

# RAT CREEK PRESS

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## 'Tis the season for Yule Ave's holiday joy

Annual event encourages people to create memories with loved ones



It's the seventh year of Yule Ave. | Supplied

### TALEA MEDYNSKI

Yule Ave's focus is simple: spend time with loved ones rather than buy them gifts. It's been a successful formula, with this holiday event celebrating its seventh year on Dec. 15-16.

"I love it so much," said Frank Zotter, creator of Yule Ave. "It's creating that bonding time for families. It's so rewarding to watch. The joy that comes from it is priceless."

As usual, Yule Ave will have a theatrical component. This year, the play is called *Enchanting Antlers*. It's a play so new that Jennifer Spencer, the playwright, was still in the process of writing it in November, although she thought about the play for a long time before she had the opportunity to write it for Yule Ave.

"The story will be for the whole family and will be about stories of ungulates from around the world hosted by me, Elk. I will be playing an elk, from my winter wallow, telling stories from the great and glorious history of antlers from around the world," said Spencer. "I am

hoping to blend education with fun."

The Usha Gupta Dance Entourage, a South Asian dance group, will also perform the Deer Dance during the Sunday performance. Spencer said she was inspired to contact the group after she watched them perform this summer. The dancers were little girls wearing antlers and South Asian regalia.

"I want to see if I can blend Eastern and Western storytelling," she said. "I'm using antlers and winter as a framing reference."

The play is expected to be 30 to 45 minutes long and will be staged at the Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts on Dec. 15-16.

And Yule Ave will still have a free holiday supper on Dec. 15, but instead of the usual chili, people can look forward to a traditional holiday dinner of turkey, gravy, stuffing, and mashed potatoes.

Virginia Potkins, the supper organizer, had originally wanted to make a Christmas meal for area residents who didn't have any place

to go to for the holidays or who didn't have the money to cook a holiday meal.

"A lot of people in our neighbourhood are the working poor," she said. "I have volunteered at Sacred Heart and have met so many people where it's the only Christmas dinner they have. I hate for someone to be alone."

But then the opportunity came up to make the holiday meal for Yule Ave.

"Of course I had to say yes," said Potkins.

Potkins is planning for 100 people to attend, and is seeking donations of turkeys, potatoes, mixed vegetables, salad, dessert, and disposable plates and cutlery. She would also love some volunteers to help serve the dinner.

The supper is open to anyone who wants to attend.

"You can have a good dinner and create some memories with your family and meet some people from the community. Get in the Christmas spirit," said Potkins.

Look for the updated

schedule on [yuleave.com](http://yuleave.com). *Talea is the Rat Creek Press editor. She loves sharing the stories of our diverse neighbourhoods.*



**YULE AVE**  
Dec. 15-16  
Dinner: Dec. 15 at 6 pm at Alberta Avenue Community Hall (9210 118 Ave)  
Enchanting Antlers  
Dec. 15, 3 pm at Alberta Ave Hall  
Dec. 16, 3 pm at Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts (9225 118 Ave)  
Lighting of Giving Tree:  
Dec. 15, 8:30 pm  
Concert: Dec. 15, 7 pm

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# A collective effort created a unique building

Newly renovated building is now ready to be leased

## TALEA MEDYNSKI

A year made a huge difference in the lives of three McCauley friends when they bought the former Blue Cross Animal Hospital building on 97 Street at 111 Avenue.

It all started when one of the friends, Marshall Hopkins, wanted to start his own law firm. Anna Bubel, a community development consultant, was walking down 97 Street when she saw the building.

"We took a big risk and cashed in our RRSPs and used our inheritances," said Bubel.

The result is a fully renovated building with a historical designation. The architecture and design is art deco, popular from the 1920s to the late '30s.

"We have so few historical buildings and it's a rare example of art deco commercial," said Bubel. She explained the exterior of the building was art deco, while the interior was quite utilitarian.

The Blue Cross Animal Hospital was built in 1948. Up until Bubel and her friends bought it, the building was used by the veterinary clinic. The veterinary clinic is still in the

neighbourhood, but just down the street in a new building at 111 Avenue and 91 Street.

The renovations were a story in itself. The partners bought the building in January and completed renovations by August.

"I drive a hard ship," laughed Bubel. "I was there everyday. We worked hard."

The partners chose to use a social enterprise model, meaning they used local resources to complete the renovations, such as Bissell Centre's casual labour and workers from the refugee network, along with local tradespeople.

The renovations were challenging: asbestos remediation was required and they had to gut the entire building after they thought they could salvage the electrical and heater, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems.

"If you're doing renos, assume you can save nothing," advised Bubel.

During the renovations, Bubel said, "I looked at a ton of art deco books. We deliberately put in glass bricks, curved walls. It [the vet clinic] was as institutional a place as you can

imagine."

They kept the fireplace and the chimney, along with the original flooring in Hopkins' law firm. They also had to level the floor, which was out anywhere from one-eighth of an inch to an inch.

While the renovations were challenging, Bubel said it was also fun.

"I spent part of everyday treasure hunting," she said. "The light fixtures came from Ontario out of old community halls. The door [a sort of clear stained glass] was from Kijiji."

Along the way, the workers gave great ideas. Mazen Hasni, a refugee from Syria, worked on the tile floors and suggested incorporating feature tile settings to make it more interesting because it's common to do so in Syria. Lenny, a worker from Bissell Centre's casual labour pool, helped her create the curved walls.

Bubel also wanted a decorative, inverted triangle trim around the doors, a very art deco feature. With the help of Geoff John-West, a local resident who renovates historical houses, they figured out how to do it.

Bubel said the experience was a great way to empower people. And although Bubel works as a social enterprise consultant, she said there's a big difference between advising people and actually practicing it.

"Do you put down your hammer and drive one of your workers to a job interview?" asked Bubel. One employee had to get all of his teeth pulled, and another employee didn't have a bank account, so she withdrew the money for him. "I was very proud of the fact that we paid a living wage, \$17 an hour to start."

The result is a unique and beautiful commercial building. While walking through the building, one can imagine a noir film being set in this location. The colours are vibrant and true to the art deco period. The second floor has plenty of windows and is bathed in natural light. Every one of the six offices on the second floor has its own door, while the first floor is more of an open-space concept. Both floors have a kitchenette. In the summer, renters can use the rooftop patio. Parking is also available on a rental basis.

Two floors are available, and Bubel said she can envision a variety of businesses renting it, with anything from medical or psychological services to an IT or architectural business or even a co-working partnership between artists. The building is move-in ready and may be appealing to people who want to work closer to home and to those who want to work out of downtown.

Bubel said the experience was intense and exhausting, but she'd be willing to do it again, give advice to others, and host a show and tell for people who want to try something like this in their community. Those interested in contacting Bubel can do so by email at [azbubel@telus.net](mailto:azbubel@telus.net).

For information about leasing the offices, call Nora Lizotte at 780.499.9001 or email her at [nlizotte@lizotterealestate.com](mailto:nlizotte@lizotterealestate.com). See page 16 for ad.

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



Anna Bubel with her crew during renovations. Left to right: Anna Bubel, Yousef Farajallah, Geoff John-West, and Mazen Hosni. | Supplied



Anna Bubel found the light fixtures from old community halls in Ontario. | Nora Lizotte

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### ABOUT US

We are a non-profit community newspaper serving Alberta Avenue, Delton, Eastwood, Elmwood Park, Parkdale-Cromdale, Spruce Avenue, and Westwood. Published on Treaty 6 Territory. 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, Joe Wong, Patricia Dunnigan, Alita Rickards, Mariam Masud, Muriel Wright, Steven Townsend, Virginia Potkins and Sean MacQueen. The board may be contacted at [board@ratcreek.org](mailto:board@ratcreek.org).

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### 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.

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### CIRCULATION

Serving 12,500 community members.

### 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.

# Friends of the RCP

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## RCP annual meeting a huge success

Thank you to everyone who attended and supported the paper



The board, staff and Friends of RCP enjoyed a lovely dinner together catered by Caribbean's Finest Restaurant. Then we held our annual general meeting with 45 people in attendance. Welcome to our new board members: Mariam Masud, Muriel Wright, Steven Townsend, and Virginia Potkins.

Thank you to our departing board members: Nicole Malenczak, John Dunn, and Aydan Dunnigan-Vickruck.



# New mixed-housing apartments available

Norwood Family Apartments will help build a strong, diverse community

## TEKLA LUCHENSKI

On Nov. 15, Right at Home Housing held a well-attended Lunch & Learn Opportunity at its newest site at 9403 112 Ave. Pride of accomplishment was obvious for all involved in the project.

The 22-unit Norwood Family Apartments is the latest project from Right at Home Housing Society. Cam McDonald, executive director, explained the society has never received government fund-

ing in over 30 years of operation. For this project, a grant from Edmonton Community Foundation helped them secure a 40-year Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation-insured mortgage.

The apartment building is a mixed-market project. It will provide homes for low-income families and for professionals who work in the neighbourhood. Of the two and three bedroom units, 75 per cent will be available at lower market rates, and 25 per cent will be available at lower rent. Families with

lower incomes in this model will be given internal subsidies. No government funds will be necessary.

McDonald said the goal is to provide housing for “people who already live in the community, who would like to make a change to something they would prefer. The people here will be stable people who have gone through the system.” Jillanne Bowler-Veltman, communications and finance manager, added, “This will give people in the neighbourhood something to be proud of. It

adds a bit of shine.” Seniors who live in the neighbourhood and want to stay independent would do well, as would young families. The model aims to encourage diversity.

The brightly lit, spacious units feature vaulted ceilings and in-suite laundry. The bathrooms on the first-floor units are accessible and can be modified. The larger master bedrooms include walk-in closets and full ensuites. The building is accessible from the outside with generous patio space.

The energy-efficient building

boasts underground parking and storage units. The location is close to schools, public transit, a hospital, and many other amenities.

Norwood Family Apartments is an exciting addition to the Norwood community. Contact Right at Home for information, or to apply. Call 780.423.1339 or visit [rightathomehousing.com](http://rightathomehousing.com).

*Tekla is a freelance writer living in Parkdale.*



Norwood Family Apartments will enrich Norwood, aesthetically and practically. | Tekla Luchenski

# Swagat delivers delectable Indian cuisine

Enjoy delicious Indian food in a diner environment

## STEPHEN STRAND

In a tiny strip mall on 118 Avenue, nestled between the traffic circle on 101 Street and 97 Street, sits Swagat India Bar & Bistro. Orienting yourself to drive in the right direction in order to park in their small parking lot takes some effort, but the reward is worth it.

Once inside, the restaurant is divided into two. One side is a large dining room with bright orange booths that feels more like a diner than an Indian restaurant. The other side is a dimly lit dance floor set up with a PA (public address) system and flashing disco lights. One wall along the dance floor has mirrors and art deco lights, rather like an old discotheque.

But don't let slight difficulty getting into their parking lot or the odd division of the room deter you in any way. The smell alone of the Indian cuisine from outside the building causes the stomach to grumble.

Two of us went to Swagat, but once the food arrived, I could feel my inner selfishness arise—I did not wish to share. The smell was intriguing, and like Pavlov's dog, I began to salivate.

We ordered vegetable korma, butter chicken, mango chicken, and saffron rice. Each main dish came with a side of naan.

The butter chicken (\$13.99) was thick and creamy and spiced in such a way that it was both exactly what you'd expect, and much better. It was thick enough to stay on the

naan when scooped without too much sloughing off.

The mango chicken (\$12.99) was also thick and creamy and had a brilliant combination of sweet and spicy, with a subtle taste of ginger.

The chicken in both the butter chicken and the mango chicken was cut into perfect mouth-size pieces and absorbed the flavours of the sauces brilliantly.

For parents of picky eaters who refuse to eat their vegetables, take note of the vegetable korma (\$10.99). The creamy dish had a variety of vegetables and was filled with aromatic spices. It was sweet and enticing and complemented the saffron rice beautifully. With the flavours found in the korma, everyone at the table

will certainly be eating their daily recommended portions of vegetables.

The saffron rice (\$4.99) was a brilliant yellow and buttery. It was flavourful without being overbearing and was moist enough that I didn't have to reach for a drink every few bites.

The naan bread arrived hot and crispy on one side while soft and fluffy on the other, cooked to perfection. And when we pulled the naan bread apart, the steamy aroma shot its way into our olfactory receptors. Who knew naan could smell so good? The naan was served on checkered parchment paper in a red plastic pub basket, which added to the diner feel.

Our server was friendly and asked if we enjoyed the Nepalese music they were play-

ing, which we did. And when we asked about the dance floor, the server explained they host dance nights on Fridays and Saturdays, which could make for a great evening of overeating and then dancing the night away.

With Swagat being open 11 am to 11 pm Sunday through Thursday, and 11 am to 1 am on Friday and Saturday, there is no excuse to not eat good food. They even offer delivery to those who live nearby.

Five forks out of five.

*Stephen works in broadcasting and writes for fun. He can be seen walking through the neighbourhood with a bag covered in pins and filled with books and notepads.*



From left to right: Mango chicken, vegetable korma, and butter chicken. | Stephen Strand



From left to right: Mango chicken, saffron rice, and vegetable korma. | Stephen Strand

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# Winter brings slick and treacherous sidewalks

Clear your sidewalks to prevent injuries and fines

**RUSTI L LEHAY**

Ice cream. Ice rinks. Ice slides at the Deep Freeze Festival. Freezing rain on sidewalks and roads. Three of these four things belong in the fun category. Avoid the fourth: Icy sidewalks.

As homeowners or property managers, you can also avoid a \$100 fine and potentially the cost of snow and ice removal added to the property tax roll. Note the city bylaw, "A person shall maintain any sidewalk adjacent to land they own or occupy clear of all snow and ice."

Chantel Perizzolo, City coordinator, complaints and investigations, said, "We are a winter city and snowy sidewalks are everyone's responsibility. We rely on citizens to report unsafe conditions so bylaw can respond and ensure that the hazard is remedied."

Perizzolo said, "Citizens can report snow on sidewalks or unsafe walking conditions 48 hours after the last snowfall by calling 311, 24-hours/day." The two-day span allows people time to clear sidewalks, though you are expected to clear walks during snowfalls.

"Edmontonians can experience heavy snowfall one day, freezing rain the next, and above-average sunny days," Perizzolo added. This fluctuation in weather has a huge impact on walking conditions for everyone—with or without mobility issues.

Christy Morin, executive director of Arts on the Avenue, left her house one morning during a "beautiful fall weather stretch, but a freezing overnight drizzle coated the sidewalks. I had a horrid fall. The snow had been removed, but I slipped on a shiny thin sheath of ice, braced, fell and cracked my

ankle in two spots." Sitting in a car a few feet away, her friend didn't see Morin fall. The resulting broken ankle required two surgeries involving steel plates and screws, then six weeks of no pressure or walking and six months of recovery.

When looking at her oddly bent ankle, 90 degrees off normal, Morin remembered thinking, "It didn't look right, so I took it with both hands and set it to the correct angle." She was so hot, she put her head on the sidewalk and felt "so grateful it was cold. I realized I was in shock." She used her phone to call her friend.

"Between October 2017 to March of 2018, there were 10,609 complaints received/investigated and only 332 reported falls/slips," said Perizzolo. Many falls or slips go unreported.

Jane Nagel, area resident, said, "I fell in January on Jasper Ave

and broke my elbow." Falls on ice have caused fractured wrists, serious concussions, broken tailbones, and more.

Morin was lucky to get both a bed and surgery the next day with an ankle specialist. "One minute you are normal. Then you are not. You learn how every day is special and how anything can change in a moment. One hundred years ago, I would have ended up a cripple."

Elizabeth Petry, local apartment owner, said, "When you fall on ice, you are looking at the sky so fast, you can't believe how you got there."

For Morin, four years still feels like yesterday. "Ice melt is not enough. You need to spread pea gravel and sand, too."

Petry trains her resident managers, "Ice melt only works at temperatures near freezing." Cleared sidewalks are ideal.

Perizzolo said, "In freeze-thaw situations where hard-

packed snow and ice cannot be removed, sand may be used as a temporary measure to keep sidewalks slip resistant until it can be cleared to the pavement."

Do not wait to report problematic walkways, especially on vacant properties. Report icy and uncleared sidewalks by calling 311, emailing 311@edmonton.ca, or downloading the app on your phone. Visit edmonton.ca/snowremoval for more information.

*A member of the Professional Writers Association of Canada since 2003, Rusti has been writing professionally since 1999. Her favourite word activity is immersion editing with memoir writers.*



Be sure to shovel snow and clear any ice to prevent fines and injuries. | Rusti Leahay

## Janis Irwin

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**About JANIS**

**Fighting for families in Highlands-Norwood**

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## OPINION

# A dozen years to stop a global disaster

Climate change's long-term effects will soon be irreversible

**AYDAN DUNNIGAN-VICKRUCK**

"Everyone complains about the weather, but no one does anything about it." We used to laugh at this well-known quip from Mark Twain. Sure, everyone complained, but it was assumed that there was nothing that we could do about the weather.

How times have changed. We have come to a point in our history where we not only can change the weather but we are also compelled to do so to ensure our own survival and that of most of life on the planet.

In October of this year, the United Nations dropped a bombshell. Commissioned in 2016 by the Paris Summit on Climate Change, the world's leading climate scientists compiled a comprehensive report on the state of the environment. The result of this report is that there is only a dozen years for global warming to be checked at a maximum of 1.5 C. If we miss this target

we risk catastrophic climate destabilization, including floods, droughts, temperature extremes, fires, and potentially the loss of hundreds of millions of lives.

None of this is news. Most of this science has been known for the last 40 years. Nonetheless, our carbon footprint continues to grow, accompanied by the forecasted environmental effects.

The gauntlet has been dropped. Twelve years is not a long time. We can no longer think in terms of preserving the status quo or making economic choices because they increase Gross National Product. Every lifestyle option now has to be evaluated in terms of how it will support life on this planet long term.

Change will happen. It is no longer business as usual. We are at the rarest of pivotal moments where we can actually direct change. If we do not choose, it will be chosen for us and it will be the worst of possible outcomes.

**Keeping it simple: an action plan.**

**Think:**

Factor in carbon footprint when you make decisions: how you vote, how you shop, what car you buy, what trips you take.

It is time to give our collective heads a shake. Climate change is real. Ignoring the issue won't make it go away.

Examine your values. Envision what a sustainable lifestyle would look like.

We have grown up with the ideal that more is better, that the goal of life is to accumulate things, that our identity and happiness are invested in our possessions. This is not sustainable.

**Walk:**

Get outdoors. Walk. Hug a tree. Plant a garden. Shovel a sidewalk. Get your feet moving. Cycle.

Statistics say that the average person spends less than 10 minutes a day outside. (Driving around in a vehicle doesn't count.) If climate change doesn't feel real, it is because

we invest our time and money in thermostatically controlled environments and trips to the tropics during the brutally cold months. We need to actually feel the breeze on our faces, inhale fresh unfiltered air, listen to the sounds of birds, feel the grass beneath our feet. Virtual reality is not reality.

**Act:**

Reduce your footprint. Go solar, go green, buy local, cycle, ride the bus. Get off the couch.

Life is not a spectator sport. We cannot watch disinterestedly from the sidelines. We need to become actively engaged in fashioning our future. As Gandhi said, we need to be the change we want to see in the world.

We need to make difficult choices that push us outside our comfort zone, unselfish choices which put the planet ahead of our individual entertainment. This goes far beyond changing our light bulbs to LED. This affects where we live and how we live on virtually every level.

**Stay positive.**

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." - Margaret Mead.

We can do this. The technology is already in place and it gets cheaper and simpler as each day goes by. It just takes collective will.

This is a group effort, actually worldwide. What happens in the Middle East or Africa affects us in North America and vice versa. We cannot solve this problem alone.

The good news is that this crisis has the potential to unite us as a species and put an end to those disruptive practices of greed and hate. Again from Gandhi, "There are enough resources in this world for everyone's need, but not enough for everyone's greed."

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



One solution of combating climate change is to use technology like solar panels. | Affordable Green Sun Solar



Spending time outdoors puts people in closer contact with nature. | Aydan Dunnigan-Vickruck



## SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM NOLAN DRUGS

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# Tish Prouse runs for Highlands-Norwood

Eastwood league's past president seeks provincial solutions to city issues

**NADINE RIOPEL**

Tish Prouse, one of Eastwood's own, is running in the upcoming provincial election as the Highlands-Norwood candidate for the Alberta Party.

Prouse is an archeologist by training who worked at UNESCO World Heritage Sites around the globe. Today, he works in forklift sales, calls the Eastwood neighbourhood home with his wife and son, and owns several properties in the area. He specializes in buying, renovating, maintaining, and owning older structures that aren't heritage buildings yet, but have the potential to be.

He discusses the importance of strong community, without which he says we are at risk of creating ghettos.

His roots in the community include being past president of

Eastwood Community League, having been approached to take on the role at a time when the league was in danger of going under. Prouse and his fellow board members restructured and systematized league operations before handing it off to a new board. Today, the league is in the black with 150 members and several successful programs.

After campaigning twice municipally, he decided to enter the provincial race because many of the issues that most interested him on a city level, such as homelessness and small business development, have a strong provincial component. He realized that the solutions he wants to bring about might be best approached from a provincial standpoint.

"The things I represent are not often represented in the province," he said, citing as an example his ideas on combating

homelessness. "Neither of the two dominant parties in this province have a plan on how to house long-term hard-to-house and homeless people."

Prouse proposes an approach that focuses less on constructing more buildings. Instead, he advocates investing more in support workers, as well as incentivizing and overseeing landlords to not only house people, but also to provide quality service and maintenance.

He explained improving economic options and services like high-speed Internet in rural areas could help people who want to stay in those communities do so, rather than moving to the city; this would reduce demand for services in the larger centres.

This might include such initiatives as decentralizing health services, co-ordinating existing infrastructure resources for

more sustainable long-term output, and building a rail line to better connect rural areas.

Prouse said he believes his party appeals to a voter who, "... recognizes that problems that are meant to be solved by government are not simple...It is acceptable to disagree and put forward different ideas."

In his view, input from everyone is needed, as well as working with everyone respectfully to develop collaborative solutions. He also argues that more experience and expertise is needed in government, and that the Alberta Party brings that.

"The reason why things are on their head is that there is a massive sense of amateurism such that we are in a situation of debt that threatens programs... Our party has absolutely the ability to take what everybody does want and make it a reality."

As for his vision for the riding: "I have an interest in making my community more viable, more safe, and more sustainable." He cites a vibrant arts scene and safe, secure schools as part of what he'd like to bring about through provincial policy.

Finally, the candidate has a request for the residents of Highlands-Norwood: "I would love it if people would call or email with any questions about why I'm doing this. Even people who are adamantly not supporting me. I want to have those conversations."

Reach Prouse through email at [tish.prouse@albertaparty.ca](mailto:tish.prouse@albertaparty.ca).

*Nadine is a professional facilitator and connector. She is also an enthusiastic member of the Spruce Avenue community, where she lives with her husband and young son.*



Alberta Party members, left to right: Stephen Mandel (party leader), Tish Prouse, Diana Ly (Edmonton-Goldbar candidate), Bob Philp (Edmonton-City Centre candidate), and Ali Haymour (Edmonton-Decore candidate). | Supplied

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# Enjoying the holidays and winter months

What we do to keep warm and happy during the winter

## RCP CONTRIBUTORS

**Our winter is enough to make the stoutest soul get restless during those long, cold months. Sometimes the best cure is to get out of the house and spend time with others.**

**This December, Rat Creek Press contributors share their ideas for getting together with friends and family during the winter and the holidays.**

We have a few different traditions with a few different people depending on our connection. For example, we attend the pantomime show at Fort Edmonton Park with my husband's British parents, as pantomimes are a winter tradition in the U.K.

But my favourite thing we do is our annual holiday open house. We know that people have a lot going on at that time of year, so we keep it casual and flexible. No RSVPs or formal structure. We just put out some food and open our doors to friends, family, and neighbours for a few hours on a weekend each December. We sometimes arrange an activity, like cookie decorating, for people to engage in if they don't feel like mingling. People can stay for as long or as short a time as works for them. Every

year, I worry that no one will show up but every year, we end up with a packed house! It's great.

Nadine Riopel

With my family and friends, sometimes a games night is just the thing. We often play card games or Jackbox, which has quite a few online games and are a lot of fun. Or we gather to watch a movie at home or in the theatre. For one-on-one visiting, my friends and I like to stop by cafes and visit over a hot chocolate, coffee, or tea.

For outdoor activities, my boyfriend and I like to get outside and snowshoe when there's enough snow.

Christmas, of course, is special and we spend Christmas Eve and Christmas Day feasting and visiting with family.

Talea Medynski

My ex and I agreed to alternate years for Christmas holidays with our children; when I have Christmas, he has New Year's, and so on. 2018 is my year.

I have mixed feelings about Christmas. I worry about creating good memories and feelings when it is a struggle for me to make ends meet. I have no relatives in Edmonton or nearby. We work it out, though, and no matter how much I worry, on the day, the kids always seem happy.

We have an Advent calendar made of baby socks and a metallic ornament tree. The girls alternate "sock day" throughout Advent. The sock has a small gift in it. The year my mother was in palliative care, I spent a lot of time going back and forth to Toronto. I couldn't be with them, and money was tight. Instead of a gift, I wrote a haiku clue for each day. The puzzle was to guess what their Christmas gift was. They had fun leading up to the Christmas Eve reveal: I was taking them to Fantasyland Hotel at the mall for the waterpark and shopping with their Christmas money (from relatives). It was a good year, even in a difficult time.

Tekla Luchenski

I have a group of friends scattered all around the world. We make sure to keep in touch online, and we're all incredibly close. A few years ago, we started a "secret gifts" tradition where we randomly draw names, sending a small gift and a card to our assigned person. It's a great reminder that we all have very different day-to-day lives, and gives us a chance to connect in a different way than we usually do. Plus, I've gotten some really cool gifts and it allows me to support local artists by making sure that their pieces are seen somewhere like India or the Netherlands.

Franki Harrogate

My favourite Christmas event while growing up was the tree decorating party. Everyone was either to bring a decoration or make a decoration. There was no pressure to do anything other than visit and be crafty. After the decorations were done, we would visit and string popcorn for the tree.

With my own children, decorating the tree is still one of my favourite parts of Christmas. I didn't get a real tree until they were about four and five. We went to Ikea, and somehow got a seven-foot tree into our car. The bottom was cut crooked and I had to straighten it. I still have that tree cookie from our first year. My elder son had several lovely ornaments he'd been gifted as a baby (winter baby), but my younger son only had one (summer baby). That first year, he dropped it and was devastated. I managed to glue it back together with a hot glue gun. Now, it's all bumpy and lumpy, but every year it gets hung on the tree, and is even more precious than when it was perfect. Every year I get a new ornament for them, based on something that happened in our lives, and we tell the stories as we decorate the tree. It's a time of bonding, storytelling, and affirmation of each individual in our family.

Rebecca Lippiatt



Playing games with friends can be just the thing to do on a cold winter's night. | Pixabay



Nadine Riopel includes activities like cookie decorating at her and her husband's open house. | Pixabay



Franki Harrogate started a "secret gifts" tradition with friends. | Pixabay

# ‘Tis the season to be jolly, but I’m lonely

Is your spirit cheerful or fearful this holiday season?

**NAZREENA ANWAR-TRAVAS**

Many newcomers to Canada describe their first Christmas as fairly eventful. It’s the time of the year where many people rejoice, but it’s also that time when, for the less fortunate, loneliness and depression hit a crescendo and they are painfully made aware of the disparity between their lives and the lives of others who seem to have all the joy in the world. For the jobless, life can seem even more bleak as it’s just not the weather that is freezing; the job market seems to be on a freeze, too. And for those with survival jobs, the financial limitations of not being able to afford what they want takes a toll.

I was one of those who felt

Christmas belonged to everyone else except me. Who was the Grinch who stole my Christmas? The newcomer in me was the Grinch.

The Christmas of 2012 was one of the most wretched phases of my life. It was the season to be jolly, except that I didn’t feel jolly. Every time I heard someone talking of family or gifts, I wanted to burst into tears. Everyone was excited and spoke about holiday plans or cookies and chocolate. Except me. My marriage of 14 years had crumbled. I had practically no family in Canada. And I was jobless. I remember how I walked aimlessly through crowded malls with an empty mind and a lonely heart. The moment I reached my tiny

basement room, I cried out loud and stared wistfully at the walls. Needless to say, it was the worst Christmas ever.

By Christmas evening, I had enough of crying. I looked at myself in the mirror. Immigrating to Canada and my current state of affairs were the results of choices I made. Nobody had forced me into making those choices. It was time I firmly stood up to the reality of those choices. I wiped away my tears, mentally resolving to never feel lonely. I was going to become my own best friend.

On Boxing Day, I went to Value Village and came home with a Casio keyboard and some yarn. By New Year’s Eve, I had crocheted two dishcloths,

was starting to crochet my first shawl, and had learned to play basic piano. (God bless YouTube!) Above all, I was a more determined and focused person with a strong resolution to never bring myself onto the verge of depression.

Now, not everyone has a pet project to work on. But there are ways to light up your soul, however dark and hopeless it may seem. If you feel lonely this Christmas, stop. Don’t let the words “low income” or “second-hand” intimidate you. Treat yourself to niceties. Think of the clothing in second-hand stores as items given by well-wishing brothers and sisters in Canada.

Don’t let your faith stand in the way of festivity. Being

happy and joyful doesn’t need a reason. Think of what you want to accomplish the following year. Draw up a New Year’s resolution list! Be determined to check off most of the items in your list.

So, if you feel a tear popping up, replace it with a cheer. As that old 1936 cartoon film says, “After all, Christmas comes but once a year!”

*Writing has always been Nazreena’s biggest passion besides crocheting and breeding budgies. Having changed nine schools as a child in different countries, cultural tolerance and flexibility to adapt to diverse environments come naturally to her.*



Many newcomers experience a blue Christmas. Contrary to the festive atmosphere, a period of depression can set in, coupled with feelings of homesickness and the woes of unemployment. | Nazreena Anwar-Travas





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# New resident elected league vice president

Donna Yateman plans to share her passion for intergenerational ties

**KATE WILSON**

A room full of youth and seniors collaborating on a project is a gratifying scene for Donna Yateman, who just made Eastwood her home this spring.

“Making a strong connection between the seniors in our community and the youth is a very big interest I have,” said Yateman, after accepting the role of vice president for Eastwood Community League. “One of my big passions is bringing generations together.”

Elected to the position in early November, Yateman has ideas to not only create intergenerational bonds, but also forge neighbourhood connections around themes such as nutrition.

“I love meeting people, bring-

ing people together with food,” she said of her new role in the community. “It would be great to see more short-term programming at the community centre, like kids programs, cooking classes.”

Yateman’s first volunteer position as a young girl was in recreation at a seniors facility, where she did what she could to enhance residents’ social interactions.

She was also leader of a church youth group for about five years, where she “spent countless hours organizing fundraisers in the community, having fun days, putting on Christmas plays.”

It was just a matter of synergy to bring the two demographics together.

“I would bring the youth to the seniors centre, perform

masses together, sing Christmas carols,” she reminisced.

After all that volunteerism, it was a natural step for Yateman to enroll in a recreation and leisure services program in college, and later to join the school council during her son’s elementary years.

She’s been a welder, pipefitter, and quality control specialist in the oil and gas industry since returning to Alberta from Ontario at the end of 2002. She’s now ready to pick up where she left off in her volunteerism.

“I’ve not been part of any volunteering since coming back to Alberta. I went straight into oil and gas work, and with the amount of hours, you get wrapped up in your job,” she reflected. “When I slowed down, I really noticed I was

missing that part of my life.”

She attended the Eastwood Community League annual general meeting on Nov. 7 to do more than learn about programming in her new neighbourhood.

“I knew I wanted to be part of the community, to volunteer,” said Yateman. “I want to . . . have an impact as close to my community as possible.”

As for a longer-term vision, she sees potential for establishing connections between university recreation students and the Eastwood Community Centre, with a focus on youth.

“A youth council would be amazing. I would like to see a strong connection established with schools in the area.”

In her new community, Yateman appreciates walking along the pedestrian-friendly,

tree-lined streets. She grew up in the Londonderry area, and recalls visiting her aunt and uncle who lived within a few blocks of Eastwood. Her cousin still lives in the neighbourhood.

“As a teenager in Edmonton, I had family in this area and as such spent a great deal of time in the Alberta Avenue area,” she recalled. “The tree-lined streets are breathtaking in every season. There is so much character and green space. I am in love!”

*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.*



Donna Yateman is the new vice president of Eastwood Community League. | Kate Wilson

# CHRISTMAS

# Party

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# Paddle on the North Saskatchewan River

## Local boat builder brings Newfoundland-style dories to Edmonton

ADAM MILLIE

Paul Winter has always felt drawn to the water and this attraction has led to a unique business in landlocked Alberta: building and renting traditional wooden Newfoundland-style dories.

This summer, he will rent dories to paddlers on the North Saskatchewan River. He spent 300 hours building one. It's a traditional boat from the 1800s, made out of Douglas fir and spruce. This rowboat has been scaled down from an ocean-faring Newfoundland dory to a smaller and more maneuverable size, better suited to a weekend river float. So far, he's com-

pleted one, has almost finished building another, and intends to build yet another one before spring.

The Alberta Avenue resident is from Corner Brook, Newfoundland, but he has been living in Alberta for nearly 15 years. He has worked his way up on the rigs, and is a Class 3 cement truck driver, but now he is pursuing what he truly loves. He describes his hand-made boat:

"This is a banker dory [and is] what they use to fish off the grand banks of Newfoundland and the east coast of Nova Scotia. They stack together, they go on a schooner's deck, and when they're done at the end of the day, they take the seats

out and stack them all together. So you stack them eight to 10 high on a deck and then strap them down. Two guys would take one; they would be 18 feet long. This is shrunk down to make it easier to handle on the river. So [it's] a 14 foot six inch boat modeled after an 18 foot six inch boat."

He's named the boat Rob Roy, after Newfoundland master boat builder Roy Dennis. He fesses up to...ahem...robbing Roy's design, and created this cheeky name to honour the master boat builder.

It's easy to see that Winter has imbued the wooden dory with plenty of handbuilt quality and craftsmanship. He's been building boats all his life, and tells me

that he built his first one at age 11 in his father's basement. His expert woodworking skills are on display in this boat.

"All my life, I've been attracted to water like a moth is to a lightbulb, I can't fight it, I'm sick of fighting it, I've just got to accept it," Winter said. "The dory is my favourite way to have fun. It's one of these with a pair of oars and they're just really stable and really fun [and] most of all, every time I cross the river I cross the bridge and just say, 'It's a perfect fit, you know.' That's what I want to do, I want to rent it out for the river."

The name of Winter's business is L. A. Dorries. "L.A. is slang for a town called Lark Harbour [pronounced Lark

'Aarbour]. They build the best dories, there's a man there, Mr. Childs, and he builds the best dories, and I'm sure on the East Coast of Canada."

Renters must sign a waiver. "Once you rent the boat, you're the captain of the boat and you're responsible for the boat."

One dory will hold up to three adults.

Deposits are taken on credit card. Rental is \$130 including drop-off at Devon and pick up at 50 Street.

To rent this dory, call Paul Winter at 587.785.3679.

*Adam lives in Alberta Avenue. He wants to make the world a better place.*



Paul Winter displays his handmade dorie. | Adam Millie

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# Surviving and thriving in a Canadian winter

Proper clothing is essential to safely enjoying winter activities

**AMANDA SOKAL**

Canada is known for many things: our politeness, our beautiful scenery...and our cold weather. According to the Magical Planet website, Canada ranks as the fifth coldest country in the world, with average winter daily temperatures ranging from -15 to -20 C and extremes of -40 C before wind chill.

Extreme temperatures are not uncommon here and exposed skin will freeze in as little as 10 minutes in temperatures of -28 C and below, according to Environment Canada. Knowing how to safely dress can quite literally be a matter of life and death.

Surprisingly, the best way to stay warm is not with a big, bulky, heavy jacket. In fact, layers are the best and most efficient way of keeping warm. In a 2013 CBC article, Eric Clifford, Mountain Equipment Co-op's outreach coordinator gave advice on layering. Nina

Arcon from nextstopcanada.ca also noted how to layer.

Arcon suggested wearing three layers, with the first layer next to your skin being a thin, moisture-repelling fabric such as silk, nylon, or polyester. According to the Mayo Clinic, cotton fabrics should be avoided, as they can absorb up to 27 times their weight in water. This means that not only do they take forever to dry, but they can make you colder (www.gizmodo.com). Examples of a good first layer are leggings or long underwear and a turtleneck.

Next is your insulating layer. This is where you want some of your bulk, but take care not to over-layer. Layers are designed to trap air and keep you warm. Too many layers or worse, layers that are too heavy, can cause you to sweat, drawing heat away from your body and lowering your core temperature. This layer could consist of a warm sweater and sweatpants. Avoid jeans if possible, as denim is made from

cotton, which does not repel wind and therefore will not be effective in keeping you warm.

The third layer will protect you from the elements, so use waterproof or windproof materials. Clifford recommended not relying on the manufacturer's temperature ratings, as they can be subjective. Your best bet is to speak to a sales associate and describe your expected outdoor activities. Sedentary activity means creating less blood flow, so you may need heavier clothing. If you're more active, wear thinner layered clothing that regulates body temperature to stay warm.

Clifford also suggested covering your head, hands, ears, and feet. He said earmuffs are good and mitts are warmer than gloves. And don't forget your feet! Look for waterproof shoes or shoes with a Gore-Tex waterproof membrane.

Keeping warm starts from the inside out. Be sure to have a hearty breakfast if you plan to be out and active in the cold. According to Clifford,

"If you're eating, it helps get your metabolism going and it helps keep your heat going. Not eating enough if you're feeling under the weather can also make your condition worse and even more susceptible to the cold."

It's not just the average person who needs to take care in these frigid temperatures. The homeless are especially vulnerable when the temperatures drop. A lot of shelters become overwhelmed during freezing weather, and it is often the day hours that are the most critical, when it is simply too cold to be outdoors.

Devin Komarniski, the Bissell Centre's manager of marketing and communications, said, "Gloves are the most difficult for us to keep stocked up. They go fast when the first cold snap hits. Jackets are the next most important, which we also need in children's sizes to stock our family closet. Boots are hard to come by as well, but so important. The running sneakers that a person acquired in the

summer just won't cut it in -20 and lower. Sometimes people are left with no option."

The Bissell Centre, Boyle Street Community Services, and Hope Mission are accepting any and all winter clothing, including socks, long underwear, mittens, toques, boots, and jackets. Socks, mittens, and blankets are most needed and often the least donated items.

*Amanda is a budding entrepreneur, a practicing Wiccan, a burgeoning gardener, and an herbalist who is working to obtain a degree as a naturopathic practitioner.*

## DONATING CLOTHING

**Bissell Centre**  
780.423.2285 ext 111 or  
reception@bissellcentre.org  
**Boyle Street Community Services**  
780.424.4106  
**Hope Mission**  
780.422.2018 or reception@hopemission.com



It's important to dress properly for our prairie winters. | Pixabay

# Reflecting on challenges and accomplishments

Self-evaluation should be viewed as a necessity to growth

**SHAREE ALUKO**

As the year winds down, many of us go through a phase of introspection to determine a level of accomplishment or a means of validation to decide if the year was a success.

Such reflection can be instrumental in highlighting our greatest assets and areas for improvement. These thought-provoking moments are also necessary for personal development and allow us to enter into an expansive state to realize our full potential. In identifying our strengths, we can capitalize on those strong attributes. Our vulnerabilities should be perceived as opportunities to improve and become the best version of ourselves.

We may even ponder about aspects of family life. Did we spend quality time with our loved ones and openly express our love? Were we too

engrossed with the hustle and bustle of life that we neglected or forgot to show how much we appreciated our family members?

Who did we encourage or support in their time of dif-



The end of the year is a good time to reflect on your challenges and accomplishments. | Pixabay

ficulties? Were we thoughtful and empathetic or selfish? How did we make others feel? What kind of energy did we exude? Did we give back to society through volunteering, mentoring, or helping others to succeed? Were we a good leader, portraying true qualities that inspired and motivated others

to be their best?

Was self-care a priority: mentally, physically, intellectually, and emotionally? How did we challenge or invest in ourselves?

This introspection is equally helpful for business owners.

How well did we manage our businesses to make significant strides in balancing ethical practices, corporate responsibility, and profitability? Were we responsive to both the needs of employees and customers and in promoting work-life balance?

The answers to these ques-

tions will give a clear picture of what we need to introduce into our lives to have a fulfilling experience while creating memorable moments. We should all strive to embrace a life of gratitude, relaxation, and fulfillment. By seeking knowledge and acquiring new skills, the doors are open for endless possibilities and options.

Be diligent, confident, a good team player, and be the energy you want to attract. Establish healthy relationships to become a better individual and abandon toxic relationships. Aim for progression and maturity.

If there is a desire to hold leadership positions and be the decision-maker in organizations, don't sit around and wait. Instead, actively pursue activities like committee or board memberships, form a group, or co-ordinate events or workshops.

Take control of your life,

create your own destiny, and be the one to determine your future. Follow your instincts and make things happen for yourself. There is a thin line between contentment and complacency and it is important to know the difference

*Sharee has a Masters in Business Administration and is passionate about sharing information.*

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# Clearing muddy water with meditation

Drop in for seated meditation sessions at Eastwood

**KATE WILSON**

Eastwood Community League is offering a weekly seated meditation session for any league member who'd like to drop in.

Whether it's to bring some peace to a hectic lifestyle or to deepen an already established sitting practice, participants are welcome from any experience or background.

My approach will be from the Japanese Zen tradition, having been a resident on and off for the past seven years at a Zen centre in the western United States. Before that, I was sitting Friday evenings at Truc Lam Monastery on 97 Street. At some point, I realized I wanted

to immerse myself fully into a Zen-based practice.

The heart of Zen is seated meditation, or zazen. One popular image for zazen is that of muddy water in a glass. Allow the glass to stand still, and the mud settles of its own accord. So as we focus on our breath, for instance, the mind begins to return to its natural resting state. That in turn offers an opportunity to look with more clarity on how our mind operates.

Seated meditation may help us learn how we add a personal narrative to situations or how we combine our emotions with daily interactions. Whatever the internal "weather", we discover how our response can muddy

what is actually a very still centre in our moment-to-moment lives.

This practice can also help us cope with more difficult internal stresses, such as depression or anxiety. With practice, we can come to see that any life experience, whether joyful or difficult, is an opportunity to know what we are and what our life is.

So the Zen approach is an unscripted invitation to sit in the midst of whatever is showing up. Whether it's the sound of the traffic outside or some inner source of anxiety, all are available as the ground from which to see clearly our authentic nature. There are hundreds of books on meditation, but doing

the actual practice is what brings about transformative change.

This is why Eastwood Community Hall will open for sitting once a week: to provide the space and some guidance for those who want to make real the value of a sitting practice.

Sessions are a half hour of seated meditation, and possibly walking meditation. If people want to stay longer, the sitting may be followed by a sharing period to discuss any issues arising from sitting practice or just to ask a question.

Cushions are provided, but we have a limited supply so participants are encouraged to bring their own cushion and mat.

Weekly seated meditation is upstairs in Eastwood Community Hall on Wednesdays starting at 6:30 pm. Please arrive at least five minutes early to settle in.

*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.*

## SEATED MEDITATION

Eastwood Community Hall  
(11803 86 St)  
Wednesdays, 6:30 pm



Seated meditation can help us to understand more about ourselves. | Pixabay

# Dear writers, have I got a pen for you!

Test out words at Avenue Word Adventuring writing group

**RUSTI L LEHAY**

I believe the pen is mightier than the therapist. Just as someone working out in the gym needs a spotter when testing their limits on the bench, writers lift raw and heavy words onto the page. We test and push our memory and imagination muscles across our screens or pages. Writing groups should serve as a safe place to test our stories and have our words sample the air.

I have facilitated writing classes for seniors at MacEwan University for the past 10 years. When Heather Lee, a worker from The Mustard Seed, inquired about a local writing group, I thought it was high time I organized one. I have participated, led, and/or formed writing groups in Tallinn, Estonia;

Las Cruces, New Mexico; and here in Alberta.

Writing has always been my place to figure stuff out, order chaotic emotions, or dissect troubling events, often leading to epiphanies. Journals and diaries, pens and paper have served me for 40 years.

If I'm confused, figuring it out on the page is key to clarity. I'm in awe of Irina Ratushinskaya, who wrote her poems on a bar of soap, memorized them to avoid discovery, then wrote them later on cigarette papers. Many of her cigarette paper poems were smuggled out of prison.

After mouthing off to the warden, I earned a day in solitary confinement. I was content like Br'er Rabbit in the Briar Patch with my pens and notebook. Perhaps I should explain. I was chair of the Women's

Mentoring Group in 1996. The guards and warden needed a practice day at the soon-to-be-opening Edmonton Institution for Women. Our group was happy to oblige as test prisoners. Regardless of what I wrote in my cell that day, imagining the absence of pens and paper feels devastating.

That might be why I will likely bequeath reams of paper and pens to my poet niece. She has admired my plethora of coloured paper, notepads, and journals. As sure as stories were first shared around ancient fires, I must have (okay, truthfully, hoard) over 200 pens, some favourite and some utilitarian. Far more than I need. In a 2018 spring writing class, I burned through three pens in one day. When other students asked how can I write so much, the instruc-

tor said, "Rusti writes with both hands." The encouragement of being in a group can mean the difference between watching your thoughts evaporate and producing pages of viable text.

For anyone wanting to write, treat yourself to a journal with pages soft as rose petals on your cheeks. Find a pen that flows across the page smooth without scratching. If you need a pen, or if you are unsure where to start with words, or if you need a safe place to share words you have stored up for years, or if you have a manuscript to test, you can find me 1:30-3:30 pm every third Thursday at The Carrot Coffeehouse.

Avenue Word Adventuring is drop-in and free, with donations accepted for any handouts I may have occasionally. The beginning format will include writing

for 30 minutes, then sharing and discussing for the remaining 90 minutes. The group structure may evolve to something different as some people may become regular attendees. Rest assured it will remain a safe place to capture and share words of all kinds.

*A member of the Professional Writers Association of Canada since 2003, Rusti has been writing professionally since 1999. Her favourite word activity is immersion editing with memoir writers.*

## AVENUE WORD ADVENTURING

The Carrot Coffeehouse,  
9351 118 Ave  
Every third Thursday, 1:30-3:30 pm

# Community

## BOARD

### EASTWOOD & ELMWOOD PARK NEIGHBOURHOOD RECONSTRUCTION

Identify opportunities for enhancement, and create a vision for the future of Eastwood and Elmwood Park. Saturday, Dec 1, 8:30am-4pm at Eastwood hall. Lunch and children's activities will be provided. Subscribe to updates: [edmonton.ca/buildingEastwoodElmwoodPark](http://edmonton.ca/buildingEastwoodElmwoodPark)

### TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL

Is Toastmasters Right for You? Do you want to become a confident public speaker and strong leader? If so, at Toastmasters you'll find a supportive learn-by-doing environment that allows you to achieve your goals at your own pace. [www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org)

### DONATE SKATES & HELMETS

Parkdale Cromdale Community League is seeking donations of ice skates and helmets for their rink. Bring donations to The Carrot (9351 118 Ave) or T&D Noodle (8405 118 Ave).

### ANNUAL EVENTS

Yule Ave, Dec 15  
Deep Freeze, Jan 12-13  
SkirtsAFire, March 7-17  
GOBfest, April 12-14

### SOUND CHECK

The Carrot Coffeehouse is seeking volunteers to operate the sound board. More info: 780.471.1580 or email [volunteer@thecarrot.ca](mailto:volunteer@thecarrot.ca).

## FREE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

### ESL & LANGUAGE

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

**PRACTICE ENGLISH**  
Conversation circle, Mondays, 7-8 pm at Sprucewood Library.

**GLOBAL VOICES CHOIR**  
An informal way to practice English. Song books and light lunch provided. Thursdays, noon-1 pm at Mennonite Centre (no classes in August). More: Suzanne 780.423.9682.

**ENGLISH CONVERSATION CIRCLE**  
Fridays, 10:30-11:30 am at Highlands Library. Part of Catholic Social Services LACE program. More: 780-424-3545.

**LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION FOR NEWCOMERS TO CANADA (LINC)**  
More: Edmonton Mennonite Centre 780.424.7709 or [info@emcn.ab.ca](mailto:info@emcn.ab.ca).

### FOOD & SUPPORT

**EDMONTON URBAN NATIVE MINISTRY**  
Drop-in Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, 10:30 am and 3 pm for social, spiritual, and practical support, including computer access. Lunch Tuesdays and Fridays, noon-1:30 pm. Small food hamper every second Thursday. Meal provided after 4 pm Sunday service.

**BENT ARROW TRADITIONAL HEALING SOCIETY**  
Various programs and services, including a soup & bannock lunch once a month. 11648 85 Street. 780.481.3451. [www.bentarrow.ca](http://www.bentarrow.ca).

**PRAYERWORKS COMMUNITY**  
Hot meals & warm friendship at St. Faith's/St. Stephen's Anglican Church hall. Thurs: serving 11 am-1 pm; open 10 am-1:30 pm. Fri: serving 5-6 pm; open 3:30-7 pm. Sat: serving 8:30-9:30 am; open 8-10 am. More: 780.477.5931.

**COLLECTIVE KITCHENS**  
Cook with friends, try new recipes, help your food budget. St. Faith/St. Stephen: 2nd Tuesday, 1-3:30 pm. Call ahead. Trish: 780.464.5444. Parent Link: Second Wednesday, 11:30-2:30 pm. Call ahead: 780.474.2400. Parkdale hall: Last Sunday of the month, 1-4 pm. Check [parkdalecromdale.org](http://parkdalecromdale.org) for details. Alberta Avenue: Sunday, 1-4 pm. Check [albertaave.org](http://albertaave.org) for details.

### PARENTS & PRE-SCHOOLERS

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

**SING, SIGN, LAUGH & LEARN**  
Mondays and Tuesdays, 10:30-11:15 am at Sprucewood Library. Wednesdays and Thursdays, 10:30-11:15 am at Highlands Library. More: 780.496.7099.

**BABY LAPTIME**  
Stories, songs, books, rhymes, & finger play for babies up to 12 months. Tuesdays, 10:15-10:45 am at Highlands Library.

**FAMILY STORYTIME**  
Share stories, songs, and games. Wednesdays, 10:30-11 am at Sprucewood Library.

**NORWOOD CHILD & FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE**  
Parent & family education, early childhood education, community events. 9516 114 Avenue. 780.471.3737. [www.norwoodcentre.com](http://www.norwoodcentre.com).

**PARENT LINK CENTRE**  
Information, support and a variety of free programs. 11666 95 St. 780.474.2400. Mon to Fri, 9 am-7 pm.

### CHILDREN

**LEGO AT THE LIBRARY**  
Design and build a lego creation. Ages 6-12. Saturdays, 3-4 pm at Highlands Library.

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

**TEEN LOUNGE JR.**  
Play video games, make a DIY project, meet friends. Thursdays, 3:30-5 pm at Sprucewood Library and 3:30-4:30 pm at Highlands Library.

### YOUTH

**EVIL GENIUS CLUB**  
Robot battles, Arduino hacks, DIY music, art, Minecraft, photography, 3-D design & printing are just the beginning. Fridays, 4-5 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.

**GLOBAL GIRLS**  
Build new relationships, develop self-confidence, and identify pathways to achieve goals. Every other Thursday, 3:15-5:30 pm at the Mennonite Centre for ages 16-22. Drop-in. More: 780.423.9691.

**TEEN LOUNGE JR.**  
Play video games, make a DIY project, meet friends. Thursdays, 3:30-5 pm at Sprucewood Library and 3:30-4:30 pm at Highlands Library.

**AIR CADET SQUADRON**  
Youth program for ages 12-18. Aviation, drill, deportment, music, marksmanship, survival, physical fitness. Thursdays, 6:30-9:15 pm Sept to June. [www.570squadrone.com](http://www.570squadrone.com).

### ADULTS

**COFFEE WITH COPS**  
Join a roundtable conversation with EPS. First Wednesday of month from 10-11:00 am at The Carrot Coffeehouse.

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

**AVENUE WORD ADVENTURING**  
Join other writers in a positive environment to write, share, and discuss writing habits and goals. Drop-in on the third Thursday afternoon of the month, 1:30-3:30 pm. The Carrot Coffeehouse. More: [Rusti@lit@ratcreek.org](mailto:Rusti@lit@ratcreek.org).

**MEDITATION INTRO CLASS**  
Explore mental and physical exercises in order to relax and enjoy stillness more easily. Thursdays, 7-7:50 pm at Parkdale-Cromdale hall.

**YOGA CLASS**  
Focus on senses, breathing techniques, and postures that build strength and flexibility. Thursdays, 8-9 pm at Parkdale-Cromdale hall.

**GUIDED MEDITATION SITS**  
Perfect for beginners. Saturdays, 7 pm. All welcome, no charge. Land of Compassion Buddha Temple. 9352 106A Ave. 780.862.7392.

**COFFEE FRIENDSHIP CLUB**  
Have coffee with individuals who are single, divorced, or widowed and looking to meet new people in the area. Wednesdays, 1-2 pm at The Carrot Coffeehouse.

**COMMUNITY ART NIGHT**  
Free art workshop for adults. Tuesdays, 6:30-8:30 pm at the Nina. Register/info: 780.474.7611.

**WELLBRIETY SUPPORT GROUP**  
Mondays, 7-9 pm at Canadian Native Friendship Centre, upstairs room #200.

### SENIORS

**CENTRAL LIONS SENIORS ASSOCIATION**  
Programs, clubs, drop-in activities, fitness centre. 11113 113 St. 780.496.7369. [www.centrallions.org](http://www.centrallions.org).

**NORWOOD LEGION SENIORS GROUP**  
Cribbage, Wednesdays, 1 pm at NorwoodLegion.ca.

**SENIORS BREAKFAST & SOCIAL (55+)**  
Join us for breakfast, visit, or play cards or billiards. Wednesdays, 11:30 am-12:45 pm (10:30-11:45 am during the summer) at Crystal Kids.

### FAMILIES

**DENE DRUMMING**  
Wednesdays, 1-3 pm at Canadian Native Friendship Centre, upstairs room #200.

**TRADITIONAL ARTS & CRAFTS**  
For ages 12+. Wednesdays, 5-7 pm at Canadian Native Friendship Centre, upstairs room #200.

**POP-UP MAKERSPACE**  
Makey Makey hack, DIY music, art, 3-D design, and more. First Wednesday of the month from 6:30-7:30 pm at Highlands Library.

**HIP HOP SHOWCASE**  
Listen to sick beats and step up on our open stage for hip hop artists, rappers, spoken word, and poets. Rated PG. Third Wednesday, 7-9 pm. The Carrot Coffeehouse.

**TABLE TOP GAMES NIGHT**  
Choose from over 20 board games and let fun fill your table. Tables are free! Call 780.471.1580 for info. Hosted by Catrin of GOBfest.

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

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

**FREE COMMUNITY REC ACCESS**  
At Commonwealth Stadium on Saturdays from 5-7 pm: Alberta Ave, Eastwood, Westwood. Sundays 1-3 pm: Alberta Ave, Parkdale-Cromdale, Spruce Avenue

**OPEN MIC NIGHT**  
Open to performers of all stages and ages! Sip a latte and enjoy original music, poetry, comedy, and more at The Carrot's uniquely warm and personal open mic night. Saturdays, 6-10 pm at The Carrot Coffeehouse.

### LOCATIONS

Bent Arrow  
11648 85 St  
Bethel Gospel  
11461 95 St  
Cnd Native Friendship  
11728 95 St  
Community Leagues - see page 12

Crystal Kids  
8715 118 Ave  
Highlands Library  
6710 118 Ave  
Mennonite Centre  
11713 82 St  
Norwood Family Centre  
9516 114 Ave  
Norwood Legion  
11150 82 St

Sprucewood Library  
11555 95 St  
St. Faith/St. Stephen Church  
11725 93 St  
St. Andrew's Church  
8715 118 Ave  
The Carrot Coffeehouse  
9351 118 Ave  
The Nina  
9225 118 Ave





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**St. Stephen: 780.422.3240**  
**Sunday Worship:**  
 8:30 am - Low Mass  
 9:00 am - Morning Prayer  
 9:30 am - High Mass  
 7:00 pm - Evensong

**St. Faith: 780.477.5931**  
**Sunday Worship:**  
 9:00 am Friday Prayer

11:00 am Sunday Worship  
 1st Sunday Common  
 2nd Sunday Trad. Anglican  
 3rd Sunday Aboriginal Form  
 4th Sunday Trad. Anglican

**AVENUE VINEYARD CHURCH**

*A friendly, informal, non-judgmental and safe place to grow spiritually. Traditional Christian values in a non-traditional way.*  
**8718 118 Avenue**  
 (Crystal Kids Building)ave-nuevineyard.com  
 Sundays at 10:30 am

**AVENUE CHURCH**

*A community to belong in...a community to serve with.*

**11335 85 Street**  
 (Parkdale Hall)  
 avenuechurch.ca

**Sundays**  
 coffee fellowship - 9:30am  
 10:00 am Service

**BETHEL GOSPEL CHAPEL**

*A Bible-based, multi-ethnic fellowship.*  
**11461 95 Street**  
 780.477.3341

**Sunday Meetings:**  
 9:30 am - Lord's Supper  
 11:00 am - Family Bible Hour

**NORWOOD WESLEYAN CHURCH**

Meeting needs with love and compassion  
 11306 91 St  
 10:00 am Sunday School  
 11:00 am Sunday Service

**EVANGELICAL BAPTIST CHURCH**

*'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'*  
 Eph. 4:32, 1 Th. 5:11a  
**12317-82 St.**  
**780.474.4830**

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

**ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**8715 118 Avenue**  
 780-477-8677

**Service Times:**  
 Sundays at 11 am  
 A caring and loving church in your community where everyone is welcome.

**THE SALVATION ARMY CROSSROADS COMMUNITY CHURCH**

A Place for Worship and Service  
 11661 95 Street  
 salvationarmy.ca/alberta

Sunday Worship - 3:00 p.m.  
 Call for other program information  
 780.474.4324

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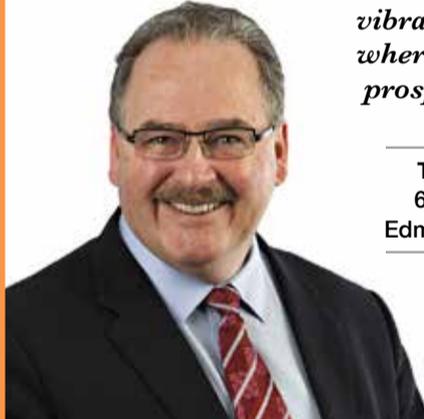
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edmonton.highlandsnorwood@assembly.ab.ca

**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  
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**Randy.Boissonnault@parl.gc.ca**



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