

RAT CREEK PRESS

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AUGUST 2014

NEWS » FARMING

Urban agriculture on the rise

Northlands Urban Farm explores the possibilities of using land



(Above) Lactuca Corp., an urban farming operation growing salad mixes and other vegetables, operates the farm. (Right) Northlands Urban Farm recently added an apiary (bee yard). » NORTHLANDS

TALEA MEDYNSKI

Many people grow gardens in their backyards, use a community garden, or use space in someone else's yard.

Northlands has taken urban farming to the next step. Launched in May, Northlands Urban Farm covers 31,200 square feet located on the southwest corner of the Northlands Campus (113 Avenue and 79 Street). The farm, surrounded by a fence, is visible from the street, and anyone can walk or drive by.

According to a Northlands press release, "Our intention is to demonstrate that agricultural production can be a viable use for under-utilized urban land, particularly for the production of high value cash crops." Sharilee Fossum, acting president and Northlands CEO, said. "The Northlands Urban Farm will feature programming to educate guests of all ages about how food gets from the farm to their fork."

Northlands partnered with

Shovel & Fork, a company teaching workshops on topics like butchery, beekeeping, and preserving. Lactuca Corp., an urban farming operation growing salad mixes and other vegetables, operates the farm.

Jennifer Sheehan, public relations manager for Northlands, explained Northlands wanted to use the land to explore urban farming.

Northlands hired Jessie Radies, a local food consultant, to bring local food to Northlands. She contacted Kevin Kossowan, part-owner of Shovel & Fork and Lactuca Corp. Kossowan's partner is Travis Kennedy, who created Lactuca Corp. three years ago and initially grew varieties of lettuce out of backyards, selling the produce to local restaurants and farmers markets.

"Northlands needed someone to execute operations, and that person was me," said Kossowan. Part of the produce from the farm goes to Northlands kitchens, and the rest goes to restaurants around

the city and to the 124 Street Grand Market.

Lactuca Corp. has steadily grown. It has gone from what Kossowan calls "microsmall," producing five pounds a week of produce three years ago, to last week's bounty of 140 pounds. They now also grow tomatoes, potatoes, and edible flowers.

As for Shovel & Fork, there have been two workshops on Northlands Urban Farm, with more planned for this fall.

On June 14, the farm added an apiary (bee yard) with four beehives and 80,000 bees. Patty Milligan, a local beekeeper, will oversee the apiary. The purpose of the apiary is to demonstrate beekeeping, honey production, and the importance of pollination.

The honey will go to Northlands kitchens. Despite the large number of bees, "there's not a lot of honey," said Sheehan. "The main purpose is for cross-pollination purposes."

Sheehan explains the bees also pollinate plants in the sur-

rounding areas.

Kossowan said the fact that beekeeping was approved for Northlands Urban Farm "explores what's possible within the city." On July 7, the City of Edmonton approved beekeeping within city limits as a pilot project. Kossowan said he would next like to see an approval to keep hens.

Tours of the farm are available to the public, but are dependant on staff availability. When requesting a tour, specify your interest.

"We can meet them there and do a walk-through," said Radies.

For anyone wondering if the urban farm is a long-term addition: "We've contracted to work for the season, but I'm not sure beyond that. As of right now, there is positive feedback from Northlands and the community," said Sheehan.

NORTHLANDS URBAN FARM
113 Avenue and 79 Street
Tour info: info@northlands.com

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Rock the STAGE with some Savoury Words

The Rat Creek Press is seeking poets of all kinds to share their words at our "Words We 'Ave Poetry Slam" at Kaleido Festival on Saturday, September 13 from 6 to 7:30 pm. \$225 in prizes will be awarded to judge's top three picks (1st \$100; 2nd \$75; 3rd \$50).

To register email Rusti L. Leahy at lit@ratcreek.org

ratcreek.org

kaleidofest.ca

NEWS » BUSINESS

Restoring the Bissell

After two fires, Bissell Centre Thrift Shoppe is set to re-open in October

RUSTI L LEHAY

Restore the Bissell: the name of Bissell Centre's new campaign. The idea behind the campaign is that if every Edmontonian donated 10 cents, it would far surpass the goal of \$25,000. The Bissell is raising money to re-open their permanent location on 88 Street and 118 Avenue in October.

There have been two fires at the Thrift Shoppe. The first one on September 2 of last year, forced them to relocate to a temporary rented location on 118 Avenue and 80 Street. Then on June 21, a second devastating fire destroyed everything at the temporary location.

The damage was so extensive in the June 21 fire that investigators can only suspect electrical flaws as the cause. They were able to rule out arson. At closing time, three staff smelled smoke and ran to safety. Emergency responders helped while 50 firefighters tried to quell the fire. Within a half hour, flames engulfed the whole building.

A preliminary estimate of damages near \$350,000 includes inventory, racks,

shelves, and store fixtures in addition to ongoing loss of revenue while staffing costs continue. Approximately 100,000 pieces of clothing and accessories were destroyed. Nothing was salvageable.

After the fire, leadership quickly organized an action plan that allowed donations to continue.

Devin Komarniski, Bissell Centre's marketing and communications manager, said, "We set up containers for clothing donations at various locations on the Tuesday after the fire."

Displaced staff are taking in and sorting clothing donations at the various sites. Edmontonians continue to collect and drop off clothing in large quantities. Watch bissell-centre.org for when they can accept hard items.

Komarniski and staff are buoyed up by generous Edmontonians. The organization was most distressed about their endangered Community Closet program. The loss of inventory is the biggest obstacle.

Komarniski said, "Donations supply clothing to the down-



Bissell Centre Thrift Shoppe currently has two drop-off locations for donations. >> RUSTI L LEHAY

town Community Closet that then provides free clothing to those who have nothing. It was and is a big concern to keep up our supply."

The Bissell Centre Thrift Shoppe needs more than one size of shoe and one type or size of clothing to meet a complexity of needs.

"Building people back up starts with dignity," Komarniski added. "We need clothes that people can feel good in for interviews and work. All of that has been at risk."

The Bissell Centre "exists to eliminate poverty" and their work continues without their retail location.

BISSELL CENTRE THRIFT SHOPPE DROP-OFF LOCATIONS

Bissell Centre Thrift Shoppe parking lot, 8818 118 Ave
Monday to Saturday, open 10-5 pm
Big steel box with attendants

Bissell Centre southside location, 5120 122 St
Monday to Saturday, open 9-4pm
Brick and mortar space

DONATE MONEY OR CO-ORDINATE A CLOTHING DRIVE

Make a financial contribution by visiting bissellcentre.org/donate/.

Co-ordinate a clothing drive in your community or at work by visiting bissellcentre.org for a downloadable poster to use.

RESTORE THE BISSELL CAMPAIGN

New fundraising campaign launched July 28
www.restorebissell.org
Permanent location on 8818 118 Avenue re-opens in October 2014.

Eastwoodfest
Saturday August 9, 2014
Eastwood Community League Park
11803 - 86 St.
10:00 - 3:00 p.m.
Free Events!

10 AM - 12 PM Pancake Breakfast
12 PM - 3 PM Children's games and activities!
Jumpy Things, Water Park!
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Eastwood Community Hall
avenue initiative revitalization
Eastwood Community League

alberta avenue COMMUNITY CENTRE Seeking block connectors to talk to neighbours. Email April at ajau84@gmail.com or call 780-477-2773.

NEWS » PROJECT

An intersection with great potential

Community Care project seeks to beautify and nurture public space near Sprucewood Library

SHELAINNE SPARROW

“Great places are created by the people who live there” -City Repair

If you were to get off bus route 5 at the intersection of 95 Street and 116 Avenue, you probably wouldn't get a strong sense of place. You wouldn't see signs that this intersection weaves together a community rich in diversity, layered with resilient elders, young parents, rooted couples, wise survivors, and vibrant children and youth.

On the southeast corner of the intersection is the beloved Sprucewood Library branch. This high-volume neighbourhood library makes this intersection a genuine community destination. The library draws community members, families in particular, from all four directions. Inside, the library is usually buzzing with quiet energy—a microcosm of the community. However, outside the library, around and through the intersection, illicit activity is commonplace. Vehicles cruise the intersection with little awareness of the community or the many children who

live here. The crosswalk linking many community members to the library and 118 Avenue's retailers, services and events barely announces the pedestrian passage across lanes of busy traffic.

It is a public space that is uninspired, rootless, and often unsafe despite its significance to the community.

It holds potential to be much more.

The Community Care: Intersection Enhancement Project invites a transformation of this space into a visually obvious, community-embracing, enhancing, and nurtured place encouraging connectivity, safety, pride and community engagement. This area could be a place welcoming and celebrating the community living around it. The project aims to cultivate the space for becoming such a place.

I have lived less than a block from the intersection for more than a decade and have a long and complex relationship with it. It is part of my daily life as the transport route to and from my home. Visits to the library with my five-year-old daughter are a regular part of our

neighbourhood strolls. But the space has always been barren and ungrounded—not a place to linger or enjoy. As a mother, I long for my daughter and all the neighbourhood's children to feel welcome and safe visiting our little gem of a library. As a regenerative designer, I wish to see the social and ecological potential of this place actualized to become a thriving, beautiful, vibrant place encouraging community connections and health.

Last summer while in early start-up of Living Ecology Design (a permaculture design and place making enterprise), I submitted an application to the Neighbourhood Revitalization Matching Grant program for support in engaging the community to transform this space through community art, ecological greening of the boulevards, and celebration.

Inspired largely by the work of City Repair in Portland, Oregon and the spirit of our community, I was optimistic. While the project was met with support and encouragement, there was another partner to get on board—the city's transportation department. Almost



The intersection of 95 Street and 116 Avenue is a huge community hub.

>> SHELAINNE SPARROW

a year later, I am still negotiating with them on getting any public art on street infrastructure. While some of the community art aspects of the project are on hold, plans for greening and other enhancements continue with a hope-

ful install before the end of the summer. I invite everyone to imagine the possibilities for this space on your next visit to our beloved library. Please share these ideas and observations. Visit www.livingecology.ca to contact me directly.



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WHAT'S ON » SHOPPING

Garage sale riches

Be a savvy shopper during garage sale season



This raincoat was in a \$5 box of clothing. >> FRANKI HARROGATE

FRANKI HARROGATE

Garage sales: where one person's junk is another's delight. Why hold one?

According to Saima, a vendor at a multi-family garage sale, it's a great way to pare down belongings. Both she and her sister are moving, and there are the added bonuses of less packing and not having to keep belongings in storage.

"We've been doing garage sales our whole lives, and they're a fantastic way to get rid of things," said Saima. "It's also fun; people stop by and chat, or pop in as they're walking or driving by."

For parents on a tight budget, garage sales are a great source of all types of stuff

for kids without breaking the bank. It's also environmentally responsible: reusing items keeps them out of the landfill and ensures fewer resources go to waste. Items like DVDs, CDs or board games are often available, allowing you to enhance your leisure time without significant cost.

At one garage sale a couple of weeks ago, I was lucky enough to buy a bunch of baby and toddler clothing (including a bright yellow, lined raincoat), a small pool with an attached bench, and a play structure with an attached slide. The slide and pool were \$5 each, and the raincoat was in a \$5 box of clothing.

Depending on your needs (and what vendors are sell-

ing), you can outfit your entire home with furniture or update your wardrobe at no great expense. And if you're new to the neighbourhood or haven't explored it much, seeking out local garage sales can be a great way to get acquainted with the area and your neighbours.

USEFUL LINKS

Information regarding the city's regulations for garage sales:
http://www.edmonton.ca/bylaws_licences/licences_permits/garage-sale-licence.aspx
 Information from Health Canada regarding facts for garage sale vendors:
<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/pubs/cons/garage-eng.php>

TIPS FOR BUYERS

- Consider safety when purchasing certain items. For items like car seats, expiry dates on the seat will tell you if the car seat is still within its time limit. Always ask if the car seat has been in an accident! Vendors are legally liable for any such items, so they must be honest.
- Ask if the vendor is open to bargaining if you think an item is too expensive. An asking price could be a starting point.
- Try to price out particular items, such as children's shoes. Knowing the store cost can be a big help.
- Consider the condition of items. Pants for \$5 might be a good deal, but how worn are they?
- Know your clothing size. It may not be possible to try on items.
- Plug in small appliances and electronics to make sure they work.

TIPS FOR VENDORS

- Make sure everything is clean and working.
- Be willing to negotiate.
- If you have antique items, take them to antique stores or auction houses instead. A garage sale isn't the place to get book value for a rare piece.
- Have very good signs, and lots of them. If necessary, include clear directions.
- Once your sale is finished, remove your signs to avoid people knocking on your door next weekend.



Writer Franki Harrogate also picked up a children's outdoor pool with side bench. >> FRANKI HARROGATE

Brian Mason, MLA

EDMONTON HIGHLANDS-NORWOOD



Proud to represent the community voices of Alberta Avenue, Parkdale, Delton, Eastwood and Elmwood Park in the Alberta Legislature.

Please contact my office or interact online with me to share your views, issues and concerns that impact our community and our democratic values.



Connect with Brian!

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EDITORIAL

Westwood mall vandalism

These acts have a demoralizing effect on the neighbourhood

CHANTAL FIGEAT

Broken shop windows, overturned garbage cans, smashed windows and graffiti in bus shelters are all examples of vandalism that show up in the Westwood strip mall and vicinity on 118 Avenue. Acts such as these have a negative impact on the quality of life and environment in the neighbourhood. Consequently, they have a ripple effect beyond the act itself and can encourage yet more vandalism.

Vandalism is expensive. Businesses affected by it must pass these costs to customers by charging higher prices. The City of Edmonton spends money on an anti-graffiti program, which uses tax dollars.

Yet, vandalism goes beyond money. It's also an emotional issue. Vandals are motivated by negative emotions, but victims must also deal with the anger and hurt. Neighbours may feel frightened and threatened by these senseless violent acts.

What's behind these destructive acts?

Common motivations are peer pressure, opportunistic action, boredom, anger, and revenge. Children, teens and young adults commit most vandalism. Young people may be showing off in front of peers, or can't resist an opportunity to rebel against authority. Others may be angry at people associated with a particular establishment and so they get destructive.

It takes skilled parenting to deal with youth whose peers are negatively influencing them. Parents who take an interest in their teenager's

peer group risk being seen as controlling, thus perpetuating teenage rebellion further. Even so, a casual friendly interest can go a long way. A good strategy is to use youthful energy and idealism in a positive way. One example would be to organize a neighbourhood clean up.

New York City has provided

“Vandalism goes beyond money. It's also an emotional issue. Vandals are motivated by negative emotions, but victims must also deal with the anger and hurt.”

a good model on how cities can deal with vandalism. In 1995, Mayor Rudy Giuliani initiated an anti-graffiti task force, a multi-agency initiative to combat graffiti vandals in New York City. Giuliani used a “broken window” theory, arguing that one broken window will deface a whole building. This single broken window also encourages more vandalism as the vandals think their actions will go unnoticed. Once elected to office, Mayor Michael Bloomberg

followed up by introducing a 311 anti-graffiti hotline.

New York City uses an approach focusing on public education and enforcement. We can see the influence of this model here in Edmonton.

The City of Edmonton focuses on graffiti vandalism under their Capital City Clean Up program. Property owners vandalized by difficult-to-clean graffiti are eligible for \$500 worth of professional cleaning. They can obtain free graffiti cleaning kits to clean graffiti on their own. Citizens can also record and report vandalism via the 311 helpline.

Although these strategies focus on graffiti vandalism, this same model can be effective for discouraging other forms of vandalism. With the helpline, police can geographically isolate trouble spots. Police pay particular attention to these areas and hopefully discourage and identify culprits. Police cars patrolling the Westwood strip mall show Edmonton police are allocating valuable resources to this area.

But it's also evident that police patrolling the mall and surrounding area in cars is not enough. Business owners are resorting to their own security measures. Private security cars patrol the area. The liquor store now has bars behind the glass after someone threw a large brick through their shop window last winter.

Vandalism requires a multifaceted approach with police, city government, individuals, and citizens' groups working together to defeat the problem.

COMMUNITY » NEIGHBOURING

Parking lot party

Combat crime and create community

APRIL AU

On Saturday, Aug. 16, there will be a party in the 7-Eleven parking lot on 118 Avenue and 89 Street.

This isn't just any party, but an event organized by the 7/11 art project, which seeks to create safer and more connected neighbourhoods by building community through the arts.

Alec Stratford, community capacity builder with N.E.T., said the project is focusing on physical disorder/crime, connectedness within the community, and awareness of community groups and services in the area.

The project was created as a response to safety and crime issues in the area of the 7-Eleven and Nova Plaza apartments. Several community groups, including Arts on the Ave (AOTA), Edmonton Police Service (EPS), Neighbourhood Empowerment Teams (N.E.T.), Avenue Initiative Revitalization, and Afro-Canadian Magazine began discussing possible ways to combat the issues.

These groups worked with Nova Plaza residents to gather their perspective on the crime and safety issues in the area and to see if they were interested in the performance-based arts project.

According to survey results, a large number of Nova Plaza residents have lived in the community for several years. However, due to out-of-town jobs, they have rarely had the opportunity to connect with others in the area. Several also admitted the crime in the area has prevented them from getting more involved in the

neighbourhood.

However, many residents said they would be happy to volunteer, or at least attend an event organized specifically with this block in mind.

The 7/11 “Party in the Parking Lot” is a vision born out of the collaborative efforts of these groups, 7-Eleven, Nova Plaza residents, and other community members.

The parking lot party will include a variety of performance arts workshops and performances in areas such as music and dance. Community members can also contribute to a visual art installation, which will be displayed after the event.

The collaboration begins to address the area's crime and safety issues as well as connect and build relationships with community members.

After all, said Stratford, “the installment isn't as important as the process.” The goal in the end is to “connect community with space through a facilitated art project,” making this part of 118 Avenue “a safe, beautiful and connected place.”

The party is hoped to be the first installment of a series of events.

7/11 PARTY IN THE PARKING LOT
August 16 from 7 to 11 pm

7-Eleven parking lot, 8933 118 Ave

Attractions include music, dance, hip-hop, and food. Free admission.

Interested in volunteering? Email
Alec Stratford at alec.stratford@edmonton.ca or call 780.944.8402

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

ABOUT US

The *Rat Creek Press* is a non-profit community newspaper in north central Edmonton serving the communities of Alberta Avenue, Delton, Eastwood, Elmwood Park, Parkdale-Cromdale, Spruce Avenue, and Westwood.

COMMUNITY, COMMUNICATION, CAPACITY

The *Rat Creek Press* goals are to help connect residents with what is happening in the community, provide a forum where information and ideas can be exchanged, and help individuals learn new skills, acquire experience and develop leadership.

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EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Rat Creek Press* is a forum for all people. We encourage comments that further discussion on a given article or subject, provide constructive criticism, or offer an idea for community activity.

Letters should be no longer than 250 words and must include the full name, location and contact information of the author. **Op-Ed columns** should be 400-700 words and observe formal rules of spelling and grammar. The RCP reserves the right to edit all material and to remove any electronic comment at any time.

All columns, letters or cartoons submitted are attributed to the author and do not necessarily represent the views or opinions of the *Rat Creek Press*. Send submissions to the *Rat Creek Press* Editor via email at editor@ratcreek.org, or 9210-118 Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5G 0N2. Mail may also be dropped at the address above.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Space is available to non-profit groups for event and program listings as well as volunteer opportunities on a first-come first-serve basis and will be printed as space permits.

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BUSINESS » THE LEMONADE STAND

Now that's got to be weird

An old story teaches entrepreneurs a valuable lesson

HENRI YAUCK

There's an old story about a town cobbler who had his shop next to an undertaker. One day the undertaker asked the cobbler if he would mind keeping an eye on his store while he went out of town on business. The cobbler agreed.

It was a hot day and the cobbler had several shoes to repair. He decided to work late into the evening. Since the undertaker's shop was cooler, he decided to work there.

Before he set up, he got himself a cold jug of beer.

Unknown to the cobbler, the town joker snuck into the undertaker's place of business and hid in a coffin behind where the cobbler was working on shoes.

As the cobbler tapped away on his shoes and sipped his beer to keep cool, the clock struck midnight.

"My goodness, it's late," said the cobbler.

Just then, behind him, he heard a creaking sound. As he turned around, the coffin behind him slowly opened and a man sat up.

Not knowing what was happening, the cobbler struck the man on his head with his hammer and instantly killed him.

The next week, the cobbler was brought before the town magistrate to be sentenced. The verdict found the cobbler guilty of first-degree murder. His sentence was to hang by the neck until dead.

The townspeople were aghast. One townsman mus-



tered enough courage to address the court.

"If Your Honour please, you have sentenced to death the town cobbler. He's the only one we have. If you hang him, who will mend our shoes? And the winters get very cold."

Soon the courtroom came alive with chants to release the cobbler.

After reflecting on the ver-

dict, the magistrate nodded in agreement and overturned his verdict.

"What you say is true," he said. "Since we have only one cobbler, it would be a great wrong against the people to let him die. But, justice must be served; as there are two haberdashers in the town, let one of them be hanged instead!"

The lesson for entrepreneurs is clear.

If you don't have a Plan M (as taught in previous articles), your business will not stand out as desirably unique and indispensable to your marketplace and could as a consequence be executed by customer neglect in your marketplace.

Over the past year, The Lemonade Stand has described ways and suggested ideas on how to reconnect by using simple proven processes to become the most outstanding and needed business in the marketplace. If you have missed those articles or are now just plain ready to look into Plan M and find out what's missing, you can do so by visiting the website below.

There is no cost. No obligation. Check it out now.

<http://www.ratcreek.org/the-lemonade-stand.html>

BUSINESS » SHOP LOCAL

Hair and fashion

The 118 Avenue businesses stand out



Owner Hashin Ibrahim cuts Jamal Ali's hair at Jilib Fades Barbershop.

» REBECCA LIPPIATT

JILIB FADES BARBERSHOP AND ART+SOUL

8648 118 AVENUE

OWNER: HASHIN IBRAHIM

HOURS: NOON-9 PM, OR BY

APPOINTMENT

PH: 587.989.8351

REBECCA LIPPIATT

Hashin Ibrahim operates two side-by-side businesses on 118 Avenue. Art+Soul is a clothing store selling t-shirts and hoodies. Jilib Fades Barbershop has three barbers available, each with their own clientele. The barbers rent chairs from Ibrahim.

Walking into Jilib Fades Barbershop evokes a feeling of timelessness. The bright red storefront stands out on 118 Avenue. Inside, movie posters, a Canadian flag, and photographs of haircut options decorate the ocean blue walls. The

high wood-framed windows and hardwood floors creaking underfoot make you feel like you could be in the 1950s.

Ibrahim trained as a barber in Canada after emigrating from Somalia in 1997. He owned a business on 105 Street—Africa Safari—until 2006. After a career detour into truck driving, he returned to barbering so he could sleep in his own bed every night and spend more time with his 9-year-old child.

Hours are not set at Jilib Fades Barbershop. The store is usually open from noon until 9 pm, but on weekends, Ibrahim stays open as long as customers keep coming—even until midnight.

Although Art+Soul currently sell clothing, Ibrahim has plans to operate the business as a tobacco shop and convenience store.

CELEBRATE WITH SUMMER FESTIVALS!

Summer is the season for festivals. Check out these Edmonton festivals:

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| August 2 thru 4 | Servus Heritage Festival |
| August 8 thru 10 | Cariwest Festival |
| August 14 thru 24 | Edmonton International Fringe Theatre Festival |
| August 16 thru 17 | Latin Festival |
| August 19 thru 21 | C'mon Festival |
| August 30 | Edmonton Reggae Festival |



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YOUTH » CAMP

Youth theatre camp sparked imagination

Organizers hope to expand the initiative into a two-week camp



Spark! youth theatre camp ended in an entertaining performance called "Christmas Under the Sea." >> RUSTI L LEHAY



Program participants Gemma and Andraya created this unique set design. >> RUSTI L LEHAY

RUSTI L LEHAY

On July 19, theatre professionals offered 8 to 15 year-olds in the community a chance to light up a stage with their ideas. Spark! is a youth-oriented arts initiative dedicated to celebrating and educating Edmonton's youth. It is facilitated by some of Edmonton's emerging artists.

Chris Dela Cruz thought of the idea for Spark! this past spring. Dela Cruz, a technician working with several companies and festivals on 118 Avenue, is also a big brother with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada. While working for arts initiatives on the Ave, he identified a gap for the community's youth. He approached his colleagues, Sheiny Satanove and Lianna Makuch, who have worked for Theatre Prospero and festivals like Thousand Faces and SkirtsAfire. They began collaborating to create

a multidisciplinary youth arts camp.

Spark! started because organizers see 118 Avenue as a burgeoning arts hub.

Satanove said, "We want to take those same values of the arts the community has fostered, and instill them in the community's youth. We hope that integrating the arts into all demographics of the neighbourhood will foster a healthy community spirit and inspire youth to pursue their dreams and aspirations."

Parents Elizabeth Johannson and Kerri Gibson Loranger enrolled Gemma and Andraya, 10 and 9.

"The girls are familiar with theatre programs as students of Virginia Park School," said Johannson.

The organizers chuckled how the girls didn't want to act, but as they fell into the brainstorming and then set creation, they

chose parts for themselves.

Dio and Cole thought the program was a great way to avoid packing for camping. Steven Michos and Karen Mykietka enjoyed the final laugh by postponing packing until after the performance.

The theatre program started at 11:00 and coincided with texts to Michos: "SOS," "I'm bored," and "Get me out of here," from both boys. After lunch the texts stopped.

Makuch said, "The boys were adamant they were not going to talk." Yet when the option came up for some appealing lines, they jumped into their roles.

This six-and-a-half hour pilot project offered participants the opportunity to develop an original performance piece which they created, designed, and performed. Dela Cruz worked on sound tech and design and Makuch offered drama instruc-

tion.

Makuch said, "Through improv, acting, movement, design and technical theatre, students had the opportunity to explore their imaginations, become more connected to their bodies and voice, learn about the logistics and technicalities of putting on a production, and discover how to translate play into storytelling and theatre."

The organizers were thrilled with how the kids used everyone's ideas and worked together to create the story. Satanove said, "They covered all the aspects that it takes to create a foundation for a performance and they pulled it off."

Makuch and colleagues hope to expand Spark! to a two-week 2015 summer camp exploring all artistic disciplines and culminating in a multidisciplinary final performance.

This year's program was

sponsored by Alberta Avenue Community League (space), Pho King (food), Alberta Avenue Revitalization Initiative (small SPARK grant), and 7-Eleven (pizza discount).

Andraya and Gemma liked the set decoration and both were quite enthusiastic in saying they would love the longer program. Their favourite part was brainstorming to create the story.

The benefits of supporting a youth's curiosity and desire for the arts are priceless.

Makuch said, "We hope to bring students from homes where they may not get the opportunity to express themselves due to family life and/or economic reasons."

By igniting the youth's creativity with a goal to create a unique performance piece driven by their own imaginations, inner thoughts will have an avenue to be voiced and undying sparks will be lit.

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YOUTH » PROJECT

Local teens make beautiful things

Crystal Kids Youth Centre teens fundraising for Brazilian outreach project



Christine has grown to enjoy taking scenery pictures, like this photo of a tree.

» CHRISTINE



Russell and the teens are fundraising for an outreach trip to Brazil. From left to right: Desarae, Christine, Britany, Kristina, and Russell (back of group). » LAURAL RUSSELL

TALEA MEDYNSKI

I meet Laural Russell and her teenage students in the basement of St. Augustine Anglican Church. It's the church's community supper night, and Russell and the teen girls, aged 14 to 18, have set out a table with framed photos, notebooks, postcards, and notepads for sale.

Russell and the teens have taken all photos. Art shows such as this are one way they are raising money to travel to Bom Retiro do Sul, Brazil for a 10-day trip, with the goal of going in October. They also fundraise by helping out in the community, such as covering up graffiti and collecting pop bottles.

Russell teaches photography at Crystal Kids Youth Centre, and for the past six months, Kristina, Britany, Christine, and Desarae have been Russell's students. They sell photos from

Russell and the teens.

"I love teaching them, they've been a great, great group," said Russell.

The trip is a "cultural exchange/humanitarian outreach" project planned by Avenue Vineyard Community Church. The church has teamed up with Crystal Kids Youth Centre.

The trip is for "community development, specifically looking at establishing a Family Learning Centre where we would teach work skills useful in the local economy. This would include skills such as sewing and computer training. We are also investigating the establishment of a wash house/sanitation project." Money raised is also going towards these projects.

"The place we're going is a poor area," said Russell. The church has gone to the same location before. Just last year, Pastor Wayne Thomas traveled

to Bom Retiro do Sul.

Thomas is an outreach worker with Crystal Kids Youth Centre and connected with the teens there. Russell and the teens also attend the Avenue Vineyard Community Church. Last year, Thomas asked Kristina, Britany, Christine, and Desarae if they wanted to go to Brazil. They all eagerly agreed.

When I speak to the teens, they're excited to travel and help fundraise the approximately \$49,000 needed.

"I was asked to go to Brazil last year. I thought it would be interesting to see how they lived—they don't have as much as we have," said Britany, and added, "I want to take pictures of people and houses, so people here can see how it is [there]."

Britany likes snapping mostly nature-related photos. In a provided biography, Britany said, "I am so excited to go to Brazil because I have a chance to make

a change, and impact someone's life in a positive and amazing way."

Kristina enjoys photographing plants and said her skills have improved since learning from Russell. She goes on to explain she wants to help people while in Brazil, and plans to take photos while she's there. According to her biography, she said, "it is an amazing opportunity for us all, and I love meeting new people."

Desarae likes what she calls "light painting", where a photographer uses a laser to draw shapes in a dark room, and then photographs the images. Desarae said she looks forward to teaching the people in Bom Retiro do Sul about Christianity as well as other useful skills.

Christine said that although not initially interested in photography, she is close to Thomas and wanted the opportunity to know Russell better. The

opportunity to travel to Brazil appealed to her because she had never done anything like it before.

"I'm excited to travel as a group and grow relationships," said Christine. "I'm all about helping people and trying to change things for the better."

So far, Russell and the teens have held three shows. On August 8, they will hold another art show at Battista's Calzone Company.

This will be the first trip out of North America for the teens.

SNAPSHOT OF FACTS

Avenue Vineyard Community Church and Crystal Kids Youth Centre are teaming up to raise money to go to Bom Retiro do Sul, Brazil for an outreach project.

The group hopes to go in October and have set a fundraising goal of approximately \$49,000.

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AUGUST ART SHOW
Battista's Calzone Company
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INTERESTED IN DONATING?
Make cheques out to Avenue Vineyard Community Church and include the memo "Brazil trip" on the cheque. Donators will receive a tax receipt at the end of the year. Mail cheques to: Avenue Vineyard Community Church at #8 11602 - 40 St. Edmonton, AB T5W 2K6

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EDITORIAL » LITERARY

SUMMER DAYS

RUSTI L. LEHAY

Everyone has written one of those summer essays for a teacher in September. Imagine writing one now, thinking back on a summer day when you were wee. Karen Sheridan did just that and if the human brain does not know the difference between remembered fear and actual in-the-moment fear, then it must benefit to think back on precious moments of carefree childhood.

After all, how many adults can say they take the time to flop in the grass and watch, really watch the goings-on between the blades from the tips down to the ground or gaze at clouds? It is these connections to nature and being in touch with the earth that can lower blood pressure, relieve stress, and make everything look new and wonderful.

If you feel funny about it, grab a child, preferably one you know, and head outdoors. A grandchild, a niece or nephew, or a son or daughter will happily explore a few moments out of time. It's even better if you take a snack. Put some jam on the end of a stick and feed a bumblebee. Watch them become too heavy to fly, then pet them. Gently.

After they buzz off the extra calories, they will fly away.

When you live in Alberta, it should be a minimum prerequisite to take one hour ONCE PER SUMMER to take time for nonsense and something uselessly non-productive in the sun. Dare you to write about it and send it in to lit@ratcreek.org.



SUN CHILD

KAREN SHERIDAN

The ground cools my belly when I throw myself down into the tall mass of green grasses. The green soothes. The quiet soothes. The aloneness soothes.

The hot sun warms the soles of my waving bare feet. I softly slap my ankles together, delighted with the looseness of the movement. I roll over to cool my back and quickly turn my eyes away from the abrupt yellow glare.

Insistent sunspots tumble up and down on the insides of my eyelids, slowly fade to pale yellow and disappear. I squint to see if it is safe to open my eyes.

My glance catches an ant's zigzag climb up a white-green column of field grass. I follow her direction and her detours, and wonder at her wandering.

Then, curious about her goal, I lean up to the greener tip of the trembling stalk. Surprised, I examine its neighbours. Magic. A row of yellow trumpets, each the size of the eye of one of my mother's sewing needles, waves at the top of my ant's stalk. In concert with blue and yellow rows on the neighbouring grasses, they blare bright harmonic homage to the nurturing sun.

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MARLENE SALMONSON

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We're a gift to each other
It's really quite true
When we get together
On the Avenue.

THE 4 SEASONS

ROB BERNSHAW

Summer Winter Spring and Fall
My how we love them all
As each season takes its turn
We look forward for the next to return
Of all the seasons that we enjoy and Love
Joy and Happiness are not always rained down from above
As time passes and the Winter seems long
Is it complaint or reason we wish it gone
When Winter arrives how we embrace
While all the while dreading the cold we must face
As the cycle continues day by day
Let us remember it is the way
As we toast their arrival we raise our glass
All the while knowing each must soon pass



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PETER GOLDRING
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Edmonton East



UPHOLDING OUR
FREEDOM AND
DEMOCRACY

Reflecting on our recent Canada Day celebrations, I am reminded of the sacrifices made by the members of our Armed Forces who serve in order that our fundamental freedoms may be preserved. Every day they show their commitment to the democratic ideals that have made our country great.

It is with that in mind that I would like to share with you my response to a letter I received from the "Free Omar Khadr Now Committee" who wanted me to take a public stand on the issue of the Canadian teenager captured in Afghanistan fighting against coalition forces, I told them:

I simply cannot agree with you on the Khadr issue.

Omar Khadr was recruited and trained as a terrorist and at the age of 15-years old, committed the crime of murdering an American soldier, allies of Canadian soldiers, in the War on Terror.

In accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 38, he could be recruited into the military at the age of 15. He was operating as such in Afghanistan which has not signed protocols that might have reinterpreted Article 38. He was therefore rightly charged and convicted for his crimes.

It's unfortunate that further charges were not laid against him for his active involvement as a terrorist fighting on the side of the enemy "against" Canadian and Allied forces. Canada used to have such laws that would have resulted in him having additional charges for his crimes, along with possible treason charges.

I hope this letter clearly explains my position on this case.

Omar Khadr made his choice, and it was not to uphold freedom and democracy. He pleaded guilty and now is serving his time. It appears to me that justice has been done.

What do you think?

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CASINO VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!
On August 2 and 3, call Verna 780-479-8019

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Sponsored by the Norwood Neighbourhood Association whose vision is to support good projects and activities that benefit the neighbourhood.

For the communities of Alberta Avenue, Delton, Eastwood, Elmwood Park, Parkdale-Cromdale, Spruce Avenue and Westwood.

EVENTS

7-11 FROM 7 TO 11

"PARTY IN THE PARKING LOT"

Music | Dance | Hip Hop | Food | Workshops | Free evening of food, performances and workshops. Experience and enjoy! Saturday, August 16 from 7-11 pm (8933 118 Ave).

GAMES NIGHT HITS THE STREETS!

Bring a card table, lawn chairs and your favourite game to set up on a street corner. Tuesday, August 26 from 7-9 pm. Half price coffee from 7-9 pm at The Carrot (9351 118 Ave).

POETRY NIGHT AT THE CARROT

Thursday, August 28 from 7:30-9 pm The Carrot will host a poetry reading facilitated by Dahlia Ross (a poet with over 25 years of writing experience). Open to poets from across Edmonton. More info: carrotassist@gmail.com

MULTICULTURAL GATHERINGS

International food, music, dancing, singing and fun. Saturdays, 2-5 pm, September 20 Corn Festival at Action for Healthy Communities (#101, 10554 110 St). To register email: Yanyu@zhou@a4hc.ca or call 780.944.4687.

NOTICES

BRAZILIAN PERFORMANCE

Come to the Parkdale-Cromdale Community Hall (11335 85 St) to see free capoeira performances every Saturday from 1-2 pm! Capoeira is a mix of Brazilian martial arts, music, and dance. More info: www.capoeiraacademy.ca

THE CARROT STAGE

9351 118 Avenue, 780.471.1580 www.thecarrot.ca
Fridays: Live music starts at 7:30 pm. Check website for line up. \$5 cover, all ages welcome.
Saturdays: Open mic 7 -9:30 pm. Share original music, poetry or comedy. Free admission for all ages. \$1.25 minimum food charge.

THE SAFEWAY WALK FOR MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY

Encourage your friends, family and coworkers to sponsor your walk as

you raise funds and awareness to help enhance the lives of Canadians living with a neuromuscular disorder. Saturday, Sept 6, from 10am-2pm at Gold Bar Park (10955 50 St). More info: Rachael Chan, 780.489.6322 x5104, or rachael.chan@muscle.ca www.walkformuscular dystrophy.ca

RECYCLE YOUR COMPUTER ITEMS

The Electronic Recycling Association will refurbish used computers and IT equipment and donate to non-profit organizations. More info: www.era.ca

PROGRAMS/CLASSES

COMMUNITY ART NIGHT

Dive into the wonderful world of art this summer with free all ages workshops. Every Thursday from 6:30-8 pm at Parkdale-Cromdale Community Hall (11335 85 St). More info: www.parkdalecromdale.org

COLLECTIVE KITCHEN

Cook with friends, try new recipes, help your food budget at PrayerWorks Collective Kitchen. Second Wednesday of each month, 5:30-8 pm, St. Faith / St. Stephen Anglican Church (11725 93 St). Cost is \$3 for one serving of each of 4 different meals. For info, please call Trish at 780.464.5444.

TODDLER TUMBLE BABY BOUNCE

(by Bent Arrow Parent Link Assoc.) All young parents or grandparents may bring pre-school aged children for gym play time on kid-friendly equipment followed by our Little Peoples Lunch. Tuesdays from 11:30 am-12:45 pm at Crystal Kids (8718 118 Ave).

IMPROVE YOUR ENGLISH

ECALA English for Community Integration offers free Parent-Tot English classes. Bring along your little ones and learn basic English skills for everyday situations. Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9-11 am at Parkdale-Cromdale Community Hall (11335 85 St). More info: Sarah at 780.887.6825.

FREE MUSIC LESSONS BY CREART!

Every Saturday at Parkdale-Cromdale Community Hall (11335 85 St) free group lessons for league members. Singing lessons from 9-10 am and

Guitar lessons from 10 am-12 pm. Play and meet others. More info: createdmonton@hotmail.com or call 780.878.8265.

SAA MEETINGS AND FELLOWSHIP

Big Book Study sponsored by Sex Addicts Anonymous. Everybody welcome. Meeting info: call 587.921.1397, text 780.394.3709, or email recovery4wolf@gmail.com.

ALATEEN MEETINGS

Help for young people whose parent, relative or friend is a problem drinker. Saturdays at 10 am at 11107 129 St (backdoor, downstairs). More info: call 1.866.322.6902 or Google alateen edmonton. Al-Anon and Alcoholics Anonymous meet at the same time, in the same building. Help and hope for the whole family.

JUST FOR TODAY AFG

Are you troubled by someone's drinking? Al-Anon meeting, Mondays at 10 am at St. Stephen Anglican Church (11725 93 St). Entrance is at back door by handicap access. For more information, phone: 1.888.322.6902.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

NFB FILM CLUB

Saturday, August 16, 1:30 pm at the Sprucewood Library (11555 95 St).

PRAYERWORKS COMMON

Hot complimentary meals and warm friendship at St. Faith/St. Stephen (11725 93 St). Every Thursday lunch 10 am-2 pm. Every Friday supper 5-8 pm with MusicJam on the third Friday. Saturday breakfast 8:30-9:30 am.

FAMILY MUSIC POTLUCK NIGHT

Join us on Friday, August 29 from 7-11 pm at the Parkdale-Cromdale Community Hall (11335 85 St) for our monthly family friendly arts party and potluck. Enjoy live professional and emerging musicians or take part in the open mic.

FAMILY STORYTIME

Share stories, songs and games for the whole family. Sundays from 2:30-3 pm at Sprucewood Library (11555 95 St). More info: 780.496.7099.

BABES IN ARMS

A casual parent group every Friday from 10 am to noon at The Carrot (9351 118 Ave).

TEEN GAMING

Come to the library to play some great games! For ages 12-17. Thursdays from 6:30-8:30 pm. Sprucewood Library (11555 95 St). More info: 780.496.7099.

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SENIORS BREAKFAST AND SOCIAL

All seniors 55+ are welcome to join us for breakfast, then stay for a visit, play some cards or billiards and if you like, you can watch a movie! Wednesdays from 11:30 am-12:45 pm at Crystal Kids Youth Centre (8715 118 Ave).

SPORTS/REC

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Use any of the amenities at the rec centre on Saturdays from 5-7 pm with your community league membership. FACILITY IS CLOSED FROM JULY 26 TO AUGUST 18.

FREE SPORTS EQUIPMENT

All kinds of sports equipment to kids in need, including hockey, skates, bicycles, soccer, softball, rollerblades, racquets, snow sliders and more. More info at 780.477.1166 or www.sportscentral.org. Also accept donations of gently used sports gear.

VOLUNTEER

SPRUCE AVENUE CASINO

Volunteers needed to work the casino August 2 and 3 at the Bacarrat. Call Verna at 780.479.8019.

PARKDALE/CROMDALE CASINO

Volunteers needed to work the casino August 3 and 4 at Century Casino. Call Margaret at 780.479.8134.

KALEIDO VOLUNTEER FUN AND SOCIAL NITE

August 19 from 6-8 pm at the Alberta Avenue Community Centre (9210 118 Ave). Dinner and fun provided! Participants will get a sneak peek at this year's festival, meet other people involved in the Kaleido Festival, and have a chance to apply to become part of the Kaleido volunteer team. More info and RSVP to kaleidovolunteers@gmail.com

NOMINATE AN OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER

The search is on for Alberta's outstanding volunteers as nominations for the Stars of Alberta Volunteer Awards are now open. From students to seniors, volunteers are the backbone of our communities and you can help to recognize their selfless generosity. Think about those remarkable people who are making a difference in your community through their volunteer service. Now consider putting their names forward for the 2014 Stars of Alberta Volunteer Awards! Six awards, two each for youth, adult and seniors, are presented annually on December 5, International Volunteer Day. For more info, please visit www.culture.alberta.ca/voluntarysector/stars. The deadline for nominations is Monday, September 15, 2014.

VOLUNTEER AT THE CARROT

Daytime and evening shifts at the Carrot need volunteers. More: carrotassist@gmail.com

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9:30 am - High Mass
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St. Faith: 780.477.5931

Sunday Worship:

11:00 am - Sunday Worship
1st Sunday - Worship in the Common
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4:00 pm - Mass, Sunday, Eritrean Catholic Community

English Classes and Collective Kitchen (Seasonal - call for more info.)

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AVENUE GOES TO THE DOGS



Dogs and their people played musical mats at the 2014 Avenue Goes to the Dogs festival. >> REBECCA LIPPIATT

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THAN **K** YOU

Beyond the robots, rides, music and scorpion pizza, we're always going to remember K-Days 2014 as the year our volunteers and guests truly stepped up and made this 10-day fair Edmonton's hottest summer destination. Thanks for playing such a big role in its success!

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