "I could appreciate the experience of having to learn a language, so I wanted to give back and be [as] great teacher as the ones my parents and I had experienced," she said.

Another ESL instructor with the LINC program, Pauline Ismael, grew up in Ontario. Ismael's mother immigrated to Canada from Thailand and her father sought refuge in Canada during the 80s from Cambodia.

"Growing up as a second-generation immigrant had some challenges but it also taught me a lot. I learned to never assume about people's situations and it sparked my interest in teaching," she said.

Ismael said she wanted to teach because she could help

people who were in similar situations as her parents had once been. "The school that I volunteered at was actually the school my father took ESL from."

From personal experience and as instructors, Alfazema and Ismael both agree that learning English is difficult. Unexpected challenges can arise, such as finding childcare while trying to take full-time ESL classes. Local ESL teacher Sarah DeLano-Barrera runs a class that endeavours to fill this gap in programming.

"There are so many women who have young children that are not really accessing the typical ESL programs. So we offer a space for women to come together and network. It's a really comfortable space and they can have their kids right in the classroom with them," she said.

DeLano-Barrera's program at

Parkdale Cromdale Community League (PCCL) went from one class to four this year because of increased demand. "Things really changed when we started using the community league space. It is such a great fit in terms of encouraging integration into community spaces." She found that her students feel comfortable accessing other programming they would not normally access due to their familiarity with the community space.

Increased interest in volunteering with the community league was an unexpected but welcome effect of creating a friendly place for ESL students. "As a league, we are really excited about the possibilities of this new strategy because it's really opening up the league as a space for social and community growth and networking."

ESL students, new and old,

have much to offer their communities; it simply comes down to giving them the tools.

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

## PCCL LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

**Multicultural Rhymes That Bind - Mondays 9:30 am-11:30 am**

**ECALA English Mondays and Thursdays 11:15 am-1:15 pm**

**Book Club for Literacy Fridays 10 am-noon**

**More info: [emcn.ab.ca](http://emcn.ab.ca)  
[parkdalecromdale.org](http://parkdalecromdale.org)**



DeLano-Barrera and her ESL class on a recent trip to Jasper. | Supplied



**YOUR neighbourhood realtor**



Selling homes since 1990!

**ROXANNE LITWYN**

780-907-7589

**ROXANNEHOMES.COM**

**Wanted!** I have clients looking for 2 or 3 bedroom homes in the area, any size, any condition.



11155-65 Street Edmonton, AB T5W 4K2

## CHURCH SERVICES

<p><b>ANGELICAN PARISHES ON ALBERTA AVE ST. FAITH AND ST. STEPHEN</b></p> <p><i>Two Traditions – One Faith.</i></p> <p><b>11725 93 Street</b></p> <p><b>St. Stephen: 780.422.3240</b></p> <p><b>Sunday Worship:</b> 8:30 am - Low Mass 9:00 am - Morning Prayer 9:30 am - High Mass 7:00 pm - Evensong</p> <p><b>St. Faith: 780.477.5931</b></p> <p><b>Sunday Worship:</b> 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</p> <p><b>AVENUE VINEYARD CHURCH</b></p> <p><i>A friendly, informal, non-judgmental and safe place to grow spiritually. Traditional Christian values in a non-traditional way.</i></p> <p><b>8718 118 Avenue (Crystal Kids building) www.avenuevineyard.com</b></p> <p><b>Sundays at 10:30 am</b></p>	<p><b>AVENUE CHURCH</b></p> <p><i>A community to belong in...a community to serve with.</i></p> <p><b>11739 94 Street (The Studio)</b> <b>www.avenuechurch.ca</b></p> <p><b>Sundays 10:00 am</b> Coffee Fellowship <b>10:30 am Service</b></p> <p><b>BETHEL GOSPEL CHAPEL</b></p> <p><i>A Bible-based, multi-ethnic fellowship.</i></p> <p><b>11461 95 Street 780.477.3341</b></p> <p><b>Sunday Meetings:</b> 9:30 am - Lord's Supper 11:00 am - Family Bible Hour Saturdays - Free English Conversation Café for immigrants</p> <p><b>EVANGELICAL BAPTIST CHURCH</b></p> <p><i>'Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you... Therefore encourage one another and build each other up'</i> <i>Eph. 4:32, 1 Th. 5:11a</i></p> <p><b>12317-82 St. 780.474.4830</b></p> <p><b>Sunday School 10:00 am</b> <b>Sunday Worship 11:00 am</b> <b>Wed. Study/Prayer 6:30 pm</b></p>	<p><b>ST. ALPHONSUS CATHOLIC CHURCH</b></p> <p><b>11828 85th Street 780.474.5434</b></p> <p><b>Service Times:</b> 7:30 am - Mass, Tuesday to Friday 4:00 pm - Mass, Saturday Vigil of Sunday 11:00 am - Mass, Sunday Main Celebration</p> <p>English Classes (Seasonal - call for more info.)</p> <p>St. Vincent de Paul Food Help Hotline: <b>780.471.5577</b></p> <p><b>ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH</b></p> <p><b>8715 118 Avenue 780-477-8677</b></p> <p><b>Service Times:</b> Sundays at 11 am A caring and loving church in your community where everyone is welcome.</p>
--	---	---

# Weaving a tapestry of community and story

Local art projects found different ways to connect community

**SIERRA BILTON**

At Kaleido Family Arts Festival last month, two art projects connected community members through personal and shared stories.

The Story Station used people's stories to develop community. The project began with organizers Lindsay Ruth Hunt and Cortney Lohnes, who wanted to create something that capitalized on the strong sense of community around Alberta Avenue. The digital Story Station their team set up at Kaleido is part of their larger Live Story Project, an initiative that aims to use stories to connect people, building community and capacity.

"The Story Station is about engaging passersby and getting

them thinking about their relationship to the community and having them share their story on camera or audio to be collected and documented," Hunt said.

Hunt and Lohnes want to engage active community members as well as those less accustomed to sharing their story. "It often took about 15 minutes of just chatting with them about their relationship to the neighbourhood. Often they would think, 'Oh, we don't have a story,' but once we started talking with them and asking questions, that would change."

One man's story stood out to Hunt. "He had only met his neighbours through his backyard a few times. But one day he got too much gravel from a neighbour and had to deal with all the gravel somehow. Sharing the gravel encouraged him to

engage with his neighbours and eventually facilitated him getting to know his neighbours."

Hunt even shared one of her own stories. "I have been in the neighbourhood for three years now but soon after we had first arrived, I got pregnant. I thought, 'OK, I really want to connect with new mothers in the neighbourhood and how do I do that?' I had been frequently going to The Carrot and saw there was a parent/child group on Fridays. So I got myself excited about that and amped myself up to go. But when I went, there was no one there! I just bought a coffee and I turned around and left."

Hunt explained her desire for community stems from her childhood. "I think back to my time as a child in my neighbourhood where I grew

up. We all knew each other and we could all look out for each other." Hunt said, "Now as a mother, I really want to foster that sense of community for my daughter."

Another booth at Kaleido had a similar focus. The Unity Project used yarn to weave individual stories into a physical tapestry of community. Marie Butler, a local art therapist who worked the booth, commented on the way stories can come together to create community.

"The core message [of the Unity Project] is as individuals, we can choose a beautiful piece of yarn, but you can only do so much with it. But when we weave it into a community, it becomes this beautiful canopy that we can all share in."

She said, "The statements were very powerful because

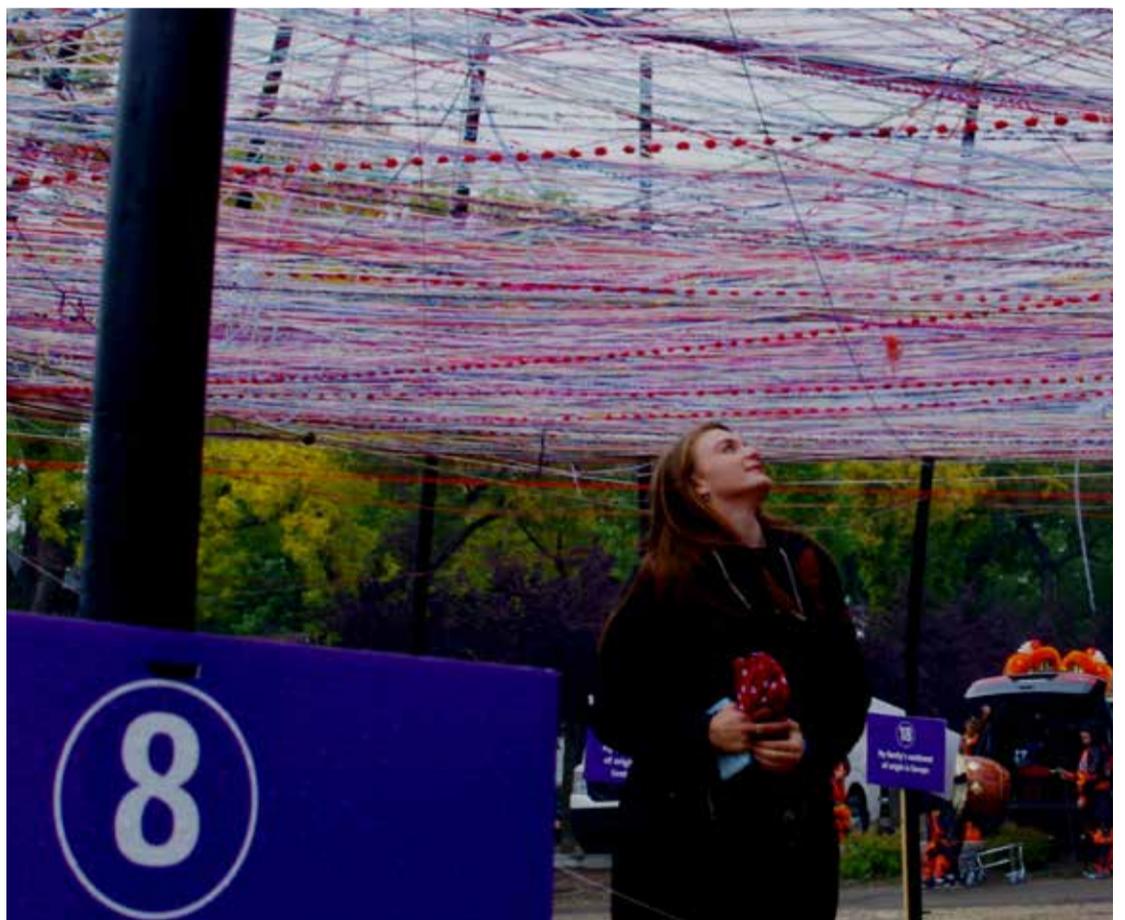
people could see how many people in the community wrapped their thread line around 'I don't have a home', 'I rent a home', 'I identify with LGBTQ' or 'I live with a chronic illness.'"

Butler saw a few hundred people participate in the Unity Project over the weekend to create an impressive demonstration of the community. "What we bring is one thread," Butler said. "But how we benefit is when all the threads come together."

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



At the digital Story Station at Kaleido, organizer Cortney Lohnes (back to camera) spoke to Ann Pugh Jones about her story. | Supplied



Sandra Podjarkowski admires her thread in the Unity Project. Visit [kaleidofest.ca](http://kaleidofest.ca) to watch a time-lapse video showing the entire process of the installation. | Sierra Bilton


**Dr. Derek Fika**  
 Family Dentistry  
*Creating Beautiful Smiles*



Experienced Dental Care

587-760-3454

New Patients Welcome!

Now Offering Cosmetic and Therapeutic Botox!

"We'll Keep You Happy for Life"

XLF Furniture

FAMILY BUSINESS SINCE 1952

FLEXSTEEL GALLERY · LA-Z-BOY · SIMMONS BEAUTYREST

11349 - 95 street | 780.477.2213 | [info@xlfurniture.com](mailto:info@xlfurniture.com) | [xlfurniture.com](http://xlfurniture.com)  
 tues - sat: 10 am to 5:30 pm | mon - sun: closed | evenings by appointment

Randy Boissonnault MP/Député - Edmonton Centre



**Edmonton**

10235 - 124 Street/rue  
 Suite/bureau: 103  
 Edmonton, AB T5N 1P9  
 Tel: 780-442-1888  
 Fax: 780-442-1891

**Ottawa**

House of Commons  
 Chambre Des Communes  
 Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6  
 Tel: 613-992-4524  
 Fax: 613-943-0044

Randy.Boissonnault@parl.gc.ca



## EDITORIAL

# Good neighbours are sure hard to come by

It's in everyone's best interests to help Northlands succeed

MIMI WILLIAMS

Founded in 1879, Northlands' presence has loomed large for over a century.

Northlands Park has been operating since 1900. The Edmonton Coliseum opened its doors on Nov. 10, 1974 for an Edmonton Oilers vs Cleveland World Hockey Association game. The first concert, Stevie Wonder, followed a few weeks later. Since then, the Coliseum has hosted the Commonwealth Games, the 1981 and 1984 Canada Cup hockey tournaments, seven NHL Stanley Cup finals, the Canadian Finals Rodeo and too many concerts and events to list here.

Northlands' management of the Coliseum (later called Skyreach Centre and then Rexall Place) and the 64-hectare property on which it sits hasn't been without controversy over the years.

I can remember residents in Borden Park and north

Cromdale fighting the demolition of hundreds of homes in their neighbourhoods to make way for Northlands' expansion in the late 80s and early 90s. I also remember that when Peter Pocklington threatened to move the Oilers unless he was let out of his lease and granted a laundry list of concessions, Northlands got an injunction against the Oilers' owner which prevented him from negotiating such a move. And while many were critical of the deal that was ultimately hammered out, I always felt that Northlands did a much better job of protecting its interests than city council did protecting ours and wasn't prepared to blame them for that.

To this day, there are people who like to point fingers at the organization for relying so much on city subsidies and tax breaks, but those people are forgetting that Northlands negotiated many of those terms because of breaks being given to the Oilers to keep them here.

To me, all of that pales in comparison to the times Northlands has proven itself to be a good neighbour, not just to those of us in the immediate vicinity, but to people across northern Alberta.

It was Northlands who received Slave Lake residents during the fire in 2011 and again this year when tens of thousands Fort McMurray residents faced evacuation. Northlands support our communities and have proven, these past few years, a commitment to broad community consultation about the future.

Love them or hate them, there's no denying Northlands has left an indelible mark. From its Urban Farm (which operates on the southwest corner of the site to K-Days) the organization continues to contribute to our recreational and cultural life.

Most of us would balk at the idea of building and financing a brand new house without giving any thought about what to do with the old house. However,

that's precisely what city council did when it struck a deal with the Katz Group to build a new arena downtown. Shutting Northlands out of the picture and removing its main source of revenue wasn't enough for the Oilers Entertainment Group. They sought and received the power to veto any city contribution to improvements at Northlands that involve either sports or entertainment, creating the potential to hamstring future plans.

In 2014, the Northlands' board formed an arena strategy committee to look at what the future might hold. With members from both the board and the community at large, the committee conducted research and consulted with stakeholders before delivering a report last year that described shuttering Rexall Place as the worst possible scenario for Northlands and the communities surrounding it. I wholeheartedly agree.

Last month, after rejecting a proposal that would see the

horse racing track repurposed as an outdoor festival site and Rexall Place as a multi-purpose sports complex, city council voted to defer Northlands' \$47-million loan for the Expo Centre for a year to give the organization time to come up with a viable plan.

Northlands has committed to working with our communities to develop a plan for the future that will enhance, not impede, the revitalization efforts that we've seen over the past decade. I, for one, think it's in all of our best interests to help them succeed. Good neighbours are awfully hard to come by.

*Mimi is a writer who first moved to the Alberta Avenue area over 20 years ago. She has participated in a number of revitalization initiatives and continues to promote the Ave as one of the best areas to live, work and play in Edmonton.*

## LETTER

## How the little things create a community

Making the choice to be neighbourly brings people together

JANIS IRWIN

In mid-July, I moved about 20 blocks west from the Highlands-Bellevue area into the Parkdale neighbourhood. From the moment I arrived, I was welcomed. Within minutes, my neighbour from across the street brought a bottle of wine; another a few houses down brought his baby (the wine was to keep, while the baby was not). And throughout my first day in my new neighbourhood, I met and

chatted with many of my new neighbours.

My sisters were in town to help me move. One, from Calgary, remarked that she'd lived in her house for three years, yet she still didn't really know any of her neighbours. It was incredible to her that I'd been living in mine for mere hours and had not only met new neighbours, but had also made new friends.

Of course, a move is often not without its challenges, but even then, we can find posi-

tives. For example, the previous owners had left bags of trash and recycling in the alley for pickup later in the week. I woke up that Monday to discover all of the bags had been ripped apart, creating a huge mess. I was quite disheartened, and I did what I could that morning, but I needed to get to work. I knew that it would be a task that I'd have to tackle when I got home later in the day. I was astonished when I came home to see that the bags had all been re-bagged, and all the

trash cleaned up. I learned later that my next-door neighbour had quietly done the clean up.

It's these little things—saying hello to a neighbour, volunteering at a community event, or picking up trash—that make a neighbourhood a community. These seemingly minor actions strengthen the social fabric of our neighbourhoods and bring us closer together.

We encounter opportunities daily in which we can support neighbourliness. I've seen how in making the choice to be

open, inclusive, and kind, we build relationships and improve the health of our communities, and in turn, we reduce fear and social isolation too.

I feel quite fortunate to have received the welcome that I did, and I can't wait to offer the same when a new neighbour arrives.

*Janis is a new resident of Parkdale. Be sure to say hello if you see her around! Find out more about her and what she's up to at [janisirwin.ca](http://janisirwin.ca).*



New Parkdale resident Janis Irwin discovered she has wonderful neighbours. | Supplied



A community hotdog roast at Alberta Avenue's league day. | Steven Michos

HAPPY COMMUNITIES

# Developing a stress-free environment

Focus on well-being to create an ideal learning space

**AYDAN DUNNIGAN-VICKRUCK**

*Whiplash*, the Academy Award-winning movie about a young jazz student at Juilliard, had it all wrong. The premise was that the teacher could get more out of his students by bullying, intimidating, inciting fear and mistrust and generally keeping his students stressed and emotionally destabilized. And he succeeded. Only in Hollywood. The premise made for a riveting movie but terrible psychology.

Turns out stress is exactly the opposite of what students need if they are going to learn, perform optimally and be creative. Neuroscience has well-documented our learning process. That part of the brain (prefrontal cortex) responsible for rational thinking, creativity and learning shuts down whenever we feel stressed or threatened. The amygdala senses that we have more important things to attend to (survival) and reacts instinctively by flooding our bloodstream with adrenaline and other hormones needed

for a fight or flight response. In other words, we learn best when we feel safe and supported. Neuroscience teaches us that optimum learning happens only in a stress-free environment that is stimulating but not intimidating, challenging but not threatening, where success is recognized but failure is not censored or shamed, where the child feels self-contained, in control and socially engaged.

Easier said than done. How does the school system which straddles the pressures of academic performance and reduced funding on one hand and family systems, learning styles, challenging behaviours and social dynamics on the other, create a stress-free environment supportive to optimal learning?

It can happen. Recently, right here in Edmonton, a classroom-based credit course to address this need was researched and implemented at Archbishop MacDonald School. It ran from 1999 to 2007. Julia Kopala, the developer and director of the program, was a high

school guidance counsellor with a deep interest in holistic health practices. The course, called *Complementary Health*, included introducing holistic health practices of breath work, yoga, brain gym, aromatherapy, acupuncture, positive self-talk, dancing, chair massage, therapeutic touch, Qigong, native spirituality, and reiki.

The results were striking. Through these practices, students learned mental and physical habits that supported positive self-talk, healthy self-esteem, mindfulness, and a heightened trust in their ability to access peace, contentment and happiness in all areas of life. Stress went down. Academic performance and a general sense of well-being went up. Kopala has written a book about the program, *When Heaven Comes ... Into the Classroom*, with suggestions for teachers, educators and anyone interested in optimizing their quality of life.

But still, we have oversized classes, underfunded programs, constant texting and behav-

oural challenges. What can a teacher do in such a pressure-cooker environment?

“If you can only implement one practice into the classroom—and your life—to reduce stress, it is breath work. It only takes three minutes and it will instantly change the energy in the classroom—as well as provide long-term benefits for yourself and the students,” said Kopala. “Breath work is simple but profoundly transformative. Everyone should be doing it throughout the day.”

Of course, saying breath work is simple doesn’t mean it is easy. It is work, after all. It involves creating time and space so that you can be attentive to your breathing: slowing it down, feeling it move in and out, noticing how this feels in the rest of your body.

Which brings us to the most important point. Everyone can and should be doing these practices, especially parents. Modelling mindfulness will not only prepare the child for school but also make for a more relaxed home environ-

ment. Add to this other supportive practices like greeting your child at the door with a hug and then creating time and space for attentive, non-judgemental listening—with eye contact. (Yes, this involves shutting down electronic interference for five to 10 minutes. Yikes!)

All of these practices might be lumped into some old-fashioned, pre-Wi-Fi concepts like affection or acceptance, but it seems we can never focus enough on the basics. The desired outcome is not simply that a child score well at school, but that they perform well at life. It is worth the effort.

Buy *When Heaven Comes ... Into the Classroom* at [www.walkingspiritink.com](http://www.walkingspiritink.com).

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



Including holistic practices like yoga creates a positive learning space. | Pixabay

Your health. Our priority.

## Professional Services

- Free Prescription Delivery
- Comprehensive Medication Reviews
- Accu-Pak™ Bubble Packaging
- Health and Wellness Events
- Community Immunization Centre
- Custom Medication Compounding
- PACMED Pouch Packaging

**Parminder Bhui**

B.Sc. Pharm.  
Pharmacy Manager

**(780) 477-1192**

8111 - 118<sup>th</sup> Avenue

### Store Hours

Monday to Friday: 9:00 am - 6:00 pm  
Weekends & Holidays: 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

**The Medicine Shoppe**  
PHARMACY

# Self-defense course empowers participants

Community members learned ways out of violent situations

**KATE WILSON**

A glimpse into the Parkdale Cromdale Community League gym on Aug. 27 would reveal a half dozen partners throwing punches or attempting chokeholds, followed by counter moves.

The self-defense workshop was the opening event of Parkdale Cromdale Community League's (PCCL's) Safety Initiative, launched by the board to address neighbourhood safety.

"We had a discussion on how to build safety in the community—what does it look like for Parkdale Cromdale, what are

the key issues here," said Alyssa Miller, PCCL communications director.

Discussion started with a safety whistle program, but soon included self-empowerment.

"We thought, what if the whistle doesn't work, how can we address all the potential issues?" said Miller. "So we brought in a self-defense workshop."

The workshop introduced participants to counter-ambush, de-escalation and escape techniques, all part of a program developed by Randy King, owner of KPC Self Defense.

"The reason we're self-defense and not martial arts is that self-defense is more holistic,"

explained King, who trained in Krav Maga and modern Arnis.

Krav Maga, developed for the Israeli armed forces, focuses on real world situations, while the Arnis system, a self-defense method from the Phillipines, emphasizes fighting with sticks and bladed weapons.

"I blended in the Arnis system because Filipino martial arts are based off a bladed culture, so it's better for knife attacks," explained King, noting attacks in Edmonton tend more toward knives rather than guns.

Workshop participants learned to be aware of surroundings to notice escape routes and objects for defense. Conflict resolution is integral to

King's program, and there are also legal ramifications associated with violence.

"Our students learn the legal system in relation to assault," said King, noting the aftermath of violence is not something self-defense programs generally explore.

"So, violence happens. Most good people don't know their legal rights after the fact, but criminals do. Our training includes self-care and makes sure your self-defense doesn't end you up in jail."

Andrea Musgrave, a participant, was happy to learn most self-defense is knowing how to respond without violence.

"Learn how to get away," she

said.

Larry Fundytus, community centre custodian, appreciated the simplicity and effectiveness of the holistic approach.

"It's really beautiful. These techniques don't depend on size or strength," he said.

For more courses, email [pccl.info@gmail.com](mailto:pccl.info@gmail.com) or visit [parkdalecromdale.org](http://parkdalecromdale.org)

*Kate took up the reporter's pad and pen while living in northern Alberta. The writing bug stuck, and the next 20 years were spent covering everything from local politics to community happenings. She lives in Alberta Avenue with her daughter.*



Shazia Muhammad and Adil Muhammad practice fending off a frontal attack. | Kate Wilson

# Safety by making neighbourhood connections

Exploring solutions by bringing crime prevention and safety to street level

**KATE WILSON**

A glimpse into the Parkdale Neighbourhoods often know their safety concerns, but achieving solutions can be elusive. That was met head on by Parkdale Cromdale Community League (PCCL) board last month with their Safety Initiative.

The community has seen some rise in crime, said Richard Williams, PCCL vice president, and discussion addressing it started with the Safety Whistle campaign.

The Safety Whistle campaign is a deterrent to violence without witnesses.

"A similar safety whistle cam-

paign has been very successful in Chile, and it's also on many university campuses across North America," said Alyssa Miller, PCCL communications director.

Safety whistles will be given to PCCL members upon membership renewal, to community members who cannot afford a membership, and to people outside of the community with a membership from their community league.

The Safety Initiative, held Aug. 27, included a self-defense workshop, a round table discussion with city staff, and a potluck.

"We thought we should have a discussion with community members, get their feedback

— what are the issues, what is our role to help the community feel safe," explained Miller. "Community building is important, which is why we held the potluck. The larger your network, the more you feel safe. We want to build a small town attitude in the city."

The theme of community connectedness infused discussion. Closing communication gaps among community members is critical.

"If you know your neighbours, you're more likely to protect each other," said Gurjeet Sangha, community safety liaison with the city.

Discussion focused on problems associated with delinquent landlords. Judy Allan, the city's

Avenue Initiative Coordinator, said a problem properties task force is collecting information on this issue.

Participants also discussed ways to reach marginalized groups and individuals.

Consistency is important for helping these people, said Sebastian Barrera, PCCL president. He suggested a part-time social worker may be helpful.

"PCCL has the space, let's put the community centre to use for the community," said Barrera. "We can bridge gaps that the government alone is not achieving."

Sangha provided information on the Lawn Sign campaign. Jointly run by the city and Edmonton Police Services

(EPS), the signs are a deterrent against crime and encourage residents to report suspicious behaviour. They're also intended to promote a sense of community.

Overall, the day was deemed a success.

"We're really happy with the turnout," said Miller. "Within two hours of advertising it we had registrants. People were saying they want this."

*Kate took up the reporter's pad and pen while living in northern Alberta. The writing bug stuck, and the next 20 years were spent covering everything from local politics to community happenings. She lives in Alberta Avenue with her daughter.*

# Intervening safely when witnessing violence

One man's experience brings awareness to violent bullying

## ROB BERNSHAW

At first, he didn't realize how bad the situation was. "At the very beginning I thought two friends were fighting, a friendly thing. Then as soon as I saw some blood on the other guy's face, then I realized it's serious," said Khan.

Khan said that during the attack, he thought of his young children in 10 to 15 years and the possibility of someone hitting them. With that thought, he knew that he had to try and do something. He tried to help by pressing the emergency button and yelling at the attacker, but that didn't stop the assault. Khan was the only person who tried to intervene.

The LRT stopped at Belvedere station and everyone

got out except for the attacker and John Hollar, the victim. At that point, Khan spoke to an Edmonton Transit System (ETS) staff member regarding the beating that was still continuing. The train continued on, but police arrested the attacker soon after at Clareview LRT station. Hollar died two days later from his injuries.

Taking the perspective that the homicide was an extreme form of bullying, the tragedy spurred Khan to create *Do not be a bystander*, an awareness campaign against bullying and violence. The idea behind the campaign is that bullying and violence is unacceptable and to "stand up against bullying and violence."

Since then, Khan has been recognized locally and nationally for his leadership role in

the campaign and in educating others. Khan said he was shaped and inspired by his parents (currently living in Bangladesh) and is passing on to his children the same values of "respect, trust and help other people when they need it."

He said the message of the campaign is, "When you see something, say something. You don't want to walk away from there. Do not pretend that it's not happening. You do not want to be a silent bystander."

However, it's important to intervene safely and responsibly. Edmonton Police Service Sgt. Steve Sharpe said to first call the police and an ambulance when witnessing a violent attack.

"I think people need to assess their own abilities in terms of how they respond and what level of response they are capa-

ble of contributing as a witness (bystander). In most dynamic and violent situations, the primary concern should be getting additional resources to a scene as soon as possible," said Sharpe.

"If you were to jump into a dynamic situation and you sustain an injury, you have to think, who will summon the resources to protect you? This is something you need to be mindful of and why it's essential you call police when violence is unfolding before your eyes."

As for the thought of having a peace officer on every LRT, ETS spokesperson Jennifer Laraway, said "Just like it's improbable to have a police officer at every corner, we cannot have a peace officer on every train car or at every platform. We have to use taxpayer dollars responsibly and

allocate our resources to the best of our ability."

*Rob is a community organizer, activist, writer for the Rat Creek Press, and passionate advocate to make Alberta bully-free.*

## MORE INFORMATION

[DoNotBeABystander.ca](http://DoNotBeABystander.ca)

[alberta.ca/bullying](http://alberta.ca/bullying)

[cyberbullying.ca](http://cyberbullying.ca)

**Bullying Helpline**  
1-888-456-2323

**National Bullying Awareness Week**  
Nov. 13-19



Khan and his wife Nashid representing *Do not be a bystander*, the anti-bullying awareness campaign. | Rob Bernshaw

# your eastwood news

*This page sponsored by Eastwood Community League*



## Connect with Eastwood!

Hall: 11803-86 St Phone: 780.477.2354  
 FB.com/edmontoneastwoodcommunityleague

Email: ewcl@shaw.ca  
 Twitter @EastwoodCL



## Meetings of the Society

Each month, Eastwood Community League has their board meeting on the first Wednesday at 7 p.m. Anyone may attend, but only members are allowed to participate in discussions and vote. This is the best opportunity to become involved, find out about the community's events and issues up for discussion, and to meet other like-minded people.

## COMMUNITY LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP

Just a brief reminder that new memberships for the 2016-17 season are available for purchase, either online through EFCL's website, or from any director of the society. Call or email for membership requests. Also, for those with children, you should be thinking of soccer registration for next year, as well as the North Edmonton Gymnastics Club's courses, on discount for community league members. Contact the league for more information.

## AGM

The Annual General Meeting has been scheduled for November 2nd, starting at 6:30 p.m. The board will be electing two executive positions (President and Prothonotary) as well as appointing directors for various initiatives and groups. The community is growing, and is working in good partnership with several organizations, so be sure to save the date and come out for your opportunity to shape our dynamic and regenerating community! Appetizers, coffee and tea will be provided.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

### FONDUE NIGHT

The Edmonton Swiss Society invites local residents to participate in their annual Fondue Night, on October 29th starting at 5 p.m. Come and experience this traditional Swiss dish of mixed cheeses and a variety of breads, taste some salads and traditional baked desserts, and meet the folks that make up the Swiss community in Edmonton. Proud to be part of the growing Alberta Avenue scene, the Swiss Society has made Eastwood their new home base for their events and meetings, so be sure to look them up on both facebook and at their website. Participants are required to pre-register with Eastwood Community League up until October 20th. Tickets are \$15 per person. Wine and beer available for purchase, or one may bring one's own; coffee, tea and juice are included.



Check out fondue night with the Edmonton Swiss Society. | Supplied

### EASTWOOD CHILDREN'S DANCE GROUP

New to the community is the opportunity for children between the ages of 6 and 9 to learn how to do some ballet and improv dance moves. These sessions will begin on Sunday, October 2nd, at 1 p.m., and run for an hour to an hour-and-a-half. These are free to all community league members of any of the communities in the area, one simply needs to show their membership card.

### YOGA FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Come and join Eastwood Community Director and Yoga Teacher, Andrea Walker, every Wednesday at 6 pm for an hour of Yin Yoga at Above Average Yoga Studio (11842-111 Avenue; aboveaverageyoga.com). If you are an Eastwood Community League Member, show your league card and receive your very first Class FREE - ANY drop in yoga class on the schedule. Andrea is a certified Hatha Yoga Instructor- RYT-200, as well as Yin Yoga Certified, Seniors Yoga Certified, Pre & Post Natal Yoga Certified.



Eastwood members can try their first yoga class at Above Average Yoga for free. | Supplied

# Local gardener harvests monster potato

Weather and green thumb produce spectacular vegetables

**DAVID BODNAR**

If the economy in Alberta isn't growing, at least we know the potatoes and tomatoes are!

My neighbours in Alberta Avenue harvested what appear to be freaks of nature, but perhaps are merely the result of our rainy growing season. For years, Nicola DiLullo, 90, and his wife Maria, 88, have cultivated two healthy backyard gardens: their own and the space once tended by my late mother. Our families have been neighbours since 1968.

In mid-September, Nick proudly displayed this monster of a potato he dug from the ground. It measured 22 x 14 cm and weighed nearly 2 kg (4.4 lb). He said that he has been harvesting fields and gardens in both Italy and Canada since he was 10 years old and has never before found a potato so large.

Two days later he picked, from a vine which would surely whimper from the strain if it could, a gargantuan tomato, as wide as the salad bowl to which it will soon make a contribution.

These specimens will likely become part of balanced suppers in his household for a week straight, but for a short time this autumn they will be the centrepiece of attention for his sons' families and visitors to their bungalow. I gladly give

credit for these "objects d'weird" to Nick's green thumb (though soil, weather and maybe atomic mutation may also be factors).

I can only speculate what amazing sights might have greeted trick-or-treaters this Halloween had Nick tried his luck with a pumpkin patch.



Nicola and Maria DiLullo have been growing two gardens for years. | David Bodnar



This potato weighed nearly 2 kg. | David Bodnar

**your  
community**

**your  
community  
league!**

## ELMWOOD PARK COMMUNITY LEAGUE

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

A new board was elected in September. Check our Facebook page for details and updates.

Contact us for your free membership & enjoy free access at Commonwealth Rec Centre on Saturdays from 5-7 pm.



## WESTWOOD COMMUNITY LEAGUE

12139 105 ST  
admin@westwoodcl.ca  
780.474.1979

### PURCHASE YOUR 2016-17 MEMBERSHIPS NOW!

Free access to Commonwealth Rec Centre on Saturdays 5-7 pm and hall rental discounts. Members entered into draw for City of Edmonton attraction family passes at AGM.

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
Thursday, October 27 at 7 pm



## DELTON COMMUNITY LEAGUE



**FAMILY FUN BOWL**  
Saturday, Oct 15 at 6:45 pm  
Plaza Bowl 10418 118 Ave  
13+ yrs \$20; 12 & under \$10

12325 85 Street 780.477.3326  
www.deltoncommunity.com

## alberta avenue COMMUNITY LEAGUE

### Membership

#### Rates

Family \$20  
Single \$10  
Senior Free  
Buy on website

We don't want cost to be a barrier. If you would like a membership but cannot spare the cash, just let us know.

### PROGRAMS

#### Zumba Fitness

Mondays 8-9 pm

Members: Free; Non-members: \$20

#### Nordic Pole Walking

Tues / Thur 7-8 pm

Members: \$20; Non-members: \$40

#### Rec Centre Access

Sundays 1-3 pm

At Commonwealth Rec  
For Alberta Ave Members

### MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- \*Free borrowing of various resource and block party kids.
- \*Free print, photocopying & faxing during office hours.

www.albertaave.org | www.fb.com/albertaavenue  
9210 118 Ave | 780.477.2773 | info@albertaave.org

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, October 25th @ 7pm  
We encourage you to attend.



10240 115 Avenue  
780.471.1932  
spruceaveleague@shaw.ca  
spruceavenuecommunity.com



# Thanksgiving with a slice of birthday cake

Finding joy through family celebrations and traditions

**STEPHEN STRAND**

When I was young, the saying “home is where the heart is” did not ring true for me.

My youth was turbulent and any family gathering deteriorated into incessant bickering. Not one passed without a snide remark, delivered right through the back and into the heart of the unsuspecting individual. Family gatherings did not hold any appeal to me. So I hid, holed up in some corner, coming out only to eat.

It was not until my stepfather began to hang around that family gatherings became fun and pleasant. Our birthdays are a day apart and two out of every seven years, one of our birthdays land on Thanksgiving. We combine our birthday parties on Thanksgiving to celebrate. It is a feast and a party. We set aside the day and do not let the banalities of life enter.

Our Thanksgiving-birthday gatherings have been pared down to those who care. It is now a small group, gathered out of love, not necessity. We exchange gifts and eat a glorious meal at my mother's home. She prepares special dishes and desserts that my stepfather and I love in addition to the standard turkey and stuffing. And the desserts! The desserts alone could feed a village. The pies, the cakes (zucchini chocolate cake for me!), and the tarts are a dream. My cousin comes, stuffed tomatoes in hand, knowing they are a favourite and will be eaten within minutes. Love, for us, is shown through food and the care given in creating and presenting them. The time taken to

make the food is worth more than any gift.

Even in the years our birthdays don't land on Thanksgiving, we still celebrate together on Thanksgiving. We exchange gifts and cards (shaking the empty cards and envelopes upside down—a throwback to the impersonal days of birthday cheques and scratch-and-wins), teasing that we are unsatisfied with our gifts, though our hearts are warmed at their thoughtfulness. With the exception of one unfortunate year where I was out of the country due to work, we have set aside every Thanksgiving to be together. It's a tradition one year shy of a decade. Thanksgiving is our day to show our appreciation for all we have.

Over the years, people have faded out of our lives and into silence. Those left are there for life. Peace has now filled my mother's home. Snide remarks are infrequently found and no knives are in need of being pulled from our backs. My mother's home, with my parents and my wife, is where my heart lies. Being there now has memories of good times, good food, love, and friendship.

Celebrating my stepfather's and my birthday on Thanksgiving is not to be missed. We will continue our celebrations for years to come.

*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.*



Holidays and birthdays should be a time for family and friends to gather, enjoy a good meal and make happy memories. Sometimes you need to change the people you are in relationship with to achieve this. | Ben Franske CC BY 2.0

## THE GREAT PUMPKIN EVENT

FREE

Monday, October 31, 2016

5:00 - 8:00 pm  
Parkdale School Grounds  
11648 - 85 Street

- Haunted Hallway
- Hot Dog
- Hayride
- Storytelling
- Crafts

FIREWORKS  
8:00 pm!

Lots of Scary fun for the whole family!

For more information  
(780)481-3451  
[www.bentarrow.ca](http://www.bentarrow.ca)

## THE HEADLESS CARROT HALLOWEEN PARTY

Saturday, October 29, 2016  
7pm - Whenever

AT THE CARROT (118 AVE & 94 ST) | [THECARROT.CA](http://THECARROT.CA)

Sponsored by:

# Legislative Assembly hosts free exhibit

Exhibit showcases stories of the immigrant experience

**CHANTAL FIGEAT**

The Canada: Day 1 traveling exhibit at the Legislative Assembly Visitor Centre provides insight into an immigrant's first day in Canada.

Produced by the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 in Halifax, the free exhibit is a collection of immigration stories.

"For 50 years, Pier 21 was a major entry point," explained Barbara Hilden, exhibits coordinator.

The initial disorientation experienced by newcomers is a common bond.

"That first day experience is something that everyone can relate to, even if you're not an immigrant," said Hilden.

My French immigrant father discovered venetian blinds on his first day in Canada, and was shocked when they suddenly rolled down. "There I was, just

a scared kid," said Dad. Used to small businesses, he was puzzled by the word "supermarket" on a door in Montreal.

The history presented by the exhibit is interesting and enjoyable.

"I need you by my side," read a ticket on an old suitcase.

Missing are sensitive topics, such as discrimination, exploitation, and assimilation. Canadian immigration policy during the 1930s was much different than it is now. As the Holocaust gained momentum in Germany, Canada allowed a mere 5,000 Jews into the country. Between 1930 and 1935, Canada deported over 28,000 male and female "foreigners" because they were radicals or had asked for relief.

During the post-war wave of immigration, landed immigrants were contracted to fill jobs that Canadians wouldn't do. Sparse attention was given to background as they were

often placed on year-long contracts to work on farms, serve in homes, or build railways.

In 1951, my father was put on a train to a farm north of Quebec City despite a classical history degree, a working knowledge of English, and no farming experience. He was ticketed with his designated occupation, name, country, and instructions that he was "to be fed."

"You don't know anything about farming do you?" the farmer asked Dad in his strange French. To his great luck, Dad had an ethical employer, as lack of government followup meant many immigrants were badly exploited.

Growing up in Toronto's Little Italy, I was on the lower end of a culture where discrimination and assimilation was normal. At least our European taste buds could avoid the awful soft, mushy Canadian bread with the salted butter!

My father's Anglo-Saxon co-workers were concerned he was raising a family in such a place. "Think of your children," they said. In reality, our neighbours were often hard-working, family-oriented, conservative people escaping scratch-and-starve farms in southern Italy. Euclid Street sported huge automobiles as upwardly mobile families traded their donkeys for a car.

During elementary school, I was instructed to sing God Save the Queen, salute the Union Jack, and say the Lord's Prayer. A portrait of the Queen hung in the classroom. Few students were of Anglo-Saxon descent and some not Christians. I was sent to a speech class not because I had a speech defect, but because my English was French accented. Most teachers meant well, but I got the message that my French culture was something to escape.

That was my experience as a

child of an immigrant, and I'm sure every new Canadian had a different experience.

The Canada: Day 1 exhibit runs until Dec. 4.

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

**CANADA: DAY 1**

**Borealis Gallery**  
9820 107 St

**Free, non-ticketed event**  
Monday, Wednesday,  
Friday: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Thursday: 10 a.m.-8 p.m.  
Weekends and holidays:  
noon to 5 p.m.



The exhibit runs until Dec. 4 at the Legislative Assembly. | Legislative Assembly of Alberta



**PROUD OF  
WHAT WE DO.**

farmfairinternational.com  
#FARMFAIR  
Edmonton EXPO Centre



# Going the extra mile for art and culture

Mile Zero Dance is participating in Alberta Culture Days

## TALEA MEDYNSKI

From Oct. 1-2, Mile Zero Dance is opening its studio for free with performances and classes as part of Alberta Culture Days.

The contemporary dance company has been participating in Alberta Culture Days since it started in 2008. The event celebrates Alberta's arts and cultures. Originally called Alberta Arts Day, it has gone from a one day to a three day event with province-wide participation.

"We decided that since we've gotten settled in the neighbourhood, we felt well-equipped to host a free performance event," said Gerry Morita, artistic director of Mile Zero Dance.

Morita explained that the event is a good way to introduce people to the McCauley-based dance company. Everyone is welcome to check out the event.

"It's a really good initiative for a

season launch. We like to do something free around that time," said Morita.

Starting at 5 p.m. on Oct. 1, the dance company will have a line up of performances and afterwards, a dance party going from 9 p.m. until midnight.

Expect to see butoh (Japanese) dance, clowns, an escape artist, burlesque, and hopefully a powwow dance. One performance, called RV There Yet?, takes place inside an RV.

Morita said the performances are "mostly inside, but some stuff is happening on the street."

Starting at noon on Oct. 2, there will be a variety of one hour classes, including ballet, contemporary dance, powwow, and Cuban salsa. Morita said attending the classes is a good way to see if you like them since the dance company will be offering those same classes this year.

"People can come in and take a class with their friends," said Morita.

Mile Zero Dance also does outreach

work in nearby communities. For every Friday from 5-6 p.m. in October, children of all ages can take free movement classes at Parkdale Cromdale Community League (PCCL).

Jodie Vandekerkhove, the outreach education coordinator, said the classes introduce kids to dancing. She refers to the sessions as movement classes because they're "a creative, fun atmosphere of learning dance—not technical. We introduce creative movement concepts and get people inspired to move to music."

The classes are part of CreArt, a free school of music and art at PCCL. Mile Zero also held a four-week session for CreArt in the spring.

"I'm the outreach coordinator and I'm really trying to join forces with the city and other communities to have partnerships that give kids dance empowerment," said Vandekerkhove. "I like what Sebastian Barrera's doing with CreArt."

Vandekerkhove said kids can drop in,

with no need to register. Future sessions depend on funding and attendance.

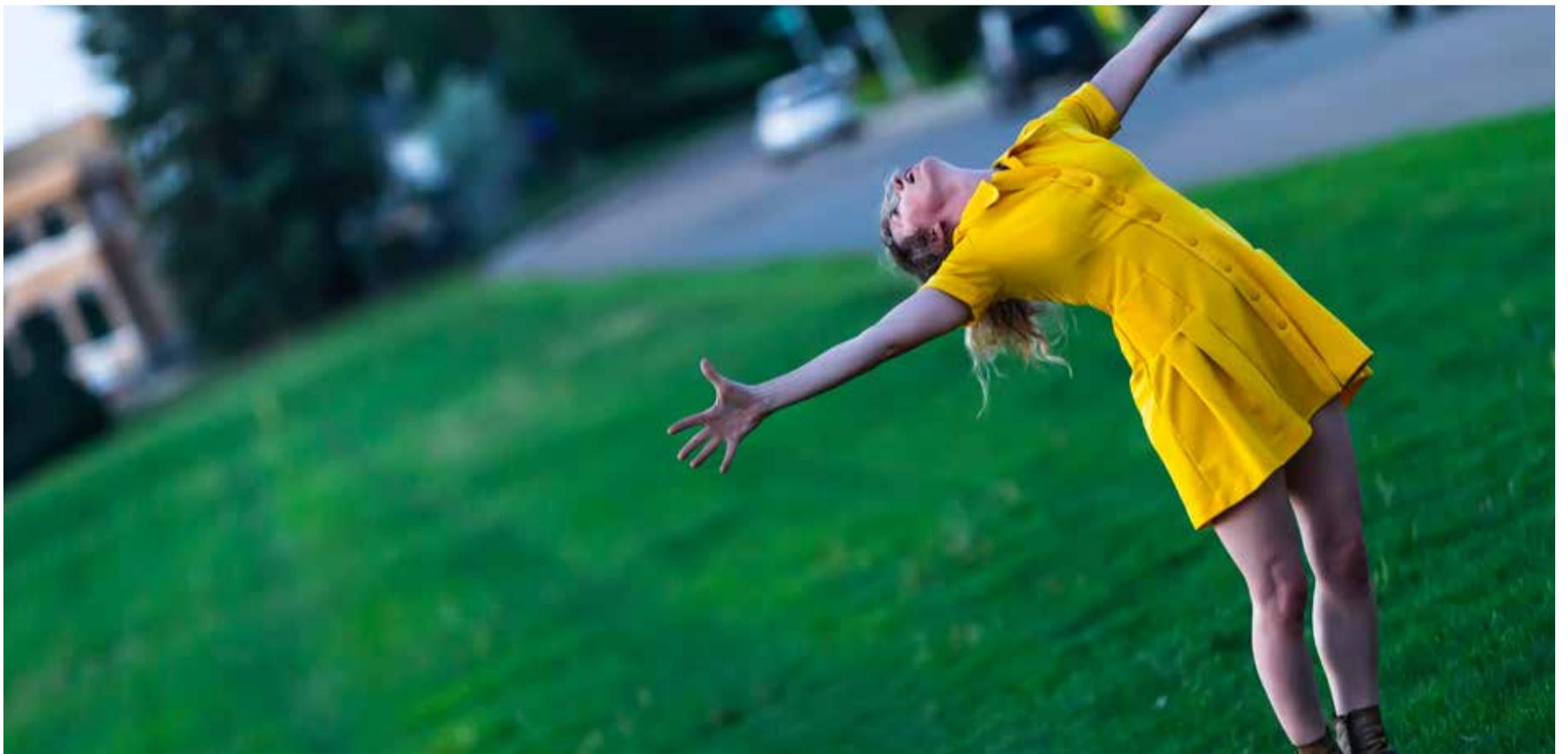
Mile Zero Dance has also held similar sessions for Boys and Girls Club of Edmonton and the Mennonite Centre for Newcomers. Vandekerkhove said she's hoping to create more partnerships and friendships with other community organizations.

For more information about the movement classes, contact Jodie Vandekerkhove at 780.719.6585.

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

## ALBERTA CULTURE DAYS

10816 95 St Oct. 1: free performances from 5-9 p.m.  
Dance party from 9 p.m.-midnight.  
Oct. 2: noon-5 p.m.



Gerry Morita, artistic director of Mile Zero Dance, performs the RV There Yet? series. | Ernest Augustus

Save \$25.00 off a cut & colour during the second week of each month.

Receive a complimentary treatment with a haircut during the third week of each month.

Come in for a cut & foils & receive a blow dry protect lotion (\$30.00 value) during the fourth week of each month.

Women Only

Exclusive Service

Private Studio

Hairdressing since 1985

Loyalty Rewards

TIMOTHIE HILL HAIRDRESSING

TH

Timothiehill.com

780.604.8838 Tuesday to Saturday by appointment.

G f i

learning + talking = clear communication

**MAKING IT IN TOUGH ECONOMIC TIMES!**

**CONNECTED**

transitions

Whether you have lost your job or home, this gathering is for you. What helps some people bounce back during adversity, while others struggle? **LET'S TALK!**

**Listening, talking, & communicating.**

**October 19, 2016**

7:00 - 8:30 pm Alberta Ave Community Centre  
93 st & 118 ave Light refreshments served.

**FREE!**

WWW.CONNECTEDTRANSITION.COM Donations accepted on behalf of YESS

"Communities to be proud of!"

**TONY CATERINA**

WARD 7 COUNCILLOR

**780.496.8333**

tony.caterina@edmonton.ca  
www.edmonton.ca

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor City Hall, 1 Sir Winston Churchill Square, Edmonton, AB T5J 2R7



# WHAT'S ON IN OCTOBER

Brought to you in partnership with [NorwoodNeighbourhoodAssociation.ca](http://NorwoodNeighbourhoodAssociation.ca)

**MOVEMENT/DANCE CLASS**  
Fridays in October from 5-6 pm | Parkdale. Run by Mile Zero Dance.

**DELTON FAMILY FUN BOWL**  
Saturday, Oct 15 at 6:45 pm | Plaza Bowl (10418 118 Ave). 13+ yrs \$20; 12 & under \$10.

**COFFEE WITH COPS**  
Tuesday, Oct 4 from 10-11:30 am | The Carrot. Chat about neighbourhood concerns with Cst. Challenger.



**HEADLESS CARROT HALLOWEEN PARTY**  
Saturday, Oct 29 at 7 pm | The Carrot. Fire pits, roasted marshmallows, music, games and more spooky fun!

**ENTERTAINMENT PRO WRESTLING**  
First Saturday of the month | Alberta Avenue. Tickets: \$20. More: [monsterprowrestling.com](http://monsterprowrestling.com)

**5 PIN BOWLING**  
Everyday, 10 am-10 pm. | Plaza Bowl.

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

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

**OPEN MIC**  
Saturdays, 6:30 pm. | The Carrot.

**SAVE THE DATE JUST ONE WORLD**  
Saturday & Sunday, Nov 12 & 13 | Ital-Canadian Seniors (9111 110 Ave). (previously called Just Christmas)

**EDMONTON POTTERS' SALE**  
Saturday, Nov 19 from 10 am to 3 pm | Alberta Avenue



**CHILDREN'S CLASS**  
Begins week of Oct 15th. Class for ages 5-11 to build bonds of friendship at the neighbourhood level. Based on Baha'i Faith and spiritual principles such as love, unity and justice. More: Alberta 587.709.7009 or [albertatelfer@gmail.com](mailto:albertatelfer@gmail.com).

**A NEW BEGINNING**  
Drawings that blend Brandon Atkinson's tattoo-inspired style and stories from his Indigenous traditions. Until Oct 16 | [BleedingHeartArtSpace.com](http://BleedingHeartArtSpace.com) (9132 118 Ave).

**OPEN WALLS 2**  
Oct 22 to Nov 19 | [BleedingHeartArtSpace.com](http://BleedingHeartArtSpace.com) (9132 118 Ave). Space open for any artist to show one work of art. Submissions accepted Oct 19 and 20 from 6-8 pm and throughout the show as long as there is hanging space left.

**GREAT PUMPKIN EVENT**  
Monday, Oct 31 from 5-8 pm | Parkdale School (11648 85 St). Enjoy wagon rides, crafts, hot dog roasts, hot chocolate, popcorn, cotton candy, costume contests, and a haunted hallway. Fireworks at 8 pm.



## FREE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Go to [ratcreek.org](http://ratcreek.org) for more information

### ESL & LANGUAGE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### FOOD & SUPPORT

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

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

### PARENTS & PRE-SCHOOLERS

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

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

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

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

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

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

### CHILDREN

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

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

### YOUTH

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

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

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

### ADULTS

**ADULT COLORING**  
Coloring and creativity. Books, felts and pencil crayons provided or bring your own. Third Wednesday of month, 2-3 pm at Highlands Library.

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

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

**NASHVILLE SONGWRITERS ASSOC INTERNATIONAL (NSAI)**  
Second Monday of the month 6:30-10 pm at The Carrot. RSVP: [Colleen\\_col\\_kside@hotmail.com](mailto:Colleen_col_kside@hotmail.com)

### SENIORS

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

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

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

### FAMILIES

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

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

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

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

### LOCATIONS

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

**Norwest**  
INSURANCE  
AGENCIES LTD

Auto \* Home \* Business \* Life  
RRSP \* Travel Insurance  
Real Estate

11734 95 St 780.477.9191  
Serving this community  
since 1976

Got  
news  
or story  
ideas?

editor@ratcreek.org

**AFFORDABLE STORAGE CENTRE**

**OPENING SOON IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD - RESERVE NOW**

Residential & Business Services

- All units indoors
- Packing & moving supplies
- 100% Canadian Owned

**8618 - 106a Avenue NW**  
**Edmonton, AB T5H 0S3**  
**(780) 705-1450**

**E-mail: stadium@affordable.ca**

**Website: www.affordable.ca**

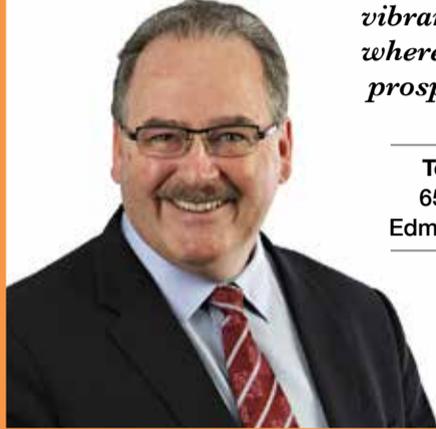


**Brian Mason, MLA**

EDMONTON-HIGHLANDS-NORWOOD

*As your representative in the Alberta Legislature, I continue to work hard for you and your family:*

- ~ strengthen key services, like health care & education
- ~ promote a government that is fair and responsible to all of its citizens
- ~ develop strong and vibrant communities where everyone can prosper



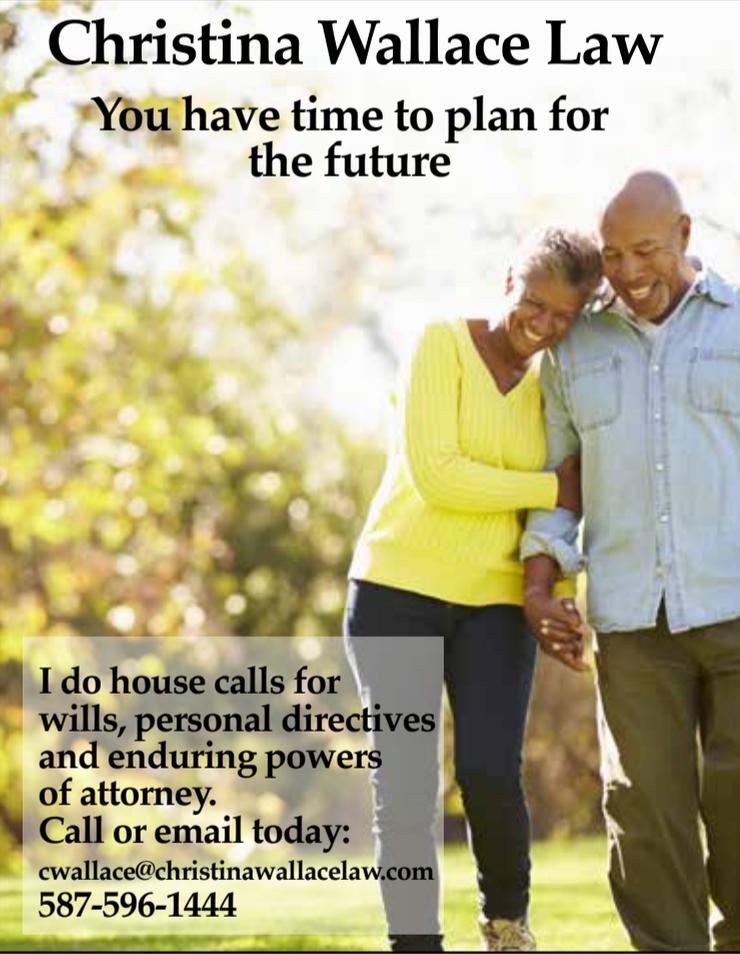
Tel. 780-414-0682  
6519 - 112 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5W 0P1

Follow me on Facebook & Twitter  
Search for: "Brian Mason Edmonton"

edmonton.highlandsnorwood@assembly.ab.ca

**Christina Wallace Law**

You have time to plan for the future



I do house calls for wills, personal directives and enduring powers of attorney.  
Call or email today:  
cwallace@christinawallacelaw.com  
587-596-1444

**R.V. Country SERVICES INC.**

SERVICE \* PARTS \* ACCESSORIES

**780-415-5015**

12523-60 st  
info@rvcountry.ca  
fax: 780-475-5517

We buy used trailers!

Is your RV ready for **WINTER?**



**MBJS MOTORS INC.**



Solomon  
OWNER

Address: 8219 118th Ave NW  
Edmonton, AB T5B0S2  
Email: irasolo2002@yahoo.com  
Phone: **587-520-4496**



The red leaves of a maple tree are beautiful contrast on the green grass in a backyard in Parkdale. | Karen Mykietka