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RAT CREEK PRESS

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FEATURE

Balloon Frames In Norwood

What's Old Is New Again

Housing For Souls

The House Of Straw

True Confessions Of A Renovation Junkie

Comparing Native Homes

Diary Of A Problem House

Nova Plaza Invites New Tenants

AROUND THE HOUSE

BRIEFINGS

Health Centre Design Plans

Community participates in design charette. Preliminary design plans to be unveiled at April 4 meeting.

Nominated for award

Rat Creek & CAP were nominated for Alberta Solicitor General Crime Prevention Award.

May is Clean Up Month

We need your help to clean up the neighbourhood. Volunteer to help with one of the upcoming events: large item pick-up, graffiti removal, 118 Ave Street Sweep or Capital City Clean Up.

New Aboriginal Funding

Local agencies benefit from \$1.1 million in funding to improve quality of life for Aboriginal people.

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Lights on the Avenue

By David Stockburger

On February 23, the Transportation and Streets Committee of the Avenue Initiative met to make a decision about the style of lighting to go up on Alberta Avenue. Over previous weeks, residents and businesses had the opportunity to choose between several lamp styles. Initially, three lamp styles were in the running, but a fourth was added as a result of recommendations made at a previous meeting of the committee.

The lamp styles ranged from the traditional to the more contemporary, and all were displayed at the Alberta Avenue Business Association. With the results of the open house and the views of the committee factored in, a clear favourite emerged. Characterized as a "contemporary acorn" style of light, the Callisto series by Lumec has modern features but echoes more traditional lamp styles from a previous era. While the choice of most people was the Callisto, there was an open and at times contentious discussion at the committee meeting.

Concerns were raised regarding the timing of making the choice, about whether or not

the process of selecting a light was backwards, and on how the tone of lighting, whether yellow or white, would affect the atmosphere of Alberta Avenue. In the end, constraints around the ordering and installation process, the desire to address safety concerns, and the number of lights that would be part of the initial installation all carried the most weight in the deci-



sion to move forward. As a result, the lights should be ordered in the near future and ought to be up and in use by the summer along Alberta Avenue.

The initial installation will make use primarily of trolley poles for mounting the lights

upon. Described as "staged pedestrian lighting", the city employees cautioned that this installation will not reflect how pedestrian lighting will ultimately look on Alberta Avenue, since the spacing and number of lights is dependent chiefly on where the trolley poles are located.

To give perspective, the initial installation will only

amount to roughly one third of the total number of lights to be installed. As such, there is opportunity in the future, if the community and the committee feel it is warranted, to choose a different style of lighting for a portion of the streetscape.



NEW PEDESTRIAN LIGHT SELECTED FOR 118 AVENUE

New Incentives To Entice Students To St. Gerard School

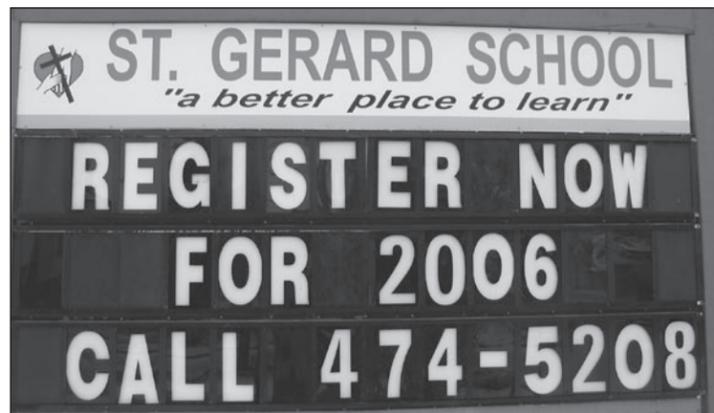
By Karen Mykietka

The first message parents and

administrators of St. Gerard's want to get out is that the school is not closing. They are being

proactive in discussing how to boost enrolment so that the discussion of closure will not be on the table in the future.

This year the school has seen the lowest enrolment in 10 years with only 113 children registered, the highest being 198. Principal Dan Friedt has hopes of adding 15 new students a year over the next three years. The changes they are instituting for the 2006-07 school year will certainly sweeten the pot for any parent looking at their school options.



continued on page 2...

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Volume 8 • Issue 3

April 2006

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OUR MISSION The mission of the Rat Creek Press Association is to highlight community news, activities, and recreational opportunities as well as local residents and businesses to support the growth of a strong, vibrant, well-connected community.

OUR GOALS To Build Community,
Encourage Communication and
Increase Capacity.

RAT CREEK ONLINE

Check out our great website at ratcreek.org. You'll find the latest issue online days before it reaches your mailbox. All past issues are also available online. Keep up-to-date on local events and meetings with our online community calendar. Check our site regularly for updates.

UPCOMING ISSUES

MAY Education & Learning

JUNE Celebrating Culture

JULY Travel

GUEST EDITORIAL

The Love Shack

By Scott Peters

My family and I live in a Sears catalogue house that was built in 1917. Sometime in the 1950s an addition was built onto the back of it. Sometime in its first twenty years of life, the foundation cracked. It has siding, over stucco, over one inch planking. The windows are new, thanks to me and some friends, and it has a five-foot high cellar barely big enough for a washer, dryer, furnace, and water tank. I am six-foot-two. I believe that the most inept handyman in history lived in this house for many years, doing many inept modifications.

But we like it. And we like the area. And so we contemplate additions, paint jobs, demolitions, redesigns, shingles, and garages, and we also try to do most of the

work ourselves. Owning a house, old or new, can be a full time job if you are so inclined, and believe me, most of the work is not that difficult to do. Just turn on your TV. I mean, if some of those guys can do it, so can you.

Sometimes I look at our house and all I see is an endless

list of work that needs to be done to it. Where to start? Where to find the time? I spend as much time working on the house as I do playing with our kids, and often it's at the same time.

I think back to when I was my children's age and the big

old drafty houses we lived in. My father also worked tirelessly to improve the places we lived in, but for all of his work, I mostly remember the things that happened and the people that we knew. Being in the armed forces, we lived in several different cities, and all those different

houses seem to me now as one. I remember their differences, but they were just places that our family lived in. They could have been mansions or falling down shacks (and I suspect that the truth is somewhere in between), but the most important thing

about them to me now, is that we lived in them. They were just the places that we made our history in. History has already been made in our old homestead house. Two generations of history. And we are trying to add a third. Trying to create good and lasting memories that neither these walls nor us will ever forget. We won't remember the cracks in the corners, or the stains on the carpets, or the drafty front door, but we will remember the birthdays, graduations, and backyard picnics that fill our lives.

But don't get me wrong because one of these days, maybe not tomorrow, but soon enough, I'll get around to fixing the cracks, and stains and drafts. But first, perhaps, just one more bedtime story.....

History has already been made in our old homestead house. Two generations of history.

And we are trying to add a third.

St. Gerard School ... Continued From Page 1

First of all, St. Gerard extended its boundaries west to 107 St; it previously ended at 90 St. Their boundaries now include Westwood, Delton, Elmwood Park, Alberta Avenue (north of 118 Ave) and Eastwood (north of 120 Ave). These new boundaries overlap with St. Alphonsus.

Boundaries are somewhat meaningless because parents can send their children to any school they choose provided there is room and appropriate programming. Where boundaries come into play is when you want yellow school busing for your child; this is only available within the school boundaries. So now the busing area for St. Gerard is bigger.



In addition, the school will be waiving the \$19/month cost of yellow bus service and dropping the \$65-per-student school fees next year. The school also has a free morning snack program and free lunch supervision. An added bonus is an on-site Day Care and Before & After School Care.

St. Gerard Catholic School opened in 1950 and is located

Emma (5) and her brother Anthony (3) on the way out the door to drop Emma at kindergarten at St. Gerard School. Mom, Nadine Roppo, has already strapped 15 month old Sophia in the van. Emma is following in the footsteps of her father, Mike Roppo, who also attended St. Gerard.

in Eastwood right up against the Yellowhead sound barrier wall at 12415 85 St. Currently the school has five classes: Kindergarten, Grade 1, Grade 2/3, Grade 3/4, Grade 5/6. They hope their changes will attract new students so that they will be able to have single grade classrooms.

All our north central schools, both Public and Catholic, are struggling with low enrolments. The larger question for our community is: will these changes and the advertising campaign entice students not already going to a neighbourhood school to register at St. Gerard's, or will they just pull students away from our other schools?

www.stgerard.ecsd.net

New Plans For Avenue

News Release - April 1st

Due to the recent collapse of oil prices, City Council approved drastic budget cuts that impact the Avenue Initiative. The good news is that a creative approach will be implemented to ensure that Avenue Initiative will still be realized. The project and revitalization will now be undertaken by various corporate sponsors.

The lead company undertaking this project is the one that owns West Edmonton Mall. A spokesman identified the various aspects of their plan: "We are calling the project West Edmonton Mall phase IX - XXII." The

entire length of Alberta Avenue will be covered with a dome and broken into various theme areas. Toll booths will be set up to charge all cars and trucks going down the Avenue to pay for the cost of the dome. The spokesman stated that "This should reduce the amount of traffic going down the Avenue - thus allowing more parking spaces." They are also looking at the option of running a gondola down the middle of the Avenue.

The plan will address the various social and criminal issues in the area by incorporating them into these themes. "We will have a section of the Avenue to reflect an Amsterdam

theme. The 'Red Light' section will incorporate a number of bars and liquor outlets all focusing on the 'Buck-five come alive' price point. This area will, of course, be restricted to people 18 or older". The spokesman felt that this would reduce the negative impact of cruising johns in the neighborhoods.

Sports betting will be available through a unique sporting event being developed, to be known as "Bottle Diving - Survivor". Bottle Diving contestants are supplied with shopping carts and lined up on opposite sides of a street. People are encouraged to drop their

recyclable bottles in the middle of the street - the officials then whistle the start of play and participants collect as many of the bottles as they can. Each participant keeps the bottles they collect as their prize. This will also help in reducing waste collection cost.

Rexall is also looking at participating in the project by sponsoring the "Tribute to the World of Pharmaceuticals" themepark. This section will allow visitors to learn and explore the variety of drugs. Tourists can also buy a variety of drug paraphernalia as souvenirs to remind them of their trip(s).

Other entertainment

areas include the "Gangland Amusement Park" where kids can stake out their territory by renting paintball equipment. Gangland will also offer graffiti art courses and summer camps.

Phase XI will consolidate all pawn shops and cash stores into one area to ensure that financial needs of residents and visitors are met. This consolidation of the 153 businesses will result in the largest financial centre in the country other than Bay Street in Toronto.

Contacted community leaders all agreed that "the price of oil better climb - and soon!!!

GOTCHA! HAPPY APRIL FOOL'S DAY!

Community Gives Design Input For New Health Centre

By Karen Mykietka

Around 100 community members sat at round tables at the Santa Maria Goretti Hall on February 27 arranging wooden blocks or cutting pictures from magazines. This was serious play; it was residents' opportunity to have input into the design of the new health centre.

Vivan Manasc of Manasc Isaac Architects, the company hired to design the new health centre, started the evening with a brief presentation. Manasc talked about her company's philosophy of integrated, sustainable building design. "We need buildings that are healthy for people as well as the planet." A number of her associates mingled with the community members as everyone explored the possibilities, alternatives and challenges of designing the health centre.

Many common themes emerged as each table shared their vision and ideas for the centre

and surrounding space. Residents want the Cromdale School incorporated into the building design in some shape or form; ideas varied from using it as an auxiliary site to using it as the main entrance of the Health Centre. Design concepts of the Centre included L-shapes, U-shapes or decentralized buildings connected by walkways. All groups, however, emphasized wanting some type of courtyard or green space around the building. To maximize the green space and minimize the footprint, residents want as much underground parking as possible.

Interestingly, the group who came out to give design input seemed to be quite different than the people who were at the previous information meeting. Those who were quite vocal about their feeling of not being informed or consulted about plans were conspicuously absent when it was time for community input. Perhaps they were boycotting the meeting on the principle that they don't

approve of the selected location of the centre. Or perhaps, they are like the person who I overheard saying she didn't have time to sit through this, she just wanted to critique the final design.

Rather than sitting around and complaining about what has already been decided or waiting to jump all over proposed plans, we should be doing what we can to influence decisions before they are made. Vivian Manasc said community input was a vital part of their design process. Those who attended the design charette shared their ideas and have a right to complain if they are outright ignored, whilst still remembering that not every suggestion can be accommodated. But frankly, if you couldn't be bothered to show up and share your thoughts, then you have no right to complain at all.

The preliminary design plans will be presented for community feedback on April 4 at 7pm at the Santa Maria Goretti Hall (11050 90 St).

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Capital Health invites you to a workshop about our community's new Primary Health Care Centre

You are invited to a Workshop for the new **Primary Health Care Centre** planned for the former Cromdale School site at 79 Street and 112 Avenue.

Date & Location:

Tuesday, April 4, 2006
Santa Maria Goretti Hall
11050 - 90 Street

7:00 P.M.

Please arrive by 7:00 to fully participate.
Children Welcome

Workshop Overview:

- Provide your initial input on the preliminary designs, elevations, and sketches of the new primary health care centre planned for your community
- Have an opportunity to pose questions

Capital Health's new **Primary Health Care Centre** will be staffed with family physicians, registered nurses and other professional health care providers. The new centre will be a state-of-the-art, one-stop location for most of your medical needs and will bring a variety of health and medical services to everyone in your community.



Information: 401-2668 or www.capitalhealth.ca/newhealthcentre
email: newcentre@cha.ab.ca

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Henry Woudstra, Manager

Training Dollars for Aboriginal Organizations

By Joan Youngman

Urban Aboriginals are benefiting from \$144,000 training dollars aimed at training Aboriginal people. The financial assistance was announced by the Edmonton Housing Trust Fund's Aboriginal Application Review Committee (AARC) to provide training in team building, staff development exercises and diabetes prevention program training for urban Aboriginal youth.

"A primary objective of the UAS is to provide Aboriginal people with greater access to the job skills and experiences they need to succeed in an urban setting," said the Honourable Carol Skelton, Minister of National Revenue and Western Economic Diversification. "Through the efforts of the nine projects identified by the Edmonton Housing Trust Fund, this goal will be achieved."

These funds are part of the federal Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) to improve the quality of life for urban Aboriginal people. Strong emphasis was placed on local input for decision making that addresses local priorities. This collaborative

approach brings together federal, provincial and municipal partners along with local Aboriginal groups to develop and implement the projects.

"These projects will create opportunities for urban Aboriginal people to learn and develop skills that will have a direct impact on their well-being and that of their community in Edmonton. These are important contributions by the Urban Aboriginal Strategy and our partner, the Edmonton Housing Trust Fund," said the Honourable Jim Prentice, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians.

"Training projects are an integral element in developing and nurturing productive Aboriginal organizations," said EHTF chair Carol Murray.

AARC is comprised of a dedicated group from Edmonton's Aboriginal community. "By building capacity, our Aboriginal organizations are empowered to enhance the services they provide to our people," said AARC committee member Clayton Kootenay.

WHO BENEFITS?

Family Centre of Northern Alberta \$15,173.

The Nechi/Poundmaker's Lodge \$15,225

Yellowhead Tribal College \$20,000

Makhoos Society of Alberta \$18,500

Native Counselling Services of Alberta \$17,250

Native Seniors' Centre \$16,800

Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women \$16,330

Dreamspeakers Festival Society \$15,800

Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society \$9,900



Rat Creek Press And CAP Nominated For Awards

By Karen Mykietka & Donna Fregren

Every year, the Government of Alberta recognizes the efforts of Albertans who show excellence in the field of promoting community safety through crime prevention, with the Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security Crime Prevention Awards.

Rat Creek Press was nominated by Safedmonton in the media category, and the work of the CAP (Community Action Project) Development Team was

nominated by Donna Fregren, a CAP member and Alberta Avenue resident, in the category of community program or organization.

The awards are presented annually to recognize the outstanding achievement of individuals, youth, businesses and community organizations involved in crime prevention. The awards are also an important element in the overall success of Alberta Crime Prevention Week (ACPW) – May 13 to 20.

The Rat Creek Press has

worked cooperatively with many local organizations such as PAAFE (printing articles related to prostitution), Edmonton Neighbourhood Watch, and the Alberta Avenue Business Association. A new column, Law & Order: On Patrol, was added recently to explore crime and policing issues. Rat Creek Press provides education and awareness about local issues and needs as well as promotion of community assets and capabilities. The paper exists to support the growth of a strong, vibrant, well-connected

community which is a key element in crime prevention.

The CAP Development Team has worked tirelessly for three years on behalf of all of the residents of Norwood, to make our neighbourhood a safer place. They have worked successfully to have the Cloisters Apartments torn down, and very importantly, have worked to include our community voice in the development plans for the now vacant site. Their work is an excellent example of the “action” in

Community Action Project. The Development Team not only dealt with an immediate problem, but went a step further to play a role in crime prevention. The CAP Development Team is an example of how the residents, working together, can make our neighbourhood a more safe and secure place to live. They certainly have made a difference.

Be proud of your community and help us prevent crime by recognizing those who give their time and money to make our communities safer places to live.

NNA & Community Work Together

I am impressed! Impressed for a number of reasons, one being the Norwood Neighbourhood Association has successfully completed yet another casino.

But what really impressed me was the casino organizing process, which appeared daunting. The assigned casino days were midweek and the shifts very long, not to mention the late shift that took volunteers into the wee hours. I wondered who would willingly participate.

Once the word was out and NNA Board Member Yoko got the ball rolling, it only gained momentum. It truly moved forward using the community network, contact by contact, person by person stepping up to say they could help out and were willing to commit well in advance.

Volunteers stepped up from all over the Norwood Neighbourhood including the Norwood school, community leagues, and some through reading the Rat Creek Press (RCP).

A senior citizen who, as a child, had lived in the Norwood Neighbourhood, read the RCP and saw the call for volunteers. She made contact and not only was she interested but three of her friends offered as well. By the time we were ready to hit the casino, would you believe, we actually had an emergency volunteers list. Those are the brave souls who are ready at the drop of a hat to come on board if someone doesn't show. Fortunately, we only had to draw once from that list. The two day casino went very smoothly, thanks to the commitment and work of the volunteers in our community.

It is through past efforts

like this that the NNA has gladly provided financial sponsorship to the following:

- The Norwood School Parent Council, to provide a hot breakfast, after school program and library enhancement.
- The Community Action Project, to address broader social issues that impact our community.
- The Alberta Avenue Business Association, to sponsor a Norwood artists' event
- The Alberta Avenue Community League, to sponsor an indoor playground
- The Rat Creek Press, to connect and inform local residents of events and matters important to the community

The NNA also takes pride in hosting four local events each year including the very much-looked forward to and successful Canada Day celebration.

The NNA makes me think of “The Little Engine That Could”. We are small, but determined to make a difference. You can be part of this as well; NNA is looking for people wanting community involvement, and we have a number of interesting opportunities. Whatever time you are able to give we can put to good use. Our next meeting will be held in the boardroom of the Norwood Child and Family Resource Centre (9516 – 114 Avenue) on Wednesday, April 12 at 7:00 p.m. Just press the buzzer top right of the front entrance and be a part of something fun and important. I'm betting you too will be impressed!

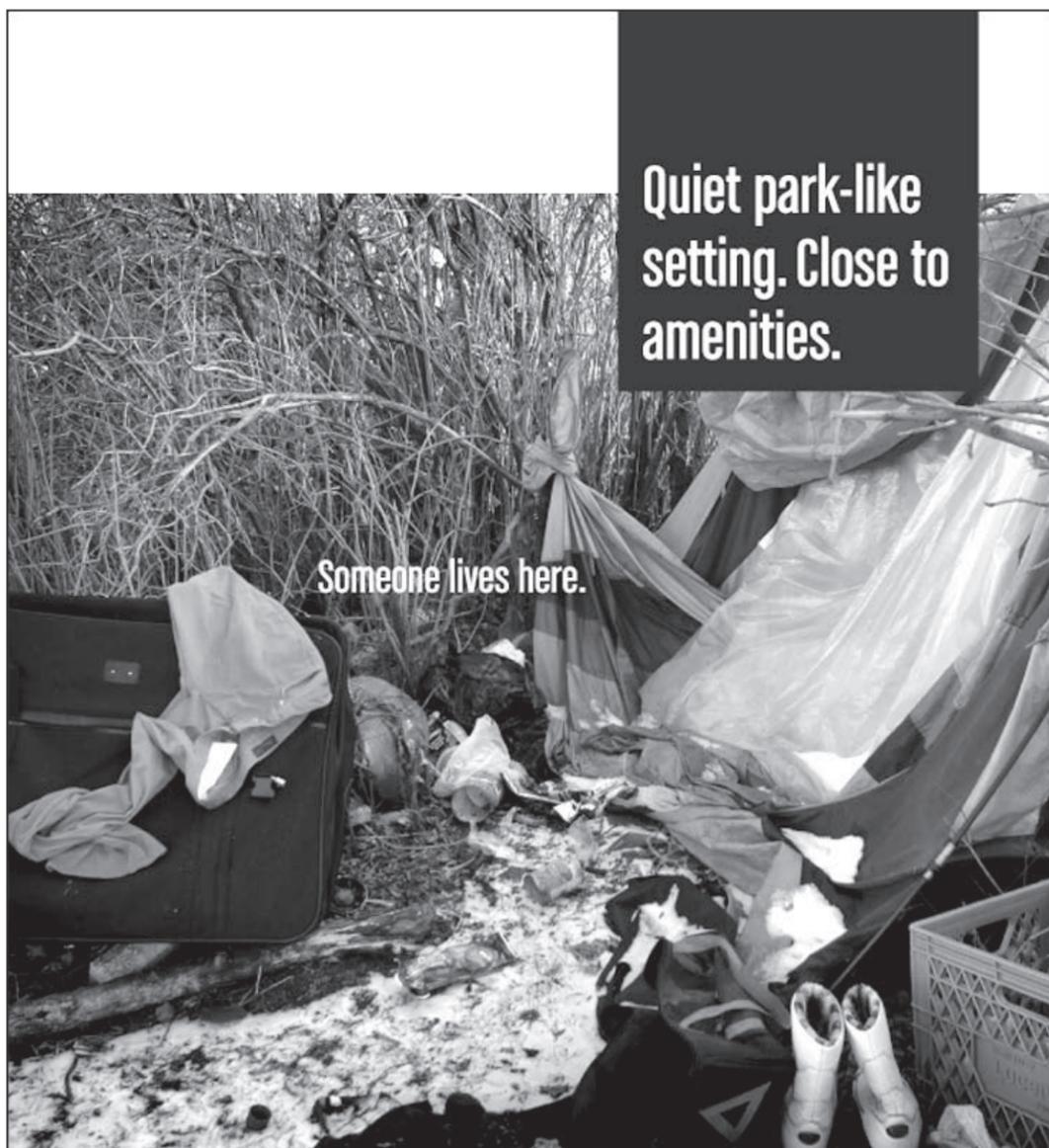
Valerie Parr
Vice President

Norwood Neighbourhood Association

HOUSING RESOURCES & OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Landlord & Tenant Advisory Board 496-5959
Capital Region Housing Corporation 420-6161
Boyle St. Community Services Co-op 424-4106
Edmonton Inner City Housing Society 421-1339
Inner City Youth Housing Project 479-7075

Home Ed (City of Edmonton) 474-5706
Edmonton City Centre Church Corp. 424-7543
Women's Emergency Accommodation Centre 423-5302
Crossroads 474-7421
Elizabeth House 378-0611



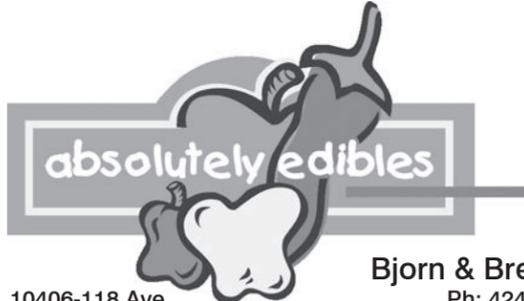
Quiet park-like setting. Close to amenities.

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It's a reality that for thousands of Edmontonians, there really is no place like home. Creating more affordable housing is everyone's responsibility. Governments, community agencies, and the Edmonton Joint Planning Committee on Housing are working to help. So can you.



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Which of These Costly Home-seller Mistakes Will You Make When You Sell Your Home?

EDMONTON - A new report has just been released which reveals 7 costly mistakes that most homeowners make when selling their home, and a 9 Step System that can help you sell your home fast and for the most amount of money.

This industry report shows clearly how the traditional ways of selling homes have become increasingly less and less effective in today's market. The fact of the matter is that fully three quarters of homesellers don't get

what they want for their home and become disillusioned and - worse - financially disadvantaged when they put their home on the market.

As this report uncovers, most homesellers make 7 deadly mistakes that cost them literally thousands of dollars. The good news is that each and every one of these mistakes is entirely preventable.

In answer to this issue, industry insiders have prepared a free special report entitled "The

9 Step System to Get Your Home Sold Fast and For Top Dollar".

To hear a brief recorded message about how to order your free copy of this report, call 1-866-815-9646 and enter ID#4900. You can call anytime, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Call NOW to find out how you can get the most money for your home.

This report courtesy of Donna Straus, Realty Executive Challenge. Not intended to solicit properties already listed for sale.

Gardening - An Essential Human Act

By Ron Berezan

How do we know when spring has arrived? Is it that first robin's song? The lengthening days? The water flowing down the gutters? I know that spring has arrived when all of the south facing windows in our home become overcrowded with trays of eager young tomatoes, peppers, herbs, and flowers, all competing for light and space and announcing to the world that another gardening season has begun.

There are few other human activities that are so universal and so timeless as planting a garden. For over 15,000 years, in every corner of the planet, people have been watching the seasons and carefully planting seeds to grow the food that makes their lives and the lives of their families, communities, and societies possible.

It is perhaps no surprise that Canadians collectively now report gardening as their third most popular leisure activity (next only to reading and - gasp!

- television watching). As millions of us across the country can attest, the benefits of gardening are many: fresh air and exercise, creative, emotional, and spiritual satisfaction, the development of beautiful outdoor spaces, and connecting to nature in a way that can often be difficult for those of us who live in cities.

When our yards and gardens include edible species, these benefits continue to multiply. The taste of a plum right off the tree, a carrot pulled from the garden moments before eating, or a fresh snip of parsley added to a soup or a salad is unsurpassable. The nutritional quality of homegrown food is also superior to most of what is typically found in the grocery store aisles. From the moment of harvest, vitamins and minerals progressively decline which is a real concern if your food is traveling thousands of kilometers on its way to your plate.

Planting a vegetable garden, or better yet, creating an 'edible landscape' of fruits, berries,

herbs, and veggies can also result in a substantial economic saving. One apple tree will produce thousands of dollars worth of apples in its lifetime. Add in a pear tree, a couple of plums, saskatoons, currants, raspberries, strawberries, and an intensive vegetable and herb garden, and the financial benefits really add up. Not to mention the added value to your property and to your quality of life.

We who live in cities can easily drift into the illusion that we are separate from the eco-systems around us. Nature can become something "out there". Planting, tending, and harvesting a garden is a great way to explore and celebrate our deep connections with the earth that sustains us.

Ron Berezan lives and gardens in McCauley and operates The Urban Farmer, an organic gardening and edible landscaping service. Contact him at www.theurbanfarmer.ca, or 221-4800.

Celebrate The Earth

GET INVOLVED IN EARTH DAY EVERY DAY!

Every little action counts towards helping the earth. You could volunteer at a local event or just participate. Write to your municipal, provincial and federal representatives about your environmental concerns. Plant a tree or clean up the garbage on your block. Resolve to re-use, re-cycle and shop wisely. Use your car less; plan to take the bus, bike or walk. The possibilities are endless!

Earth Day Celebration in Edmonton

Edmonton Earth Day is organized by the Earth Awareness Society of Edmonton. It features music, environmental discovery activities for the kids, earth friendly food and exhibits, and free workshops throughout the afternoon. This is a wonderful way to celebrate and learn.

Located at Hawrelak Park on April 23, from 12:00 - 7:00 p.m.

First launched as an environmental awareness event in the United States in 1970, Earth Day (April 22) is celebrated as the birth of the environmental movement.

In 1990, two million Canadians joined 200 million people in 141 nations in celebrating the first International Earth Day. In many countries, the global event brought pressure on heads of state to take part in the UN Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro to address issues such as climate change and the worldwide loss of species.

In Canada, Earth Day has grown into Earth Week and even Earth Month to accommodate the profusion of events and projects. They range from large public events, such as Edmonton's Earth Day Festival at Hawrelak Park (30,000 participants), and Oakville, Ontario's Waterways Clean-up (2,000 participants) to the thousands of small events staged by schools, employee groups and community groups.

Excerpt from www.earthday.ca

Celebrating 25 Years

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Volunteers make Rat Creek a Success. Getting Rat Creek to over 8,000 mailboxes takes a lot of time and energy and it could not be done without the hard work of our volunteers.

Call: 479.6285

Business on the Avenue

By Peter Rausch
Executive Director, AABA

Our Association will again be sponsoring two main events for the Avenue this spring and summer. The first is our "Second Annual Spring Street". We will again be cleaning the Avenue from Northlands to NAIT. The event will be held on Tuesday, May 16 and Wednesday, May 17 – we will be starting at Northlands and making our way to 90 Street on the first day, then finishing the job the next day. We are inviting all participating businesses to a celebration barbeque at the Metrotown Market after the work is done.

There will be a media launch on May 17 with members of City Council and other dignitaries at 7:30 am at the Coliseum Steak and Pizza parking lot. Anyone who can get up this early is invited to join us

for coffee, doughnuts and help launch the Sweep!

We are looking at contacting a power wash company to give an extra sparkle to the storefronts and providing dumpsters for larger items to better spruce up the Avenue. The City has allocated additional funds to keep the Avenue (and the rest of the City) clean during the spring and summer. As a result of these new funds we will see improved litter bin cleaning and collections, increased street flushing to 5 nights per week, back lanes will be swept and increased street furniture cleaning. We are also working with Edmonton Transit System to tidy up the bus stops and shelters.

Once the sweeping and cleaning are done, participating businesses will have their flower barrels in place along the Avenue by the end of May. In the longer term, as part of the

Avenue Initiative, we are looking at using hanging flowerpots instead of the barrels.

The second big event is our "Second Annual Shine & Dine" that will be held at NAIT on Saturday, July 8. The cars will be on display from 10:00am to 4:00pm at the 118 Avenue & 106 Street parking lot. We are planning to draw over 150 custom cars and 1,200 people for this event.

One big change for this event will be the addition of a DJ to pump out the music! DJ Tanner is a car buff himself and has a great collection of hits from the 50's, 60' and 70's to get people dancing. We will be promoting our restaurants and other food businesses by distributing discount coupon books at this event.

Please call me if you would like additional information on these programs or to be a volunteer.

NEEDED: ONE ENERGETIC SUMMER STUDENT FOR AABA

AABA is looking to hire a summer student to help our efforts. The duties for this position include: updating and compiling our Business Directory, preparing "Business Profiles" for the Rat Creek Press, helping plan and coordinate our events, participating in the Avenue Initiative and helping identify potential businesses for the Avenue.

We are looking for a postsecondary student – ideally enrolled in a Marketing, Business or Planning program. We are looking for someone to start in early May and work for 18 weeks. The hours of work are 8:30am to 4:30 pm at a rate of \$10.00/hour.

For further information, or to apply for the position please call 471-2602.

Alberta Avenue Business Association
Ph: 471.2602
E-mail: aaba@telusplanet.net

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

XL-Ent Furniture And Impeccable Service

By Karen Mykietka

You would be hard pressed to find anyone in Edmonton who knows furniture like Ed Struzynski. Struzynski, at 77 years old, runs the oldest furniture business in Edmonton. This Ukrainian/Polish country boy started a rug cleaning business in 1952 and opened XL Furniture at 11349 95 St in 1955. Today the store is a two-level 16,000-square-foot furniture showroom and warehouse. The business is family: Ed, his two sons, Al and Wayne, and daughter-in-law Colleen all work at the store regularly.

The exterior is very unassuming. Many of us in the neighbourhood have likely driven or even walked by many times without really noticing or paying attention. Joy Dyck says, "A few years ago we were looking for living room furniture...the last place we looked, and the one closest to home, was XL Furniture. It was there that our search ended because we found the best price for the style and make we had been looking at elsewhere."

Many of us don't realize we have a premiere furniture store in our midst. People from all over Edmonton and across the province come to our neighbourhood seeking out XL Furniture. I asked a customer browsing in the store how she heard about XL, she replied, "I grew up in Edmonton.

You just know XL Furniture is where to go."

And a smart choice it is! The price tag on the furniture includes the GST, free delivery anywhere in Alberta, and extended warranty. With all those extras, the price is still probably lower than you'll find anywhere else. That is just the beginning. Ed says, "This place is built on service...We have our own delivery truck, our own guys who take the time and do it right."

Doing it right means a pre-delivery inspection including any necessary touch ups or adjustments, then full-service home delivery. They will leave your floor clean and not a mark on your wall. Your old furniture will be moved for you and your new purchase left completely assembled and arranged.

Al Struzynski, who is vice-president of his father's company, says what makes their business unique is the personal touch. "Our slogan is 'We'll keep you happy for life'. That's really what we're all about. We're on old company and we do business the old way where people can trust you and you make them happy."

For Al the long-term plan was always to take over the family business, but he got into it sooner than he planned when he graduated from university in Engineering in the early 1980s and was unable

to find employment in Edmonton. His wife, Colleen, also worked in the business on and off during the years and is now there pretty much full-time. Customers seek her advice on coordinating colors and styles.

Currently, there are three other staff in addition to the four family members. But with plans for a fourth expansion, this will likely have to grow as well unless they convince the third generation, the grandchildren, to join the family business. Speaking of himself Al says, "When your father owns a business, that's what you use to make money." Now things have come full circle, and Al is the father who is able to offer his children an occasional job or the opportunity to take over the longstanding family business.

The store is open Monday to Saturday from 9 am to 5:30 pm, until 9 pm on Thursdays and closed Sunday. It offers a great selection including furniture by names such as Flexsteel, La-z-Boy, El ran, Buhler, Simmons, Bermex and Dutilier. They also offer flexibility from custom ordering upholstery to mix and match dinettes.

Dyck says, "The service was impeccable, the furniture was high quality and Alberta made to boot, and they had the lowest price. I was sold." I'm sure you will be too.

(See Ad Page 14)



THE STRUZYNSKI FAMILY AND ONE OF THEIR EMPLOYEES
(Left to Right) WAYNE STRUZYNSKI, PETER YUZYK, ED STRUZYNSKI, COLLEEN STRUZYNSKI, AND AL STRUZYNSKI.



Business Briefs

By Karen Mykietka

NEW

BARRY'S SIGN SHOP

8605 118 Ave
Ph: 477-7446

Barry Lloyd's been in the signage business for three years. He was previously located in Beverly where he did a lot of signs for local businesses. Lloyd moved west down the Avenue to take advantage of a better lease deal and find a new market. While Lloyd doesn't do electrical signs, he says his prices are the best in town on banners, vehicle lettering, magnetic signs and window signs. If you've ever seen Azucar Latin Nightclub signs, you've seen his work. Lloyd also donated all the KIS Club signage. If you need a sign, call Lloyd. Please do call first as he may be out on a job.

DIVERSE CASH LOANS

8648 118 Ave
Ph: 477-7484

Another cash store has opened on the Avenue. The store is an independent (as opposed to a franchise) and is owned by a numbered company. Dean Clarke, the manager, says they provide cheque cashing and loan services. He also indicated that the same numbered company plans to open a service

shop on the other side of the building to provide the community with services such as photocopying, faxing, internet access, and bill payment. Clarke says they want to provide services the community needs and wants.

AFRICAN BEAUTY SUPPLIES

11748 95 St
Ph: 471-2212

This is a bright and colourful store because the wall and racks are lined with African clothing, scarves and fabric. Kadija Nur, the owner, is a native of Somalia. This is her family's second business on the Avenue – her husband runs the Quba Halaal Meat & Convenience Store across the street. The store carries skin and hair products from Arab states that are popular among African women. You'll also find African dresses, skirts, blouses and scarves. The prices are very reasonable; a decorative jean skirt is only \$25. Open Monday to Thursday 10:00 am to 9:30 pm and Friday to Sunday 10:00 am to 11:30 pm. An African hairdressing shop in the same location is also in the works.

KASOA TROPICAL FOOD MARKET

8529 118 Ave
Ph: 471-1177

This new market specializes in African and Caribbean Foods.

You'll find canned and dry goods as well as fresh, frozen and dried fish, most of which is imported from Africa. The owner, Charity Durowaa, is originally from Ghana. Durowaa has been in Canada for 12 years and moved to Edmonton from Toronto. She started importing and selling ethnic food items from her home when she couldn't find any stores carrying the products she wanted. You'll find some unique items at her store like a fermented corn flour product that is used in many traditional African recipes, a smoked dried fish that is a staple in Africa and dried snails on a stick. Open Monday to Saturday, 10:30 am to 7:00 pm.

HOME-RELATED

ARCADE FLOORING AND SUPPLIES

11714 82 St
Ph 944-9300

Arcade specializes in hardwood, laminate, carpet, ceramic tile and linoleum. Prices are very competitive and service is very friendly and knowledgeable. Clay Smith established Arcade Flooring about 12 years ago but has close to 40 years experience in the flooring business. He is a hands-on man, and if time permitted his preference would be to personally install

all flooring for his customers, but that is just not possible. Smith prides himself on his company's workmanship and customer service. He's full of helpful advice on anything to do with floors, so give him a call.

LENNIE'S GLASS

474-2671
cell 446-1208

This business may sound familiar to those of you who have been around the area a while. Lennie's Glass opened on 118 Ave and 82 St in the 1930s (the location is now vacant and has a Canada Glass sign). The business has been passed through the family from founder Colin Lennie to his brother Charlie to Colin's son Brian who ran the business until the 1990s and then closed it. Three years ago, Mark Lennie, Brian's son, resurrected the business but opted to run it from his home. Mark has been working in the glass business since he

was a teenager helping his dad in the shop. He does residential and commercial work, most of it onsite. When you need glasswork, check out this third-generation local business.

CLOSED

TIMOTHIE HILL HAIRDRESSING

11507 87 St.

Timothie Hill visited Salt Spring Island, B.C. in December and has decided to relocate there permanently. He recently sold the building which housed his business and home in Parkdale. He plans to visit Edmonton in early April to pack up the rest of his belongings.

MAY IS CLEAN UP MONTH

Volunteer drivers and pickup trucks are needed for large item pick-up. Help clean up your neighbourhood. If there aren't enough volunteers in your area, you may not get pick-up service! Call Judy Allan at 496-1913.

8612 - 118 Ave
Edmonton, Alberta
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479-4378

We're looking much better. Thank you.



At The Medicine Shoppe, we're giving your favourite pharmacy a whole new look. Our recent renovations have enhanced our already prompt prescription service and expanded our

health care selection. It's all part of our dedication to personally know you and help you with your individual health care needs. Remember, when it matters most, it's The Medicine Shoppe.

The Medicine Shoppe
PHARMACY

Parminder Bhui, B.Sc. Pharm
Pharmacist/Owner
8111-118 Avenue
Edmonton, AB
Hours: M-F 9 a.m.-6 p.m. | Sat 9 a.m.-2 p.m.
477-1192

SPECIAL OFFER

All **Rexall** Products
Offer expires June 30, 2006

25% OFF

Have Your Unused Rooms Earn You Money

Many of the homes in our neighbourhoods have basement suites or a suite could be added. Some of us live in houses with more rooms than we need. The Northern Alberta Brain Injury Society (NABIS) encourages you to consider renting a suite or providing room and board for someone with acquired brain injury.

NABIS, located on 111 Ave, is a non-profit organization which promotes an optimal lifestyle for northern Albertans affected by brain injury. They provide a continuum of services to people affected by acquired brain injury including: support, service coordination, information, referral, leisure/recreation and advocacy. The causes of acquired brain injury are varied and could include motor vehicle collisions, stroke and aneurysms, tumors, falls, sports-related injury, disease and oxygen deprivation.

Ken McLeod, an Eastwood resident, buys and fixes up

homes in our area and rents them to people with lower income. He has worked with NABIS and their clients and says they make great tenants. So if you have a suite in your home or you are open to the idea of providing room and board, please contact Linda Oxford at NABIS, phone 479-1757 or email linda@aihhelp.org.

Brain Injury: any damage to the brain
Every year: 10 000 Albertans sustain a brain injury. 1700 to 1800 require ongoing support of one kind or another.
Every month: NABIS supports 300 Albertans affected by brain injury.

NABIS – Northern Alberta Brain Injury Society
www.nabis.ab.ca
#229, 10106 111 Ave
479-1757

Balloon Frames In Norwood

By John Masciuk

Norwood is a charming district dominated by balloon-framed houses from the 1900s.

Until the 1830s, British tradesmen and construction practices of mortising heavy posts and beams dominated American home building. About 1833, an American invented a method of putting up buildings using 2 x 4s and a keg of nails. This type of house construction was dubbed a balloon-frame, because they thought it would blow away in the first heavy windstorm. However, these buildings stood the test of time, and the practice of framing in this fashion lasted until the new 2x 4s standards of the 1940s.

Some of these houses have distinct exterior characteristics with their several small roofs projecting out from the front at various angles. The roof-lines give these houses a distinct styling, which the new duplexes try to imitate. Balloon frame houses were the first attempt at creating affordable housing

for a mass market, and over time thousands of designs were created, some more desirable than others.

Many of these houses are as charming inside as they are on the outside but some homeowners have found that the pleasant exterior is lost in a somewhat cramped and dark interior.

An example of a house with problems for the contemporary mind is the "four square". In the four square each floor has four rooms and an enclosed porch

attached to the front of the house. That meant that the windows in the front two rooms

on the main floor faced into the porch, creating two rooms that felt dark and cramped. The



front enclosed porch is also a waste of space because it has no use other than storage. Other

designs, whether square or rectangular, have the same problem if the enclosed porch is left

on the front of the house.

The obvious solution would be to remove the enclosed porch. However, that would also alter the roofline and reduce the size of the house. Removing the wall between the house and the porch is the most common solution, which allows a view from the porch. However, insulated windows in the former porch can be difficult. There has to be an architectural

balance with the new windows or they will look out of place.

Another more common approach is to put glass patio doors on the back of the house. With these doors, light brightens up the house from the back and gives a view overlooking the back yard. However, placing a patio door ultimately gives the impression that the house is more modern than it is.

These balloon-framed houses, have their own history and style. A few homeowners are diligently restoring their old house to its original state, looking for the old fixtures in flea markets and garage sales. Others renovate with new fixtures, new kitchen cupboards and a coat of paint. Whatever the problem these houses present to the homeowner, one can only hope that with all the modern materials and ideas applied to each of the houses something will still tie all these houses together into one community.

What's Old Is New Again

By Bruce Grams

Interior Design likes to revisit and rethink the past. We can witness this revisiting in the fashion and automotive industries as well. Think PT Cruiser and flared pants!

The latest reincarnation is the earthtone interior. This new colour trend includes beige, browns, blues and oranges. This look was big in the early to late 1970s.

What is different about it this time out is the choice of accents and textures. Gone are the macrame plant hangers, the bright wall-to-wall carpets and wood trims. Instead, we have woven wood blinds, hardwood floors and painted trims.



The furniture style has changed as well. Sleek refined "hotel" style furniture is all the rage. It is upholstered in solid fabrics with a softer texture, as opposed to the bold patterned



fabrics of the '70's. What is good about this is that the thin armed sofas and chairs fit better into our smaller interiors. Yes, it is true, most of us are living in smaller homes.

Wallpaper is also making its way back into our homes; just don't expect to find any bold red patterns with black flocking. The new papers have an embossed texture and much softer colours. The one exception is the revival of grasscloth. This paper was a high-end look in the past, and it will re-enter the market as high-end again.

Back to the beige, browns and blues. The beiges have yellow undertones, while the browns and blues have what

I call a dirtyness to them, as opposed to being bright and clear. This creates a more somber subdued palette. What gives the room a crisp look is the introduction of black as an accent.

How long will this look be with us? Nobody knows for sure. But I can tell you that the bones of these spaces i.e., wood floors, painted trims and sleeker furniture are here to stay long enough for most of us to wear them out through living well in our homes.

Bruce Grams is an interior designer and artist. He operates Douglas Design and Select Framing at 8606 118 Ave. 413-8250.

PAAFE

Housing For Souls!

When a person thinks of housing, it can bring up many headaches such as payments, dealing with flooding, security systems, and other downfalls. But in the beginning, when we think of housing, we think of stability, security, credit building, happiness, joyous times, losses and gains, family seasons, gatherings, celebrations, goals reached and the comfort of loved ones, especially when there are setbacks.

We automatically know housing brings heat, water, electricity, security and other essentials such as phone, Internet, cable and most of all Love.

Now, I'd like to ask a few questions, because I believe you would not get the picture if I don't.

Have you ever slept a night in a back alley bush?

Have you ever had to?

Do you know what it's like not having a toilet to do basic human needs?

When was the last time you couldn't grab a bite to eat when you awoke?

Can you wash your clothes when needed?

Take a shower or bath when desired?

Put another blanket on top of yourself when cold?

Take a pain killer for pain?

Have you ever wished you were someone different?

Have you spoken to, or met, anyone that has gone through any of these experiences?

Wish you could save some of the homeless Souls?

Thanks! God Bless from all of us Souls!

Presented by Charlene at Homefest 2005

- A woman involved in prostitution and drugs and plagued by homelessness.



The House of Straw

By Linda Oberg

Elmwood Park community league was founded in 1946. Originally named Grierson Estates, it was a haven for veterans returning from World War II. By the early 50s, sidewalks and mail service were added to the neighborhood. It was only a matter of time before members banded together to construct a community hall. Using salvaged construction materials and volunteer efforts, the league was able to construct an arch-rib community building that would accommodate the volunteers and the growing number of residents moving in. Roller-skating and pot luck dinners became regular events, which grew into annual variety shows produced by the locals.

The community thrived with the spirit of their efforts until 1993, when disaster struck. The building which volunteers had worked so hard to construct fell prey to arson. Damages looked minimal but in reality the arch-rib supports were badly charred and would no longer support the building. The contents were sold, and all their hard efforts and dreams were hauled

away as rubble. The league was now forced to operate out of the rink shack.



POST AND BEAM STRUCTURE FOR STRAW BUILDING

It would be almost a decade before volunteers had sufficient finances and community support to consider the daunting task of replacing the hall. Plans were drawn up for a building that would include an atrium, a library, meeting rooms and access to the surrounding parkland. The only difference was that this new building would be made of straw. Such a thing was still considered by some to be experimental, and resounding criticism began to emerge, but still the community rallied financial support with the opportunity to "Buy a Bale"

in the new hall. Plans were designed for a large community centre

that would accommodate the residents for years to come. But as the project grew, so did the apprehension of the small group of volunteers. A trial run was needed to alleviate any fears about using this unique method of construction, so new plans were drawn up for a smaller building which incorporated the geo-thermal concept into the foundation. This would then gather passive solar energy as a means of heating and cooling the building, thereby eliminating any mechanical costs.

A post and beam structure was laid on an elevated wood base, with over 200 rye bales strategically placed, a row at a time. Additional layers were secured into position by bamboo dowels driven into the previous layer. Upon completion of the walls, nylon string was then used to stitch the walls into the wood frame structure. The entire straw surface was then covered with stucco wire, and any void spaces between bales were filled with fiberglass insulation. Metal flashing was attached to act as a splash guard against

lime parging, to seal in both the interior and exterior walls.

The process was simple enough and it gave residents of all ages a chance to participate in the actual construction. Since completion, the new straw building has given members a warm, comfortable meeting space and a reminder of what can be achieved when people work together and dream big! As to future plans on the large building... those are up in the air. The league has put any further development on hold for now, but the construction



BAIL WALLS BEING PREPPED FOR STUCCO INTERIOR

ground waters and the extended roof overhang would protect the walls from rain. The final touch consisted of applying several layers of concrete/

drawings are still there waiting for the next group of volunteers interested in taking on the project. Perhaps someday it too will be completed.

True Confessions Of A Renovation Junkie

By Angie Klein

In February, I worked 14 days straight, most of them 10- and 12-hour shifts. After a grueling schedule like that you would assume that I would be in for a little R&R, but Nooo...I end up re-doing my bathroom. I didn't go into work on Friday morning planning to start a renovation project, but when I got home, that's what happened. It seems that's how it always happens.

Like most of the people around this area, I live in an older home. A lot of things had been done to the house (some not very well). But a lot of things needed to be done. The bathtub was fitted with a bar (for help getting up). Handy thing, those bars...until they pull out of the wall, taking the tiles with them.

Now replacing one or two tiles is a breeze. I have tiled whole floors, no problem (See, I am an addict). The problem is the previous owner didn't leave any spare

tile. But as I said a lot of things that were done in this house were not done very well. They attached a tiled plywood shelf to the wall. All I had to do was remove it... pry off the old tile and repair the holes in the tub. So I get started right away, and within a half an hour the bathroom is a war zone. All the toiletries are in baskets on the kitchen table, and there are hunks of plaster and grout sitting in the tub. I am surrounded by broken bits of scraped-off tile, and screwdrivers, scrapers and assorted other tools are strewn all around.

My Reno mania has won again.

Now I have a fixed tub surround...but there are holes in my walls and nowhere to put the toiletries back to...so I have to finish the job. I paint and replace the wallpaper boarder with one I had sitting waiting for this day (addicted...) Now I need accessories. So I shop, and I shop, and I shop (could this be the begin-

ning of a whole new addiction?) I find great shelves, but they are the wrong color, and some cool moons in the wrong color...so I paint all my new purchases blue (they were on sale, and a bit scuffed up anyway), change the shower curtain...rings and all, and replace the toilet seat.

So you're probably wondering what the cost is to replace 2 broken tiles...

- PAINT (one gallon) \$14.00 (Liquidation World)
 - BOARDER \$20.00 (Rona)
 - TOILET SEAT \$10.00 (Canadian Tire)
 - SHOWER CURTAIN \$30.00 (Zellers)
 - CURTAIN RINGS \$ 5.00 (Liquidation World)
 - MOONS \$3/1.00 (Liquidation World)
 - SHELVES \$28.00 (Zellers)
 - TILES \$0
- Happy Renovating!!

Comparing Native Homes

Grade Five- The Funky Monkeys Norwood School

We are studying about Native homes of the past. Many tribes across Canada lived in different ways. Two of the most popular types of homes were wigwams and longhouses. There are many differences and similarities between them. Do you know what they are? Read on to find out.

There are many differences between longhouses and wigwams. Longhouses were much bigger than wigwams. They could house an entire clan (extended family). They would put the emblem on the outside of the longhouse. In the longhouses, they had sections for privacy, tools and food. The wigwams were smaller and could only house about two families. Longhouses were permanent dwellings, whereas wigwams were temporary and could be taken down easily. These

are some of the major differences between wigwams and longhouses.

On the other hand, there are many similarities between wigwams and longhouses. They both used wooden poles and bark to build them. When beginning construction, they both needed to carve the outline in the dirt. Smoke holes were needed in both types of shelters to let the smoke escape. They were also both used to hang and dry food. These are only a few of the many similarities between wigwams and longhouses.

The Native People lived in many different types of homes. These are some of the similarities and differences between wigwams and longhouses. These are only two types of Native homes of the past. To learn more about Native homes, visit your local library or search the internet to do some research. We hope you enjoyed our article.

Diary Of A Problem House

By Jim Maxwell

Am I a bad person? Most people wouldn't think so. I obey all the laws, don't cause trouble, and even volunteer in the community. There are however, some people that don't have a very high regard for me although they've never met me. They live next door to a house which I own. And therein lies the problem.

I own this house as a revenue rental property. After the last renters moved out in May, the house sat empty. I tried to sell it but for one reason or another, it didn't sell. There was a single mother staying with a friend next door who saw me walking around the yard. She needed a place to stay. I took her on a tour of the house and she wanted it. Great! Both of our problems were solved.

How many times have we all been stopped by a bureaucratic person who said we were a day late or even a couple of minutes, had the wrong form or had filled it in wrong, or had the money but the banks were closed? We discussed the rent and damage deposit and agreed. She might even buy the house in the future. But there was one little problem. She was going to be starting a course soon (going back to school, that's good), didn't have the money right now but would have it in a few days. The training program was going to pay her a stipend every month. Could she move in? I thought, what would be the harm, why not give her a break? We never signed a lease agreement since she was going to buy the house anyway. Only she and her son were to live there, but she said her father had been threatened by a notorious slum landlord; maybe he would move in and help pay the rent. Okay, easier for her to pay. Whenever I stopped by, she appeared to be making this a home for her son and father.

There did seem to be a lot of friends around all the time even when she wasn't. She had prob-

lems with getting her friends to pay her money, or with her mother who also was going to pay her money. When it came time to pay the rent, she would call me to say she was on her way and then not show up. Consistently, I would

I used the forms and procedures from the Landlord and Tenant Board. As long as she paid up she would be able to stay.

I was leaving a community meeting when I heard about some problem houses that seemed fairly

renter who denied everything.

A notice of eviction does not mean that the renter has to move. An order from the court has to be applied for which takes a couple of weeks. In court the tenant was able to get an extension for a month before vacating. There had been a couple of deaths in her family, including her father, which had prevented her paying the rent. Her mother had also passed away (a second time). It was a very tragic time in her life. There was no problem with garbage in the back yard. If I accepted the judge's advice, I might get the money owing; if not, I would have a judgment against her. I did not believe anything the tenant said in court but accepted the ruling. When I got home I found in my mailbox a notice from Bylaw stating that I had two weeks to clean up the garbage or face fines. Luckily, I was able to get an extension on this.

Then there was nothing to do but wait until December 21 when she was supposed to pay the due rent. The day came and went with no rent, as I had expected. She was to be out at noon on December 31. If she wasn't, I would have to file a Writ of Possession as well as an Affidavit of Service to get her out, then, if necessary, hire a bailiff to evict her.

I went over on the afternoon of December 31. There I witnessed a miracle; her father was moving things out the back door. I commented on how well he looked for being dead for 3 weeks. It took them a week to get fully moved out, leaving me with two truckloads of garbage to take

to the dump.

I found that they had never hooked up the utilities and that the power and water had finally been disconnected. When I asked to have them hooked up on January 11, there was a delay that I was not told about. Service technicians had visited the property on Dec. 23 and were threatened. There was a notice in the house file that service could only be done in the attendance of the police. The tenants had also tampered with the meter so they could get electricity. It took two weeks to get utilities hooked up.

Inside I was greeted with senseless destruction. Doors were kicked in, walls had been written on with marker pen, carpets destroyed with wax, and of course there were needles (syringes).

At the time of this writing the house is still being worked on.

I used to literally sit in judgment on landlords who had problem houses, thinking they should know better, not be so greedy, pay more attention to their property and be more careful in choosing tenants. I am not going to stop investigating problem houses. I did after all clean up this house without going in front of a CAP committee. But it should be noted that, even with the best of intentions and training, it took me two and a half months to evict problem tenants who terrorized a block, and they left, I believe because the utilities had been shut off, not because of legal requirements such as a landlord's right to his own property or a neighbourhood's right to have safe streets.



Doors were kicked in, walls had been written on with marker pen, carpets destroyed with wax, and of course needles (syringes).

have to go over to her place after calling to make sure she was home only to find she had stepped out for a few minutes.

Then there was the issue of garbage. In August I received a notice to clean up her yard, or I would be liable to a fine and possible charges for the city to clean up. Standing there talking with her father, I was told there was no garbage in spite of the notice in my hand and the garbage.

A lot of things didn't seem to be going right. I had no faith in anything my tenant said anymore and felt that I would probably not receive any rent. She was a problem tenant and I should evict her.

close to my house. A couple of weeks later two of the neighbourhood police told me my house was one of them and evicting the tenant was a very wise thing to do, especially since there was a violent person living in the basement that I should not deal with.

When the date of eviction came, someone put a letter and cheque in my mailbox. The eviction was over or was it? The next day I took the cheque to the bank to see if there were enough funds. The cheque was stolen and this was the start of a criminal investigation that is still ongoing. That afternoon the police visited my

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Brian Mason, MLA
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e-mail: edmonton.highlandsnorwood@assembly.ab.ca
www.brianmason.ab.ca

Nova Plaza Invites New Tenants

By Tracey Comeau

The new affordable housing apartment on Alberta Avenue is welcoming renters, both private and commercial.

Nova Plaza, the latest project by Nova Builders Inc., is located at 89 St. and 118 Ave. and combines affordable apartments with ground-level commercial space in an effort to help revive the Avenue. The apartment sits in the place of the old Safeway building, close to NAIT and Kingsway Garden Mall, as well as several bus routes.

"(The community) loved seeing that old Safeway go, that rodent-infested place," said Norm Aldi, president of the Eastwood Community League, adding that it was the first major construc-

tion on the avenue in 30 years.

Jela Licina, the manager of Nova Plaza, said the new apartment will be beneficial to the community.

"There's not that many brand new buildings (on Alberta Avenue), so it's nice. It's good for people who aren't making that much money," she added.

The four storey building has 96 apartments available for families, seniors and persons with special needs, all of whom should have an annual income of \$16,000 to \$36,000. Monthly rent depends on apartment size: \$420 for one bedroom units, \$540 for one bedroom units with a den, and \$575 for two bedroom units. Over 70% of the apartments have been rented out, and there is still plenty of room

available on the ground level for commercial businesses to set up offices at \$14/sq ft.

Peter Rausch, the Executive Director of the Alberta Avenue Business Association, said he thinks the building will serve the community well as a mixed-use building, bringing new shoppers to Alberta Avenue, its restaurants and its stores.

"We are working with the city and other groups to look at filling the commercial space," Rausch said.

"We hope to fill the rest of the commercial spaces (in Nova Plaza) with office space, a coffee shop, and maybe a convenience store," he added.

Aldi said Nova Plaza is a step in the right direction in the effort to revitalize Alberta Avenue.

"We're trying to get more eyes on the Avenue," he added.

The Plaza is one of eleven affordable housing projects in Alberta that received \$15 million in new funding from the Canada-Alberta Affordable Housing Program. The \$9.6 million apartment used approximately \$5.2 million in federal and provincial grants combined. The total federal and provincial funding of the housing program has surpassed \$109 million since the program agreement was signed in June 2002.

The original design of the building was altered after representatives from community groups including the Alberta Avenue Community League, Eastwood Community League, and the Alberta Avenue Business

Association negotiated management, usage and design changes. Modifications included the parking lot being placed at the back of the building, rather than the front as originally planned, in order to comply with the Alberta Avenue pedestrian orientation set out by the City Planning and Development Department.

Rental space is filling up quickly. If you or someone you know is in need of good quality, affordable housing, contact Jela Licina at 991-0200.

Tracey Comeau is a second year Grant McEwan Journalism student. You'll be reading more of her writing in the coming issues as she will be doing a six week internship with the Rat Creek Press.



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AVENUE INITIATIVE REVITALIZATION

STRATEGY UPDATE

MAY IS CLEAN-UP MONTH. WE NEED YOUR HELP!

This May we are cleaning up our streets and buildings. For our large item pick-up, we need volunteer drivers with pickup trucks, people to ride along and help load items, and numerous other volunteers. Please contact Judy Allan with your name, address and phone number. The more volunteers we have the more we can do! If we don't have enough trucks, we'll have to limit the area we can provide pick-up service to.

We will also be removing graffiti from buildings along 118 Avenue and will need volunteers to come out and paint. Kids are welcome to help.

There is also a city-wide initiative called the Capital City Clean Up, where you can adopt a block in your neighbourhood for the summer! For more info or to sign up to become a block captain: call 944-5470 or visit www.edmonton.ca/capitalcitycleanup. Info sheets are available at Sprucewood Library.

Judy Allan, Avenue Initiative Coordinator
judyallan@edmonton.ca or 496-1913

WORKING GROUPS

All meetings are held at the Alberta Avenue Business Association (11770 95 St.). Please contact Judy Allan before attending for the first time (contact info to left).

1. Streetscape meets 1st Monday (April 3), 6:30 pm

This group is responsible for putting together the "pattern book" for the Avenue Streetscape. The community will have lots of opportunity to give feedback on the final look or theme. The Streetscape Working Group will use public input to work with the City to determine how the Streetscape proceeds. A "contemporary acorn" style of pedestrian light has been chosen for 118 Avenue (see front page story) and will be up this summer. Go to the Avenue Initiative Update under News on ratcreek.org to download the brochure for these lights.

2. Development and Revitalization meet 1st Wednesday (April 5), 7pm

This group is in the process of learning about how the City Planning Department works and what kind of zoning is possible. The first step is to look at what the current inventory is and what changes in zoning could be made to help ensure positive development.

3. Beautifications and Cleanliness meets 2nd Wednesday (April 11), 7pm

This group is looking at ways to help clean up the area. During the month of May, they will be

spearheading events such as a Large Item Pick-Up, working with the City to increase the level of service to clean up Streets and working with the BRZ on their annual "Clean Sweep".

4. Programs and Services meets 2nd Wednesday (April 11), 7pm

This group's actions include looking at ways to increase people's access to information on existing programs and services and to implement community-based events. The focus over the next few months will be to work with the local arts community and to promote or host Block Parties this spring and summer.

5. Safe Streets meets 3rd Tuesday (April 18), 7 pm

This group is working on increasing community safety. Some of the actions include: hosting a Community Crime and Safety Open House, increasing safety in parks, implementing programs such as neighborhood Watch and Block Parents, and working with By-Law for better enforcement. The Safe Streets Committee will work closely with Constable Pat Tracy, the new Community Liaison Constable, to look at ways to reduce crime and increase safety of community residents.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Large Item Pick Up/Big Bin Event – May; date to be announced

Graffiti Removal Day – May; date to be announced

AABA 2nd Annual Spring Sweep – Tuesday, May 16 and Wednesday, May 17

Labour of Love

By Dawn Freeman

Michelle Djonlic has done more to her house with a hammer, saw, drill, and mitre box than most people could do with an entire team of Home Depot helpers. Not to mention that it has all been done at the same time as working, painting, volunteering, pregnancy and birth of two delightful children, and spending time with her husband Anthony. Michelle thinks her energy comes from her mother. I think she is the living Energizer Bunny, and she is also my inspiration on how to teach yourself DIY home renovation.

Michelle is originally from New Brunswick but her husband Anthony grew up in Edmonton. They moved here from Vancouver six years ago and after living in a downtown condo for a while decided they wanted a place of their own.

"I like old character houses and the trees are wonderful; that was one of the things that brought us to this area," says Michelle. "I loved this house as soon as I saw it." It wasn't until after they moved in that they found out about the problems

in the neighbourhood. Enraged with the prostitution and places like the Cromdale Hotel, they both joined the board of the Eastwood Community League.

On top of family, work, and volunteering, they had a house that needed renovation. "At first we got in contractors to look at what needed to be done. But these guys didn't seem to know any more than I did about how to deal with the house. So

I decided that I would do it myself...I tore every room apart at once, which was nightmarish! But I knew I'd never get it done if I didn't."

The house was built in the late 1920s by a finishing carpenter who worked on the beautiful houses over by the University. Many original features were left in the house; unfortunately, the previous owners had let things slide. But Michelle was

keen to restore its authenticity.

"I did a lot of research at the Archives so I knew what I wanted," she notes.

And being an artist, Michelle had the eye for colour, attention

all the mouldings and picture rails, cleaned and re-stained the canvas walls, created a loft out of the upstairs rooms, added a bathroom, built an enclosed porch to original 1920's

specifications, and many more things; the list seems endless.

Right now they are busy finishing off their loft, adding a beautiful oak handrail as well as putting in an oak hardwood floor in their basement suite.

And Michelle has been at the helm of it all, doing the research, learning how to do the actual work, and wrestling with the tiny details that make all the difference.

"I feel like I have worked on the house every day of my life!" laughs Michelle. "It has been a slow but steady pace doing renovations while at first working and then having children."

Not to mention painting,

Michelle is also an accomplished watercolourist who has recently placed in a competition held by the Canadian Society of Painters in Watercolour. Her paintings, on display at The Front Gallery on 124 St., are large, magnificent works based on old photographs. They will also be in the Artists on the Avenue Gallery on 118 Ave. when it opens.

"My new passion is making hats," Michelle says. "I've just started making my own creations. I'm making ladies hats, garden hats, wedding hats as well as custom-made ones." Check out her website at www.andehats.com.

And still the renovations go on.

"I would like to be finished renovating before I get pregnant with my next baby. Maybe by the end of summer?" But she doesn't sound too sure – can renovations ever truly be over? Michelle has a plan for when they are: "I intend to throw all my tools over the fence," she laughs and adds, "If your marriage can survive renovations, it can survive anything."

I think both the house and the family look great.



EASTWOOD RESIDENTS MICHELLE & ANTHONY DJOILIC

to detail, and sheer determination to see it through. She calls herself crazy.

In the four years Anthony and Michelle have owned their home Michelle has: pulled up flooring, hand-sanded the original fir hardwood floor (while pregnant!), rebuilt a closet to the original specifications, tiled two bathrooms (hand-cutting the tiles), hand-sanded and re-varnished

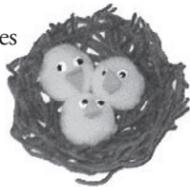
Easter Craft Fun

Easter is right around the corner so here are a few craft ideas to make with the kids.

CHICKS IN A NEST

You need:

- Brown Yarn
- (cotton works the best)
- One Small Round Balloon
- Three 1" Yellow Pom Poms
- Liquid Starch
- Orange Craft Foam
- Tacky Glue
- Six Wiggly Eyes
- Scissors
- Bowl
- Newspapers



Instructions:

Blow up balloon to about 4" and tie off. Use a piece of yarn to hang it over your work area. (We worked on the kitchen counter and hung our balloon from a cabinet knob.) Place newspaper under balloon to catch drips.

Pour a cup of Liquid Starch into an old bowl. Cut several 4" pieces of yarn and place them into the starch. Make sure each strand is coated evenly with starch.

Wrap starched yarn pieces around balloon in all directions until balloon is covered to look

like filigree. Cut and dip as many pieces of yarn as you need. There will be empty spots where the balloon shows through. Let dry overnight.

Cut down your yarn-covered balloon. Pop the balloon and pull it out. Cut the yarn ball in half. You may want to set one half of the nest inside the other for a fuller-looking nest, or use each half to make one nest.

Cut six small triangles of Orange foam for beaks. Glue two on to each pom pom to make it look like the chick's mouth is open. Glue on eyes. Place the chicks into the nest.

PAPER COLLAGE EGGS

You need:

- Paper scraps
- Scissors
- Glue
- Ribbon
- Piece of Heavy Paper



Instructions:

Cut a large egg out of a piece of heavy paper. Cut or tear paper scraps into 1" pieces. Glue them on to the egg, overlapping the pieces. Finish with ribbon if desired.

SPARKLING EASTER EGGS

You need:

- Rhinestones
- Cardboard Tube
- Heart Gemstone
- Plastic Eggs
- Glitter
- Toothpicks
- Gem Glue and Tacky Glue



Instructions:

Cut cardboard tube into rings to set your eggs in while you work. Cover the top half of an egg with a thin coat of tacky glue. Sprinkle on glitter. Shake off extra. Let dry. Turn upside down in the ring and do the same to the other half. Let dry. Use a toothpick to dab on small bits of gem glue and press a gem into place. Continue until you have a nice pattern of gems on your egg. Let dry.

These craft ideas were taken from the following websites. Check them out for more Easter (and other) craft ideas!
www.makingfriends.com
www.dltk-holidays.com
www.enchantedlearning.com
www.garvick.com

Have fun making crafts, and have a Happy Easter!

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Compassion Is The Way To Live In The World

By Dawn Freeman

In a society that is addicted to quick solutions, it is actually long-term thinking that is needed in dealing with issues such as prostitution and drug addiction. P.A.A.F.E.'s (Prostitution Awareness and Action Foundation of Edmonton) role in the network of communities is to work in partnership with anyone and everyone who wants to, to create long-term solutions and strategies of hope, to start with the status quo of the law and make it work for individuals, for communities and for our criminal justice system. They believe in compassion – in law enforcement, in prosecution and in everyday thinking and living.

P.A.A.F.E.'s Executive Director, Kate Quinn, thinks very hard about the definition of short-term versus long-term success. And she believes that compassion is the key.

"I believe that as a society, we can do so much better for our citizens who become addicted, or for those who are pulled into prostitution through poverty, abuse, or pimping. Why are we (as a society) failing these young people with basic problems, by saddling them with a ten-year ball and chain. The person needs to do their part to end their enmeshment in harmful

activities, and we can do our part to open doors for them to reintegrate"

Quinn is talking about the effect a criminal record can have



on a person's life – on anyone's, but especially for a person who is already struggling with staying off the street or staying clean and sober. With a criminal record a pardon cannot be applied for until 5 years after the completion of the sentence and then can take years to come through. With more and more employers doing security clearances, their record will show up and most likely be the cause of not getting hired. Without the ability to gain employment, the person is easily drawn back onto the street in order to make

money. As well, even volunteer organizations do these security checks now on people who just want to volunteer.

"The record creates a barrier

to participation in main-stream employment, education and society," says Quinn.

This barrier, coupled with the sad fact of a further 3 murders of women in 2005, motivated the Safedmonton Committee to develop Project SNUG. P.A.A.F.E., the Edmonton Police Vice Unit, and Metis Child & Family Services were asked to take the lead and coordinate services to meet the immediate needs and provide long-term support. All the stakeholders are proud of their project's achievement. Quinn is especially pleased at the follow-through – again it is long-term success she is after.

"Whoever is intervening in the life of (especially) a young person, do we not have a responsibility to walk with them in the long term? Is not the restoration of that person to herself, to her family and to her community as equally an important thing as stopping the criminal behaviour?"

Housing is one of the biggest issues – there is just not enough. Fully half of the women who apply for help through the C.O.A.R.S.E. (Creating Options Aimed at REducing Sexual Exploitation) diversion program (see sidebar) have no stable place to stay at the time

of their arrest – they are either living with unsafe men, staying in the drug houses, sleeping outside if it is warm, or going to George Spady Centre or W.E.A.C (Women's Emergency Accommodation Centre). In the W.E.A.C. women have to sleep in shifts because the demand is so high, yet they will never turn anyone away. And the shelters often have people using drugs in them, not where you want to be if you are trying to stay clean.

"It costs \$101 per day to house someone in a jail. It costs \$64 per day to house someone in Crossroads transitional housing, a program that is not funded any more. Are we a society who wants to build more and more jails and take this 'tough on crime' approach only, or are we a society who believes in helping addicted people who may have been harmed in their childhood? Do we not have a challenge as a society to do something better? Let's look at how we are using our tax payers' dollars; I want [them] to go into more safe houses, transitional houses and appropriate addictions resources to help our young people be restored to themselves, their families and their communities. I do not think that criminalizing young people works in the long term."

Staff Sergeant Nowlan agrees that more emergency and transitional housing is needed. And so P.A.A.F.E., alongside other organizations, is working hard to find funding for just that.

Quinn feels that we are continuing to grow into a caring society that helps give options to the less fortunate of our members.

"Edmonton Police have pioneered the compassionate use of the enforcement tool, and the Prosecutors' Office has employed compassionate use of the criminal justice system to help people get out of the chaos of the criminal activity in which they are involved. The key word is compassion. I'm not against enforcement or prosecution; in

fact, sometimes a charge helps people wake up and turn their lives around, but lets use these tools compassionately."

C.O.A.R.S.E (Creating Options Aimed at REducing Sexual Exploitation) Diversion Program

The C.O.A.R.S.E. diversion program is a court diversion program for individuals who are currently involved in the commercial sex trade. It offers the choice to eligible individuals to develop a personalized plan to help them end their sex trade involvement and have their charges withdrawn, thus removing the barrier of a criminal record.

The C.O.A.R.S.E. diversion program is offered to anyone at the time of arrest for S. 213 CC and prostitution related charges that will proceed summarily, with a few exceptions. Project SNUG creates the capacity for those struggling with big issues to get immediate help and if eligible to get to the C.O.A.R.S.E. Diversion Program more easily.

For more information
contact P.A.A.F.E. at
www.paafe.org or call
them at 471-6137

We're still talkin' trash...

Remember to sign-up
And help keep Edmonton litter-free!
This summer, the City of Edmonton, local businesses and community groups will team up to cleanup, one street at a time.

We can't do it without you.
Volunteer to become a Block Captain in your neighbourhood and get your family, friends and neighbours to help out. Together, we can make Edmonton shine. The Capital City Clean Up Adopt-a-Block sign-up sheets are available at www.edmonton.ca/capitalcitycleanup and at City of Edmonton Libraries and Leisure Centres.

Adopt-a-Block in your neighbourhood!

The City of Edmonton, local businesses and community groups are all helping to clean up this summer. And with your support, all of Edmonton can shine. Show your civic pride and help keep Edmonton litter-free!

Join in by volunteering to become a Block Captain and adopt a block in your neighbourhood. Adopted areas can be the block where you live, work, shop, or play, or any nearby school, yard or neighbourhood park.

What do I have to do?
Block Captains are responsible for keeping their adopted area tidy from May 1 to August 31, and for providing to the City of Edmonton a record of volunteer hours and bags collected. Depending on your adopted area, one cleaner per week should keep your block neat and tidy. Captains are also responsible for recruiting their own team members, friends or neighbours to help out if needed.

How do I get started?
Fill in the form below and send to the City of Edmonton. Each Block Captain will receive a letter to distribute to the City of Edmonton. The City will provide you with safety guidelines, bags, gloves, and other information. Participants will be recognized for their efforts including a thank you party for their participation.

Sign up to help make Edmonton litter-free!
Important information on the back of the sheet.

For more information call 944-5470 or email capitalcitycleanup@edmonton.ca

Prostitution makes victims of us all.

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Phone: (780) 471-6137 Fax: (780) 471-6237
paafe@telusplanet.net



*Caring for our communities.
Happy Easter.*

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2nd Floor City Hall email: janice.melnichuk@edmonton.ca
1 Sir Winston Churchill Square
Edmonton AB T5J 2R7



Local Agencies Get \$1.1 Million Financial Boost For Aboriginals

By Joan Youngman

For years Edmonton's agencies have faced cut-backs and have trimmed so much fat, they are down to bare-bones services. Coupling this trend with government downloading of program services to the non-profit agency sector, these trends have created excessive strain on the agencies right here in our own community. Now some relief is in sight. The new funding deals with culturally specific community services for Aboriginal people, research, and gang awareness for youth. Local recipients include the Canadian Native Friendship Centre, Native Counselling Services of Alberta, Gordon Russell's Crystal Kids,

Bent Arrow, and Prostitution Awareness and Action Foundation of Edmonton.

With \$1.1 million in financial assistance announced by the Edmonton Housing Trust Fund's Aboriginal Application Review Committee (AARC), nine organizations are paving the way for long-term improvements in services and supports for Aboriginal people and their families. The money was allocated as part of the federal Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) to improve the quality of life for urban Aboriginal people. The major emphasis is on local input into decision-making to address local priorities.

The Canadian Native Friendship Centre (CNFC)

received funding in the amount of \$286,412 for extensive capacity building to better serve the needs of the Aboriginal community. The CNFC will expand their assessment and referral services to include an outreach component. A cultural coordinator will promote healing, healthy life styles, traditions and teachings. A fundraising coordinator will develop a fundraising plan and work to secure sustainable funds. The communications person will create communication tools about the CNFC, its services and other service agencies for Aboriginal people in Edmonton. A finance assistant will be hired to provide additional financial resources to ensure adequate organizational reports are gener-

ated on a quarterly basis.

The Edmonton Community Foundation, on behalf of Families First Edmonton (FFE), received \$362,310 to conduct research to assist Aboriginal people and their families with services and supports. Twelve hundred families in the northeast area will volunteer to participate in this research, which will continue until June 2008.

The Native Counselling Services of Alberta (NCSA) received \$164,800 to provide youth with information and support to resist the temptation and false promises of the gang lifestyle. This pilot project will help young people access supports and services necessary to leave the gang life and become self-

sufficient. Workshops will be delivered to raise awareness on the issues of gangs and raise hope of achieving success through facilitators who are former gang members.

The six other projects receiving funding include:

Gordon Russell's Crystal Kids Youth Centre - \$92,450

Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women - \$69,000

Dreamspeakers Festival Society - \$65,540

Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society - \$45,000

Prostitution Awareness and Action Foundation of Edmonton - \$31,143

Edmonton Joint Planning Committee on Housing - \$13,100

Breath Of Life

By Dave R.

Try this for as long as you can stand it: plug your nostrils and breathe through an ordinary drinking straw while you go about your morning routine. It may sound like no big deal but panic sets in after just a few minutes. Imagine living your entire life like that.

Now add a twist: you are suddenly unable to absorb the food that you eat. It's sort of like drowning and starving to death over a very long period of time. This is what life is like for sufferers of Cystic Fibrosis, an inherited and incurable disease affecting more than 3,000 people in Canada and 30,000 people in the United States.

But there is hope; more than half of all the patients at the Cystic Fibrosis clinics serving Edmonton and northern Alberta are now adults. This is amazing, considering that only thirty years ago, most CF patients were not expected to reach voting age. Why the improvement? Research - lots

of expensive work done by many compassionate people.

The Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation is the major fundraising organization that battles this disease. On Saturday, June 24, you can help. Sign up for the Ride for the Breath of Life Motorcycle Run, and join us as we ride from Acheson to Pigeon Lake. Get your friends and family to sponsor a part of your ride. Pay a \$25.00 registration fee, and have breakfast with us, ride with us, and barbecue with us as we give away lots of great prizes including a helmet from Alberta Cycle and a mini scooter. Prizes are offered for the oldest and youngest, top three fund raisers, top three race winners, longest distance traveled and largest corporate donation.

For more details or to obtain a registration and pledge form, contact www.cfedmonton.ca/motorcycle or call the CF office at 780-466-2265.

Pull out your leathers and kick your ride into life!

COMMUNITY LEAGUE INFORMATION:

Alberta Avenue

9210-118 Avenue

Ph: 477.2773

Meets 2nd Tue at 7pm

Hours: Wed 11am-5pm

Delton

12325-88 Street

Ph: 477.3326

Call for meeting times

Eastwood

11803-86 Street

Ph: 477.2354

Meets 4th Wed at 7pm

Hours: MWF 10am-2pm

Elmwood Park

12505-75 Street

Ph: 479.1035

Call for meeting times

Parkdale Cromdale

11335-85 Street

Ph: 471.4410

Meets last Thu at 7pm

Hours: MWF 11am-2pm

Spruce Avenue

10240-115 Avenue

Ph: 471.1932

Meets 2nd Mon at 7pm

Westwood

12139-105 Street

Ph: 474.1979

Meets 1st Wed at 7pm



PETER GOLDRING

Member of Parliament
Edmonton East



The Young Offenders Act and Ten Year Olds

The Justice Minister recently made headlines when he categorized the current Young Offenders Act as a failure. One criticism of the Young Offenders Act has been that it ignores the number of children under 12 who are recruited by seasoned criminals to do their bidding, since the younger ones can't be charged or processed criminally. In Edmonton, we have been exposed to a television image of a 10 year-old child being led away in handcuffs. For many, this image is shocking, since it implies that a very young child may find himself in a jail cell, which fortunately is not the case. The intention behind bringing very young children into the justice system is not that of imposing criminal incarceration or punishment. Instead, it is so the law can intervene at an early stage. In this way, the police are able to get these children out of the clutches of older criminals and generally negative influences. Some may argue that existing young offender legislation can accomplish the same thing. The evidence is to the contrary. The importance of early intervention to prevent family breakdown should be largely self-evident; it is the same form of "early intervention" advocated by the Justice Minister in relation to very young offenders. If both the family and the very young offender can be redirected to the "right track" very early, the potential for greater social harm in the future is minimized.

Through the engagement of the criminal justice system at an early stage, the particular supports that these young children need are more readily accessible. The end result, it is hoped, is that the wayward 10 year-old will be less likely to become a hardened 15 year-old. Justice Minister Vic Toews is to be commended for according a particular priority to early intervention with very young offenders. What do you think?

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SOCCER

It is still not too late to register for soccer! I am looking forward to an exciting outdoor season. Barry Gabrusch is returning as our under-12 coach. Barry is an excellent motivator and is a strong team builder. Welcome back Barry.

I would also like to thank the Edmonton School of Ballet for its continued support of our Ballet program. Also, I would like to thank our two previous instructors (Danica, Laura) for their passion and dedication to their students and wish them luck with their new opportunities.

I am pleased to announce that Jen Wolf will teach ballet in our community. After a brief pause Ballet is back! The Edmonton School of Ballet has continually found instructors of the highest ability to teach our classes. If you have a budding dancer I encourage you to give our Ballet classes a try. These classes are an excellent way to keep a child active as well as to introduce the world of dance!

I am looking for interested community members to support a community basketball initiative. Or if you are a parent, coach or player that would like to help with a grass roots summer baseball program, give me a call!

Brad MacCallum
Community Sports Coordinator
Parkdale-Cromdale, Eastwood,
Elmwood Park, Alberta Avenue
Community Leagues
office: 479-2313
cell: 982-3052

BALLET / DANCE

BALLET/DANCE

8 Sundays, April 23 - June 25
(no class May 7, May 28)
At Parkdale Hall
Instructor: Jen Wolf

BEGINNER 3-4

Students will begin exploring movement patterns based on themes. Focus will be on balance, levels, co-ordination, direction, and, of course, creativity! Music is chosen to fit the themes presented each week and presumably, is recognizable to the students.
Time: 1:00-1:30
Cost: \$10.00

BEGINNER 5-6

Students will begin to incorporate some of the basic ballet and jazz postures and movements into a class still based on creativity. This gives our young dancers a dance vocabulary that will enhance their experience and skill as a developing mover!
Time: 1:30-2:15
Cost: \$15.00

BEGINNER 7-10

Students will expand their movement vocabulary in a challenging and rewarding program. Focus is placed on control and fluidity of movement, as well as a strong sense of musicality and performance. As always, creativity is encouraged!
Time: 2:15-3:15
Cost: \$20.00

ADULT FITNESS

No prev. sporting / fitness experience req'd

BEGINNER AND INTERMEDIATE PILATES

Develop core strength, mobility, improved postural alignment and coordination. Core strength is developed by using the deeper abdominal muscles and connecting these movements with the breath. It'll give you a body that is stronger, leaner, more flexible and better balanced.

8 Thursdays, April 13-June 1
7-8 pm at Alberta Avenue
Community League
Cost: \$30.00 members;
\$40.00 non-members
Instructor: Mirella Zadkovich

ADVANCED PILATES

8 Thursdays, April 13- June 1
6-7pm at Alberta Avenue
Community League
Cost: \$30.00 members;
\$40.00 non-members
Instructor: Mirella Zadkovich



REGISTRATION

To register for any community league sports program or fitness class or to inquire:
Call Brad MacCallum at 479-2313 (office) or 982-3052 (cell).

DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU CAN WORK BINGOS AT ALBERTA AVENUE BINGO FOR CREDIT TOWARDS SPORTS PROJECT ACTIVITIES? CALL ALBERTA AVENUE COMMUNITY LEAGUE FOR MORE INFORMATION. ONE BINGO IS WORTH 40\$\$\$ IN PROGRAM CREDITS!

OR bring cheque (made out to Alberta Avenue Community League) or cash to one of the following locations, whichever is most convenient. A receipt will be provided upon payment of fees.

Alberta Avenue Hall

11am-5 pm Wed

Eastwood Hall

10am-2pm on Mon, Wed or Fri

Parkdale-Cromdale Hall

11am-2pm on Mon, Wed or Fri

See page 12 for Community League Hall addresses.

Your registration must be confirmed by payment of fees (if applicable) 3 days prior to the start of the class. Some late registrations are accepted at the discretion of the course facilitator. If you have a community league membership (from any league), you receive a discount!

INSTRUCTORS

Mirella Zadkovich had her first experience with Pilates when she attended a workshop many years ago, and since then Pilates has become a large part of her life-style. In July, 2004, she became certified in the mat program under the guidance of Tracy Friesen at Integration Pilates studio. Mirella has a degree in medical laboratory sciences and is involved in dance and many other areas of sports.

Sasha Samadi became the Head Coach of Concordia University College's men's soccer team in the fall of 2003. Since then the team has gone undefeated in the regular season for 2 years and won silver twice in the Alberta College Athletic Conference. Sasha is originally from Iran where he played on the Youth Under 18 National Team. He has excellent technical soccer knowledge and skills, and an outstanding ability to communicate with children and youth.

Jennifer Wolfe has been teaching for 13 years. She obtained the Junior Teacher's Certificate from Edmonton School of Ballet and is currently training to receive her Associate Degree in the Cecchetti Method of Ballet. She has instructed classes in Jazz, Tap, Ballet, Hip Hop, and Creative Movement. She strongly believes in a positive experience for all of her students.

Free Community Swims

Alberta Avenue and Parkdale community league members can swim for free at Eastglen Pool (11410-86 St) on Sundays from 12-2 pm. Call your league to buy a membership.

Spruce Avenue community league members can swim for free at the MacEwan Centre for Sport and Wellness (10700-104 Ave) Sundays from 2-5 pm.

For membership or more info call Ray at 474.5354 or Verna at 479.8019.
You must present your 2005-2006 community league member card at the pool.



FUN AT THE AVENUE INDOOR PLAYGROUND

Avenue Indoor Playground

Great toys large and small for hours of fun!

Wednesdays from 1pm to 4pm

At Alberta Avenue Hall

9210 - 118 Avenue

For children ages 0 to 6 yrs
run, jump, climb, rock, slide, push, crawl, throw,
balance, ride, pedal, build

For moms, dads & caregivers
sit, relax, socialize, connect

Free

for anyone with any community league membership; otherwise \$3/visit. For more info call Karen at 479-4812.



9516 114 Avenue Ph. 471-3737

Call and register for all programs unless stated otherwise.

Rhymes that Bind

Rhymes, finger plays, songs and movement games for infants and toddlers. Free drop-in program including lunch. Newborn to 3 yrs. 11:30 am-12:30 pm, Wednesdays, April 5 to June 7.

Planet Norwood

Recreation, personal development, life skills, cultural awareness, academic skills and more. For children ages 6-13 years. It's FREE but please register. Monday to Friday, 3:30 to 6:00 pm
Thursdays, 2:30 to 5:00 pm
Saturdays, noon to 4:00 pm

Literacy and Parenting Skills

Support for parenting, community building, alternatives to TV, safe place for children as well as learning reading and writing. Childcare provided while parents are in group and must be booked in advance. For parents with children ages 0-6. Wednesdays, 9:30-11:30, May 3 to June 21.

Teen Night

For ages 10-13 years. Fridays, 6:30-8:30 pm



SPRUCEWOOD LIBRARY
11555 - 95 Street, 780.496.7099

LIBRARY PROGRAMS

Please call 496.7099 and register for programs unless they are specified as drop-in programs.

CHILDREN & TEENS PROGRAMS

Fabulous Readers' Club
2 p.m. Saturday, March 11
Grades 4 and up.

Cooking - a Recipe For Fun
5:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 5
Find out how to cook a healthy meal and incorporate the 4 food groups into your daily diet.
Ages: 10-14 years.

D.I.Y: Do It Yourself
2 p.m. Saturday, April 22
Funky Journals. Come and make your own personal journal to fit your own personal style. Ages: 13-18 years.

YMCA at the Library

Drop-in 3-5pm, Wednesday, April 19
Information for kids and teens on community programs and resources.

Family Storytime

6:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 25
Stories, songs, activities and fun for everyone.

Library Bureau of Investigation

2 p.m. Saturday, April 29
Another murder has taken place at the library, and everyone's a suspect! The Library Bureau of Investigation once again needs your help to solve this terrible crime before the murderer strikes again!
Ages: 10-15 years.

HOURS

Monday - Tuesday 10 am-8 pm
Wednesday - Friday 1 pm-8 pm
Saturday 10 am-5 pm
Sunday closed

Tiny Clay Pot Pin Cushion

2 p.m. Saturday, May 6
What to give Mom for Mother's Day? How about a pin cushion which you have decorated with a couple of simple embroidery stitches and wrapped up especially for her. Ages: 9 years and up.

FREE MEETING ROOM

Sprucewood's large meeting room is bookable both during and after library hours.



COMMUNITY EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

UPCOMING EVENTS

Art Sale/Exhibit & Silent Auction

Friday, April 28 from 3pm to 7pm and Saturday, April 29 from 10am to 4pm at the Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts (9702 111 Ave). Proceeds will support art programs for students at City Centre Education Project (CCEP) schools. Items include Jewelry by Dianne Robinson and Lynn Cote; Pottery by Fernande Beland; Artwork by CCEP students; and donated Silent Auction Items.

The Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts is offering free family art classes every Thursday from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Instructor is Marta Beranek. Children must be aged 5-12 and accompanied by an adult. For more information or to register call 474-7622. Space is limited.

April 6: Clay Bowls - use a coil technique to create your own bowl. Must also be able to attend April 13 class to glaze bowl after firing.

April 13: Glazing - paint your fired bowl using pottery glazes.

April 20: Acrylic painting - learn about colour mixes and proportions as you create a self-portrait.

April 27: Mosaics - create a mosaic picture with lentils, beans, tapioca and more.

11th Annual Community

Garage Sale

Thursday April 27, 10am - 8pm
Friday April 28, 9am - 8pm
Saturday April 29, 9am - 5pm
A hosted by the Spruce Avenue Community League at the hall (10240 115 Ave). This is an opportune time to turn your unwanted items into cash. Tables are available for \$10.00 for the 3-day event. Call Verna @ 479-8019 to reserve your table.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Free Community Swim
See ad on page 15.

Preschool Indoor Playground

Wednesdays, from 1 - 4 pm at Alberta Avenue hall (9210 118 Ave). Drop in with your children 6 years and under. For more info contact Karen at 479-4812.

Improve your public speaking with toastmasters

Learn public speaking and communication skills in an encouraging, supportive and friendly environment with Norwood Toastmasters Club on Thursday evenings from 8pm to 10pm at the Norwood Legion (11150 82 St). This is a strong well-established club with diverse membership. Call Pauline 430-8774 for more information.

Argentine Tango Dance

Lessons: Sundays, 6 - 8 pm;
Practice: Sundays 8 - 9 pm. \$5/

person per class. Come by yourself or bring a friend. Parkdale Hall (11335 85 St). For more info call Cindy or Vance at 440-2455.

Traditional Swordsmanship

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 7 - 10 pm at Parkdale Hall (11335 85 St) use back door. \$50/month; visitors welcome. By the Academy of European Swordsmanship. For more info, call 437-9317 or visit www.the-aes.org.

Adult Swim

Friday & Saturday nights from 11pm to 1am at Eastglen Pool (11410 68 St). Also Mon & Thu 7:30-9:30pm and Wed 8:30-9:30pm.

Edmonton Crossroads Church (Salvation Army)

11661 95 St 474-4324
The Sal: Teen Drop-in Tue-Fri 3:30-5pm
Christian 12 Step Group Mondays, 7:45pm
Ladies AA Meeting Tuesdays, 8pm
Open AA Meeting Thursday, 8pm
The Haven: Food & fellowship Fridays at 7pm
Worship Service Sundays, 3pm & 6pm
Fellowship, Coffee & Snacks Sundays, 4:15pm

St. Faith's Anglican

11725 93 St 477-5931
Thursday Service & Lunch 12pm
Breakfast Saturdays, 8:30-9:30

AA Meeting Saturdays, 2pm
Sunday Service 11am
Women's Supper & Fellowship 2nd Thursday of the month (Feb 9) at 6pm
Community Supper 3rd Friday of the month (Feb 17) from 5-6:30pm

St. Andrews Presbyterian Church

8715 118 Ave 477-8677
Sunday Service 11am

Edmonton Urban Native Ministry

At St. Andrews, 8715 118 Ave. Drop-in centre Tues-Fri from 10am-4pm

NOTICES

SPORTS DIRECTOR NEEDED

Spruce Avenue Community League is looking for a Sports director to organize teams for children living in the community. Call Verna or Henry at 479-8019 if you are interested

GRAND PRIX VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

30-40 volunteers are needed for Grand Prix 50-50 ticket sales. Tickets are sold on the race grounds on July 21-23. Orientation provided in mid-June. This should be a great fundraiser and a fun time for all. Must be 18 years of age. Call Verna at 479-8019.

ADULT TUTORING / NEW TUTORS ALWAYS WELCOME

Do you know someone who wants to learn to read and write better? Please tell them about The Learning Centre (10116 105 Avenue). We offer one-to-one tutoring and small group learning. We also welcome volunteers who want to help others learn. For more information, call Mary at 429-0675.

LOCAL STUDENTS NEED SUPPORT FOR ALEX DECOTEAU RUN

The seven schools in the City Centre Education Project will be participating in the fifth annual Alex Decoteau Run on May 12, 2006. Approximately 600 students from Delton and Spruce Avenue are in need of lunches at a cost of \$2.20 per lunch. If you could help out contact Loraine Kliciak or Gary McCorquodale at 477-8742.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE ALBERTA SPORTS HALL OF FAME

Do you know of any local resident or team that attained a high level of excellence and brought recognition or honour to the province of Alberta in sport on a national or international level? For more info, contact the Business Association at 471-2602.