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Comfort food and camaraderie

Owner hopes Otto becomes a community meeting place



Ed Donszelmann sits at the communal table at Otto on 95 Street. | Rebecca Lippiatt

REBECCA LIPPIATT

Ed Donszelmann is thrilled with how well opening Otto has come together. Despite delays with permits, all licensing was in place by Dec. 12, and the doors to this family-friendly community café in Norwood are now open.

The vision for Otto was born out of Donszelmann's experiences in Amsterdam. In the mornings, he would have a cappuccino in a local café, and in the afternoons, meet again at the same location for a glass of wine or a beer and visit with his sister. He wants Otto to be a community meeting place, the place people refer to as their local coffee or wine shop. As a McCauley resident, Donszelmann wanted to open a restaurant closer to home.

"The focus is food and you and I sitting here chatting at the big communal table. I hope that people meet new people," Donszelmann said. "My vision is for a neighbourhood, community meeting place."

Donszelmann brings a strong knowledge of the restaurant industry. He was previously a partner in Culina Restaurants & Catering and the Sugarbowl. Both of his cooks trained at NAIT and have worked at Culina, Woodwork, and Three Boars.

Thomas Spacinsky, the head chef, and Gregory Parschauer, assistant chef, designed a menu focused on comfort food—sausages, in particular. The menu may change slightly in the future. Steven Furgiuele, a local sausage maker at Fuge Meats, prepares the sausages. A vegetarian option and side dishes will also be available. Diners can choose from a selection of wine, a limited number of specialty cocktails, or beer from Alberta's microbreweries.

Otto is decorated simply. The communal table facilitates meeting friends and neighbours. Donszelmann sourced the old school chairs, complete with carvings and pen drawings, from Habitat for Humanity ReStore. The

bar stools are what you would find in a science lab, and the tables are made of pressed floor joists, designed by Dave Regnier. Washrooms are non-gendered (and accessible) and share a common sink/handwashing area, hidden behind a sliding door that's affixed with a barn slider from UFA. The front sliding garage door will open in the summer to allow patrons to overlook Norwood Square.

Donszelmann says everyone asks about the name Otto. He jokes that he should make a story about it being his father or grandfather's name, but the name actually arose from a logo drawing a friend did when Donszelmann first conceived of the restaurant. The logo fell by the wayside, but the name stuck.

Local community members are looking forward to the new business. Shelaine Sparrow, whose house is a few blocks from the café says, "We have been monitoring the restaurant's development closely—more excited with every indicator that

opening day is a bit closer. [Otto is a] neighbourhood game-changer and we are ready!"

Donszelmann calls Otto an "amazing collaboration." Opening night was a success. "We opened the doors this evening and amazing people showed up. I am thrilled to be part of this amazing community."

A professional photographer for the past 9 years, Rebecca is actively involved in her community, participating in arts festivals and as the photo editor for the Rat Creek Press.

OTTO

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Planners seek input on Norwood Boulevard

Public meeting focuses on mobility and land use

CHANTAL FIGEAT

City planning staff held a second public meeting on Nov. 30 about the future of Norwood Boulevard from 109 to 82 Street.

The first public meeting on June 22 provided city planners with feedback in areas which would enhance the quality of this neighbourhood slated for revitalization. Both meetings were well attended.

Robert Lipka, principal planner and project leader, explained that the area of Norwood Boulevard is focused on movement. He said there has never been a coherent plan and many different boundaries are involved.

During the meeting, city staff asked participants to provide input for marketing and mobility studies. The marketing study focuses on land use. For example, the buildings can be commercial or residential, or they may be mixed use. A

pedestrian or commercial walkway is one of the options under consideration.

Participants, who were presented with six photos illustrating options for land use, then explained the reasoning behind their choice. My group favoured the mixed-use scenario involving both residential and commercial space in buildings.

"I see a ton of potential for the boulevard. I'd love to see innovative mixed-use zoning that will bring more walking traffic to the area," said Dustin Bajer.

Lipka then discussed the mobility study, which focused on movement such as public transport, pedestrians, motorists, commercial transporters, and cyclists. City staff asked participants to create their ideal vision using paper cut-outs and to provide comments on their choices. Narrow sidewalks and lack of walkability were discussed as well as heavy traffic caused by Norwood School, raising concerns about child safety. Participants suggested implementing a

speed reduction in that area.

Meeting attendants were pleased to see the city's attempt to address the problems along Norwood Boulevard.

"Finally, something is being addressed, at least superficially," said Maggie Glasgow.

Janis Irwin added, "It's great that we're having a discussion, and it's fantastic to see so many community members out for the meeting. My hope is that we'll see these conversations followed by concrete actions."

Lipka said the project is not without challenges. "We've still got a long way to go." Part of the challenge is the limited budget. "There's no money to build," said Lipka. He added, "I'm really glad I'm here tonight, you've given some good feedback and information."

A third public meeting will be held in March or April of 2017. City staff will submit the present report and recommendations to the executive committee in April or May, and then book

another public hearing in May or June. Implementation will occur in 2017-2018 with changes to zoning bylaws, construction, and capital projections.

If you own a commercial building on Norwood Boulevard, funding is available through the Façade Improvement Program. Contact Lara Pinchbeck at 780.496.6196 or email lara.pinchbeck@edmonton.ca.

For more information on the Norwood Boulevard Corridor Study, email Robert Lipka at robert.lipka@edmonton.ca or call him at 780.442.0252.

Chantal has worked in publications production for the government and has taught overseas in South Korea. She loves the ethnic diversity and history in Alberta Avenue and enjoys sharing it with the community.



Participants discuss and provide their thoughts on the mobility study. | Chantal Figeat

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ABOUT US

We are a non-profit community newspaper serving Alberta Avenue, Delton, Eastwood, Elmwood Park, Parkdale-Cromdale, Spruce Avenue, and Westwood. 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.

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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.

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Alberta bans door-to-door energy sales

Numerous complaints and sales tactics led to decision

TALEA MEDYNSKI

In the new year, expect fewer door-to-door salespeople to come knocking at your door.

The Alberta government has banned door-to-door sales of furnaces, water heaters, windows, energy contracts, air conditioners, and energy audits as of Jan. 1, 2017. Energy companies who continue with door-to-door sales could face a fine or possible charges under the Fair Trading Act.

Over 1,000 complaints since 2010 led to the government's decision to ban this practice. Service Alberta Minister Stephanie McLean said government investigators "have heard it all," explaining Albertans "have complained about door-to-door salespeople, they've complained about deliberate misrepresentation, being sold products that they don't need, and contracts not being cancelled upon request."

Energy providers still have

options to reach customers. McLean said, "Companies can still offer a great deal. They just have to do it in ways that don't involve the salesperson at your door. They have to do it in a way that doesn't cause a person at your door to force you into making a decision on the spot," said McLean. Instead, companies can reach customers through mail, phone, internet, or mall kiosks.

McLean held the press conference in Calgary resident Ruth Zinck's home. The 88-year-old said last April she opened the door to an energy salesperson. Zinck told the salesperson she wasn't interested in switching to another contract or another supplier. But the next day, she was surprised to discover the salesperson had signed her up without her consent, under her deceased husband's name.

"I don't know he managed to see it, but he knew with whom I was associated and he managed to cancel that contract and install his own," Zinck said. "I

had not signed it, I had not said verbally I would be interested in them and yet I had a contract."

Zinck tracked down a representative in Guatemala. With the help of a friend, a registered letter, and some other communications, she cancelled the contract.

"I have become very apprehensive about anyone coming to my door," said Zinck.

Alberta Avenue resident Michelle Kurulok said she thinks the ban is a good decision. "I have had some rotten sales people come to my home.

They were pushy and tried to enter uninvited," Kurulok said. "I am really sad that it had to go that far."

McLean urged people to find out as much information as possible about an energy company before making a decision. "Alberta's Utility Consumer Advocate is there to help you make informed choices on buying natural gas and electricity services." She suggested visiting servicealberta.ca for more information about consumer rights.

If an energy salesperson comes knocking after Jan. 1, "feel free to close the door, say no thank you," said Tina Faiz, press secretary for Service Alberta.

Faiz suggested recording the salesperson's contact information (name, phone number, ID, and company name) and then calling the toll-free consumer protection line (1.877.427.4088).

Talea is the Rat Creek Press editor. She loves sharing the stories of our diverse neighbourhoods.



It's important to always thoroughly research companies before signing a contract. | Pixabay

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Ten years of icy magic on Alberta Avenue

Deep Freeze draws artists, youth and winter-fun seekers

KATE WILSON

Close the door behind you and step into a world of ice and snow art, costumes and street hockey. That's the promise and follow through of Deep Freeze: A Byzantine Winter Festival.

"We go to Deep Freeze every year. It's been a family event," said Maggie Glasgow, a resident of Alberta Avenue with her husband and young family since 2007.

She recalled how, in one of its early years, they tasted Quebec-style "tire sur la neige:" maple syrup boiled down and rolled in snow. It's become a favourite.

"I was excited because I lived in Winnipeg," said Glasgow. "This reminded me of Festival du Voyageur, which I grew up with."

Deep Freeze turns 10 this year, and its creators will be taking a village and turning it upside down.

"We were looking at an image of a house built upside down and thought, why not incorporate it as a theme?" said

Christy Morin, artistic director.

Ten years ago, a group of local artists founded the festival (with Arts on the Ave presenting it) to brighten the doldrums of the Edmonton winter. They combined traditional and not so traditional, activities, art, and a dab of magic and whimsy. The byzantine in the name refers to the founders' idea of aligning the festival's timing with the Orthodox New Year on Jan. 14.

Organizers also saw Deep Freeze as a way to showcase artists who live on the Avenue, said Rebecca Pickard, who's been volunteering along with her husband from its beginnings.

"To make the city see it as an arts district. Now artists submit pieces from all over."

Shelaine Sparrow has lived in the community for 17 years and volunteers for the festival when she can, but is definitely motivated as a participant.

"I'm an enthusiast," said Sparrow. "I'm rooted in the spirit of the events, the sharing with community members in such an authentic way. It's become a genuine part of the

Avenue."

The festival's endurance is in part thanks to continuity balanced with flexibility. There's a different theme every year. But what's always present is the celebration of cultures. Pickard said she is especially taken with the French and Métis elements, being a Métis woman herself.

"I remember the first years, with the Ukrainian and French elements. But the last couple of years there's more of a presence of Aboriginal culture, with the elders, the smudging, and drumming."

Deep Freeze features French Canadian, Franco-African, First Nations, Acadian, and Ukrainian cultures, showcased on different days. Aboriginal culture is featured both days at Pison Village.

There's also the street-level connections—neighbours bonding with neighbours, breaking the isolation that decreasing daylight hours can bring. Carissa Halton, her husband, and their young family have lived in the area for about 13 years.

"My kids have grown up going to Deep Freeze, thinking it's normal for the street to shut down after Christmas for Arts on the Ave," said Halton, noting how her oldest son takes advantage of the activities. "He loves the street hockey, knocking the puck back and forth, just having that freedom to go out on the street he knows so well."

Everyone needs social interaction, said Sparrow, who takes her daughter to Deep Freeze for the fun and the communal aspect.

"Being in the deep dark pockets of winter can be isolating. I love seeing my neighbours, seeing the kids. I don't see them all year and then I see them at Deep Freeze, how they've grown."

Festivals like Deep Freeze have raised the profile of 118 Avenue with the rest of the city. Edmontonians are finding out what neighbourhood children have known now for 10 years.

Deep Freeze is fun.

"I like the slide, because it's fast. And the ring toss," said

7-year-old Lily Halton. "Last year, I got to sit on the big throne. We always warm up in the big tent."

And local festival-goers can skip the car ride.

"How could I not go? The live music, the arts and culture, and so close to home," said Sparrow. "It's a gift."

Kate took up the reporter's pad and pen while living in northern Alberta. The writing bug stuck, and the next 20 years were spent covering everything from local politics to community happenings. She lives in Alberta Avenue with her daughter.

DEEP FREEZE: A BYZANTINE WINTER FESTIVAL

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Activities for families abound at Deep Freeze Festival every year and it's all free! | Epic Photography



Many families attend Deep Freeze every year. | Epic Photography

Outdoor community rinks holding firm

Beating the odds relies on residents' support

KATE WILSON

Watching new skaters test their steadiness through sheer persistence is a cheery experience come winter as outdoor rinks become available in the neighbourhood.

"I like making ice for the kids. I get a laugh out of watching them learn how to skate and the smile on their faces," said Henry Stainthorp, rink manager at Spruce Avenue Community League (SACL), while flooding the league's rink in November.

He noted the new rinkside floodlights, required by the city. Thankfully there are grants for such things, but the seasonal and volunteer-based nature of rink operations comes with constraints. Combined with insurance and other costs, neighbourhood rinks face many challenges.

Skaters once prized Alberta Avenue's rink. On avenuehistory.org, there was an excerpt from *Through the Years - Alberta Avenue 1995* in which resident Alex Mair described how the rink came alive on weekends.

"Saturday and Sunday evenings, the skaters would whirl around the ice to the sound of a live band ... They had live music down at Central Rink, yes, but they didn't have the live

music that filled those winter nights at the Alberta Avenue Skating Park," Mair recalled.

Today, support for the Alberta Avenue Community League (AACL) rink is sporadic.

"Usage isn't as positive as it used to be, like back in the day, with families deciding to go out for a skate on a sunny winter day," said Lyall Pedersen, rink manager. "And it's not always open, due to the weather."

Edmonton has an estimated 130 outdoor rinks. Some struggle, while others do well.

The Newton Community League replaced its old rink in 2013 thanks to some innovative funding arrangements and lots of volunteers. Our neighbourhood outdoor rinks include Eastwood, Parkdale-Cromdale, Delton, Alberta Avenue, and Spruce Avenue. Westwood once managed its rink, but the city now runs it.

A brief history

The origins of the modern, indoor rink can be traced to Montreal, where the first organized indoor game was held in 1875. Nineteen years later, the Thistles hockey team played Edmonton's first ever recorded game. Then there was Edmonton's Thistle Rink (built in 1902 and burned down in 1913), Edmonton Gardens, and Jasper Avenue's Central Skating Rink (opened in 1922).

In Edmonton's neighbour-

hoods, the 1950s saw rink development reach a high point. When SACL got going in 1951, the first thing on their list was a rink, along with a bowling green and baseball diamonds. By 1964, the 125 community-operated rinks had over one million visits.

Not all was upbeat. Ritchie Community League had trouble financing its rink as early as 1946, and so did Jasper Place, Oliver and Riverdale. Despite the fact that Elmwood Park's first priority was a rink in 1948, it no longer has one.

"It was removed many years ago, the prime reasons being there was a lack of interest from volunteers to run it and a lack of funds to pay someone to maintain it," said Gillian Daley-deGroot, Elmwood Park Community League president.

Challenges of community ice

According to Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL), while most community rinks rely on volunteers, many community leagues now hire help. It hasn't held them back.

"In the last 20 years, there's definitely an increase in the number of rinks," said Joanne Booth, EFCL assistant director. "After building a playground, a rink is usually the next facility to get built."

Weather is another challenge. According to a study conduct-

ed by Nikolay N Damyanov, H Damon Matthews, and Lawrence A Mysak, Canada's outdoor skating season has shortened, particularly in Southwest and Central Canada. Wilfrid Laurier University reports some cities could see up to a third of the outdoor skating season disappear over the next century. Calgary could see a 19 per cent drop.

Leagues are doing what they can. Just this past December, AACL organized a New Year's skating party—the first in recent memory.

"We're trying to put in some positive effort," said Pedersen. "We want to get people using the rink."

It's also up to community members to use them. The Eastwood rink sees a variety of users from the neighbourhood.

"We're expecting more, as we have done some upgrades to the sports facility to ensure it's more efficient and secure," said Tish Prouse, past president of Eastwood Community League.

In Delton, the hour or two of public skating shifts to shinny hockey.

"Shinny is so popular—the public skate, they hardly get a chance," said Walter Gurba, Delton Community League's rink manager. He divides the rink in half if a mom with a toddler drops in.

"So the kids can skate,"

Gurba said. "We have good ice, people know about it."

Like Delton, Spruce Avenue has a Zamboni, making for a great ice surface. The Spruce Avenue rink is used by the two adjacent schools and by the city's Learn to Skate program.

"It's operating at full capacity," said Verna Stainthorp, SACL secretary.

Meanwhile, EFCL held its second annual outdoor rink contest this winter, with community leagues across the city vying to take the trophy and bragging rights from defending champs Grandview Heights.

"We're always looking for new ideas to help league volunteers get their rinks ready," said Booth.

Kate took up the reporter's pad and pen while living in northern Alberta. The writing bug stuck, and the next 20 years were spent covering everything from local politics to community happenings. She lives in Alberta Avenue with her daughter.

OTHER OPTIONS

Weather not cooperating? Check out Edmonton Downtown Community Arena (10245 105 Ave).

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Neighbourhood outdoor rinks face many challenges. | Rebecca Lippiatt



Henry Stainthorp flooding the Spruce Avenue Rink. | Kate Wilson

EDITORIAL

The transformation of Alberta Avenue

Area residents have always sought to improve the area

MIMI WILLIAMS

Long before the Alberta Avenue Revitalization Initiative was launched, area residents have been the driving force behind efforts to improve 118 Avenue and surrounding communities.

In November 1992, a coalition of residents and business owners formed the Avenue Revitalization Project (ARP) to address issues around disrepair and crime from NAIT to Capilano (now Wayne Gretzky Drive).

One of ARP's first tasks was dealing with plans for a strip mall on the land where the Cromdale Safeway now sits. The original car-oriented design, surrounded by coniferous trees and poorly lit, was almost impossible for pedestrians to access. Group members took action on two fronts. First, they convinced the city to change the land use bylaw to prevent certain types of businesses (like nightclubs or arcades) from setting up shop. Second, community members worked with the property owner, who agreed to

adopt crime prevention through environmental design principles on the site.

Over the years, a number of groups have formed to work alongside community leagues and the Alberta Avenue Business Association to create a vision for what we wanted our neighbourhood to become. The Community Action Project, the Commonwealth Stadium Neighbourhood Alliance (prior to the 2001 World Championships in Athletics), Community Response to Urban Disorder (CRUD), and Arts on the Ave have all proven to be effective champions.

Things really turned around in 2005, when the city appointed a full-time staff member to coordinate volunteer community efforts and council began to make significant capital investments in revitalization. Tens of millions of dollars was spent on everything from improved pedestrian lighting to planting trees on the widened sidewalks. New garbage receptacles, bus stops, and bicycle racks complemented the efforts

of business owners who participated in initiatives like the Façade Improvement Program, a matching grant available for businesses and property owners who undertake exterior renovations in Business Improvement Areas.

Over the past 20 years, Alberta Avenue has transformed from a place to avoid into a destination for people from across the capital region. Along with well-attended events like Kaleido Family Arts Festival and MuttStock, we are home to dozens of thriving local businesses that keep our sidewalks busy year-round.

A persistent thorn in the side of rejuvenation has been derelict properties. Constrained by provincial legislation which dictates that as long as a property is structurally safe, there's little the city can do.

Property owners may have a number of reasons to allow a building to remain derelict. Foremost is avoiding the higher property taxes resulting from improving a building. Those of us who hoped recent

amendments to the Municipal Government Act (MGA) might provide avenues to more aggressively deal with these property owners were disappointed.

In 2002, Winnipeg passed the Vacant and Derelict Buildings Bylaw. Considered the most stringent bylaws related to vacant and/or derelict properties in North America, it enables stiff boarding fees for residential and commercial properties, with the most extreme enforcement provisions in the bylaw allowing the city to take possession of a derelict building with no compensation to the owner. Before the city takes title, they must provide the owner several opportunities to correct the property and appeal the decision. They must also have a redevelopment plan for the site. In many cases, this has involved passing the property over to a community or non-profit group for a nominal fee, turning an eyesore into a benefit. Between Jan. 1, 2010 and Nov. 30, 2016, the program dealt with 1774 vacant or derelict properties.

The problem in Alberta isn't that municipalities don't have the authority to confiscate properties. Rather, the problem is municipalities can't impose fines and increase tax burdens on derelict property owners, no matter how negatively they impact surrounding properties and the community as a whole.

Albertans have been invited to have their say about further amendments to the MGA until Jan. 31, 2017.

Those of us who want to see the blight of derelict properties removed from our landscape might want to ask the provincial government to make the legislative changes our cities need to do so.

Send comments to Minister Danielle Larivee via MunicipalAffairs@gov.ab.ca.

Mimi is a writer who first moved to the Alberta Avenue area over 20 years ago. She has participated in a number of revitalization initiatives and continues to promote the Ave as one of the best areas to live, work and play in Edmonton.



Revitalization has been the work of many people over several years. | Supplied



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<p>ANGELICAN PARISHES ON ALBERTA AVE ST. FAITH AND ST. STEPHEN</p> <p><i>Two Traditions – One Faith.</i></p> <p>11725 93 Street</p> <p>St. Stephen: 780.422.3240</p> <p>Sunday Worship: 8:30 am - Low Mass 9:00 am - Morning Prayer 9:30 am - High Mass 7:00 pm - Evensong</p> <p>St. Faith: 780.477.5931</p> <p>Sunday Worship: Morning Prayer Fridays at 9:00 a.m. 11:00 am - Sunday Worship 1st Sunday - Worship in the Common 2nd Sunday - Traditional Anglican 3rd Sunday - Aboriginal Form 4th Sunday - Traditional Anglican</p> <p>AVENUE VINEYARD CHURCH</p> <p><i>A friendly, informal, non-judgmental and safe place to grow spiritually. Traditional Christian values in a non-traditional way.</i></p> <p>8718 118 Avenue (Crystal Kids building) www.avenuevineyard.com Sundays at 10:30 am</p>	<p>AVENUE CHURCH</p> <p><i>A community to belong in...a community to serve with.</i></p> <p>11739 94 Street (The Studio) www.avenuechurch.ca</p> <p>Sundays 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:30 am Service</p> <p>BETHEL GOSPEL CHAPEL</p> <p><i>A Bible-based, multi-ethnic fellowship.</i></p> <p>11461 95 Street 780.477.3341</p> <p>Sunday Meetings: 9:30 am - Lord's Supper 11:00 am - Family Bible Hour Saturdays - Free English Conversation Café for immigrants</p> <p>EVANGELICAL BAPTIST CHURCH</p> <p><i>'Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you... Therefore encourage one another and build each other up'</i> Eph. 4:32, 1 Th. 5:11a</p> <p>12317-82 St. 780.474.4830</p> <p>Sunday School 10:00 am Sunday Worship 11:00 am Wed. Study/Prayer 6:30 pm</p>	<p>ST. ALPHONSUS CATHOLIC CHURCH</p> <p>11828 85th Street 780.474.5434</p> <p>Service Times: 7:30 am - Mass, Tuesday to Friday 4:00 pm - Mass, Saturday Vigil of Sunday 11:00 am - Mass, Sunday Main Celebration</p> <p>English Classes (Seasonal - call for more info.)</p> <p>St. Vincent de Paul Food Help Hotline: 780.471.5577</p> <p>ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH</p> <p>8715 118 Avenue 780-477-8677</p> <p>Service Times: Sundays at 11 am A caring and loving church in your community where everyone is welcome.</p> <p>CHRISTMAS SERVICES</p> <p>Dec. 18, 7:00 p.m. at St. Faith's. Lessons and carols for advent. Dec. 24, 5:30 p.m. at St. Faith's. Family service with pageant and Holy Communion. 11:00 p.m. at St. Stephen the Martyr. Choral mass. Dec. 25, 9:30 a.m. at St. Stephen the Martyr. Choral mass. 11:00 a.m. at St. Faith's. Service of Holy Communion.</p>
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A message from the Avenue Initiative Revitalization

Every year, something new and exciting is always happening. For 11 years, I have had the honour of working as the Avenue Initiative Coordinator and sharing in the momentum for change and revitalization in the area. In partnership with community members that live in the neighbourhoods that surround 118 Avenue from NAIT to Northlands, our revitalization initiative has contributed a legacy of success.

The change over the years has been significant. From a new streetscape and 30 building facades to the emergence of a vibrant arts community and lively community leagues, the area has become re-energized and revitalized. But the true legacy is in the time, energy and heart that so many people put into making these communities a great place to live.

This vibrancy was epitomized in the numerous acts of community that emerged during the 100 in One Day event in June of this year. Wesley Andreas led a success-

ful Animate Your Alley where eight residents painted bright and fun scenes on their garages and fences. Dora Arevalo, owner of El Rancho Restaurant, brought dancing to the street with a Latin festival called Festival Mi Tierra Calle 87 (In My Neighbourhood). And the Alberta Avenue Business Association launched Eats On 118, which gave Edmontonians a chance to experience the area's fabulous selection of restaurants.

These are only a few examples of residents and business owners contributing to their community. Initiatives like community gardens, festivals, and jam sessions adds to a long list. Through the Avenue Initiative Matching Grant, 19 festivals and events were supported. The talent and hard work of the many leaders and volunteers involved is contagious. People from all over the city are joining with local residents to attend events and experience all that Alberta Avenue has to offer.

Since the beginning of the Avenue Initiative, many

dedicated volunteers have taken part in committees and working groups to put the many ideas into action. Most of the working groups have wrapped up, and the steering committee has worked towards transitioning into a district council. This will be a first for the area! The Alberta Avenue District Council will be made up of representatives from community leagues and community organizations and will continue to serve as part of the lasting legacy left by the Alberta Avenue Revitalization Initiative.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the community volunteers that have given and continue to give their time to make the Alberta Avenue district a dynamic and vibrant community. I hope that you enjoy this year's Year End in Review and take pride in your efforts as we remember some of the great projects and events of 2016.

Judy Allan



From steering committee to district council

A steering committee has been meeting monthly since the Avenue Initiative began in 2006 to ensure that the actions on the revitalization strategy moved forward. The committee recently transitioned into the Alberta Avenue District Council. The Alberta Avenue district is the area between NAIT and Northlands from 111 Avenue to the Yellowhead. The council wants representatives from the seven leagues in the area as well as other key stakeholder organizations.

The council is positioned to better meet current needs and to continue working together when the revitalization is complete. Currently, the council includes representatives from Alberta Avenue Business Association, Arts on the Ave, Rat Creek Press and from the following community

leagues: Alberta Avenue, Eastwood, Parkdale-Cromdale, Spruce Avenue, and Westwood. It is still seeking representatives from Delton and Elmwood Park.

The district council's purpose is to:

- Build and foster connections to support communication**
- Promote networking and collaboration**
- Work together on local issues and opportunities**
- Be a strong voice to all levels of government**

Development Revitalization Group

How a community looks and feels is important to creating a great neighbourhood. The neighbourhoods in this area are home to beautiful old houses on tree-lined streets. This unique beauty is what draws many people to the area. Unfortunately, problem and nuisance properties also exist in the area.

A dedicated group of people attend the Development Revitalization Group. They keep an eye on new development and gather information on properties with problems to be addressed. The city has created a Problem Properties Task Force that is working hard to find solutions to these issues. The development group supports their work and has represented the area at city council. They attended two problem property community meetings run by the Neighbourhood Revitalization Team and the members of the Problem Property Task Force.

Joachim Holtz, Executive Director of the Alberta Avenue Business Association, and Gerard Forget, member of the Development Revitalization Group, are working on improving vacant lots and empty buildings. For the area to continue to grow and reach its full potential, it is important to draw new development to the area.





Avenue Initiative Neighbourhood Matching Fund

From \$100 Small Sparks to \$20,000 for large festivals and projects, the Avenue Initiative Neighbourhood Matching Fund supports community in creating vibrant and connected communities. The Matching Grant also provides funding for projects initiated by the many

talented people who make this area great. Each grant is matched with either volunteer hours, in kind donation, or cash.

The many events, murals, and projects that the

Matching Fund funds has a greater impact than just the events themselves. Through the years of festivals, events, murals, block parties and projects, community has worked together, forged friendships and developed leadership skills that will last a lifetime.

2016 Neighbourhood Matching Fund Recipients

Animate the Avenue Alleys
Bloomin' Garden Show & Art Sale
Black History Month
Kaleido Family Arts Festival
Deep Freeze Festival

Headless Carrot Halloween Bash
Great Pumpkin Event
SERCA Festival of Irish Theatre
Lighting Equipment
Thousand Faces Festival

Family Fun Time Outdoor Movie
SkirtsAfire HerArts Festival
Drive In On The Ave
Yule Ave A Merry Christmas
El Rancho Mi Tierra Calle 87

Flowers On The Ave
Chalk It Up
Jingle Jammin
National Aboriginal Day





A splash of colour and fun in neighbourhood alleys

Wesley Andreas

Animate the Avenue Alleys (ATAA) was based on a successful alley mural painting and placemaking project in 2015 in Spruce Avenue, part of the city-wide DIY city placemaking initiative (a joint project of City of Edmonton CITYlab and Make Something Edmonton).

@YegHappyCity collaborator and Spruce Avenue resident Wesley Andreas approached the Avenue Initiative Revitalization and Arts on the Ave to partner and organize a multi-site community and placemaking project in the seven Avenue communities for 100 in 1 Day on June 4. The project's goals were to beautify and change perceptions of underutilized alley spaces, encour-

age community building and build a stronger network within the area, and to change broader community views about the Alberta Avenue area within Edmonton.

Meetings were held in April and May to invite participants in the Avenue communities to participate. Ultimately, 11 participants and groups came forward, representing owners and renters in Spruce Avenue, Delton, Alberta Avenue, Parkdale, as well as nearby McCauley. The Avenue Initiative provided rental/hosting funds for organizing events at The Carrot and significant funds for exterior paint and painting supplies for the murals. On June 4, participants completed their projects at the 11 alley sites, hosted alley gathering spaces (temporary placemaking), and neighbours and visitors were invited to check out the spaces and the

art in action. Three Edmonton area artists were also involved in providing advice in advance or helping participants on June 4.

In addition to increasing neighbourly interaction and building community in residential areas off 118 Avenue, many participants also met each other, building a stronger network in the area. The 11 sites represent a lasting visible artifact of beautification, contributing to increased ideas of maintenance and ownership of the alleys. The positive media coverage about the process and the results contributed to positive messaging about the Avenue communities. ATAA also resulted in new relationships between CITYlab, Make Something Edmonton, AOTA, the Avenue Revitalization, @YegHappyCity, and others.



Community musicians enjoy a jam session in Alberta Avenue Community League.
| Lorraine Bergstrom

Sessions strike a chord with musicians & music

Lorraine Bergstrom

Last fall, my friend Gerard Forget and I attended a meeting called Take the Lead hosted by the Avenue Initiative Revitalization. The purpose was for people to share ideas and brainstorm implementation of new projects that would benefit the community.

We saw this as a great opportunity to share our idea of organizing jam sessions for community musicians and performers who were looking for a place to play together in an informal environment.

We quickly compiled a list of musicians and performers we knew, then began to market the idea. We booked several Sunday afternoons at the Alberta Avenue Community Centre. The first session in February was a huge success with 25 people attending.

The character of any jam session is determined by who shows up. Some people prefer to do instrumentals while others perform a cappella songs or anything in between. It is a great way to meet fellow musicians, get more stage experience, learn how to play different music or songs, and have fun! We planned for these jam sessions to be

acoustic, but many musicians brought amps and microphones.

Over the summer months, musicians from our group had an opportunity to entertain the public at some community events. After a break over the summer, the jam group started up again in October.

Jam sessions provide a venue for like-minded people of all skill levels who enjoy sharing music. Every kind of music is welcome. This is a great opportunity for all who attend to collaborate and coordinate with other musicians on the fly.



Alberta Avenue Business Association - Rising Up

Joachim Holtz

The heartbeat and vibrancy of an area is closely linked with its business district. In Edmonton and many cities across Alberta, Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) are established as an opportunity for businesses to work together to accomplish mutual goals like attracting customers.

The Alberta Avenue BIA spans from NAIT to Northlands along 118 Avenue and encompasses over 200 businesses. With its wide variety of unique businesses, most of them owner-operated, it is a great place to shop locally. A highlight of 2016 were four successful culinary tours called Eats on 118 that received incredible press coverage.

BIAs are also a liaison to city services and programs, supporting local businesses through promotion and beautification. This year, in partnership with the Avenue Initiative Association, we sponsored hanging flower baskets and flower planters along the Avenue again as well as a 16 week litter pickup project in partnership with Capital City Clean Up.

Alberta Avenue BIA has been a leader in the facade improvement projects completed since the program's inception in 2005. For the past 11 years, 29 facades have been completed under the City of Edmonton's Facade Improvement matching grant program with a total reimbursement of \$1.2 million

to commercial property owners. New storefronts attract businesses and customers, creating a vibrant shopping area.

Joachim Holtz, P.Mgr
Executive Director

Check out our new website:
www.alberta_avenue.com



ALBERTA AVENUE
BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Rising up!



A new facade project completed this year on a stand alone building at 90 Street and 118 Avenue resulted in the Pussycat Video business being replaced with two new businesses: Pink Polish Nail Salon and Fade Zone Barber and Beauty Shop.

Eats on 118 a sweet and savoury success on Alberta Avenue

Alberta Avenue BIA teamed with the Avenue Initiative to host their first food-focused campaign for the hospitality businesses on 118 Avenue. The community response was overwhelming, with four sold out tours. Fourteen local businesses participated in the guided food tours with 34 patrons per tour and 135 tickets sold.

Tour attendees were pleasantly surprised with the high value of the tours, affordable tickets, and the unique opportunity to explore and celebrate many different cultures in one evening.

The first Eats on 118 tours generated consid-

erable positive media coverage. Talented restaurateurs hosted local media personalities like Lorraine Mansbridge, Liane Faulder, Graham Hicks and bloggers for a first-hand look at the life and culinary delights of 118 Avenue.

Eats on 118 was successful in telling the story of the business owner on the Avenue and allowing attendees to tour and taste the many diverse flavours of Alberta Avenue.

Stay tuned for more Eats on 118 initiatives in spring of 2017!



Uyioghosa Oyairo | Koultures
Afro-Continental Restaurant



Abdi Dualie | Mareeg Cafe & Restaurant



Francisco Frias | Handy Bakery



Melanie do Vale | Passion de France



Battista Vecchio | Battista's Calzone



Dora & Alba Arevalo | El Rancho
Spanish Restaurant



Laura Truong | T & D Noodle House



Jesus Gonzalez Rivas | Paraiso Tropical
Latin Food Market

Volunteer & Notices

FOOD TAXI NEED: GET A FREE LUNCH

Seeking volunteers to pick up and deliver lunch to Hawrelak Park for Silver Skate Festival crew. Jan. 16 to Feb. 6. You will get a gas honorarium and free lunch. volunteer@silverskatefestival.org

DO YOU LOVE COFFEE? COMMUNITY? ARTS?

Be part of a great team by volunteering as a barista at The Carrot! If you'd love to learn coffee art and the ins & outs of being a barista, or just want to get involved in the community, contact volunteer@thecarrot.ca.

LOVE THE WINTER? WANT TO BE PART OF A WINTER FESTIVAL?

Volunteer for Deep Freeze, Jan. 14 & 15. Sign up through www.deepfreeze.org/volunteer or email volunteer@deepfreeze.org

CALL FOR ARTISTS EXTENDED

Are you a musician, visual artist, dancer, or slam poet and your family of origin is African, Caribbean, South or Central American? Be part of Black History Month in February. Contact artsadmin@artsontheave.org or call 780.471.1580 before Jan. 20.

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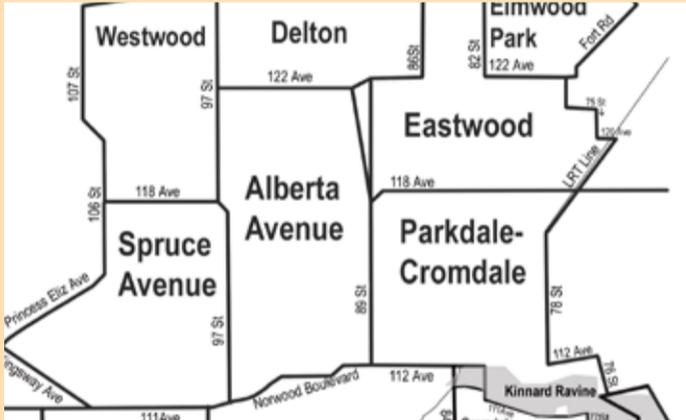
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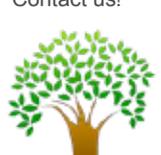
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Building communities in urban centres

Mayors' Forum addresses libraries and community

AYDAN DUNNIGAN-VICKRUCK

What can a library offer that most people don't have already with smartphones and tablets?

Mayor Don Iveson and Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi addressed a paying crowd of over 800 on Dec. 7 to defend the library's continued relevance and explain why they believe it is worth the millions each city is putting into redeveloping its downtown libraries.

"Libraries are the last great public institution in which everyone is welcome," said Iveson. "They are the most welcoming, inclusive place that we have. They reflect the value we put on citizenship, community and education."

Libraries continue as the cornerstone of community, even in this digital age and especially in lower income communities.

"Coming together in shared community space is more important now than ever," said Nenshi. "Questions around how we live together, share space, land, and water in a way that serves us all are even more important today as cities grow larger and forces that separate us seem to grow stronger than the forces that hold us together."

Nenshi discussed the increase of intolerance, racism, and xenophobia and how it's important for people to combat it. He added, "At the same time, Canada is a beacon for the world. We are a country that holds the values of safety, optimism, tolerance, pluralism, multiculturalism."

Both mayors have contributed a lot to civic life. The World Mayor Project awarded Nenshi the 2014 World Mayor Prize for his vision of urban living. Iveson served on

the Edmonton Public Library (EPL) board for many years and continues to champion its civic importance.

"As Edmonton and urban centres across Canada continue to grow, we are in need of neighbourhood gathering places. Over 80 per cent of our population now live in cities. We are continually challenged to find ways to create community. This is more easily done on a neighbourhood scale and libraries are one of the gathering places for neighbourhoods," said Iveson.

This need for community meeting spaces is especially relevant to integrating new immigrants. When asked how he felt the settlement of the Syrian immigrants was progressing, Nenshi expressed disappointment that more attention was not given to English language instruction. "Every library should have an ESL program,"

he suggested.

The discussion, directed by pre-submitted questions from the audience, referenced other visions that the mayors have for the development of their respective cities. Both mayors underlined the importance of developing the downtown core, increasing higher density residences and accessibility by walking or cycling, and increasing transit to bring people from the fringes to the city centre.

"Anything we can do to encourage people to meet their neighbour face-to-face and say 'hi, how are you?' builds community," said Nenshi. "New development must be diverse with all ages, all cultures, all incomes. When we put a face to different nationalities and cultures, we go a long way to dispelling the fear and prejudice."

Iveson referenced the development of recreation centres,

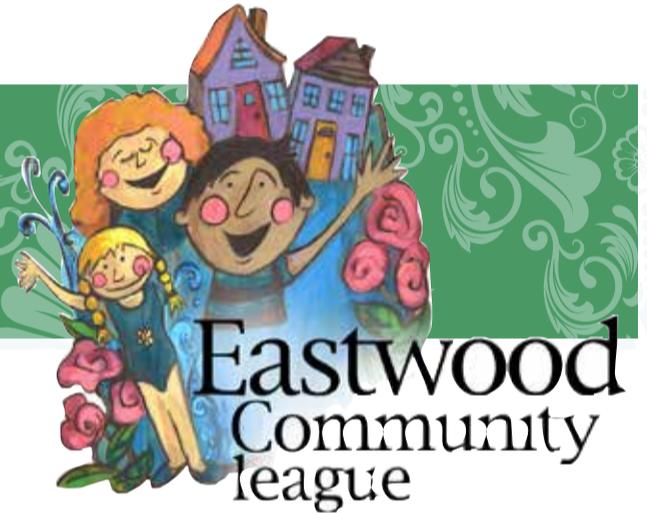
river valley walkways, cycling lanes and higher density housing such as secondary suites as ways to meet these objectives.

It is exciting to reflect, in these days of heightened cynicism about politics and government, that so many people would pay to come out on a very cold night to listen to two mayors talk about libraries and their vision for community living. We are blessed to have two mayors of vision who understand what is involved in creating nurturing and integrated communities that include citizens of all nationalities, races, and cultures.

Aydan is a social worker, blogger, tango dancer, outdoor enthusiast and co-parent with Patricia to 8 children and 16 grandchildren. He's also a resident of the 'hood and loving it.

your eastwood news

This page sponsored by Eastwood Community League



Connect with Eastwood!

Hall: 11803-86 St Phone: 780.477.2354
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Community, what is it good for... absolutely nothing?

"I refuse to believe that trading recipes is silly. Tuna fish casserole is at least as real as corporate stock." –Barbara Grizzuti Harrison (1941-2002, American writer)
Do you believe in community? If one of the board members in the picture came to your door and invited you to a winter ice carving event, how would you respond? (This question is highly rhetorical, but feel free to shout your answer to the high heavens!)

Picture this. Eastwood is your community in which to belong, to feel safe and to thrive! It is a place to join a neighbour in a community garden or attend the community rink and play some shinny hockey. This is a community to come together in

a league hall to celebrate an epic birthday party!

The previous board of directors, under the leadership of Tish Prouse, have done a lot to bring out the magic of dog parties, neighbourhood festivals and various partnerships with many local organizations. More than that, they have given new life to a community hall that needed a new sign and some critical upgrades. They believed our community to be a place in which to belong and thrive.

As the new board, we believe in continuing this vision. We dedicate ourselves to be those door knockers and ask for your ideas, insights, leadership, and passion to join us!

OUR GROWING LIST OF COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING

Free dance classes for children
| Sundays, 1-3 p.m.

Community choir with E-Town
| Youth: Wednesdays at 4 p.m.; adults: Thursdays at 6:30 pm.

Dog club
| Dogs and partners can walk, play, socialize and learn expertise for raising their dogs.
Various days of the week.

Community soccer
| Register with Delton Community League in early January to enroll children ages

3 to 16. Call 780.982.5823 or email soccer@deltoncommunity.com.

Outdoor ice rink
| Shinny hockey and community skating throughout the winter season.
Watch Facebook for details.



The new Eastwood Community League board. Back row (left to right): Linda Burns, Cheryl Atkins, Keith LaRoy, Jane Slessor, David Barker, Tao Liu. Front row (left to right): Lenn Wheatley & Elana Papin.

Blowing soap bubbles on my 63rd birthday

Considering some philosophical questions about life

AYDAN DUNNIGAN-VICKRUCK

A journalist once asked Albert Einstein: “What is the most important question we can ask?”

Einstein replied: “Is the universe a safe place?”

That’s a big question. I am not sure how I would answer it. But since I am at the reflective stage of life, it seems like a good time to give it some consideration.

Questions are like little soap bubbles we expel into the air—elusive and ephemeral, the oily marbled skin turning in the sunlight. So pretty I want to gather them up and hold on tight. But the moment I reach out to grasp hold, they disappear.

Good questions are like that. They keep you reaching out,

clutching at thin air as the answer eludes you.

These are some other questions evoked by Einstein’s question.

“Is there a God?”

“Does my life have a purpose?”

“Will my children find me as delightful and endearing when I am in diapers as I did them?”

These questions float by, changing shape and colour with each turn, their resolution just beyond my reach.

Is the universe a safe place?

As I sift through childhood memories, the answers are mixed, muddled, hot and cold.

At first it warms me. It snuggles in tightly around me like the flannel blanket I had as a child that made my world feel safe and secure. It smelled of mother’s breast and father’s musky shirts and lilacs and

spruce gum and smoke from birch logs crackling in the fireplace, bringing assurances of belonging and being loved.

And it chills me. My body tightens with the memory of the night when a predator entered the bedroom, or the afternoon when a car struck and killed our dog on the highway, or the last day of the school year when my best friend moved away into the city, or when my father moved away.

There are no sureties or guarantees. No one answer to explain all of life’s vagaries. No home lasts forever. Everyone is flawed. Our skin sags and bones weaken and health fails.

All the assurances I counted on as a child have proved as permanent as soap bubbles. Some have been popped for me, some I popped for myself.

So how am I feeling now,

looking back over six decades of burst bubbles? Or looking forward to greater uncertainties to come?

I have gathered two insights from this exploration.

First, I can’t answer that question by revisiting the past nor anticipating the future. I can only answer it for myself from inside this day, this moment, this time and place.

Secondly, it’s an intensely personal, subjective question. I cannot answer it for my children or anyone else I might want to protect from pain and harm.

So I turn off reports on the news of wars and famines and corrupt governments. I turn inward to listen to the rhythms of my body. As flesh and blood, I become mindful of the constancy of my breath, rising and falling, supporting me. By a

force beyond my own will, I am being upheld, supported and nourished.

I venture out beyond my skin. I explore our beautiful home: safe, comfortable, warm. I marvel at the singular blessedness of sharing it with the love of my life, Patricia.

In this moment, there is security and safety and love all around me.

On this, the 63 anniversary of my launching into the world, sight unseen with no guarantees, my conclusion is, “my universe indeed feels like a safe place.”

Aydan is a social worker, blogger, tango dancer, outdoor enthusiast and co-parent with Patricia to 8 children and 16 grandchildren. He’s also a resident of the ‘hood and loving it.



RCP writer Aydan Dunnigan-Vickruck hangs out with a few trolls one year at Deep Freeze. | Supplied

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Ring in the new year around the world

The different ways cultures hope for a better year

AMANDA SOKAL

My mother always told me to be careful about what I did on New Year's Eve because that is what I would be doing all year round. (What a good reason to avoid the dishes!) Here in North America, we usually celebrate New Year's Eve with fireworks, champagne, and a midnight kiss. But how does the rest of the world ring in the new year? Most traditions are designed to attract prosperity and good fortune in the coming year.

In Denmark, broken dishes aren't thrown away. In fact, people accumulate them through the year and keep them in front of their door. Then they smash the dishes on the doorsteps of friends and family as a sign of friendship and love. The person with the most broken dishes

on their doorstep is thought to have the most friends.

Brazilians like to celebrate the new year in yellow underwear because the colour is thought to attract wealth to the wearer.

Do you wish New Year's Eve celebrations would last a little longer? How about up to 15 days? The Chinese celebrate Yuan Tan, which falls anywhere between mid-January and mid-February due to the Lunar calendar. Festivities include dragon and lion dances, feasts, and gifts of money in red envelopes for good luck.

Scotland celebrates Hogmanay, also known as first footing. In this celebration, timing is crucial. The first guest (traditionally a handsome, dark-haired man) to set foot in a house in the new

year should bring gifts: bread for prosperity, whisky for luck, and other gifts like coal, shortbread, and salt.

In Belarus, unmarried women play a game to determine who will marry in the upcoming year. A pile of corn is placed in front of each single woman and a rooster is released. The woman who has the most corn eaten by the rooster is the first to wed!

Ukrainians hold New Year's Eve celebrations on Jan. 13 in accordance with the Julian calendar. According to bootsnall.com, Malanka traditionally involved people "caroling, playing pranks and acting out small Christmas-related plays."

How do you and your family celebrate? What are your traditions, and where did they originate?

SOURCES:

www.travelandleisure.com/slideshows/worlds-strangest-new-year-traditions

www.123newyear.com/newyear-traditions/

www.bedandbreakfast.com/info/travelers/travel-inspiration-guides/new-years-traditions

Amanda is a budding entrepreneur, a practicing Wiccan, a burgeoning gardener and an herbalist who is working to obtain a degree as a naturopathic practitioner.

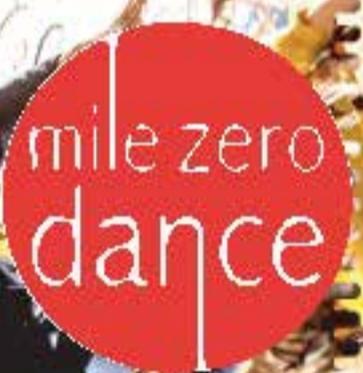


The Chinese celebrate Yuan Tan with dragon and lion dances, among other festivities. | Pixabay



North Americans typically celebrate New Year's Eve with fireworks and champagne. | Pixabay

“In Denmark, broken dishes aren't thrown away. In fact, people accumulate them through the year and keep them in front of their door.”



mile zero dance

winter 2017 at mile zero dance

<p>dance classes start jan 16</p> <p>ADULTS (butoh, toonie yoga, contemporary, contact improv)</p> <p>KIDS (ages 3-12) tuesdays and thursdays</p>	<p>free dance Day</p> <p>January 22, 1-5pm</p> <p>free drop-in classes (contemporary, kids, hip hop and more)</p>	
<p>PERFORMANCES</p>		
<p>dance crush</p> <p>Todd Houseman & Vanessa Cardona (edmonton/columbia)</p> <p>JAN 13 & 14 @ 8PM</p>	<p>dirt buffet cabaret</p> <p>JAN 19 & FEB 9</p> <p>9PM \$10 080</p>	<p>sub-arctic improv series</p> <p>JAN 26 & FEB 23</p> <p>8PM</p> <p>\$15 080</p>
<p>MEMBERSHIPS \$15 • VOLUNTEERS ALWAYS WELCOME ALL CLASSES, PERFORMANCES, EVENTS AT SPAZIO PERFORMATIVO</p>		
<p>SPAZIO PERFORMATIVO 10816 95 st milezerodance.com / admin@milezerodance.com / 780 424 1573</p>		





WHAT'S ON IN JANUARY

Brought to you in partnership with NorwoodNeighbourhoodAssociation.ca

COFFEE WITH COPS

Jan. 3, 10-11:30 am | The Carrot (9351 118 Ave). Chat about neighbourhood concerns with Cst. Challenger.



WINTER GREEN SHACK

Free drop-in. Jan. 7 to Feb. 2, Tuesdays & Thursdays from 3:30-6 pm and Saturdays from 1-5 pm at Alberta Avenue park. Come enjoy games and crafts.

DEEP FREEZE FESTIVAL

On Jan. 14 & 15, enjoy artistic panache, authentic cultural and heritage winter games, and fun. More: deepfreeze.ca

BUILT TO LAST

Until Jan. 21 | bleedingheartart.space (9132 118 Ave). Installation artist Carly Greene explores the idea of shelter (carlygreene.com).

LEARN TO SKATE

Free drop-in, 2:30-5:30 pm on Jan. 28, Feb. 4, Feb. 11, & Feb. 18 at Spruce Ave rink. All ages welcome. Learn basic skating skills through fun activities and games. Bring your own skates and helmets.



ENTERTAINMENT

PRO WRESTLING

First Saturday of the month. | Alberta Avenue. Tickets: \$20. More: monsterprowrestling.com

5 PIN BOWLING

Every day, 10 am-10 pm. | Plaza Bowl.

KARAOKE

Wednesday to Saturday, 9 pm-2 am. | Mona Lisa's Pub.

LIVE MUSIC

Fridays, 7:30-9:30 pm. Cover: \$5, children free. | The Carrot.

OPEN MIC

Saturdays, 6:30 pm. | The Carrot. Open mic is cancelled during Deep Freeze Festival (Jan. 14).



SAVE THE DATE

CARROT BY MOONLIGHT

Feb. 12, 7 pm. Doors open at 6:30 pm. Enjoy an evening of wine & beer pairings with international cheeses. Learn to make chocolate truffles. | The Carrot

NEW YEAR'S EVE SKATING PARTY

Dec. 31 from 6 pm to 1 am at Alberta Avenue rink. Music, skating, fire pit-a-blazing, & hot chocolate.



FREE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Go to ratcreek.org for more information

ESL & LANGUAGE

PRACTICE ENGLISH
Conversation circle, Mondays 7-8 pm at Sprucewood Library. Fridays, 10:30 am - noon at Highlands Library.

CREE LANGUAGE
Conversation circle by Canadian Native Friendship Centre. Mondays 6-8 pm at Highlands Library.

ECALA ENGLISH
For community integration Mondays and Thursdays from 11:15 am to 1:15 pm at Parkdale-Cromdale. More: Sarah 780.887.6825 or sarahdelano@hotmail.com.

BOOK CLUB
For literacy learners, Fridays 10 am to noon at Parkdale-Cromdale.

GLOBAL VOICES CHOIR
An informal way to practice English. No experience with singing or English is required. Lunch is provided. Thursdays noon - 1 pm at Mennonite Centre. More: Digna 780.424.7709.

CONVERSATION CAFE
Practice speaking English and learn about Western Canadian culture. Childcare provided. Saturdays 10-11:30 am from mid-September to end of May at Bethel Gospel.

LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION FOR NEWCOMERS TO CANADA (LINC)
More: Edmonton Mennonite Centre 780.423.9522 or info@emcn.ab.ca

FOOD & SUPPORT

PRAYERWORKS COMMON
Hot complimentary meals & warm friendship at St. Faith/St. Stephen. Thursday drop-in 10 am - 2 pm. Friday community supper, 5 pm. Saturday breakfasts 8:30-9:30 am. More: 780.477.5931.

COLLECTIVE KITCHEN
Cook with friends, try new recipes, help your food budget at St. Faith/St. Stephen. Cost: \$3. Second Tuesday: 1-3:30 pm. Trish 780.464.5444. Third Wednesday, 5:30-8 pm. Amanda: 587.930.8238.

PARENTS & PRE-SCHOOLERS

COW BUS
Edmonton Literacy Classroom on wheels every Friday from 8:30-10 am at Parkdale hall.

GROWING TOGETHER
A free drop-in group for pregnant women and women with babies up to 3 months of age. Free resources including milk coupons and prenatal vitamins. Tuesdays 1:30-3 pm at Norwood Centre. More: 780.471.3737.

STAY AND PLAY
Free indoor play space and unstructured group for parents and children. Snack included. Mondays 10 am - noon at Norwood Centre.

MULTICULTURAL RHYMES THAT BIND
Pre-literacy program for families with babies & children pre-kinder age. Mondays 9:30-11:30 am at Parkdale-Cromdale. More: Sarah 780.887.6825.

BABES IN ARMS
A wonderful casual parent group Fridays 10 am - noon at The Carrot.

SING, SIGN, LAUGH & LEARN
Mondays and Tuesdays 10:30 am at Sprucewood Library. More: 780.496.7099. Wednesdays 10:30 am at Highlands Library. More: 780.496.1806.

CHILDREN

LEGO AT THE LIBRARY
Design and build a lego creation. Ages 6-12. Third Saturday of the month 2-3 pm at Highlands Library.

GIRL GUIDES
Girl Guides meeting Mondays from September to June at St. Andrew's. More: 39thedmontonguiding@gmail.com or 1.800.565.8111 (answered locally).

YOUTH

EVIL GENIUS CLUB
Robot battles, Arduino hacks, DIY music, art, Minecraft, photography, 3-D design and printing are just the beginning for this club of maniacal makers. Fridays, 4-5 pm at Highlands Library.

TWEEN LOUNGE
Play video games, make a DIY project, or just hang out. Thursdays, 3:30-5 pm at Sprucewood Library and 3:30-4:30 pm at Highlands Library.

TEEN LOUNGE
Play video games, make a DIY project, or just hang out. Thursdays, 6:30-8:30 pm at Sprucewood Library.

ADULTS

ADULT COLORING
Coloring and creativity. Books, felts and pencil crayons provided or bring your own. Third Wednesday of month, 2-3 pm at Highlands Library.

AVENUE BOOK CLUB
Meets the last Wednesday of each month 7 pm at The Carrot. More: Lorraine 780.934.3209.

COMMUNITY ART NIGHT
Free art workshop for adults. Tuesdays 6:30-8:30 pm at The Nina.

NASHVILLE SONGWRITERS ASSOC INTERNATIONAL (NSAI)
Second Monday of the month 6:30-10 pm at The Carrot. RSVP: Colleen_col_kside@hotmail.com

SENIORS

NORWOOD LEGION SENIORS GROUP
Darts and pool, Tuesdays at 10 am; Cribbage, Wednesdays at 1 pm at Norwood Legion.

PARKDALE SENIORS SOCIAL
Bingo, snacks and conversation. Mondays 10:30 am - 1 pm at Parkdale. More: PCCL.info@gmail.com.

SENIORS BREAKFAST & SOCIAL (55+)
Join us for breakfast, visit, play cards, or billiards. Wednesdays 11:30 am - 12:45 pm at Crystal Kids.

FAMILIES

BOARD GAMES NIGHT
Plenty of games to choose from or bring your own. Last Tuesday of the month 7 pm at The Carrot.

FAMILY ART NIGHT
A variety of free art activities for school age children accompanied by adults. Thursdays, 6:30-8 pm at The Nina.

MUSIC LESSONS BY CREART
Free group music lessons Saturdays at Parkdale-Cromdale from 10 am to 12 pm. More: creartedmonton@gmail.com or 587.336.5480.

FREE REC CENTRE ACCESS
Free access to Commonwealth Recreation Centre on Saturdays from 5-7 pm for members of Elmwood Park, Spruce Avenue & Westwood and on Sundays from 1-3 pm for members of Alberta Avenue, Delton, Parkdale/Cromdale. Eastwood does not participate.

LOCATIONS

Community Leagues - see page 12
St. Faith/St. Stephen Church 11725 93 St
Highlands Library 6516 118 Ave
Sprucewood Library 11555 95 St
Norwood Family Centre 9516 114 Ave
Carrot Coffeehouse 9351 118 Ave
The Nina 9225 118 Ave
Norwood Legion 11150 82 St
Crystal Kids 8715 118 Ave
St. Andrew's Church 8715 118 Ave
Bethel Gospel 11461 95 St
Mennonite Centre 11713 82 St

DAWSON PARK & KINNAIRD RAVINE PARK MASTER PLAN

DROP-IN OPEN HOUSE



Tuesday, January 17
 5-8 pm
 9321 Jasper Avenue
 E4C, Alex Taylor School

The City of Edmonton invites you to help shape the 25-year vision and guiding principles for the Dawson Park/Kinnaird Ravine Master Plan. Your input will help the City develop a program that reflects the public's vision and identity for the park.

edmonton.ca/dawsonparkmasterplan



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2nd Annual BLACK HISTORY MONTH Celebration

Honoring African-Canadian Contributions

Friday, February 10, 2017

Starting 77 and at Edmonton City Hall

Join Ogden Howell Community of Alberta (OCHA) and Concordia University of Edmonton in honouring African-Canadian culture, with live traditional dance and taste of East African food.



2nd Annual SOCIAL JUSTICE FORUM

Wednesday, February 11 from 9:30 - 5 pm
to Thursday, February 12 from 9 am - 12 pm
7288 Arts Blvd, Edmonton

IMPASSIONAL INSTITUTIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL DECISIONS, PRACTICES, PROCEDURES, AND POLICIES. We have invited University Professors, Law Enforcement officials, Members of Parliament, and Human Rights Organizations.

EMINENT PERSONS PANEL: We have invited Elected Officials, Civic & Human Rights Organizations and Community Leaders to share on the Eminent Persons Panel to hear from diverse perspectives.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Email Ogden.Howell@gmail.com or chc.concordia.ab.ca, or call 780-744-8000, 780-814-5028.

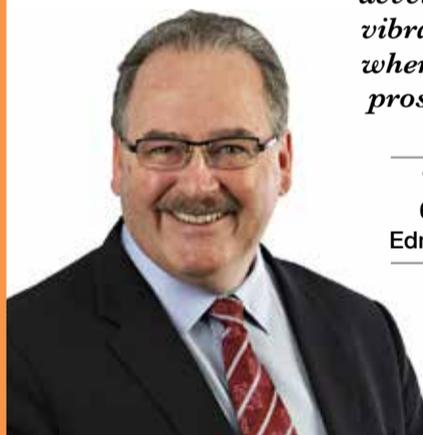


Brian Mason, MLA

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As your representative in the Alberta Legislature, I continue to work hard for you and your family:

- ~ strengthen key services, like health care & education
- ~ promote a government that is fair and responsible to all of its citizens
- ~ develop strong and vibrant communities where everyone can prosper



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