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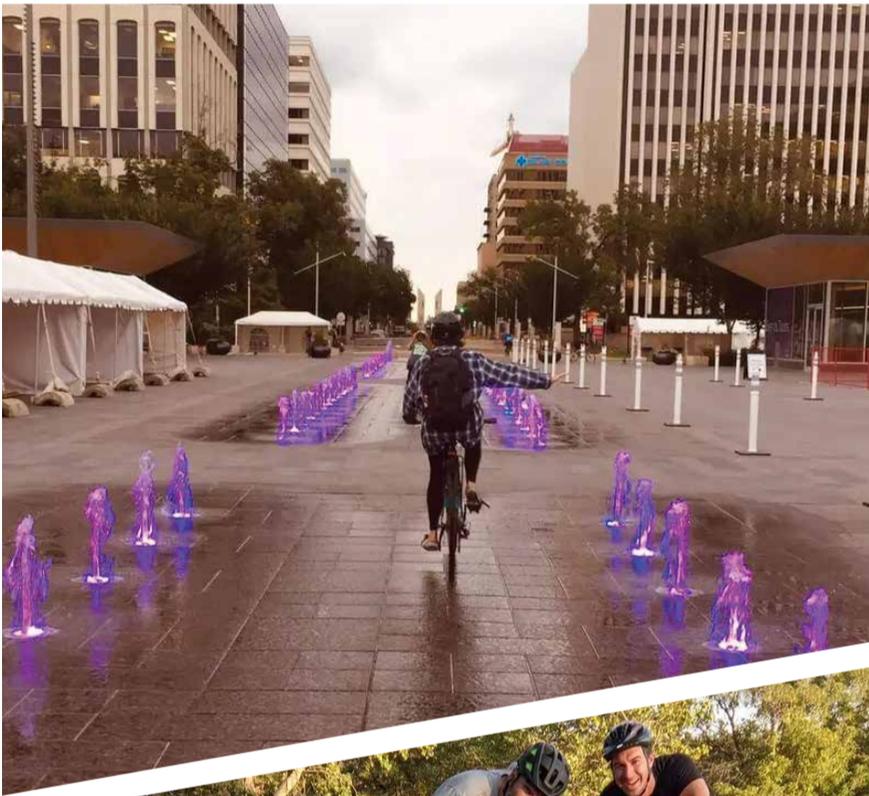


BY THE COMMUNITY - FOR THE COMMUNITY

JUNE 2023

Exploring the city on two wheels

Cycling group encourages neighbours to get to know one another



Top: Alberta Ave Cycle Nights is open to everyone and it's free to participate.
Bottom: The group is planning to add Sunday rides for kids or adults getting back into bike riding. | Supplied

ANDRES CALDERON

The Alberta Avenue area can be experienced in a way that combines both community building and an active lifestyle with the Alberta Avenue Cycle Nights group.

"It was started off to sort of get people [in the neighbourhood] used to riding or learning how to ride on the bike paths and bike network," says Maggie Glasgow, one of the group creators. "[And then] also just to get exercise in a sociable kind of way."

Glasgow and two other local residents started the group in 2019 after a discussion at their local community league.

"We were talking about how the bike network had expanded and a lot of people were unsure of how to use [it], all the rules and everything around [it], so we decided to start this group."

The group meets every Wednesday at 7 pm at 114 Ave and 95 St (beside OTTO Food & Drink) and doesn't follow a regular route. Instead, they map each ride as it happens, basing the decision on who shows up and their skill levels.

"It all depends on who comes," says Glasgow. "If there are people that... maybe they have a bad knee or their stamina just isn't up, then we will usually just ride on the bike network and not go down into the river valley. [Often] we just kind of explore and see what's around."

The group will also use a general consensus when determining how long each ride will last.

"In the fall, we usually don't get more than an hour in," says Glasgow. "It depends. Some weeks it will be a large group and everybody is like, 'Yeah, let's go for longer, let's see where we get to.' Nothing is really set in stone."

Glasgow notes the group is open to the public and is free to join. For now

the rides are arranged using Facebook, though other social media platforms could be considered in the future if needed. Cyclists are also free to post in the group if they want to connect with someone for a bike ride that's independent of the regularly scheduled meets.

According to its Facebook page, the group now includes 217 members, though Glasgow clarifies that rides themselves have consisted of anywhere from a few participants to a maximum of 12-14 riders. She

notes, however, that she would be happy to see an increase in people attending each ride.

"We'd like to see more, a lot of people are interested," says Glasgow. "Maybe if [you're] shy, come on out, because it's a really nice group of people that go and are really welcoming. As we ride, we talk, we get to know people. It's a good time."

Glasgow adds the group is planning to incorporate rides on Sundays geared towards kids or adults who are new to cycling or who want to get back into the sport. She clarifies these rides would be a "no pressure sort of ride."

"I think a lot of people in this neighbourhood...want more accessibility using alternate forms of transportation," says Glasgow. "Now, with the bike routes, I feel so much more comfortable and I've gotten back into cycling and I use my bike all the time."

The group is on Facebook under the name Alberta Avenue Cycle Nights.

She adds that anyone interested in cycling can visit the Bike Edmonton Downtown Community Workshop for affordable equipment.

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

"Maybe if [you're] shy, come on out, because it's a really nice group of people that go and are really welcoming. As we ride, we talk, we get to know people. It's a good time."

Maggie Glasgow

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Enjoy Alberta Ave's new dog park

A new off-leash dog park opens off 118 Avenue and 93 Street



Dogs have a new place to roam in Alberta Avenue's Dog Park. | Molly Staley

The Alberta Avenue Dog Park has a particular charm to it. It has beautiful trees, benches, puppy poop bags, and a lovely stillness during certain times of the day.

However, Loretta Paulina calls it “the sad dog park” because it’s not relatively well known yet. Some people prefer to use the Eastwood Dog Park, as it’s larger and familiar. It should be known that although 118 Avenue and the surrounding area is full of beauty, culture, and life, we must be cautious dog owners in our communities. Unfortunately, the park doesn’t yet have proper lighting, so owners are limited when it comes to visiting at night or when the sun sets early from the fall to the spring.

When asked how the City of Edmonton could improve the park, Walker notes, “It would be nice to see another entrance to get in and out of the park easier. We have seen improvements made since it opened, and we’re pleased.”

The Alberta Avenue Dog Park can be a new treasure in our dog-loving community if we let it be so. The park is open until 11 pm daily for users to responsibly enjoy.

Molly is a journalist and communications specialist in Edmonton, Alberta. More than writing, she loves her pug, Garry.

MOLLY STALEY

Nestled between churches on 93 Street and 117 Avenue is a quaint, recently built dog park. It can be hard to see at first if you are walking nearby, but this small park was made for your furry best friends.

“We love that park!” says Samantha Walker, a long-time 118 Avenue resident. “We have two dogs, and one of them is not very friendly with other dogs...and because we can see who’s coming and get her leashed up fast... one of us can just take her to the

leashed area behind the park, while our other dog can socialize like he loves to do.”

According to the City of Edmonton Off-Leash Areas & Dog Parks website, all users of this new area must respect the rules included in the park’s bylaws and that are listed on the park’s signs. Dogs must remain on leash until they enter the barrier between public and park. Dog owners must always respect each other. Any violent dogs must be removed immediately. And an important rule to remember—primarily due

to recent events in the area—is to avoid wildlife such as coyotes. But the number one rule is to clean up after your pup.

The Alberta Avenue Dog Park has a particular charm to it. It has beautiful trees, benches, puppy poop bags, and a lovely stillness during certain times of the day. As a frequent user, I find solace in taking my dog to the park. As he searches for the perfect spots to relieve himself, I’ll put on a podcast and walk around the small bit of land, or sometimes I’ll sit.

Blake Desjarlais
Edmonton Griesbach

Constituency Office
10212 - 127th Avenue NW,
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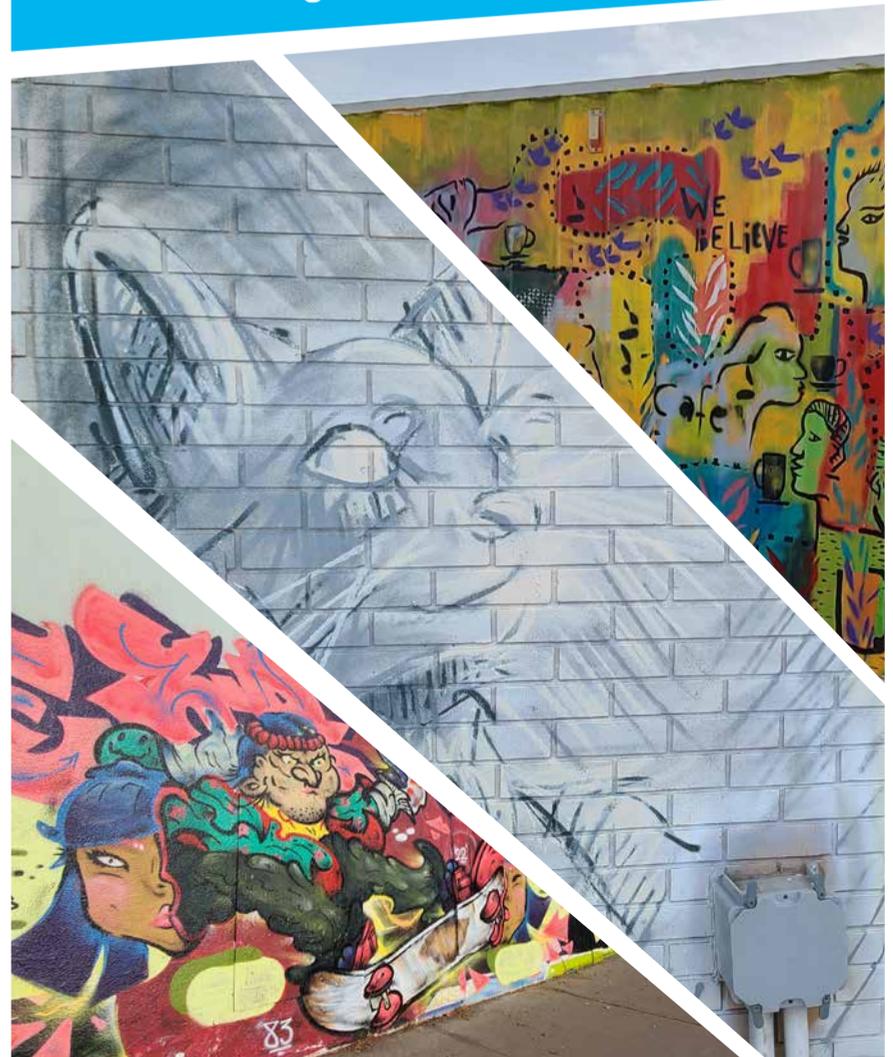
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ABOUT US
We are a non-profit community newspaper serving Alberta Avenue, Delton, Eastwood, Elmwood Park, Parkdale-Cromdale, Spruce Avenue, and Westwood. Published on Treaty 6 Territory. The opinions expressed in the paper are those of the people named as authors of the articles and do not necessarily reflect those of the board or staff.

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Build Community, Encourage Communication, Increase Capacity.

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

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

CONTRIBUTORS
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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.

Alberta Ave welcomes a local choir

Ruth Alexander leads a group of “excellent women” who sing and have fun

MOLLY STALEY

Alberta Avenue Community Centre is home to many activities and groups, and one of the newest is a local choir group called The Larks, led by Ruth Alexander.

Alexander is a British actor and musician with over 25 years of experience who lives in the Alberta Avenue area. Alexander has lived in Canada since 2017. She’s been a part of numerous Edmonton productions, notably *Once, A Musical* and *A Christmas Carol*. This summer, she’ll be the music director of *Little Shop of Horrors* at The Citadel Theatre. Though Alexander loves performing, she also loves being involved in and leading choirs.

When Alexander left the UK for Canada, she wasn’t only leaving her home but also a singing community, a collective, and a choir. “I worked with a choir...called the Handbag of

Harmonies, an all-woman choir. It was such a community, and when I moved to Canada, I missed having that kind of community around. Singing can bring people together in a unique way.”

She assembled a casual, no-obligation group of people who loved to sing off Whyte Avenue some years back, which became the foundation of The Larks. Alexander’s original intention was to gather people who enjoyed singing, regardless of skill, because it made them feel good. Choir members feel connected to others, and Alexander’s mission is to connect and empower other women who want to branch out and share their voices. “I wanted to build a community

in Canada,” says Alexander.

Any woman can join the group. No audition is necessary, and singing skills can be refined. She hopes The Larks is an inclusive, welcoming

group of people who love to sing. Their repertoire is also quite diverse. “We know about seven or eight songs now,” says Alexander, “and they sound very good!” Some of the music they’re learning includes the 70s and 80s hits, such as Elton John and The Police, alongside Cher and a healthy number of show tunes. “We have pieces from *Into the Woods* and *Mamma Mia*.”

Alexander kindly invited me to attend a rehearsal. Do, re, me, fa, show me to the room! I could hear the group belting their exercises as soon as I entered the building. Everyone, with perfect posture, looked comfortable and happy. As Alexander led the group through exercises, I watched as they smiled through each note.

Despite this choir’s casual nature, they’re excited about a few upcoming performances—their first as a group. “Our first performance—we’ve never

performed for anyone—we’re going to perform for family and friends. It is going to be a social evening rather than a performance.” They don’t meet during the summer, but in September, The Larks will be performing at the annual Run for Life and at Kaleido Festival and seeking out street performance opportunities at Edmonton festivals, possibly such as the Deep Freeze Festival.

Alexander hopes that the choir will grow and they’ll be presented with more opportunities to perform; however, she honestly would like to see people enjoying singing.

The Larks meet every Monday at 7 pm at the Alberta Avenue Community Centre. You may pay a drop-in fee or commit to a season. For more questions, email ruth@ruthalexander.co.

Molly is a journalist and communications specialist in Edmonton, Alberta. More than writing, she loves her pug, Garry.

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Ruth Alexander (sitting at the front of the room) with The Larks, the new choir. | Molly Staley

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Local community garden expands

Alberta Avenue will be adding a solar-powered greenhouse



Crew from Exceed Solar and Alberta Avenue unloaded the greenhouse panels next to the base. From left to right: Laslo Bajzar, Steven Michos, Megan Alzetta, Elliott Putters, John Putters, and Daniel Shurko. | Karen Mykietka

MYA COLWELL

Alberta Avenue Community League's garden continues to expand. The league partnered with Exceed Solar, an Edmonton-based company that is set to supply a solar-powered greenhouse for the space. Exceed Solar is donating a portion of the labour and building materials while also partnering with Alberta Avenue in their fundraising efforts.

The greenhouse will be one of the first of its kind to be installed, and it was designed to push the limits of a traditional residential greenhouse.

"The whole purpose of the greenhouse was [to] take a normal greenhouse and extend it beyond its seasonality in Canada or in cold climate weather," says Elliott Putters, the CEO of Exceed Solar. The organization designed the greenhouse in partnership with the University of Alberta, and the original prototype was built at the university in the East Campus Gardens.

The greenhouse features a northern

insulated wall that retains heat, and a solar-powered air source heat pump that can both heat and cool the space. The greenhouse's ability to cool the space is important since temperatures are reaching above 30 degrees starting as early as May.

The greenhouse will be one of the first of its kind to be installed, and it was designed to push the limits of a traditional residential greenhouse.

"We also build in sensors to our greenhouse so that we can monitor the indoor conditions of the greenhouse," explains Putters.

The greenhouse also has a windowless potting shed that's completely insulated, notes Karen Mykietka, the facility manager at the league. Since the shed is insulated, it would be easy to keep warm with only a small heater, and with the help of grow lights, it would be a good place to start plants during the cold season.

"The plans are to use [the greenhouse] as a three-season greenhouse because that winter season can be very expensive to keep the greenhouse warm," says Mykietka. But she says they're willing to see how far they can push the greenhouse.

The greenhouse has several main benefits. Most importantly, it allows gardeners to start their plants sooner in the season. "You can get at the very least a month, potentially two months, earlier in the season than you would normally. So you're starting with a bit of a head start on the season," notes Putters. "You can potentially get another crop cycle out of the season."

"It would be a great way to extend our season later into the fall and to start things [earlier] in the spring," says Mykietka. "We could start a lot more of our own flowers, and gardeners can start veggies."

Additionally, the greenhouse is another lovely space in which the community can gather. As Putters points out, this factor is a crucial element of a community garden.

Currently, the greenhouse is in the process of being built. Alberta Avenue built the base of the greenhouse, and Exceed Solar is building the greenhouse

on top of that. Putters says that it takes two to three weeks for construction to be completed.

For Putters, deciding to put the greenhouse in at Alberta Avenue was an easy decision. "We chose Alberta Ave because quite frankly, I think they're the community in Edmonton that really deserves it," says Putters. "I find the residents of

Alberta Ave are incredibly proud of their community. They have a beautiful community garden with plenty of space there, and we have a product that we feel fits the needs of the community. It would be a perfect showcase for that product to other communities as well."

The league is considering running workshops and classes out of the greenhouse in the fall. A gala unveiling the greenhouse will happen later this summer.

Mya is a student working toward a career in journalism and communications. Writing is one of her passions, besides baking and playing trombone.

The league is considering running workshops and classes out of the greenhouse in the fall. A gala unveiling the greenhouse will happen later this summer.

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The unstoppable spirit of Albertans

We found courage in the face of fires this May

CONSTANCE BRISSENDEN

The wildfires of Alberta seemed far removed from my life. In mid-May, I learned that they affect everyone in Alberta, especially students.

As an author, I sometimes visit schools to talk about creating great books and the books I wrote with Cree author Larry Loyie (now passed away).

During our talks, the students learn about Indigenous traditions, wild animals, and courage in the face of change. Loyie's books bring out questions and discussion. The students know what a *mosoom* is (a grandfather). They know *kokom* (grandmother). These relations are important in their lives.

The students teach me a lot. On my recent week-long tour to schools in the Lac La Biche area, they shared their fears of fire. I learned that Albertans are a tough lot, even when the worst has happened.

The Great Fire of 1919 wiped out the budding town of Lac La Biche. This year, by mid-May, 116 wildfires flared and burned in the area. Because

of the possibility of fire, the Young Alberta Book Society said I could postpone my school visits, which were sponsored by Cenovus Energy. I chose to head north. Learning about the students, their lives, their accomplishments, and their challenges made me grateful that I went there after all.

I met Shylit, a Grade 10 student, proud of winning a contest to create an anti-bullying poster at Light of Christ School. I also met Aaron, who's in the same grade. What he said shocked me to the core. He told the class that his grandparents' house on Fox Lake First Nation had just burned to the ground.

For Aaron, the fire left a huge hole in his life. His summers are usually spent with his grandparents. "I guess I won't be going there this year," he said. He believes they'll build a new house.

I told the class that I wanted to write about the fires and the courage of Albertans. Aaron's classroom buddy, Noah, offered a title for my article. "Call it, 'We're unstoppable!'" he said.

The students teach me a lot. On my recent week-long tour to schools in the Lac La Biche area, they shared their fears of fire. I learned that Albertans are a tough lot, even when the worst has happened.



Constance Brissenden with Grade 9-10 students at Amisk Community School. | Florence Castor

Alberta is a beautiful province. In spring, the forests are bright green.

The skies were clear and the birds were singing as I drove to Beaver Lake Cree Nation. The nation's Amisk Community School has 110 students in a community of some 1,200 members.

After my talk with the Grade 5-6 class, one student stayed behind. Quietly, Annie told me that her grandparents' house, where she'd lived, had burned down. "I thought that I would live in that house my whole life," she said. Although it had happened several years ago, the pain was still strong. Fire scared her and made her cry. I said that

Spending time with students in five schools, both in town and in tiny hamlets like Caslan, sharing their stories—of fires they survived, of wild animals they saw, of sports they liked, of dreams they had of the future—was a challenge and a gift.

she'd have her own house one day. I sincerely hope so.

Spending time with students in five schools, both in town and in tiny hamlets like Caslan, sharing their stories—of fires they survived, of wild animals they saw, of sports they liked, of dreams they had of the future—was a challenge and a gift. I hope that I encouraged them to stay in school, and to make their dreams come true. I know they encouraged me, and opened my eyes to their reality. Fire can destroy, but—like Noah said—the students are unstoppable.

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



The energetic Grade 5-6 class at Amisk Community School. | Constance Brissenden

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OPINION

Teach entrepreneurship in schools

The earlier people learn about business, the better off they'll be

SHAREE ALUKO

Many people seem to think they should either go to post-secondary school or start a business. Why can't these two things be done in tandem? It would be better to learn the theoretical principles that will establish the foundation needed to create and sustain a lucrative business.

This line of reasoning could be due to the lack of entrepreneurship curriculum taught in schools between kindergarten and Grade 12, and the misconception that it's irrelevant to be taught how to operate a business. Some may say to go to university after making money, which

isn't necessarily the wrong way, either. Others may even say they don't need an education since they already can earn a decent living.

While there are varied perspectives on this issue, entrepreneurship should be taught to children as early as elementary school. It's important to create an awareness of business as early as possible and inculcate the necessary skill set that can be honed and further developed in high school and post-secondary.

Many young students are interested in operating a business. For example, my son Ajayi came home from elementary school saying that he and a group of his classmates were starting a business.

While there are varied perspectives on this issue, entrepreneurship should be taught to children as early as elementary school.

I assumed it was a school project, but later on I inquired some more. To my astonishment, it wasn't a school initiative but a group of kids coming up with the idea to start an origami business.

"Business is gonna be crackling," said Ajayi. His friends were equally confident. He shared that his friends said, "Business is gonna be booming," and "Business is gonna be rocking." He also told me that they meet on Fridays to provide updates. This proves that even Grade 3 kids are excited about entrepreneurship.

It's beneficial to foster an entrepreneurial spirit in students early, thereby presenting it as an option for a career path. This may include encouraging students to think of business ideas, teaching them about generating an income, and providing them with explanations of profit and loss. They could have projects that include starting a business and exploring strategies about growing a business.

According to unchartedlearning.org, "Teaching elementary entrepreneurship curriculum isn't solely about introducing principles of business, but rather about teaching students how to adapt to the ever-changing world around them by developing an entrepreneurial mindset—a mindset that embraces creativity, resiliency, and accepts learning from failure."

More post-secondary institutions should offer entrepreneurship as a major, which would encourage the entrepreneurial-minded to pursue further education in alignment with their goals. Including an entrepreneurship course in all majors as a foundational or core course could lead to more successful professional corporations because

these lawyers, doctors, or engineers would be better equipped to work in and operate these workplaces.

Many professionals are now going back to business schools to complete an MBA because they have come to the realization that they're falling short in the business knowledge to successfully operate their organizations. They have all the expertise in their respective fields, but it takes more than that. The missing ingredient is business acumen.

By incorporating more entrepreneurship in our schools, we'll not only be creating workers but also more employers. The idea of creating and maintaining a business may appear less daunting because they would've been preparing for this possibility from a

very early age. It will create more independent graduates who can also be intrapreneurs (employees who focus on innovative ideas or projects), although employees would be empowered in working in more independent roles. Incorporating entrepreneurial skills is vital because the

attributes of independence, risk-taking, assertiveness, innovation, and creativity will create a better workforce and a stronger and more productive economy.

According to hbr.org, "After all, in the unknowable future, all leaders will need to be entrepreneurs: visionaries that can imagine, adapt, and act nimbly to address whatever challenges come their way. Business schools should not delay in adopting new teaching philosophies that empower the next generation of entrepreneurs—as well as all business leaders—to meet these challenges."

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



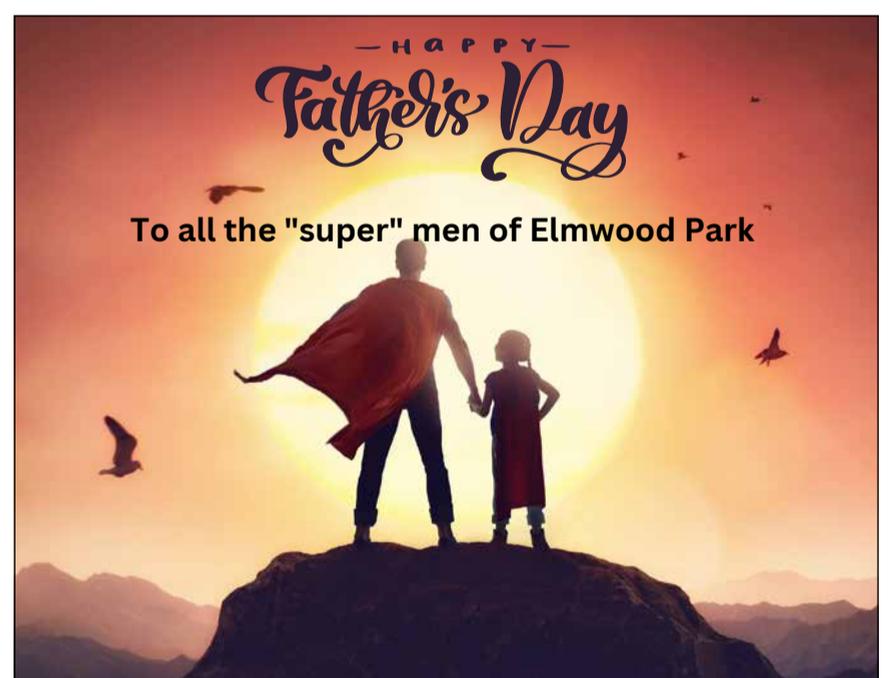
Teaching entrepreneurship early on will prepare people for the future.
| Christina at wocintechchat.com on Unsplash

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Community building includes caring

Executive director of CEASE retires from her role

ANDRES CALDERON

According to Kate Quinn, the outgoing executive director of The Centre to End All Sexual Exploitation (CEASE), the work being done by CEASE was made possible in part by a combination of community awareness, community partnerships, and an episode of *The Oprah Winfrey Show*.

“CEASE was born out of community action, especially in the Alberta Ave and McCauley neighbourhoods,” says Quinn, “and I was first a volunteer on the community committee that eventually became known as the Prostitution Awareness and Action Foundation of Edmonton. [In] 2011, we renamed ourselves as CEASE.” Quinn had been executive director of CEASE since 2011.

The committee worked with law enforcement, street outreach workers, safe houses, and parents whose daughters had been victims of exploitation. She credits this coalition of community partners for creating CEASE as a “response to the visible exploitation of vulnerable children and youth in our neighbourhoods and the impact of men cruising our core communities.”

Quinn says they used to meet at the Alberta Avenue Community Hall. “We tried to see what [we could] do locally to make a difference.”

An episode of *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, explains Quinn, introduced the committee to an initiative being used in San Francisco known as the John school.

“By then the mayor and police chief had started a task force to look at the impact on communities and vulnerable people,” says Quinn. “We worked with the mayor’s office and the police chief and they sent two detectives down to San Francisco to observe this John school.”

Any doubts that a similar strategy should be used in Edmonton were quickly dispelled at the committee meeting following the detectives’ return.

“The detectives came to our meeting, and I was the volunteer chairperson at the time,” says Quinn. “Sitting next to the detectives was a petite,

Indigenous woman. I knew her story, [but] nobody else did, and she chose that moment to say, ‘I used to be on the streets... and I think this John school is a good idea.’ And all around the circle everybody said, ‘Yes, we think it’s a good idea.’”

“Sitting next to the detectives was a petite, Indigenous woman. I knew her story, [but] nobody else did, and she chose that moment to say, ‘I used to be on the streets... and I think this John school is a good idea.’ And all around the circle everybody said, ‘Yes, we think it’s a good idea.’”

Kate Quinn, outgoing executive director of CEASE

Quinn notes this resulted in the Adult Alternative Measures Program, in which men who were caught attempting to buy sex services would have to pay the equivalent of a fine, and the money collected would then be invested by the government into community programs that “would help heal the harm” caused by the men’s actions. Quinn adds this same investment is what provided the funds to start CEASE as a non-profit.

Since its foundation, CEASE has since grown to include six full-time staff and three part-time staff. Quinn adds she has seen the positive effects of her work, but notes challenges in helping those vulnerable to exploitation still exist. Amongst these are the increase in crystal meth use in the community and the use of the internet as a means for men to buy sexual services.

Despite this, however, Quinn is optimistic that CEASE is up to the challenge. She speaks highly of the incoming executive director, Liz John-West, and is excited to see how CEASE will grow under her direction.

Quinn says she will use her retirement to “rest, get fit, and reconnect with family and friends.”

As for her time at CEASE, Quinn speaks less of her own considerable accomplishments and instead reflects back on the organization’s roots as a community group.

As for her time at CEASE, Quinn speaks less of her own considerable accomplishments and instead reflects back on the organization’s roots as a community group.

“I think it’s very important to work as a community,” says Quinn. “[And] to keep expanding that circle and ask, ‘Who’s voice are we missing, and how do we need to grow so that we reflect the realities and the diversities of what is happening in our communities?’”

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



Kate Quinn is retiring as the executive director of CEASE. | Supplied

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The truth about being a refugee

Finding hope is a powerful thing after being lost in despair

QAYUM SULTANI

My life entirely changed on Oct. 16, 2014, when I was forced to flee my country of Afghanistan and become a refugee. At the time, I was 18 years old.

I'm from the Hazara ethnicity of Afghanistan. Our people have faced massacre, migration, forced displacement, and even enslavement in Afghanistan for a century and a half.

Being a refugee wasn't my choice. The Taliban kidnapped me and I escaped. I fled to Indonesia hoping to be rescued, and dreaming of a safer, better, brighter future.

When I arrived in Indonesia, I was put in a detention centre for three years. Day by day, time passed. I realized that while my life was saved, I'd been trapped physically, mentally, and spiritually. My crime was fleeing war, discrimination, injustice, insecurity, and genocide. After I was released, I learned that I'm not allowed to study, work, travel, or live a normal life in Indonesia.

After understanding and accepting my situation, I decided to do positive things despite the many challenges. When I was in the detention centre, I started learning English. When I got out, I started learning the Indonesian language. I teach English to refugee kids on a volunteer basis, and sometimes I lend my skills as a translator to other refugees in the hospital. Learning languages, reading



Qayum has been a refugee in Indonesia for the past eight years. | Supplied

books, and doing exercises enabled me to live an easier life.

Still, I'm a stateless refugee that no one wants. I belong to nowhere. The dreams that I had, the enthusiasm that I had, and the hopes that I had were all destroyed in the refugee world.

I live a wishful life as a refugee. Every day and every second, I wish my country was a safe place to live. I wish I wasn't a refugee. I wish I could study and achieve my goals and dreams. I wish I could live

freely like a normal human. Among all these wishes there's a sad and bitter wish that hurts me all the time, and that's wishing not to die as a refugee.

In the past eight years in Indonesia, many refugees have died. Many committed suicide, and others died due to stress, depression, and hopelessness. Witnessing my friends dying made me more and more hopeless. My life became a gradual death after living in uncertainty for years.

Days, months, and years passed and nothing changed about my future. The pain that I have as a refugee isn't a simple physical pain, but a pain that's poisoned my mind, my physical body, my heart, and my soul.

Many months ago, I met a group of five Canadians. When they told me they'd sponsor me to live in Canada, my world changed.

I feel like a light of hope has been lit inside me. It gives me power every day. It recharges me like a dying battery. I was losing hope and disappointment was making me die inside. But my sponsors didn't let that happen. They extended their helping hand in the ocean where I was drowning in disappointment and hopeless-

ness. They have enlightened my life, giving me hope. Now I'm hopeful. I'm optimistic.

For a human being, nothing's more powerful than hope. Hope captures our soul and our whole being and pulls us out of the deep well in which we thought we were almost dead and would never see light again. Hope returns us to the path of life. My sponsors are the reason I can see the light once again.

I'm extremely happy that the Canadian government and the dear people of Canada are giving me the opportunity to see the light once again. And I'm grateful from the bottom of my heart.

Once I get resettled, I'll choose a lovely place to live in the countryside so I can plant trees. I want to plant

100 trees every year with my own hands for as long as I'm alive, because I truly love nature.

With respect to lovely and honourable Canadians.

Qayum is an Afghan refugee who has been stranded in Indonesia for nearly 10 years. A group of Alberta Avenue residents recently applied to sponsor him through Canada's private sponsorship program. His arrival date is uncertain, but eagerly awaited.

For a human being, nothing's more powerful than hope. Hope returns us to the path of life. My sponsors are the reason I can see the light once again.



Left: Refugees protest their nine-year detention. Right: Qayum Sultani wants to plant 100 trees every year. | Supplied

Drop-in @ Alberta Ave

**Preschool Gym
Thursdays
9:30 am - 11 am**



**Youth
Thursdays
4-6 pm**



**Seniors
Tuesdays
12-2 pm**



The path to sponsoring refugees

How I became Auntie to a bunch of young Afghan men

REBECCA LIPPIATT

I love people's stories. I'm fascinated to learn how they got where they are, and what happened to them to craft them into the person they are. What events shaped their world view and their lives? And as much as I love stories, I also love learning something new.

On a November evening in 2020, as I was slowly bending spaghetti noodles to fit into a pot of boiling water with one hand, I used my other hand to click on the round Facebook message notification that popped up on my phone. It was from a young man named Izzat, who said he was a Hazara refugee from Afghanistan but was trapped in Indonesia. I quickly shoved the rest of the noodles into the water and sat down to read this message. This was a story I hadn't heard before.

Cautiously—because I've been offered my fair share of million dollar inheritances from Nigerian princes—I let my curiosity take the reins. Izzatullah Izzat was his Facebook name. His pictures appeared to be from Indonesia's rainforests. He provided me with a connection in Toronto, who ran a non-profit, who has a university job (thanks, LinkedIn), and who verified Izzat was both a real person and a kind one.

Izzat didn't ask me for money. He only asked me for help finding a Canadian willing to sponsor him to come to Canada through the private sponsorship program.

Like other Canadians, the enormity of the societal changes we'd seen since the COVID-19 pandemic started left me feeling helpless. But when Izzat asked me for help, I saw one person standing in front of me who I was capable of helping. And so, I did.

Over the next few months, as Christmas lights illuminated our world, I learned more about this young man. Within a few messages, he asked if he



Refugee claimants sit on top of water tankers and see life going on outside the camp. | Photo by Hussain Nazari, who spent four years in detention from the ages of 17 to 23.

could please call me something other than Rebecca. Because I was older than him, he said it felt disrespectful to call me by my first name. That's how I became Auntie.

I learned about the Hazara people, who are a minority community, and their situation in Afghanistan. Even as the Western media congratulated itself on victories establishing democracy, the Hazara people (likely descendants of the Mongols and Asiatic in appearance) suffered daily kid-

nappings and bombings in areas outside the West's line of sight. Throughout the 2010s, the Taliban threatened to kill every Hazara man between the ages of 7 and 70.

When war erupts, young men are the first targets. Strong and fit young men are also their family's hope for a safer future elsewhere. They leave, hoping to establish a home in a safe country.

When you see photos of a stream of refugees walking away from the country of their birth, and ask, "Why are there so many young men?" or "Where are the women and children?," this is part of the reason why.

When war erupts, young men are the first targets. Strong and fit young men are also their family's hope for a safer future elsewhere. They leave, hoping to establish a home in a safe country. The mothers, wives, and sisters wait at home, hearts in their mouths, hoping for freedom that their sons may forge for them in a country across the globe.

The Taliban had kidnapped Izzat and he managed to escape. He fled to Indonesia, believing the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) would help him settle in a safe country. Two weeks before he arrived, Australia, in response to the pandemic, had closed its borders to refugees (which is a violation of their UN commitments). Now, 14,000 people are trapped as refugees—some, like Izzat, for as long as 10 years. And, as an added bonus, the refugees weren't able to get help from the UN. Instead, they had to find their own sponsors.

Izzat had sent hundreds of messages searching for a sponsor before he had reached me.

After three months of reaching out to every organization and church group I could think of and also receiving complete silence, I made the decision to sponsor Izzat myself. In turn, I messaged everyone I could think of who might possibly want to help me form a group of five private citizens who'd be responsible to help this young man immigrate to Canada and support him in his first year. After a few months, I assembled a group of people who—much like myself—are

open-hearted but a little bit broke and were willing to help.

There is a lady in Australia who everyone calls the Australian Angel, or Mom Miriam. Her father was a Jewish refugee. Because her father was able to escape and survive Europe during the Second World War, she went on to become a professor, and has a good life.

She's also disgusted with Australia's immigration policies. When her parents died, Miriam decided to offer her inheritance in \$10,000 increments to any refugee in Indonesia who finds a Canadian sponsor. This is about half of the money required for a private sponsorship group to help settle a refugee in Canada. The other half comes from friends or family, if the refugee is lucky, or from fundraising.

Our original group of five has expanded to around 10 people. We've submitted five sponsorship applications, and have plans for more (including women who fled from Afghanistan when the Taliban took over in 2021).

In April of this year, Izzat's decade-long attempt to get to Australia was finally successful. After their 2022 election,

the country loosened its refugee policies and began admitting people who'd been trapped in Indonesia for so long. I was thrilled that Izzat finally has his freedom and a little bit sad because he is a marvelous young man who I'd hoped to meet.

Over the coming months, Qayum, another

one of the young men we're sponsoring, will be sharing more of what it's like to be a refugee, and what he hopes for his life in Canada. His first installment is posted at ratcreek.org.

If you'd like to be part of this movement to welcome new Canadians into our community, please email me at RMLL@shaw.ca.

Rebecca has attended free concerts as 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. In her current incarnation, she has been a full-time photographer for the last 15 years, is exploring writing, and is co-parenting four nearly-grown children.



Izzat stands in Parliament House in Canberra, Australia, the place where the laws that kept him in Indonesia for 10 years were passed. | Izzatullah Izzat

REACH event focuses on actions

Exploring relationships and reconciliation in community

MARILYN GRAY, REACH

In the wake of unmarked graves, a papal apology, and the creation of the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, the issue of repairing relations has been increasingly on Canadians' minds.

The century-spanning issues of colonization and what reconciliation could look like are complex, often leaving community members unsure of where to start.

REACH Edmonton's 2023 AGM Showcase aims to explore how Edmontonians can contribute to reconciliation in their own lives through practical actions, featuring guest speakers Cheryl Whiskeyjack and Lewis Cardinal.

The event, held on June 8 at MacEwan University's Feigel Conference Centre, will feature short presentations from each speaker, focused on the shared stories of relationships in community, in the context of facing the ongoing effects of colonization.

Whiskeyjack's career in the public service and serving vulnerable populations spans over 30 years. She has worked in the Government of Alberta, Government of B.C., and in London, England.

She aims to bring an inclusive and inviting lens to issues around creating connections through open dialogue in difficult contexts.

"We want to take an opportunity to call people in and be curious," says Whiskeyjack. "We're planting seeds for conversations to happen in community."

Cardinal is Woodland Cree from the Sucker Creek First Nation in northern



Register to attend the REACH AGM event. | Supplied

Alberta, Canada. His consulting company, Cardinal Strategic Communications, specializes in Indigenous education, communications, and project development. He is also owner and CEO of Red Earth Blue Sky Productions, a multimedia production company. Currently, Lewis is project manager, with the Indigenous Knowledge and Wisdom Centre, for *kihcihkaw askiy*-Sacred Land, the first designated urban Indigenous ceremony grounds in Canada.

"Reconciliation is an action," says Cardinal, who will discuss why it's essential to view reconciliation as an ongoing process, which carries within itself the spirit and intent of the first Treaty to the modern treaties.

"The intent of Treaty is to bind us together as family. It's all about relationships," he says. "When you hear 'O Canada' or see our flag, there should be a slight tapping on your shoulder and the question that comes to mind is: Are your relationships in order?"

By exploring reconciliation with a multi-generational lens and a focus on personal responsibility towards action in our own lives and communities, REACH hopes to create an informative and explorative space to learn about this issue, which has been on the minds of Canadians increasingly over the past few years.

REACH's AGM is an opportunity to learn about the impactful work of REACH

and our community partners. This event is Thursday, June 8th at 4 pm at the MacEwan University Feigel Conference Centre (Room 11-204, Allard Hall, MacEwan University, 11110 104 Ave). For more information, or to register, click here: eventbrite.ca/e/2023-reach-edmonton-agm-tickets-602853520107

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

Consider your voting philosophy

Albertans need to work together despite differences in political views

REBECCA LIPPIATT

Our political landscape has become incredibly polarized over the past few years. We seem to have lost the ability to find common ground. If you sit down and talk with people from different ends of the political spectrum, a shared common goal seems to be the right to be free to pursue our hopes and dreams.

This quest for freedom has become a battlefield. Each side demands that the other side stop trying to control it.

For some, control brings to mind the restrictions around abortion in the U.S., a philosophy that has made its way into Alberta through organizations like the Wilberforce Project. The mandate of the Wilberforce Project is to fund the nomination of pro-life candidates and

influence health policy. The narrative is so strong that the Prolife Alberta Party has the third highest funding of any political party running in this election.

For others, being left alone means that they shouldn't have been made to wear masks to prevent the spread of COVID-19, or shouldn't have been required by their employers (mostly in the health field) to be vaccinated. They also want their bodies left alone.

Being left alone with regards to money often relates to taxes. Many people want to keep as much of the money they earn as possible and believe that they should have the choice of where to direct their money, whether it's to be used on themselves or to fund charitable organizations that fit their own values.

Others believe that everyone has the right to participate in society, regardless of their economic capability, and think that taxes should be used to make our province equitable and accessible for everyone. They would ask, "Does someone who uses a wheelchair for mobility not deserve the right to have infrastructure that allows them to get around as much as someone who has an expensive car?"

Everybody wants the right to live their life on their own terms and by their own direction. No one wants to be told what to do. But because we live in a society with other people, we have to compromise about how we can best live together.

Imagine your neighbour likes to have bonfires. They put all their garbage on their bonfire, from paper to plastic milk jugs. When it's windy, sparks fly out of their bonfire, putting your house at

risk of catching fire. Your child also has asthma, so when they are burning their bonfire, your child begins wheezing.

In a world where we're all left alone to do our own thing, your wheezing child would have no right to clean air. You'd have no right to protect your house from an errant spark. So there are rules around backyard fires. Yes, they restrict the right of someone to burn whatever they feel like burning and force them to pay taxes to have their garbage taken away, but those rules are necessary to protect other people. In addition, we pay taxes so that there's a fire department who can protect your home if it does catch on fire.

While everyone really just wants to be left alone to pursue their own life and dreams, we can't actually function as a society if we don't care for each other. Being left alone doesn't negate our collective responsibility to first do no harm to others, and secondly, to help each other have decent and safe lives.

So no matter the result of the May 29 provincial election, remember that we are all fellow Albertans. Ask yourself, how can we collectively create a province where we can all thrive? To create a province where we all feel free in, we have to work together, side by side.

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.



No matter who you voted for on May 29, remember that we all want a good life.
| Brendan Church on Unsplash

A local tribute to the Modernettes

Learn about Spruce Avenue's history through its architecture

WESLEY ANDREAS

This is the first in a series for the *RCP*, sharing behind-the-scenes local history research in the Rat Creek area.

First up: an experience connected to Jane's Walks. I've been organizing Jane's Walks in Spruce Avenue since 2015. A surprise research find last year happened just in time to add new material for the 2022 walk. The discovery adds a new chapter to Spruce Avenue's 110-year urban history and connects a famous Edmontonian to the neighbourhood.

holidays in 1935, for this full page on December 28 was about the opening of a showhome. See the headline below this article.

Before I read that article, the 1930s was a gap in our knowledge about Spruce Avenue. Our community knew about the early years following the lot sales of the Hudson's Bay Company Reserve in 1912, and about the American air base located here during the Second World War. The advertorial also solved a puzzle: the origins of a line of bungalows on 101 Street.

article revealed important information on the builder: J.N. Côté. When I found that name and some heritage profiles during an online search, I reached out to the heritage planners at the City. They'd never heard of the Modernettes, but they did have a file on Côté.

According to the planners' files, Joseph Napoleon Côté was born in 1888 in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec. He started his Edmonton construction business in the 1920s, building prominent homes in many areas. Several are still standing and

ably reflecting the economic challenges of home sales. The home located at 11439 101 St.—the last original Modernette standing until 2022—was first occupied by John Wuetherick, a clerk at the Bank of Montreal. The home next door (11443) was home to John O. Fazackerley, a buyer with H.H. Cooper, a wholesale grocer located in the Revillon Building. The house at 11435 wasn't occupied until 1938. Stanley B. Ellis lived there, and he worked for Canada Packers on Fort Road.

The original showhome at 11431



Top: Headline of the *Edmonton Journal* advertorial published on Dec. 28, 1935. | newspapers.com

Bottom: A 1935 photo of the Modernettes from the *Edmonton Journal* advertorial published on Dec. 28, 1935. | newspapers.com

I want to introduce you to the Modernettes. I encountered this term in an old *Edmonton Journal* headline while researching the family that built my house in the 1940s and then owned it for many years. A business advertisement led me to this particular headline. It was a sort of advertorial for new homes. News must have been slow over the Christmas

The bungalows were unusually tiny, even compared to wartime houses, with unique Art Deco-style exterior stucco that looked original.

From the article, this set of what I thought was three was actually four bungalows built during the Great Depression. (The fourth has been renovated extensively, so its origins were hidden). The

listed on Edmonton's inventory of heritage properties. The City designated at least one home in Garneau.

Built in 1935, the Modernettes appeared to be an experiment: smaller homes for the Depression's lean years.

The Modernettes are likely Spruce Avenue's only examples of Streamline Moderne, a type of late Art Deco architecture, and they were modern and stylish for the time.

Although all four of the Modernettes were standing in 2009, they've gradually been lost. The oldest one, the showhome open for public tours in the article, is the only one remaining. It's also been renovated, with the stucco exterior covered and the front altered. The other homes preserved the stucco exteriors and hadn't been maintained as well as the oldest house. One was lived in as recently as 2021, but was torn down in late 2022, leaving an empty lot. The other lots are occupied by duplex infill homes.

I then researched the early occupants to share the story of the Modernettes at last year's Jane's Walk. I made some interesting discoveries, relying on *Henderson's Edmonton city directory*. This directory contained listings of residents, home locations, and occupations, and was published annually from 1908 to the 1980s.

According to information over multiple years published in the *Henderson's Edmonton city directory*, the northernmost homes weren't occupied until 1937, prob-

101 St. had an occupant who was a famous Edmontonian. Grant W.G. McConachie lived there from 1937 until about 1941. Information from the Canadian Encyclopedia website and the website of Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame states that McConachie was a bush pilot in the 1920s and became a pioneer of air travel in Western Canada, based out of Blatchford (City Centre) Airport. He lived in the house in the years he was establishing Yukon Southern Transport, his permanent passenger and airmail service to the Yukon. After CP Air bought McConachie's business in 1941, McConachie then worked for CP Air, becoming president by 1947. It was at CP Air that McConachie oversaw the first scheduled air service from Canada to Asia and Australia. He was inducted into Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame. Today, there is a northside Edmonton neighbourhood named McConachie.

Reflecting back on the chance discovery of that 1935 newspaper, you can see how much fascinating history we have here, waiting to be discovered. I hope you enjoyed this journey back into Spruce Avenue's history and that you'll stay tuned for more in this series.

Wesley has lived in a 1940s semi-bungalow in Spruce Avenue since 2012. He is a community league board member and loves to research and share the local history of the area.



The last of the Modernettes with its original exterior, prior to demolition in 2022. | Wesley Andreas

TRISHA ESTABROOKS

Education can change the lives of young people in many tangible ways. Public education gives students the skills they need for life after high school. It teaches children about citizenship and their role in the world, and prepares them for a life of fulfillment. But often it's what's intangible, or not easily seen, that's at the root of why something matters. For public education, that unseen but critically important gift that education gives us is hope.

Education allows us the hope to believe that things will get better. Embedded in education is the hope that we can figure out a challenge, that we can be successful, that we can learn, and that we can adapt and achieve. Perhaps most strong of all is the hope every parent feels that we can give our children a better future, and the seeds of that hope are also sown in the classroom. All of these hopes are realized by a strong public education system.

Hope was on the mind of the Board of Trustees leading up to the recent provincial election. While there were certainly many things to be critical of, including cuts to education and a lack of new school announcements, we chose instead to focus on the positives and on possibilities. To do this, we launched an advocacy campaign inviting parents, school councils, and education partners to join us in imagining what's possible.

For example, imagine what's possible when there's adequate funding for public education. Imagine the possibilities when



IMAGINE WHAT'S POSSIBLE:
Every public school student gets what they need to thrive

Public education can help students have hope for their future. | Supplied

mental health supports are provided in all of our schools. Imagine what could happen if school construction keeps pace with growing enrolment. We encouraged parents and families and all those who care about public education to ask candidates seeking elected office questions related to funding, mental health, and the need for immediate investment in new schools and modernizations.

I appreciate the passion that so many people have for public education. Now

that a new government has been elected, the Board of Trustees will be working hard to ensure that an investment in public education is a top priority.

This time of year is also the season of celebrating high school graduations from Edmonton Public Schools, as well as other milestones. If you're attending a graduation ceremony for any student, please take a moment to remember the hope that exists in the young people you're supporting. They have hopes and

Imagine what's possible when there's adequate funding for public education. Imagine the possibilities when mental health supports are provided in all of our schools. Imagine what could happen if school construction keeps pace with growing enrolment.

dreams for their futures, and that's an amazing and inspiring gift that years of public education have given them. Research has shown that hope is actually a learnable and measurable skill, one that has a significant impact on students' success in schools. Young people who embrace hope have higher self-esteem and are more likely to set and achieve their goals.

It's also a great time of year to say thanks to teachers, educational assistants, principals, custodians, and all school staff for their passion in supporting you and your children. All those amazing staff also create hope for our kids.

The Board's hope for the future of public education is what drives us in our service to parents, families, students, and communities. We believe that hope is worth celebrating.

Trisha is the school board Trustee for Ward D and is currently serving at the chair of EPSB. You can reach her at trustee.trisha.estabrooks@epsb.ca.

Advice in a changing world

For what it's worth, my advice to the graduating class of 2023

NICK KOSSOVAN

Dear class of 2023:

Had my priorities been in order when I graduated, my career compass would've been:

Love what you do.

Love the people you do it with.

Love what you leave behind.

We live in a complicated world, especially when it comes to work. There are usually established but not hard and fast rules and prerequisites to meet, such as obtaining an education, in order to begin moving towards your career aspirations. However, even when the prerequisite is met, success isn't guaranteed.

Don't expect your degree to be enough.

After graduating from college, I stumbled through my 20s, unsure of myself and my place in the world. At the time, I didn't fully grasp who I was or how my Social Science diploma would contribute to my career. Ultimately, I had to figure out the world and the workplace on my own.

Undeniably, the past three years have been tough. The pandemic redesigned student experiences, and social media became more "social" than it was pre-pandemic. You're not the first graduating class to face a world full of turmoil and uncertainty. Imagine graduating in 1942 and months later finding yourself fighting somewhere in Europe, or graduating in 2008 amid what is known as The Great Recession.

You have challenges: a tight labour

market, widespread layoffs, and rapid technological advancement, particularly in artificial intelligence. This technology has the appearance of not being designed to enhance productivity, but may have an end goal of employee replacement. Plus, inflation is making employers rethink how they do business.

Like every graduating class before you, you alone are responsible for your career trajectory, so take full responsibility for it.

Talk to everybody.

Opportunities are all around you. There is just one caveat: they are attached to people.

The adage, "It's not what you know, but who you know," is more relevant today than it ever was. Networking is the key to attaining a successful career. American entrepreneur, author, and motivational speaker Jim Rohan summed up the importance of cultivating and maintaining a professional network: "Your network is your net worth."

Recently I came across a troubling headline, "Americans More Than Ever Have No Friends." The article's author, Elizabeth Gilbert, states that Americans are experiencing a "friendship recession."

Today, many people participate in digital communities but have few real-life relationships. Instead of talking to people, texting has become the norm. Many employees advocate working from

home so they can work in isolation.

Human contact is decreasing as more people use technology to communicate or avoid dealing with their surroundings. As a species, we're rapidly becoming unsociable. Don't be part of this decline!

Don't think you are above anybody. Give someone your undivided attention, and you'll be amazed at what you learn. As much as possible, talk to people who've *been there and done that*. The best conversations I've ever had have been with people who'd already travelled the path I was on or were where I wanted to be.

In terms of your job search and career, I can tell you from experience that opportunities pop up from the most random conversations.

When meeting new people, remember that showing interest is a massive gesture. Place your attention on the other person by asking open-ended questions.

TIP: When meeting someone for the first time, ask yourself, "How can I help this person?"

Don't feel entitled to anything.

Getting rid of any sense of entitlement is imperative; otherwise, you'll be holding yourself back trying to fight the fundamental universal truth that the world doesn't owe you anything, not even to make a living.

Having a sense of entitlement is a turnoff. Not expecting anything from anyone is how you become an independent adult and earn respect. When you stop feeling entitled, your self-esteem will soar, and you'll start upping your game.

Become a person who adds value.

Make "always add value" your personal mantra.

Employees who contribute measurable (*keyword*) value are highly regarded and likely to enjoy job security.

Read these books.

How to Win Friends & Influence People by Dale Carnegie

The Presentation Secrets of Steve Jobs: How to Be Insanely Great in Front of Any Audience by Carmine Gallo

100 Ways to Improve Your Writing: Proven Professional Techniques for Writing with Style and Power by Gary Provost

Regarding how rapidly AI is emerging, keep a close eye on it! Nobody really knows where AI is heading. One thing is certain: many jobs will be eliminated as employers identify which jobs they can delegate to AI. Hence, avoid positions that AI is likely to be able to do in the future.

Volatile economic conditions coupled with rapid technological advancements have created a job market in flux like never before. Hence, my last piece of advice: never lose sight of your career goals.

Despite all the job market volatility, building a career you love is still possible by focusing on what you are good at while embracing lifelong learning.

Nick, a self-described connoisseur of human psychology, writes about what's on his mind from Toronto. You can follow Nick on Twitter and Instagram @NKossov.

EdmontonEats welcomes newcomers

Catering company serves up tasty and authentic cultural fare

REBECCA LIPPIATT

In 2019, Afaf Bayoud, her husband Jehad, and their four children became Canadian citizens. That year, the family hosted their first EdmontonEats event.

Bayoud says, “I was the first host of an EdmontonEats event in 2019. It was hosted by NAIT at Ernest’s. I worked along with the students at the Culinary Arts program to teach them how to prepare authentic Libyan recipes.”

EdmontonEats began as a social enterprise, evolving out of Communities United, a collective of individuals and organizations working to end poverty in five northeast Edmonton neighbourhoods. Maureen Murphy Black, the founder of the project, says that

EdmontonEats emerged out of “her interests in learning about new cultures, hearing people’s stories, [and] building welcoming communities.” She also credits support from friends, neighbours, businesses, and service providers.

Murphy Black continues, “The plan was to grow EdmontonEats into a self-sustaining social enterprise that contributes to an understanding of the cultural diversity of Edmonton, to share food and cultural experiences, and to create a unique revenue stream for families who have arrived in Edmonton as immigrants and refugees.”

Bayoud says that she “became involved with EdmontonEats so that we could be more connected with our

neighbourhood and get involved in our community.”

The project existed as a pilot program through the Bannerman Community League from 2019 to 2022. In August of 2022, Murphy Black and Bayoud incorporated EdmontonEats and became EdmontonEats Catering. The start up social enterprise was so successful that it became a self-sustaining business. Eighty per cent of the revenue goes to the cultural hosts - the people who share information about their culture and who prepare the meals.

Bayoud, co-owner of EdmontonEats Catering says, “It is exciting to be building a company that welcomes other newcomers and gives all of us an opportunity to share our cultures and foods with each other and our guests. In Libya, making a thoughtful, elaborate meal for guests of honour is an act of great respect. We want to honour our guests by creating authentic menus.”

EdmontonEats continues to welcome new cultural hosts. Murphy Black and Bayoud meet with potential new hosts to find out how they want to participate and why they want to join the enterprise. After the new host prepares their favourite dish for the organization’s members to try, the dish can then become part of the menu.

Both cultural hosts and other volunteers are welcome. Non-cook volunteers can contribute their skills by assisting with the website and marketing events, helping out in the kitchen for events, assembling the cultural boxes and kits,

and driving hosts and food to events as needed.

Cultural hosts gain the opportunity to learn how to work in a commercial kitchen, and are supported to take their Food Handler Certificate. Because the cultural hosts are newcomers, working at EdmontonEats is often their first paid work experience in Canada, which creates a work history with Canada Revenue Agency and provides a reference when applying for other jobs. The hosts also work with other guest chefs to learn about foods from many cultures.

Customers of EdmontonEats get to learn about foods from around the globe, from spices and

preparation techniques to cooking tips and tricks. They also make connections with individuals from many parts of the world and hear about their life experiences. And of course, they get to eat delicious food while contributing to the sustainability of a business that is making a difference for newcomers and refugees.

Get involved with EdmontonEats by calling 780.893.8979 or by emailing edmontoneatsassociation@gmail.com. If you would like to sample some food at one of their events or at home, visit edmontoneatsveg.ca.

Rebecca has attended free concerts as 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

Eighty per cent of the revenue goes to the cultural hosts - the people who share information about their culture and who prepare the meals.



Maureen Murphy Black (left) and Afaf Bayoud (right), co-owners of EdmontonEats. | Rebecca Lippiatt

From vendor stall to sharing a hall

Three flea market creators decided to share a space

MOLLY STALEY

Three new businesses are located on the corner of 92 Street and 118 Avenue: Mr. J Comics, Square One Merchandise, and Wildwood Gifts.

Queen Mary’s Market, formerly Super Flea Market on 111 Avenue and 120 Street, has been home to numerous vendors selling collectibles and paraphernalia, artisan goods and local goodies, and more. Joe Parent, Darwin Evilla, and Bob Williams met while selling their respective goods at Super Flea Market.

“I have been doing this business for 12 years with my wife,” says Williams. Parent and Evilla sold items at the market for over 10 years. However, for the past five weeks, the three have been sharing a space together on 118 Avenue, promoting one another’s businesses, and grinding each other’s gears about the upcoming playoff results.

“Bob is always yelling at us from his shop,” states Parent. His mother Ilona, an avid volunteer, chuckles and agrees.

“I have loved comics since I was six years old. Reading comics is how I learned to speak English,” says Parent. Parent, with the help of Ilona, runs Mr. J Comics. The two moved to Canada from

Germany, and Parent, after settling, fell in love with the characters, stories, and illustrations of comic books. He is a classic comic lover in that his superheroes of choice come from Marvel Comic Books and DC Universe. His shop, Mr. J Comics, sells more than hard-copy comics. They also carry action figures, posters, graphic novels, stickers, and other aesthetic paraphernalia.

“I aim to become the largest and most visited comic bookstore in Edmonton, [and] hopefully, Canada,” says Parent. Ilona adds, “I support him. This work calms him and makes him happy.”

Directly to the left of Parent is the office of Square One Merchandising, run by owner Evilla. Evilla has been in the printing business for over 15 years; however, he now owns one of the only UV DTF printers in Edmonton. The UV DTF (Direct-to-Film) printer prints directly onto film. Darwin can print custom designs or customers can choose what they want from an inventory of designs. “We can do a

lot of things. Our most popular stuff is t-shirts and transfer printing. It is a bit more on the down low, but we also do traditional, mass printing of documents, though it is not advertised.”

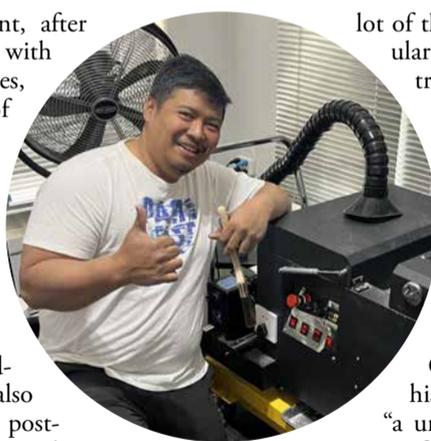
Across the hall from Parent and Evilla is Wildwood Gifts. Williams and his family specialize in “a unique shopping experience for scented wax, oils, and incense.” Currently, they stock just over 70 scents for incense. Another trendy item is their touch lamps/wax warmers. “They were very popular at Christmas!” says Williams, “and soon we will get the moose, beaver, and bear lamps back into stock.” Bob also says that their backflow incense cone burners replicate waterfalls using the smoke from the incense. “We started this business from my grandson and still have a satellite stall at the new Queen Mary’s Market.”

The three men agreed it would be most beneficial to mirror one another’s hours. They are closed Sundays and Mondays and open Tuesday through Saturday

For the past five weeks, the three have been sharing a space together on 118 Avenue, promoting one another’s businesses, and grinding each other’s gears about the upcoming playoff results.

starting at 10 a.m. All three are working on improving their internet presence, so the best way to get to know these unique businesses is to visit their shops. They are located at 9142 118 Avenue.

Molly Staley is a journalist and communications specialist in Edmonton, Alberta. More than writing, she loves her pug, Garry.



Left: Joe Parent stands in front of his comic book shop, Mr. J Comics.



Middle: Darwin Evilla, owner of Square One Merchandising, shows off his UV DTF printer.



Right: Bob Williams in front of his favourite items and biggest sellers at Wildwood Gifts.

| Molly Staley

Keep your pets cool this summer

Three tips to help prevent your pets from overheating

DR. NATASHA RUSSELL

Some like it hot! But most of our companion animals sure don't, especially when extreme heat comes on too quickly, preventing their bodies from building up a physiological resistance/tolerance to it. Adapting to heat takes

time and gradual increases in temperature, which sure didn't happen this spring. Let's cover the basics on what to watch out for and how to prevent heat emergencies, because they're often fatal and even when they aren't, who has money to spend on expensive emergency vet bills?

Know the risk factors that contribute to overheating

We've already covered how quick increases in temperature prevent a pet's inner physiology from protecting itself. However, some physical factors will also cause their bodies to overwork even more in the heat. These include pets who are obese (think about pets who snore at night); pets who are very young or old; and pets with respiratory/breathing issues such as collapsing tracheas and/or brachycephalic breeds (those with flat faces and small nostrils) like Shih Tzus, Boston terriers, pugs, boxers, and bulldogs.

Know the symptoms of overheating

Watch out for excessive panting. Whenever our pets pant, there should be breaks in it. When there aren't breaks, *pay attention*. Another sign to look for is excessive drooling. Any drooling in pets who never do should *provoke action*. Pay attention to new tiredness, muscle weakness, or unsteadiness. *Never ignore* unexplained vomiting and/or diarrhea, or even general restlessness.

If you notice your pet is overheating, provide access to fresh water, shade, and somewhere cool (a cool basement, an air conditioned car, a pet-friendly air conditioned store, or a strong fan).

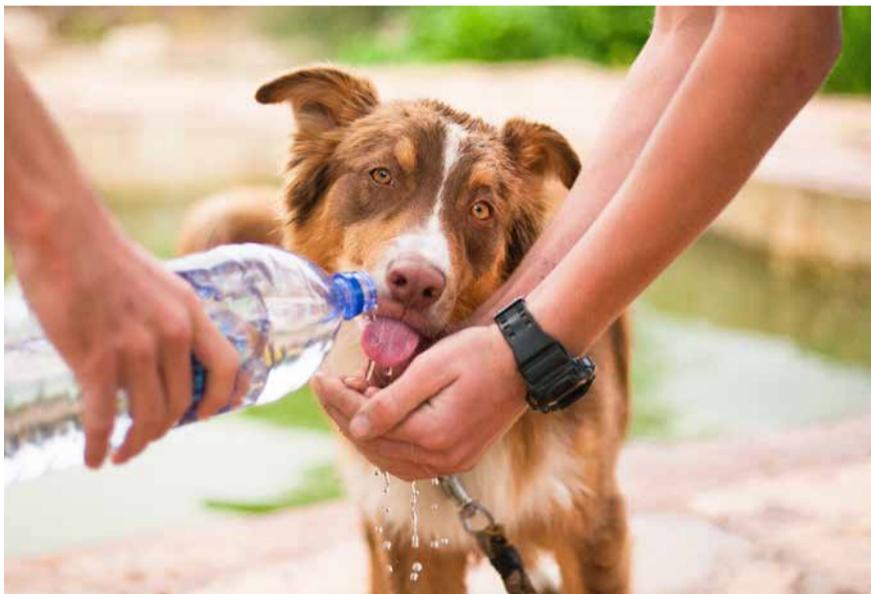
If you're unable to alleviate any of these symptoms in under 30 minutes, seek medical attention. Don't forget you can always monitor your pet's Sleeping Respiration Rate (SRR) to check in on their overall well-being: edmcommunityvet.com/portfolio/how-to-measure-your-pets-sleeping-respiration-rate/.

Know what you shouldn't do

Never (like ever) leave your pets alone in a parked vehicle; leave pets unsupervised around a deep pool; or leave your pets without enough water. Also, don't shave your dog to cool them off (hair is protective and sunburns happen), and don't linger on hot asphalt (paw pads can burn quickly, so stick to the grass).

Until next time!

Dr. Russell trained as a biochemist and veterinarian, owns the Edmonton Community Vet Clinic, mentors Little Vets, and enjoys her time as an engaged community member.



Pets are susceptible to overheating, so make sure to keep them cool and hydrated. | Pixabay

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Supervise or harness your exploring cats

Dear neighbours,

It's lovely seeing so many folks out and about in spring, as well as seeing how many folks enjoy the companionship of pets. I love watching dogs enjoy themselves at the off-leash dog park by Eastwood Arena. However, I've noticed an increase in house cats wandering the neighbourhood, most often during the day. Please, if you want to bring your cat outdoors, come with them. Use a leash and a harness and enjoy the sight of your beloved furry family member exploring your yard or other local green spaces while you do the same!

I ask this because there are many folks who drive in the neighbourhood (some residents, some not) and don't check their speed. This includes driving through marked playground zones. Excessive speed greatly decreases the ability of a driver to stop suddenly and avoid injuring pedestrians, animals, and even other drivers.

Keeping your cat on a leash is important because the lifespan of an average, indoor house cat is between 10 and 15 years, while the lifespan of an outdoor cat is between two and five years (petplace.com/article/cats/pet-health/average-life-expectancy-cats/).

Vehicles aren't the only risk outdoor cats face. Other risks include other cats, dogs, and wild animals; parasites (e.g., fleas, ticks, and worms); poisons (including pesticides, fertilizers, or antifreeze); and finally, toxic garden plants such as lilies. And if your cat comes home

injured, the unexpected financial impact of expensive veterinary bills can be catastrophic to our budgets.

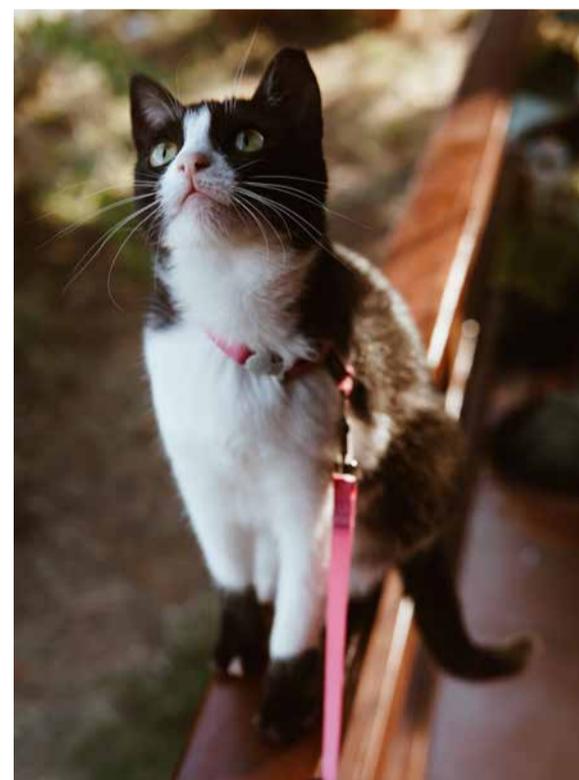
If you're worried about your cat receiving enough stimulation and activity, there are many fantastic ways to enrich your home environment. One option is a catio, which is an outdoor enclosure where you can create the playground of your cat's dreams. YouTube has many beautiful examples and instructions. Another option, as mentioned above, is taking your cat outside on a leash and a harness. A harness ensures that they can't wiggle out of the leash if, for example, they become frightened or disoriented and try to run.

Indoor environments can also be improved: a wide variety of toys that you can switch between will keep your cat interested in playing with you as well as allow for some great bonding time. You might also consider creating platforms and vertical spaces for your cat to play or snooze in. Outdoor bird feeders offer hours of "Cat TV" for sensory stimulation, as do interactive feeders that require cats to literally play with their food.

Having animal companions has been proven to benefit mental health, to boost overall well-being, and even to improve recovery times from acute illness or injury. Let's keep our loved ones safe and around for as long as we can.

Jay McCoy, Eastwood

Let's keep our loved ones safe and around for as long as we can.



If you're allowing your cat outside, consider using a harness and a leash. | Dee. on Unsplash

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The world begins from childhood

The importance of protecting our children



Children should be free to have a joyful childhood. | Photo by Robert Collins on Unsplash

NATANEL KRIEKSFELD

Childhood is a small magical country in which children hopefully live without worry and sadness. How beautiful and bright that country is, and how full of wonders. Each one of us has been in this wonderful garden of life, and will always search for its footprints in our memories. Childhood is a child's laugh. It's so sincere; it's a child's eyes full of delight and trust, and the sound melts even the coldest of hearts. Our planet is a small and colourful ball in a child's hands.

Childhood should be merry, peace should be the norm, and each new day should be interesting. If parents take good care of their children, then those children will take good care of the family's next generation.

On June 1st, we celebrate the International Day for Protection of Children.

International Children's Day (celebrated on June 1 in many countries) also has its own flag. The flag's green background symbolizes harmony and fertility. A symbol of our planet is in the middle of the flag, and around the

Earth are figures of children: black, yellow, white, blue, and red. They represent the diversity of the Earth's inhabitants, as well as tolerance.

International Children's Day is a reminder of the fragility of children, as well as their defencelessness. Children are small particles of big happiness that require care and love. In this world, each small individual needs to feel the warmth and love of their mother, as well as to hold their small hand in the big and warm hand of their father. All children are

looking at this big, bright, and magical world unfolding before them. They run through the rainbow of desires to reach their dreams. They make their secret wishes, always believing that one day they'll come true. Children's eyes are like bright stars in the night sky that are looking down and thinking what the next day is going to be like. No city's stars shine as bright as they

do in the city of our childhood. Will parents be able to make their children's early years bright and worry-free?

Children are the most bright, pure, and wonderful things existing on this planet. Childhood should be merry, peace should be the norm, and each new day should be interesting. If parents take good care of their children, then those children will take good care of the family's next generation.

International Children's Day is the holiday of all humanity, since we all had a childhood. Children should grow, learn, and play. No one should take a peaceful environment away from children.

From ancient times to this day, child labour has taken place around the world. Children were subjected to dangerous working conditions and either didn't get paid at all, or got paid very little. Even though times have changed and many countries have adopted laws to protect children from child labour, children are still working in condi-

tions that risk their health, and possibly even their lives. When celebrating International Children's Day, we

are to acknowledge and spread awareness about child labour and how it's important to protect all children from it.

The experiences that children go through during their childhood years have a direct effect on the development of their brains. This devel-

opment in turn builds the foundation for future learning, behaviour, and health. Thus, parents are to love their children and take good care of them to the best of their abilities, so as to grow the next generation of strong, smart, and loving inhabitants of our lovely and beautiful planet.

Natanel is originally from Israel and came to Canada with his family when he was a year old. Now 15 years old and in Grade 9, he's a new Canadian citizen.

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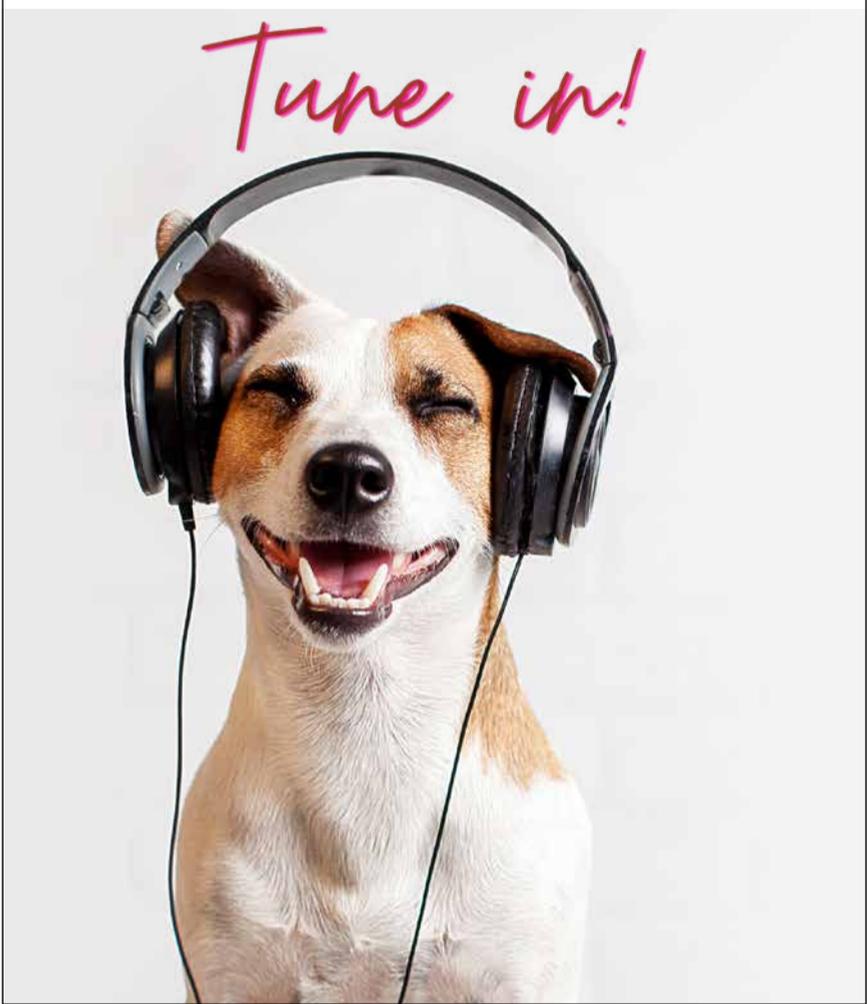


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Tune in!




Discover the Diversity in Your Own Backyard!

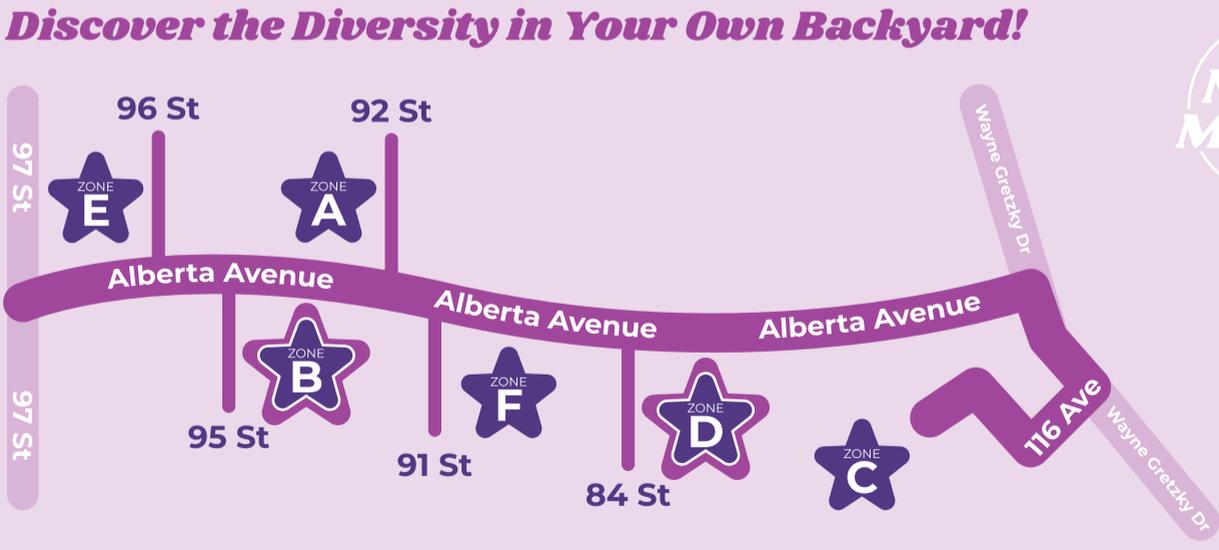
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