

Rat Creek Press

Alberta Avenue • Delton • Eastwood • Elmwood Park • Parkdale-Cromdale • Spruce Avenue • Westwood



BY THE COMMUNITY - FOR THE COMMUNITY

FEBRUARY 2023

Warm up with Latin American food

El Fogón Latino delivers Latin American flavour to Edmonton



The restaurant owners say they get customers from all over the city. | Karen Mykietka

ANDRES CALDERON

Edmonton in the middle of winter may seem to be a strange place to eat cuisine inspired from the northern tip of Latin America, but the owners of El Fogón Latino wouldn't have it any other way.

"[Owning a restaurant] was always a dream of mine, and I started cooking at a young age," says Sarahi De Goncalves, main chef and one half of the couple who owns and operates the business on 80 Street and 118 Avenue. "Initially my plan was to move to and open a restaurant in Panama, but when my husband and I got together in 2008, we decided to move here instead."

After arriving in Edmonton from Venezuela in 2010, Sarahi and her husband, Kevin, waited until 2017 to open the restaurant. "I did all kinds of work when I arrived, and my husband still has a full-time job as a pipefitter, but we never lost sight of our ultimate goal," she

adds. "It's such a full-time commitment that you feel like you never have much time for yourself. You have to be here no matter what, but the customers make it all worthwhile."

The unassuming restaurant has all the makings of a coveted hole-in-the-wall gem; it's the kind of place that makes local eating so appealing. It has six tables and four spots at the bar, and you'd be forgiven for thinking the music playing was about to end with a full-on party. Sarahi prepares the food and delivers it quickly, which makes it perfect for take-out or dining in. "We make homemade food, and homemade food is never pretentious," says Sarahi.

The menu has developed over the years and now offers not only Venezuelan food but also foods from Colombia, El Salvador, and Argentina. The learning curve in perfecting these foods has come with its challenges, but Sarahi asserts these are not unwelcome. "I love learning, and many customers from these countries have pro-

vided tips and suggestions to make sure I get the flavours done right," she adds. "It's always great when people come in and tell me they like the food because it reminds them of being back home."

Initially envisioning opening a location on Jasper Avenue or Whyte Avenue, the couple ultimately decided to open the restaurant at 8026 118 Ave out of economic feasibility; the rent is roughly half of what the other areas charge for the same amount of space. Despite being new to the neighbourhood, the couple were able to rely at first on members of Edmonton's Venezuelan community to establish a foundation. With time, they attracted more of a local customer base that has kept them in good standing.

"Most Venezuelans live on the south side of the city, and it can be difficult to commute from there," says Sarahi, "but we have regulars from all sorts of communities. One individual came in every day for three months straight, and another every

day for a year. Sat in the same spot and ordered the same meal."

Being family owned and operated, El Fogón Latino strives to preserve a piece of Latin American history and culture and offer this to our city. It's an excellent gift and an even better way to escape to the heat for a bit before heading back out into the snow.

Andres is slowly studying nursing while working full time. He spends most of his free time either reading or going to used book stores. He has a collection of over 1,200 books.

EL FOGÓN LATINO
8026 118 Ave
MON-SAT, 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.
SUN, 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Instagram: @elfogonlatino
780.756.8388

11244 / 11246 92 STREET



DETAILS



www.edmontoncdc.org/listings

DUPLEX
FOR SALE

\$349,900

3 Bedrooms

2.5 Bathrooms

Appliances Included

Features open floor plans, modern finishings, and spacious bedrooms.

BOOK A SHOWING
TODAY



Don McKay

780-993-7334

themckayteam.ca



Rat Creek Press opens doors

People, programs, opportunities, and events are all covered

CONSTANCE BRISSENDEN

Rat Creek Press was my introduction to Edmonton when I moved here in 2010. My partner, Larry Loyie, was starting cancer treatment at the Cross Cancer Institute. Since we lived near High Prairie, a six hour drive north, we needed a second place in “the city.” We alighted in Parkdale and I found a copy of *Rat Creek Press* in my mailbox.

In those days the paper was a black and white edition, but it contained the same informative articles as today. *Rat Creek Press* was a strange name, I thought. I learned there was a Rat Creek running through our area in the early years. A series of articles about local history was fascinating. Larry and I began to feel at home.

Since November 2005, *Rat Creek Press* has informed readers about seven local neighbourhoods. The communities of Alberta Avenue, Delton, Eastwood, Elmwood Park, Parkdale-Cromdale, Spruce Avenue, and Westwood are less separate and more united because we read about them in the local community paper.

The past years of COVID-19 isolation affected every business. *Rat Creek Press* is no different. Publisher Karen Mykietka and editor Talea Medynski forged on with reduced advertising revenue and no casino revenue. The fact that we still have a local newspaper is astonishing.

In November of 2022, we held our AGM. New board members bring ideas and enthusiasm to any society.



Constance Brissenden picks up her copy of *Rat Creek Press* at Alberta Avenue Community League on 118 Avenue. | Derek Quittenton

Shauna Letendre is a newcomer to our area. She heard about the AGM and ended up becoming a director on the board. “Being involved gives me a chance to learn about my neighbourhood,” says Letendre. “I’m really looking forward to knowing more.”

As the treasurer, Derek Quittenton is a journalism graduate with a background in financial planning. “I’ve always appreciated the

independent press,” he says. “*Rat Creek Press* has a varied area and a diverse audience. I like that.”

***Rat Creek Press* was my introduction to Edmonton when I moved here in 2010.**

Two board members have staying power. Victoria Stevens is a business owner, continuing with the board in her new role as vice chair. “*Rat Creek Press* is vital to create community and keep us informed. A lot of what happens in our area doesn’t get picked up by other media,” she observes.

Join me in continuing to read and revel in this local paper. Its very existence is the glue we need to keep our neighbourhoods flourishing.

Secretary Kevin Blakeman arrived from the U.K. six years ago. In his second year on the board, Blakeman says, “I’m keen on being part of the community through *Rat Creek Press*. I love living in this area and I love the people.”

As the new chair of *Rat Creek Press*, I look forward to working with the board.

The newspaper is expanding its outreach with a grant from the City of Edmonton. The focus will be on equity, diversity, and sustainability, and the grant will allow the paper staff to continue to do what it does best. Delivery of the *RCP* to apartments will be reinstated. Regular articles and ads will bring fresh perspectives on diversity and inclusion. We will also work on sustainability by soliciting advertising, researching grants, promoting donor support, and seeking sponsorships.

Join me in continuing to read and revel in this local paper. Its very existence is the glue we need to keep our neighbourhoods flourishing.

Constance’s writing and editing career spans more than 40 years. She lives in Parkdale-Cromdale.

DON'T MISS THESE ONLINE ARTICLES

Liquor store permit causes waves

Community members have options to be heard at the appeal board | Published Jan. 24

Lace up your skates and hit the ice

Local rinks are open for public skating | Published Jan. 7

Social agency helps former inmates

Buffalo Keeper NehiYaw Centre is dedicated to helping the Aboriginal community | Published Dec. 6

Follow us [Facebook.com/RatCreekPress](https://www.facebook.com/RatCreekPress) and subscribe to our eNewsletter at [ratcreek.org](https://www.ratcreek.org).

RAT CREEK PRESS ASSOC. 9210 118 AVE, EDMONTON, AB T5G 0N2 T: 780.479.6285

ABOUT US

We are a non-profit community newspaper serving Alberta Avenue, Delton, Eastwood, Elmwood Park, Parkdale-Cromdale, Spruce Avenue, and Westwood. Published on Treaty 6 Territory. The opinions expressed in the paper are those of the people named as authors of the articles and do not necessarily reflect those of the board or staff.

GOALS

Build Community, Encourage Communication, Increase Capacity.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Constance Brissenden, Victoria Stevens, Kevin Blakeman, Derek Quittenton, and Shauna Letendre. The board may be contacted at board@ratcreek.org.

PRODUCTION STAFF

PUBLISHER Karen Mykietka info@ratcreek.org
EDITOR Talea Medynski editor@ratcreek.org
DESIGNER Brenda Fortin design@ratcreek.org
ADVERTISING ads@ratcreek.org

CONTRIBUTORS

Our writers vary from trained journalists to community residents with varying backgrounds. We strive to be a place where individuals can learn new skills and acquire experience—whether in writing, editing, photography, or illustration. We welcome letters, unsolicited submissions, and story ideas.

COPYRIGHT

Copyright of articles, letters, photographs, and other online materials submitted and published by the *Rat Creek Press* in print or online remains with the author, but the *Rat Creek Press* may freely reproduce them in print, electronic and other forms.

CIRCULATION

Serving 12,000 community members.

DELIVERY

The paper is delivered by Canada Post to all houses, apartments, and businesses in the seven neighbourhoods listed above including those with no unaddressed mail notices. For the most part, delivery begins on the last Wednesday of the month.

ROAD TO THE JUNOS

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
THE ALBERTA AVENUE COMMUNITY LEAGUE



SAINT AND THE FULL 100 BAND • MELAFRIQUE

FEB 10 | ALBERTA AVENUE COMMUNITY LEAGUE

EDMONTON
JUNOS
2023 HOST
COMMITTEE

BUY TIX NOW

[EDMONTON.JUNOAWARDS.CA](https://www.edmonton.junoawards.ca)

Ways to address problem properties

The City created a new strategy and provided dedicated resources

CITY OF EDMONTON

Problem properties are much more than abandoned houses with overgrown weeds. They are magnets for repeat criminal activity, place a burden on emergency services, and pose a significant public health risk. Their presence in a community generates frequent and serious complaints and safety concerns.

Problem properties have been a long-standing challenge throughout Edmonton. That's why, in early 2020, the City of Edmonton initiated an 18-month human-centred research project to gather ideas and lived experiences from Edmontonians in some of the hardest hit neighbourhoods. Out of this came the 2023 - 2026 long-term strategic approach for problem properties and dedicated funding to tackle the issues associated with these places.

"After 18 months of research and community engagement, the development of a robust long-term strategic approach, and the creation of a funded centralized model for administering the Problem Property Initiative, the City of Edmonton and its stakeholders are now, more than ever, positioned to address problem properties," says Justin Lallemand, the City's specialized program coordinator.

The Initiative now includes:

Dedicated resources

Neighbourhoods with high concentrations of problem properties and derelict buildings will be assigned dedicated municipal enforcement officers to proactively identify and quickly address problem properties before they escalate. A dedicated community safety liaison will also join officers on inspections to bring an enhanced social justice lens and will provide direct support to people staying in or employed at problem properties.

Centralized office

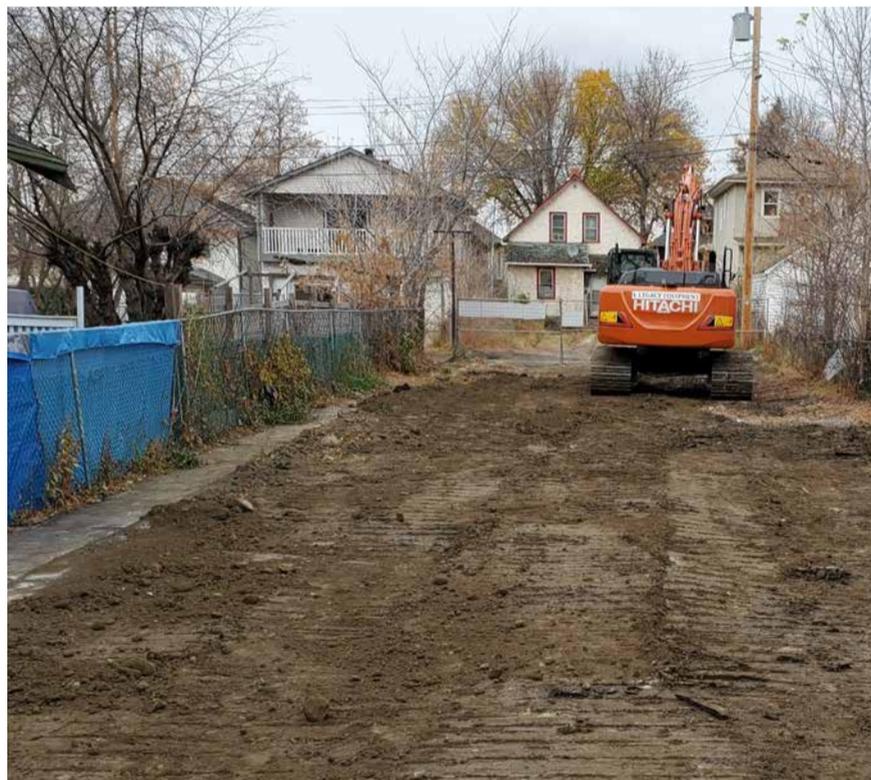
A newly created centralized office serves as the key point of contact for the public, community, and city council regarding all aspects of problem properties. This team will continue to develop relationships, attend community meetings, and co-create solutions based on data as well as the specific needs of the communities to which they are assigned.

Coordinated responses

The Problem Property Initiative coordinates the efforts of multiple City departments, the Edmonton Police Service, Alberta Health Services, and the Government of Alberta to present a united, consistent approach to the



Before and after images of a recent clean up coordinated by the Problem Properties Team (PPT). Fire had destroyed the property and left it in a state that presented a significant and unsecured hazard to the surrounding neighbourhood. The team intervened, removing approximately 11 extra-large bins of debris and backfilling with approximately 20 dump truck loads of dirt. | City of Edmonton



complex issues associated with problem properties.

Unique approach to unsecured, vacant properties

The Community Property Safety Team (CPST) is a bold, innovative, and proactive approach to reducing fire risk at unsecured, vacant buildings. Using provincial legislation, the CPST holds landowners accountable to secure unsecured, vacant buildings that pose a fire risk to the surrounding community.

Streamlined path to demolition

A more focused, unified approach to streamline the path to demolition has been designed to take bolder action in addressing situations where owners have not taken accountability for their problem properties. This process prioritizes and expedites demolitions where required.

Potential tax subclasses

The City is studying the potential to establish a tax subclass for derelict properties. This subclass would enable the City to charge a higher tax rate to properties that are declared derelict, hopefully helping to discourage neglect and ensuring owners take responsibility for their property.

Resource and contacts

Stay tuned to your neighbourhood news and social media for an invitation to attend one of the City's Meet and Greet Events where the Problem Property Initiative will share information about its strategic plan, dedicated teams, and new resources; and continue to gather information from community members about their lived experiences with problem properties.

To learn more about the Problem Property Initiative, visit edmonton.ca/problemproperties.

To report a problem property call 311, contact 311 online, or use the confidential reporting form at edmonton.ca/problemproperties.

To report an unsecured, vacant property, call 311 or email communitypropertysafetyteam@edmonton.ca.

For general inquiries or to engage directly with the Problem Property Initiative, email problemproperties@edmonton.ca.

Information from the City of Edmonton.

The Community Standards and Neighbourhoods branch at the City of Edmonton enhances a livable city by supporting safe properties and a civil urban society that meets the standards and expectations of communities.

NEZ BASEBALL & SOFTBALL

PLAY BALL! SUMMER 2023

NEZSPORTS.COM

Blake Desjarlais

Member of Parliament
Edmonton Griesbach

Constituency Office
10212 - 127th Avenue NW,
Suite 102
780-495-3261

BlakeDesjarlais.ndp.ca
Blake.Desjarlais@parl.gc.ca
[@BlakeDesjarlaisNDP](https://www.facebook.com/BlakeDesjarlaisNDP)
[@DesjarlaisBlake](https://twitter.com/DesjarlaisBlake)

Black History Month is crucial

Get involved in the celebration and increase your awareness

SHAREE ALUKO

The entire month of February celebrates Black history. It's a time to reflect upon the past and see how far Black people have come. Do you see progress, or is it a tad too slow for your liking? Whatever your case might be, let us look at the bigger picture and celebrate our wins, though there is still much more ground to cover.

Joy Thomas, vice president of The National Black Coalition of Canada Society in Edmonton, explains, "The formal celebration of Black History Month took roots in the need to recognize and celebrate the contributions and accomplishments of Black Americans to the United States of America. It began in 1926, spearheaded by Carter G. Woodson, known as the 'Father of Black History', who was the second Black African descendant to receive a PhD from Harvard University. His pioneer work eventually led to the official recognition of Black History Month in the United States in 1976."

In December 1995, Canada recognized February as Black History Month when Jean Augustine, a former MLA, made the motion in the House of Commons. Augustine, who immigrated from Granada in the 1960s, was the first Black Canadian woman elected to the House of Commons.

"Alberta carved out its own little place in history when MLA David Shepherd mounted a relentless campaign to have Black History Month recognized in 2017. Rachel Notley officially proclaimed February as Black History Month on Jan. 31, 2017," says Thomas.

Many people may be wondering why Black History Month is important and why there needs to be a month dedicated to such history.

Thomas says, "In line with 2022's theme 'February and Forever: Celebrating Black History today and every day', it is important that we never lose focus on recognizing the daily contributions that Black Canadians have made and continue to make in shaping the cultural pluralism that is Canada."

It is important to acknowledge the varied stories, experiences, education, professional designations, and gifts of Black people.



Celebrate Black History Month in February. | Unsplash

She explains that a lot of Canadian Black history hasn't been recorded.

"This commemorative month remains a necessity, because elements of racism and systemic barriers continue to outline the lived experiences of Black people in Canada. Black History Month takes us

beyond just our history of honouring the monumental achievements of our dearly departed pioneers, [and] also emphasizes the need to recognize our living pathbreakers, advocates, entrepreneurs, and educational innovators."

Representation is an ongoing issue that everyone should be aware of. Thomas explains that representation is important because seeing ourselves represented in spaces creates the feeling that nothing is impossible. Although the Black community is in a better position than before, African, Black, and Caribbean (ABC) peoples still face major representation barriers.

Thomas says, "The existence of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policies, although good on paper, does not necessarily provide the 'true action' needed to drive inclusive spaces for Blacks and other marginalized groups within the

Canadian context. Unconscious bias continues to lead the day, as programs meant to destigmatize are creating a reversal effect instead of fostering safe and inclusive environments where we can experience, learn, grow, and truly belong."

She adds that celebrating Black culture includes recognizing "Black influence, resilience, and excellence within the broader Albertan landscape and beyond." It is important to acknowledge the varied stories, experiences, education, professional designations, and gifts of Black people.

"All these often fade in the abyss that is the backdrop month of February. Our intelligence is often judged by our accents, our looks, our English language limitations, our heritage, and the biased stories circulating in history books and the media. Our personal stories have been eclipsed by a singular monochromatic narrative about us, as told by others. Our passion for who we are, and our fire, has been deemed aggressive and dangerous, marking us as unapproachable."

She says that the best thing people can do to celebrate Black History Month is educate themselves.

"We live in an information age where knowledge is readily accessible at our fingertips," she says. "NBCC does a great job of collating a list of Black-led com-

munity organizations on their website at www.nbccedmonton.ca and Black History Month events for February 2023."

During February, the NBCC, a Black-led organization, holds an opening ceremony with community members, dignitaries, and government officials.

"As it relates to Black History Month, NBCC strives to promote cultural education, diversity, inclusion, equity, and connecting communities," says Thomas. "NBCC honours and recognizes the work of Black community individuals and organizations through an annual Award of Excellence program, a Black History Month Cultural Magazine that depicts how local Black Albertans are building Canada, and a musical and art event at the Northern Jubilee Auditorium that is in its 37th year."

By looking at the positives in terms of the progress being made, you may be more motivated to continue on the journey of success and may eventually take bigger strides to get to the destination faster, whatever that destination may look like for you.

Sharee has a Masters of Business Administration and is passionate about sharing information.

Kamal Nuur, Billan Financial Services

A MOSAIC OF CURIOSITY

ALBERTA AVENUE. SHOP. DINE. PLAY. WORK.

Acting on rising grocery prices

Why your groceries cost more and what you can do about it



Global challenges have led to the increased cost of groceries. | Kevin Blakeman

KEVIN BLAKEMAN

Most of us do our grocery shopping on a weekly basis, and if you've noticed that your food is costing more and more, you're not alone.

The cost of groceries across Canada has been on the rise and it's impacting the budgets of many households. Last year saw unprecedented changes, with price

hikes not seen in Canada for over 40 years. Depending on how you view it, there may be some positive news in Canada's Food Price Report 2023, which predicts a relatively low 5 to 7 per cent food price increase in 2023.

Several factors are causing the increase in grocery prices, with the first one being the rising cost of logistics. As fuel prices go up, it becomes more expensive to transport

goods. Additionally, supply chain disruptions caused by COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine have made it more difficult to get certain products, which can lead to higher prices.

Then there's the cost of labour. Last year, the minimum wage increased in various provinces (visit retailcouncil.org for details). Retailers must pay their employees more, which can lead to higher prices for consumers. The minimum wage in Alberta hasn't changed since 2018, but much of our food is sourced elsewhere.

Climate change and weather patterns are also affecting food prices. Droughts, floods, and extreme weather events are causing crop failures, which can lead to shortages and higher prices for fruits, vegetables, and other produce.

All of these factors lead to increases in cost, which somebody has to absorb. According to a study by Dalhousie University, Canada's top three grocers all posted higher profits last year compared with their average performances over the previous five years, so it's clear that as things stand, the burden of these global challenges will likely fall on the Canadian consumer.

With everything in mind, here are a few practical tips to minimize the impact of rising grocery prices on your household:

- Plan your meals and make a list of what you need before heading to the store. This can help you avoid impulse buys and stick to your budget.
- Compare prices at different stores. Check flyers, websites, and popular deals apps such as Flashfood.
- Buy in bulk when possible. Items like

rice, pasta, and spices are often cheaper in bulk.

- Purchase off-brand products. These items are often cheaper, but they're usually just as good.
- Plant a garden. Growing your own fruits and vegetables can help you save money on produce.
- Be mindful of food waste. Plan your meals around ingredients you already have in the house and make use of leftovers. If you can't use it, see if you can freeze it to use another time.
- Buy seasonal produce. In-season fruits and vegetables are often cheaper and fresher.
- Be adventurous. Sometimes the cheaper items are the least popular, so don't be afraid to pick up something you have never tried before. You'll find lots of recipes and tutorials online to help you make a tasty dish out of something new.

As the cost of groceries continues to rise, it's important to be mindful of our spending and to look for ways to save money. By following these tips, you can help minimize the impact of rising grocery prices on your household budget. However, it's important to remember that grocery prices are affected by factors beyond our control, so it's worth being mindful of these factors, and supporting policies and practices that can help mitigate their impact.

Kevin has been making video games for almost two decades and writes for fun. He is originally from England, but currently lives in Delton.

PCCL Programs

NEW THIS MONTH!

- **Drop-in Homework Club** for ages 10+ WED 4 15-5 30pm in the lounge. Snacks provided
- **Learn to paint for beginners** SUN 5-6 30pm FEB 26 start kim@parkdalecromdale.org to register

CONTINUING, NEWCOMERS WELCOME!

- **Yoga with Jesse:** TUES 7-8pm. All levels welcome.
- **Hockey and Learn to Skate** ages 6-12 THURS 6 30-7 20pm <https://freeplayforkids.com/start-to-play>
- **Creart music and art:** SAT 10am-1pm. <https://www.creartedmonton.com>
- **Capoeira** for adults and children: MON/WED/FRI <https://capoeiraacademy.ca>
- **Collective Kitchen:** currently full



For more information:
programs@parkdalecromdale.org

Janis Irwin, MLA
Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood

Follow Janis on social media

780.414.0682 ~ 6519 112 Avenue
Edmonton.HighlandsNorwood@assembly.ab.ca

Peter Leveille
Broker/Owner & Realtor®
780-487-4040
www.abrealtylistings.com

Property values are up on average 5% in Rat Creek Press neighborhoods over last 5 years!

Seniors Real Estate Specialist, SRES® & Real Estate Negotiation Expert, RENE®
Over 17 years Real Estate Experience!!

OPINION

Diversity, equity, and inclusion

This concept should be more than lip service

SHAREE ALUKO

Our society should universally embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion, but we often overlook this notion rather than promote it. A lot of lip service is associated with this topic, but not a lot of active support. However, this concept is beneficial to building community, expanding business, and developing research.

The lag in actively promoting this concept is possibly attributed to ignorance about what it really means.

The University of Washington's website provides a start to explaining the concept: "Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is not just a phrase. Each word speaks to distinct values."

By taking a diversified approach to life, we are able to tap into resources that we do not possess on our own. We can take advantage of varied perspectives, skillsets, and capabilities.

According to the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion's website, "Diversity is about the individual. It is about the variety of unique dimensions, qualities and characteristics we all possess. Inclusion is about the collective. It is about creating a culture that strives for equity and embraces, respects, accepts and values difference. Diversity and inclusion is about capturing the uniqueness of the individual; creating an environment that values and respects individuals for their talents, skills and abilities to the benefit of the collective."

And the University of Toronto's website states, "Equity is the promotion of fairness and justice for each individual that considers historical, social,

systemic, and structural issues that impact experience and individual needs. Diversity is a measure of representation within a community or population that includes identity, background, lived experience, culture, and many more. Inclusion is the creation of an environment where everyone shares a sense of belonging, is treated with respect, and is able to fully participate. It is important to note that while an inclusive group is by definition diverse, a diverse group is not always inclusive."

With this better understanding of the concept, it's evident that there are still plenty of opportunities for creating awareness and being more proactive in championing this issue.

An appreciation of DEI allows us to look past our differences, be it outer appearances or religious beliefs, to create close-knit communities. This practice gives us the opportunity to see the power of everyone's unique offerings and to understand how we can collaborate to achieve much more collectively than what we offer individually.

By taking a diversified approach to life, we are able to tap into resources that we do not possess on our own. We can take advantage of varied perspectives, skillsets, and capabilities. Doing so adds value to someone else's life when they are given the opportunity to be included in all areas of society.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion also works well in business. A workplace that creates a culture of DEI will gain from diverse talents, and employees will have more and better advancement opportunities at their disposal. I have experienced first-hand the benefit of having a co-worker translate a document that is written in a different language. The translation was done much quicker than if we had to contract the services of a translator, and, to top it all off, it came at no extra cost.

Additionally, staff who speak multiple languages are beneficial for business because the diversity enables a better understanding of a customer base and presents an increased ability to serve the needs of those customers. For example, when customers enter a major bank, they will often see the diversity of a community reflected in that space. This diversity also makes customers happy because there is representation.

In recent years, there has been an increased commitment to practicing diversity. A 2020 McKinsey & Company report states, "The business case for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) is stronger than ever." In addition, "Our latest report shows not only that the business case remains robust but also that the relationship between diversity on executive teams and the likelihood of financial outperformance has strengthened over time."

Comprehensive research that includes diverse viewpoints will not be skewed, hence providing more objective results.

Having a team of brilliant minds, regardless of nationality, who may contribute immensely to a field of study can produce life-changing outcomes, such as new technology or medical breakthroughs.

The University of Toronto supports this opinion on their website: "Research and innovation that serves a globally diverse world, must embed principles and best practices of equity, diversity, and inclusion."

Life should not be considered a zero-sum game where some people win and other people lose. The concept of diversity, equity, and inclusion illustrate a win-win strategy where there are no losers but only winners.

Sharee has a Masters of Business Administration and is passionate about sharing information.



Embracing the concept of diversity, equity, and inclusion will improve our world on several different levels. | Unsplash

We can add value to someone else's life when they are given the opportunity to be included in all areas of society.

"We'll Keep You Happy for Life"



XLFurniture
FAMILY BUSINESS SINCE 1952

FLEXSTEEL GALLERY · LA-Z-BOY · SIMMONS BEAUTYREST

11349 - 95 st.
780 - 477 - 2213

info@xlfurniture.com
www.xlfurniture.com

STERLING
REAL ESTATE

YOUR neighbourhood realtor



Selling homes since 1990!
ROXANNE LITWYN
780-907-7589

ROXANNEHOMES.COM

WANTED!
I HAVE CLIENTS LOOKING FOR 2 OR 3 BEDROOM HOMES IN THE AREA, ANY SIZE, ANY CONDITION.

11155 - 65 ST.
EDMONTON, AB
T5W 4K2



STERLING REAL ESTATE



Free All Bodies

YOGA

Wednesdays
6:30 - 7:30 PM

Eastwood Community Hall
11803 86 St




SERVING THIS COMMUNITY SINCE 1976

Norwest
INSURANCE AGENCIES LTD

Auto | Home | Business | Life
RRSP | Travel Insurance | Real Estate

11734 - 95 Street
780-477-9191

Helping Edmontonians in crisis

The need for Crisis Diversion increases in winter

**MARILYN GRAY
REACH EDMONTON**

As temperatures plummet during the winter months, the risk to community members in crisis intensifies. During this time, the demand for services like 24/7 Crisis Diversion drastically increases.

According to the Crisis Diversion Edmonton website, “Crisis Diversion teams help people experiencing non-emergency crises get to a safe place, freeing up police and emergency medical services to respond to more critical events.”

By doing this work, the 24/7 Crisis Diversion program addresses issues of poverty, mental health, and addiction by helping people connect with the best available resources to support their needs.

“It’s important all year because we’re able to support the folks who need support, but not from emergency services,” says Claire MacDonald, program manager for 24/7 Crisis Diversion at REACH Edmonton. MacDonald adds, “The demand is higher in the winter, and amplifies during cold temperatures because the risk is so much higher and the concern from the general public goes up when the weather is extreme.”

While the volume of calls can be a challenge, it’s positive that so many Edmontonians are concerned about their fellow citizens’ safety.

The 211 staff dispatched the team 3,110 times during November and December. Additionally, the Crisis Diversion Teams proactively engaged with 4,869 people by providing warm clothing and transportation if people accepted it.

“During those months, we had just under 8,000 contacts with folks in need of support,” says MacDonald. “This doesn’t include the nearly 6,000 calls to [the Crisis Diversion team] that did not result in a dispatch, so we are grateful to the public for their patience as it’s the same operators answering all of these calls.”

While the volume of calls can be a challenge, it’s positive that so many Edmontonians are concerned about their fellow citizens’ safety.

“We’re really happy that Edmontonians are concerned about

HELP EVERYONE STAY SAFE FROM THE COLD

IF YOU SEE SOMEONE IN DISTRESS IN COLD WEATHER PLEASE CALL 211 + PRESS 3

WHEN TO CALL 911	WHEN TO CALL 211
A person has overdosed or is not breathing	A person is intoxicated or otherwise impaired
A person is violent or is threatening violence	A person is sleeping in a lobby, or unsafe space
A person is exhibiting violent behaviour and is refusing to leave	A person is dressed inappropriately for the weather
A large group situation where safety is uncertain	A person feels unsafe, but no threat of violence is present
A person is asleep in a snowbank for an extended period of time	A person is confused, disoriented, or may be experiencing a mental health concern

WHEN YOU SEE A PERSON IN DISTRESS, #JUSTCALL211 + PRESS 3

24/7 CRISIS DIVERSION TEAM

the vulnerable citizens enough to call in,” says MacDonald. “We saw such an increase in need when extreme temperatures hit early this year.”

At least eight unhoused people have died in Edmonton this winter.

“Having our extra set of eyes can help mitigate crises like dying or freezing to death,” says MacDonald.

Last year’s enhanced funding from the City of Edmonton has allowed the teams to have more vehicles on the road during high-demand winter months.

“There’s always increased need in the winter, and even though wait times are still high, [the funding] has helped to alleviate some of the pres-

ures,” says MacDonald. “Thanks to this funding, we were able to add two additional vehicles on the road this winter, which run from November to April when the winter weather is a factor.”

While 211 manages dispatch for the teams, a single team does this in addition to answering all calls that come to 211.

“We don’t have dedicated staff who only answer the Crisis Diversion line, but we hope to move to that in the near future.”

Operators at 211 answered 11,763 calls in November and December of last year, about half of which were Crisis Diversion calls.

Last year’s enhanced funding from the City of Edmonton has allowed the teams to have more vehicles on the road during high-demand winter months.

“Providing services to Edmontonians with such complex needs is always a challenge, but the staff on the Crisis Diversion teams work tirelessly to help people the best they can,” says MacDonald. “The compassion and dedication of these team members is unmatched. We are so grateful for their commitment to serving folks who are facing so many multilayered challenges.”

The 24/7 Crisis Diversion initiative is a collaborative partnership with Boyle Street Community Services, Canadian Mental Health Association (211 program), Hope Mission, and REACH Edmonton. Stakeholders also include Edmonton Police Service and Alberta Health Services Emergency Medical Services.

If you see someone in a non-emergency crisis, call 211 and press 3 to reach the team.

For more information about Crisis Diversion, visit www.crisisdiversionedmonton.ca.

The REACH Edmonton Council for Safe Communities was established in 2010. Its ambition is to, in one generation (25 years), significantly increase community safety in our region; increase Edmontonians’ perception of safety and inclusion; and engage the people of Edmonton and the region in developing a culture of safety and crime prevention.

Spruce Avenue Winterfest
Feb 25 from 1-3 pm

Join us at the Spruce Avenue Hall (11507 103 street) for a children’s shinny hockey game from 12 to 1, horse drawn wagon rides from 1 to 3 and free skating. Snacks and warm drinks will be provided. For more information or for your child to join the shinny hockey game contact programsdirector@spruceavenuecommunity.com

Check with your league

FREE COMMUNITY SWIM FOR LEAGUE MEMBERS!

SATURDAYS 3-5 PM
&/OR
SUNDAYS 1-3 PM

COMMONWEALTH REC OR EASTGLEN POOL



get creative!

SPARK YOUTH CAMP

SPRING BREAK 2023
MARCH 27-31

REGISTER

www.albertaave.org
Financial Aid available



Alberta needs pharmacare.

Tell MP Randy Boissonnault to keep his promise to Albertans and deliver on a universal drug plan for all!

Add your voice!

friendsofmedicare.org/ABpharmacare




Peripheral Neuropathy Breakthrough!



Shirley of Downtown Edmonton testified to this. "I remember my husband driving me to my consultation and I saw a woman running just outside our neighbourhood. I was so envious - I just kept thinking 'I would give anything just to walk again'. My primary care doctor told me my troubles with pain and balance were just symptoms of old age and gave me a prescription. I was so depressed."

Fortunately, Shirley would eventually see Dr. Melanie Morrill Ac. on the local news talking about similar symptoms and how she offers a real solution at Accessible Acupuncture.

"I just knew I had to see her. She was my last hope."

"Almost all of our patients come to us with a story similar to Shirley's. They've been everywhere else. They've been told there's no hope. They've been told 'it's just part of getting older.'" shares Kelly, a Patient Care Technician at Accessible Acupuncture. "It just breaks my heart but I know how much we can help people like Shirley so I'm always so happy when they walk through our door."

Those diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy often face a very grim reality; Western medicine declares that there is no solution while most alternative therapies carry large price tags and offer little to no resolve. Which is why Dr. Melanie Morrill Ac. and the staff at Accessible Acupuncture pride themselves on being 'the last resort with the best results'.

Peripheral neuropathy is a result of damage to the nerves and this damage is commonly caused by a lack of blood flow in the hands and feet. A lack of blood flow results in a lack of nutrients; the nerves then begin to degenerate and die which causes pain ranging from discomfort to debilitating. Because neuropathy is a degenerative condition, once those nerves begin to deteriorate they will continue to do so until they are completely expired, leaving those suffering with crippling balance issues.

"In this case, the absence of pain is not necessarily a good thing," shares Dr. Melanie Morrill Ac. "This usually indicates that your nerves are hanging on by a fragile thread."

How exactly is Dr. Melanie Morrill Ac. able to reverse the effects of this degenerative disease? "Acupuncture has been used to increase blood flow for thousands of years which helps to get the necessary nutrients to the affected nerves. But the real magic happens when I integrate ATP Resonance BioTherapy. This is a technology that was originally developed by NASA to expedite recovering and healing."

"I just can't say enough about Accessible Acupuncture," Shirley shared through tears of joy. "My husband and I moved here 3 years ago and he's gone to the river valley every day to walk. I always stayed home because of the pain and discomfort. Yesterday I walked beside the river with him! And next week we're starting square dancing again! I am truly living life these days."

"According to Shirley's test results, she has seen a 74% improvement in pain and functionality, which is on par with a majority of our patients," Shares Kelly. "But more important than those test results is the joy she's expressed being here and hearing about all the amazing things she's able to do because she feels great!"

By seamlessly blending the ancient science of acupuncture with modern medical solutions Dr. Melanie Morrill Ac. has achieved a 90% success rate in reversing the effects of neuropathy. She starts each patient with an initial consultation during which a sensory exam is performed.

"This not only aids in making a proper diagnosis but it helps to define just how much nerve damage has occurred," tells the Doctor of Acupuncture. "This is important because if a patient has suffered more than 95% damage, there is little that I can do to help them. I'm familiar with the medical miracle but I know my limits as a practitioner and the limits of my medicine."

When it comes to treating peripheral neuropathy, regardless of its origin, early detection greatly improves your chances of a full recovery.

If you or someone you love are suffering with chronic pain that presents as burning, tingling or 'pins and needles' or you've recently been diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy, it's important to know that there are options. There is hope!

Accessible Acupuncture is now accepting new patients but only for a limited time. Only 20 new neuropathy patients will be accepted in February.
Call 587-879-7122 to schedule.

CALL 587-879-7122 | Read more at AccessibleAcupuncture.ca

Free Tax Clinics

Get your benefits and credits



If you have a modest income and a simple tax situation, volunteers can do your tax return for you!

Alberta Avenue Tax Clinic

Phone, drop off, or in person
9210 118 Ave / south door

Tuesdays 10 am to 2 pm
Thursdays 4 pm to 8 pm
March & April 2023

Appointments:
taxclinic@albertaave.org
780.479.6237

YOUTH RISE

IS EXPANDING!

YOUTH RISE will be running **free** drop-in programs for youth ages **12-18** at two locations in North Central Edmonton! There will be free food, sports, games, and leaders there ready to meet you! Anyone is welcome to join us at any of our programs!

STARTING JANUARY 25TH
WHEN Every Wednesday 4-6pm
WHERE Vanguard College
12140 103 St NW, Edmonton

STARTING FEBRUARY 23TH
WHEN Every Thursday 4-6pm
WHERE Alberta Ave Community League
9210 118 Ave NW, Edmonton



Scan the QR code for more launch details or visit youthrise.ca to learn more.

hello@youthrise.ca
youthrise.yeg