



Take a nostalgic trip into the past with an old-time drive-in movie night at the Alberta Avenue Community League Building parking lot. A more fitting movie couldn't have been chosen for this second installment of the outdoor extravaganza (*Back to the Future*) where popcorn and treats will be available. Back-seat kissing allowed.

## Alberta Avenue drive-in returns

MARI SASANO

Everyone get in the car! Following the success of the Alberta Avenue drive-in movie in October, it's coming back Sunday, May 19th with another outdoor screening - this time showing the 1980s movie *Back to the Future*.

"I'm riding on the coattails of the last one, which was *Grease* in October," says the event's organizer, Frank Zotter.

"It was really rewarding. Part of what motivates me is that I love how our neighbourhood is changing. A decade ago, it was definitely more dodgy. People feel safe now," he says, crediting community groups for bringing the community together.

"You can bring safety and family-friendly fun during the day, but the challenge is to do the same at night. This is a way for everyone to go out and have



Frank Zotter and the Candy girls will be around to liven up the entertainment.

fun and be safe."

For Zotter, the signs are clear: "I'm so touched by seeing kids in pajamas running around, and people remembering the drive-ins of their childhood."

Eighty-five cars attended the October show, which had all the hallmarks of a typical

drive-in experience: ushers to show you to a parking spot, concessions, and cartoons until dusk. Admission is free, but donations are welcome. Zotter loves the nostalgia of the drive-in (the first movie he ever saw was at a drive-in), and that people are now able to

share that experience with the younger generation who missed out on them.

"The sad thing is, it's becoming a thing of the past. There are no drive-ins left in Alberta, and there are only 3 in B.C. We're bringing it back, thanks to the Avenue Initiative," he says.

"In fact, after the first one, the city planning person for Belvedere asked, 'Can you bring this to my neighbourhood?' And I said, 'No!' I like that it's unique to Alberta Avenue."

The response has been so positive, plans are also in the works for another one in August.

**DRIVE-IN MOVIE: Sunday, May 19th**  
Cartoon begins at 9:00pm  
*Back to the Future* at 9:30pm  
Alberta Avenue Parking Lot  
93 Street and 118 Avenue

## Community wins battle against liquor store

RCP STAFF

After hearing more evidence on April 25, the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB) denied the application for a liquor store at Arden's Food Mart across from Norwood Square Park. This is a reversal of their previous verbal decision announced in March.

For over two hours, SDAB heard the concerns of the area residents, organizations and businesses that would be affected by the development as well as neighbouring community leagues. In addition, over 30 letters of opposition were emailed.

In her closing statements, Karen Mykietka, president of the Alberta Avenue Community League, said, "In the 15 years I have lived in the area, I have never once heard a resident say we need more liquor stores but I have frequently heard complaints about public intoxication, drinking in parks and safety concerns."

"We hope the owners finally got the message and give up on further applications - it's futile," says Mykietka.

## Ward 7 civic election campaign begins

DARREN BOISVERT

Local resident and long-time political activist Mimi Williams has formally announced that she will be contesting the Ward 7 seat during the upcoming 2013 Edmonton Civic Election. If successful, she will replace two-term councillor Tony Caterina as our local representative (who will also be running for re-election in the October election)

"I want to be a champion for mature communities," says Mimi Williams. "I see that council acknowledges that we have an urban sprawl problem, and then they do nothing. There is a need for council to

be bold."

As a self-described "rabble-rouser", Williams is casting herself as a change-agent. It's a role she has relished for years as a long-time NDP and trade union activist, and during her years as a freelance journalist and writer (most recently seen on the pages of *Vue Weekly Magazine*).

This will not be Williams' first attempt at getting onto city council. She ran unsuccessfully for Edmonton Public School board in 1992, and contested for city council in 1998-2001-2004.

"The issues I was talking about in those elections are still here today. That motivates

me to once again to offer my insights," says Williams.

She says her campaign will focus on local community support for senior citizens (accessible access), increasing public transit, finding ways to better engage citizens, empower the local community leagues, and help bring the community's ethnic communities closer together.

"The city has a wonderful mosaic, but these communities aren't reflected on council," says Williams. "I want to connect the dots between people, tell stories, hear stories."

On larger city-wide issues she is well-known for her opposition to the proposed downtown

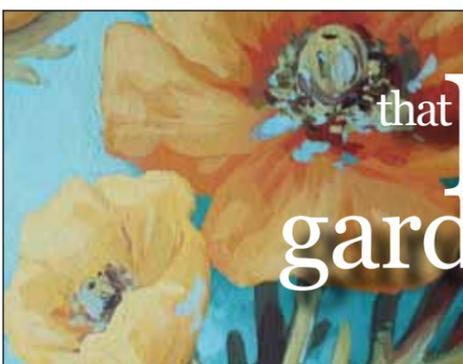
arena and the continued trend of building the city outwards, instead of in-filling upwards (but done with proper community consultations).

"In this ward, I'm hearing a strong message of change," says Williams. "There has been a real breach in trust in this ward. His arena vote was one of the things that made me realize that Tony Caterina has betrayed (the community's) trust. It was a million dollar flip-flop, that if it passes, will dictate for a generation the direction of this city. It will tie the hands of city council. We are so close to election day, the arguments for rushing the decision, means voters won't have a say on this."



Mimi Williams is running for councillor.

While only Councillor Caterina and Williams have formally announced their candidacy, there are several other people who are expected to toss their hats into the political arena in the months ahead.



that **Bloomin'**  
garden show  
& art sale

**Saturday, May 11, 2013**  
Alberta Avenue Community Centre  
9210-118 avenue 9:00am - 4:00pm  
A fantastic event that combines gardening information and products with an artisan market & gallery all in a beautiful, serene atmosphere.

[albertaave.org](http://albertaave.org)

## Community News

# Speedy food for busy people



**FOOD QUEST**  
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RUSTI L. LEHAY

Tonight the quest is for efficiency -- leftovers as sustenance for the busy pre-travel day to come and speed. Walking in, we are met with a greasy spoon aroma which obviously fails to deter patrons. Seven of the ten tables are full with people, the air with chatter and the tables hold colourful platters of food. One of the two servers bustling from table to table drops menus in our hands within moments of our sitting. Within seconds of ordering tea and the mango smoothie, we have our drinks. At first glance, a mango smoothie delivered in a closed frosted can and two glasses of ice fails to exude confidence. The container does state ingredients in English and the short list offers a lesson in foregoing hasty judgements. Pure cane sugar, mango and water deliver quality taste despite the absence of presentation.

Starting with green onion cakes that are delightfully non-



RUSTI L. LEHAY

greasy to hold, we also ordered the lemongrass chili chicken and the shrimp vermicelli. My companion, Rebecca, also a world traveller, has tried Chao Long in the Philippines, which is based on Pho. Here on the avenue the Pho King Rare Steak & Flank Beef Noodle Soup is tasty, the beef more thinly sliced than ever experienced on her Asian travels with a delectable broth that we both slurp with appreciation.

Our main challenge is to get

the noodles out of the serving bowl into two soup bowls. While the shrimp satay was tasty, there was no real flavour to the vermicelli and we were both struck with a desire for additional cucumber and carrot and less of the bland iceberg lettuce.

The brightly lit diner with large uncovered windows hosts two fluorescent neon signs and many patrons can watch the world go by on the avenue. If you want to keep up with

your favourite sports teams, two high definition television screens offer you the plays. You can buy a t-shirt promoting the restaurant and either people do or they wash the display shirt that looks fresh, no tell-tale dust along the ridges of the hanger.

Without mentioning we needed a quick turnaround, menus and orders were taken promptly. Our only delay was pondering the 119 choices on the menu. The food arrived and my friend, Rebecca, a former

server at Walt Disney World Resort recalls food service rules she was expected to follow there.

Drinks should be on the table in less than five minutes and the patron's satisfaction needs to be verified within two bites or two minutes otherwise too much time has elapsed and they have already resigned to eating their meal without your service. Granted that is high fine dining and we appreciate they meet the timing with our tight clock of 40 minutes to a yoga class for Rebecca and a volunteer meeting downtown for me then another meeting.

Just as couples race to of pick-up their children from school, transport one child to soccer, another to piano lessons, help with algebra while stirring spaghetti sauce and boiling pasta and pack for a business trip after Dr. Seuss, (sometimes need lovemaking without all the frills of foreplay and candles in order to speed the border crossing into the land of sleep), dining out occasionally requires practical fast food, ambiance not required, efficient service a necessity.

Taste is a bonus and the Pho King Vietnamese diner food fits the agenda completing the quest with three forks out of five.



*The Avenue Initiative is a community based revitalization of 118th Ave from Nait to Northlands.*

*The community has come together to work with the City to develop a council approved strategy that will create a safe, walkable community for everyone.*

**For information call Judy Allan 780-496-1913  
avenueinitiative.ca**

## Come Check Out These Great Events On The Avenue!

### Safe Streets Meeting

Feeling safe in your home and your community is important. In the past the Safe Streets group worked on many community initiatives to create a safe and clean community. Are you interested in getting involved? Please join us for an information meeting that will look at re-forming this community group to work on projects connected to safety in our community.

**Tuesday May 14th  
7:00 p.m.**

Nova Plaza (Landlords Office) 8904 - 118th Ave  
RSVP Judy.Allan@edmonton.ca 780-496-1913

### Drive-In on the Ave Returns BACK TO THE FUTURE

Alberta Avenue Community Centre Parking Lot! It's FREE!

**Sunday May 19th  
9:00 p.m.**

9210 - 118th Avenue

Cartoon at 9:00 p.m. movie begins at 9:30 p.m.

### Large Item Pick Up

**Saturday, June 1st**

\$10 for the first item & \$5 each additional item. Items must be outside on pick up day & clearly marked. Register in person & pay cash:

AB Ave Community League office 9210 118 Ave.

Mon/Wed May 22, 27, 29 from 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Tue/Thu May 21, 23, 28, 30 from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.



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# News Briefs

## Spring is near and the Ave is Bloomin'



Fresh green smells and the promise of fall fresh produce will be on display and available for your garden.

MICHELLE HAYDUK

For one day only, Alberta Avenue welcomes back the seventh annual that Bloomin' Garden Show and Art Sale on Saturday, May 11th, 2013 from 9:00am to 4:00pm at the Alberta Avenue Community Centre (9210 118 Avenue).

This fantastic event combines gardening information and products with an artisan market and gallery all in a beautiful, serene atmosphere with classical music - a great place to take your mom or do your Mother's Day shopping. "It's not just an event," says organizer Karen Mykietka, "It's an experience!"

This free event brings together urban gardeners, community residents, and local artists to discover gardening and art in

a friendly, creative atmosphere. "We have something for everyone," says Mykietka. "Gardeners can learn from experts and buy plants and flowers. For the non-gardener shop the local artisan goods and check out the art gallery. Or you can explore your creative side and entertain the kids with our hands-on art and garden activities."

Enjoy breakfast and lunch fare by Elm Cafe while sipping a gourmet coffee or fresh-squeezed lemonade.

"Whether you're a seasoned gardener, a novice, an art lover, or just looking to nurture your community roots, that Bloomin Garden Show and Art Sale is the perfect place to be this Mother's Day weekend," states Mykietka.

## Unsung hero on Alberta Ave dances with honour

DARREN BOISVERT

Local business owner, and community activist Denise Leclair has been nominated for the 2013 Women of Distinction Award in Arts and Culture by the Edmonton YWCA. Now in its 31st year, the awards ceremony (May 30th) has long been a prestigious feather in the cap of many exceptional women in Edmonton.

Six to eight hundred people are expected to attend the ceremony, and if Leclair decides to dance into the ballroom, no-one would be surprised. She the owner and instructor at Bedouin Beats on the corner of 118th Avenue and 94th Street.

"Not only does Denise support a large group of women," says Sharry Watson who dances at the studio and led the nomination process for her mentor. "But she is there for a lot of aspiring dancers and dance troupes, provides venues for recitals, and showcases dancers during Kaleido and Deep Freeze."

And while the colorful dancing attracts many men and women to the community, Watson says that Leclair is making a "real difference in the neighbourhood and making that part of the neighbourhood safer for women".

If Leclair does win the award, she will join last year's recipient



Denise Leclair is cool in sunglasses and her students have nominated her for a prestigious award.

Kathleen Quinn (2012 Lois Hole Achievement Award winner) as a local activist who is honoured for her work.

"The only difference between the award winner's and those nominated is a statue" says Amber Niemeier, Director of Communications and Development for the YWCA. "All 41 nominees this year (in several categories) will be treated as this is their special day. They are all exceptional people and often unsung heroes of our city."

The annual awards and gala event will also help raise

money for programming at the YWCA, helping to empower more women in Edmonton.

"In the nine year I have run the awards, the one commonality what we get back each year is that women tend to be extremely humble. For us, it's a matter of changing their perspective of what the award is about and thanking them for setting an example... for women and everybody."

For more information on the YWCA contact Amber at 780.970.6500 or to buy tickets call 780.970.6503.

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The Rat Creek Press is a forum for all people. We encourage comments that further discussion on a given article or subject, provide constructive criticism, or offer an idea for community activity. Letters should be no longer than 250 words and must include the full name, location and contact information of the author. Op-Ed columns should be 600-800 words and observe formal rules of spelling and grammar. The RCP reserves the right to edit all material and to remove any electronic comment at any time.

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

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## Editorial

Submissions: editor@ratcreek.org

# Green space fight; it's worth the effort

DARREN BOISVERT

There is nothing worse than being atomized. No, we are not referring to the bellicose threats by military leaders and nations around the world, but to the increasing trend here in North America of sticking to our own piece of land in splendid isolation.

What happens on the global stage should provide a lesson for all of us in our own personal lives.

There will always be a necessary tension between our desire for privacy in an overly photographed and monitored world and our need to exist peacefully with our neighbours. If we chose to live together, we need to find ways to cross the borders in our own community in order to decrease our distrust of the strangers who live among us.

We don't need to be rocket scientists to understand that community parks are the first, last and best place for people to meet in a safe -- neutral -- location.

For decades, this community has existed in fear. We stepped quickly past the girls on the street corner, turned a nervous eye to the circling vehicles of men looking for sex, and worried our children would step on a discarded needle. We stayed in our homes, and drew the blinds down on our windows.



There is nothing more difficult for people who dislike confrontation and violence to learn how to fight. The stress can be debilitation and no-one in their right mind wants to volunteer to step forward to take the slings and arrows of aggressive 'blowback'. But committed leadership is necessary to provide security for all and an ethical roadmap for avoiding the dangers of escalating violence.

I think of people like Gerard Forget, gathering signatures for a petition to stop a massage parlour being set up next to Crystal Kids. I appreciate Cora Shaw showing up at bylaw hearings to provide

a community response to development. I respect the leadership of Chris Hayduk (CRUD) and Kathleen Quinn (CEASE) who -- with different strategies -- encourage us to engage our neighbours in firm, but respectful ways.

And I think of Lorne Larsen, former chair of the Westwood Community League, who spent seven years struggling to provide community space for his neighbours. A struggle, sad to say, he did not live long enough to see finished.

In Westwood, piece by piece, the common land that surrounded the H.A. Gray School was parcelled off to private interests with the

community being denied their affirmed right to control the development. City officials thought the cemetery along YellowHead Trail was 'green park land'. Inattention by city council to the needs of the community were overlooked. Westwood was, and is, being atomized into smaller and smaller pieces.

Which brings us to the Triangle Park proposal. Seven years of requesting, designing, presenting to council, and stressing with unfair development plans has led to nothing but less park space for the community. So it was encouraging to hear Lorne's wife Marlene Larsen say, "Enough! This park is going to be approved and built this year and we are going to name it in Lorne's name."

It was good to hear the fight in the voice of current board chair Kim Ellis during numerous phone calls about the need to force city council to provide Westwood with more community space to gather and BE a community. And it was good to chat with City Councillor Kim Krushell who committed herself to convincing her fellow councilors to provide funding for this crucial community development.

In short, when we struggle non-violently for the well-being of everyone, we engage in the 'good fight'.

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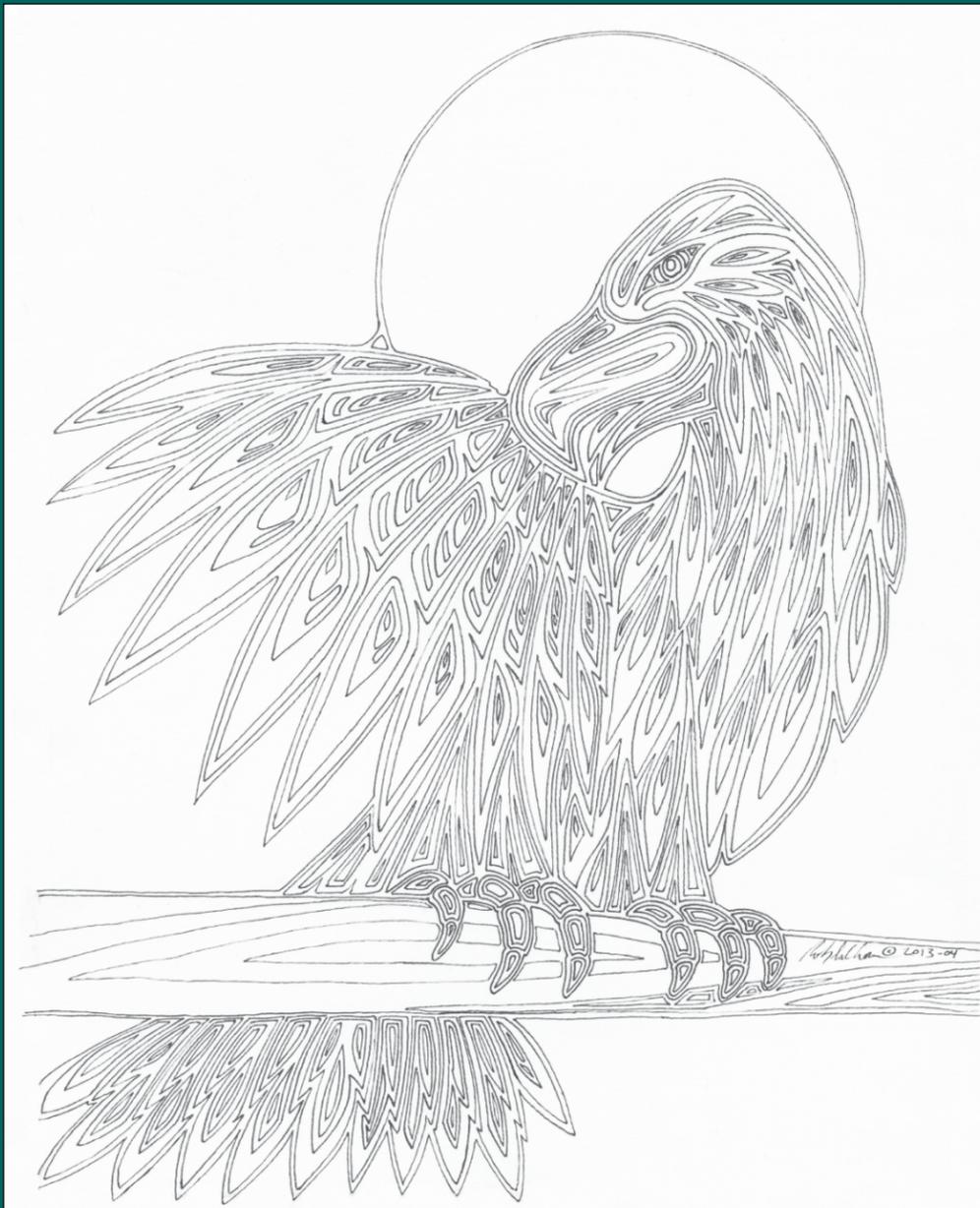
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# Needing color for summer



You can go crazy with trying to stay in the lines with this illustration, but it's hard to go wrong with trying to make the world a more colorful place. Local artist Rob Calhoun has generously created this picture for everyone to see the beauty in nature one line -- one color -- at a time. Great for doodling and eye-hand coordination skills.

# Join Jane's Walk

## An Alberta Avenue exploration



Norwood: a plan for neighbourhood improvement. 1976

RCP STAFF

Have you ever heard of Alberta Avenue? What did you hear? Was it good? Or was it something else?

To observe buildings is not to be solely concerned with architecture. Embodied in any given structure are the multiple layers of meaning that stretch through history and tell the story of who we are as a community and as individuals.

Alberta Avenue is an incredibly unique neighbourhood in Edmonton. One of the city's oldest, it has changed in dramatic ways over the years. Today, as the area once again begins to thrive, we are pleased to be able to look back and uncover the layers of experience that make up its character.

Join us for a walk through the neighbourhood where we will explore the history of the area, but in an attempt to understand the places as they are now.

We will be meeting at the Alberta Avenue Community League (9210 118 Ave) on Sunday, May 5th at 1:00pm.

The walk will be guided by Jon Weller, producer of The Ave We Had history project. This project is a unique community history project that has sought to bring the history of the Alberta Avenue neighbourhood to life through theatre, writing, podcast, oral history and more. Most recently Jon has been developing a multimedia historical walking tour for the area and is looking forward to finally getting to share what he has learned.

Also, if you have a smartphone make sure to bring it as there is opportunity to listen to stories from residents themselves. If not, other options will be available.

Meet at the AACL, 9210 118 Ave, on May 5th. For more information go to: [www.theavewehad.org](http://www.theavewehad.org)



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**Want to garden this spring?**

**Community garden spots available** in Alberta Avenue, Eastwood, and Elmwood Park. We are discussing future gardens at St. Patrick School and Norwood Square. Interested? Contact Rocky at [rocky.pilisko@edmonton.ca](mailto:rocky.pilisko@edmonton.ca) or 780.496.3782

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# Man camp and outsourcing education to Barbarian Dad

DAVE VON BIEKER

It is Jack's first weekend away from home. He's 9 and we think he's ready for a weekend camp. I reassure him, or more honestly myself, in the car. It seems saying goodbye is for my own benefit. I turn. Walk away. Let go.

Perhaps this is a mistake.

Sending my son with a gang of rugged hunting-fishing-hockey dads is a fatal error. I'll be found out. I'm a manMom, after all. I like art.

\*\*\*

Jack returns with many stories. Old-book-wild-boy stories ranging from plain truth to obvious exaggeration. At camp, they whittled hot dog sticks with a pocketknife.

At camp, they tied a boy's loose tooth to a shopping cart -- and pushed -- running until the tooth tore free. It took three tries and a mouthful of blood.

There was an old cabin in the woods, snow too high to enter. Through the windows, you could see bed bugs crawling on plastic covered mattresses. There was the tale of the old man who went for a walk long ago, never to return.

There were quads, driven through the woods and over a frozen

lake. Or a melting lake, as one ATV left a trail of cracking ice and splashing water. Boys were towed in a plastic bin, used to carry carcasses from the hunt. It was fast enough to blur fear and fun. At one point Jack's driver turned around, looked him in eye and asked, to Jack's astonishment, "Do you want to drive?"

Then there was Barbarian Dad. I picture him bearded and shirtless. He raised his bulging arms high, a block of ice in each hand. He thrust the two blocks together and, in some miraculous herculean feat, he made fire. The boys swear this is true.

The manliest thing I did was sign the waiver.

I stayed home with my daughter this weekend. On our Saturday morning date, in place of ice-fire hot dogs, we shared brunch and tea. We strolled to an antique store. We hit the Old Strathcona Farmers'

Market for free samples and kettle corn. That afternoon we walked to The Carrot for Skirts-a-Fire, a women's arts festival.

Maybe the exact moment Barbarian Dad is forging fire from ice, I am listening to singer songwriters and watching my daughter draw while I nurse a vanilla soda.

\*\*\*

If my interests lack testosterone, I have no shame. I'm over that. I think. But I do have fear. I fear my narrow view of the world will shape, and limit, the paths my children take. I fear that I will infect them with my faults. I fear that perhaps, sometimes, they need Barbarian Dad.

Jack never drove the quad. A sticker said he was too young. He reads those warnings and draws back. So do I. This may be the hardest part of parenting: finding a way to give my kids what I don't have. Raw and bloody barbarian courage, for instance. Or even a basic understanding of sports, and why people play them.

But perhaps the best I can give is myself. And this must be why 'it takes a village to raise a child'. We offer up the best of who we are, and outsource the rest.



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# Help create a park for kids

REBECCA LIPPIATT

At Norwood School, both staff and parents have a belief in the necessity of engaging students in rich cultural experiences and fostering active living and a deep appreciation for the natural world. We create opportunities for students to learn how give back to their community and foster their leadership skills. To help our students be able to become all they can be, and to realize their potential as future leaders in the community, we strive to provide them with literacy skills, extensive hands on learning and new experiences.

We have been working with the school community, and especially the children, to determine how best to develop the school grounds to provide an outdoor classroom, living play spaces, opportunities for environmental education and greenspace for the school and wider community.

We have been working with the City of Edmonton and Edmonton Public School Board to ensure the success of the project.

As an inner city neighborhood, there are few places that provide the healing embrace of the natural world. Greenspaces are known to produce calming effects on a community and the benefits are well documented; including health benefits

for children (and adults), an increase in community activity, a reduction in crime, and enhanced self-esteem.

This multi-year project started with the enclosed vegetable garden. It will expand to include native trees and shrubs around the school perimeter to reduce pollution from the busy roads and create a feeling of safety for the children; planting stand-alone planter boxes for beatification; adding natural play materials (logs and rock



sculptures); a labyrinth (for meditation); a medicine wheel; benches to encourage more community members to use the space outside of school hours; art projects (a climbing wall made of natural materials; creative and artistic soccer goal posts).

The parents, students and teaches currently work together to plant seedlings and in the spring, transplant those seedlings to the vegetable garden outside. Community members prepare and maintain the garden during the summer. Each fall the students and parents harvest the vegetables and a hot

Harvest Lunch is provided to all Norwood students. We look forward to doing this to help the children learn about where their food comes from and empower them to learn self-sufficiency.

We have a strong support for greening Norwood School and we welcome all community members to join us. This spring, in late May, we will need help with the initial planting of the shrubs and trees. There will be a day of celebration to do the planting.

On an ongoing basis, help with planting and maintaining the planters, and especially with the garden, would be most appreciated. We envision adults from our community working with the children to share their knowledge about growing plants, vegetables and harvesting food.

We are all working hard to see this project to fruition and are excited to see the results. We hope that our community members will stand by our side and together we will heighten learning, strengthen citizenship and build a natural learning oasis for our community.

Rebecca Lippiatt is the Chair of the Norwood School Parent Council. To assist with this project, please contact: Joanne Wynn, Principal at 780.477.1002 or [norwood@epsb.ca](mailto:norwood@epsb.ca). Visit <http://norwood.epsb.ca> for more information.



## EDMONTON

### Planning home repairs?

You could qualify for City funding through two new home repair programs



The City has launched two new programs to help qualifying homeowners living in designated priority neighbourhoods: **Alberta Avenue, Boyle Street, Central McDougall, Eastwood, McCauley, and Queen Mary Park.**

#### Curb Appeal: Exterior Home Repair Program

Curb Appeal helps qualifying homeowners improve the exterior of their homes, including roofs, garages, fences, and landscaping. You could qualify for grant funding to match your costs up to \$1,000. Any person or family residing in their own home may apply, regardless of their income.

Curb Appeal will run for two consecutive years. To be eligible for grant funding, repairs must start and end within a year. Funding is available on a first-come-first-serve basis and is based on limited budget availability.

For further information, call 780-423-3135 or email [curbappeal@edmonton.ca](mailto:curbappeal@edmonton.ca). Application forms can be downloaded from [edmonton.ca/curbappeal](http://edmonton.ca/curbappeal).

#### HOPE: Housing Opportunities Program for Edmonton

HOPE is a new home repair program offering a one-time conditional grant of up to \$20,000 for qualifying major repairs, disability modifications and up to \$2,000 for energy-efficient retrofits.

Some restrictions apply, including the following:

- HOPE applicants must own and occupy their homes
- Seniors and persons with a disability will be given priority
- Applicants must meet median income thresholds and provide proof of income
- The property must be at least 15 years old (5 years old if the applicant has a disability.)

For further information, call 780-423-3135 or email [HOPE@edmonton.ca](mailto:HOPE@edmonton.ca). Application forms can be downloaded from [edmonton.ca/hope](http://edmonton.ca/hope).

If you're interested in HOPE, but aren't living in a priority neighbourhood, please let us know. We'll notify you if funding for other areas becomes available.





## THE LEMONADE STAND THE ARCHITECTURE OF BUSINESS SUCCESS

Here is the 8th in the series on building a successful business. Our neighbourhood is filled with freelancers, entrepreneurs, independent artists, and cottage industries run from homes.

We hope that by presenting the challenges and hurdles faced by many independent business owners, along with sensible advice for success, will encourage others to consider following their dream of independence. This series is dedicated to helping these entrepreneurs succeed.

Do you have a start-up business in mind that is about ready to roll? Then it's time to contact Darren Boisvert at [editor@ratcreek.org](mailto:editor@ratcreek.org) and get your name and business on our first contact list. You may qualify for short-term free rental as a local entrepreneur, as well as marketing and business building guidance from our team.

# How to cook up success in business

HENRI YAUCK

What does the kitchen have to do with a successful business? You can answer that by watching the foul-mouthed English chef Gordon Ramsey, host of "Kitchen Nightmares", and "Hell's Kitchen."

He is noted for taking restaurants that are almost ready to close and turning them around in what appears to be 7 days. If you are looking to increase sales and bring stability to your business, or even in the process of starting a new business there is a lot you can learn from his method. That is if you look past the f\*#\*\* language to see what he really does.

Let's break it down into actionable steps.

1) He takes a careful look at what the restaurant is selling. In the case of the restaurant this

is not just the food and how it is prepared, but also how it is served, the restaurant ambience, how the customers are treated, etc. His first step is to visit the restaurant and order from the menu, then carefully observe what happens as well as doing his taste test.

2) He finds out what the customers really want, or expect in exchange for their money. He finds out who the regulars are and what they want. He finds out what foods they and the potential customers want. He also checks up on the restaurants in the area that appear to be doing well, as a further comparison. This helps answer the question -- why would the customer buy from me instead of someone else (It usually is not a price issue).

3) He finds out who is behind the disaster, the management, chefs, and servers looking to discover if

they have the skill sets needed to do the job. Usually he is able to discover one or two individuals that are passionate about the business, instead of putting in time between pay checks.

4) Armed with good information, he can now develop a few signature dishes that are most likely to draw in the customers that are needed. Here the chef has more say than the owner.

Back to the product... is it wanted? Does it live up to the customer expectations? He then develops a smaller, more relevant menu. And brings the decor up to the level it needs to be. (This is part of the product people buy when they go to a restaurant; the experience adds to the enjoyment of the food). The other thing that happens in this process is he drops the unpopular dishes (products), further reducing waste and

increasing efficiency.

5) He then puts in place systems to assure consistency in product, service and customer attention. This serves to reduce wait times for customers, eliminates waste and keeps customers coming back.

6) Marketing. Street smart marketing, with everything in place, all systems working he sends all staff, including the owner, onto the street loaded with samples from the signature dishes on the new menu along with invitations to the restaurant for their re-opening event.

7) Inspect what you expect. He revisits the restaurant after a month or two to see what's happening.

Yes, this ex-professional Scottish football player turned chefs' system does work. And, what is interesting it matches a lot of what we have been talking about in the last seven articles.

### RAT CREEK PRESS IS LOOKING FOR STUDENT INTERNS

Interested in writing, photography or website design? Interested in learning more about your community? Interested in putting your skills to work or learning new skills? We have numerous needs and opportunities at the Rat Creek Press. \$1000 bursary available. Email [info@ratcreek.org](mailto:info@ratcreek.org), express your interest and tell us about yourself.



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# Blogging back to City Hall

MARI SASANO

Longtime Edmonton Journal columnist-turned freelance communications consultant Scott McKeen has earned the title of the City of Edmonton's first blogger-in-residence.

"I was receptive right away because it's storytelling, it's truth-telling," he says over a cup of coffee at the Kids in the Hall bistro at City Hall. "I honestly believe that government can be and is often a force of good in our lives."

Now, the most cynical would raise an eyebrow and point to news stories of corruption or mismanagement. But McKeen isn't interested in those stories.

"I just notice that people use the word 'bureaucrat' as an epithet, as a put-down. I don't believe that. My experience around here was meeting some caring, competent people who worked long hours."

The position will be a homecoming of sorts for McKeen, who covered city hall for the Edmonton Journal for 12 years first as a reporter, then as a popular columnist. "I'm interested in it, I care about the personalities who work there. Everything from zoning to speed limits. You have the technical element, but what fascinates me is citizenship -- how people react to that."

McKeen has begun his tenure at the end of March and

will continue posting every two weeks for six months, telling the behind-the-scenes stories that don't get any other media coverage.

"I'm not digging around looking for flaws. Those kinds of things are well-covered. A branch of a government doing good work, quietly -- that's news in the sense that it's novel. It's not what you're reading elsewhere. I like busting myths that way."

**"I honestly believe that government can be and is often a force of good in our lives."**

Civic politics, especially stories about what's working, doesn't always get its due, he says.

"Civic politics aren't given the same prominence unless it's an arena or a huge tax hike. But a lot of these stories that impact people's lives in a real tangible way are in the third

page of the second section of the paper."

One department that McKeen is looking forward to highlighting is the Office of Traffic Safety, which is one of the only city-run traffic safety departments in the world.

"They have some really cool data. They took one stretch of 23rd ave -- there are some people doing highway speeds along there. I love the human factor, for example, stories that tell us about how citizens might undermine, inadvertently, the strength of community. In that traffic thing, 40 per cent of the cars comply with the speed limit. 60 per cent were speeding. That's fascinating."

McKeen has been getting suggestions for other city departments and is excited to show the range of services that the civic government provides. "I'll probably stay away from cats," he says, although a story on Animal Control wouldn't be out of the question. It's the people who work there that he's interested in.

"City folk in general tend to be pretty friendly. They're not as detached as provincial and federal people. I've always like being around city people. I want to treat them with respect."

To read Scott McKeen's blog, check [www.transformingedmonton.ca](http://www.transformingedmonton.ca)

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**Spruce Avenue Community 10240 - 115 Avenue** **COMMUNITY GARAGE SALE ON MAY 3th + 4th**

# The Ave We Had

[www.theavewehad.org](http://www.theavewehad.org)

## If you build it they will come

### A history of park development in Alberta Avenue

JONATHAN WELLER

The grass is starting to show itself again, small spots of green amidst a sea of brown melt are a refreshing sight after another long winter. Soon it will be time to enjoy the warm spring days and the parks will start to fill up with people playing, walking and sitting idly to watch the days grow.

Stumbling upon a small park tucked away along a quiet residential street is one reason I have heard several times as to why people like this area. It is a truth I have noticed as well, small and somewhat strange parks dot the neighbourhood. Some look like they are an empty waiting to be developed, others have grown into a busy playground and trees. The pattern of them struck me as odd though and led me to wonder how they came to be.

At the turn of the century urban reform movements were emerging in full force. They were a reaction to the congestion and squalor of nineteenth century industrial cities with their crowded downtown cores, reckless suburban speculative subdivision, corrupt governments and exploitation of

natural resources. Seeing these negative trends, advocates arose to fight for more beautiful and healthy cities, and town planning began a shift towards a form of art.

Landscape architects were brought in to develop ambitious plans for how cities would grow into places of beauty and harmonious social interaction; public health advocates, spurred on by new scientific discoveries into the causes of disease, pushed for clean water supplies, proper sanitation, fresh air and sunshine; and groups emerged to push for the establishment of parks and playgrounds where the tired soul of the working man could be refreshed with the touch of nature.

Edmonton, however, was far away from the centers of cultural upheaval and not all of these ideas took root in a timely manner. Landscape architects were employed, but their ambitious plans were thwarted by the incredible inflation caused by the land boom and the subsequent crash that followed, being made worse by the onset of the First World War.

As such, the Norwood subdivision, which was opened for sale in 1904 by McDougall and

Second during the first land rush, was arranged in the most efficient and profitable way possible. Long rows of rectangular lots were laid down on the prairie and any need of park space could be found in the wide open country that lay to the edges of the neighbourhood.

Making matters worse, there were no established organizations in the city for whom parks and recreation were a concern. It was not until after the war in 1921 that the Gyro Club was first established and they became the main advocate for parks in the decades that followed.

The result of all this was that Norwood filled in and as lots were developed open space grew rarer and rarer. So much so that by 1976, Edmonton Parks and Recreation reported that the Alberta Avenue neighbourhood alone required over 7.0 acres of additional parkland in order to meet the recommended area.

This was one factor of concern that led to the Norwood area being designated as the City's Neighbourhood Improvement District in 1975 and the Alberta Avenue/Eastwood area north of 118th being designated in 1978.



EDMONTON ARCHIVES 10-2926-24

Neighbourhood Improvement Programs were a federal initiative, in fact, the last of the national level urban renewal projects aimed at rejuvenating declining inner-city neighbourhoods across Canada. It was established in 1973 and only lasted until 1978. It dealt with the renovation of existing housing, together with selective demolition of unsound housing, and allotted funds for social and community services, while ensuring the participation of residents in the decision-making process.

It was a unique program that saw significant changes in the area. The Norwood plan led to the purchase of numerous lots and their development into park space, including Norwood Park on 95th Street, as well as many single lot parks scattered through the area. The Alberta

Avenue/Eastwood plan led to the purchase of more lots for parks in the area, the expansion and development of school grounds, the expansion of the community league grounds and the building of the new Alberta Avenue Community League Hall, which residents pushed to become a multi-use recreational facility as well.

So it was not a quirk of long ago history that gave the area its unique assortment of parks. It was a relatively recent change in the area and while the area is still deficient in park space, as a result of the efforts in the mid-1970s the problem is by far reduced. It is an excellent example of how a directed and well-supported effort that works with all levels of government so that residents themselves can actually build a more livable community.

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**SCCU - PASTAGATE**

News of over the top linguistic cleansing efforts at the hands of the separatist Quebec government made international headlines in February, involving a Quebec restaurateur, the word pasta, and Quebec's overzealous Language Police.

Although it is shameful that there would be Language Police in any part of Canada, "Pastagate" has become a symbol under which Canadian Unity groups can focus, allowing them to raise awareness on the diminishing nature of Rights and Freedoms by separatists and other legislators.

I spoke in the House of Commons about an event that was very successful in raising awareness of the issue. This function was sponsored in part by the Special Committee for Canadian Unity, SCCU, of which I am a long-time supporter.

Below is the full text of my statement in the House:

*"On April Fool's Day, pasta lovers will gather at Massimo Lecas' restaurant 'Buonanotte' in Montreal, lampooning Quebec's separatist government and their linguistic cleansing comedy of errors.*

*Sponsored by the Special Committee for Canadian Unity and PutBackTheFlag.com, this evening of comedy will be held at the Italian Restaurant where Quebec's Language Police ordered the removal of the word "PASTA" from the menu.*

**Imagine** – No Pasta – on an Italian Restaurant Menu!

*Throughout the world from Australia to England to, of course, Italy, they regaled at this farce and at the silliness of the separatists.*

**Welcome to Pastagate!**

*Join us on the evening of April 1st in Montreal for even more comedic fun as we support the needy; support Canadian Unity; support the Constitution and Charter of Rights and Freedoms; support Linguistic Fairness; and indulge in our love of pasta!!"*

I believe that it is important to support all Canadians constitutional right to use the language of their choice on business signs and restaurant menus in Montreal, Vancouver or here in Edmonton. What do you think?

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# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

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

## EVENTS

### ART FROM THE HEART OF THE CITY SHOW AND SALE

Friday, May 3rd from 3:30-7pm and Saturday, May 4th from 11am-4pm at Nina Haggerty Centre (9225 118 Ave). Art by the Students of Delton, John A. McDougall, Norwood, and Spruce Avenue. Proceeds of the art sale will support art programs of the CCEP Schools. More info: Rhonda Navrot at Norwood School 780.477.1002 or Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts 780.474.7611 www.ninahaggertyart.ca.

### PLAY RANGERS

Starting May 6th from 4:30-6:30pm. This is a free 6 week City of Edmonton outdoor program for kids 6-12 years of age. Spend some time exploring Kinniard Ravine. Each week there is a new activity: photography, shelter building, GPS and more. Children meet at Sheriff Robertson park (8112 111 Ave). Please dress for the weather!

### THE AVE WE HAD HISTORY WALK

Jane's Walk on May 5th at 1pm. Meet at Alberta Avenue Community League, (9210 118 Ave) www.janeswalk.net.

### SPRUCE AVENUE 17TH ANNUAL GARAGE SALE

Friday, May 3rd from 9am-7pm and Saturday, May 4th from 9am-5pm at 10240 115 Ave. Donations of gently used household items, books, games, etc would be greatly appreciated with money raised for the park re-development project. Donations may be dropped off at the hall on Thursday May 2nd from 9am-9pm or if you require a pick-up call Verna at 780.479.8019. Due to limited space large household items will not be accepted. Concession open both days.

### THE CARROT STAGE

9351 118 Ave. More info: 780.471.1580. Thursdays: Zoomers open mic for folks 55+ 1:30-4pm. \$1.25 minimum charge. Fridays: Live music 7:30-9:30pm. Go to thecarrot.ca for line up. \$5 at the door. Saturdays: Open mic 7:30-9:30pm. Great time to share your newest tune, poem or comedy act! Free for all ages. \$1.25 minimum charge.

### COPS AT THE CARROT

Join Edmonton Police members on Tuesday, May 7th from 10am-11am at The Carrot Cafe (9351 118 Ave).

Bring your questions and comments or just stop in and say hi. Can't make it? You can always call your Community Liaison Constable Christopher Lucas at 780.421.2602.

### PARKDALE-CROMDALE 3RD ANNUAL GARAGE SALE

Saturday, June 1st and Sunday, June 2nd from 10am-5pm at the Parkdale Cromdale Community Hall (11335 85 St). A variety of clothing, jewelry, antiques and toys. Concession open both days. More info: Margaret at 780.479.8134.

## NOTICES

### RCP LOOKING FOR STUDENT INTERNS

Interested in writing, photography or website design? Interested in learning more about your community? Interested in putting your skills to work or learning new skills? We have numerous needs and opportunities at the Rat Creek Press. \$1000 bursary available. Email: info@ratcreek.org, express your interest and tell us about yourself.

### BIG BIN DATES

Dispose of your unwanted household furniture, appliances or electronics on these weekends from 9am-5pm. June 1st and 2nd at Commonwealth. August 24th and 25th at Northlands. September 21st and 22nd at Northlands. For details and other dates/locations search "Big Bin" at edmonton.ca

### REGISTER FOR LARGE ITEM PICK UP

Pick up date: Saturday, June 1st. Cost: \$10 for the first item and \$5 for each additional item. Items must be outside on pick up day and clearly marked. Register in person and pay cash at Alberta Avenue Community League office 9210 118 Ave. Mon/Wed May 22nd, 27th, 29th from 6-7:30pm. Tue/Thu May 21st, 23rd, 28th, and 30th from 10am-1pm.

### NORWOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION (NNA) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday, June 15th at 11am at 9210 118 Ave. The NNA is a community organization that supports our community by sponsoring/ granting to non-profit community projects. Please come to learn about our year, join our board and help us further define our granting criteria.

### CRUD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

It's been another great year of engaging community. Please join us for our AGM and board elections on Thursday, June 20th at 6:30pm at 9210 118 Ave.

### AOTA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Arts on the Ave's 2013 AGM takes place on Sunday, June 23rd from 3-4:30pm at The Carrot (9351 118 Ave). You must be a member to vote. To become a member of AOTA, go to artsontheave.org. Forms are also available at the Carrot. Yearly memberships are \$5. Light refreshments and snacks provided. Guest speaker TBA.

## PROGRAMS/CLASSES

### FAMILY ART CLASSES

Thursdays from 6:30-8pm at Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts (9225 118 Ave). FREE! May 3rd Create in the style of a famous artist; May 10th Open paint night; May 17th Optical Illusion Art; May 24th Create a paper mache lantern; May 31st Make a clay time machine.

### COLLECTIVE KITCHEN

Participants pay \$3 per portion of food made up to a maximum of 5 portions. One World...One Centre, 12050 95A St. on the third Monday of the month. For more info call Melanie 780.246.1742.

### FREE MUSIC LESSONS BY CREART!

Running continually every Saturday at the Parkdale Cromdale Community Hall (11335 85 St). Free group lessons will be offered to members. Singing lessons run from 9-10am and Guitar lessons from 10am-12pm. Play and meet others. Contact Chantal at 780.669.3272

### SING, SING, LAUGH AND LEARN

For children up to age three accompanied by a grown-up. Parents will learn strategies to engage their children and enhance their communication and development. Tuesdays from 10:30-11:15am at the Sprucewood Library (11555 95 St). More info: 780.496.7099.

### CREATIVE PROSE AND WRITING GROUP

Tuesdays from 7pm to 9pm at The Carrot (9351 118 Ave). More info: Vivian at vzenari@gmail.com

### FELTING WORKSHOP

Learn how to needle felt with Mike. April 13th from 1:30-4pm at The Carrot (9351 118 Ave). More info: 780.471.1580.

### ENGLISH CONVERSATION CAFE

Practice your English conversation skills every Saturday morning from 10:00-11:30am at Bethel Gospel Chapel on the corner of 95 St and 115 Ave. Classes are free, and childcare is provided.

### ESL GROUP

New students are always welcome so drop-in or recommend a friend! Wednesdays from 9:30-11am at the Parkdale Cromdale Community Hall (11335 85 St). More info 780.887.6825.

## SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

### FAMILY STORYTIME

Share stories, songs and games for the whole family. Saturdays, from 2:30-3:00pm at Sprucewood Library (11555 95 St). More info: 780.496.7099.

### TWEEN LOUNGE

Join other teens in the program room to play video games, make a DIY project, meet friends or just hang out. For ages 7-13. Thursdays at 3:30pm at Sprucewood Library (11555 95 St). More info: 780.496.7099.

### TEEN GAMING

Come to the library to play some great games! Hone your Guitar Hero or Dance Dance Revolution skills, or choose from plenty of other Wii and PlayStation games. Thursdays from 6:30-8:30pm at Sprucewood Library (11555 95 St). More info: 780.496.7099.

### WOMEN'S AFTERNOON OUT GROUP

For women to gather, socialize and bring their project to work on, whatever they are. Drop-in fee is \$1 per visit to go toward supplies and outings. For more info, call Michelle at 780.232.5822 or email at heartsalive@hotmail.com

### COMMUNITY MEALS

Breakfast: 2nd and 4th Saturdays from 8am-10am; Supper: 3rd Friday at 5pm; Women's fellowship supper: 2nd Thursday at 6pm; Drop-in Centre: Thursdays 10am-2pm at the Anglican Churches of St. Faith's and St. Stephen the Martyr (11725 93 St). More info: 780.477.5931.

### PARKDALE-CROMDALE SENIORS GROUP

Seniors bingo takes place every Monday from 10am-2pm at the hall (11335 85 St). Coffee and snack provided.

### SENIORS LUNCH

Wednesdays from 11:30am-12:45pm at Crystal Kids Youth Centre (8715 118 Ave).

### L'I'L SPROUTS PLAYGROUP

Come by the Parkdale Cromdale Community Hall (11335 85 St) with your little ones Fridays, from 10am-12pm. For more info call Chantal at 780.669.3272.

### BABES IN ARMS

A casual parent group Fridays, 10am-12pm at The Carrot (9351 118 Ave).

## SPORTS/REC

### YOGA AT THE GALLERY

In support of the Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts on Sundays from 1pm-2:30pm in the Nina Gallery (9225 118 Ave). Cost: Karma Class (by donation).

### FREE SPORTS EQUIPMENT

All kinds of sport equipment to kids in need, including Hockey, Skates, Bicycles, Soccer, Softball, Rollerblades, Racquets, Snow Sliders and more. More info at 780.477.1166 or sportscentral.org. Also accepting donations of gently used sports gear.

### FREE QIGONG CLASS

YiXue Lotus practice (Lotus Qigong) for a calm, stable heart and overall well-being. Weekly class, No Fee. Call Astrid 780.477.0683.

### FREE COMMUNITY ACCESS AT COMMONWEALTH REC CENTRE

Enjoy the fitness centre at Commonwealth for free on Saturdays from 5pm-7pm with your community league membership.

## VOLUNTEER

### HELP AT BLOOMIN GARDEN SHOW

Volunteers needed for Saturday, May 11th. Help serve coffee and drinks, with children's garden activities, with raffles/silent auction, info, book/magazine exchange, perennial swap. More info: bloomin@albertaave.org or 780.477.2773.

### NNA CASINO FUNDRAISER

Norwood Neighbourhood Association needs volunteers June 18th and 19th. If you can help out please email: nna@albertaave.org

# CHURCH SERVICES

### ANGLICAN CHURCHES OF ST. FAITH'S AND ST. STEPHEN THE MARTYR

St. Stephen uses the Book of Common Prayer in the rich worship style of Anglo-Catholicism. St. Faith worships according to the Book of Alternative Services and has a more contemporary service in language and form. Two Traditions - One Faith.

St. Faith's: 780-477-5931  
St. Stephen: 780-422-3240  
11725-93 Street

### Sunday Services:

8:30 am - Low Mass (St. Stephen)  
9:00 am - Morning Prayer (St. Stephen)  
9:30 am - High Mass (St. Stephen)  
11:00 am - Morning Worship (St. Faith's)  
7:00 pm - Evensong (St. Stephen)

### CHRISTIAN LIFE CENTER

Our Vision is to be a growing community of believers who are woven together by the love of God for support, fellowship and prayer.

10123 Princess Eliz. Avenue  
780-471-2250 www.clifec.ca

### Service Times:

9:40 am - Pre-service Prayer  
10:30 am - Worship Service  
10:45 am - Kzamm Kids  
Child care provided for ages 0 to 12 yrs.

### AVENUE VINEYARD CHURCH

A friendly, informal, non-judgmental and safe place to grow spiritually. Traditional Christian values in a non-traditional way.

8718-118 Avenue (Crystal Kids building)  
www.avenuevineyard.com  
Sundays at 10:30 am

### BETHEL GOSPEL CHAPEL

A Bible-based, multi-ethnic fellowship.

11461-95 Street 780-477-3341

### Sunday Meetings:

9:30 am - Lord's Supper  
11:00 am - Family Bible Hour  
Saturdays - Free English Conversation Café for immigrants

### CARISMA CHURCH

Our vision is to EMBRACE a relationship with Jesus and share it with others. Come and experience a multicultural worship service in an informal, friendly environment.

8401-114 Avenue 780-477-1235  
www.carismachurch.org

### Sundays at 10:00am

Kids Ministries for ages 2 to 12yrs. Come as you are. All welcome!

### ST. ALPHONSUS CATHOLIC CHURCH

11828-85th Street 780-474-5434

### Service Times:

7:30 am - Mass, Tuesday to Friday  
4:00 pm - Mass, Saturday Vigil of Sunday  
11:00 am - Mass, Sunday Main Celebration  
4:00 pm - Mass, Sunday, Eritrean Catholic Community

English Classes & Collective Kitchen (seasonal - call for info)  
St. Vincent de Paul Food Help Hotline: 780-471-5577

### ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Please join us for our diverse services. We offer regular Sunday worship services in German and English languages.

10759-96 Street (Corner of 108 Ave)  
780-422-0059 www.stjohnsluth.ca

### Service Times:

9:30 am - German Service  
11:00 am - English Service  
11:00 am - Sunday School for Children

Holy Communion: Every first Sunday of the month in the German Service  
Holy Communion: Every third Sunday of the month in the English Service

Listings for free events and programs as well as volunteer opportunities. Email your listings to info@ratcreek.org.

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# POSTCARD FROM TURKEY



*John and Margaret Larsen, local residents, who have taken off a month to explore Turkey. They have shared a snapshot of what is often called "the best balloon ride in the world."*

By John Larsen

We're in Goreme, a small town in central Turkey famous for its topography and its balloon rides.

We get up at 5:00 AM to get ready. The balloons fly at dawn for best weather conditions. By 5:30 AM, the town is teeming with balloon baskets towed by support crews and with shuttle busses. Eighty balloons are flying today. The launch site is a few kilometers upwind of the canyons we plan to enter.

Goreme lies on a volcanic ash layer many hundreds of feet thick, which has through erosion, been shaped into crazy shapes and canyons. The canyons are dotted with "fairy castles," tall spires of rock about 15 feet across at the base and about 75 to 100 feet high capped by boulders.

At the launch site the balloons are being filled. There are 17 people flying in our basket today. The baskets are divided into four compartments and are lying on their sides. We enter the basket and lie on our backs with our legs bent like astronauts. The gas jet are turned

on and with a great roar and we're off. Quite exciting.

The wind is light and blows us toward the canyon where, with a release of hot air, we descend. There is no wind in the canyon so we drift slowly among the rock formations. Our pilot is the best in the business here and has been written up in the Lonely Planet guidebook. He has trained for two years to become a pilot and four more to be an instructor.

We are drifting among the "castles" close enough to touch. When we near a ridge or an outcrop we skip over it with a foot or two to spare. It is incredible. Just when I think we're going to crash the balloon lifts and we drift on. At the recovery site we descend and our pilot actually lands the basket right on the trailer.

The ground crew is waiting for us with champagne and treats. We have our photo taken with our pilot and return to Goreme. The flight takes just over an hour and costs 200 dollars but is easily worth it. It is rated as perhaps the best balloon ride in the world and people visit here from all over the world just to experience it.

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**NORWOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION (NNA)**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SATURDAY, JUNE 15TH AT 11AM AT THE ALBERTA AVE COMMUNITY LEAGUE 9210 118 AVE**

The NNA is a community organization that supports our community by sponsoring/granting to non-profit community projects. Please come to learn about our year, join our board and help us further define our granting criteria.

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