

your free **COMMUNITY** newspaper

ALBERTA AVENUE
DELTON
EASTWOOD
ELMWOOD PARK
PARKDALE
SPRUCE AVENUE
WESTWOOD

RAT CREEK PRESS

BUILDING COMMUNITY . ENCOURAGING COMMUNICATION . INCREASING CAPACITY

CIRCULATION 8,500

PH: 479-6285 EMAIL: info@ratcreek.org

We need your help pickin' up the neighbourhood

BEAUTIFICATION AND CLEANLINESS WORKING GROUP

Spring brings green grass and May flowers but it also uncovers months of garbage. On a windy day you'll see more garbage flying in the air than birds. The Alberta Avenue hall is growing patches of cigarette butts instead of grass. Some apartment buildings on 82 Street have more garbage outside the dumpsters than inside. Walk down your street and alley and you are sure to find many private and common areas in need of a spring cleaning.

Well, we've made spring cleaning easier for you this year! Set aside May 13 & 14 to haul your large items or garbage to dumpsters in the Alberta Avenue hall parking lot – dump for free! If we really want to see a cleaner neighbourhood, we need to look beyond our own fence. So pick up in and around your yard, then ask your neighbours if they need help. Many people do not have access to a truck, so getting rid of large items can be difficult. If you have a truck or trailer, call Judy at 496-1913 and offer a few hours of your time to help with pick up service.

Take pride in your neighbourhood and join in on *Pickin' up the Neighbourhood!* We all need to do our part.



Amanda Lewis

DOESN'T FIT IN THE GARBAGE CAN? BRING IT TO THE BIG BIN EVENT.

BIG BIN EVENT (LARGE ITEM PICK UP)

May 13 & 14
9:00 am–5:00 pm

Bring your debris and unwanted large items to the Alberta Ave Community League parking lot at 93 St and 118 Ave for free disposal.

Sponsored by the Capital City Clean Up and the Avenue Initiative Beautification & Cleanliness Working Group.

LARGE ITEM PICK UP

Need help getting your garbage to the bin site?

If you have no way of bringing your large items to the bin site, call and we will do our best to arrange for pick up of your items. Also please report large items dumped on empty lots or left at vacant properties.

Please note pick up service is dependent on having volunteer truck drivers. If at all possible, please arrange to get your items to the bin site yourself. Call 496-1901 or 479-6285.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Help give our community a spring cleaning

Do you have a truck or trailer? Help pick up large items. Do you like to paint? Join the graffiti removal team. Help also needed with the pancake breakfast and cleaning up blocks adjacent to 118 Ave.

EVERYONE WELCOME

Volunteer Pancake Breakfast May 13, 8:30-9:30 am at Eastwood Hall (86 St & 118 ave), Tim Horton's coffee & donuts, door prizes and lots of fun! Truck owners will be compensated for gas.

Contact Judy 496-1913 or judy.allan@edmonton.ca

Who you gonna call?



2ND ANNUAL SPRING STREET SWEEP

May 16 east of 90 St
May 17 west of 90 St

Join local businesses in cleaning up 118 Avenue. Garbage will be picked up, sidewalks swept and a power washer will be available for businesses to wash their storefronts. Flower barrels will be put out at the end of May.

Kick-off on May 6, 8:00 am at Coliseum Steak & Pizza parking lot (84 St) with the mayor and other VIPs.

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Streetscape Maintenance Trouble-shooting Guide

onlineEXTRA

Damaged Trees
Community Services
496-8733

Decorative Lights
Damaged or not Working
Business Assn. 471-2602

Graffiti on Building or Structures
Business Association
471-2602

Dumpster Overflow
Bylaw Enforcement
496-3100

Trash Can Overflow
Waste Hot-line
496-6699

Litter on Road & Sidewalks
Transportation Roadway
496-1700

News Stands Damaged
496-1700

Parking Meter Damage
Transportation Parking Meter Shop
496-1700

Fire Hydrant or Water Breaks
EPCOR Water 412-6800/24 hrs.

Telephone Repairs and Troubles
Telus ph. 611

Payphone Maintenance
995-8775

Capital Health
Building Inspection & Public Health
413-7927

Traffic Light
Broken or Inoperable
EPCOR 412-4500

Hazardous Sign (Private)
Bylaw Enforcement
496-3100

Damaged Light Standard
or Burnt Out Street Lights
EPCOR 412-4500

Decorative Street Banners
Downtown Business Association
471-2602

Abandoned Shopping Carts
Transportation Roadway
Maintenance
24 hr. Call Centre 496-1700

Bus Shelter Damaged
Transportation Transit
496-8900

Street Sign Damaged or Missing
Roadway Maintenance
496-1700

Weed Overgrown
Community Services
496-1901

Mail Box Damage
Canada Post
1-800-267-1177

Roadway Potholes
Snow Removal, etc.
Roadway Maintenance
496-1700

Compliments of Alberta Avenue Business Association 2001

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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.

I'm not stupid, but . . .

DAWN FREEMAN

I have a secret. I am somewhat ashamed of it, and I have spent years either being angry at myself or my parents about it. It hasn't exactly stopped me from doing a lot of things, but it sure is stopping me now. Luckily I still CAN do something about it. What's my secret? I didn't graduate high school.

When I was 17, it didn't matter at all. I got a job and I wasn't thinking about long-term plans. Career was a word other people used, and university was an unaffordable dream. When I was 25, it still didn't matter. I worked in bars and I played in a band. I only had me to look out for, and as long as I made enough to pay the rent and buy a beer, I was content. When it became important, I saved enough to fly away from my New Zealand home to Canada.

Things started to change when I settled here. I got a job, no big deal, but I started to think about the big questions like: Do I want to work in a bar or retail now that I am nearly 30? How would I

support a family on that kind of money? Would I like to go to university and get a degree, a Masters, a Ph.D.? How do I get a job that has potential, that I can use my brain in?

When I started finding answers to some of my questions I was in for a shock. Sure I can get a job, but a lot of the jobs I wanted, the ones with potential, wanted a high school diploma. Sure I could go to col-

(for close to minimum wage) in a store at the mall and ironically became the editor of this fine paper. It was the motivation that stopped me finishing high school, not the lack of ability.

So here I am now, I'm 35 and it does matter. Eventually it does matter. It may not stop you from pursuing your dreams, but it COULD. It may not stop you from getting that great job, but it COULD.

I say, DON'T! Stick with it and get that piece of paper. It is so much easier to do it at 17 than it is at 20, or 25, or 35.

I'm not stupid, but it sure was dumb not to finish school.

**Different college and university courses have their own specific requirements.*

Editorial Note: Dawn definitely isn't stupid! She is well-spoken and well-read and an articulate writer. It took a lot of courage for her to share this publicly, thanks Dawn! I hope it encourages some of you. I am the opposite of Dawn. I graduated high school at the top of my class and went on the university where I put in seven years getting a Bachelor degree and then a Master's, picking up numerous scholarships along the way. Am I smarter than Dawn? Am I more educated? Depends how you look at it, but probably not on both counts! For instance, out of a list of a 100 classic books, Dawn has read 30 of them; I have read 4! How educated you are often has little to do with how many years you sit in school, but schooling is important to get ahead in our society. So make the most of it.

- Karen

"Career was a word other people used, and university was an unaffordable dream."

lege as a mature student, but I still needed either a 65% in English 30 or equivalent. And as for university? Well, only some undergraduate programs accept mature or non-matriculated students and even then you still need a 70% in English 30 or equivalent and sometimes in another subject as well.*

It was about then I had my first child, then my second, so I put those thoughts on the back burner. I stayed at home to raise the kids, took part-time work

It may not stop you from fulfilling your potential, but it COULD. At the very least it creates one more roadblock that has to be overcome.

I'm studying right now to take my GED (general equivalency diploma) exams so I don't have such a disadvantage anymore. If you're like me, an adult with no high school diploma, I say join me! And if you are a teenager stuck in your last years of school and feeling like you just want to quit,

LETTERS

Common Courtesy

The Rat Creek Press is your community newspaper. Last month, a resident in the Parkdale Community accosted one of our volunteer carriers. The resident was apparently upset that she continued to have the Rat Creek Press delivered to her door. She took her irritation out on our volunteer by shouting at her.

Not everyone likes the Rat Creek Press. Not everyone appreciates having it in their mailbox. The Rat Creek Press believes that opinions should be expressed; we are after all, a community newspaper. Expressing opinions is what we do best. We need to be clear; screaming at one of our volunteers is not acceptable.

The Society has spent some time discussing what we could do to have a no distribution list. Our problem is this: We are a volunteer organization, and a no distribution list causes significant

administrative time for our volunteers. We are moving distribution to Canada Post, and Canada Post is not able to honour a no distribution list.

So, we have decided on the following scheme. If you don't like the Rat Creek Press, you have two options.

1. You can exercise your democratic right to throw the paper out.
2. You can write us a letter, telling us what you think we can do better. We are your community newspaper, and we want to be responsive to the community.

Let's be clear here. We all live in this community. Shouting at a volunteer is never acceptable behaviour. Let's use some common courtesy. The people who write, deliver, and publish the paper are your neighbours.

Cheryl Walker
Chair, Rat Creek Press Association



Check out [onlineEXTRA](#) at www.ratcreek.org for more articles!
• Trouble-shooting Guide • Single Sex Education • School Overview

VILLAGE FOODS

Open 7 days a week. Mon-Sat: 8am - 11pm Sun: 9am - 10pm

movie rentals - 99 cents & up
prepaid calling cards
magazines
slurpee machine
water cooler bottles
ATM & more!

8411 - 118 Avenue 477-8586

Letters Welcome

We invite you to write letters to the editor. A maximum of 350 words is preferred. You must include your full name, phone number and address (or neighbourhood). All letters are subject to editing. Send your letters or comments to editor@ratcreek.org.

Big pharmacies can be hard to swallow.

At The Medicine Shoppe, we believe that smaller is better when it comes to getting superior service. We take pride in knowing your name when you walk through our door. And we enjoy building the trust that comes with delivering superior customer care with one-on-one personal attention. We understand that when you need medication the last thing you need is a line-up. Remember, when it matters most, it's The Medicine Shoppe.



The Medicine Shoppe
PHARMACY

Parminder Bhui, B.Sc. Pharm
Pharmacist/Owner
8111-118 Avenue **477-1192**
Edmonton, AB
Hours: M-F 9a.m.-6p.m. | Sat/Sun 10a.m.-2p.m.

59¢
Reg. 99¢



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Limit 1 per person. While supplies last.
Offer expires 05/30/06

In the life of a journalist

TRACEY COMEAU

The first time I ever considered a career in writing was in my final year of high school. I didn't know what to take in college, so I took the matter up with my school counselor. We talked for what seemed like ages, and I left her office determined to become a chef.

Eventually, I realized I liked eating a whole lot more than I liked cooking. I revisited the counselor, and we took another look at my options.

"I like math, English, lunch and phys-ed," I told her. "But I love only English."

I told her I loved reading the newspaper, and she sensed we were on to something. After more digging we struck gold: Journalism. I started at Grant MacEwan College in the fall of 2004.

Glamorous and Easy

I had always figured journalism was glamorous and easy, but I was wrong. Evidently, so were many of my classmates. By the

end of the second year, about half my class quit the program.

"I don't know if I really knew what journalism was," says Debbie Friesen, who is currently enjoying the program at Grant MacEwan before starting her internship at the Edmonton Sun. "I thought journalism was giving your opinion on things, and when I got in I realized it didn't matter what your opinion was."

Karyn Zypchyn, a Journalism instructor at Grant MacEwan, says she thinks many students entering the program had misconceptions of the job.

"In the media right now, there's this notion that journalists themselves are stars..." Zypchyn says. "I don't think people appreciate the true difficult work, the true perseverance, and the intellectual rigor it takes to try to get at the truth. There's a clash between what they thought it was and what it really is," Zypchyn adds.

Thrill of the Chase

I thought the program

would let me share my raw creativity with the world, but I wasn't prepared for the technicalities of the writing and the difficulty of getting interviews. However, I soon grew to enjoy these challenges and fell in love with the fast-paced world of journalism.

As I approach graduation, I still love the thrill of the chase in getting interviews and being a storyteller to the public.

Shelly Decker, a freelancer for the Edmonton Sun, says she fell in love with the job because of its excitement.

"I dreaded sitting in an office from 9-5...another day, another routine, another monotonous job. Journalism is an interesting job. It's not dull," she says.

A Worthy Journalist

Journalism has taught me more than I ever expected. It has improved my writing, forced me to see the world with a critical yet unbiased eye, and increased my people skills. At the very least, it has been an interesting and entertaining adventure.



"TELL ME MORE ABOUT..." TRACEY GETS THE SCOOP

Tracey Comeau

"There is never a boring moment," Zypchyn says. "No story is the same, and you meet the most interesting, bizarre, scary, fantastic people. No other job would allow you to do that."

As my last year in the program comes to an end, I am preparing for my internship at the Rat Creek Press. Excited at being accepted as an intern, I plan on spending my internship proving myself a worthy journalist.

For anyone considering Journalism as a full-time career, Decker recommends some sort of schooling. Calgary's SAIT and Edmonton's Grant MacEwan are the only schools

in Alberta offering Journalism diplomas: SAIT's 2-year program averages \$4,800 per year and Grant MacEwan's 2-year program averages \$4,600 per year. Universities in B.C. and Ontario also offer Journalism degrees.

Be prepared for hard work, long days and large phone bills. But if you're anything like me, you'll be in for the time of your life.

Tracey is a second year Journalism student at Grant MacEwan College. She will be interning at the Rat Creek Press during May and June of 2006, and looks forward to developing her skills as a reporter.

Spruce Avenue Neighborhood Watch Campaign

ANGIE KLEIN

David Despains, the co-ordinator of Spruce Ave Neighborhood Watch, will be running a door-to-door campaign in the coming months to help identify "hot spots" in the neighbourhood. These are the areas within our community with the highest incidences of crime. At the last Spruce Avenue community league meeting the crime statistics for our area were discussed and there is a notable spike in property crime. The statistics

report includes Kingsway mall, and therefore is not an accurate report per-capita, but it does raise some questions as to whether there is something that we could be doing to make our community less attractive to criminals.

The block captains canvassing will be easily identifiable with badges. These volunteers, along with David Despains, will be trying to recruit for, and raise awareness of the neighborhood watch program. We would also like to acknowledge

our gratitude to local residents for being vigilant in the protection of one another's homes and property. Many watchful eyes make our community a friendlier, safer place to live.

This issue will be the focus of Spruce Avenue's next community league meeting on May 08 at 7:00 p.m. All community members are invited to attend. More information about the campaign can be found on-line at www.watch.edmonton.ab.ca.

This is our community... let's make it the best it can be.

ROBIN GALENZA

On Tuesday April 4, 2006 at Santa Maria Goretti Community Centre, Capital Health along with Manasc Isaac Architects revealed the preliminary design for the new Eastwood Health Centre on 11240-79 Street. The preliminary design only showed the basic outline of the building, and the facilities inside; not the physical look of the building.

"Buildings that are sus-

tainable are healthy for both people and the planet," Vivian Manasc said during her presentation to the estimated fifty people who attended Tuesday's meeting. "We all have a serious stake in our community."

Most of the community members who attended the meeting were happy to see that the Cromdale school is being integrated into the design.

"We are heading in the direction of potentially using the school in the design," Manasc said.

AVENUE INITIATIVE REVITALIZATION STRATEGY UPDATE

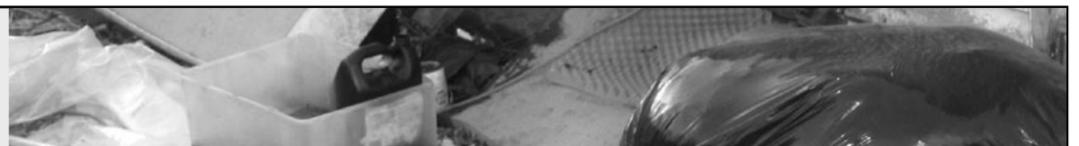
WORKING GROUPS

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

- Streetscape meets 1st Monday (May 1), 6:30 pm**
Putting together the "pattern book" for the Avenue Streetscape.
- Development and Revitalization meet 1st Wednesday (May 3), 7pm**
How the City Planning Department works and what kind of zoning is possible.
- Beautifications and Cleanliness meets 2nd Wednesday (May 10), 7pm**
Ways to help clean up the area.
- Programs and Services meets 2nd Wednesday (May 10), 7pm**
Ways to increase people's access to information on existing programs and services and to implement community-based events.
- Safe Streets meets 3rd Tuesday (May 16), 7 pm**
Increasing community safety.

OPEN HOUSE June 6, 7-9pm at Eastwood Hall: Mark this on your calendar and plan to come hear what's happening and give your input

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



SPRING CAN REVEAL PROBLEMS

Watch for increased bylaw enforcement in our area in May

The Development Compliance Branch of the City of Edmonton's Planning and Development Department reminds Edmontonians that the spring thaw can reveal a lot of materials stored on private property that need to be removed, stored or stacked neatly.

Each year the City registers complaints concerning furniture, appliances, garbage bags, tree clippings, renovation material, loose litter and other nuisance conditions.

The Nuisance Bylaw #10406 defines a nuisance as any property condition that is untidy, unsightly, offensive, dangerous or that interferes with the use or enjoyment of other property. It includes, but is not limited to, conditions such as abandoned or dismantled vehicles, garbage, auto parts, construction material etc.

The bylaw reflects community standards to maintain property within the city in a pleasant, tidy and safe condition. If your property is in a nuisance condition you will be issued a warning notice requesting your voluntary compliance. If homeowners ignore that notice a formal order or direction will be issued. Failure to comply with an order or direction may result in penalty fines in the amount of \$250 and the removal of the nuisance condition at the property owner's expense. A second offence could result in a \$500 fine.

If you'd like more information, check the department's web site at www.edmonton.ca/planning_dev. You can also learn more by calling customer service at 496-3100, or visiting the 5th floor of the AT&T Tower at 10250 101 St.

DON'T FORGET TO VOLUNTEER MAY 13 FOR THE PICK'N UP THE NEIGHBOURHOOD EVENT.

Daycare for your furry four-legged children

BUSINESS BRIEFS

KAREN MYKIETKA

Dogspaw Daycare & Training Center
12209 Fort Rd 471-BARK
www.dogspaw.ca

Daycare, classes, behaviour modification – these words bring children to mind for many of us, but for Dogspaw it means man’s best friend – the dog. Nicole Johnston opened shop in our community in December 2005 so she could expand her home-based dog training business to include a doggy daycare. Dog owners can drop their doggie children at daycare between 7am and 5pm Mon to Fri and have one less thing to worry about when they are at work.

Dogs play in the training area where a fence separates the small and large dogs; the two groups take turns accessing the outdoor dog run. “In the afternoon, the dogs have a one-hour nap time,” explains Johnston, “otherwise they start acting up and fighting with each other.” Right now Johnston dogsits an average of 12 dogs a day but still has room for more. She assesses dogs for their dog friendliness before accepting them and will only introduce one new dog to



WHO LET THE DOGS IN?

the group a day. Cost of dogsitting ranges from \$15-18/day.

The other part of the business is dog training classes. Dogspaw offers courses in Basic Manners, Puppy Socialization and Agility. In Agility classes, dogs learn how to do obstacles, tunnels and jumps. This type of class isn’t only for those dogs and owners who do competitions. “Some people do them to bond with their dog, others because their dog is underconfident,” says Johnston. All the trainers have professional memberships. Classes are 6 to 8 weeks and cost between \$100 and \$130. They also offer one-on-one behavior modification classes for dog and owners.

On Saturday, May 6 from

12 to 6 pm, Dogspaw is having an open house. Agility demonstrations will be done throughout the afternoon and Second Chance Dog Shelter will be there with a dog needing a home.

The Local Business section is sponsored by the Alberta Avenue Business Association - the organization representing businesses in the 118 Avenue business revitalization zone (BRZ). Check out the local business directory online at www.alberta-avenue.com or stop by the business office to pick up a copy.

*Peter Rausch, Executive Director
Alberta Avenue Business Association
11770 95 St Ph 471-2602
Fax 477-1378
Email aaba@telusplanet.net*

Sally Ann store closed

After 11 years serving our community, the Salvation Army Thrift Store on Princess Elizabeth Ave has closed. Their lease expired in March and they were not able to negotiate a new lease term. A Salvation Army spokesperson said there was not another suitable loca-

tion in the 118 Ave area. They do hope to open a thrift store in the Northwest but don’t know exactly when or where. For second-hand bargains try one of the other local second hand shops - Bissell or Value Village – or the other Sally Ann locations : (12928 50 St; 5804 Terrace Rd; 9503 49 St). Call 437-6861 to have your donations picked up.

Out of the Fire Studio
12205 Fort Rd 378-0240
www.outoffthefirestudio.com
www.howtomakepottery.com

Beautiful handcrafted pottery and various other interior accents are now available to the public from this studio on Fort Road. For a number of years, Cindy Clarke and Jim Willett have only been selling their creations wholesale. Now anyone can stop in Mon to Thu 9-6 pm, Fri 9-4:30 or Sat 1-5 pm.

In addition to a wide array of pottery, Clarke has candles, masks and other works on consignment from other local artisans. As well she is importing jewelry, bath wraps and sandals from Sri Lankan widows; bags, scarfs and more jewelry from India and possibly other items from Milan.

The new retail business is having a grand opening on Saturday, May 6 from 12 to 6 pm with 10% of the proceeds going to the Win House women’s shelter. Pottery wheel demonstrations will be done at 12, 2 and 4 pm.



BEAUTIFUL POTTERY



MASKS AND MORE

Get the kinks out

A massage school and clinic in the ‘hood’

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

CHRISTINA VERNON

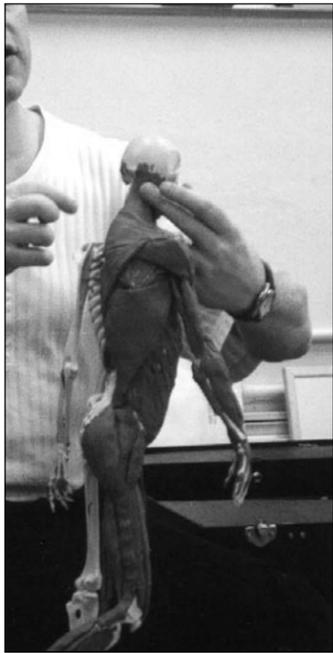
The Somatics Institute School of Massage, located in the north wing of St. Basil’s Catholic School, is a school with a difference. Their program brings together holistic principles with traditional massage techniques in an effort to give their graduates the capacity to blend complementary and alternative healthcare principles with mainstream medical science.

The school’s Program Director is Matthew van der Giessen, a long-time and respected massage therapist in the city. Matthew has been teaching for many years, including offering training in anatomy to yoga instructors. His unique approach is the use of Mannekins™ onto which muscles are built. This “hands on” process of learning has proven to be an effective teaching model – moving muscles into the three dimensional plane where massage therapists experience them.

The school’s two-year full-time program offers the opportunity for self-exploration and in doing so teaches principles that graduates can apply later in their work with clients. Body awareness is

encouraged through the use of eastern movement practices such as tai chi, chi gong, and yoga, as well as the western practices of Hanna Somatics™ and Sensory Awareness™. The school also uses integrative arts such as clay and drawing to explore the functional organization of the body.

Students are provided with a strong background in orthopaedic assessment and treatment for specific conditions. Additionally they are introduced to and encouraged to use



TEACHING MANNEKINS™

techniques that involve light touch such as lymphatic drainage. The emphasis is on learning to meet the client where he or she is at; discovering what is needed for engagement on a client by client basis.

“I feel like I have learned a lot about myself,” says Gian Gibson, a second year student at the Institute. “I have learned that I am important which is significant because how I treat myself is reflected in how I treat others. This is a valuable foundation for my work as a therapist and I look forward to life-long building on these learning’s.”

A few of the other modules of study include anatomy, physiology, sports massage, pharmacology, pregnancy massage and business. Teaching clinics at the school and practicums in the community help students practice their developing skills in a variety of settings. This year the program at the Royal Alexandra Hospital has been in full swing with students dedicating one afternoon a week to providing much appreciated massages to hospital patients. As well, NAIT athletes benefited from sports massages during the teaching of that particular module.



MARYKA GIVES A CHAIR MASSAGE TO A STAFF PERSON AT THE ROYAL ALEX HOSPITAL. EVERY THURSDAY STUDENTS HEAD TO THE HOSPITAL FOR THEIR PRACTICUM TIME, USUALLY WITH PATIENTS; HOWEVER, IN THIS INSTANCE, THEY PARTICIPATED IN A STAFF WELLNESS DAY.

If you are interested in participating in the school’s on-site clinic, call the school at 438-3757. Massages are one-hour long and cost \$25.

Christina Vernon is a graduate of the Somatics Institute and has her own mobile massage business. She can be reached at 907-8262.

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.

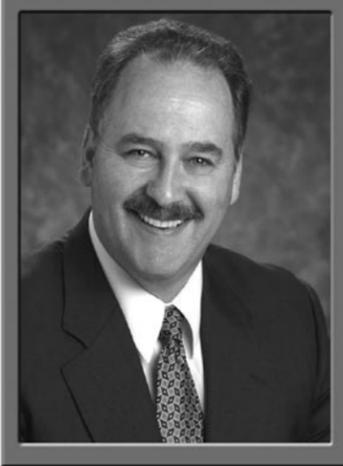


Café 10406-118 Ave
Deli 9567-118 Ave

Bjorn & Brenda
Ph: 424-6823
absolutelyedibles.com

Questions, Concerns, Issues?

**Brian wants to hear them!
Edmonton Highlands-Norwood**



Come chat with your MLA about health care, about the provincial government, and about what we can do to improve our community!

Town Hall Meeting
Tuesday May 2 at 7pm
Prayerworks Hall
11725-93 Street
Beside St. Faith's
Anglican Church

Call Brian's office at 414-0682 for more info.

Edmonton Highlands-Norwood Constituency Office

#100, 8930 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5H 1E9

Phone: 414-0682
Fax: 414-0684

e-mail: edmonton.highlandsnorwood@assembly.ab.ca
www.brianmason.ab.ca

St. Alphonsus

Catholic Elementary/Junior High School

St. Alphonsus Challenge!

St. Al's is a clean, warm school with nice teachers and students who make you feel welcome.
Josh Gr. 7

All the teachers have a great personality and treat everyone fairly.
Jenny Gr. 7

St Al's represents a good example of what schools should be like.
Kassandra Gr. 7

People at this school are very easy to be friends with so you won't have to be shy!
Lily Gr. 7

Teachers encourage you to follow your dreams, and bring together a class of many cultures.
Korrina Gr. 7

We have teachers who are always willing to help with school work and activities.
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- Braided Journeys Aboriginal Program
- English as a Second Language (ESL) Assistance
- Awards Program
- Study Buddy Program
- Mentorship Program
- Student & Staff Involvement in Religious Celebrations



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- School Dances
- "Girl Power" and "Boy Power" Groups
- Homework Club
- Jazz Band
- Art Club
- Axe Music Lessons (electronic guitar and drums)



Resources

- Safe and Caring School Member
- Differentiated Programming
- Interpreters for ESL Families
- Counseling Services
- Inclusive Education (Individual Program Plans for Special Needs Students)
- Aboriginal Liaison Worker
- Clothing Bank for Families of St. Alphonsus

Our Neighbourhood Schools They have a lot to offer

KAREN MYKIETKA

Over 1800 students attend our eight area schools – 5 public and 3 Catholic. Many of these students live outside the area but come in for special education programs, the Polish-bilingual program or Girl's Academy at St. Basil, or the year-round schooling at Eastwood and Parkdale.

Unfortunately, many of the locals are choosing to go to school elsewhere. Programs of choice like immersion, logos, arts core and IB lure a number of students outside the area. But please don't write-off our local schools which checking them out. I have been in every one of them and find them cozy and welcoming. The schools are small, varying between 114 and 200 students in K-6; therefore, class size is also small.

We have great teachers. Paul Gish, principal of Eastwood, says, "I have one of the most talented staffs I have ever worked with." Plus, most schools have additional staff from teacher-librarians to music specialists to family therapists.

The great thing about our neighbourhood is we have a number of schools relatively close by to choose from depending on our needs: travel needs (walking distance, yellow school bus or transit), care needs (many schools have onsite daycare and/or after-school care), time schedules (start times between 8:30 and 9:00 and end times

between 2:52 and 3:40), relational needs (if one class or teacher isn't a good fit for your child, check out a different one).

Our area schools have been running full-day kindergartens (K) for a number of years. The St. Alphonsus kindergarten is technically a half day, but they offer an extended program which the majority of children attend. Even though the Alberta government has decided not to fund full-day K, "Edmonton Public is committed to the full-day K already in place in 18 of its schools. They will find the funds within the district budget," says Heather Raymond, principal of Norwood School. The Catholic board will try to do the same.

Judi Strang, kindergarten teacher at Norwood school, says, "Full-day kindergarten is helpful for many children, but it's not for everyone." If you only want to send your child half-days, then discuss that option with your school or look into neighbouring Virginia Park or Victoria schools.

We have two Headstart programs in local schools as well as one at Norwood Family Centre and Atonement Home. They are all for low-income families except Norwood Centre which is based on their geographic boundaries. Delton, Norwood and Spruce Ave run Jr. Kindergarten programs open to everyone but they are dependent on securing continued funding.

onlineEXTRA



The City Centre Education Project involves seven public schools (Eastwood, Delton, John A. McDougall, McCauley, Norwood, Parkdale and Spruce Avenue) serving the communities of Prince Rupert, Queen Mary Park, Delton, Eastwood, Elmwood Park, Parkdale, Norwood, Spruce Avenue, Westwood, Central McDougall, Boyle Street and McCauley. This year we have embraced Abbott School as well.

The objective of the coalition is to provide the very best educational opportunities possible for our children so that each one of them can complete high school. We know that raising a child is not just the business of schools but requires home and school to be working together as well as the greater community supporting children and their families.

We have many partners working in our schools to support children

and their success.

- The Family Centre
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- The United Way
- Alberta Children's Services
- Edmonton Police Service
- YMCA
- Aboriginal Youth and Family Well Being and Education Society

We work closely with many other organizations in the community.

Watch for a brochure in your mailbox outlining some of the highlights of programming at your local school. Please call your local school to get involved.

Upcoming events:

- **CCEP Art Sale and Exhibit**
April 28 and 29, Nina Haggerty Centre
- **City Centre Education Joint Parent Council Resource Fair**
May 4, 4:30 to 7:30 Spruce Avenue School
- **Alex Decoteau Run**
May 12 Rundle Park

No boys allowed All-girls Jr. High attracts 50 students in first year

MONIQUE NUTTER

The Jean Forest Leadership Academy all-girls junior high program opened its doors this year at St. Basil School in Spruce Avenue. Fifty girls enrolled in the program, which only included grade 7 this year, but will be expanded next year to include grade 8 and the following year grade 9.

"Our mission at the Jean Forest Leadership Academy is to provide the finest Christ-centered learning environment which inspires young women to develop in spirit, leadership, intellect, self discovery and service," reads the background information provided by Jacquie Dahlen, assistant principal in charge of the Academy. Jacquie speaks of the ages of 12 to 15 being a critical time in developing one's identity, a time in which patterns established are carried on to adulthood.

But why an all-girls setting? Jacquie says the program was developed in response to repeated requests of parents to Edmonton Catholic. She also says the Academy is "an academic setting for girls where they can participate fully, without any distractions." Her experiences at Jean Forest show her that "when no boys are in the mix, there is a real



SHAWNEE, ELANOR AND KRISTIN IN UNIFORM POSING WITH THE SCHOOL NAMESAKE

community feeling for girls."

Jacquie, hired six months before the program began, did research and site visits to all-girls schools in Vancouver, Victoria, and Calgary as well as the Nellie McClung programs in Edmonton Public. The program she developed includes a strong math/science focus, leadership activities including a service component, and an extensive list of options ranging from the more traditional foods and fashions, art and drama to forensics, robotics, and small engine repair.

Sandy Gillis, the principal of St Basil's, also speaks

with warmth and pride about their expansion this year to include the all-girls program. He recounts his first experience teaching in an all-girls school as a substitute back east. "Never again, was what I thought at the time," he chuckles, "but now with more experience under my belt, I find it delightful to teach girls at an age where they are interested in exploring meaning and spiritual life."

It might not be for every girl, but it's great to have an all-girls program like the Jean Forest Academy among our range of educational options.

onlineEXTRA

Trade Winds To Success Project WANTED!! Aboriginal Pre-Trades Trainees

MARY COLLINS

The newly formed Trade Winds to Success Training Society has been funded by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Alberta Human Resources and Employment, the Union Training Trust Fund(s) groups, and three AHRDA holders: Oteenow Employment and Training Society, Metis Nation of Alberta, and Treaty Seven Economic Development Corporation. Trade Winds

To Success Training Society has been funded to provide employment programming to meet skills gap shortages benefiting the Union Training Trust Fund(s) and Aboriginal people in Edmonton and Calgary. The project will provide training and skills development for Aboriginal people to work in the trades.

The project provides Aboriginal people with pre-apprenticeship training to make an informed career choice for boilermaker, car-

penter, ironworker, plumber, steam/pipefitter and welder. Other components of the 20 week course include a week of life skills, four weeks of academic upgrading to write the trades entrance exam level 4 and eight to ten weeks of union shop and hand skills training. Work clothing and safety equipment are provided along with all appropriate safety tickets for each trade. Participants completing the program will be hired as permits with the union.

The program expects 200+ graduates over the three year period to fill the union's labour market shortage. Participants must be at least 18 years old, Metis, Inuit, Status or non-status, be unemployed, under employed or employment threatened and MUST live in the metropolitan areas of Edmonton or Calgary. Funding is available through Oteenow Employment Centre, Metis Employment Services or Aboriginal Futures. Bi-weekly information sessions are held; to find out more information contact the Project Coordinators in Edmonton (780) 471-9100 and Calgary (403)205-3500.



SCOTT L'HIRONDELLE, A CURRENT STUDENT OF THE UNION SHOP TRAINING PROGRAM

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Vanguard College dedicated to being active in the community

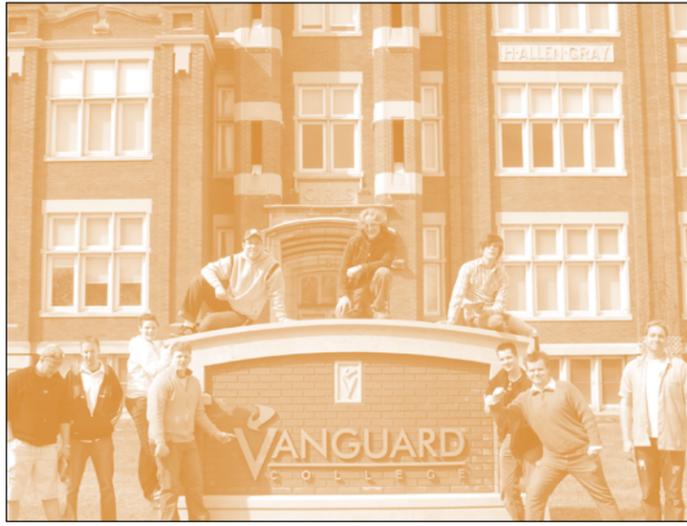
KRISTI ETCHEVERRY

If you take a walk in the community of Westwood you are bound to come across a towering red brick building. Many of you may know it as H.A. Gray School or possibly as the Westwood Campus of NAIT. However, it is no longer either of those. In July 2004, the building, located at 103 Street and 121 Avenue, was purchased by Vanguard College.

Previously known as Northwest Bible College, Vanguard College is affiliated with the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada and accredited by the Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE). Over the past two years the College has put over \$2.6 million dollars into renovating and restoring the building and this summer the last phase of renovations will be completed.

Around 175 full time students from over twelve different church backgrounds attend the college. There are also numerous part time students and students that take courses through Vanguard's distance education program, IBOLT. The mission of Vanguard College can be summed up in four words - Developing Innovative Spirit-Filled Leaders. Every student knows this phrase, and the school is dedicated to making it a reality.

Vanguard offers a variety



STUDENTS ATTENDING THE VANGUARD COLLEGE IN WESTWOOD

of programs in five main areas: Pastoral Studies, Youth Ministries, Music, Children and Family Studies, and Intercultural Studies (Missions). Each program offers a one year certificate or a four year degree program. Other programs

include two and three year Theological Studies Diplomas and a Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) certificate. Programs are flexible and can be combined to best suit the needs of the student.

Vanguard College is located right in the middle of the Westwood Community and is dedicated to being an active part of the community. At the beginning of each school year there is a Service Outreach Day. All the students head out into the community to serve

in whatever ways are needed. Among other things, students have washed windows, raked leaves and cleaned apartments. All students are required to do 6-10 practicum hours per week as part of their education at Vanguard. Many choose to work with churches and organizations in Westwood and the surrounding neighborhoods. In addition, each September the Westwood Community (and anyone else who wishes to join!) is invited to Vanguard for a free Family Fun Day. With games, live music, a petting zoo, food, crafts, and all sorts of family orientated events, Family Fun Day is a highlight of the year for all who are involved!

If you would like more information regarding Vanguard College you can visit their website www.vanguardcollege.com or contact Tim the "Recruitment Guy" at 452-0808.

Teaching and learning the three R's

JILL SCHEYK

The Learning Centre, located in downtown Edmonton (10116 105 Avenue), has been helping adults improve their literary and mathematical skills for 25 years, but while there's a lot of time spent teaching and learning the three R's, the Centre is also about building community.

"This is kind of my family, other than my religious

But Roulston isn't the only one who has a few years at the Centre under her belt. Yolande Herman has been dropping in twice a week since 1995 to build up her reading and writing skills. She is the author of one of The Learning Centre's in-house publications, a slim volume of journal entries titled *Then...and Now*. Mary Norton, a co-coordinator at the Centre, said that having a published work in

The Learning Centre has had on Yolande Herman; she says as much in an author's note on the back of *Then...and Now*. "I always wanted to go to school," Herman wrote. "When I was a kid I did well in school. Then we moved and I couldn't go to school any more. Now I can read some stories. I write every day. I feel better."

Classes at The Learning Centre run in six-week cycles, and always end with some sort of celebration. To finish the six-week cycle that ended in April, almost everyone sat down at a large round table and decorated an Easter egg. The students put the eggs in a glass bowl that became the centerpiece for Sister Roulston's send off party. Roulston spent about two or three days a week at the Centre during her years as a volunteer. She found that the knowledge students gained under her tutelage inspired her as much as it did them.

"To see people managing to think better of themselves and to be able to use the gifts that they have...it's been a great gift to me," she said.

The students, the tutors and the other volunteers come together to make The Learning Centre what it is: devoted to learning and dedicated to building community.

Jill Scheyk has just finished her first year of journalism at Grant MacEwan College. She has written previously for the MacEwan Journalist. Jill belongs to the Edmonton Outdoor Club, and also enjoys reading and tinkering with Photoshop.



GRADE 2 CLASS IN A COMMUNITY CIRCLE

Tribes at Norwood School

A new way of learning and being together

MRS. GANGL AND THE GRADE 2 FANTASTIC FROGS

to share at that time. Those are the Tribes agreements. *Serena, grade 2*

Tribes is not a curriculum, program, or list of activities. It is a process, used to create a positive environment for learning throughout a school community. At Norwood School, teachers have been working on creating a Tribes Learning Community (TLC) within our classrooms and within the school. The grade two class wrote about some of the strategies we are using to implement Tribes. Several of these strategies are described below.

Community agreements

These are the Tribes agreements we use in the school. The first agreement is "Appreciation." This means no put downs. The next agreement is "Mutual Respect." This means having respect for yourself, others, and things. Another agreement is "Listening." It is important to listen to people because it makes them feel included. The last agreement is "Participation." With this you have the right to pass. This helps you to feel comfortable if you don't have an idea

Barnyard babble

Barnyard Babble is something we do sometimes to find our group. First, a teacher gives you a card with a picture of an animal on it. You have to go around and make the sound of that animal to find your group. Everyone who is making the same noise as you is in your group. It is a fun way to get into a group. *Gabrielle, grade 2*

Community circle

A community circle is used for getting to know other people and share ideas. First you sit in a circle together. Then you take turns to share ideas. Sometimes the teacher gives us something to pass around and whoever is holding it gets to talk next. When it is your turn you have the right to pass but when everyone is done talking you can have a turn if you want. In a community circle, everyone gets a chance to talk. That is how a community circle works. *Madison, grade 2*



BOOKS ARE THE WINDOW TO THE WORLD

family...this has become a real community for me," said Sister Aline Roulston, a long-time volunteer at the Centre. "I have many friends here, I've brought my own friends here to volunteer. It's been something extra-special," she added.

Roulston has volunteered for The Learning Centre for 19 years and has served on the advisory board and board of directors, as well as tutored countless adults in reading and writing. She is retiring to New Brunswick this year.

the Centre's library builds the students' confidence and gives them a voice. The shelves outside Norton's office hold dozens of works, from children's stories to personal accounts.

"Many of us find our meaning through our work, whether that's paid work or raising families or volunteer work, and so for some people (the Centre) is kind of where they find their meaning," Norton said. "It's what they do."

It's obvious what an impact

Keeping it in the family

The house that wouldn't be sold

ROBIN GALENZA

The Northlands area has been slowly dying out for a few years. The community around 112 Ave and 79 St is no longer filled with residents, just empty houses. But now a new project, the Eastwood Health Centre, is moving into the site of the old Cromdale School.

This Eastwood Centre has been causing debates around the surrounding area since Capital Health stated their intentions of building a new centre. Clay Sorensen's family has been living in a house north of the Cromdale School, which was built in

1935, since the early 1950's. Clay, a maintenance man at a downtown hotel, went to Cromdale School grade one to grade eight; in fact even his parents went there. Sorensen admits school was like a job to him when he was a kid but that he still has fond memories of playing soccer with his friends, and, remarkably, even his first grade teacher.

"My grade one teacher, I'll always remember her name oddly enough, I can't remember anyone else but I remember her," Clay said.

Clay disliked the idea of the health centre being built on the site of the old school

because he believed and still does that the centre should be on 118 Ave and 82 St.

"Initially I was against it but to be honest with you my opinion is that if it's going to be there, ok, then let's make a good thing out of it." Clay's two main concerns however, are not for the school itself but for those who will be using the services of the health centre.

"If they had knocked it

their soccer or played pick-up baseball or something there, so it's kind of nice that they have that left," Sorensen said.

As for his own house, the only house left inhabited in the area called Northlands, it is going to stay within the family. Clay says the family has not decided who will keep the house in the future, but it is important to the family, especially his grandchildren.

"There is a lot of history here, including this tree in the backyard which is pretty unique to this area. It's an apple tree, called a Northern Spy. They are common in parts of Ontario but they are not common here." Clay said, "And



CLAY SORENSEN - THE LAST MAN STANDING ON HIS BLOCK

Amanda Lewis

down [the school] I would have been ok with it but I know some people wouldn't have been," Sorensen said. "My main concerns are that it is easily accessible and covered for seniors and for moms and children, and the security factor; make sure the thing's patrolled properly."

One thing Clay likes most about the preliminary design that Manasc Isaac Architect's revealed at the last community meeting is the open green space the architects left.

"It's kind of nice because there is a group of young people who for as long as I can remember over the years have practiced

where this house is, many years ago it used to be a stockyard, the only thing I could figure is that it came in with some critters one time. And it grew and it produced apples; they used to be bigger than your fist but they're about the size of your fist now. A lot of people have gotten apples off this over the last thirty or forty years."

The Sorensens have been asked to sell their house several times to Northlands but they will not.

"The family's plans are basically my mother's, this is her place and she has no intention of going anywhere," Sorensen added.



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Unsafe for human habitation

Cleaning up neighborhood derelict houses

PATRICIA DUNNIGAN

Neighbourhood vision

Chris Hayduk, the Derelict Housing Officer with EPS has a vision for our neighbourhood. "The more we can get resident ownership of houses in the area, the safer it will become. By taking action on unsafe housing we also take action on dangerous and criminal activity. We are going through a renewal in this area, and those of us who live and raise our families here have a strong commitment to making this a safe and healthy community."

He should know. Chris's territory stretches east/west from 121 St. to Wayne Gretzky Drive and north/south from the Yellowhead to the river. "The need is greater here because it's such a high rental district," he adds.

When the opportunity came to go on a ride-along with Constable Hayduk and Wojciek Drobin, an Environmental Health Officer with Capital Health, I jumped at the chance.

Black with grease

Our first stop was at a recently condemned drug house. A contractor was doing some cosmetic repairs in the kitchen. We were greeted by a strong smell of natural gas as we entered. The walls and ceilings were covered in filth, black with grease and mice were scurrying around in the kitchen. Chris was interested in safe

disposal of used needles and asked about what drug paraphernalia the contractor had found. When he admitted to having thrown many needles into the garbage, he was given a safe disposal demonstration on the spot.

As we moved through the house the officers explained hazards that made the house unfit to live in. Access to the basement was partially covered over with flooring and it was a tight fit for the 6'6 Constable to squeeze through the opening and onto a wooden ladder with a broken top step. In the basement we found a crumbling foundation that was propped up by a wooden retaining wall. One corner had a big mound of dirt from a recent cave-in.

Unsafe to live in

To be condemned a house has to be judged unsafe for human habitation. Concerns can include; electrical, plumbing, heating, mould, broken windows and crumbling foundations. This house failed in three of the categories. Once a property is condemned, Capital Health insists that everything is repaired up to code before anyone can live in it again. The word is that a new buyer recently assumed the existing mortgage of \$118,000, sight unseen, on this beauty and is renovating it so he can rent it out again. It looks like a very bad investment; according to Wojciek it will take half of that

again to bring this house up to required standards.

Once a house is condemned the tenants are required by law to leave the premises. Failing to do so can result in a trespassing charge with a stiff fine or four days in jail. Chris and Wojciek work as partners. As a police officer Chris doesn't have the authority to condemn a house; his role revolves around the type of activity being reported. Capital Health has the authority but their officers can be in danger when trying to evict people so Chris backs Wojciek up with security. Only the City of Edmonton Derelict Housing department can order a demolition.

Familiar filth

We leave for our second destination, a condemned 2.5 storey house where the tenants have removed the condemned sign and are resisting the order to vacate. The smell of gas and cigarette smoke is thick as we climb to the upstairs suite. It is here that I get to appreciate Chris' exceptional people skills. Faced with contradictory stories he is clear, direct and polite in reiterating his message – "either leave or you will be fined." The upstairs resident claims to be the owner, which would give him permission to remain in the house to do repairs, however his name is not on the title. He has been fighting with the downstairs tenant and each blames the other for the problems.

When we enter the main floor suite we are met with the familiar filth. The health inspector wants to see if the plumbing works but someone is in the bathroom so the tenant exclaims, "Listen, you can hear him flushing the toilet. See, the plumbing works!" He twists and changes his story to deflect any responsibility – his brother owns the house,



WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN A BEAUTIFUL OLD HOUSE IS NOW BEYOND REPAIR

Capital Health said he could stay longer, he lives there alone (although someone is smoking behind a closed door off the kitchen). Chris patiently continues to tell him to find another place or he will be fined.

Before we leave we go to the back of the house and knock on the door of a basement suite where yet another man still lives. "The entrance is too low to be legal," Wojciek explains. Because of this, even if the necessary repairs are made to the rest of the house, they can never rent this part out again.

Our third stop is in the vicinity of 119 Ave. & 90 Street. Two side by side properties are being investigated. One house has been demolished and the other is boarded up. Chris looks for evidence of trespassing and Wojciek for health concerns. The demolition is complete but the rubble still remains and the owner has taken the opportunity to dump old junk and garbage on the site so it can be removed by the city.

Action is being taken on derelict houses thanks to the partnership between the Edmonton Police Service, Capital Health and the City of Edmonton. Out of 195 investigations last year, 50 houses were

demolished. "That's good for the community," states Chris. Yes it is.

Making A Complaint

Anyone who has valid concerns about a house can make a complaint. Problems can include: lack of water, heat, and broken windows, vacant and condemned houses being accessed, or suspected drug house.

You will need to provide the address of the house, what you observed; problems, types of activity and, if known, who the owner is. Although your complaint will remain confidential you need to provide your contact information.

How long before action is taken depends on the severity and the work loads at the time. While each complaint is investigated, this doesn't insure that something can be done about it. You are encouraged to call back if you haven't had a response.

If you have a health or quality of life complaint, call Capital Health at 413-7711. For concerns about a vacant derelict house you can call the City of Edmonton's derelict housing department at 496-6031. Constable Hayduk can be reached at 944-5202.



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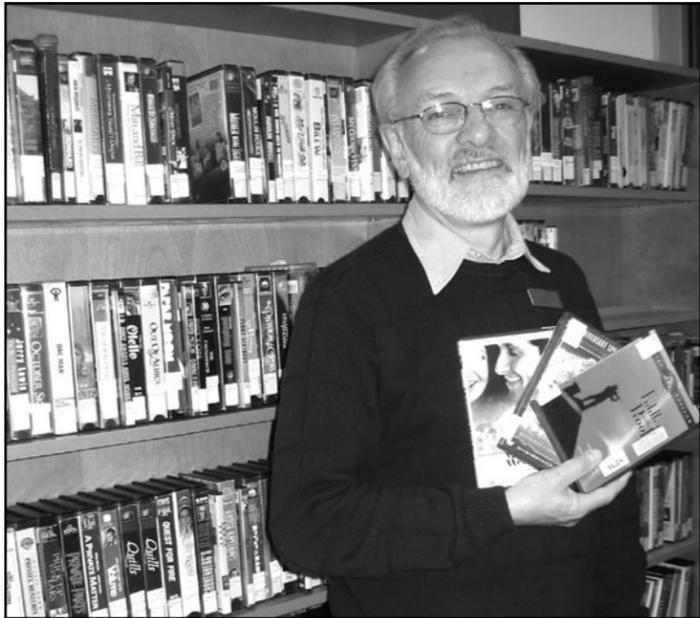
SpruceWords : It's not JUST about books

HOWARD SAUNDERS

Education is a wonderful thing – and the benefits of formal education are well known; a better job and more security in life can all come with a successful journey through post-secondary education. But education comes in many forms. These days it is not always just book learning that helps us to reach our goals – indeed, research has shown that people learn in different ways, some doing better by watching or listening, rather than reading.

This being the case, the public library is the place to come. While we have thousands of books on a multitude of topics, we also have a lot of other things – on DVD, CD and tape.

If you are learning a language, a book is just not enough. You need to hear the spoken word. We have CDs and tapes to help you learn a wide variety of languages



HOWARD SHOWS OFF THE SPRUCEWOOD COLLECTION

– and that includes English, surely one of the hardest of all languages to learn, due to its lack of consistency.

As a lifelong lover of music, I am constantly broadening my musical education by listening to CDs from the

library. You know how it goes – you hear a song on the radio that you think sounds interesting. Instead of going out and buying it right away and risking your twenty bucks, you can go to the library, borrow the CD and listen to it for free

for three weeks, then make up your mind about buying it. This has paid off for me many times over the years. Some I have bought and others I have just taken back, thankful that I saved my money!

You know that we now have a big collection of DVDs – and the feature movies are very popular indeed - but have you thought how interesting the non-fiction ones can be? If you want to learn some new cooking techniques, try our cookery DVDs and you can be taught by such people as Jacques Pepin and Julia Child, as well as by Martha Stewart – not to mention the Clever Cleaver Brothers.

History buffs will have a ball with our DVDs, whether you want “Storm over Europe, the Huns are coming” about Attila, Visigoths and Vandals and the wandering tribes of Europe, or if you prefer “Journey to Oblivion” the story of the disaster that befell

the steamship the *Empress of Ireland* in the St. Lawrence Estuary. Fans of exercise will want our DVDs too, as will those who want inspiration for their yoga sessions.

Programs in the library can be interesting and educational. During Spring Break, 24 children had a wonderful time when an interpreter from the Valley Zoo brought animals and reptiles into the library. That armadillo was absolutely amazing! Watch out for programs in our upcoming Summer Reading Club.

You never know what you might learn when you come to the Edmonton Public Library!

Editor's note: This will be Howard's last column with us as he is retiring as manager of the Sprucewood library this spring. Thanks for your words Howard and we wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

Good Morning, Mr. Magpie The most common and most hated bird

ARTHUR DYCK



They can be loud and obnoxious, waking you up early every morning. They've been known to steal objects from your backyard. They hate cats. This is the magpie, one of our city's most common birds, and possibly, the most hated.

Magpies have a terrible reputation, though not always deserved, for driving songbirds out of a neighbourhood by eating their eggs and young. They are true omnivores, eating anything vegetable or animal, including small mammals such as mice, or the dog food out on your patio.

In iridescent black plumage with the white wing patches, white belly and sides, magpies can be seen in almost every neighbourhood, where they are considered a general nuisance. In spite of many efforts over the years to eradicate the magpie, they have remained one of the most successful of birds.

More often than not, you will see them on the ground, flipping over leaves and stones to look for insects and other invertebrates. Their nests, a disorganized mess of sticks, can be seen high in a tree, on a power pole, or on a power stanchion.

Love them or hate them, we'll probably always have the magpie with us. Actually, there is something rather likeable about them. Their loud cry is often followed by soft chuckling conversation. And you have to admit that their plumage and long tail is striking. As for their character, there is something to be admired in their brashness.

Next time you see a magpie, consider it good luck, not bad (see Magpie Legends). And if you are in the neighbourhood of 115 Avenue and 101 Street, keep an eye out for the albino magpie in its white and light gray plumage.

Magpie Legends

The magpie is the subject of many folk tales and customs wherever it resides.

In the western world the magpie was connected to Bacchus, the god of wine, so it became associated with intoxication.

In some parts of Europe, a magpie sitting on the top of a roof is a sign that a member of that household will soon die.

The belief that it was bad luck to meet a magpie, especially a lone one, led to the development of various customs such as removing one's hat and making the sign of the cross or spitting over one's shoulder three times and saying “Clean birds by sevens, / Unclean by twos; / The dove in the heavens / Is the one I choose.”

In the eastern world, the magpie is regarded in a totally different manner. It is a Chinese bird of good omen and a bringer of joy. To meet a magpie, especially at the start of one's journey, is an omen of great success.



PETER GOLDRING
Member of Parliament
Edmonton East

Speech from the Throne states Government's priorities

On Tuesday, April 4th, Canada's new Conservative government delivered its first Speech from the Throne outlining the Five Priorities that Canadians from every part of the country supported during the recent federal election.

The first priority of Canada's new Conservative government is to introduce the Federal Accountability Act. This new law will restore the principle that government should serve the public interest, not personal interests.

Secondly, Canada's Conservative government will reduce taxes – starting with the GST. Our plan calls for the GST to be dropped from 7% to 6% immediately, and eventually to 5%. It's meaningful tax relief for all Canadians.

Canadians are worried about the availability of health care services. That's why Canada's new government will negotiate patient wait time guarantees with the provinces – so Canadians finally start to receive essential medical treatment within clinically acceptable waiting times.

Fourthly, Canada's new Conservative government will deliver with a truly universal childcare plan that assists every family with children under six years old with \$1,200 annually. At the same time, we will introduce incentives for businesses, non-profit and community-based organizations to add 125,000 new childcare spaces.

And our plan respects the fact that parents – not governments – are best at making decisions about how to care for their kids.

Finally, Canadians deserve to feel safe in their homes, on their streets and in their communities and no longer want the well being of criminals to be above that of good, honest, law-abiding Canadians. Beginning with the Speech from the Throne, those days of “hug a thug” are gone.

Accountability, cutting the GST, a patient wait time guarantee, choice in child care and getting tough on crime – these are the priorities Canadians voted for and they are the priorities of Canada's new Conservative government. We welcome your comments or concerns.

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495-3261 **www.petergoldring.ca**

Come Join the fun!

Play and Save Low Cost Summer Programs 2006

T-Rex & Friends

July 4-7, 9:00-11:30
Alberta Avenue Hall
Ages 3-5 yrs \$11

Arts Galore

July 10-14, 9:00-4:00
Eastwood Hall
Ages 6-12 yrs \$23

Art Alive

July 17-21, 1:30-4:00
Eastwood Hall
Ages 6-9 yrs \$14

Sports Stars

July 24-28, 1:30-4:00
Parkdale-Cromdale Hall
Ages 6-9 yrs \$13

Adventure Us

July 24-28, 9:00-4:00
Alberta Avenue Hall
Ages 6-12 yrs \$23

Move & Groove

July 31-Aug 4, 1:30-4:00
Parkdale-Cromdale Hall
Ages 6-10 yrs \$14

Puppet Theatre

Aug 8-11, 9:00-11:30
Eastwood Hall
Ages 3-5 yrs \$11

Kinder Cooks

Aug 14-18, 9:00-11:30
Spruce Avenue Hall
Ages 3-5 \$13

Kinder Sports

Aug 21-25, 9:00-11:30
Alberta Avenue Hall
Ages 4-6 yrs \$13

Sports Stars

Aug 21-25, 1:30-4:00
Alberta Avenue Hall
Ages 6-9 yrs \$13

Early in-person registration on May 11 from 4:30 - 7:00 pm
at Commonwealth Stadium (11000 Stadium Rd) OR Grand Trunk
Leisure Centre (13025-112 St).

Phone Registration begins on Tuesday, May 23. Call 496-2966.

To get your own complete copy of the 2006 PLAY AND SAVE Brochure pick
one up at your local library or call 496-1901.

Sponsored by:



PRE-SCHOOL SOCCER

6 Tuesdays
beginning May 16
Alberta Avenue Community
League (Rink)

Instructor: Shauna Dowson

Group 1 5:15 - 6:00

Group 2 6:00-6:45

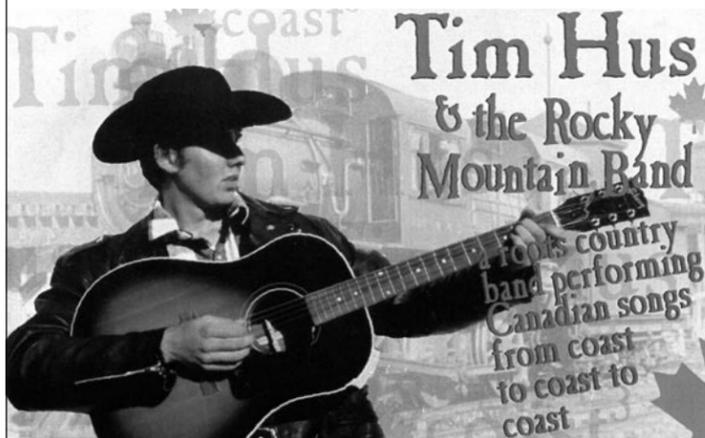
A great class for
pre-schoolers (age 3-5)
to learn instep passes,
shooting, dribbling,
throw-ins, stopping a ball,
co-operative play and
game simulation. Tag
games, keep away
games & mini-games.

To register call Brad
MacCallum at 479-2313
(office) or 982-3052 (cell).



Tim Hus and the Rocky Mountain Two invite you to a great party!

Former resident of Norwood Tim Hus is throwing a party on
Friday, May 5 at the new Sidetrack Café on 10238 - 104 Street.
Now living in Calgary, Hus frequently returns to Edmonton to play
his unique style of alternative cowboy/country music. His latest CD is
called HUSKIES AND HUSQVARNA, keep an eye out for it and
see you at the show!



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Thinking of Buying?
Call **Roxanne Litwyn**
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FREE MARKET EVALUATION

List of homes for sale
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www.roxannehomes.com

Not intended to solicit properties already listed for sale.

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

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If busy, please call 709.2222
11749 - 95 Street Edmonton

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.

JOURNALISM WORKSHOP & RCP EDITORIAL MTG

Tuesday, May 30 from 6:00 to 8:30 pm. 6pm Pizza supper. 6:30 pm sharing by Tracey Comeau, a 2nd year GMC Journalism student interning with the Rat Creek Press. Time for discuss and Q&A. 7:00 pm Open editorial meeting to brainstorm and plan for the upcoming year. Please call 479-6285 to RSVP.

"A TASTE OF EDMONTON" VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Safeway Pancake Breakfasts, Wine Servers and Security volunteers needed from July 20-29. Great benefits and only a minimum of 12 hrs is required. Call Suzanne at 423-2822 ext. 25.

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 / 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.

CAR FOR SALE

94 Ford Taurus Station Wagon 3.8L, 175,000 kms, Good Condition, \$2000 obo. Call Rene 477-3214.

To post a free community notice (max 75 words) email info@ratcreek.org or call 479-6285. Notices are published as space permits and deemed appropriate by the editorial team.

Go to ratcreek.org online for a complete and up-to-date calendar. Submit your events to events@ratcreek.org or call 479-6285.

CCEP COMMUNITY RESOURCE FAIR

Thursday, May 4 from 4:30 to 7:30 at Spruce Avenue School (11424 102 St). Explore agencies, camps and organizations who provide services to our community.

ADULT COMMUNITY ART NIGHT - BOOK PROJECT

3 Tuesdays, May 9 to 23 from 6:30 to 8:30 pm at Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts (9702 111 Ave). Make a media accordion book using pen & ink washes, design a collage jacket, bind the pages to the jacket. Cost \$10. Call 474-7611 to register.

COME WHAT MAY EXHIBIT

Of all new work by Nina Haggerty artists. Opening reception on Thursday, May 11 from 4 to 7:30 pm at Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts (9702 111 Ave). Exhibit runs from May 5 to 25. Hours 9:30 to 2:30 Mon-Fri and Tue/Thu 6 to 8 pm. Call 474-7611 for more info.

ADULT COMMUNITY ART NIGHT - CLAY WORKSHOP

5 Tuesdays, May 30 to June 27 from 6:30 to 8:30 pm at Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts (9702 111 Ave). Creating slab and coil houses, abstract vases, flowers, and figures. Cost \$10. Call 474-7611 to register.

FREE COMMUNITY SWIM

See ad on page 11.

PRESCHOOL PLAYGROUP / INDOOR PLAYGROUND

Contact Karen at 479-4812 for more info.

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.

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.

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 URBAN NATIVE MINISTRY

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

THE SAL: TEEN DROP-IN

Tue-Fri 3:30-5pm at Edmonton Crossroads Church, 11661 95 St, 474-4324.

AA/RECOVERY MEETINGS Edmonton Crossroads

11661 95 St, 474-4324
Christian 12 Step, Mon at 7:45pm
Ladies AA Meeting Tue at 8pm
Open AA Meeting Thur at 8pm
St. Faith's Anglican
11725 93 St, 477-5931.
AA Meeting, Sat at 2pm
Keep It Simple Club
11720 82 St, 471-4705
AA Tues & Thur at 8pm.
NA weekdays at 12pm.

FOOD & FELLOWSHIP Edm Crossroads Church

11661 95 St, 474-4324
The Haven, Fridays at 7pm.
Worship, Sundays, 3 & 6pm.
Coffee/Snacks, Sundays, 4:15
St. Faith's Anglican
11725 93 St, 477-5931
Service & Lunch, Thur, 12pm.
Breakfast, Sat, 8:30-9:30.
Women's Supper & Fellowship,
2nd Thursday at 6pm.
Community Supper,
3rd Friday from 5-6:30pm

All welcome at
SOLID ROCK EVANGEL CHURCH



Sundays at 11 am
Wednesdays at 7 pm

Colosseum B&B Chapel
11827 - 85 Street

Pastor Stanley Burdett
Ph: 463-5950

Play or Work
BINGO at Alberta Avenue




9210-118 Avenue, 477-2773

Every Wednesday, Thursday & Friday starting at 6:10 pm
Additional late night bingo on Fridays starting at 10:20 pm
Volunteers needed!! It's easy work in a quiet & smoke-free environment. Come out and support your community.



NORWOOD Child & Family Resource Centre

9516 114 Avenue
Ph. 471-3737



Edmonton Public Library

SPRUCEWOOD BRANCH
11555 - 95 Street, 780.496.7099

Rhymes that Bind
Rhymes, finger play, songs and movement games for infants and toddlers. Free drop-in program including lunch. Newborn to 3 yrs. 11:30-12:30, Wednesdays, until June 7.

Books & Fun for Toddlers
Explore books, play games, sing songs and do crafts. For ages 13 months to 3 years. 10-11:30 followed by lunch, Tuesdays, May 16 to June 20.

Books & Fun for Preschoolers
Read stories, tell stories, sing, dance, do crafts, play games and meet other families. For ages 3-6 years. 1:30-3:30, Tuesdays, May 16 to June 20 OR 10:00-12:00 followed

by lunch, Thursdays, May 18 to June 22.

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
Thursdays, 2:30 to 5:00
Saturdays, noon to 4:00

Literacy and Parenting Skills
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

Call and register for all programs unless stated otherwise.

Fabulous Readers' Club
2 p.m. Saturday, May 13
Grades 4 and up. Enjoy some games, win some prizes and, of course, read GREAT books!

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

Just Plain Fun
2 p.m. Saturday, May 27
Ages: 6 - 12 years
Spring to the library for stories and crafts. Take home your own painted plaster keepsake.

Heroic Writing Contest!
Whether your hero is a friend, relative, celebrity, pet or historic figure, we want to hear about it! Tell the world about your hero and enter for a chance to win great prizes! Entries may be in any form - a story, a newspaper article, a poem or even a comic strip! Write about your hero in 500 words or less and drop your entry off at the Sprucewood Branch by Friday, August 11, 2006.

Did you know the library has a huge collection of music cds, videos and dvds?

D.I.Y: Do It Yourself
2 p.m. Saturday, May 20
Ages: 13 - 18 years
Sweet Lip Gloss. Show off those beautiful lips of yours with your own homemade lip gloss.

How to Get Organized
6:30 p.m. Wed, May 24
Join Shelly Morrison from Clutter Cutter Professional Organizing Inc. who will present a session on organization.

Shelly will share her proven ideas for cutting clutter from your home. Recapture your space and sanity!

CALL TO REGISTER FOR PROGRAMS or to book the large meeting room for free both during or after hours.

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