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APRIL 2015

NEWS » VOLUNTEERING

The challenges of recruiting volunteers

Local organizations and events are constantly seeking new help to be sustainable



The Avenue Goes to the Dogs is a long-running festival in need of volunteers and organizers. » REBECCA LIPPIATT

TALEA MEDYNSKI

Alberta Avenue is home to an increasing number of festivals. While festivals enrich the community and city, festivals often hinge on the people powering them: volunteers.

"In some ways, more festivals means 'yay, more volunteer opportunities,'" said Amanda Sokol, program coordinator for Volunteer Edmonton. "But it also means more volunteers are required. Organizers have to get the call out for volunteers earlier. There's more competition."

While new festivals like the upcoming Avenue Community Festival are created, others like Avenue Goes to the Dogs are in jeopardy. The festival has been running since 2008. Since Mari Sasano, festival organizer, was brought on in 2010, Avenue Goes to the Dogs has grown from a one-day local event to a two-day city event. But Sasano says she cannot run it any more.

Sasano said the decision was difficult. "For me, it's money and time." As a freelance writer, she hustles for work. Although Sasano received an honorarium, the work involved in the months before the festival meant she couldn't take on as much freelance work.

The festival operated under

CRUD (Community Response to Urban Disorder), an organization that is folding.

Sasano approached the Eastwood Community League for support, but the board was brand new and she was having trouble getting firm commitments and required documents. Since then, Eastwood Community League has said it will help and may come on as partner or take over the event, but organizers are still needed in order for the festival to run this year.

Sasano said she needed more knowledge of available resources and a mentor who had organized several successful festivals. More importantly, she needed volunteers with varied experience in areas such as bookkeeping or logistics.

"What tends to happen is that people volunteer until they burn out. At some point, other people have to step in," said Sasano.

Karen Mykietka, producer of the Bloomin' Garden Show, also struggles to find volunteers.

"We have a small core planning committee, but last year we only had a handful of volunteers for the event day," said Mykietka. "Without enough volunteers to share the load, people burn out. Losing one or two key people could mean the

end of this event."

Mykietka managed to find a student to be a festival production assistant this year but she says that does little to help sustainability in the long run. "I need more local residents who will invest in planning and organizing both Bloomin' and the garden party from year to year. It's a fun event to plan and work!"

Judy Allan is the Avenue Initiative coordinator and has worked with community volunteers for over a decade.

She explained that while it can be hard to lose a festival, it's important to ask if it's something the community still wants. When people discover they may lose something, they sometimes rally and save or reinvent a festival.

"I think we have a lot of volunteerism in the community," said Allan. The rising number of festivals has "increased the number of volunteers we have, but I think it's hard to get people out—there are lots of choices."

In March, Allan held a brainstorming event at the Carrot Coffeehouse about community projects. More than half who attended were new and looking to become engaged in the community. To Allan, lack of interest or people isn't the problem. The challenge is getting oppor-

tunities known to interested people as well as finding those willing to take on a leadership role.

Sokol said she thinks the problem is time.

"People are so busy, it's easier to commit to a non-leadership role. I think the key for people thinking of volunteering is to consider what really matters to them."

Sokol suggested organizations highlight the benefits involved in volunteering.

"It should be a mutually beneficial transaction," said Sokol, and explained volunteers are savvy when looking for opportunities.

Volunteer Edmonton's website has news, resources, training, and information for volunteers and organizations looking for volunteers. She suggested recruiting using Go Volunteer, a searchable database for volunteers and a place where organizations can post opportunities. Resources and links to other useful sites are also available on the website. Posting on sites like Kijiji can also be useful.

The Carrot Coffeehouse is an organization that works with volunteers everyday. Brendan Van Alstine is the volunteer coordinator and schedules volunteers for one hour to four-hour shifts.

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NEWS » AWARENESS

Exploring ways to end sexual exploitation

It is time to tackle and discuss this significant issue

ALEC STRATFORD

April 20 marks the beginning of Sexual Exploitation Week of Awareness for the City of Edmonton. Sexual exploitation and its related factors remain an incredibly significant issue within our city. A quarter of the way through this year, we continue to hear about the national tragedy of missing and murdered indigenous women, the need to create a consent culture promoting healthy and safe relationships, and the continued push to provide safe places for youth and adults to talk about sexual and gender identities.

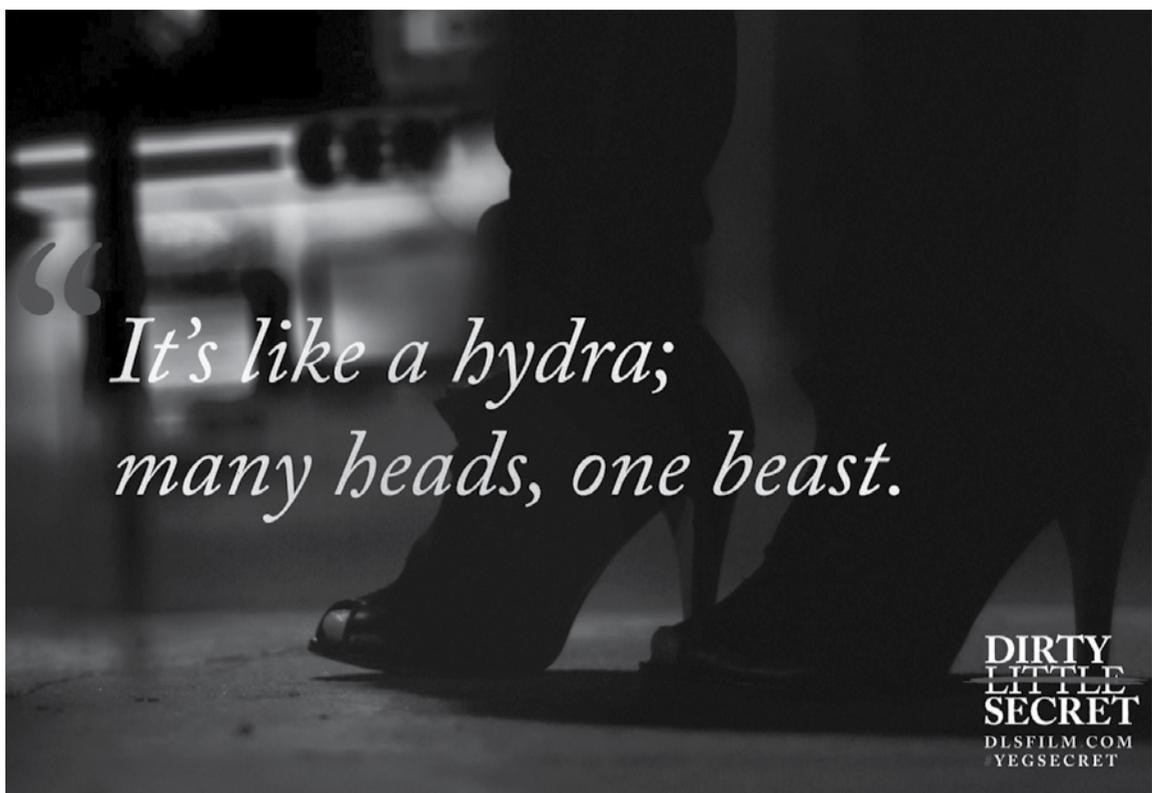
Sexual exploitation has many roots within our culture and is pervasive throughout the city. As our esteemed colleague John Walker says, sexual exploitation “is like a Hydra; many heads, one beast.” The challenge Edmontonians face is how to address the many heads of the beast while also tackling its roots.

This year, The Sexual Exploitation Working Group (SEWG) partnered with a youth program to develop a short film documenting youth perspectives of sexual exploitation. The

film will be launched on April 20 at City Center Mall at noon. The video will be accompanied by a campaign designed by the youth, which will act as an invitation for everyone to hear the issue of sexual exploitation through the perspective of youth. The opportunity is to embrace the story that these youth are telling us and allow it to become our story. By listening and learning what youth are experiencing, we can take action to help end sexual exploitation.

This week will also feature an online film screening of *Finding Dawn* on April 21. The film illustrates the deep historical, social, and economic factors contributing to the epidemic of violence against native women in this country. On April 23, there will be an online screening of *Buying Sex*, a feature documentary exploring the state of prostitution laws in Canada.

The week will also feature a hard talk panel discussion on



Sexual Exploitation Week of Awareness runs from April 20-25. >> SUPPLIED

youth perspectives and services for sexual exploitation on April 22 at City Hall hosted by Coun. Scott McKeen.

When we hear the stories of those most affected by this

issue, we as a city can start to understand where we can make crucial changes in our communities to help create long-lasting changes to end sexual exploitation. We hope you will join us!

For details of the week, visit SEWG via <https://twitter.com/sewgedmonton> and <https://www.facebook.com/sewgedmonton>.

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“It’s a lot of work to stay on top of, but I’ve got a bit of a system now.” He recruits using Go Volunteer. “It’s been a pretty good resource. I get at least five responses per post.”

When it comes to retaining volunteers, “Appreciating them is the biggest thing. Letting them know we couldn’t operate without them. I try not to call on the same volunteers over and over—I don’t want to burn them out.” For every 50 hours of work, volunteers receive a bonus: a bag of coffee beans or a

bag of house blend coffee or tea. Sokol emphasized the importance of communication. “Give volunteers opportunities to provide input. Change up positions so you haven’t lost them.”

The same principle applies for those in leadership roles. Allan advises against having the same person serving on several committees.

“You can’t stretch yourself that thin,” said Allan. Organizations need committees “so that when a leader needs to step down, there’s someone else

to take it on.”

Despite the challenges involved in finding time to volunteer, there are many benefits. Besides connecting with people and being involved in a community or group, volunteering can help with career opportunities or be a way to transition into another career. Experience can be included on a resume and volunteers can ask for a letter of reference. Many businesses look for people with volunteer experience. In some cases, volunteer-

ing may lead to a position with a non-profit organization.

Sasano encourages volunteering, although for now she wants to attend festivals rather than organize them.

“Knowing people is huge and you don’t have to be extremely outgoing. Take a few days off, learn some new skills, network, gain work experience, build community, give to something that will give back.”

Want to see an Avenue Goes to the Dogs festival this summer?

Then step up and help make it happen. The Eastwood Community League and Judy Allan will help support new organizers for such events.

Email judy.allan@edmonton.ca or call 780.496.1913. Volunteer Edmonton www.volunteeredmonton.com 780.801.4727

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NEWS » AWARD

Local elder recognized with Sage Award

Author Larry Loyie's message is one of cultural pride

CONSTANCE BRISSENDEN

Cree author Larry Loyie is determined to teach the world about Aboriginal history, culture and traditions through his writing. At 81 years old, the residential school survivor has been recognized with a 2015 Sage Award for Education, sponsored by Servus Credit Union. The award recognizes outstanding achievements and contributions of seniors in Edmonton.

Over the past 20 years, Loyie has visited more than 1,600 classrooms across Canada. He shares his culture and traditions in readings from his books. He also shares a simple message to students: Read, read, and read some more.

On a recent visit to Delton School, Loyie asked why reading is important. Kevin, a grade six

student, thought for a moment, and then answered, "You have to read a lot to be a good writer." Kevin first met Loyie at a writing workshop at Story Avenue, a two-day event sponsored every February by the Young Alberta Book Society. Said Loyie, "It's the students like Kevin who keep me going. I believe in them and their efforts. Reading helps get good marks in school and opens up future possibilities."

Kathy Oster, a librarian and teacher at Delton School, agreed that Loyie's message is important. "Students who meet him want to read his books. They learn how he loves his culture and traditions. He encourages them to get to know their own cultural traditions, whatever their background. He encourages pride in each student."

Loyie's first children's book,

the award-winning *As Long as the Rivers Flow*, was published when he was 68 years old. The story of his last traditional summer before attending St. Bernard Mission residential school, it opened the door to a sequel, *Goodbye Buffalo Bay*, about his last year at school and moving on as a 13-year-old worker.

His most recent book, *Residential Schools, With the Words and Images of Survivors* (available at Audreys Books), was published last November and is already a bestseller. "I want to see libraries full of books about Aboriginal people written by us," he said. "I want to share our traditions and culture, and show people the truth about our struggles, resilience, and strength."

For more information on Larry Loyie and his books, see www.firstnationswriter.com.



Larry Loyie, on a visit to Delton School, presented a beautiful doll to librarian-teacher Kathy Oster for school use.

» CONSTANCE BRISSENDEN

NEWS » IN MEMORIAM

Susan Belcher: community shaper

Alberta Avenue loses beloved resident and community champion

NICOLA DAKERS

On Feb. 23, Alberta Avenue resident Susan Belcher died after a long battle with multiple myeloma. She faced the disease with incredible strength and spirit, always trying new treatments and providing support to other people with myeloma. It was with this same spirit Belcher served the community she lived in for over forty years.

Belcher was born in England, and moved with her family to Milwaukee, Minnesota where she spent the majority of her youth. She attended the University of Wisconsin, where she met Yehia, her husband. Yehia, originally from Egypt, suggested they move to Canada and it was not long before they settled in Winnipeg and started their family. After the birth of their two daughters, Jasmine and Amy, Susan and Yehia moved their family to Edmonton.

The couple purchased a home on 92 Street and 115 Avenue in Alberta Avenue in the mid-1970s and it was here that Belcher became deeply involved in the community league. She maintained this commitment while teaching as a professor of sociology and women's studies at the

University of Alberta and the University of Athabasca.

While a member of the Alberta Avenue Community League board, Belcher participated extensively in facilitating sports and recreation for neighbourhood children and in building the community league hall that area residents now enjoy. She often spoke of loading her van full of kids and shuttling them to and from games, once joking that there were so many kids in her van that some had to lie on the floor. She continued to do this until her daughters graduated and moved to the U.S. to complete their university education.



Susan Belcher lived in the Alberta Avenue community for over forty years. » SUPPLIED

neighbourhood.

Boundary lines on a map aren't the only thing that make a community. Rather, the people living within those boundaries make a community. Belcher's fierce

commitment to our community,

along with her years of service, helped shape the wonderful place we now live.

commitment to our community, along with her years of service, helped shape the wonderful place we now live.



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PROFILE

Cliff's IGA closes after 56 years

Community businessman believes the people around him made him successful

CONSTANCE BRISSENDEN

Clifford Chow considers himself a lucky man. The 86-year-old owner of Cliff's IGA at 121 Avenue and 82 Street closed the store at the end of March after 56 years in the same location.

He worked hard, made good business decisions, and married a girl from back home in China. Each of his six children worked at Cliff's IGA during their school years. His daughter and operations manager Virginia Chow, and her husband, general manager Denny Ly, were among the 30 full and part-time employees.

When Chow was born in China in 1929, it was a time of change. In the late 1940s, Communists took over. In 1952, his father, who ran a Chinese restaurant, brought Chow to Edmonton. The two shared a room over the restaurant, and Chow worked as a dishwasher. "I made money to send home to my mother back in China," he recalled. "I didn't like being a dishwasher, and looked around for other opportunities."

During the day, he began working at his cousin's dry cleaning business, still working nights with his father. He didn't like the dry cleaning business either. Invited to run a variety store for another cousin, he jumped in. When his job ended, he promised himself that he'd own his own business.

Along the way, he married Jillian (now passed away), the daughter of his schoolteacher in China.

Looking back, he said, "I feel my way is a good way. Be honest, treat people right. Get along with everyone. A successful business is not only you. The people around you make you

successful."

In 1959, he purchased the 800 square foot IGA store. Within a few years, he bought the two houses next door and began planning expansion. On June 15, 1974, the new store, more than five times bigger, opened. It was a proud day, made even better by the fact that the nearby Safeway was on strike. Chow bursts out laughing at his luck. "I had more business than I could handle. It was hectic, but all my energy went into running the store."

His staff will move on with good memories. Many worked there for a dozen or more years. Harry, with more than 13 years on staff, expressed what many staff felt.

"Cliff was not only my boss, he is one of my best friends. He was an icon there for many years and deserves recognition. He helped so many people over the years. What other store will help like he did? He will be sorely missed."

Harold Edgi, an employee for just over a year, hadn't worked in retail grocery before. He is grateful for the training and opportunities. "There were good people working there," Edgi said, "Because of Cliff, I took my job seriously."

Like many, longtime customer Doug Thompson was



Clifford Chow at the IGA in 1986. >> SUPPLIED

surprised to hear of the store closing. "I shopped at Cliff's IGA since moving into the neighbourhood. The staff was always helpful, and the product line was what I required. The store served the area for people on fixed budgets for food they could afford a day at a time. The loss of this independent [store] will be a great loss to the community."

Customer Dan Sandford echoed the feeling. "My first

visit was in the 1980s. I walked all the way from the Stadium area in a blizzard to buy my groceries. The store was homey, with friendly staff. I don't know what I'll do. I'm lost now that the store is gone." Like others, he's watching the site to see what opens next.

As for Chow, he's not sure what he'll do next, but he has some ideas. "I'll take it easier and visit my family. We have weekly get-togethers, which I

enjoy. All my friends are here now. It's been a wonderful time at the store. I'll have time to think about my happy memories, but I won't miss working seven days a week."

To the customers he appreciated and valued, Chow says thank you, and wishes them all the best.

THE WIZARDS OF AHHHHHHHS

Each day, our city's most creative minds work to inspire awe and wonder. Each year, to celebrate and support their enormous contribution to Edmonton's community and culture, we sponsor the Northlands Emerging Artist Award at the Mayor's Celebration of the Arts. Congratulations to this year's winners and to the city in which they shall undoubtedly flourish.

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WHAT'S ON » FESTIVAL

A new festival on the block

Avenue Community Festival geared for the community

TALEA MEDYNSKI

Community members can look forward to a new festival on Canada Day and July 2 on the Ave in the Alberta Cycle grassy space.

The Avenue Community Festival is based on a model called open crowd festivals, copyrighted by Fusion Australia Limited. Jocelyn Hansen, the national coordinator at Fusion Canada, is helping guide festival organizers.

"The idea is the community owns it and wants to be part of it," said Hansen.

Arthur Dyck, festival organizer, thought about bringing an open crowd festival to Alberta Avenue all winter.

"I think some things happen that were meant to happen," reflected Dyck. He has worked with Fusion before in an Inglewood community festival. "I had a really good time. I thought this would be a great thing for the community."

The distinguishing feature of an open crowd festival is how it's set up in a horseshoe shape. The idea is for everyone to see and interact with one another and have a sense of belonging. Although the festival is kid-friendly, it's geared for all generations.

A master of ceremonies is in the front, talking and welcoming people to the festival. Games like tug of war or sack races are in the centre of the horseshoe,

while activities like stilt walking, face painting, or a climbing wall frame the outside of the shape. Activities and games for the festival are still being planned.

The Avenue Church and the Anglican parishes of St. Faith and St. Stephen the Martyr are spearheading the festival.

Dyck explained that while many area festivals draw in people from around the city to the community, open crowd festivals are specifically for the community. The goal is to build community, friendship, and provide people with a safe place to interact with others.

Aaron Au, also a festival organizer, said he's hoping to get community buy-in, with businesses to contribute with food,

tents, and tables. Sprucewood Library, Edmonton Police Services, the City of Edmonton, Salvation Army Crossroads, and the Alberta Avenue Community League are already participating.

Festival organizers are also looking for volunteers. While the same group of people tend to volunteer for community events and are always welcome, new volunteers are encouraged to participate.

"Think of the people who are looking for a place and looking for connections," Hansen suggested.

Dyck hopes 800 to 1,000 people attend. Hansen explained word of mouth is part of how news of the festival spreads in a community. The idea is that

by the end of the first day, people talk about the festival to their neighbours, bringing more community members in for the second day of the festival.

"It's another way of bringing the community together. We want to invite people from our communities to interact," said Dyck. "To me, this needs to be very organic."

Avenue Community Festival
July 1-2

Alberta Cycle grassy space
Free admission
Interested volunteers can email Arthur Dyck at prayerworks@stfaithsanglican.org

WHAT'S ON » POETRY FESTIVAL

Words that will move you

The line up for the Edmonton Poetry Festival is sure to impress

BRIEANNA MCCUTCHEON

The Edmonton Poetry Festival has grown a lot since it started in 2006 when Alice Major founded the festival. At the time, Major was the city's poet laureate, an honorary position given to a poet out of recognition for promoting the art. Fast-forward nearly a decade and the festival is now preparing for an eight-day thought provoking, visually stimulating poetry gathering.

"It started out as a much smaller thing," said Rayanne Doucet, executive director of the festival. "We bring in poets internationally...we're growing into a really world class festival." This year, there are 60 artists

spread out over eight days. "We average about 4,000 guests over the course of the week, and every year that number grows a little more as people find out about us."

Dave Von Bieker, the creator of Bleeding Heart Art Space, is hosting the opening night of the exhibition. "We're proud, as a new art space in the city and the area, to be able to contribute in some way." Von Bieker admits poetry can seem intimidating, but is confident there is something for everyone.

"Just like music, there are tons of different genres and styles of poetry. There might be some [styles] you legitimately don't like and that's okay." Whether you enjoy listening to the rhyth-

mic sounds of beat poetry or prefer the age-old haiku, there will be something to tickle everyone's ears.

The spoken word is not the only medium presented at the event. Kelly Shepherd is reading at the opening of the exhibition at Bleeding Heart Art Space with his chapbook, *The First Metaphor*. This exhibition will have 14 different stations of Shepherd's poems paired with linocut artwork by Alison Kubbos.

Shepherd has a deep and meaningful connection with his work and provides some insight from where he pulls inspiration. "I am very interested in this idea how do we relate, how do we belong or not belong to the

natural world."

Shepherd confesses that despite having numerous published poems, nerves tend to get the best of him. "I do still get nervous...I still can say, I've done it maybe 50 times or 100 times and I am still nervous each time." He welcomes the feeling, explaining they show that he truly cares about the product he is producing. "If I was too comfortable or it was too easy, I would take it for granted...the idea of tension is a good thing."

The opening night event runs from 5 to 6:30 pm on April 19 at the Bleeding Heart Art Space, but the exhibition continues until June 6. All ages are welcome.

Edmonton Poetry Festival

The First Metaphor
Opening night
April 19 at 5-6:30 pm
Bleeding Heart Art Space
9132 118 Ave
Free admission but gallery donations welcomed
All ages

Edmonton Poetry Festival

April 19-26
Various venues & prices

To see the complete line up of the festival, visit edmontonpoetryfestival.com.

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Installations must be completed and installed by **Thursday, May 28 at 8 pm.**

First and second place People's Choice Awards will be selected for each category by attendees at the Rubber Boots & Bow Tie Garden Party on Friday, May 29.

The Rat Creek Press is sponsoring \$100 for first place and \$50 for second place cash prizes. You may put your installation for sale (30 per cent commission on sales), donate it to our silent auction, leave it in the community garden or take it home.



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Apply online at www.albertaave.org/bloomin.html

EDITORIAL

The price of convenience

By wanting to save time, we have created an environmentally destructive culture

FRANKI HARROGATE

By now, many people will have heard about John Sylvan publicly stating that he regrets having ever invented K-Cups. Decried as an environmental disaster by critics, the cups apparently cause so much waste that if just one year's worth of discarded pods were lined up end-to-end, they would circle Earth more than ten times. While the convenience of making a single serving of coffee (or hot chocolate) is undeniable, the cost-benefit ratio clearly favours making an entire pot or boiling a kettle over using a pod that is currently non-recyclable.

Coffee pods aren't the only items designed for single-use. Our society has become inured to the idea that it is faster and more economic to utilize non-renewable resources to manufacture, ship, and use products once than it is to include reusability as part of a product's design or use a product repeatedly. Some examples of this that will be examined include diapers, utensils, tampons and

menstrual pads, and razors.

It is true disposable diapers are convenient. However, the creation and slow decomposition in landfills creates an enormous environmental problem. More water is used to manufacture disposable diapers than is used to wash cloth diapers. Further, most people don't clean feces from disposable diapers before throwing them out. This puts human waste into landfills, increasing the possibility of disease transmission through birds, rodents, and leakage into groundwater.

There is also the added expense of disposable diapers. Cloth diapers are initially expensive, but are a one-time cost, particularly if it is possible to wash and dry them at home. Then there's the added bonus of being able to reuse cloth diapers for another child. That said, there are eco-friendly disposable diapers that use cornstarch and other environmentally-friendly materials. However, they must still be manufactured and, despite decomposing faster than regular disposables, still offer

the problem of possible contamination and spread of infectious disease.

Then we have disposable utensils. While some variations are now being made with biodegradable cornstarch, machines that require non-renewable resources must still produce them. Further, while cornstarch utensils biodegrade quickly, they also result in the release of methane, a greenhouse gas, from landfills. Typical disposable utensils, made from petroleum products, are also an environmental problem, using non-renewable resources in their manufacture and taking up to 100 years to decompose. Instead of using disposable utensils, why not bring your own utensils to events, or volunteer to help wash up donated or rented dishes and silverware?

Tampons and menstrual pads are amongst the biggest environmental banes out there. The manufacturing requires bleaching as well as utilizing other chemicals in the processing of cotton from a raw material to a finished product. Add in the

one-time use of plastic applicators for tampons as well as the individual wrapping and packaging of both tampons and pads, and we have an environmental nightmare.

There are many alternatives, however: from cloth pads to reusable, washable silicone, getting your period doesn't have to be an environmental pain. Cloth menstrual pads and the DivaCup are but two of the many environmentally-sound options available as an alternative to shelling out money every month for products that leech chemicals into your body and local landfills.

Finally, we have disposable razors. Undeniably handy, these plastic products are still a problem in that they are often not recycled or municipalities don't have the ability to do so. Even if recycling is possible, there is still the issue of the non-renewable resources used to manufacture these products.

We still see antique shaving kits and straight razors, cloth diapers that lasted an entire family, and silverware that's

been handed down from generation to generation. We don't see grandpa handing his grandson a 50-year-old plastic Bic. In our rush to save time, we have created a throw away society and economy that depends on disposability. The ability to repair or reuse products is disappearing, and the need to buy more is steadily increasing. Think about who is making money when a formerly reusable product must be replaced weekly, monthly, or even daily. Then think about what it will save to not have to pay for such convenience.

"We still see antique shaving kits and straight razors, cloth diapers that lasted an entire family... We don't see grandpa handing his grandson a 50-year-old plastic Bic."

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

re: CAT cracks down on crime on the Ave

Perhaps that headline should have read "Police actually do their job for once, but only for four days this year."

Instead of neglecting a neighbourhood for decades, why don't they

do whatever they were doing on Jan. 21-24 every day instead?

Adam Millie

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

re: Development woes

In the last few years, I noticed trendy developments going on all over the neighbourhood. Every time I go for a walk there seems to be a new house popping up. It's not just houses. It's a giant duplex, triplex, or whatever they can squeeze in.

Two houses down from me, a duplex is being built and is so tall they can easily see my yard, so privacy is out the window. For the immediate neighbours on each side, sunshine is out the

window.

It's very frustrating for everybody who has lived in these communities for so many years. We feel like our voice does not matter. City officials seem not to care at all. It's like we don't pay taxes or something. I guess we have to remember this when the next election comes up.

Krzysztof Mruk

RAT CREEK PRESS ASSOCIATION 9210 118 AVENUE, EDMONTON, AB T5G 0N2 | T: 780.479.6285

ABOUT US

The Rat Creek Press is a non-profit community newspaper in north central Edmonton serving the communities of Alberta Avenue, Delton, Eastwood, Elmwood Park, Parkdale-Cromdale, Spruce Avenue, and Westwood.

COMMUNITY, COMMUNICATION, CAPACITY

The Rat Creek Press goals are to help connect residents with what is happening in the community, provide a forum where information and ideas can be exchanged, and help individuals learn new skills, acquire experience and develop leadership.

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EDITORIAL POLICY

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 400-700 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 at editor@ratcreek.org, or 9210-118 Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5G 0N2. Mail may also be dropped at the address above.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Space is available to non-profit groups for event and program listings as well as volunteer opportunities on a first-come first-serve basis and will be printed as space permits.



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KINDNESS MATTERS

The perfect fit and simple politeness

Stories from the community show character and compassion

LINDA WILKINSON

Kindness Matters is a column dedicated to random and strategically-planned acts of kindness in our neighbourhoods. After requesting stories of kindness last month, I waited expectantly to see if anyone would respond to my challenge. And I was not disappointed. Two readers sent me stories of kindness that have impacted their lives.

The first story is from Valerie Parr, a community member since 2001. She shared what she calls a “reciprocal experience” that occurred last summer when she gave some bottles and dishes to a couple who were pushing a shopping cart down the back alley. She noticed that the man was wearing only socks and wondered what happened to his shoes. The man looked at her and said, “Don’t mind my sock feet, but we have to share the pair of shoes we have.” This touched her heart and gave her an idea to help this man out.

His not having shoes tore me up, so I ran into the house and into the basement. My husband had a pair of new leather slip-ons that were too narrow and have sat for at least a couple years. Actually, they were waiting for this day! I grabbed them and flew out of the house into the back alley, and the man was still there organizing the bottles in the cart.

I held out the shoes and asked him, “Will these fit you?” Oh, if you could have seen the look on his face. He took them and slipped them on - a perfect fit! He looked me in the eye and just kept saying, “Thank you. God bless you. I can’t believe this. Thank

you.” I smiled back and told him he was more than welcome and to have a good day. He said, “I can’t believe this, I’ve got tears in my eyes”.....andso did I.

What a perfect example of a Zig Ziglar quote: “Life is an echo. What you send out, comes back. What you sow, you reap. What you give, you get. What you see in others exists in you.”

The other story came from Andrea Wilson. She shared a story of quiet kindness. Few words were spoken, but a smile and a kind gesture spoke volumes.

Early one morning I was walk-

ing up the stairs from the LRT to the Citadel for the start of my shift. I was bundled up for the cold winter day and wearing heavy boots. I am closing in on 60 and carrying far more weight than I should be, hence the stairs. There is construction at the Citadel and everything is shrouded in plywood and scaffolding—very narrow and dark.

At the top of the stairs were two scruffy young men carrying their bicycles. The first young man barreled down the stairs, crowding me to the side. As I trudged closer to the top, the second young man looked down at me and paused. I grinned

up at him and started to hurry up the stairs as best I could. His whole face broke out in a smile, and he told me not to rush. He waited for me to get to the top, then continued on his way.

All his goodness showed in that smile, and as I walked toward work, I thought about his kindness, wondered if he got his politeness from his parents, and hoped his day went well. It was a small thing, but it was wonderful and unexpected, as all random acts of kindness tend to be. And I wished I had a chance to share his thoughtfulness...and now I do.

Thanks to Valerie Parr and Andrea Wilson for these heart-

felt stories of compassion. They confirm that how we treat one another really does make a difference...because Kindness Matters.

I look forward to hearing more stories of kindness from the community. Please send your stories (and pictures if possible) to linda@lindajwilkinson.com. Stories may be edited for length, punctuation, and grammar.

Note: The email posted last month was incorrect. We apologize if your story was not received because of this error, but we encourage you to resend your story.



How we treat each other makes a difference. >> FREERANGESTOCK



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GREEN INITIATIVE » PROFILE

Good enough for your skin to eat

Truly local skin care and eco-friendly products

REBECCA LIPPIATT

In the summer, Amy Beath can be found in Edmonton's river valley harvesting rosehips and lavender for her skin care products.

Beath takes an old-fashioned approach to skin care. Instead of using lotions (which dry out the skin), she uses salves and oils. She uses herbs and plants from her own backyard and the river valley. Beath uses all-natural products and chooses local sources as often as possible. Right now, she is searching for an Alberta sunflower oil producer.

She comments that "natural" is an overused word, particularly in skin care marketing. To Beath, "natural" means as in as much of a natural state as possible.

Her own health challenges with primary lymphedema motivated her to use products that are more natural. She grew up on an acreage where her family kept bees and produced beeswax creams. As she got older, she grew to appreciate the value of natural products. Once she started making skin care products for herself, she

couldn't believe how much better her skin was.

Beath did a lot of research in producing her own salves and lotions. She couldn't find good, truly natural products on the market at a reasonable price. Beath started Ameya Studio in 2009. After spending five years producing gifts for her friends, she went on to create products to sell online, in trade fairs, and in local stores. She also sells from her home (by appointment).

The best selling products for Ameya Studio are the wool dryer balls. They cut drying time by absorbing water and reducing static. With a drop or two of essential oil, they are a replacement for dryer sheets, which contain flame-retardants and petroleum fragrances. Her skin care products and organic deodorant also sell well. As an added benefit, the deodorant can last up to a year and contains no aluminum. The tooth powder is made with local mint and her skin care lines are designed for oily, normal and dry skin.

To avoid harmful chemicals, Beath encourages people to be a detective in reading labels.

Big chemicals to avoid are SLS (sodium lauryl sulphate), SLES (sodium lauryl ether sulphate), parabens (hormone disruptors), propyl-anything, and fragrance, which can contain up to 4,000 different chemicals. To find out what is in your current skin care products, visit ewg.org to investigate their skin-deep database. Thousands of products are indexed, and there is a phone app to use while shopping.

Beath has recently paired up with the Devonian Gardens to conduct workshops. The workshops are extremely popular, and the scheduled events are currently sold out. Watch for upcoming dates by checking out the adult education



Amy Beath's health challenges led her to create her own natural skin care products. >> REBECCA LIPPIATT

programs on the Devonian Gardens website (www.devonian.ualberta.ca). This spring, she will be teaching courses on how to make household cleaners, as well as lip butter, body butter and body scrub.

You can find Beath this month at On the Spot Pop Up at Latitude Gallery on April 4, and Make It Edmonton on April 10-12 at the Enjoy Centre.

NATURAL RECIPES FOR THE HOME

Air Freshener

Boil slices of lemon (which deodorise a room) with some rosemary. For the Christmas season, add cloves instead of rosemary. Recipe courtesy of Ameya Studio.

Citrus Peel Surface Cleaner

It's excellent for many surfaces such as: glass, mirrors, windows, countertops, stainless steel fridge doors, sinks, your car dash & windows. Why citrus peel vinegar & not straight white vinegar? You are welcome to use straight vinegar blended with water for cleaning surfaces and it works great. I started making this citrus cleaner because I found it gave a pleasant, lasting clean smell in the house that wasn't as harsh to the nose as straight vinegar. Also, many citrus essential oils come from the peel of the fruit and they are great for cleaning and disinfecting. By soaking the orange peels in vinegar, it draws out the essential oils and creates a citrus-infused vinegar that smells amazing & works great!

Recipe & Instructions

- 1) Get some oranges. Organic oranges are best as you are using the peels in this recipe. I am using oranges in this recipe, but you could also use lemons, grapefruit and even limes!
- 2) Place orange peels in a mason jar, and add vinegar to the jar to keep peels covered. Keep adding peels and vinegar until you get to a full jar.

- 3) Place jar in a sunny window and let the peels infuse the vinegar with their oils for 2-4 weeks.

- 4) After 2-4 weeks has passed, strain the vinegar into a clean jar or bottle and put peels in the compost. Your orange peel vinegar is now ready for making into a surface cleaner! It will have a beautiful orange colour as shown in the tall bottle in right side of the photo. You will also notice it doesn't have as pungent of a smell as the plain white vinegar that you started with!

- 5) Find a spray bottle and mix the vinegar with tap water in a ratio of 1 part to 2 parts (1:2) or 1 to 3 parts (1:3) of vinegar to water. For example, mix 1/2 cup vinegar to 1 cup water (1:2 ratio), or 1/2 cup vinegar to 1-1/2 cups water (1:3) ratio. Add 1 tbsp castile soap or liquid soap nuts detergent to your bottle. Add essential oils such as rosemary, eucalyptus, or tea tree to add some extra disinfecting power to your spray. For a 250 ml bottle, add 10-12 drops of essential oils in total. Shake your bottle to thoroughly mix the ingredients.

- 6) Spray on mirrors, windows, countertops, stainless steel fridges, etc. and wipe with a clean, lint-free cloth. Your vinegar concentrate will last for 1-2 years. I tend to buy my oranges at the market when they are in season and make a big batch of orange peel vinegar and save it to use throughout the year. Recipe courtesy of Ameya Studio.

BRIAN MASON

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GREEN INITIATIVE » FOOD

Farmed and ready

Fruit rescue groups gear up for a green summer

HAMDI ISSAWI

Edmontonians looking to minimize their carbon footprint this summer can start by looking in their own backyards—or somebody else’s.

Come June, local fruit rescue groups will be mobilizing volunteers to root through the city and relieve property owners of unwanted fruits that would otherwise go to waste.

One of these groups is Operation Fruit Rescue Edmonton, or OFRE (pronounced “OFF-er”). OFRE is a membership-based, non-profit organization working to optimize access to urban fruit by connecting those who want

Mike Johnson, president of OFRE. “Fruit and apples come as far as New Zealand and Fiji—Washington State—when in reality the fruit is perfectly acceptable and edible here.”

The organization’s green credentials are underscored by innovative events and projects such as rhubarb bike tours, the construction of a pedal-powered apple crusher, and the installment of a micro-orchard and cider shack in the heart of McCauley.

Serving as the organization’s base of operations, the micro-orchard

hopes that the sharing of that knowledge will get more people engaged about accessing locally grown fruit,” said Johnson.

Visitors can expect to find local varieties like apples, pears, cherries, raspberries and Saskatoon berries when the orchard is in season.

Fruits of Sherbrooke is another fruit rescue society that’s been drawing attention to backyard bounties in its own creative way.

Like OFRE, Fruits of Sherbrooke also organizes fruit picks, preserving classes, and charitable donations. What sets it apart is the use of rescued and donated fruit to craft unique jams and sauces that are then sold.

Back in 2010 when the society first began, their products featured a small footprint on the label to symbolize their environmental efforts. They only gleaned crops within walking distance of their community league. But as the orga-

nization and its grower base expanded, vehicles became necessary to cover a larger area and carry bigger hauls.

“That’s where the time and money goes: driving around the city,” said Carol Cooper, a founding partner and head of kitchen operations. “There’s no other way of getting things done.”

But the team hasn’t given up on their green roots. With three master composters on their team, the organization has found ways to incorporate environmental values into their curriculum, from composting cherry pits to repurposing rhubarb leaves for garden paths.

“You can walk on your pathway when it rains, because the rhubarb leaves lie there and then they get composted right into the ground,” explained Cooper.

Starting this year, Fruits of Sherbrooke is planning to provide an independent composting course for other communities.

“If you can, just offer people exposure because many don’t understand the basic principles. So we walk the talk.”

Fruits of Sherbrooke

Information about products, classes, and team building events available online at fruitsofsherbrooke.ca/ info@fruitsofsherbrooke.ca 780.244.0129

Operation Fruit Rescue Membership:

Available online at operationfruitrescue.org/
 Individual: \$20
 Family: \$35
 Upcoming events:
 Annual General Meeting
 March 29 from 1-3 pm
 McCauley School
 9538 107 Ave
 Memberships, snacks, and beverages available

Inquiries:
info@operationfruitrescue.org
 780.433.2235

Teaming up to rescue fruit builds resilience as well as community.

>> CAROL COOPER

it with those wanting to share it.

Throughout summer and fall, registered property owners can schedule pickers to glean unwanted crops ready for harvest. Then, pending availability, nearby OFRE members are dispatched to these properties. Once the fruit is picked, the haul is split between OFRE, the grower, the picker, and a charitable organization like the Edmonton Food Bank. Last year, OFRE rescued 5,864 pounds of fruit and donated 2,445 pounds to charity.

“In that regard, that’s helping limit the footprint of how far fruit actually travels,” said

will also function as a hands-on resource for teaching the community about growing, harvesting, and preserving local fruit.

“We want to showcase the amount of fruit that can be grown and the types of fruit that can be grown in here in the



Meet your neighbours at the
**Rubber Boots & Bow Tie
 Garden Party**
 Friday, May 29, 7:30 pm

Don't miss this opportunity for an adult night out mingling with the great people who live in our neighbourhoods.

Advance tickets only \$10 (\$20 at the door)
 Buy your tickets online at albertaave.org

Spring is here and gardening is near!

Compost Sale at the Avenue
 Avenue Community Garden

Thursday, May 14 | 5-7 pm
 Saturday, May 30 | 10 am - 3 pm

30 L bag for \$6 or 2 for \$10

Split those perennials and round up those extra seeds.

Gather up any garden books or magazines you longer need.

Swap and exchange tables at that Bloomin' Garden Show & Art Sale

May 30

Drop off items at 9210 118 Ave
 Tue or Thu from 12-2 pm
 Wed from 5-7 pm
 Bring perennials on May 29 or 30.

TRAVEL » COMMUNITY GARDEN

Sowing something wild and wonderful

Berlin's Tempelhof community garden blossomed from the efforts of citizens

DAVE VON BIEKER

I'm crouched in the grass, panning slow across the garden with my video camera. I want to remember this place. I want others to believe how beautiful and wild a place can be. A stranger taps my shoulder and I am jerked from my wonder.

He is thin, with wild blond hair hacked short. He might be mid 20s or 30s, with a face a decade older. And younger. Wild eyes. Pinstriped suit jacket. Bright red skinny pants. He might be Sting, 30 years younger, if Sting had never made it. If Sting had, instead, decided to haunt the abandoned Berlin Tempelhof Airport.

The stranger offers me a poem. Just one euro for some beauty. I buy. I've paid more for less.

He begins in German but switches gears when the fog clouds my eyes. I barely understand him. The words are familiar, but not strung together in this way. I can make out something about 'the essences!' and 'always loud, the instrument functions well!' So many exclamation points!!! I know because he writes the poem down. I bring the scrap of paper home,

scrawled in CAPITALS. My souvenir from the Tempelhof garden.

The poet fits here perfectly. Almost anything would.

much like our own proposed Blatchford development. But in the meantime, the land would not lie fallow.

It would become a park.

a little old airplane to explore, and high perches that give a better view. There is a community library inside a reclaimed phone booth, complete with a

sit and read on rickety chairs. Benches made from old skateboards. Enclaves to share a beer around a plastic patio table in the midday sun.

The rules on sharing a beer are different here, of course. All of the rules seem to be different. The Tempelhof garden could never happen here. Not now. Not beneath the weight of our red tape.

What happens if someone gets hurt? Who is liable? What happens if a kid gets slivers from the airplane made of discarded wood, or if people steal what I grow? What happens if people don't keep it clean?

I don't have answers, but I'll tell you this: in Berlin, a huge plot of land has been given back to the city. Citizens have sown something wild and wonderful that could never come from a council meeting. Ordinary people have grown this extraordinary place. All by themselves. All together. This community garden is first about community. Its abundance cannot be counted.

If I recall, we've got some unused spaces around here somewhere. We even have an old airport.

I wonder...



This wall of planters made of old shoes can be found in Berlin's Tempelhof community garden.

>> DAVE VON BIEKER

This community garden has blossomed from the grounds of an old Berlin airport. The Tempelhof Airport, like our municipal airport, was used for small private and commercial flights. Then, one day, it wasn't being used at all.

Berlin made a decision. They gave the airport back to the city. It was to be developed into an urban utopia of sorts—

Old runways are painted with distance markers for runners. There are start and finish lines for kids racing bikes and places for rollerblading and skateboarding. My wife and I ride the track and it takes a half hour to circle just once.

There is a ramshackle centre to teach urban gardening. There is a trailer where bikes are repaired. There are sports fields,

light to read in the dark.

There is the community garden. At its entrance, if it can be said to have one, trash is piled. Old wood. Sheets of plastic. Scraps. Raw materials. Adult Lego.

You cannot imagine what these grown ups have built. There are hidden pathways. A wall of planters made of old shoes. Rickety platforms to



PETER GOLDRING
Member of Parliament
Edmonton East



PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF THE POLICE AND PUBLIC

Recently it was reported that Edmonton police now have a new flying model helicopter with a camera to be flown over accident scenes; yet another toy for the boys costing \$27,000. Last year they purchased a fleet of Segways for park-patrol, ending the (drudgery) pedaling of their bicycles.

The Edmonton Police has been procrastinating when it comes to purchasing up-to-date evidentiary tools like body worn cameras (BWCs), as has been done in several other Canadian and American cities. The public has to protect

itself by making do with its own personal recording devices because currently evidentiary pen and paper notes can be made anywhere anytime.

The cost of the latest model helicopter would have outfitted 25 constables with body cameras that would both protect the police and public from false accusations, which is something that I can speak personally to. Let's do the right thing here, something that is fair to both police and the citizens they serve and protect. Acquire the equipment that will give transparency and protect everyone's rights. In October 2012, a small number of Edmonton's police officers with federal funding began testing the cameras in the course of their regular duties. What ever happened?

The cost savings relating to courtroom witness-time for officers and the accused would be dramatic by having actual real-time audio-visual evidence recorded at each individual event. These savings of public money in court cases more than merit purchasing cameras, allowing thousands of policing hours to be reverted to public good and even pay for what other toys the boys wish for.

On behalf of the interests of Edmontonians and Canadians, body worn cameras are affordable tools that help protect rights of the police and public. Other cities like New York, London, and Calgary agree.

What do you think?

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ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS HOUSING OPTIONS IN THE INNER CITY

You're invited to a second round of community meetings with the City of Edmonton's Realizing Housing Potential project.

Come hear a summary of what's been said at past meetings and give further input on potential housing solutions and priorities for **Alberta Avenue and Eastwood**.

Monday, May 4, 2015 6:30 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Alberta Avenue Community League Hall
9210 118 Avenue NW
Free childcare and refreshments provided

Visit the project website to find out about meetings in the other project neighbourhoods.

For more information

Phone: 780.496.6026

Email: innercityhousing@edmonton.ca

Web: edmonton.ca/realizinghousingpotential



REALIZING HOUSING
POTENTIAL

Edmonton

Westwood Community League
www.westwoodcl.ca 780-474-1979

Seeking volunteers for open positions



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

events

COFFEE WITH COPS

Join Cst. Thomsen to chat about neighbourhood concerns. Tuesday, April 7 & 21 from 10-11:30 am at The Carrot (9351 118 Ave).

PENNY CARNIVAL

Saturday, April 11 from 1:30-4 pm at Alberta Ave (9210 118 Ave). Admission 50 cents.

SPRUCE AVENUE GARAGE SALE

Friday, May 1 from 9 am - 7 pm and Saturday, May 2 from 9 am - 4 pm (10240 115 Ave). Donations of gently used items would be appreciated; proceeds go to the park re-development. Large items such as appliances and couches will not be accepted. Drop at the hall starting April 27 or call for a pick-up. Verna 780-479-8019.

BLOOMIN GARDEN SHOW & ART SALE

Saturday, May 30 from 10 am - 4 pm at Alberta Ave (9210 118 Ave).

THE CARROT'S ULTIMATE GARAGE SALE

Saturday, May 30 at 9 am. Drop off boxed items that are gently used and in working order from May 26-29 (9351 118 Ave).

art & music

TATTOO ARTISTS AT CARROT GALLERY

Unveiling of works by tattoo artists and new work by Glen Ronald. Listen to the artists speak about their artwork. Tuesday, April 7 from 7-9 pm (9351 118 Ave).

JOIN EMCN's GLOBAL SINGERS

Eat a delicious lunch, learn new songs and meet new people. Thursdays from 12-1 pm. Room 2-4, Mennonite Centre (11713 82 St).

NASHVILLE SONGWRITERS GROUP

Monday, April 13 from 6:30-10 pm at The Carrot (9351 118 Ave). Colleen col_kside@hotmail.com.

FAMILY ART WORKSHOPS

Dive into the wonderful world of art with FREE all-age workshops every Tuesday from 6:30-8 pm at Parkdale (11335 85 St).

COMMUNITY ART NIGHT

Free workshop for adults. Tuesdays from 6:30-8:30 pm at The Nina (9225 118 Ave).

FAMILY ART NIGHT

A variety of free art activities for school age children accompanied by adults. Wednesdays from 6:30-8 pm at The Nina (9225 118 Ave).

SPIRIT ART

Explore your spirit through art. First and third Wednesday of the month from 10 am - 12 pm at St. Faith/St. Stephen (11725 93 St).

MUSIC LESSONS BY CREART

Free group music lessons every Saturday from 9 am - 12 pm and violin lessons from 12-1 pm at

Parkdale (11335 85 St). Sebastian 780.878.8265.

THE CARROT STAGE

9351 118 Ave, 780.471.1580, thecarrot.ca
Fridays: Live music starts at 7:30 pm. Check website for line up. \$5 cover, all ages welcome.
Saturdays: Open mic 7-9:30 pm. Share original music, poetry or comedy. Free admission for all ages. \$1.25 minimum food charge.

programs

BAGEL MAKING WORKSHOP

Local resident and former restaurant owner, Siu To, will guide you through the art of making Montreal Bagels. All supplies provided. Cost: \$5/person. Register: info@albertaave.org or 780.477.2773.

CEMENT GARDEN SCULPTURE WORKSHOP

Learn to make a dynamic garden sculpture to be featured at the Rubber Boots & Bow Tie Garden Party and the Bloomin Garden Show. Build a metal armature on the first weekend and apply fiber cement the second weekend. Sculptures created should not exceed 5 feet. All materials will be supplied. April 25/26 & May 2/3. Cost: \$225. Register: ritchiev@telus.net.

POP-UP MAKERSPACE

Robot challenges, Makey Makey hacks, DIY music, art and 3-D design. Saturday, April 18 from 1-2 pm at Highlands Library (6516 118 Ave). All ages.

NUTRITION AND COOKING AT NORWOOD

Learn some tips and information about cooking nutritious meals, then put your knowledge into practice preparing a delicious meal to take home. FREE! Childcare and supplies are included. Friday, April 24 from 4:30-7:30 pm (9516 114 Ave). Register: 780.471.3737.

STRESS AND WELLNESS WORKSHOP

Come for a FREE workshop and discover the impacts of stress and the importance of wellness. Presentation by Dr. Vera Baziuk, Thursday, April 30 from 1:30-3 pm at Norwood Centre (9516 114 Ave). Childcare and snack provided. Register: 471.3737.

LIVELY LEARNING AT THE LIBRARY!

School-aged programming for homeschoolers. Explore interesting topics with hands-on activities. For grades 1-9. Wednesday, April 15 at 1:30 pm. Drop-in. Highlands Library (6516 118 Ave).

PRAYERWORKS COLLECTIVE KITCHEN

Cook with friends, try new recipes, help your food budget. Second Wednesday of each month, 5:30-8 pm at St. Faith / St. Stephen Anglican Church (11725-93 St). Cost: 4 one serving meals \$3. Trish 780.464.5444.

ADULT READING & WRITING

A new program using mainly

Aboriginal materials. Thursdays, 9:30 am 12 pm at St. Faith/St. Stephen (11725 93 St).

sports & rec

WOMEN'S ACTIVE YOGA CLUB

Get active and learn yoga you can practice at home. Bring comfortable clothing. Tuesdays from 12-1 pm in room 2-4 at Mennonite Centre (11713 82 St).

FREE FAMILY ZUMBA CLASS

Tuesdays 7-8 pm (no class April 2) at St. Alphonsus School (11624 81 St). Children ages 5 and up are welcome with parents but they must participate in the class.

ALBERTA AVENUE OUTDOOR PLAY PROGRAM

Staff will lead children and families in games and activities (93 St & 118 Ave). Free drop in for ages 6-12 and families. Saturdays, March 14 - April 18 from 12-3 pm.

FREE COMMUNITY ACCESS AT COMMONWEALTH REC CENTRE

Use any of the amenities at the rec centre on Saturdays from 5-7 pm with your community league membership.

FREE SPORTS EQUIPMENT

All kinds of sports equipment for kids in need. sportscentral.org or 780.477.1166.

social

FATHERS' CLUB

A place for fathers to talk about guy stuff and do guy things. Supper and childcare included. Wednesday, April 15 from 5:30-7:30pm at Norwood Centre (9516 114 Ave). Register: 780.471.3737 or tristanh@norwoodcentre.com.

NFB FILM CLUB

Animated and documentary film from the National Film Board of Canada. Saturday, April 18 at 1:30 pm at Sprucewood Library (11555 95 St). Saturday, April 25 at 1:30 pm at Highlands Library (6516 118 Ave).

BOARD GAMES NIGHT

Games provided or bring your own games. Tuesday, April 28 from 7-9 pm at The Carrot (9351 118 Ave). Sponsored by NNA.

WANDERING WOOLIES

A local knitting group. Wednesday, April 29 from 7-9 pm at The Carrot (9351 118 Ave).

PRAYERWORKS COMMON

Hot complimentary meals & warm friendship at St. Faith/St. Stephen (11725 93 St). Lunch every Thursday from 10 am-2 pm. Supper 1st, 2nd & 3rd Friday from 5-6:30 pm. MusicJam on the third Friday. Breakfast every 2nd and 4th Saturday from 8:30-9:30 am.

TWEEN LOUNGE

Play video games, make a DIY project, meet friends, hang out. For ages 7-13. Thursdays from 3:30-5 pm at Sprucewood Library (11555 95 St) or Highlands Library (6516 118 Ave).

TEEN LOUNGE

Play video games, make a DIY project, meet friends or hang out. For ages 13-17. Friday, April 24 from 6:30-8:30 pm at Highlands Library (6516 118 Ave). Drop-in. Free tickets available starting at 10 am that day. Teens with tickets will be given access between 6:15-6:30 pm. Doors close at 6:30 pm.

TEEN GAMING

Come to the library to play some great games! For ages 12-17. Thursdays from 6:30-8:30 pm at Sprucewood Library (11555 95 St).

ENGLISH CONVERSATION CIRCLE

Practice your English. Mondays at 6 pm at Sprucewood Library (11555 95 St) or Fridays 10:30 am - 12 pm at Highlands Library (6516 118 Ave). No program April 6 at Sprucewood.

pre-schoolers

BOOKS FOR BABIES

For parents and their infants (under 12 months) to explore literacy through songs and stories. Thursdays, April 9-30 from 10-11 am at Norwood Centre (9516 114 Ave). Register: 780.471.3737. Siblings are welcome.

GIVE YOUR CHILD A HEAD START

Free preschool program for ages 3 ½ - 5 runs four half days a week at Norwood Child and Family Resource Centre (9516-114 Ave). Free busing, nutritious snack, health and dental services, and a high quality child-focused program. Taking registrations for fall 2015, 780.471.3737.

NORWOOD CENTRE COME AND PLAY

Enjoy our free indoor play space and meet new friends in this unstructured group for parents and children. Snack included. Mondays from 10 am - 12 pm (9516 114 Ave).

BABES IN ARMS

A casual parent group every Friday from 10 am - 12 pm at The Carrot (9351 118 Ave).

PROGRAMS AT SPRUCEWOOD LIBRARY

11555 95 ST, 780.496.7099
Family Storytime, Sundays 2:30 pm. No program April 5.
Baby Laptime (up to 12 months), Mondays, 10:30 am. No program April 6.
Sing, Sign, Laugh & Learn (for caregivers and children up to age 3), Tuesdays, 10:30 am and Wednesdays, 6:30 pm.

PROGRAMS AT HIGHLANDS LIBRARY

6516 118 AVE, 780-496.1806
Family Storytime, Mondays at 6:45 pm & Saturdays, 11am.
Baby Laptime (up to 12 months), Thursdays, 10:30 am.
Sing, Sign, Laugh & Learn (for caregivers and children up to age 3), Wednesdays, 10:30 am.
Share a Story: Listen, Move, Play (3-5 years and their grownup), Sundays, Feb. 8 to May 3 at 1:30 pm. No program April 5.

seniors

NORWOOD LEGION SENIORS GROUP

Play darts, shuffleboard and pool. Socialize over coffee and desserts. Tuesdays at 10:30 am. Cribbage, Wednesdays at 1 pm. At Norwood Legion (11150 82 St).

PARKDALE-CROMDALE SENIORS SOCIAL

Seniors bingo, coffee and snack. Mondays from 10:30 am - 1 pm at Parkdale (11335 85 St).

SENIORS BREAKFAST & SOCIAL (55+)

Join us for breakfast, visit, play cards or billiards or watch a movie. Wednesdays from 11:30 am - 12:45 pm at Crystal Kids (8715 118 Ave).

volunteer

RUN A BEVERAGE STAND

Fresh squeezed lemonade, brewed ice tea, gourmet coffee, and tea - we need people to make it and serve it at Bloomin Garden Show, May 30. Also looking for bartenders for the garden party on May 29. bloomin@albertaave.org or 780.477.2773.

GET TOGETHER WITH OTHER DOG LOVERS

Want to see an Avenue goes to the Dogs festival this summer? Or smaller dog-related events? Then step up and help make it happen or there will be no events this year. The Eastwood Community League and Judy Allan will help support new organizers for such events. judy.allan@edmonton.ca or 780.496.1913.

SAY HELLO

Are you friendly and outgoing? We need people to work the info, silent auction, and exchange/swap tables at Bloomin Garden on May 30. bloomin@albertaave.org or 780.477.2773.

EASTWOOD SHARE YOUR INPUT AND SKILLS

The new Eastwood Community League board is still seeking a secretary and board members at large. Help shape the future of your neighbourhood. ewcl@shaw.ca

GOT MUSCLES AND A COUPLE HOURS TO SPARE?

Helped needed setting up and tearing down for the garden party and garden show on May 29 & 30. Lend your brawn. bloomin@albertaave.org or 780.477.2773.

SHARE YOUR ARTISTIC TALENTS

Join CreArt Edmonton - a social movement of free art spaces and education. Sebastian 780.878.8265

NNA

A big thank you to our community calendar sponsor!



The City of Edmonton urges residents to report potholes, especially on local roads. City crews don't have the resources to go through every neighbourhood to find potholes themselves. Residents should call 311 to report the location of potholes. In January and February, the city filled 27,300 potholes and received 1,982 reports. >> SUPPLIED

Councillor Tony Caterina
Ward 7 - Communities to be proud of



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THE BIG DIG



Alberta Avenue

We hope you enjoyed the festive trees that spruced up our communities this winter. Now they can bring beauty throughout the community for years to come!

On May 2nd these beautiful Spruce Trees will be available to residents living in the area to take home and plant in your yards and gardens. Pick up in the garden at 95 Street and 106Ave (east side)

10:00 am – 2:00 pm (or while quantities last)
Trees will also be available May 9th if they don't all get picked up on May 2nd.

Lots of great ideas were gathered at the  ALBERTA AVE Event From Graffiti Walls to Neighbourhood Art Studio Sales there are lots of ideas to put in to action.

Join us to start the planning
Wednesday April 8th 7:00 pm
Landlord and Tenants Office 8904-118th ave

CREATING COMMUNITY CHANGE LEADERSHIP SERIES

Location: Alberta Ave Community League - 9210 118 Ave
Please contact Lindsay Ruth 780-496-1913 or creatingcommunitychange@gmail.com to register.

Sunday, April 12 - Organizing in your Community

This session will focus on how to organize a community campaign that builds partnership with organizers and communities to create spaces for participatory learning, networking, and resource sharing in order to affect positive community change.

Sunday, April 26 - Story Telling for Community Change

By telling stories community organizers can build power and envision new community possibilities. The session will focus on developing the skills and knowledge for effective story telling for positive community change.

Time: 12:00 pm – 4:00 pm - Lunch: 12:00 pm Workshop: 12:45 pm



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