

Rat Creek Press

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



BY THE COMMUNITY - FOR THE COMMUNITY

JULY/AUGUST 2023

Family business hits all the right notes

A look inside Edmonton's oldest music store

MYAH JUNEAU

Byron Myhre was hosting band practice outside of Myhre's Music in Edmonton when his bandmates pointed out that his cell phone location services registered his music store as "Home" and his *actual* home in Sherwood Park as "Work."

Home. Byron Myhre has considered Myhre's Music on 118th Avenue his home for nearly his entire life. Established in 1967, Myhre's Music was opened by Byron's father, fiddle legend Alfie Myhre and remains the oldest music store in Edmonton. After spending so much time at Myhre's Music (formally Alfie Myhre's Music), Byron Myhre's phone registered his family's store as his home. It seemed fitting. After all, Byron was introduced to playing music at four years old.

Still, Byron wasn't always convinced that he would follow in his father's musical footsteps, despite inheriting his father's love for bluegrass and fiddle. Shortly after high school, Byron was approached by a local medical supply shop that was impressed by his outgoing personality and dynamic sales abilities. Both of his parents were supportive of his new career path. He sold medical supplies for over a year before returning to work at Myhre's Music, where he's been ever since.

Byron hated outside sales and knew he was always meant to work alongside his father. This memory triggered Byron's ambition to continue Alfie's legacy. Byron looks back, claiming, "It's where I need to be— where I want to be," and adds, "I had a really good example: my dad."

When Byron was a young adult, he worked at the store with his dad every day until 6, then race out the door. On the other hand, Alfie stayed late every night to repair fiddles or restring a wall of guitars. At the time, Byron had no idea why his father stayed so late at the store and "had no idea how much went into it."

Byron can't help but chuckle when his oldest son Tanner has one foot out the



Top: Byron Myhre in his natural habitat, ready and willing to lend a hand or play a tune. **Bottom:** A rare look behind the scenes where instruments are repaired and recycled. | Myah Juneau

door the minute the store is closed. He reminisces about being in his twenties and starting his car as soon as his shift was over, having no idea what was going through his dad's mind then. There's a familiar vibration when Tanner asks, "What is my dad doing staying here so late?" that makes Byron feel even more at home.

Despite his parents' official retirement

in 2017, they occasionally appear at the store to play a tune or help balance the accounts.

Like his father, Byron grew up playing bluegrass music and

travelled across Western Canada, entering and winning almost every fiddle competition he encountered. Byron played fiddle for a well-known Canadian bluegrass band called Jerusalem Ridge, named after a popular bluegrass song by Bill Monroe, better known as 'Father Bluegrass'.

Byron humbly credits Myhre's Music's success and his personal growth to the loyal customers and friends he's met through both the store and performing. "I can't believe people come in here and trust me— they respect me," Byron adds. Some customers even became employees, but the Myhre's carefully guard who they let into their family business. More than anything, Byron is grateful for the support from the music community and is thrilled to have his son working alongside him to continue the family legacy.

"I can't believe I can support my family with this, and everything we have is because of this silly store."

Myah Juneau is a journalist and photographer in Edmonton, Alberta. Aside from writing, Myah enjoys reading and playing hockey.



Delton Community League Where do you fit?

Neighbours we want to hear from you.

Members will be knocking on your door.

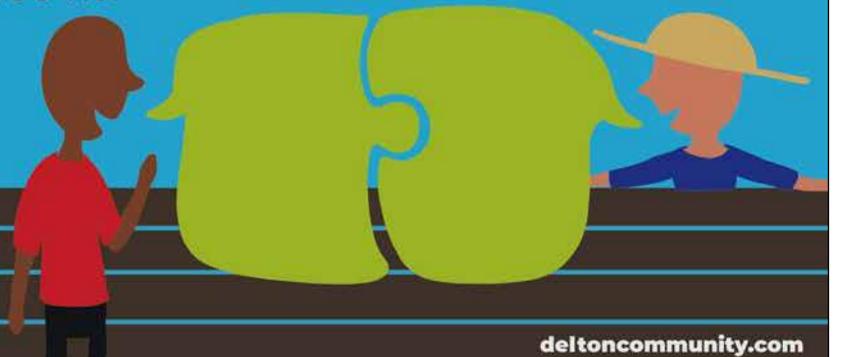
What action do you want to take?

Edmonton Tool Lending Library - league members can borrow tools at no cost.

Soccer | Skating | Crafts | Family Day | Gardens | Casino and Bingo Fundraisers

Coach | Playing | Learning | Building Maintenance | Safety

Member Day Saturday September 23 >> Come join us at the hall 12325 88 Street



deltoncommunity.com

Everything lost but his grateful attitude

Canada will be lucky to gain this young citizen

QAYUM SULTANI

Naturally, every living person has a goal or a dream. As a child in Afghanistan, I wanted to become a doctor to treat my people in the village. Our village in Ghazni province was far from the city, and people did not have access to medical care. After I was kidnapped by the Taliban and had to flee, I could no longer help my people as a doctor. I was deprived of studying and achieving my goals.

Imagine being a teenage boy who has never travelled from rural Afghanistan. Suffering as a refugee, I saw injustice to asylum seekers. I registered for asylum in Indonesia. For one year, I lived in a shelter called Wisma Satria. Then I was sent to a detention center – Rumah Detensi Imigrasi Pekanbaru.

When I arrived, the detention centre rooms had a capacity for three to four, but we were eight to 12 people. We had to spend four months in this closed-door jail cell. Our sleeping spot was next to the toilet, and because it was lower than the toilet, sometimes water poured onto us, waking us up.

If I rose to use the toilet and tried to return to sleep, I had to sit straight in my place. In my absence, a little movement of my cellmate filled my place. My only option was to sit by the wall. I was still lucky that people were not on either side. I had to wait until my friend made another move in his sleep to wedge myself in again. Sometimes, he did not move, which meant a night dozing sitting up against the wall.

Despite my challenges in the detention centre, I decided to study and improve my English. I had old books, dictionaries from



The cell where Qayum was incarcerated for four months. Designed for three people - it held eight. | Supplied

other refugees, pens, and notebooks from before the detention centre.

Understandably, many refugees were depressed. I was the only one waking up early in our room while others slept till 11 or noon. At first, I memorized basic vocabulary every morning. Now, dozens of refugees tell me kind words about how hard I studied in the detention centre.

I kept studying throughout my detention. Days, months and years passed until we were transferred to accommodation housing. [Accommodation housing resembles a motel room with two beds, a bathroom, and a shared communal kitchen.]

Once I was released from detention, I didn't quit studying and improving my English skills. I attended many classes, took an online English course, and did many upgrading activities. After several months,

I decided to be helpful to others at a lower level, so I offered English classes for refugee children and adults.

At the same time, I improved my Indonesian language and accompanied my refugee friends to the hospital, helping them with translation.

Being helpful gives me a special feeling. We grow by lifting others. In the last nine-plus years in the detention centre and accommodation housing, I have been trying to avoid stress and depression, and instead, I have been using my time doing positive things.

When I arrive in Canada, I want to become a public speaker and a writer. I want to study human rights so that I can do something positive and helpful for people who are targeted and persecuted. I want to be the voiceless people's voice.

Thousands of refugees like me are suffering on different parts of this earth. My goal is to contribute to developing my new home and my new country, the place that will welcome me. I have many plans for the future because I believe Canada is a country that gives me such an opportunity.

I am grateful to Canada's government and the honourable people for allowing me to study and live peacefully in their beloved country. I hope they will give the same opportunity to other refugees living in the Indonesian detention system.

Qayum Sultani was forced to flee his country Afghanistan and became a refugee when he was 18 years old. He just turned 27. Depending on the speed of the Canadian immigration system, he will probably be 28 or 29 years old when he arrives in Canada.

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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. 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.

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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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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.

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Alberta Ave Community Upcoming Events

**CAR SHOW
& SHINE**
July 29TH

10:00 am-4:00 pm
AACL Parking Lot
Co-hosted

by ValGal Motors

\$20 to
register
your car /
free to
attend

Concession Open
50/50 Draw
Top Entry Prizes



**94th Street
Extravaganza**

August 19TH
Between 112 Avenue
and 116 Avenue

10:00 am - 7:00 pm

Bazaar and Art Market



Artisans,
garage/street
sales, food,
open houses
and more

Bee Block Party

August 19TH
AACL Garden
11:30 am-4:30 pm

Face painting
Food Trucks

Educational
Vendors



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We Bring the supplies
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Gardens are popping up all over

Neighbours work together to grow food in community spaces

GAIL SILVIUS

Delton and Westwood had no permanent community gardens, so residents created new gardening spaces on public and private land. Learn more about the City's various urban gardening initiatives at edmonton.ca/urbangardens

Woodland Garden

A group of neighbours have constructed a garden on underused land next to an apartment building in Delton with their landlord's consent. This is a great way to convert water-hungry lawns to local food production. They've named it the Woodland Garden.

League pop-up gardens

The City of Edmonton has a Pop-Up Community Garden program to help increase access to fresh food while providing opportunities for outdoor recreation, community involvement and wellness. Delton Community League has a garden for the first time; this is the second year for Westwood Community League's pop-up garden.

Gail is recently retired and enjoys exploring her Delton neighbourhood.

Top left: Looking down on the new garden that neighbours created together on a patch of lawn between apartment buildings.

Top right: Hany is excited about her first harvest from the new garden plots next to her apartment building.

Bottom left: Delton residents, Celia and Bernie, tend their garden box at the Delton Community League pop-up garden at 12325 88 St. Celia, originally from Saigon, is happy to have space for gardening.

Bottom right: Hassan and Hussien create a raised bed for the garden. An experienced carpenter, Hassan took the lead in teaching others.

| Gail Silvius



TWO SESSIONS FOR 2023

JULY 24 - 28
JULY 31 - AUG 4

9AM - 4PM
\$100 PER SESSION

OPEN TO CHILDREN 6 - 12 YEARS OF AGE

Each day will be made up of fun activities focused around camp games, physical literacy, and building social connections among camp-goers.

For more information & to register please visit www.campchange.ca

In Partnership with PCCL




Green Shack Free Drop-In Program

Parkdale (Sheila Bowker Park) 10:30am to 1:30pm
Cromdale (Sheriff Robertson Park) 2:30pm to 5:30pm

Get active and join in on games, sport, crafts, music, drama and special events!
visit www.edmonton.ca/activities_parks_recreation/green-shacks for more information

Midsummer Night's Rhyme: Poetry Pub Night
Friday July 28th
7pm - 11pm
Family-Friendly Event

Check our website and socials for more information



Celebrate charisma with colours

African fashions on 118 Avenue add energy and style

CONSTANCE BRISSENDEN

The dresses showcased outside Top Fashion on 118 Avenue are bright and fresh.

They draw the passerby into a shop crowded with stylish designs. Women, men, and children find unique offerings from across Africa. Choose ready-made wear, order customized versions, or buy lengths of fabric to sew at home. There are many choices.

Owner Stephen Omoruyi and his wife, Nyasha Omoruyi, started selling African movies and CDs in 2007. By 2010, the store had transitioned to traditional African dress, reflecting Stephen's Nigerian homeland.

Nyasha, a knowledgeable salesperson, is from St. Vincent and the Grenadines in the Caribbean. "We are always getting new things," she says. "Prints always change. There are always new trends. But we have classic patterns as well. Older people come in and know the prints from a long time ago, from Ghana, for example, and other African countries."

Some lengths of cotton cloth are wax block prints created in Holland. All are stunningly attractive, often with distinctive colour combinations. Wash in cold water and hang to dry, Nyasha suggests.

Buyers can wear any print they choose for any occasion. Weddings, graduations, funerals, baby naming ceremonies, and church are prime examples. Head coverings, bags, shoes, and jewelry are also available.

The children's outfits made me wish I had a handy grandchild to dress up. Playful and unique, the dresses and shirts will make any child stand out.

Stephanie Hubbard, a nutrition advisor at Polar Bear Health & Water, a few doors away, loves the "energy-invoking

clothes" from Top Fashion. "The clothes are charisma with colour. I have one of their dresses that just lightens my mood. Both men and women appreciate bright colours that make the wearer feel vibrant," she says.

Sihem Market Convenience Store also features African fashions. Aman Okb, the owner from East Africa, has focused on relaxed fashions and popular sportswear for adults and children. Two-piece tracksuits offer comfort and casual style. Popular hats and T-shirts round out the look.

Red, blue, white, and black sneakers are displayed behind the counter. At the higher end, are Jordan 23 and Jordan Jumpman versions. "Puma brand offerings sell under \$200," notes Okb. Among other offerings, the enterprising entrepreneur provides African food staples, U-Haul rentals, card lamination, and snack items.

Although not African in scope, don't miss the jewelry selections at the Carrot Community Arts Coffeehouse. Edwin Aquino recently took over multiple roles: artisan, gallery, and workshop coordinator. One hundred percent of sales of AllOne Jewelry help to support women and children from Alberta, Kenya, Congo, Cuba, Rwanda, and Thailand.

STORE LOCATIONS
Top Fashion, 9338 118 Ave
Sihem Market, 7919 118 Ave
The Carrot Coffeehouse,
9351 118 Ave

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





Top left: Young Marko steps out in style at Top African Fashion.

Top right: Colourful sneakers are popular at Sihem Market.

Circle: Model Glen Williams' accessories make her a standout guest at any wedding.

Middle right: Tracksuits are youthful additions to Sihem Market.

Bottom left: Grade 4 student, Faith, models a cool two-piece summer outfit. Available at Top African Fashion.

Bottom middle: Necklaces and earrings are summer perfection at The Carrot Coffeehouse.

Bottom right: Handmade local jewelry is chosen by Edwin Aquino, artisan coordinator for The Carrot Coffeehouse.

| Constance Brissenden

Our brains work differently

Look past the labels to see the strengths of neurodivergence

REBECCA LIPPIATT

Neurodiversity is a term used to describe people whose brains work differently than the typical brain. While originally used to describe autism, neurodiversity also applies to attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyslexia, dyscalculia, Down syndrome, bipolar disorder, social anxiety, and other differently abled brains. Neurodiverse people make up around 15 percent of the population.

The stereotypical view of neurodivergent people is usually the child who can't sit still in class or the non-verbal adult who's hitting their head in frustration, or conversely, the savant who can draw entire city skylines accurately from memory, or Dustin Hoffman's character in the 1988 movie *Rain Man* who could accurately count hundreds of objects in seconds.

How neurodivergence is expressed is highly individual. Two autistic people may have completely opposite strengths and weaknesses. For example, one person might be hyperlexic (e.g. able to read very early, often without instruction) while another might be dyslexic and have great difficulty reading.

Even how a single person acts or performs can be confusing for people who don't understand neurodiversity. A person with ADHD can "hyperfocus" and complete a number of tasks in a very short timeframe. The following day, they may not be able to get off the couch and be perceived as lazy.

Being neurodivergent can have consequences in the workplace. While people with uneven skill sets may excel at many aspects of their job, there may be parts of a job that are difficult for them to accomplish. If an employer accommodates the neurodi-

vergent employee, they can thrive and be a great asset. If they are expected to follow a generic job description and are judged by their challenges, employment can be frustrating and demoralizing.

The COVID-19 pandemic increased ADHD diagnoses, both for adults and children. An article in ADDitude Magazine concluded that, for the first

time, "parents gained a front-row seat to their kids' attentional and educational struggles during remote school."

Dr. Danielle Michaels, an Edmonton family physician says, "The only thing more inheritable than ADHD is height." Multiple studies show

that the heritability of ADHD and autism is above 80 percent. As more children are diagnosed, their parents are discovering that behaviour patterns they thought were quirks or flaws are actually ADHD.

This was the case for Tekla Luchenski. While her children have neurodivergent diagnoses, she had not considered this for herself until a therapist pointed out that many of her difficulties might stem from ADHD. She later received a diagnosis.

Luchenski explains her emotions upon finding out. "It was such a relief. It was like putting on glasses for the first time. I thought, 'So this is how people see the world!'"

She continues, "Then I felt anger and grief wondering what my life could have been like had I known earlier."

Luchenski adds how ADHD has caused her social problems. "A lot of our behaviour can look narcissistic. Once, I completely forgot a friend after asking her to an event, and it really hurt her."

Several neurodiverse conditions make it difficult to shrug off frustrations or difficult situations. This

is called emotional dysregulation. Luchenski says, "It makes you reactive. They think you are this explosive person."

Despite the challenges neurodiverse people face, neurodivergence has helped humanity to survive. According to *Science Daily*, dyslexia, which is found in 10 percent of the general population in all countries and cultures, is an adaptation to specialize in exploration, to find safety in an ever-changing world.

In people with ADHD, traits such as novelty-seeking, exploration, and vigilance are adaptive advantages, in addition to being attentive to environmental threats. Autistic people often have pattern-recognition and critical-thinking skills, paired with hypersensitivity to the environment and a strong sense of justice.

Bernard J. Crespi, an evolutionary biologist at Simon Fraser University says, "I do not believe autism is a disease, but instead a natural, positive, and adaptive response to stress." He continues, "The sensory system is often on high alert, and the problem-solving abilities often kicked into high gear." This is in contrast to the view that autistic people are mentally deficient. Compassionate modifications often solve the communication difficulties that many neurodivergent people experience.

Neurotypical and neurodiverse patterns of thinking evolved together. Dr. Helen Taylor, research

fellow at the Strathclyde Business School, states, "Bringing explorative, global-thinking brains together with exploitative, local-thinking brains leads to solutions that couldn't be imagined by one individual, or even a group of similar people."

Rather than looking at neurodivergence as a problem that needs to be solved, in our ever-changing world, we can harness the strengths and experiences of neurodivergent people.

Rebecca has attended free concerts as a bouncer, juggled plates as a waitress, completed a degree in microbiology, laboured in the oilfield cleaning storage tanks, and worked as an editor for the Government of Alberta. She has been a full-time photographer for the last 15 years, is exploring writing, and is co-parenting four nearly-grown children.



Just because something is different doesn't mean it is wrong or broken. People's brains don't all function the same. This is more than okay, it's necessary. | Ali Reza Jaffari

Janis Irwin, MLA
Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood

Follow Janis on social media

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Elmwood Park Community League Grand RE-OPENING

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10:30 am - 5:30 pm

Elmwood Park
Parkdale
Spruce Avenue
10:30 am - 1:30 pm

Delton
Eastwood
Sheriff Robertson
Westwood
2:30 pm to 5:30 pm

So you want to go ... where?

Travel in Alberta competes with more pricey choices

CONSTANCE BRISSENDEN

My Alberta travels have taken me on land and water in all directions. I've learned we have alternatives to international destinations at a fraction of the price.

Do you want to go to Scotland's outposts?

Check out a closer "croft" (a Scottish agricultural land holding) at Michichi Dam Recreation Area, near Morrin, AB, south and east of Red Deer. Gazing over the reservoir to the rolling hills beyond is like a touch of the Shetland Islands. The campground attracts short-term and long-stay visitors. Enjoy fishing for rainbow trout off the dock or birdwatching along the one-kilometre-long Michichi Creek Boardwalk with eleven interpretive nature signs. Call 1-403-772-3807 for campground information.



Do you want to go to the Grand Canyon?

Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park near Milk River, AB, will take your breath away. An excellent, shaded campground with a tuck shop nestles the Milk River. Trails lead to ancient pictographs. This site has been used for thousands of years. The deep canyon vistas and twisted hoodoos are worth the drive to the very south of the province. Call 1-877-537-2757 to book.



Do you want to take a cruise on the Rhine River?

Edmonton's RiverWatch guided rafting tours on the North Saskatchewan River are a delight. Multiple options are available, from sunset floats to group and family floats. Book as soon as possible for this new and popular attraction. Your float boat is safe and comfortable for its 12.5-kilometre-long voyage. Nature passes at a leisurely pace. You are picked up and dropped



off at your vehicle. What could be easier? Book at www.riverwatch.ca.

Do you want to visit the Swiss Alps?

Try Banff or Jasper national parks instead, only a day's drive from Edmonton and thousands of dollars cheaper than the Alps. Hike the magnificent Rockies or ride into the clouds with the Jasper SkyTram. Pamper yourself at Banff Upper Hot Springs, open year-round with its natural mineral water. Waking up to the sound of silence at a camping site is exquisite. Book online for all accommodations.

Do you want to dine in New York City?

I do! But I'll try Red Deer instead as a foodie destination. The city, including an expanding downtown food district, has many tasty spots now. I'll lunch at Shiso for a Japanese Sushi and Sashimi Combo or enjoy a King Crab Maki. Then it's on to supper at The Granary Kitchen for Walnut Salmon or their Rack of Ribs with 15 beers on tap. For dessert, Angels' Bingsu and More has multiple sweet treats. I want a Bingsu, a fluffy Korean shaved ice dessert loaded with sweet toppings. Or maybe a Mango Sago, a creamy coconut tapioca pudding with mango chunks? An overnight stay at a local hotel is on order.

It's my fantasy for a relaxing and tasty getaway with yummy tales to tell.

Alberta is a fine place to tour and enjoy. Make shorter trips in the province for a fraction of the cost of international travel. Other places are great, but we have entertaining – and cost-sensible – options close to home.

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

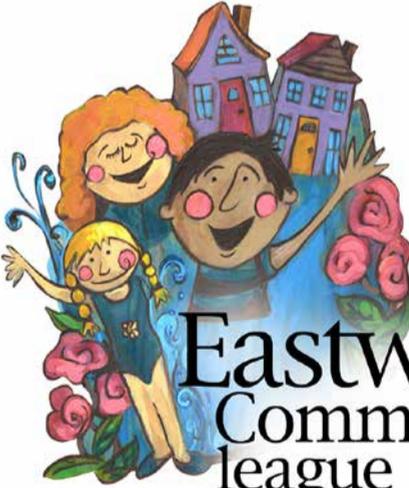
Top: The view over the reservoir at Michichi Dam Recreation Area feels like a taste of Scotland. **Middle:** The views of twisted hoodoos at Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park are breathtaking. **Bottom:** The beauty of winter is the backdrop for the Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel. | Constance Brissenden

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Eastwood Community league
1923 - 2023

Bingo Night



Get ready to shout "BINGO!" and win some amazing prizes at this fun-filled event. First two cards are free and a dollar for additional cards. Also a 50/50 final game for \$2 entry!

Monday July 31st
Spruce Avenue Hall

Bring your friends and family for a night of laughter and excitement. Prizes will be awarded to the lucky Bingo winners!

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Edmonton



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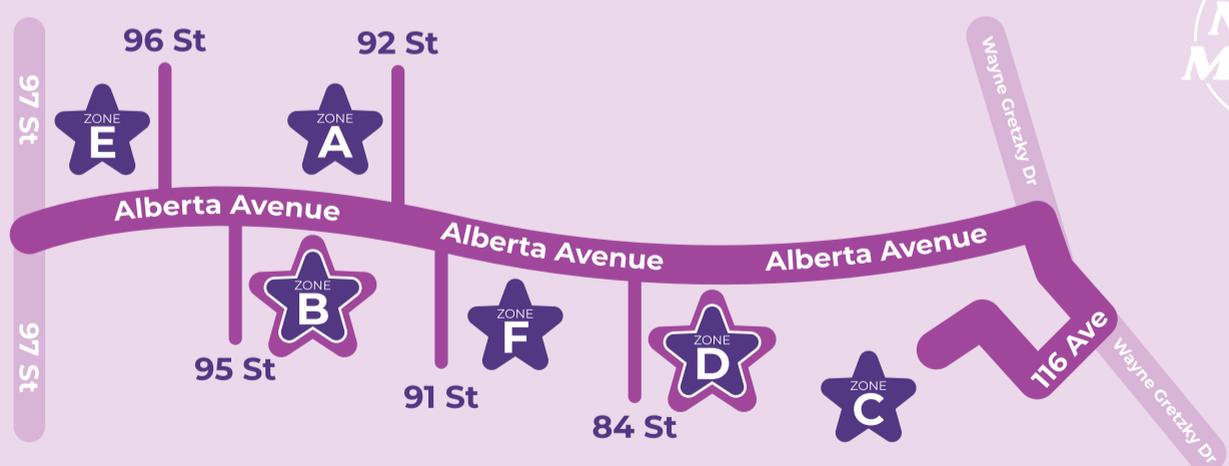
10 Markets from June to September, 2023

Friday Nights | 6 - 10 pm



Scan for dates & locations

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★ ZONE A 9210 118 Ave
June 30 - Alberta Avenue Community League

★ ZONE D 11745 84 St
August 11 - Battista's Calzone
September 1 & 8 - Battista's Calzone

★ ZONE B 11765 95 St
July 14 - Downtown Auto
September 15 - Downtown Auto

★ ZONE E 9606 118 Ave
August 18 - Mona Lisa Pub

★ ZONE C 7515 118 Ave
July 24 & 25 - Special KDays Edition

★ ZONE F 9035 118 Ave
August 25 - Canadian General Store