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Shop Local: what it means to our communities

JESSIE RADIES

Local and independent businesses bring dozens of benefits to our communities, and are a critical piece of the revitalization process. Not just for how they impact our streetscapes, but also how they impact our community.

For revitalization to really succeed, we need to understand the role that local, independently owned businesses play. Why? Because business and community leaders can organize to create an economy that generates a strong community, a healthy environment, and meaningful employment.

What do local and independent businesses do?

They keep dollars circulating in the local economy. Every dollar spent in the community triggers other purchases – this is commonly referred to as “the multiplier.” The more times a dollar circulates within a geographic area, the more income, wealth, and jobs it creates. A growing body of evidence suggests that locally-owned businesses generally contribute more to the economic multiplier than non-local businesses. Economic impact studies have demonstrated that the multipliers generated by local merchants are anywhere between 58 to 300 per cent greater than those of chain retailers. Numerous studies make the claim that most job growth comes from local independent business.

But it's not just the number of jobs that is a benefit. Jobs at retail multinational corporations often pay less and offer fewer benefits than the jobs in locally-owned businesses. This is particularly true in the case of multi-national corporations, which not only reduce the net numbers of jobs, pay significantly lower wages (up to 20 per cent less) but also manage to suppress wages in

the retail sector as a whole. Higher wages and benefits are not only of direct interest to employees, they are also of interest to social service agencies and levels of government that focus significant resources on battling poverty.

Spinoff effects of local businesses

Proportionately, small, local firms provide greater contributions to local charities and non-profits than large multinational corporations. Imagine Canada's survey of Business Support for Charities and Non-Profits revealed that as a percentage of pre-tax profits, firms with annual income of less than \$1 million contributed 1.1 per cent of their profits to charity, whereas firms with annual income over \$25 million contributed 0.6 per cent of their profits to charity.

As well, unique local businesses help communities retain or build character and provide genuine choice to consumers. This helps stop the homogenization of communities and allows neighbourhoods to build distinctive flavor.

There is also positive environmental impact. As stated above, independent businesses are more likely to procure necessary goods and services from local sources, thereby reducing the kilometres travelled (CO₂ emitted) by their suppliers. The concentration of independent



Photo: Mari Saadino

business also encourages walking in existing or mature neighbourhoods rather than driving to big box stores in suburbs.

Local business engage people power

Local businesses are owned by people who live in the community. This means they are less likely to leave, and are more invested in the community's future. When business decisions are made by people who live in the community who will feel the impacts of those decisions, it changes the nature of those decisions. Local business owners are also generally much more accessible than executives of large corporations based in other provinces or countries. Consequently, business owners with local headquarters are more likely to respond to pressure for higher labour and environmental standards.

What can I do?

The personal is the politi-

cal. How and where people shop has an impact personally, locally and internationally. For example, sociologists have determined that consumers have ten times as many conversations at farmer's markets than they do at supermarkets. Independent, local businesses, tied into numerous networks, facilitate this type of interaction. Moreover, socially conscious consumers demand products and services that meet their ethical requirements. For many, spending is a political statement, or at least a statement of values. The ability to patronize businesses that support these values is an important act of citizenship.

These benefits are all very desirable to mature neighbourhoods and new neighbourhoods, so how do we capture them?

We need to shop in local and independent businesses, especially the ones in our neighbourhoods.

Patronage does a number of things:

It allows business owners to continue to operate

It demonstrates “opportunity” to other potential business owners

It displaces less desirable businesses

It creates opportunity for entrepreneurship.

Without sales, businesses will not survive. We need to be mindful of where we shop.

Make your dollars work. If we have businesses in our community that we want to thrive, we need to patronize them. If we have businesses we wish would go away, don't patronize them.

Jessie Radies is the co-owner of Blue Pear restaurant and the founder of Keep Edmonton Original, www.keepefontonoriginal.com

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Join the Rat Creek Press for wine and cheese and our Annual General Meeting

Please join us for our AGM at the Carrot on Sunday November 7 at 3 pm. We will be holding elections for the 2010-2011 board; please come out if you are interested in giving your input on our community's newspaper.

The Carrot: 9351 118 Ave

Rat Creek Press seeks board members

Want to get involved with your community newspaper?

Join the Rat Creek Press board. We are seeking enthusiastic community members to govern the Press as well as engage in fundraising, administration, and promotion for the Rat Creek Press. Individuals with board experience would be great, but anyone with some know-how and energy are welcome to apply! Contact info@ratcreek.org for more information.

Be a friend of Rat Creek!

We know how much you love receiving your community newspaper every month. Funding for the Rat Creek Press comes largely from casino money, grants, and donations. If you love your neighbourhood paper, please contribute what you can!

Donations can be mailed to:
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More board members welcome.

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OUR MISSION

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

OUR FINANCIAL SUPPORTERS

Norwood Neighbourhood Association
Spruce Avenue Community League
Alberta Avenue Business Association
PAAFE - Prostitution Awareness &
Action Foundation of Edmonton
Alberta Lottery Fund

Write for the Rat Creek Press

Do you have a news tip or
an idea for an article?

Come to the next editorial
meeting on October 5, 7 pm
at the Carrot Cafe or email
editor@ratcreek.org

Upcoming Themes:
December: Home
(deadline November 15)

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Minding our business

EDITORIAL WITH MARI SASANO

You might not know this, but all of the Rat Creek Press staffers are business owners. We are all sole proprietors of our own freelance businesses, from our ad sales rep to our designer to me. This is not our only contract, and we hustle every day to meet all of our responsibilities.

It's not the easiest path to take. There is no one to find the projects and market my skills but myself. No one is going to take up the slack when I feel tired, and until recently, I couldn't apply for EI when the work dried up. So far, I can't find the extra money to pay into that system, so either I work, or I don't survive. There are no paid sick days, no employer-supplied benefits (it comes out of my own pocket), and no guarantee of income, ever. It's

just one person's skills in the marketplace, with no safety net.

On the other hand, the kind of freedom that I have as a freelancer is priceless. I set my own hours, I can pick and choose what kind of work I

get, I set the prices, and I have complete control of how much or how little I work. Flexibility and work-life balance are buzzwords in the corporate world; I have those conditions built into my business.

I can leave my desk when my brain needs a break because I have no boss looking over my shoulder. The expectations of first-to-the-office, last-to-go-home doesn't exist because I know that the work gets done in the first four hours of the

day. We all go through a mid-afternoon slump, but I don't have to "look busy" for the rest of the day; instead, I do laundry and go through emails. Suffice it to say, I get a full night's sleep every night.

Is it worth the risk? Most times, it's very stressful. But I know I can count on my ability to find work and get it done well, and on time. That's one of the keys to success I can share with you. Here are some

**“Work hard, but
not so much
you can't do a
good job”**

more:

Work hard, but not so much you can't do a good job. And you should be doing a great job, consistently. The secret is not worrying about being as good as everyone else; you should instead be the very best

at what YOU do. Use your difference as an advantage. Treat others how you would like to be treated, but then again, you should be the kind of person who is treated very, very well.

And so, I must tell you, dear readers, that I am moving on. I have loved being the editor of this paper, but it's over, for reasons beyond my control. That's the nature of business. I am grateful for the opportunities that I've had here, and I'm proud of all the writers who have constantly improved and grown over the past year. I'm also proud of where I've taken the Rat Creek Press in the 18 months I've been at its helm: I've written a tonne of news, dug up some great stories, and introduced you to some amazing people.

This paper may look different next month. If you don't like it, do something. Write a letter to the editor. Or jump in and write for the *Rat Creek Press*. It's your business.

Restructuring and regrouping

Letter from the RCP Board

The Rat Creek Press (RCP) board has always consisted of people who believe in the importance of a community paper and its contributions to revitalization of the area. Our neighbourhoods are full of good stuff – people, businesses, events, news – and we want everyone to know about it.

A provincial lottery grant three years ago allowed the RCP to hire a three-quarter-time editor/staff writer. Having a staff writer allowed the paper to cover more news and events. First Jessica Kimmerly filled the role, then Mari Sasano. Since this grant money ran out, the RCP has been running a deficit and the paper has yet to secure additional funding. This led to a major cash crunch and forced the board to make some hard decisions.

We do not have the budget to continue the status quo. The only way to balance the budget and still produce a monthly paper is to restructure the production team and ask them to work for less. Our two editorial positions are being amalgamated into one editor/manager position.

Mari is unable to accommodate the changes of the new position and lower pay with her current workload, so this is her last issue with us. We thank her for all her hard work over the last year and a half, and for being a champion for our community. We wish her well in her freelance writing career. (See sidebar for interview with Mari.)

In addition to changes in the production team, November also brings the RCP Annual General Meeting and changes to the board. The board, which had four vacancies all year, is losing two more members – Jo-Ann Siebert and Patricia Foufas. We thank them for all their work and support.

The RCP needs more people to come forward willing to serve as board members. While anyone with enthusiasm and time is welcome, we would especially like to see individuals with skills or experience in finances/book keeping, grant writing, journalism/newspaper production, board/non-profit management and social enterprise work. Join us at The Carrot Coffeehouse on Sunday, November 7 at 3 pm.

Interview with Mari Sasano

What did you enjoy most during your time with the RCP?

Mari: Working with the volunteers who are all passionate and brilliant people, much better than they think they are. And connecting with so many different kinds of people in the community. I'm a pretty shy person, so having an excuse to introduce myself and ask nosy questions was great!

What was your favourite issue?

Mari: The Pet issue is a lot of fun. I also really enjoyed the Youth Issue which allowed so many young people to publish for the first time. In fact, every time we got a new writer was great, and it was really gratifying to watch them develop their voices. I'm pretty proud of the writers.

What do you think the Rat Creek brings to the community?

Mari: It connects people through ideas, through letting people know what other people are doing, and where they can contribute. It lets people know what's happening, it informs them of the kinds of changes that are happening. News on this very local level lets people know that they aren't alone in their concerns, and that they have a voice.



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Cromdale one more step to coming down

MARI SASANO

On October 8 2010, our community took one more step towards getting rid of 118th Avenue's biggest eyesore as the Court of Queen's Bench upheld the order from the City of Edmonton to demolish the derelict Cromdale Hotel.

"It's very good news. We expect at this point that there is likely another appeal, but it's moving forward in the right direction," says Ryan Pleckaitis, Acting Director of the Complaints and Investigation Section for the City of Edmonton.

This court order is in response to an appeal filed by the owners of the Cromdale (located on 118th Avenue and 82 Street) to the appeal to the City's License Appeal Committee in the spring. The original order was served in October 2009.

"This essentially affirms our decision and confirmed that we applied the proper standards to our review," says Pleckaitis. The Community Standards and License Appeal Committee is required to make some minor amendments to its order, but this does not impact the validity of the decision. If there are no



CROMDALE HOTEL

further appeals, the Cromdale could be taken down in Spring 2011. The property owner has two months in which to take their appeal to the Alberta Court of Appeal.

"It's frustrating to those with a vested interest in it, but it could go from the Court of Appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada. But the owners have some decisions to make based on the cost of the process. Hopefully at some point they will see that the courts are likely to uphold our order and ask themselves, why pay for

legal actions on top of demolition costs?"

Pleckaitis says, however, that it is only a matter of time, and that residents can be cautiously optimistic of some major, positive changes to the area.

"It's positive to the City of Edmonton, and especially for the people of that community. I think that building has become a symbol of what the Avenue used to be, so in addition to addressing the problems, tearing it down will show some hope for what it can become."

Teach your kids to be Safe at Home

MARI SASANO

Have you ever worried about the safety of your children while they are at home alone, or whether they would be able to fix themselves a snack while you are sick in bed?

The Parkdale-Cromdale Community League is helping kids learn some valuable skills in its Safe at Home program, a three-week course run by the City of Edmonton for 6 to 12 year olds to teach them safety guidelines when parents are not around.

"We thought it would be a good idea because we want kids to know what to do when the doorbell rings, or how to safely make a simple meal," says Parkdale-Cromdale Community League programmer Mirella Zadkovich.

"I'm hoping it will make an impact on kids. It's good to give an education on these kinds of things, and it's affordable so we hope lots of families get involved."

The program starts Sunday, November 21 and runs every Sunday until December 5. Topics include how to answer the phone, safely prepare food, respond to emergencies, and more.

This program is part of the Parkdale-Cromdale Community League's plan to offer more courses in the future. Zadkovich hopes to hold courses on nature to take advantage of the Kinnaird Ravine, as well as sports classes to get children in the area more active.

Safe at Home costs \$10 and runs from 10 am to 12 pm on November 21, 28, and December 5 at the Community Hall, 11325 85 St. To register, call 780-471-4410 or email info@parkdalecromdale.org.

Attention young emerging artists: four spots left in mural painting project

Want to be involved in something big? Now's your chance! The Avenue Initiative is looking for young emerging artists to paint murals on the electrical boxes along the Avenue.

If you live between 75th Street and 104th Street and 111th Avenue and Yellowhead Trail and are between 13 and 20 years of age, please submit one piece of artwork and a short paragraph on why you want to be involved by November 30, 2010 to one of the following:

Email Jaimie at tjclem@telus.net
Drop off in person at The Carrot (9351 118 Ave.) Attn: Jaimie

If you are selected, you will be asked to submit your mural design by February 28, 2011. A workshop with professional artists will be held in March 2011 to guide you through the process. Come spring and warm weather we will take to the Ave and you can paint your mural!

Electrical box dimensions: 2 sides of 26 inches x 42 1/2 inches
2 sides of 18 inches x 42 1/2 inches

Don't miss this chance to leave your mark on the Avenue!

For additional information please contact Jaimie at 780-721-8417 or tjclem@telus.net.



THIS SPACE COULD BE YOURS: SEEKING YOUNG ARTISTS FOR MURAL PAINTING PROJECT

Area resident is awarded honour from Medical Association

MARI SASANO

Local resident Austin Mardon was awarded the Alberta Medical Association's Medal of Honour on September 24, 2010. This award is the highest award for a non-physician to honour individuals who have made an outstanding contribution in health to the people of Alberta. But Mardon is very humble about his accomplishments, which include a list of academic titles, publications, social service work, and other awards, including the Order of Canada.

"I've been an advocate for the mentally ill for that past 18 years. I've served on committees that work for better treatments and medications, and presented to the provincial legislature and to the Senate of Canada on a national level. I suppose it adds up," he says.

Mardon's advocacy comes from his personal experience since being diagnosed with schizophrenia, which he compares to any other chronic illness that requires lifelong medication. It is his hope that society's attitudes towards mental illness will change so that more people will be able to receive treatment without fear of how others will react.

"If more people with serious mental illness were treated



AUSTIN MARDON (LEFT) WITH AMA PRESIDENT DR. CHRISTOPHER J. DOIG

the same way as other people who have physical illness, people would be healthier and happier. The stigma against getting treatment just means people don't get well."

And so, receiving this award is a kind of validation.

"It was very pleasant that the doctors would recognize someone with a mental illness. It's like coming home."

Although his illness pres-

ents some challenges— he must take his medication without fail, and he cannot work full-time— he doesn't feel that his diagnosis was without benefit.

"I was always an intellectual, a geeky university student. But I've learned about my emotional side. And that basically, you can make a life out of whatever situation you're in. I try to be as healthy as possible, and do good work."

Everything's coming up AABA



AABA RECOGNITION AWARD RECIPIENTS

MARI SASANO

Despite what Alberta Avenue Business Association executive director Joe Holtz describes as a "challenging year," the 118th Avenue area continues to improve.

At AABA's annual general meeting, Holtz reported fewer empty buildings as well as progress in the facade program and other neighbourhood improvements, and good participation in the Economic Impact Assessment Report that surveyed nearly 200 local businesses.

Challenges included the overall economic climate in Edmonton, as well as the continued construction on 118th Avenue.

At the end of the evening, Holtz and the AABA board presented its first Recognition Awards to local individuals who have made significant contributions to the area's revitalization. Recipients include Councillor Tony Caterina; Kris Andreychuk from the Edmonton Police's NET team; Alberta Avenue Community League's Karen Mykietka; AABA secretary and local resident Berenice Kaiser; Avenue Revitalization coordinator Judy Allen; and Arts on the Avenue's Christy Morin.



The Rat Pack

I AM THANKFUL BY THORIN, AGE 7

I am thankful for my food, water and money and most of all for being alive

I am thankful for all that because they are all wonderful and make me feel like a prince riding a stallion in the fields

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"Do you believe in.. the Son of God?"

"Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?"

John 9:35-36 NKJV

After the war

by Ernest E. Moranetz

as young kids we went for evening walks with our parents to get out of our stuffy hot apartment. everyone did.

we weren't far from the main street and as we walked along i was fascinated by the flashing neon signs. running pigs above a butcher shop, smoking cigarettes, beer advertisements.

it was wonderful! this was the 1940's just after world war two.

it was safe to walk around at night and the streets were filled with people and the the sights and sounds and smells of the city.



Parkdale memories: a principal looks back, Part 3

MARLENE HANSON

From the family collection of Grandmother Florence McCoy's diaries, which span some 61 years, we can reflect on a time when days and evenings were spent quite differently than they are today. Families spent time taking care of household duties, going to church, participating in local community gatherings, and making time to visit neighbours.

Some examples:

January 14, 1935:
Mended. Attended business meeting at church.

January 16, 1935:
Mended. Baked. Wrote Mamma. Frank at hockey game.

February 14:
Girls at Valentine Social. Frank went to Ponoka. Got home at 2 am.

March 8:
Attended Teachers' Alliance Banquet.

March 23:
Made dress for Erma. Baked.

March 29:
Made quilt for Mrs. F. Took it over.

April 13:
Blizzard here. Mended coats all day.

April 22:
Washed. Frank went to hear Aberhart.

April 25:

Serving Circle in church.

Frank's meeting in Alberta Avenue Hall. Chickens arrived.

May 13:

Washed. Made 2 shirts. Altered 2 dresses. Frank at meeting at Community League.

May 30:

Meeting in Eastwood Hall.

August 22:

Frank came home to vote in provincial election. Social Credit won big victory.

September 4:

Canned peaches . Went with Mrs. C to Johnston's farm.

Wrote Dad.

September 19:

Frank painted kitchen. I weigh 168. Gladys weighs 20 lbs.

Wrote home.

Sept 27:

Called on Mrs. Carlson.

Canned plums.

Sept 28:

Went to town in a.m. Spent p.m. sewing. Hutchins here in evening.

Sept 30:

Martha started school.

Oct 6:

Sunday School Rally. Guests for tea.

Oct 14:

Dominion elections. Liberals won. Mrs. C & I spent p.m. at Laura's.

November 6:

Went to Circle. Cold and

snowy. Eastwood Community

Pictures.

November 16:

Mrs. H and I went to see "Crusades"

December 13:

Called at Carlson's. Wrote Christmas cards. Erma at Eastglen High School skating party.

December 18:

attended service. Meeting at church. Took Baby for a ride.

December 20:

Sunday School Christmas tree. School closed.

December 30:

Janet and Jimmy here. Social at Delton in evening.

How could she possibly make two shirts and alter two dresses in one day?! Every time I go to do my own laundry, I am greeted by the pile of socks waiting to be darned. I'm not sure if it will ever happen, but there they sit, with holes in the toe, reminding me to stop long enough to sit down with a light bulb, a needle and thread, and stitch up the holes. Where is Florence when I need her?

Marlene Hanson, granddaughter to Frank and Florence McCoy, served as principal of Parkdale School, from 2003 to 2010.

Martha Hanson (McCoy) passed away in 2006. This is the third of a four part memoir of her family's history in the Parkdale area.

Carrot Christmas Arts Bazaar



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Sukha Shack yoga bends to your budget and ability

MARI SASANO.....

Yoga is perhaps one of the biggest fitness trends of the 21st century. People have been flocking to studios, and those stretchy lululemon pants are ubiquitous, even for those who have never chanted an “Om” in their life. There are health benefits, physically and mentally, and ideally it goes beyond the mat, through observing yogic principles in the community.

Sukha Shack aims to do exactly that with their new facility, located on 111 Avenue and 93 Street.

“What we’re hoping to do in this neighbourhood is to provide affordable yoga to the community,” says studio manager and instructor Jackie Montgomery.

“So far, we’re having lots of people coming, so that’s a good sign!”

The building also houses a nondenominational meditation group whose practice focuses on clearing the negative and welcoming the positive influences within a person. The yoga studio is run by this group, with the same aim of fostering positivity, relaxation, and clarity of mind to those who practice. The approach is holistic, to care for body, mind and soul.

“I personally have an Iyengar and Ashtanga back-

ground, with some Hatha. Our classes are gentle for beginners, with classes for adults, kids and teens. And we have classes in Akhanda, which is meant to help you find your inner smile; it’s rooted in tradition with chanting, meditation, breath, and asana [poses].”

The studio also offers Reiki (energy healing) sessions and classes, as well as other alternative healing services.

Classes are \$10 (\$8 for seniors or students) to drop in, with various packages available for multiple visits or registered classes. For schedules or more information on pricing, please check the website.



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small BUSINESS

Lori Arndt, the gal with the Tomboy Tools

DARLENE TAYLOR

“We can learn to do anything we want, it’s just a matter of getting up the nerve.” That’s what Lori Arndt did when she volunteered for Habitat for Humanity; her courage and willingness to learn and try anything anyone was willing to show her started her on the road to becoming a DIYer (do it yourself). While picking up a hammer or saw wasn’t hard, knowing how to use a power tool was. Her experience with Habitat gave her the confidence to go to the next level.

She has been involved with Tomboy Tools www.tomboytools.ca for two years. To quote their website, “TOMBOY TOOLS® is a tool and home improvement company for women, by women, providing a unique range of private-labeled hand tools for home improvement projects. Our primary business is to provide the highest quality tools and techniques to women, empowering them to become confident and competent homeowners through our In-Home Workshops – Tool Parties!”

Having invested in their tools myself, I do feel they are sized right. The newer pink-coloured line means they don’t seem to “run off” or “disappear” like my previous tools did.

Lori wanted to get some type of renovation related work when she found out about a direct sales opportunity with Tomboy Tools. She felt this was exactly what she was looking for. She really pursued the business in 2009. When asked what she gets out of it, she said it is fun and she has enjoyed meeting a lot of people. Attending trade and gift shows afforded an opportunity to meet hobbyists like

herself as well as learn even more about new products and techniques in home renovation. She feels that people need to learn how to use the right tools and to use them safely.

One of the most satisfying aspects is using her own knowledge and experience to give others the confidence to try their own projects. She said there are a lot of people who are afraid to touch a hammer, but she wants them to know they can do it: pick up a hammer and hang a drape or a picture. To her, success with Tomboy Tools is not about the money but being the inspiration to women and able to help them. Using tools is very scary for a lot of people; she doesn’t think it should be that way.

I’ve seen this lady’s handiwork for myself in some very ambitious renovation projects in her home, and it’s very impressive. Lori’s goal is to complete the major work by Christmas! Her most recent pride and joy is a concrete counter top. I must admit the idea was of great curiosity as



TOMBOY TOOLS’ LORI ARNDT WORKS ON A PROJECT, AND YOU CAN TOO!

I imagined a sidewalk for a kitchen counter. But no, it is quite striking and I would put it up against a granite or stone top counter. It is a detailed and time-consuming process especially for the DIYer, but I think she has a lot to be proud of.

I asked her what advice she would give to someone in business:

- Keep good records, it will make it easier for tax time.
- Self-motivation is the toughest part of pursuing your business. It is very

important to follow up. This is hard if you have limited number of hours per day, but you have to take it seriously and pursue every avenue.

- Research the company and the business you are interested in
- Research what it’s all about
- Ask yourself: do you really want to do it?
- Is there a market for it? There are lots of great ideas out there, but not always a viable market for it.
- Be prepared to give the hours to put into it.

• For security and privacy reasons, don’t get business cards with your home phone and home address on it.

Have fun – if you are in business, you should have some fun with it. Lori understands her limits, she knows what mistakes she can live with and what she can’t.

To contact Lori and find out more about Tomboy Tools call her at 780-995-1679 or email tomboy.lori@gmail.com. She has many items in stock she will deliver to you, or hold a party!

Social media and the start-up business

PATRICIA FOUEFAS

If someone would have asked me 10 years ago what I would be doing today, running a small business would not have been it. Yet, today I find myself as one half of the husband-and-wife team running Eva Sweet – a small start-up company that is attempting to bring Liege waffles to Edmonton. Getting from inception to the point where we are selling our first waffles has been an interesting ride with starts, stops, hurdles and epiphanies that moved us – sometimes kicking and screaming – into the world of the small business. The learning curve has been intense.

Part of our learning process has been to try to make sense of the new business environment of social media and the important place that it has in the germinal yet maturing street food world here in Canada. Initially, we took the lead from some of tech-savvy customers who strongly hinted that we

should be tweeting (that is, posting on the Twitter community online) our locations, but we have quickly learned the value of connecting on a personal level with our customers. Not only does social networking allow us to tell people where we are, but also when there is a special event or promotion. It is a very valuable tool for a mobile business where locations and situations can change with the weather.

Through social media, we have come to know a little more about what we are doing right and what we are doing wrong which was incredibly valuable in trying to meet expectations. In the past, where customers would have walked away never to return again, we are now privy to the conversation where they tell their family and friends exactly what they think of us. Social networking is also a world where complex customer relationships develop and there is the potential to “take it on the chin” in a very public forum when things go wrong. It is not

for the faint of heart.

The promise of social networking to a small business is the ability to use personal testimonials instead of expensive advertising to propel your business forward and showcase new promotions. Where communication and technology is concerned, the social media world has exploded into a place where the new business can advertise and promote itself in the DIY online “nouveau web” world where communicating to customers takes little more than a few clicks or a very deliberately crafted 140 character tweet. Twitter, Facebook, Foursquare, Foodspotting and other social networking sites bring not only the possibility of communicating with customers in a gruelling near-24 hour a day cycle, but the expectation that tweets and mentions will be followed up.

Running your own business often comes with the fantasy of being your own boss, deciding your own hours and being free from the constraints of the usual



COME ONE, COME ALL TO THE WAFFLE TRUCK!

work environment of managers, co-workers and structured coffee breaks. What many people soon find out is that running your own business often involves working around the clock and being your own personal slave driver. Our business has had us waking at 3 am to prepare for the coming day and staying

connected in the 24/7 world of online media. No boss would ever ask this of us and yet we do it as an act of faith that it will one day make us masters of our own fate. We will keep you posted on that works out.

Follow Eva Sweet on Twitter, @evasweetwaffles

Marketing: getting the word out about your business, on a budget

REBECCA LIPPIATT

When I first started my business, I had enough money for equipment, and that was it. My marketing strategy was extremely haphazard and not thought out. Now, it's still somewhat haphazard, but I do have slightly more of a game plan. Over the nearly four years I have been running my business, I've relied primarily on word-of-mouth to grow. For example, when someone has a new baby or needs family or wedding photos, and they ask their friends if they know of a photographer. This word of mouth strategy relies on two major points: excellent customer service and evangelical clients.

We all know how much we enjoy talking to the computerised voice at some big companies and how satisfying it is to press 900 buttons until we're connected with a live person. Or not! Keep that experience in mind when dealing with your clients. While I don't have a lot of voice contact with my clients until I meet them (I am usually contacted by email, or through my website), I try to respond to emails within 12 to 24 hours, even if it's to just say, “Thank you for contacting me, I will get back to you on Monday morning. Have a great weekend.” When I am working with a client, I keep in regular contact to let them know how our session went, and to let them know when I've ordered their product and when it will arrive.

Providing excellent customer service will earn you evangelical customers who believe in your product and will sing your praises to their friends and colleagues. As your business grows, some

of these people will become your key clients. Key clients have the innate skill of networking. After I had been in business a couple of years, I noticed that nearly half my inquiries were being referred to me by three clients, and although the other half were also referred, it was not in the same concentration. My key clients have very little in common with each other, but their friends and colleagues really value their advice. I make sure to give something extra to these clients as a thank you.

Internet presence is incredibly important, and it doesn't have to be expensive or difficult. Blogger and Wordpress both have professionally-designed blogs for free or a low cost. Buying a domain name (www.yourbusinessname.com) is fairly cheap (\$10 per year), and you can redirect the name to your blog site. I do prefer blog sites over static sites (although, you certainly can do both) as with blogs you are able to update what you are doing regularly. You can also have a business page (or a personal page with a business name) on Facebook, and “friend” your clients (or they can become fans). You can update your client base regularly on news about your business. Also, many people use Twitter to keep clients updated, and attract new



REBECCA LIPPIATT'S PHOTOGRAPHY

business.

Consumers are more interested now than ever before in making purchasing choices which are healthy for their families and communities. Some companies have made this the cornerstone of their marketing. In Edmonton, E-SAGE promotes local business, which have a commitment to ecological, economic and community sustainability. Including these values in your product and marketing strategy will increase your loyal customer base. You can also give back to your community or causes you believe in.

These marketing strategies are all useful, but the best strategy is to love what you do and do it whole-heartedly. You are the only you, and when you love your work and believe in it, you attract customers who support you.

Rebecca Lippiatt lives in the Norwood community and operates Dragonfly Photography (www.dragonflyphotography.ca). The photos are of her clients who have all become good friends.

Sowing the seeds of business

ANGIE KLEIN

“I think I'm going to sell the other shop,” My boss mused. “OK,” I said.

“OK what?” He asked. “OK, I'll buy it,” I replied. That's how it started.

With a few thousand dollars in the bank and some equity in my two properties, off to the bank I went. I had drawn up a business plan, I thought this would be a simple matter of borrowing some money, then transferring the title. Nay Nay.

I first had to have the store appraised at a cost of around \$600. The first of many unknown expenses that were to arise. The shop came out smelling like roses, appraised at more than what I was to pay. It took a few weeks for the bank to give us an answer and my boss wanted this thing sold. I almost lost the shop to another purchaser, but we managed to hang on to the sale. Legal fees and other stuff like phone lines and utilities all needed deposits, so that sucked up a few more thousand dollars and the small nest egg I had accumulated was down to just about zero.

Thanks to my Mom's fairly deep pockets we were able to trudge on. I spent days designing a logo for the store. We ordered new signage, another expense I hadn't thought of. That bill came in at a whop-

ping \$3000 and change. I was so excited the day it went up, I stood outside in the parking lot and admired it for a long time! We did get the loan from the bank, and we managed to pay off my boss...just barely.

The cost of the inventory was a lot higher than we expected, and we weren't buying the shop in a busy month, so revenue wasn't there to cushion the blow. I missed a paycheck or two in the first year, putting back into the shop almost the same as I'd taken out, but four years later things are smooth sailing. In one more year we will own it outright. I am a risk taker and I know the flower business inside and out so for me the decision was an easy one. Make sure you understand the business you are getting

into. Be prepared to work hard for your investment. Never underestimate the hidden cost in starting up, and be happy. We all spend so much of our time at work; if you're going to buy yourself a job, make sure it's one you like.

Angie Klein is the owner and chief designer at a funky little flower shop called Petals On The Trail located on the east corner of 118 Ave and St. Albert Trail. Call them at 780-482-7673 for any of your floral needs.



PETALS ON THE TRAIL

Building community through fundraising

KELLY FOWLER

I'm in the business of fundraising. Mind you, I'm not a professional fundraiser involved in posh black-tie galas, top-grossing silent auctions or country-wide campaigns involving coloured ribbons; instead, I'm a Scout mom.

Whether your offspring is an aspiring gymnast, hockey player, musician, soccer diva or Ukrainian dance star, chances are you've sold chocolates, worked a bingo or casino, flipped pancakes at a charity breakfast, or collected recyclables for bottle drives. The very word "fundraising" puts fear into the hearts of many! It's time consuming, hectic, and downright hard.

For me, I've got a son who's excited to go and meet more than 30,000 other youth at the 22nd World Scouting Jamboree in Sweden, Summer 2011. The World Jamboree is the highlight of any Scout's career – a fantastic tradition created by Lord Baden-Powell back in the early 1900s – but the price tag to be a part of the Canadian Contingent to this jamboree is \$4,400 per kid. Our first thoughts: how on earth are we going to come up with that kind of money?!

Our whole family decided to tackle the business of fundraising. We all agreed that the kids had to be involved in raising the money, and our methods were to stay true to the spirit of Scouting by incorporating community service and environmental stewardship.

My boys suddenly found themselves goal setting, budgeting, planning, communicating and working together as a team. They are getting loads of public speaking opportunities, developing a sense of responsibility and understanding that they can earn their own way to Sweden next summer. Don't get me wrong, giving up free time on Saturdays and evenings still produces occasional grumbling from kids and parents alike, but we're all learning that hard work pays off.

We haven't reached our goal yet. With one-third of the fees raised and paid, we still have a ways to go to get to the World Jamboree, but the journey is becoming the destination. I love watching all the kids involved grow into the leaders of tomorrow as they see that nothing is too hard, too far away or too expensive...if they continue to work to turn ideas and goals into reality.

Double bonus, we get the satisfaction of building community every step of the way. These fundraising efforts are taking us even further into the neighbourhood than we expected – the Alberta Avenue farmer's market, door-to-door sales of Scout Popcorn, presentations to the Rotary Club, new connections with local businesses, and more. We're becoming



LOCAL VENTURER, OLIVER FOWLER, CANVASSED THE NEIGHBOURHOOD FOR "SCOUTREE" PLEDGES THIS PAST SPRING TO RAISE MONEY TOWARDS ATTENDING THE WORLD SCOUTING JAMBOREE IN 2011. THE 25TH EDMONTON SCOUT GROUP PLANTED MORE THAN 600 WHITE SPRUCE SAPLINGS IN THE CITY.

more active each and every day.

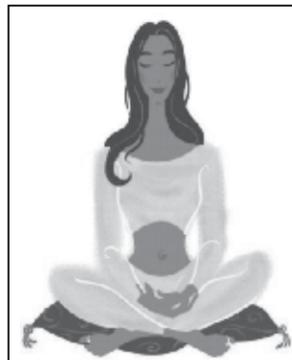
So, if you have a Scout knock on your door this fall, you may be educated on a cause, asked to purchase poinsettias or fruit baskets, or maybe just have the offer of shoveling your walkway for a small donation. It's just us kids, learning the business of community.

Kelly Fowler is a Scout mom in the 25th Edmonton Scout Group. Check out their projects at www.1001bagnights.com, or send some words of encouragement to donate@1001bagnights.com

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Don't wait! Do it yourself!

ERI RIOT

There's always a buzz in various circles about a do-it-yourself revolution: people learning to do things and create things for themselves instead of buying pre-made. And thanks to the internet and its many easily-accessible marketplaces, people are starting something of a sell-it-yourself revolution. It only makes sense that crafters and creators would use this amazing tool as a way to connect to their market, wherever in the world it might be! Given the number of crafters, producers, creators – whatever you call yourself – out there, particularly in this neighbourhood, there must be a lot of you who are wondering how they can do this for themselves, and that's what we'll talk about today.

The most important thing to keep in mind as you decide to start down this road is the idea of what you want to make. It's the first decision and the most important one. Because this is something you're going to start

putting your heart, soul, time and money into, it needs to be something you believe in and enjoy. Don't pick something that just follows the latest trend, unless you want to get bored in a month or two. Work from your strengths! Whatever it is that you want to make, there's a market out there for it somewhere in the world. Whether it's paintings of bicycles, quilted coffee cup cozies, or hand-knitted sweaters for pet birds, someone wants to buy it from you.

That's where the internet comes in. Not just for email forwards and funny websites anymore, this is your ultimate tool for connecting to your buyers, wherever on the planet they might be. Web store providers like Big Cartel (www.bigcartel.com) and Shopify (www.shopify.com) offer easy, low-stress, low-cost ways to put together your store, but the hot spot for crafters is without a doubt Etsy (www.etsy.com), the online handmade marketplace. There are also lots of alternatives to Etsy, such as Shop Handmade

(www.shophandmade.com) and Artfire (www.artfire.com) that you can check out, but we'll focus a little bit more on Etsy for now, by virtue of it having the most users and therefore the largest market for your items.

Even if you think you'll move on to somewhere else or even your very own website store later on, Etsy is a great place to start. Here, you can make your first few sales, and see what kind of response your goods get. It's designed to be as easy as possible for everyone involved. You can start by heading over to www.etsy.com and creating an account; it's free, you won't be charged anything until you list an item. A good way to get familiar with how the site works is to do some browsing. Try searching a type of item, maybe even the type that you want to create yourself. That will show you what else is out there, and how people are going about presenting their items in their listings. Once you've got a feel for it, try creating your own first listing!

Once you've got products online, the first step of your marketing is already completed for you. Your items are automatically listed in Etsy's search, so anytime someone searches for that type of item on the site, your products will appear in their search results. That in itself is a great way to get some sales. There are other ways to use the internet to market yourself, however. Do you have a blog? Do your friends have blogs? See if some of them will link to your store for you, because word-of-mouth is always effective. You could also try joining online forums or discussion groups that are relevant to what you're making. To use the sweaters-for-pet-birds examples, you could join a few groups that are devoted to bird lovers, and put a link to your



shop in your forum signature so that it's available to the people you chat with in the forum. And never underestimate the power of just telling people about what you do! Have some business cards or mini-cards printed up (www.moo.com does fantastic work) and be ready to hand them out to anyone you meet.

Feeling excited and ready to go? Good! Time to start brainstorming, and soon you'll be part of the sell-it-yourself revolution!

Find Eri Riot online at www.eri-makes-stuff.com

Some practical tips to starting a business

DARLENE TAYLOR

My husband Reg and I have started several businesses over the years, mostly home-based. Our biggest venture was opening a music school and store in 1988 – at its peak we had a staff of 13 and close to 200 students. Here are our tips:

- **Be Prepared** – and no matter how prepared you think you are . . . you aren't. It may be an old motto but it's a good one: if you can "expect the unexpected," then you are ready to start a business.
- **Business Plan** – these come under many guises: marketing plan, financial plan, business plan. No matter what you call it – have one! The more thorough and complete it is, the more likely you are to succeed or at least be prepared. Whatever you write you will need to update and add to on a regular basis. Six months is a good measure, and definitely update it annually. You must understand where you came

from, where you are, and the possibilities for the future. If you don't keep on top of this you will miss opportunities and may even lose revenue because you thought you knew it all. You don't.

- **Business Associates** – whether as friends, on retainer, or on an as-needed basis: have a lawyer, accountant, and banker and/or financial advisor. Even if you are one of these, unless it is your business (and even if it's not) have these contacts at the ready. Meeting with them annually to look at the progress of your business and to discuss it could be an incredible asset. These professionals can see things, prevent issues, help you out on things that you may not even know. And yes, even for a small home-based business these contacts can be incredibly useful.
- **Paperwork** – we all hate it. This is the paperwork you have to do but don't want to and may put off because it doesn't seem important. Whether it's detailed

vehicle repair and mileage records, bookkeeping, journals, plans or receipts you must set aside time every day to record it or file it or manage it. It will save your business and your sanity.

- **Review ROI** – I'm not talking about balance sheets when I say Review Return on Investment – I'm talking about you! Owning a business is a 24/7 job no matter what anyone says, especially a new business. You have to look at all that you invest: missed events or family get-togethers, time away from hobbies and sports, vacations and living. Mental and physical health is part of this too. Most business owners invest all the energy they have to growing their new investment but may sacrifice too much. Treat yourself as a business and invest in you. Hire yourself out to the business and be very critical to judge if it's worth it. Make sure you talk honestly with good friends and family who will not give you lip service but honestly help you

evaluate your venture.

- **Network** – everybody says it and most of us think we understand it. While your networks may be a source of building business, you also need support networks that will provide you encouragement and honesty as you build. Memberships and attendance in business related groups and even a few non-related can be very advantageous to long term business survival. It can be difficult to measure the financial investment against the business or even personal benefit but it is there.
- **Word-of-Mouth** – it is still the number one method of business growth. Treat it with respect. You never know what influences you have created, whether good or bad – and you will create both. Try to periodically survey where your business is coming from and note the value of word-of-mouth growth. Focus on the positive outcomes. Negative feelings

may come to light. Objectively evaluate them and do what you can to improve on future service but do not focus on those that are unhappy.

- **Look at your competition** in many ways – you should find your competitors when you are doing up your plans. Find out what kind of presence they have on the web and other media. What is the level and quality of their promotional material? What are the industry standards and expectations for the type of business you are in? Some home-based or small business can survive a year or maybe two on homemade business cards or hand-written fliers, but many cannot. The level of professionalism may seem to be a high and unnecessary price but what is each customer worth to your business? You only get one chance to make a first impression, so make it a good one.

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C. MORRISSEY

As a new parent I am somewhat obsessed with how I can be a better one. I am always wondering things like: is he eating enough? Is he getting enough sleep? Is he getting enough attention, or too much? Is he reaching his milestones on schedule? The list of questions goes on and on. But I am often reminded of this quote from the psychologist Carl Jung, "Nothing has a stronger influence psychologically on their environment and especially on their children than the un-lived life of the parent."

This quote must have resonated with me because I have always remembered it, even before I became a parent. I know, for me, a huge part of being a GREAT parent is giving my child a chance to find and cultivate their interests and passions. But this quote calls me to consider: is it as important that I give myself time to pursue my goals and interests, as it is for me to provide those opportunities for my child?

I found some mothers in the community that I see pursuing their dreams and passions for art and design and have created businesses out of them. I wanted to know how they think this has affected them as parents.

I contacted Maria Pace-Wynters, a stay-at-home mom/artist who has created her own business marketing and selling her artwork, primarily online. In her case, she found that fulfilling her desire to paint and share her work also enabled her to stay home with her children.

She says, "I didn't really have a business plan, I just knew that I had to make a move toward my dream of being an artist, and now was the time. When my stuff started to sell I realized that I could make more money than I could going out to work, and at the same time I could actually continue being a stay at home mom."

When asked about her take on the Jung quote she said, "I love that my daughters are actually proud of me. They love looking at my paintings.

To them, it is not even a question that it is something I have to do. They see my passion for what I do and I know that they will be passionate about whatever they choose to do because of that. It is a gift to be able to give them that and to know that if I wasn't creating, not only would they miss seeing me live out my dream, there is a good chance that they would see someone bitter and full of regret."

Another mother, Sabrina O'Donnell, also impressed me in her ability to create not only beautiful designs but also a viable business when she brought Sabrina Butterfly designs into fruition.

"I have always had a passion for clothing design. SB Designs clothing line is a home-based business where I design the entire line and do



SABRINA BUTTERFLY DESIGNS IS LOCATED AT #102, 6421-112 AVE OR ONLINE AT WWW.SABRINABUTTERFLYDESIGNS.CA

all my own cutting. Presently I have help with manufacturing (the sewing part), which I have sourced out to a company in Vancouver. In September 2007, I opened my own boutique which is now the official home of the Sabrina Butterfly

Designs clothing line and many other jewelry and accessory designers."

When asked how her creative professional life affects her as a mother she says, "I think having Violet see her mother being able to do something she truly loves, will show her that you can do anything if you set your heart to it. I have never had any doubts in my mind about what I want to do and I hope this rubs off on her. I want her to feel as confident and true to herself as she can possibly be. I want to praise her for her passions and support her where ever her heart wants to go. My

parents were very supportive of me and never doubted my decision of wanting to be a clothing designer."

When asked about balancing being a parent and a business owner at the same time, the themes of multitasking and time management kept

coming up. Sabrina says that playing both roles has "... given me some stability and forced me to be more organized and structured. I have limited time, so I must use it well."

Maria gave a good example of the creative compromising that happens to get things done, "If you want to paint and you have your four year old, then playing 'ART STORE PERSON AND THE PRINCESS' (or whatever she comes up with) is a good compromise. I know that it is not exactly losing yourself in your art but you take what you can get and I wouldn't change it for the world."

Being a mother can be thought of as a business in and of itself, requiring creativity and a do-it-yourself spirit. So it should be no surprise that moms strike off and become entrepreneurs once in a while. But when women and mothers do, they are starting more and more home based businesses with creativity and expression in mind. These women are an inspiration to me because they have the guts to go after their passions and take the road less taken.

Because when it comes down to it, when I ask all of those questions about how my child is doing and obsess over the details, what I really want to know is if he is happy. After consulting these mothers and business owners I am even more convinced that one of the ways that I can help him to grow into a healthy individual is to consider my own happiness and give myself chances to find and cultivate my own bliss. That taking those steps is vital to making me a better parent.



CHECK OUT MARIA PACE-WYNTERS' WORK AT WWW.MARIAPACEWYNTERS.COM



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In 1899, Canadian soldiers left for war in South Africa. Their sacrifices, immortalized in bronze at the gates of old Quebec, set the standard of service by Canadians in the interest of international peace. Canada was born into the world of nations from respect gained for the bravery and commitment of the members of Canada's armed forces. In 1917, the valiant efforts of 100,000 Canadians defeated the Germans at Vimy Ridge, in France. In 1943, in Ortona, Italy, Canadians engaged in hand-to-hand, building-by-building, street-by-street combat, defeating the Germans in what is known as the "Stalingrad of Italy." Almost sixty years ago, during the Korean War, 30,000 Canadian soldiers distinguished themselves with their brave service under severe conditions. Today our troops from Canada continue to distinguish themselves in Afghanistan, to the point of a presidential citation for one unit.

However, the price tag of peace in this violent century has been war, and has been so very high, with 110,000 Canadian war dead. We must learn from the harsh truths of wars past so that we do not repeat humanity's mistakes.

The poppy was seen as a symbol of earthly life, until a day in Flanders, when from the fields of war, Lt. Col. John McCrae penned verse of remembrance for Canada's war dead. He spoke for all who have faced their soul in the finality of the theatre of war, whether Korea, the two World Wars, the Gulf or Afghanistan. He could well be speaking of all brave men who have soldiered the world for Canadian beliefs. His words, carved on the walls of the House of Commons, strongly speak to the need for memory and respect, always.

"If ye break faith with us who die, we shall not sleep."

For our war veterans and remembered war dead, we pause on November 11 to give our respect. We will not forget.

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Calling all youth, bicycle enthusiasts, commuters and advocates



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provides workspace, knowledgeable volunteers, and the tools for youth to rebuild bicycles that would otherwise end up in our City's landfills. Youth are given the opportunity to repair a bicycle using the tools in the shop and the skills they have gained during weekly sessions facilitated by volunteer mechanics.

the spoke.

aspires to foster a sense of belonging and self worth by way of providing a positive and engaging community space and hands on work experience. Volunteers will work with youth, providing mentorship and skill sharing. Youth will be given the opportunity to build relationships with peers and volunteers in a safe and positive environment centered on the values of cooperation and mutual respect.

Once graduated, these participants will have the chance to facilitate future sessions with new youth from the community. This transition intends to foster confidence, self-esteem and life skills; encouraging and supporting youth to be leaders and role

models in their community.

the spoke.

promotes active and environmentally sustainable transportation. Many youth do not have access to bicycles and have limited opportunities in terms of positive community based recreation. the spoke. offers a solution! By recycling used bicycles and providing them for public use, the spoke. keeps bicycles out of landfills, cars off roads and provides sustainable transportation for youth and this community.

On September 28, 2010 a second set of sessions kicked off with a new group of youth from the community. These youth were referred from a variety of community organizations including Vineyard Church, the Yellowhead Youth Centre, the Inner-City Youth Housing Project and several community schools. With the support of alumni youth and new adult mentors, this group stands poised to take the spoke. to a whole new level.

Know of the perfect candidate?
the spoke. is gearing up for a



A FUTURE BIKE MECHANIC AT WORK AT THE SPOKE

session in November and we are currently accepting applications. The best part is that there's no cost – all that's required is a commitment to participate and a love of cycling!

Drop us a quick line about your youth and let us know what makes them the perfect fit. Space is limited – but we've got a waiting list and will run sessions throughout the winter months.

For more information or to register, contact Kris Andreychuk, kris.andreychuk@edmontonpolice.ca or phone 780-944-8402.

the spoke.

community, confidence, leadership, transportation, cooperation, skills, environmental stewardship... together, we can build more than just bikes.

Sprucewood Library: A great place to start small business research

Sprucewords
WITH SHANNON CLARKE

The idea of starting up a small business can be both incredibly appealing and extremely daunting at the same time. There are so many factors to consider, and one may feel the sinking sensation of information overload when looking for answers to all the logistical questions of how to start or grow a small business.

Whether you have a brilliant idea for a new business or you are looking for growth opportunities for a currently established one, a great place to look for resources is at your local branch of Edmonton Public Library.

To find out what kind of resources would be most useful for both aspiring and established small business owners, I thought it would be wise to chat with someone in the neighborhood who has been through the process of starting a business. I asked my buddy Chris about the challenges he encountered since starting his business in 2006. His top three challenges were: deciding whether to incorporate or remain sole proprietor; figuring out how to save on taxes; and learning about marketing.

Using these topics as a guideline I set out to access information (both in electronic

and print formats) relating to small business. I started my search at www.epl.ca by selecting the "databases" link under the "digital content" tab at the top of the library homepage. From here, I clicked on the link to Business Source Elite.

Business Source Elite is your gateway to full-text articles from 1,133 scholarly business journals. I started with a broad search, typing "starting a small business in Canada" into the keyword search box. This led me to several informative articles on the subject. I then narrowed my search to the more specific topic of "incorporation vs. sole proprietorship." This gave me seven articles on the topic. EPL's subscription databases can be accessed freely from home (with a library card) or in the library on our public computers.

If you are interested in coming to the library to pick up some print resources, try searching the catalogue using the term "Small business – Canada." EPL has about 175 titles available on this topic. To respond to Chris' challenge of understanding taxes for small business, I found a book called *167 Tax Tips for Canadian Small Business* among several up-to-date, Canadian publications. I also found 47 books on the topic of marketing your small business. Reading magazine articles

on these subjects is also really easy, as we have subscriptions to magazines including *Entrepreneur*, *Fortune Small Business*, *Canadian Business*, *Profit*, and many more.

Another great general resource I found is called *Your Guide to Government Financial Assistance for Business in Alberta*. This comprehensive reference manual provides details on all assistance programs (federal and provincial) that relate to enterprises in Alberta. Since the directory is updated annually, you'll be sure to have the right contact information for specific assistance program managers.

Sprucewood has recently started a pilot project to lend laptop computers for use within the library. If you are interested in coming in to do some research on small business (or anything else for that matter) why not sign out a laptop? Then you can relax in one of our armchairs, or spread your mobile computer work station out with several books in front of you on one of our worktables. Our laptops have all the same programs as the desktop computers, but make it easier to work wherever you are most comfortable.

For more information on any of the resources discussed in this article, or the laptop lending program, please visit Sprucewood Library at 11555 95 St.

AN AVENUE HOMESTEADER

WITH CARISSA HALTON

Six years ago we moved into our First World War-era house. I didn't notice the mouse families that made my home their home until the winter of our first year here when they decimated a box of Red River cereal that had fallen in a back cupboard.

This sad, sick mouse sat here in the kitchen for Madi's viewing pleasure. Mice are curious creatures. They feature strongly in Christmas lore ('twas the night before Christmas/and all through the house/not a creature was stirring/not even a mouse), poems (the title of the novel *Of Mice and Men* was a line taken from an 18th century ode to a mouse family whose nest was tilled), books and films (ahh, sweet *Stuart Little*). They are kinda cute for a rodent. You also have to respect their resiliency: they can enter a space the diameter of a pencil, and are always willing to try new foods.

Much of their resiliency is surely due to their capacity to breed. Five to six young are born three weeks after mating and they become sexually active from six to 10 weeks old. So, not theoretically, females could have six litters per year equaling 36 new mice. Then half of them then go about breeding just like their mamas.

Of course if I were looking for a house now, I'd notice the "mouse" signs: the steel wool around entrances and jammed around plumbing, the baseboard joints with slightly curved exits, the black poison boxes tucked behind furniture. Controls in our home have also included traps but I stop at sticky paper! Sometimes I wonder if Halton House mice have super-evolved. They are complacent about peanut

A mouse slayer becomes part of the family



MOUSEKILLER HALTON, STALKING HER PREY

butter, and steal chocolate without setting off the traps. They are ambivalent to poison, and I'm squeamish about putting it out.

But a little while ago, I snapped. On two separate nights I heard the familiar scratching of a soon-to-be mama mouse tearing off the insulation from the ceiling tiles to use for her nest. The thought of more babies made me set aside my peevishness about cleaning litter boxes, cat hair on my clothes, dead mice at my door and itchy exczema... I went out and got me a mouse slayer. What's worse? Dead dried mice in my walls or dead mice as presents on my bed side. It's a draw.

Dubbed Biscuit by the three year-old in the house, this mouse slayer hangs out in the basement's joists – choice mouse highways. In fact, one morning last week we awoke to find ceiling tiles on the floor; he'd fallen through in his hunt for choice morsels.

He's introduced my kids to the animal world's gladiator fight style. This has brought up

interesting questions for me. I want to shield my kids from the truth of what animals do to other animals. I also don't want to see it myself. Mice have brought the "wild" into my home. And, like usual, I don't want to face the nature unless it's on my own terms. Like meat, which I prefer to buy in a clean, non-animal-looking bundle on styrofoam, I want the benefits without the (necessary) gore and mess of the animal kingdom. I suppose this is one of the many perks of being at the top of the food chain: we can lie to ourselves, then construct realities to confirm these stories. This cat, so languid and social, is teaching me a lot about my own foibles regarding the role I play in the natural order of things.

Philosophical ramblings aside... our cat is an unrepentant mouse slayer. Just in time for their annual winter retreat inside my home – the mice are finally running scared.

This article was originally posted on the Avenue Homesteader blog, <http://avenue-homesteader.blogspot.com/>

Keeping the bite out of the dog business



dog talk

WITH DARLENE TAYLOR
OWNER OF K9 BEHAVE

The phone rings. "I'm afraid of my son's dog, can you help me?" After a brief conversation in their family room, she asks, "Do you want to see him?" I'm asked to wait while everyone disappeared from the room. This was not quite what I had planned. I hear a door open, then the skittering of dog nails coming down the hall, and around the corner. Before I know it, a 65 pound American Staffordshire Terrier is jumping on me, licking my face furiously. Typical of the Staffie fashion, this was his way of showing affection for humans. Whew! I have nightmares thinking about the many ways this could have played out. The mother could tell me nothing about the dog, not even the breed, only that she was afraid of him.

Over the years as a dog

trainer, I have been very, very, very blessed. I have worked with a great number of "aggressive" dogs and it has gone well. I wear heavier clothing and layers. Each time I treat the situation as brand new and take precautions, which have served me well.

I'm so thankful for my dogs who have helped me so much along the way. Not just with their love, but with their skills as I watch them as I evaluate a client dog's temperament. Many calls deal with dog-to-dog aggression, and without my own dogs, dealing with this issue is impossible. But not any dog will do – you need a dog who is socially savvy. Not only does this dog have to communicate calming signals and other things that only dogs know, but as a trainer I need to be able to read these signals. I need to see when my dog tells me that there are poor social skills, fear, high prey drive, or something else that they see in the other dog. With one client, my terrier actually played two roles:

that of a calm social dog, and then the part of a crazed, leash aggressive, teasing, dog passing by. My dogs on more than one occasion somehow seemed to know exactly what was needed for the training session to be effective.

My passion to help people have "good" dogs has always been my mission statement. The many dogs that have remained with their owners has been key to why I continue in the dog training business. The thank yous and successes make it worthwhile. With any business there are the fun and motivating parts and then there are the "I should quit and give the whole thing up" parts. The last 12 months have showed a slow down for many businesses and thankfully is starting to pick up again. Wow, it's been nine years that I have been doing this, and I still enjoy it!

Darlene Taylor, K9 Behave 780-915-0213, k9behave@presplus.onza.net



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MICHELLE HAYDUK

This month's award nomination was sent to us by email that stated, "I would like to nominate my neighbour, Maria Makino, for the Nice Neighbour Recognition Award. Maria has always been amazingly friendly and caring."

I was intrigued by how terrific Maria sounded, so I decided to phone the writer and get more details. I found out that Maria is the kind of neighbour that everyone wants and is the perfect recipient for the Nice Neighbour Recognition Award.

I learned that Maria and her family emigrated from Brazil about two years ago, and moved into the community of Parkdale. Immediately, Maria started to connect with her neighbours and began to demonstrate how kind and giving she was. Maria and her family did not have a car at the time, so she generously allowed her neighbour to park in her garage. The best part of this is that the garage was used regularly for two years by Maria's neighbour and Maria refused to take anything in return.

Maria has cooked meals (even accommodated a special diet), bought groceries and helped out her neighbours in a variety of ways. When the

nominator went through some difficult times and had to leave home for two and a half weeks, Maria showed, yet again, what great neighbours are all about. Maria went every day to look after her neighbour's cat. Then, when her neighbour returned home she found a handmade doily, a new potted plant and a fridge full of groceries.

This year our nominator was not able to grow her own garden. So once again our nice neighbour, Maria, offered fresh produce from her own garden. When I asked if Maria helped other people as well, the reply was, "Absolutely!" She gives rides to people who need it, she makes meals for people, and the list goes on and on.

I am always amazed to hear about the great people in our neighbourhoods. These are the everyday people that make our communities great. Congratulations Maria!

CRUD would also like to thank all of the contributors that



make this monthly award possible. The prize pack sponsors for September are: Habesha and Hollywood Pizza restaurants, Paraiso Tropical, Safeway and The Carrot Coffeehouse.

For details on the Nice Neighbour Recognition Awards along with other community building initiatives visit www.crudedmonton.org. Nominations can be made at info@crudedmonton.ca or by phone at (780) 996-4728. Please include your name and contact information, the nominee's contact name and information, plus details on what makes your neighbour so great. Let's work together and recognize all of the great people in our neighbourhood.

Spago proves that looks aren't everything



The Daring Diner
WITH ANGIE KLEIN

Spago has been a fixture on the outskirts of our neighborhood for as long as I can remember, and I've lived in the community 10 years now. Their interesting menu consists of mainly seafood and fish dishes, fittingly so, as Portugal is a coastal country.

Several options for meat lovers and a few selections for vegetarians are available too. Jeff and I had a hankering for mussels, so Portuguese food sounded perfect. We were seated right away even though we didn't have reservations. "The dining room could be updated," I thought to myself. It looked almost as it did in the '80s, I'm sure. I also had a bit of a hard time ignoring the film of food stuck to the plastic cover of the menu.

Jeff and I ordered a bottle of featured wine from Portugal and Tyra had a pop.

The service was kind of slow considering there were very few other diners, but we came in the middle of a shift change, I would have at least expected our first server to let us know she was leaving. Tyra's order of Vegetarian Rotini came first. It was a visually unappealing mass of whole wheat pasta, loaded with peppers and mushrooms, topped off with sweet shredded cabbage and two asparagus stalks. She said it was tasty, and did finish the whole thing, so I guess looks aren't everything.

Jeff and I shared a "Maria's Seafood Special." Designed for sharing, it is a combination of appetizers, salad and a main course. The salad was fresh and tasty, mixed baby greens with loads of tomato and peppers and a slightly spicy balsamic vinaigrette. The main entree was salt cod with potato strips and caramelized onions, again, not pretty, but very good. The platter was rounded off with heaps of tender calamari rings. On the sides of the platter were some of the smallest mussels I had ever eaten, paired with even smaller clams. I was somewhat disappointed in their size, even though their flavor was very nice.

While we finished our wine Tyra tried some dessert. Spago has a large selection to choose from and she finally decided on the Pan Baked Apple Pie. Not the best choice...

It smelled very good and the lattice-topped pie looked very cute in its little cast iron frying pan. A small mound of vanilla ice cream with a melted sugar topping was a nice touch too, but that's where the love affair ended. The crust was thick and tough. The apples were almost uncooked and very dry, and although it was nicely spiced, there wasn't enough sugar. All in all it wasn't a bad meal, but for our bill of almost \$115, I wasn't completely satisfied.

Spago is located at 12433 97 St., phone 780-479-0328
Until next time... Happy Eating!

Poetry slam winners announced

The Rat Creek Press hosted the second annual community poetry slam at Kaleido this September. Judged by poet Alexis Kienlen, former journalist Scott McKeen, and Rat Creek editor Mari Sasano, three winners were selected from a group of dedicated performers. This year's winner, Kevin Lotsberg, also won last year's competition.

1st Prize – Kevin Lotsberg
2nd Prize – Wendy Ainsworth
3rd Prize – Louise Lee



CONSTABLES HAYDUK AND NICHOLS MEET WITH THE COMMUNITY EVERY TUESDAY MORNING AT THE CARROT

Thank you for your continued support

Councillor Tony Caterina
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EDMONTON

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR PET OWNERS Animal Care & Control Centre Moves to New Location

Starting **October 28**, residents who have lost or found an animal should go to the **new** Animal Care & Control Centre located at **13550 – 163 Street**, next to the Edmonton Humane Society.

The **new** Centre will provide enhanced care for over 8,000 stray animals yearly, including better designed spaces for pets, larger service areas for pet owners and all City of Edmonton pet-related services under one roof.



REMINDER TO RESIDENTS

If you have found a pet:

♦ Take found pets to the Animal Care & Control Centre at **13550-163 Street**. (If the animal is injured, or aggressive, call **311** to be connected to an Animal Control Officer.)

If you have lost a pet:

♦ After checking your neighbourhood thoroughly, log in to **PetLynx** (www.petlynx.net) and create a lost pet report. All animals in the Animal Care & Control Centre are entered into PetLynx. If your pet has been found with current ID, the Centre will notify you.

NEW HOURS:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday 9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Thursday 2 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Closed Sundays and Holidays

Need more information? Visit www.edmonton.ca/pets or call 311



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

ART & THEATRE

VISUAL ARTISTS COLLECTIVE

Second Wednesday of the month at 7pm at The Carrot (9351 118 Ave). Drop in, have a coffee, discuss visual art related topics. For more info contact: Michael Germann, mikalow@shaw.ca, 780-909-7027.

ARTS NIGHTS AT THE NINA HAGGERTY

Come out for a FREE evening of art making ranging from clay building to printmaking and everything in between. Community Night: Tuesday from 6:30-8:30 PM and Family Night: Thursdays from 6:30-8:30PM at 9225 - 118 Avenue. Limited space so please phone ahead to register: 780-474-7611.

MUSIC



GUITAR LESSONS

All styles, all ages. Experienced and tailored to you. Call Reg at 780-915-1241.

DROP-IN GROUPS & PROGRAMS

PRIDE CENTRE PROGRAMS & EVENTS

9540 111 Ave, Ph 780-488-3234
 YouthSpace (Youth under 25)
 Drop-In: Tues to Fri 3-7 pm, Sat 2-7 pm
 Youth Movie: Fri 6:30-8:30 pm
 Community Drop in: Tues to Fri 1-10 pm, Sat 2-6:30
 Seniors Drop-In: Tues and Thurs 1-5pm
 TTIQ (Education and support for Transgender, Transsexual, Intersex and Questioning people at any stage of transition): Second Tues of the month 7:30-9:30 pm
 Community Potluck: last Tues of every month, 6-8:30 pm
 Drop in Counseling: by appointment and drop in (if available) Wednesdays 7-10 pm, except the first Wednesday of the month.
 Cocaine Anonymous: Thur 7-8 pm
 AA Big Book Study: Sat 12-1 pm, open to everyone
 Youth Understanding Youth: Sat 7-9 pm
 Gay Men's HIV Support:

Second Mon of the month 7-9 pm
 Free School: Second Sun of the month 11 am-5 pm

SENIORS DROP-IN

Wednesday from 11:30am-12:45pm at Crystal Kids Youth Centre (8718 118 Ave).

BABES IN ARMS

Fridays, 10am to 12pm at The Carrot Community Arts CoffeeHouse (9351 118 Ave). Come and connect with other parents in the community. More info: 780-471-1580.

CRYSTAL KIDS YOUTH CENTRE

8718 118 Ave, Ph 780-479-5283 Youth program (ages 6-17): Mon to Thur 12pm-8pm, Fri 3pm-10pm, and Sat 1-5pm.

BOOK CLUB

Love to read? Come and join us at The Carrot Coffeehouse on the second Thursday evening of each month from 7PM to 9PM. Lively discussions, humor, and enlightenment! More info: Ann 780-752-4867.

STITCH AND CHAT

Looking to restart. Contact info@artsontheave.org if interested.

COPS AT THE CARROT

Join EPS members every Tuesday morning from 9:30 to 11 am for open and direct access to the EPS members working in your community. Bring your questions and comments or come in for a visit and coffee.!

ENGLISH CONVERSATION CAFE

For those who need to practice their new-found English language skills. Every Sat a.m., 10:00-11:30 AM at Bethel Chapel, 95 St & 115 Ave. Free child care provided.

PARKDALE-CROMDALE LIL SPROUTS PLAYGROUP

Fridays from 10 am to 12 pm. Come join our playgroup! A place where parents can meet and children can play. Bring your snacks, ideas and sense of adventure! For more information, email info@

parkdalecromdale.org or phone 780-471-4410

SPORTS & REC



BOOTCAMP

Tuesdays & Thursdays 6pm to 7pm from Sept 7 to Dec 21 in the small gym. Drop-in for \$15/class or \$280/person. Contact Candace Taha Ph: 780-445-5191 or E-mail: candacetaha@yahoo.ca

SPORTS THURSDAYS

The Alberta Avenue Community League has a gym, basketball hoops, floor hockey equipment and more. We need people interested in using the space. If you are from our community and the activity is open to the community, it's free! Do a one off or plan a regular get together. Call Karen at 780-278-4812.

FREE SWIM FOR ALBERTA AVE COMMUNITY LEAGUE MEMBERS

Eastglen Pool will be closed for maintenance from Sept to Nov. During that time our community swim will be at Hardisty Pool (10535 65 St) on Sundays from 1:15 to 2:45pm.

GIRL GUIDES AND BROWNIES

If you're a girl looking for fun, friendships, and new challenges, Girl Guides of Canada - Norwood District has a spot for you! Sparks (girls aged 5-6 or in K-Gr 1) meet Mon from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Brownies (girls aged 7-8 or in Gr 2-3) meet Mon from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Girl Guides (girls aged 9-12 or in Gr 4-6) meet Mon from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. All groups meet at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 8715 - 118 Ave. For more info, call Jean 780-469-4487 or Angel 780-642-0879.

VOLUNTEER



NINA HAGGERTY CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

We are looking for individuals willing to share 2-4 hours a week as gallery attendants. Gain experience working in a gallery setting, while supporting your

neighborhood arts scene! For more info, contact Anna at volunteer@ninahaggertyart.ca

THE CARROT COMMUNITY ARTS COFFEEHOUSE

Learn how to make lattes and coffees, hang out at a cool coffee shop for 3 or 4 hours and visit with the interesting people. Drop by: 9351 118 Ave, call 780-471-1580 or visit www.thecarrot.ca.

NOTICES & UPCOMING EVENTS

CRUD DOG WALKING GROUPS

An excellent opportunity to meet your neighbours (and their canine companions) and spend some quality time walking around the neighbourhood. Mon evenings: 6:30pm in front of St. Alphonsus Church (118 Ave and 84 St.) Wed mornings: 4:45 am (yes, you read that correctly), in front of the Parkdale Community League (11335 85 St.) Thurs evenings: 7:30pm in front of the Telus building (118 Ave and 89 St.)

CRUD COMMUNITY DINNER CLUB

Meet neighbours and friends while exploring a variety of wonderful cuisine along Alberta Avenue. Please visit www.crudedmonton.org or call 780.996.4728 to find out the time and location of this month's feast.

CHURCH SERVICES

AVENUE VINEYARD
 8718 118 Ave (Crystal Kids)
 Sundays, 10:30 am
 www.avenuevineyard.com

ST. ALPHONSUS CATHOLIC CHURCH
 11828 85 St, 780-474-5434.
 Mass every Sunday at 10 a.m. Saturday mass at 4 p.m. Morning mass from Tuesday to Friday at 7:30 a.m.

ST ANDREWS PRESBYTERIAN
 8715 118 Ave, Ph 780-477-8677
 Regular service, Sundays, 11 am

SALVATION ARMY
 Edmonton Crossroads
 Community Church (EC3)
 11661 95 Street, Ph 780-474-4324
 Sunday 3:00 pm and
 Wednesday 7:00 pm

ST FAITH'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
 11725 93 St, 780 477-5931
 Sundays 11 am Holy Communion & Christian Education for children

BETHEL GOSPEL CHAPEL
 11461 95 St, 780-477-3341
 Sundays 9:30 AM - Communion; 11:00 AM - Family Bible Hour

Sprucewood Branch Edmonton Public Library

11555 - 95 Street
 780-496-7099 www.epl.ca

Upcoming programs:

English Conversation Circle
 10 am Mondays

Explore! Your Library
 10:30 am weekdays.
 Please register.

Practice English @ Your Library
 6:30 pm Mondays

Sing, Sign, Laugh and Learn
 10:30 am Tuesdays
 For children birth to 3 years

Story Stop: 15 min story time
 10:30 am Thursdays

Aboriginal Family Storytime
 1:00 pm Fridays

Teen Gaming
 6:30 pm Fridays
 For ages 12 to 17

Stories from the Heart of the City
 1:30pm November 18



Alberta Avenue Farmers' Market
 Home made • Home baked • Home grown

Thursdays 2pm - 7pm
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93 St & 118 Avenue
www.albertaave.org

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FREE!

“Feel the beat on the street”

Join us for an African 90 minute hand drum workshop with Marons Fung
Nov 13, 3:00 - 4:30pm.
All ages welcome!

RSVP info@artsontheave.org

Check out our website for more workshops & events!

Sudanese Visual Art Workshop
Details TBA at thecarrot.ca

9351-118ave www.thecarrot.ca

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Construction on 118th Avenue



UNDER THE PAVEMENT, ANCIENT RAIL TIES ON 118TH AVENUE

Mari Sasano



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Laurie Tod



Mari Sasano

CONSTRUCTION CREWS START BUSTING UP THE PAVEMENT ON 118TH

GREY CUP WITH CRUD

CRUD is excited to be hosting its first Grey Cup party on Sunday, November 28th from 4:00 pm until the game ends.

Why watch the Grey Cup at home on a small screen with stale potato chips? Come join CRUD at the Alberta Avenue Community League (9210-118 ave) and watch the game on the BIG SCREEN with friends and neighbours. Lite snacks and cash bar will be available.

Ladies, your *personal* SHOPPING experience awaits

While CRUD's Grey Cup party is on take part in an exclusive shopping experience. Just in time for the holiday season, STELLA & DOT's fabulous jewelry line will take you from ordinary to EXTRAORDINARY with effortless style. A portion of all sales will go towards CRUD's community building initiatives. So come out, support a good cause, and start your Christmas shopping early!

COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO URBAN DISORDER
T: 780.996.4728 | email: info@crudedmonton.org

www.crudedmonton.org



Hello Highlands-Norwood!



Hello friends,

The Legislature is now back in session, and I am once again busy bringing your concerns to the Government of Alberta. I am calling on this government to be more fiscally responsible with education, health care, and jobs for Albertans as top priorities. Please continue to send me your feedback, questions, and concerns.



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