

# Rat Creek Press

Alberta Avenue • Delton • Eastwood • Elmwood Park • Parkdale-Cromdale • Spruce Avenue • Westwood



A local resident with his new carts. | Rusti L Leahy

## - RUSTI L LEHAY -

If you have ever hurt your back taking out the garbage, you may want to learn from Lauren Singer. Her Ted Talk informed millions of a zero-waste concept. Her waste from one year fit into a 16-ounce mason jar.

Chris Fowler, director of the City's waste strategy, is stoked to see 250,000 Edmonton households separating waste to prevent food scraps and yard waste from going to the landfill. "It will make a big impact towards our City's zero-waste future."

From April 13 to June 18, the City collected over 5,000 tonnes of organic waste and 560 tonnes of yard waste from spring yard waste collection alone. According to an April 13 City news release, "Today marks a significant milestone for Edmontonians as automated waste collection starts for almost 40,000 homes who received their carts in phase 1 of the Edmonton Cart Rollout."

Cart delivery is scheduled for the

Eastwood, Alberta Avenue, Cromdale, and Spruce Avenue communities between June 29 and July 27, with the first collection days starting the week of Aug. 4.

Each single-family home will receive a garbage cart, a food scraps cart, a food scraps pail, and an information package that includes a brochure, poster, collection calendar, and city map.

To make it even easier, "download the free WasteWise app in the App Store or Google Play for sorting information and collection day reminders."

Not only will the new garbage carts help Edmonton move closer to the zero-waste goal, the new automated pick-up for the carts will also save sanitation workers from physical strain and injuries. Automated collection trucks use a mechanical arm to empty the carts.

It is rewarding for Anna Kravchinsky, communications coordinator of city operations and waste services, to be part of a pro-

gram that will modernize our waste system and "help our city become more sustainable for generations to come. I'm excited to see my community, friends, and neighbours see their daily habits change," as waste is now redirected.

Organic waste is converted to compost. Fowler says, "Residents who show commitment to learning about the Edmonton Cart Rollout or engage in waste reduction behaviours will also have the opportunity to collect the City of Edmonton Compost free of charge at the Ambleside Eco Station or the Kennedale Eco Station." For more information, visit [edmonton.ca/ecostations](http://edmonton.ca/ecostations).

With the carts in use, all participating Edmontonians can now, according to a City news release, "help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The rest of the city will transition to the new way of sorting and automated collection throughout the spring and summer until cart delivery is complete in August."

To reach the zero-waste goal, the City

presented a Multi-Unit Strategy Report to the Utility Committee on June 25, which recommends source separation for apartment and condo buildings. Fowler says, "If approved by council, multi-unit residences could transition to a three-stream collection program starting in 2023."

A zero-waste future is exciting for Fowler, but there is "still work to be done." Collaboration with non-governmental organizations plays a big role in waste reduction in our city. Part of the plan is to introduce a "broad spectrum of waste reduction activities such as reuse fairs, bike repairs, textile repairs, and urban harvest events." The program will make it easy and rewarding for more Edmontonians to participate and think about waste reduction.

*Rusti has been writing professionally since 1999. Her favourite word activities are coaching writers and offering online writing stay-treats.*

# Reducing speeds for fewer accidents

## Slower speeds increases driver vision and reaction time

### - NAZREENA ANWAR-TRAVAS -

Following a decision by Edmonton City Council, starting this August the speed limit will be reduced from 50 km/hour to 40 km/hour on most residential and downtown streets. The exact date of implementation will be announced sometime in July.

By reducing the speed limit by 10 km/hour, there's a 20 per cent increased likelihood for pedestrian survivability in the event of an accident.

"Crash data from 2015 to 2019 reveals that the majority of pedestrian fatalities and major injuries occurred due to driver error, such as failing to yield to a pedestrian who had the right of way," says Sarah Giourmetakis, media spokesperson for the City's safe mobility department.

According to the City website, "Reducing speed limits is one important action within the Safe Mobility Strategy 2021-2025, Edmonton's approach to advancing Vision Zero. It is a key component of the City's

strategic goals for the next 10 years and supports ConnectEdmonton in creating a safe, healthy, urban and climate resilient city for all residents."

The change is wonderful news for Ahmar Abdellah, a Norwood resident who recently lost a good friend in a motorbike collision. "Losing a loved one leaves lifelong emotional scars," he says. "I am glad the City is taking steps to prevent road accidents."

There will also be fewer signs on the streets. "If there is no speed limit sign on a residential road, the default speed limit will be 40 km/hour," explains Giourmetakis. Drivers will have a grace period with photo radar to adjust to the new speed limit. The City is also releasing a Safe Speeds Toolkit to the public and will be promoting it with a public education campaign in July. "We will be working with community stakeholders to ensure the toolkit is accessible, including to those without Internet access," says Giourmetakis.

Nirmal Shengde, a Cromdale resident

working in the west end, is concerned that he will need to start driving early to work. "Right now, roads are empty [due to people working from home]. But when people return to work there is bound to be traffic build up, especially since there are also additional traffic lights in certain communities."

"There will be little impact on driving times as the reduced speed limits will not impact most major roads," assures Giourmetakis, who encourages people to use the Estimated Time of Arrival Tool on the City website to map out a trip and compare the travel time with current speed limits versus the revised speed limits.

"But won't there always be speed offenders, regardless of the speed limit?" wonders Peggy Liang, an Alberta Avenue resident. In 2020, 12 people were killed in road traffic collisions.

"Reduced speed limits does help in preventing crashes and reducing the severity of collisions," says Giourmetakis. "Slowing down increases a driver's field of vision

and gives time to react to the unexpected. However, safety is a shared responsibility. Regardless of how we move around on roads, paths, and spaces, we all need to look out for one another."

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

### MORE INFO

FAQs, ETA tool, & interactive map of roads with new speed limit: [edmonton.ca/SafeSpeeds](https://edmonton.ca/SafeSpeeds)



Residential speed limits will soon be reduced from 50 km/hour to 40 km/hour. | Nazreena Anwar-Travas

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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.

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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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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.



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# Neighbourhood renewal continues

Ensuring longevity and durability of our neighbourhoods

**- NAZREENA ANWAR-TRAVAS -**

The City of Edmonton’s neighbourhood renewal projects continue in Alberta Avenue and Eastwood/Elmwood Park.

Alberta Avenue’s neighbourhood renewal started in 2019. This year construction will include areas between 118 Avenue and 122 Avenue.

“Residents can expect to see new concrete sidewalks, curb and gutter replacement, new asphalt road surface, new LED street light system, and replacement of surface drainage structures,” says Donny Fung, engineering project manager. “Once the sidewalk removal and replacement along the west of 94 and 91 Streets and 119 to 121 Avenues is complete, roadway reconstruction will begin followed by landscaping work.”

Upgrades to the street light system include galvanized poles. In neighbourhoods with mature trees, the height of the poles will be reduced to allow better lighting. “New street light pole base, underground conduit installation reconstruction, as well as surface drainage upgrade is substantially complete,” says Fung. “What remains to be done is concrete work, roadway construction, light pole/

fixture installation, and landscaping.”

The City will send community members a letter about the construction and some additional bike lane information.

“Some residents are not familiar with the proposed traffic flow change,” says Fung. This summer, another bike lane will be added along 92 Street from 111 Avenue to 114 Avenue. “The protected bike lane on 119 Avenue from 97 Street to 93 Street should also be opening soon. This information will be included in the next letter.” Fung recommends residents to visit the project website for more information on the final bike lane configuration and proposed traffic flow changes.

In Eastwood/Elmwood Park, neighbourhood construction began in spring 2020. This year, construction will be taking place from 89 Street to 76 Street along 120 Avenue and 119 Avenue.

“Renewal work includes the reconstruction and paving of roads, removal and replacement of public sidewalks, curbs and gutters, as well as street lighting,” says Farai Mudede, project manager.

Construction on 82 Street to 76 Street along 120 Avenue and 119 Avenue is under-

way. Upon completion, construction will start on 82 Street to 86 Street, along 120 and 119 Avenues.

“We are also updating parks and open spaces in Eastwood/Elmwood Park,” says Mudede. “There will be renewal work in James Kidney Park beginning in June that will include new pathways, sod, and tree planting. During construction, the park may be closed to the public.”

Residents may notice more noise and traffic.

“Streets may be blocked off with roads and sidewalks inaccessible,” points out Mudede. “No Parking’ signs will be posted at least 24 hours before the restriction. The project is progressing on time and on budget.”

The tentative end date for the 2021 construction for both the Alberta Avenue and Eastwood/Elmwood Park projects is the end of October depending on weather conditions. Both projects will also address deficiencies noted last year. For Alberta Avenue, these included surface concrete cracks in curbs and gutters, sidewalk works, water valve elevation adjustment, and debris cleaning in catch basins. The Eastwood/Elmwood Park project has remaining landscaping work. More

information can be found on the City of Edmonton website.

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

**NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL**

**Alberta Avenue**  
[edmonton.ca/buildingalberta/avenue](http://edmonton.ca/buildingalberta/avenue)

**Eastwood/Elmwood Park**  
[edmonton.ca/buildingeastwoodelmwood/park](http://edmonton.ca/buildingeastwoodelmwood/park)



In Eastwood and Elmwood Park, Neighbourhood Renewal began in spring of 2020. | Farai Mudede

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# Hear from your election candidates

Tune into an all-candidates meeting this September

## - REBECCA LIPPIATT -

During the second week of September, the *Rat Creek Press* will be hosting a series of virtual All Candidates Meetings for Ward Métis, Ward O-day'min, and the mayoral candidates. These meetings will give Edmontonians and ward residents the chance to hear and compare the candidates vying for their votes.

The mayoral candidate meeting is first on Sept. 13, Ward O-day'min on Sept. 15, and Ward Métis on Sept. 16. All meetings will run from 7-9 p.m. on Zoom and will be live-streamed on Facebook.

Of the mayoral candidates, Brian (Breezy) Gregg, Kim Krushell, Amarjeet Sohi, Diana Steele, and Cheryll Watson have confirmed their attendance. Michael Oshry, Abdul Malik Chukwudi, Rick Comrie, and Augustine Marah have not yet responded. Mike Nickel will update organizers in August.

Confirmed candidates from Ward O-day'min include Gabrielle Battiste, Adrian Bruff, and Anne Stevenson. The organizing committee is awaiting responses from Gino Akbari, Tony Caterina, Naima Haile, Bill Knight, and Joshua Wolchansky.

In Ward Métis, Liz John-West, Cori Longo, Caroline Matthews, Salar Melli, Ashley Salvador, and Steven Townsend have confirmed their attendance. James Kosowan has yet to confirm.

Moderating the debates will be Matthew Kleywegt, who ran in Ward 7 in the 2017 elections. Kleywegt is a teacher who is inter-

ested in local politics. He says, "I like to be a part of the process of some of the most meaningful democratic processes in people's lives."

Organizing the event on behalf of the *Rat Creek Press* is a member of their board of directors, Mike Enders. While studying

that allow those elected or campaigning to create personal connections with voters who live in their constituencies."

At the time of writing, the *Rat Creek Press* is the only media organization hosting an all candidates mayoral debate. *CTV*, *Global*

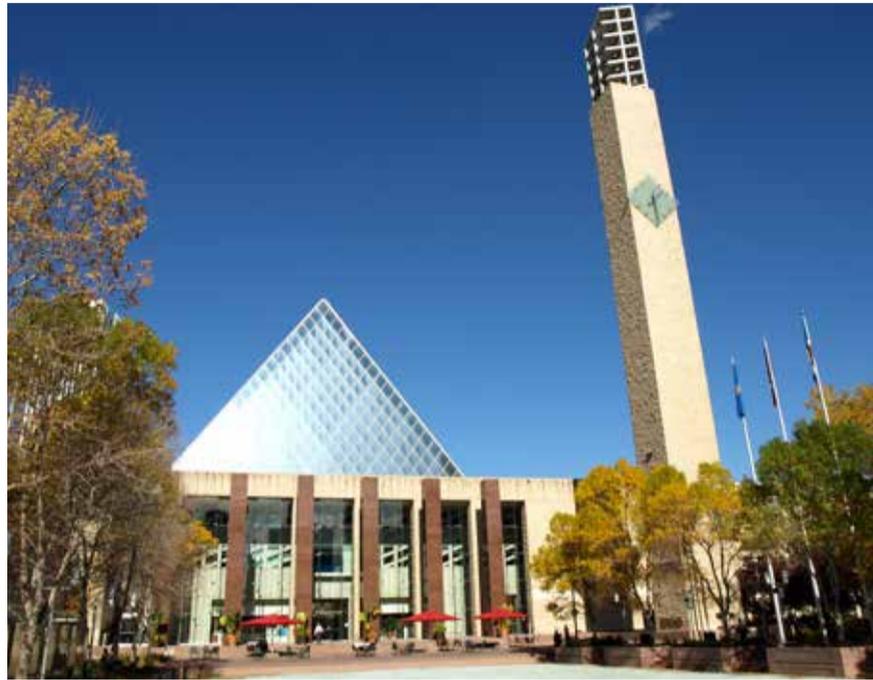
ing the debate.

Each candidate has a few minutes to give an opening statement and present their platform. Then, each candidate will be given several pre-screened questions. The final portion of the debate will take questions from the public. With so many candidates, Kleywegt plans to run a "fair but firm" event. He says, "I will be very clear about what candidates can expect and be very clear about the agenda and the rules of the debate."

The *Rat Creek Press* chose to do a virtual event because at this point, it is not clear if there will be gathering restrictions in place due to the pandemic. However, Bellevue and Highlands community leagues, in conjunction with Concordia University of Edmonton, will be running an in-person debate for Ward Métis candidates.

Organizers are seeking questions from the community. Email your questions to [ads@ratcreek.org](mailto:ads@ratcreek.org) using the subject line: Ward (name) Candidate Questions. Please leave your community name and your first and last name in case any follow up either from the organizers or from media is required.

If you would like to participate in organizing the event, contact Mike Enders at the above email.



Edmonton's civic election is scheduled for Oct. 18, 2021. | The City of Edmonton

criminology years ago, Enders focused heavily on political science classes. He says, "This created a love for municipal or local politics

*News*, *City TV Edmonton*, *CBC Edmonton*, *Edmonton Journal*, *Edmonton Sun*, and *APTN* have all expressed an interest in cover-

*Rebecca has attended free concerts as bouncer, juggled plates as a waitress, completed a degree in microbiology, laboured in the oilfield cleaning storage tanks, and worked as an editor. In her current incarnation, she is a full-time photographer and is a mother to two boys and stepmother to two girls.*

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THE WAY  
IT'S ALWAYS  
BEEN DONE.**

**THEN  
THERE'S  
THE WAY  
FORWARD.**



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Saturday August 14  
**TOM COCHRANE · PRISM**

Friday August 20  
**THE SHEEPDOGS · DEFAULT · THE WATCHMEN**

Saturday August 21  
**BLUE RODEO · ALAN DOYLE**

Sunday August 22  
**DEAN BRODY · THE ROAD HAMMERS  
 JESS MOSKALUKE**

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# Cycling on Alberta Ave's bike lanes

Area cyclists weigh on the neighbourhood's bike lanes

- RUSTI L LEHAY -

Bike lanes are a topic of hot debate in Edmonton; some love them, while others hate them. In the Alberta Avenue area, bike lanes are a welcome option to a new resident, Sarah F. A dedicated cyclist, Sarah uses the easy, low-traffic bike lane on 96 Street daily. "My route is really straight-forward to get to work downtown."

She adds, "The lighting is great along the bike lanes." Sarah mentions only one way to improve the lanes. "Fix the potholes." While motorists complain about those, a pothole can be disastrous for cyclists.

Maggie Glasgow, an area resident and an avid cyclist commuter, offers an additional valid critique. "I would rather see [the bike lanes on] 96 Street and 114 Avenue on main streets such as 95 Street and 115 Avenue, though. I think those routes are faster with fewer stop signs." There is enough room for parking and bicycle lanes on both 95 Street and 115 Avenue. Bike lanes there might

make it challenging "for non-residents to turn onto the residential streets to shortcut, which is a big problem in our neighbourhoods."

Signage does need to erase all room for doubt, especially on the one-ways. Glasgow says, "I constantly get confused as to which way you can travel along 114 Avenue. They should have one-way arrows for vehicles at each intersection, especially at 114 Avenue and 95 Street!"

The bike lanes are painted clearly on 96 Street. The diamond and bicycle images are a traffic marking that signals the lane is designated for bicycles only. Cars may not enter this lane except at intersections for turning when the lane's outside solid lines become dashes.

Despite signage, collisions do happen. Edmonton can learn from Seattle's Department of Transportation. Not only did they do a bike and pedestrian safety assessment examining all the variables over seven years of cyclist and pedestrian crash data, but

they also studied the intersections where no crashes ever occurred. They are using algorithms from their studies to build smarter, safer roads.

Sarah adds, "Drivers do need to pay more attention when they are turning right. For both pedestrians and cyclists."

Glasgow sees cyclists, particularly families and kids, using the lanes. "Kids in our district don't have many safe spaces to ride their bikes because of the design of the neighbourhood (no cul-de-sacs and bays). At least they can ride their bikes along the bike paths and get to friends' houses safely."

Regardless of bike lanes, all cyclists on motor vehicle roads need to adhere to the rules of motor vehicle traffic and practice defensive driving. Cyclists using a crosswalk must dismount, and then walk their bike across. It's important for cyclists to remember they're not a pedestrian when on a bicycle. Bicycles are deemed a vehicle and therefore subject to traffic laws. Cyclists can be at fault even if a driver hits them. Wait for a break

in traffic to cross uncontrolled intersections.

Everyone (pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists) needs to be aware and know the laws. And if everyone adhered to the rules, one might ponder if bike lanes are even necessary. For enjoyment and health and being kinder to the environment, they are very essential. Enjoy riding this summer!

The best bike lanes in the Alberta Avenue area run north and south on 96 Street, east and west on 114 Avenue, 119 Avenue (two lanes for the bikes); 92 Street is also designated as a bike route but not painted. Painted bike lanes will be added to 92 Street once Neighbourhood Renewal is complete.

Visit [edmonton.ca/bike](http://edmonton.ca/bike) for more information.

*Rusti has been writing professionally since 1999. Her favourite word activities are coaching writers and offering online writing stay-treats.*



John Hughes rides his bike on 114 Avenue heading west. | Rusti L Lehay

Alberta Avenue Community League

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## community garden

BIKE TOUR

Saturday, July 24  
& August 28  
10 am - 1 pm  
includes a light lunch

Tour Eastwood, Elmwood Park, Parkdale-Cromdale, Northlands Urban Farm & Alberta Avenue gardens.

Meet at the Alberta Avenue parking lot  
93 st & 118 ave

More info will be posted at [albertaave.org](http://albertaave.org)



# Go on the Alberta Ave bike tour

Learn more about the history of community gardens in the area

- ZACK JANSEN -

Community gardens in the inner city have cropped up in recent years and show no signs of leaving. These gardens have provided not only fresh and healthy food for the community, but also a place for neighbours to connect. Garden members rent a small plot of land to grow their own plants, and the community gets a beautiful spot to meet and make connections.

There are many benefits to joining a community garden.

Kate Wilson, manager of Eastwood Community Garden, says, “[It’s] the sense of being part of something that brings people from all walks of life together. Meeting people that I wouldn’t normally have met, that’s been the most rewarding aspect.”

With the isolating impact of the pandemic, people feel the need to make connections more than ever and gardening is a perfect solution. Community gardens provide a refreshing green space and a place to

socialize with neighbours. If you are looking for an opportunity to meet new people or grow some tasty produce, visit [edmonton.ca/communitygardens](http://edmonton.ca/communitygardens) for more information on locations and tips on joining community gardens.

As more people look for ways to grow their own food in the city, the number and scale of community gardens have grown. In fact, both Spruce Avenue and Westwood Community Leagues are planning on creating their own community gardens in the next few years. Spruce Avenue Community League has already submitted the application to the City and there are plans to begin gardening as early as next spring.

Ashley Ayume, Spruce Avenue Garden manager, says they hope to create an inter-generational connection and plan to include the local schools so that students are able to learn more about gardening and healthy eating.

If you’re looking for an opportunity to learn more about the history and operation of

these gardens, Alberta Avenue Community League is organizing a bike tour of five community gardens this summer on July 24 and again on Aug. 28. This tour will start at Alberta Avenue Community Garden, then move through Elmwood Park, Eastwood, Parkdale-Cromdale, Northlands Urban Farm, and finish back at Alberta Avenue.

Each stop will include a tour of the site and a short talk about their history and operation. The tour is an excellent opportunity for those interested in their local community gardens to learn more, but also for anyone looking for an interesting bike tour.

Should you be unable to make the date and still want to experience the history of our local community gardens and enjoy the scenic tour, a virtual version of the bike tour will be available online at [albertaave.org](http://albertaave.org) in August. The tour is a chance to see all the gardens in full bloom later in the summer at your own pace while still learning more about their history and operation.

*Zack is a second year mechanical engineering student at the University of Alberta. He worked with the Alberta Avenue and Eastwood community leagues through The Engineering Connects program in the Winter of 2021.*

## COMMUNITY GARDEN BIKE TOURS

Saturday, July 24

Saturday, Aug. 28

10 am to 12 pm

Meet at Alberta Ave parking lot on 93 St & 118 Ave

Go to [albertaave.org](http://albertaave.org) for more information before the event.



Five community gardens are included in the tour. | Steven Townsend

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# AWESOME BLOCK AWARDS

Edmonton

# Experience al fresco on the Ave

## Places offering patio dining right in the neighbourhood

### - VICTORIA STEVENS -

The days are longer, the temperatures are soaring, and we're eager to soak it all up. After a dark, cold winter nothing feels better than grabbing a bite to eat and sipping a drink on a patio where we can enjoy the beautiful weather while experiencing the energy of the neighbourhood. There is no better place to do that than right in your own backyard. Be sure to check out these local eateries this summer.

#### Handy Bakery

Located on the corner of 86 Street and 118 Avenue, Handy Bakery is an Avenue staple. Offering a variety of freshly baked items such as Portugese tarts and coffee and tea basics, this is a great place to stop for a sip and a

snack. Located just outside the doors facing 86 Street, the patio is on the sparse side, but boasts a great shady stop on a sunny day.

Handy Bakery (8660 118 Ave)  
Tues-Sat, 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.; closed Sun and Mon

#### Green Onion Cake Man

The legend! The Green Onion Cake Man is the latest incarnation of Edmonton's original green onion cake creator. Located at 9132 118 Avenue, the eatery is the best place in Edmonton to buy some green onion cakes, plus more. A couple of tables and some chairs, each covered by a green umbrella, sits just outside the large south-facing window. From here you can people watch on the Ave while snacking on some great eats.

Green Onion Cake Man (9132 118 Ave)

Monday-Saturday, noon - 8 p.m.  
Sunday, noon - 6 p.m.

#### Mona Lisa's Pub

The neighbourhood's pub, located on the corner of 96 Street and 118 Avenue, is a favourite of locals looking for some cold beer and excellent pub food. The casual and relaxed atmosphere is reflected on their patio, which hosts four to five tables covered with large white umbrellas and a couple of plant boxes full of flowers. The pub is open everyday, offering an excellent place to grab a few pints and stroll home.

Mona Lisa's Pub (9606 118 Ave)  
1 p.m. - 11 p.m. daily

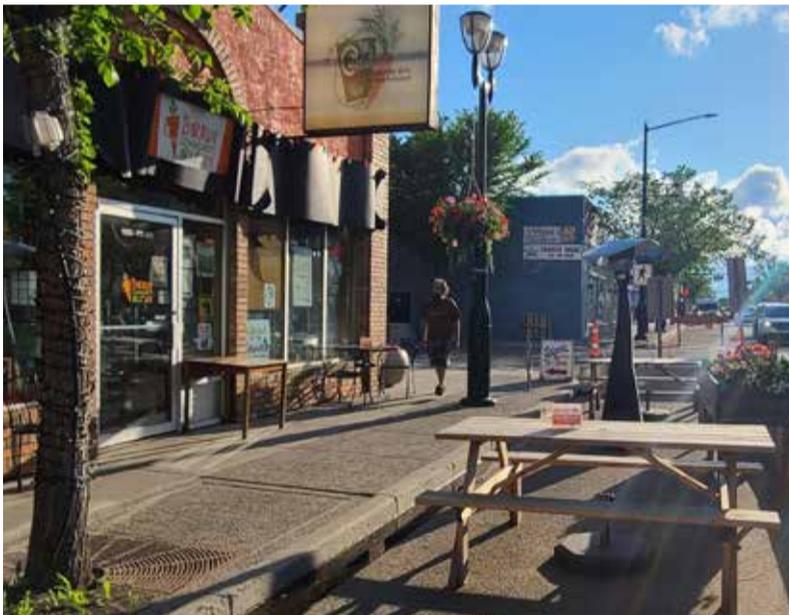
#### The Carrot Coffeehouse

The Carrot Community Arts Coffeehouse

is a long-time area coffee spot. It is staffed mainly by volunteers and was established by Arts on The Ave. The corner of 93 Street and 118 Avenue is where The Carrot Coffeehouse is located and where two picnic tables sit out front shaded by yellow umbrellas. The picnic tables offer a nice change from the smaller sized tables on other area patios, allowing yourself just a little more space to relax.

The Carrot Coffeehouse (9351 118 Ave)  
Tues-Sat, 9 a.m. - 8 p.m.  
Sun, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Closed Mon

*Victoria is an entrepreneur, roller derby player, and basset hound lover living in the Delton area.*



The Carrot Coffeehouse's patio consists of picnic tables. | Victoria Stevens



Mona Lisa's Pub has four to five tables on their patio. | Victoria Stevens



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# What's ahead for local events

Plenty of fun planned for this summer and fall

- TALEA MEDYNSKI -

Some local festival, fundraiser, and event organizers are tentatively making plans for this summer and fall, while others have decided to cancel this year.

K-Days is one of those events that have been cancelled this year. The Northlands statement says, "Following Premier Kenney's announcement, we at Northlands took a hard look at whether we could deliver a high-quality event given limited timelines and resources. Following discussions with the City of Edmonton and Explore Edmonton, Northlands has made the difficult decision that K-Days will not take place this summer." Organizers hope to re-launch K-Days next year.

Fans of Monster Pro Wrestling can look forward to it starting up.

"We have scheduled our first event back for Saturday, Aug. 7, starting at 2 p.m., outdoors, weather permitting," says Sean Dunster, owner of Monster Pro Wrestling. "We will likely start back on the first Saturday of every month." They will move indoors in October. Dunster adds, "We just opened up the doors of our gym again. We train people too, and have been since 2002!"

Find information about the gym on [facebook.com/MonsterProWrestling](https://www.facebook.com/MonsterProWrestling). Buy tickets at Alberta Avenue Hall, or through any of the wrestlers.

Together Again Outdoor Concert Series will bring live music to people at the former Northlands Park (the current Edmonton

Exhibition Lands). It's a series of socially distanced outdoor concerts taking place Aug. 6 through Aug. 29. Trixstar, an Edmonton-founded live event company, is launching the outdoor concert series.

"Music is an important part of bringing people together and connecting is fundamental for our mental health," says Trixstar's president Mike Anderson. "We're making it safer and more intimate while creating more space and keeping the same excitement you'd expect seeing your favorite bands perform live on stage. It's time to get off our screens and back to experiences."

Visit [togetheragainyeg.ca/](https://togetheragainyeg.ca/) for tickets and concert information.

Morgan Wolf, a board member of the Muttstock team, says Muttstock is set to be held on Aug. 28 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Elmwood Park Community League (12505 75 St.). "[Organizers] have moved the date ahead as far as they possibly could."

A bonus of the new location is that there's only one entrance, and so it will be easier for organizers to control the flow of people if needed. Everything will be held outside, and organizers will spread out things like vendors to ensure nothing is crammed into one area. Plus, the league is right by the Sands Hotel. "We're partnering with Sands Hotel to take care of parking. It's about a 600 metre walk to the league."

She adds, "If we go two years without a festival, we'll be forgotten. [Organizers] are really pushing to get on people's radar."

Muttstock usually includes activities such

as live music and demos.

Wolf says, "Muttstock is formed of a group of animal rescues. Muttstock is one of the rescue's biggest fundraisers. We're just going to try and play this by ear. Let's move forward until we can't."

The Tibetan Bazaar is also on this year from Sept. 18-19 at Alberta Avenue Community Centre. Jeremy Landon, Tibetan Bazaar organizer, says, "We will be hosting online content combined with the traditional in-person programming such as Tibetan cultural food, performances, vendors, teachings, and much more." He adds, "We are mainly looking at hosting the event inside, but there will be additional plans to adjust if needed depending on external circumstances such as changing health measures."

Although the in-person event will be held from Sept. 18-19, the online portion will be available longer, although that is still being planned. "The online content will consist of Dharma teachings, a condensed vendor marketplace through Facebook, and potentially a live stream of the event."

Edmontonians can look forward to Kaleido this year from Sept. 17-19. The theme will be *Dancing in the Streets*.

Christy Morin, artistic director, says, "We know that we're doing Kaleido, we're just not sure what form it will take (stationary or on tour). We know that there will be events running up to Kaleido."

Last year, Kaleido went mobile, touring around the area and stopping for short performances in parks. This year will be

similar in bringing the spirit of Kaleido to the people with performances, art installations, and more. Morin explains, "We're looking at being in the parks for an extended amount of time—an hour to an hour and a half, but we're not sure at this point. We're hoping we can be stationary for longer amounts of time. The parties in the street were great last year; such an intimate experience for the performers and the audience."

Local community leagues will also start offering events and programs. Alberta Avenue Community League intends to have a few campfire pub nights in their garden over the summer and fall. They are also working on a variety of food programs. Visit league websites or follow their Facebook pages.

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

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Muttstock is taking place at Elmwood Park Community League. | portraits by Brizsa



Last year's Kaleido focused on touring the area and short stops for performances. | Epic Photography



Tibetan Bazaar will be held again this year, both in person and online. | Supplied



Monster Pro will be starting up in August with an outdoor show. | Rebecca Lippiatt

# Smudging brings us all together

Exploring an important Indigenous tradition

- CHRISTIE PACE -

To begin, I would like to acknowledge that we are on Treaty Six territory, home of the first peoples, also known as amiskwaciwâskahikan, meaning Beaver Hills House.

We are the keepers of the land for as long as the sun shines, the grass grows, and the river flows. We are on the traditional lands, referred to as Treaty 6 territory, and the City of Edmonton. All people here are beneficiaries of this peace and friendship treaty. Treaty 6 encompasses the traditional territories of numerous Western Canadian First Nations such as the Cree, Saulteaux (so-toe), Blackfoot, Métis, Dene (de-nay), and Nakota Sioux (sue). We acknowledge the many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people who have called this area home since time immemorial.

Smudging, an especially important Indigenous tradition, is a ceremony of praying with traditional medicines. We use sage, sweetgrass, fungus, and or cedar. These items are placed in a small cast iron frying pan or shell, which we light with a match if possible. The smoke from the smudge burns our message to the Creator. We use the smoke to cleanse ourselves while praying. Take the smoke over your head to think good things, over your eyes to see the way, over your ears to hear good things, over your mouth to speak good things. Inhale to give yourself strength. Move the smoke over your body to help you do what you need to do, and over your feet to take you where you need to go.

While you smudge, you pray to the Creator. Those that know their traditional language will pray in that language as it is sacred, and the Creator will hear it more clearly. We give thanks for all things: the sky, the sun, the birds, the animals, the fish, the moon, stars, and our fellow humans. We are all connected, we are all related. After the prayer, those who have been gifted with songs, drums, and

kihsakitin, and love one another.

We cannot take one tradition alone and separate it from all the others. Our way of living is connected like the wind, water, fire, and earth. When you smudge our medicines to pray, you cleanse your mind, body, and spirit. They all work together. Everything is a circle of life; one requires the other. When you speak about smudging you are speaking

Smudging brings all together.

It is not a simple task to choose just one Indigenous cultural tradition to speak to, as all traditions are paramount to the Indigenous peoples. Many Indigenous nations who called this land home had intricate societies with governances and systems in place, and they guided our principles, spirituality, and livelihood. Our ancestors, elders, ceremonial knowledge keepers, and ceremonies bless our way of living and being. Traditions are things that happened to Indigenous people, but those things do not define Indigenous peoples.

It is also important to remember the things that happened after contact—treaties, the Indian Act, residential schools, the Sixties Scoop, and the loss of language and culture. All of Canada must face the consequences of those injustices together. We will see this unfold as we collectively watch the numbers rise of the Indigenous children being found on residential school properties.

The way through this, through the atrocities of residential schools, through our collective mourning, the way to heal is through ceremony.

*Christie is a proud Métis and Black woman from Edmonton amiskwaciwâskahikan (Beaver Hill House.) She currently works as a manager at Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society, the largest urban Indigenous non-profit in Western Canada. Her work focuses on keeping culture at the centre of our work. Christie is a mother, daughter, sister, auntie and wife, as well as a proud Beagle parent to Grym Pace.*



Smudging is an important Indigenous tradition. | Photo by Content Pixie on Unsplash

rattles may share a song. We are all traditional people of our Creator who continue to walk together on Turtle Island and pray as one through prayer,

of ceremony, and when you speak of ceremony you speak to prayer, song, and language. This is what we call wahkotowin; everything is related and connected to one another.

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# Why treaty is more than a word

Knowing the intent of our treaties leads to understanding

**- CONSTANCE BRISSENDEN -**

Eleven treaties were signed between Indigenous nations and the Canadian government, with the last signed in 1921.

Today, their significance is crucial to our understanding, said Dr. Patricia Makokis of Saddle Lake Cree Nation near St. Paul, Alberta. On June 8 during a Zoom presentation called Treaty Talk & Treaty Walk gathering and panel discussion, Makokis spoke on the topic, along with other Cree and non-Cree speakers.

In 2018, Makokis joined forces with the University of Alberta, City of Edmonton, and others to film the documentary *Treaty Talk - Sharing the River of Life*. In 2019, Makokis again worked as film producer of a follow-up documentary called *Treaty Walk - A Journey for Common Ground*, funded by Health Sciences Association of Alberta (HSAA).

Both documentaries help educate about the effect of treaties on both sides.

Dr. Diana Steinhauer, president of Yellowhead University, explained that for Indigenous peoples, the essence of Treaty Six, which includes the Edmonton area, was an unwritten, oral agreement to be allies with the newcomers. For the signers representing the Canadian government, the written word was law, putting control of Indigenous lives and land in their hands.

The documentaries came after a boycott of St. Paul, the nearest town to Saddle Lake Cree Nation. Members of the Nation were angry with the constant racism they faced in St. Paul. The anger started when teenage boys in a black truck shouted degrading insults at Pamela Quinn and her mother,

Florence Quinn, teachers from Kihew Asiniy Education Centre, as they exited the movies in St. Paul in 2005. The boycott of St. Paul's businesses ended one year later after the town formally apologized.

Maureen Miller, St. Paul's mayor, was shaken by the experience. She spoke in the documentary, explaining many residents were "afraid to acknowledge that their beliefs

could be different." The boycott cost the city millions of dollars.

each other. One trekker honestly shares that when she arrived in Canada more than a decade ago, she was told many negative things about Indigenous people. Walking with them as a member of HSSA, she learned

how kind and good they were.

As HSSA speaker Scott Macdougall observed, "Treaties matter. We all benefit from these treaties. We haven't had a chance to get to know each other."

Makokis's grandson, Atayoh Makokis, appears in the films. Only three years old at the time, the happy boy plays outside without a care in the world. Later, he drums and sings the "Grandmother Song" with confidence.

"I want my grandson to grow up without having to face racism," said Makokis. "If we are going to change the Canadian narrative, we are going to do it together. The treaties were about friendship and about sharing the land."

In *Treaty Talk*, Steve Andreas of Saddle Lake Cree Nation asked, "Are you willing to sit down and share what you believe and respectfully listen to somebody else's beliefs and then enter into a dialogue? And have a cup of tea?"

After watching the films and hearing from the speakers, the answer should decidedly be, "Yes."

To watch both documentaries, visit [www.treatytalk.com](http://www.treatytalk.com).

*Constance's writing and editing career spans more than 40 years. She lives in Parkdale-Cromdale.*



Dr. Patricia Makokis speaking during a Zoom session on how to build positive relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous allies. | Constance Brissenden



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# Strengthening through partnerships

## Community partnership to spread local stories

### - REACH EDMONTON -

A new partnership with a local non-profit organization is exploring the way communities talk to themselves about who they are and where they're going, with the hope of creating more empowered, self-defined communities.

REACH Edmonton collaborates with community partners to develop strategies that make Edmonton safer and more vibrant. It conducts its work through community involvement, stakeholder engagement, and inter-agency collaboration. Its key roles are to convene and co-ordinate community members in creating innovative community safety and crime prevention initiatives.

In 2010, the REACH Edmonton Council for Safe Communities was established. Its ambition is to, in one generation (25 years), significantly increase community safety in our region; increase Edmontonians' perception of safety and inclusion; and engage the people of Edmonton and the region in developing a culture of safety and crime prevention.

REACH thrives on collaboration and working with community partners to devel-

op safety strategies that make Edmonton a safer and more inclusive place to live, work, and play.

One of the many community-driven initiatives REACH is involved in is the Neighbourhood Organizing Initiative, which aims to build capacity within communities to address their specific safety and well-being issues. This work begins when communities connect with REACH seeking safety and well-being support. REACH then responds by engaging community members to identify their needs and priorities.

These engagements aim to achieve:

- An engaged, connected, and informed community
- A common vision of what safety means for a community
- Community-specific safety tools
- Connections between communities and external resources and experts
- Data that informs and drives community-owned safety initiatives

The Neighbourhood Organizing Initiative is now actively supporting neighbourhoods as a convener and co-ordinator of local initia-

tives in McCauley, Chinatown, Leefield, and North Glenora.

As an extension of the neighbourhoods' work, REACH is partnering with local, independent media to explore both homegrown solutions and the wider context of the challenges local neighbourhoods wrestle with.

Marilyn Gray, responsible for communications and storytelling for REACH Edmonton, worked in community newspapers for nearly a decade before joining the REACH team.

"This is a unique opportunity to explore what is happening in a neighbourhood," says Gray. "What do the challenges look like, what quiet success stories are happening, and what kinds of futures are possible?"

She adds, "Over time, the stories a community tells itself about who it is, where it came from, and where it's going affects the possibilities we can imagine. This collaboration is an opportunity to support the essential work of local, independent media in exploring who we are as co-creators of our communities."

REACH Stories are featured on the REACH Edmonton website: (reachedmon-

ton.ca/stories/).

"What we hope to see is the cultivation of a community-wide relationship between REACH and community members. I'm hoping that people who are interested in these kinds of ideas, or who have insight into the challenges and opportunities in their neighbourhoods, will reach out to me and we can build this local body of work together," says Gray.

For more information about REACH Edmonton, visit [www.reachedmonton.ca](http://www.reachedmonton.ca).

To connect with Marilyn Gray about REACH Stories, email [Marilyn.Gray@reachedmonton.ca](mailto:Marilyn.Gray@reachedmonton.ca).

*The REACH Edmonton Council for Safe Communities was established in 2010. Its ambition is to, in one generation (25 years), significantly increase community safety in our region; increase Edmontonians' perception of safety and inclusion; and engage the people of Edmonton and the region in developing a culture of safety and crime prevention.*



REACH Edmonton works with community partners. | Supplied by REACH Edmonton

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# A way to find success in Canada

## Education as a pathway to success for newcomers

**- TEAGAN DE SEGUIN -**

The Language Assessment, Referral, and Counselling Centre (LARCC) of Catholic Social Services offers a variety of free services for newcomers. We can help you improve your English, pursue further education, and find success in Canada.

Your first step is to take a Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) English test. This test is widely accepted for applications to English classes, academic upgrading, career training programs, and even some colleges and universities.

After your test, we can provide referrals to English classes and other educational opportunities. You can also meet individually with an educational counsellor to discuss your career goals and learn more about post-secondary education or short-term career training programs.

Post-secondary education refers to any education beyond the high school level, such as college or university. This encompasses a

wide variety of programs ranging from certificates that can be completed in a few months to degrees that require several years of study.

Having a post-secondary education provides increased opportunities for higher-paying and higher-skilled jobs. While any form of education can be beneficial, many employers seek out candidates with Canadian education and/or experience.

When applying to a college or university in Canada, you will likely be asked to submit proof of English language proficiency and documentation of your previous education. Then, you might be asked to take English as a Second Language (ESL) classes or upgrade certain high school courses through academic upgrading. Once these requirements are met, you can begin your studies.

Or you may choose to pursue a short-term career training program. These programs exist in many different fields. While some career training programs prepare you for an entry-level job in a new career field, others are meant to help you re-enter your

professional field from your home country by providing Canadian work experience and training. Program length varies from a few weeks to a few months, and many programs are free or eligible for government funding.

For newcomers with significant education and work experience, there are other ways to build your career and find success in Canada. We might recommend you do an assessment of your international credentials, participate in a professional mentorship program, or gain Canadian experience through a meaningful volunteer position.

Each individual is unique and there are many different paths to success. For some, this means re-entering the profession you held in your home country. For others, success is about pursuing a new career path and finding gainful employment. Once we have assessed your level of English, we can provide personalized advice and referrals based on your educational background and career goals.

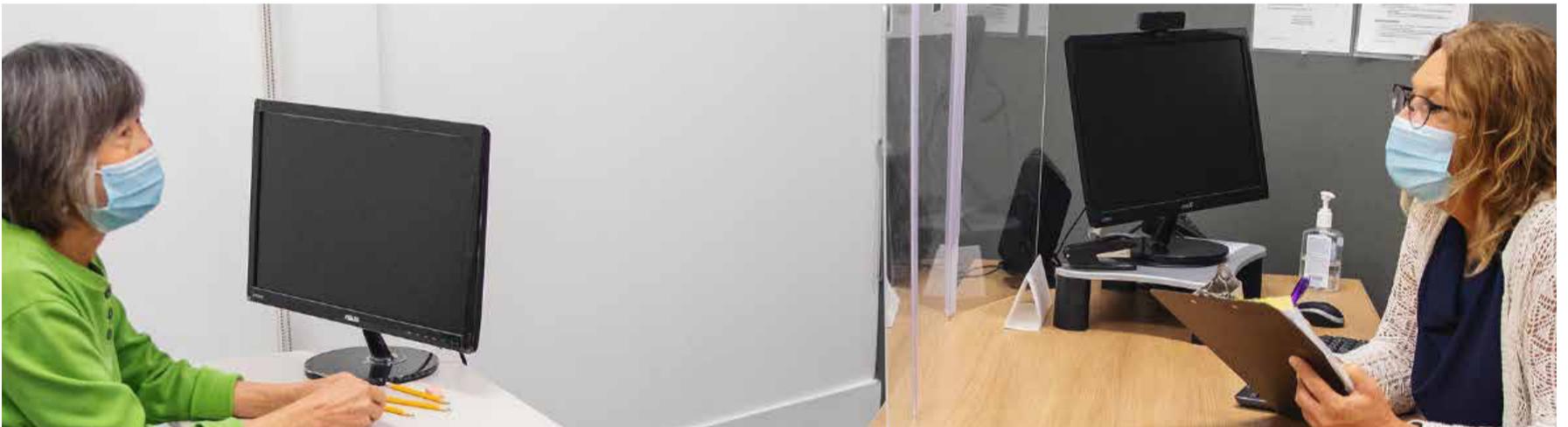
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sessions to learn more about careers and employment, education and student financing, language tests, and more. Register for free at [larcc.cssalberta.ca/Events](http://larcc.cssalberta.ca/Events).

We are currently offering both online and in-person services. In-person services are available at 8212 118 Ave, by appointment only. All services are free for permanent residents, Convention refugees, and Canadian citizens.

To book an English test and/or educational counselling, visit [larcc.cssalberta.ca/Appointments/Booking-an-Appointment](http://larcc.cssalberta.ca/Appointments/Booking-an-Appointment) or call 780.424.3545.

*Teagan is the program coordinator at the Language Assessment, Referral, and Counselling Centre (LARCC) of Catholic Social Services. She delivers presentations about education and employment for newcomers to Canada, and also offers one-on-one educational counselling.*



A newcomer to Canada meets with a staff member from the Language Assessment, Referral, and Counselling Centre (LARCC) for educational counselling. | Supplied by Catholic Social Services

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Photo credit: Jennifer Ostopovich

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# Anti-racism is a call to action

Panelists discuss strategies for reconciliation and anti-racism

- MYA COLWELL -

Local advocacy group Edmonton Culture presented a two-part online discussion, "How to be an Anti-Racist," on June 23 with American author Ibram X. Kendi and a panel of Edmonton's social activists.

This event was organized to fight against rising instances of racism in Edmonton and Alberta. Junetta Jamerson, who runs Black Women United YEG, says, "We're now at a juncture in time where there's a dire course correction needed."

That's where anti-racism comes in. Anti-racism is seeing all racial groups as equal. It means that policies do not lead to inequity, or over-incarceration of racial groups, or cause racial groups to live disproportionately in poverty.

Being an anti-racist comes down to involvement and reflection. Kendi challenges everyone to ask themselves: "Am I upholding

the structure of racism [through policies, the current healthcare and education systems full of systemic racism] and thereby being racist, or am I challenging it and thereby being anti-racist?" We don't have the luxury of hiding behind the term "not racist." Kendi explains there is no middle ground. "You're either being racist or you're being anti-racist."

Andre Corbould, Edmonton's city manager, touched on this when he discussed Edmonton's plan to tackle racism. "All Edmontonians deserve to live in a city free of racism," Corbould says. "Not being a racist is not good enough. All of us need to choose to be anti-racist, and that needs to be infused in everything."

Alberta's particular brand of racism is one of white nationalism and conservatism, says Shalini Sinha, chair of Edmonton's Anti-Racism Advisory Committee. The racism she experienced in her childhood is the same BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of

Colour) youth are experiencing today, three decades later. Education and change are vital, now more than ever. "Racism sets up confusion, it sets up all kinds of lies, it's based on lies," she says, and working toward reconciliation means confronting these lies head-on.

"Infiltrate, don't assimilate," says Christine Sokaymoh Frederick, executive artistic director of the Dreamspeakers Festival Society. Canada has used a policy of assimilation for so long, she explains passionately, and it is important to retain your identity when fighting racism. Jamerson adds: "I want to encourage you to embrace your culture as a protective factor, and not as a liability that has to be cast off in order to survive."

Red tape and barriers might be inevitable when you're fighting for a vibrant, anti-racist community. Sokaymoh Frederick believes that change will result from working in harmony and in solidarity together. We need to work toward anti-racism "because we believe

in the collective good, not just in being seen as a good person," she says.

Panelists encourage people to get involved by volunteering or donating. Elevate BIPOC voices if you have a platform. And offer support to social justice groups if you have the expertise.

"Racism is enacted in multiple ways, and it could take multiple ways to dismantle it," stresses Sokaymoh Frederick. Above all, we need to listen to BIPOC individuals, let them take the lead on policy and choose their solutions, not solutions impressed upon them by Caucasians in power.

*Mya is a student working toward a career in journalism and communications. Writing is one of her passions, besides baking and playing trombone.*



Alberta's type of racism is white nationalism and conservatism. | Pixabay

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# Safe intervention in situations of conflict

Presentation outlined how to be an active bystander

**- THEODORA MACLEOD -**

When witnessing injustice, most individuals say they believe they would intervene on behalf of the victim. However, an online presentation held by SAFFRON Centre on March 26 showed there is more to bystander intervention than commonly assumed.

Early in the presentation, Jack, a practicum student at the centre who presented on the topic, states, “A key component of bystander intervention is that it is deliberately non-violent in nature.”

Jack makes it clear bystander intervention is much more than being a knight in shining armor stepping into battle on behalf of a helpless victim. In fact, the goal is not to battle, but to act with the intention of defusing the situation. And though it may seem this kind of intervention is for face-to-face interactions, the presentation emphasizes it is just as important to mediate when witnessing

injustice online.

The most common reasons why people may not act when they witness a conflict are fear for physical safety and being unsure how to help. However, bystander intervention is deliberately non-violent and places the highest emphasis on personal safety. Another key reason is what experts describe as Diffusion of Responsibility, wherein individuals in a group or public setting with others present assume someone else will intervene. One of the most notable cases of this phenomenon is the 1964 murder of Kitty Genovese in Queens, New York City, where it was originally reported 38 witnesses heard the horrific events taking place, but did not act because each assumed others would intervene or seek help. While the original article making this claim has since been ruled as inaccurate, the term “Genovese syndrome” lives on as another name for what is now more commonly called the bystander effect.

The SAFFRON Centre states those who are confident in their abilities to improve in conflict or emergency situations and those who have seen successful bystander interventions in the past are more likely to act. This is why it is important people are taught effective ways to diffuse a hostile situation. The more knowledge and information one is armed with, the more confident they will likely be.

Effective intervention is broken down into the three Ds:

**D**irect communication with the parties involved using clear and direct language while employing empathy.

**D**istracting or diverting attention away from those involved.

**D**elegating to individuals in the bystander group to take a group approach or seek out higher authority.

The SAFFRON Centre suggests documenting the incident when safe to do so and checking in with the party who may have been harmed. Jack emphasizes documenting or contacting a higher authority only with the consent of the victim and considering how those actions may cause future harm.

The overall message of the presentation was clear: bystander intervention is about preventing harm. The more people who are willing to intervene with the intention of mitigating harm, the more others are also likely to do so in future situations, thus preventing harm and trauma overall.

Jack easily sums it up: “Every individual matters, especially with bystander intervention and learning these techniques.”

*Theodora is a writer and journalism student who has lived in Edmonton for the last 17 years. She has been a resident of central Edmonton for 16 years and is passionate about the community.*



When someone needs help, you can peacefully intervene. | Photo by Rémi Walle on Unsplash

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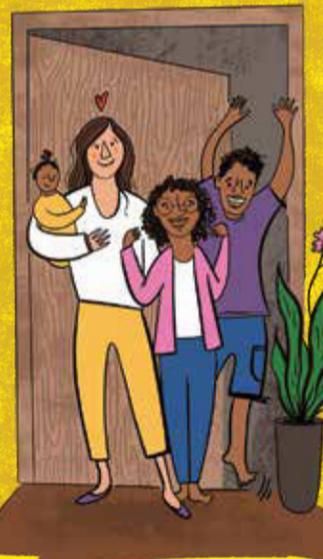
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NAIT - NORTHLANDS, 75 ST - 106 ST / 11AVE - YELLOWHEAD

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