

# RAT CREEK PRESS

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MARCH 2016

## Northlands' new vision

Proposed changes are both innovative and risky



Northlands president and CEO Tim Reid and Mayor Don Iveson at Northlands' Vision 2020 | Supplied

### CONSTANCE BRISSENDEN

The clock is ticking to determine the future of the aging hockey arena and the entire Northlands site.

Northlands' proposed Vision 2020 strategy for its 160-acre "campus" is a huge gamble. On one hand, it's a \$165-million-dollar "re-creation of recreation," marked by massive changes to its three main venues. On the other is the spectre of a derelict site inspiring falling housing values and increased crime.

"We don't want Vision 2020 to be an all-or-nothing strategy, but we also don't want Northlands to be the next not-for-profit society that is \$20-million-dollars in the hole and no way to pay it back," President and CEO Tim Reid told community league members in February.

"The last area structure plan was in 1983. We have two possible strategic outcomes this time around. We can close

Northlands down, or we can restructure. By October of this year, the decision will be made with the City of Edmonton whether to go with Vision 2020 or not."

The plan targets three areas of the site.

Rexall Place becomes Northlands Ice Coliseum, with seven new ice sheets on two levels opening in 2019.

"The neighborhood will suffer if Rexall Place is left unattended," said Reid. "Edmonton could become the hockey tournament capital of Canada. We could host other indoor events, including soccer, volleyball, and lacrosse."

The Expo Centre's Hall D will be renovated to house a 5,000-seat venue for sports and concerts. A high-end hotel will be included. Both Expo Centre and the Ice Coliseum would include more dining and shopping.

Horse racing and perhaps the casino are on the way out. In their place is Northlands

Urban Festival Site, a large park able to host massive-scale concerts, midways, festivals, and rodeos. The site will also be open to the public for sports, picnics, and other gatherings.

An updated agricultural strategy is in the works and may include a farmers market and a craft brewery.

Residential development can also result on the Northlands site and adjacent vacant land. A high-rise student residence for Concordia University is a possible starting point.

"Vision 2020 gives us a great start at keeping the existing infrastructure," observed Eastwood Community League president Tish Prouse. "It gives me an idea how change will impact my life and our children's lives. The concept invests more strength into our neighborhoods."

Deborah Rose, CEO of DECSA, sees the proposal as an opportunity to create employment. DECSA provides employment, education,

and training to Albertans with barriers and disabilities. "The changes will also alter the perception of the rest of the city to northeast Edmonton. Vision 2020 is innovative and risky. But if you don't try, you'll never know if you could have succeeded," said Rose.

"Most will see Vision 2020 as a positive thing," said Dan Rietveld, vice-president of Highlands Community League. "We can use this as an opportunity to get our area back into the conversation."

"I think our team has done a brilliant job of giving Northlands' neighbours something to talk about," concluded Reid.

Northlands will present Vision 2020 to city council on March 17.

Give feedback through a survey at [northlands.com/vision2020/survey](http://northlands.com/vision2020/survey).

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

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# Caring for St. Patrick's Church

Father Stempfle has been the resident priest at St. Patrick's Church for 38 years

CHANTAL FIGEAT

St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church is a quiet oasis of kindness and caring. An integral part of the church is Father Frank Stempfle, who has been a priest for over 60 years.

Stempfle was born in 1926 and lived on a farm near Strome, Alberta. He later resided in Primate, Saskatchewan, before returning to Alberta to live on a farm near Hayter.

He was inspired to enter the clergy by the priests he came into contact with as a boy and young man. "We had a very fine parish priest when I was growing up," said Stempfle. Later on, he attended St. Anthony's College in Edmonton where he was influenced by the Franciscan priests who ran the school. He spent seven years at St. Joseph Seminary and was ordained in 1952 by Archbishop John Hugh MacDonald.

Stempfle has been a priest at St. Patrick's twice. His first position at the church began in 1970 and ended in 1978, when he left to be a priest for Assumption Parish. He returned to St. Patrick's in 1985 and has remained there since then. "It's a delightful little parish ... people are so good to me," said Stempfle.

The church has a history as well. Archbishop Henry Joseph O'Leary started St. Patrick's parish in December 1934. The first chapel was at Fairview School at 120 Avenue and 95A Street. Formally opened in 1950, the present building has had only three priests. Monsignor Donahue served from 1949 to 1970. Father Stempfle had his first stint from 1970 to 1977, and then Father Purcell remained until 1985 when Stempfle returned.

Attendance at mass is now "holding its own" said Stempfle, with somewhat fewer than 100 people attending on Saturday

afternoons and 100 on Sunday mornings.

At its height, St. Patrick's had an active Knights of Columbus youth group and men's club. Some parish women were affiliated with the Catholic Women's League (CWL). No longer tied to the CWL, this group of women have a history of providing light meals for bereaved families in the church basement. They also run tea and bake sales.

The functional styling of the church is typical of post-war architecture. The idea that form should follow function has resulted in a design that's functional and simple without a lot of detail. Another characteristic is the use of materials at 90 degrees to each other.

When he's not attending to his priestly duties, Stempfle is an avid golfer. By all appearances a content and happy man, he credits his good health to walking the green, saying that he plays "three, sometimes four times a week" and still manages to keep up his work at the church.

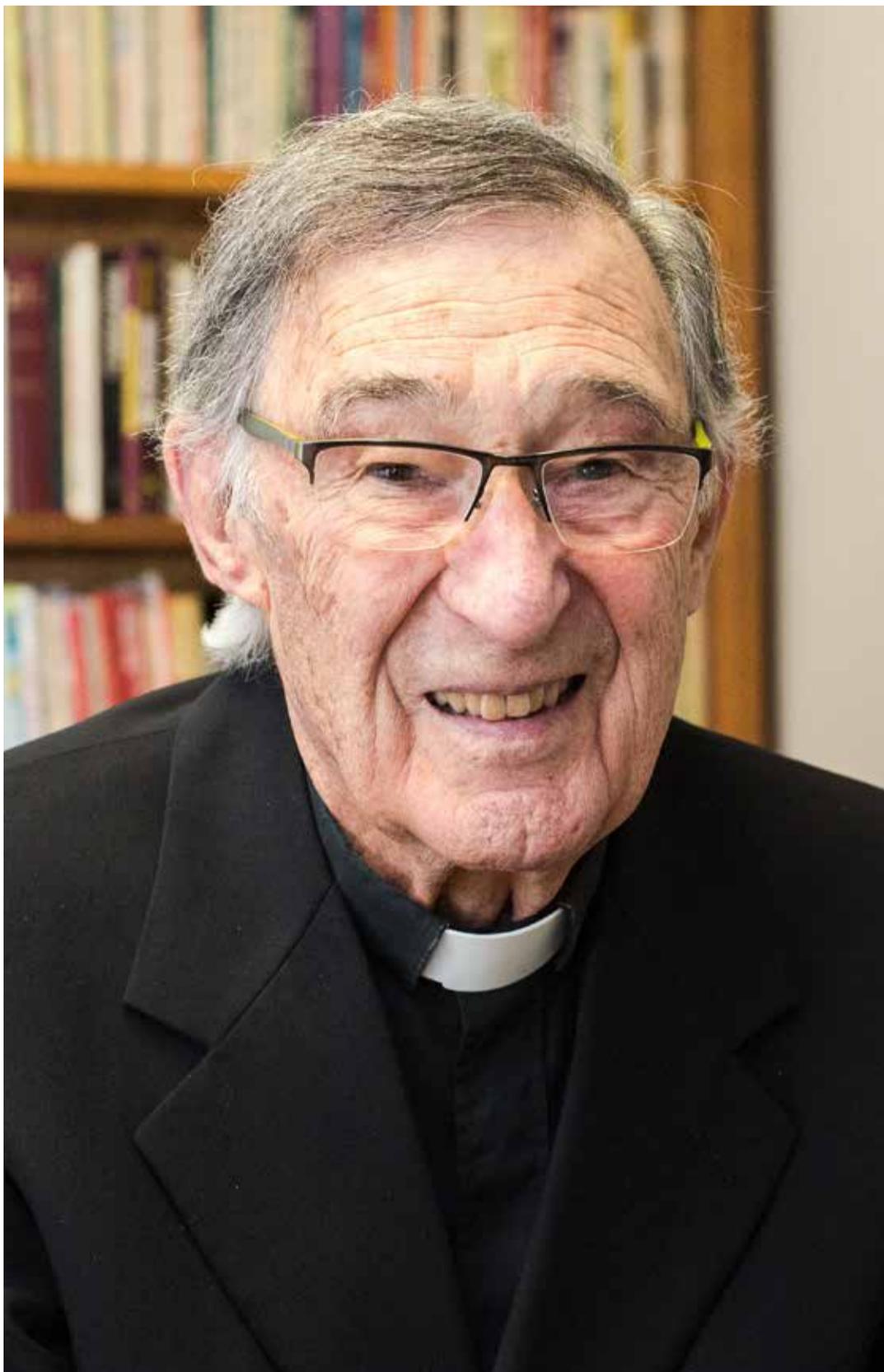
Members of the parish cherish the priest. "We just love him," said Kay O'Brian, the church secretary.

*Chantal began professional writing while attending Carleton University. She enjoys the history of the Norwood area as well as the cultural diversity along Alberta Avenue.*

## ST. PATRICK'S DAY CELEBRATION

March 13, starting at 10:45 am in the church basement

Lunch & performances by Irish dancers. Tea & baked goods available for purchase.  
St. Patrick's Church  
11811 96 St



Father Frank Stempfle loves working at the parish. | Rebecca Lippiatt

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# Gotta story? Go digital!

The Nina's Digital Storytelling project guides storytellers through the process

JOCELYN BROWN

The Nina (n-eye-na) is an art-making centre for adults with developmental disabilities. If you have ever walked by and looked through our windows during the week, you likely saw a room full of people drawing and painting. If you came through the doors to visit, you probably saw our textile, ceramics, and printing studios bursting with activity. Over 170 people belong to the Nina's collective of artists.

At the Nina, we love being part of Alberta Avenue's thriving art scene and we offer free drop-in Community Art Nights on Tuesdays and Family Art Nights on Wednesdays for anyone wanting to create art. In the Stollery Gallery, we host 15 or more exhibits a year from other groups and individuals as well as Nina artists.

Now there's a new project that's all about community, and we'd like to invite you to join us.

The Digital Storytelling Project is about (surprise!) digital stories, which is essentially a two-minute movie. The project tells a story through pictures, photographs, music and anything else the storyteller wants to use. People can record their own voices or use no words at all. The story can be as simple

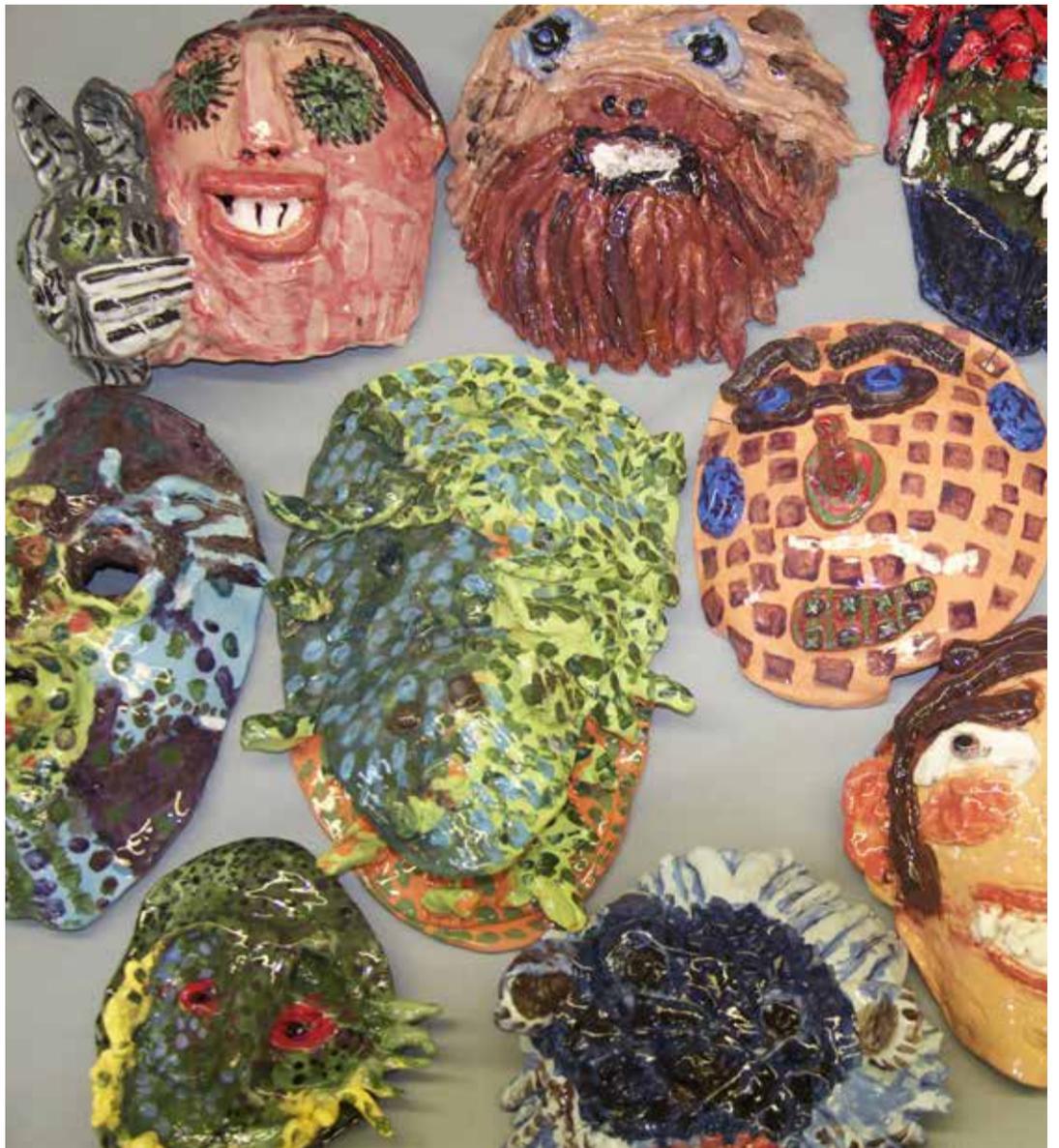
as getting a haircut or buying a new pair of boots or something as momentous as immigrating to a new country.

Over a year, a trained facilitator will lead five small groups of Nina artists, staff, and participants through the story-making process. We'll share stories and support each other in learning the necessary technology, which isn't difficult and doesn't require any computer experience. Participants will meet for one and a half hours per week for six weeks. Once the stories are done, storytellers own their stories and can decide if they want to share them.

Digital stories have been used around the world to tell stories that otherwise would go untold. They have become a powerful tool for building community (check out [www.storycenter.org](http://www.storycenter.org) to see lots of examples). We're fortunate to have the support of two champions of inclusive community: the Edmonton Public Library and Arts on the Ave.

Contact [Jocelyn@thenina](mailto:Jocelyn@thenina) for more information.

*Jocelyn has published two novels and several short stories and articles. Writer in residence at EPL in 2012, she has worked at the Nina Haggerty Centre for five years.*



Storytellers get an opportunity to create a two minute digital story. | Supplied

## The ARTerY is reborn as The Aviary

DAVE VON BIEKER

Owners Philip (pictured) and Mark Muz hope to open The Aviary this spring at 9314 111 Ave. The Aviary is an all-ages arts venue and café with space for about 100 people. You can help by buying Aviary Victory Bonds for \$20 or attending their fundraiser concert at Studio96 on March 5. Details at [facebook.com/arteryyeg/](https://facebook.com/arteryyeg/). Look for a full article on The Aviary soon.

Co-owner Philip Muz stands in The Aviary, which will soon open. | Dave Von Bieker



# Striving for the Olympic Games

Parkdale resident and sabre fencer proves that dedication pays off

CONSTANCE BRISSENDEN

Nine years ago, Parkdale resident Marissa Ponich didn't know much about sabres, a cavalry weapon used on horseback long ago.

Andrew Rusheleau, Ponich's then-boyfriend (now husband) introduced her to sabre fencing when she was attending the University of Alberta. She came to love the sport under the guidance of coach Sergei Kazimirski, founder of Sergei's Sabre Club.

Today she's one of the top women's sabre fencers in Canada.

Ponich was 19 years old when she started to practice the sport, a decade older than most. "I've had to work hard," she admitted. "I wouldn't say I have a natural talent. I try to focus on the techniques I need to fix."

Her training schedule is intense. She trains two to three times per day, six days per week. A typical day starts with yoga before work as a City of Edmonton clerk. At lunch, she heads to the gym for cross training and physical preparation, which generally includes activities such as plyometrics, jumps, squats, and sprinting. After work, she's fencing at the club for two to three hours.

Her dedication has paid off. Ponich has been a national team member since 2013, representing Canada at the 2015 Pan American Games and at World Championships for the past three seasons. Some of the countries she has competed in include Canada, Venezuela, France, USA, Mexico, Turkey, Greece, Russia, Hungary, China, Costa Rica, Colombia, and Chile. Belgium, Italy, and Korea are ahead this spring.

Her goal for 2016 is to qualify for this August's Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The push is on until April, the deadline for all Olympic qualifying events.

"I knew qualifying would be hard work, but I'm going to push until the last minute," said Ponich. No matter what happens, she plans to continue fencing until 2020.

Unlike épée (heavier fencing sword) and foil fencers, sabre fencers score

using not only the tip of the weapon but also the cutting edge of the blade.

As her coach Kazimirski explained, the challenges are mental, technical, and physical. "To understand fencing, you need to understand that the movement is quick and instant. To win, you must be coordinated, think clearly, and be accurate in your technique, as well as in peak physical shape."

As for Ponich, Kazimirski observed, "She's smart and incredibly hard working, strong, and a positive person. She sees the good side to find something positive in her development and not repeat mistakes."

Ponich does not receive any funding, so she relies on her full-time job and sponsorships for financial support. The City of Edmonton has been a strong supporter, allowing her to co-ordinate her annual vacation with her competitions. "My co-workers are supportive, always wishing me well," said Ponich.

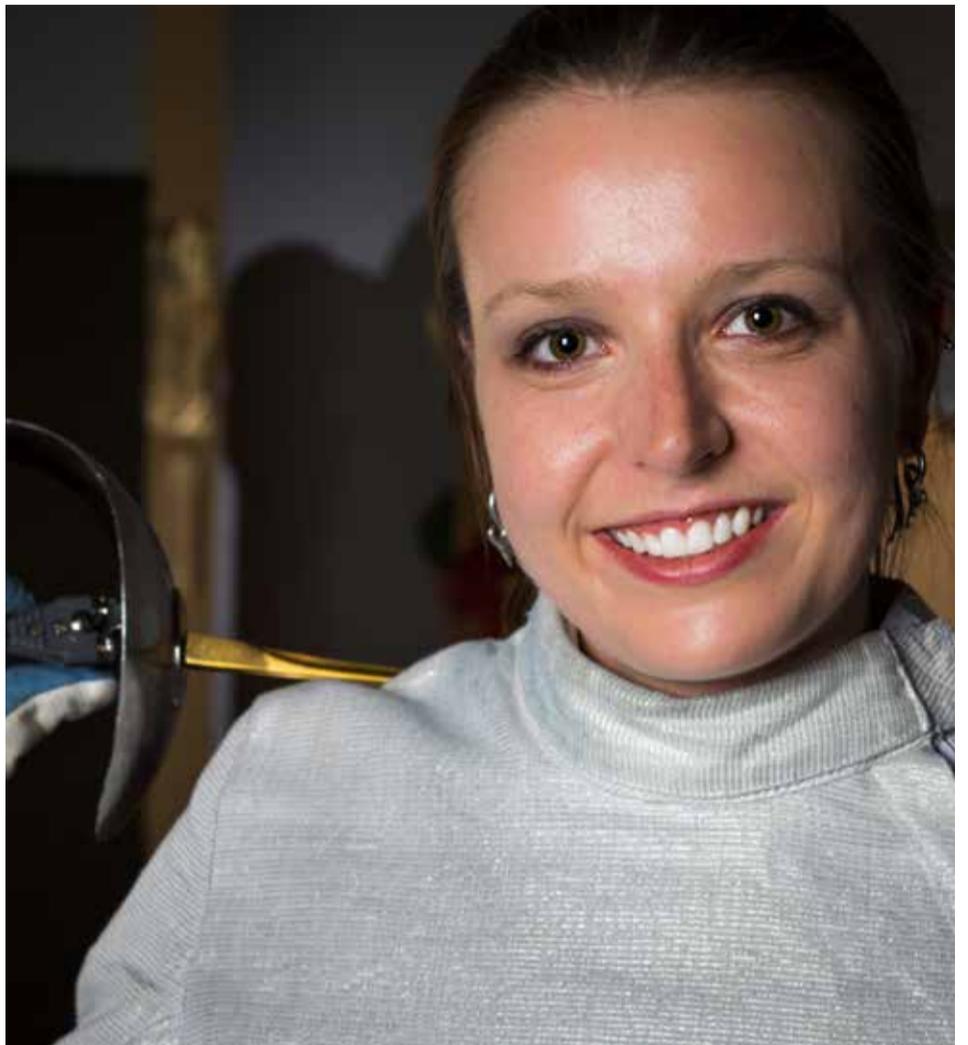
Another solution has been crowdfunding through the MAKEACHAMP website (<https://makeachamp.com/mponich>).

"Crowdfunding is good for me, not only financially but also for the emotional support. It's great to know that so many people support me to become the best fencer I can be," she said.

Winning competitions is not the only satisfaction. At the 2015 Pan American Games in Toronto, Ponich met Brenna, a young girl attending the event. They had their photo taken together and Ponich gave her a pin from the Games. Brenna's father, Paul, sent Ponich a Facebook message that included a video of Brenna thanking her for the pin and explaining that she was going to start fencing. He reported that both Brenna and her sister are taking fencing lessons.

"I helped inspire these girls to start fencing," Ponich said proudly, "and that is incredible."

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



Marissa Ponich is competing to qualify for 2016's Olympic Games in Brazil. | Richard Skura



Marissa Ponich competed at the Pan Olympic Games in July 2015. | Devin Manky Photography

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# Welcoming Syrian refugees

How a group banded together to help a refugee family

ADYAN DUNNIGAN-VICKRUCK

Kathryn Rambow is still dragging around that cold. There has been no time to recuperate. A refugee family—the first installment—arrives on the plane tomorrow.

Rambow, an Alberta Avenue resident, has been busy ensuring a two bedroom apartment is outfitted for a young family of four. Rambow is part of the Refugee Response Group, a few dozen people (some local) who connected to welcome Syrian refugees.

“We have proxy sponsorship from Roberston-Wesley United Church which helped a lot with the red tape as well as with the money end of things,” explained Rambow.

The group sponsored 12 family members. They’ve been expecting four members of the family since early January (the remainder of the extended family is in Lebanon getting medical clearance). Bad weather delayed the flight and then the eight-month pregnant wife couldn’t travel because she was too close to giving birth. Last week they received news the family was coming. It’s been a bit of an emotional rollercoaster, said Rambow.

“We were so excited when we first got notice. Then disappointment when they were delayed. I even found myself feeling jealous when I would read about other groups who had received their families. Now of course, we are thrilled and stressed.”

Rambow said the group is in a Blended Visa Office-Referred program. The federal government covers the family’s basic expenses for six months of their first year, but the group covers the remaining six months and any additional support.

The group was able to raise \$50,000 for the family of now 13 in less than three months from a variety of donations, such as bottle drives, bazaars, and individual donations.

She said “people have been amazing” in

their response of the idea of bringing in a refugee family. “I continue to be astounded by the response. We haven’t met any negativity. And it seems that no sooner we envision a need than someone steps up to meet it. It has been a real exercise in faith and goodwill, that’s for sure. Edmonton is a great community. People can’t seem to do enough.”

The support doesn’t stop with sponsorship. New Canadian families in the apartment complex want to help. The group also has a resettlement committee, which includes a health team, a school team, and people to help with shopping and cooking.

“There are so many things for them to learn: how to ride the ETS, how to use an electric stove, where to find cultural and religious supports, how to dress for winter. And of course the real big thing is the language, which has to happen before they can even begin to think about working.”

Rambow isn’t sure if the family speaks English.

“This young couple that is coming tomorrow did complete high school and English and French were part of the curriculum. The phone contact that we have had to this point has had to be through an interpreter. We will work closely with Catholic Social Services and the Mennonite Centre for Newcomers who do the ESL programs as well as counselling.”

Rambow said the biggest challenge isn’t raising the money or getting public support, it’s the hurry up and wait aspect of welcoming the family. She added, “but we did it, and we are still doing it and will continue to do so long after our official year commitment ends.”

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



The Refugee Response Group welcomed a Syrian refugee family on Valentine’s Day. | Rebecca Lippiatt

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We Believe in Connecting Community for a Safer Neighbourhood!




## We Believe In 118!

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## Get Involved!

Some new and exciting ideas are in the planning stages and you can get involved!  
For more information email: [judy.allan@edmonton.ca](mailto:judy.allan@edmonton.ca) or 780-496-1913.

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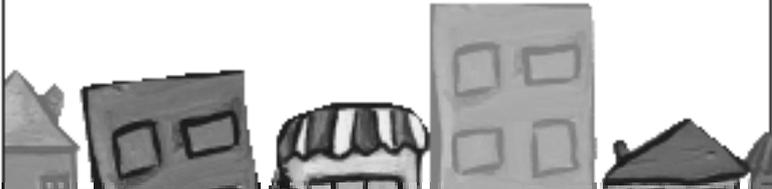
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## EDITORIAL

# Stretching the food budget

Creative ways to grow food, save money and stay healthy

FRANKI HARROGATE

It's no secret that food costs have increased. For some, that jump has barely registered, but for many of us, it has impacted our budgets noticeably. What has caused food prices to soar? Where does that leave those of us with tight finances? Are there alternatives to purchasing expensive fresh fruits and vegetables?

Part of the reason food costs have risen is because of the high price of oil. Large-scale farms require machinery to mechanically harvest products and the cost of transport has also increased. Climate change is another culprit, with floods, droughts, and storms in various areas destroying harvests. The low Canadian dollar is another, more recent factor. Finally, some governments have banned exports of foods, fearing shortages and ensuing political instability. Such bans mean low supply and correspondingly higher prices.

For those of us with tight budgets or on fixed incomes, higher food prices are a

cause for alarm. It's easy to sacrifice luxuries, but eating is essential. Edmonton's Food Bank has seen a marked increase in clients due to the economic downturn, a sign that food insecurity has only gotten worse for many.

If you already budget for your food, it can be difficult to make cuts. This is of particular concern when providing for children or working with specific dietary needs.

One way to stretch your food budget is to begin (or increase) using beans to make meat dishes go further. Beans can also be used as a meat substitute. Bulk beans, in particular, are far less expensive and do well in a variety of recipes, from chilis to rice and corn mixes. It's important to learn how to prepare dried beans as well as factor in the extra time to cook. The Internet is a useful source for recipes and helpful hints.

Another way to get around purchasing expensive fresh veggies is to purchase frozen instead. They are just as nutritious and can be stored for far longer. If frozen vegetables aren't an option,

canned is the next best thing. While not as nutritious, they are better than nothing. Buying food in bulk with several neighbours is another idea.

And let's remember we live in Alberta and have oodles of sunshine. Many of us have access to yards or community gardens. Even in winter, it's possible to grow things like lettuce, onions, and herbs indoors. Online tutorials abound. Indoor and outdoor container gardening is another option.

Gardening larger plots takes time. When growing root vegetables like carrots and beets, weeding, watering, and fertilizing are time-consuming necessities. If you don't have enough time, consider sharing a garden space with someone and coming to an agreement about division of labour and upkeep.

If you decide to cut food costs by gardening, there are ways to make some of it a bit easier. Marigolds repel a variety of insects and reduce the need for commercial pesticides (which you may not want to use on food plants). The "three sisters" of squash, beans, and corn planted

together provides fertilizer, shade, and a natural trellis all at once.

Depending on your likes and needs, growing your own food can stretch your budget significantly.

If it's the actual preparation and cooking giving you trouble, the Internet is a great source of recipes, how-tos, and suggestions. Perhaps someone with canning skills may trade doing so for a share of the spoils. Many community leagues and local groups offer cooking nights where a dish is communally prepared and everyone leaves with portions to take home. Such programs benefit all residents, not to mention being a great way to generate community and wellbeing for everyone who attends.

*Franki is a graduate student in counselling psychology and an active volunteer. She's happily married to a talented acupuncturist, and mama to two fascinating miniature humans.*



Rising food prices demand careful budgeting and creative thinking. | Pixabay

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## ABOUT US

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

## COMMUNITY, COMMUNICATION, CAPACITY

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

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## EDITORIAL POLICY

The Rat Creek Press is a forum for all people. We encourage comments that further discussion on a given article or subject, provide constructive criticism, or offer an idea for community activity. Letters should be no longer than 250 words and must include the full name, location and contact information of the author. Op-Ed columns should be 400-700 words and observe formal rules of spelling and grammar. The RCP reserves the right to edit all material and to remove any electronic comment at any time.

All columns, letters or cartoons submitted are attributed to the author and do not necessarily represent the views or opinions of the Rat Creek Press. Send submissions to the Rat Creek Press Editor via email at editor@ratcreek.org, or 9210-118 Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5G 0N2. Mail may also be dropped at the address above.

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

## LETTER

## Readers support Rat Creek Advertisers

Some months ago, I believe you ran a story about a local female plumber. Would you be able let me know who that was and/or the name of her plumbing company? Thank you.

Keep up the good work, by the way. We pick up a copy of your paper every edition and yes, we try to give business to advertisers in your paper when we can. Hope the Rat Creek Press remains running for many years to come.

Greg Pang  
RedFrame Law

## LETTER

## Concerns about Northlands new vision

The Northlands Park Vision 2020, particularly the outdoor concert space they are planning, will affect the horse racing community and people that live and work at the racetrack. This is a place that is more than an industry. It is a family, a way of life, and more importantly, a historic place that has been functioning in this city for over 100 years, 30 of mine.

My neighbourhood deals with issues like noise and parking. Patrons from Northlands Park currently do not respect the neighbourhood and the parking laws within it. If they intend to hold concerts/festivals that have an attendance of upward of 140,000 people, just think of the issues that will come with this type of traffic.

I hope to see in the next issue some information on how this will affect the communities that surround Northlands Park.

April Welch  
A concerned resident and horse racing advocate

Give feedback through a survey at [northlands.com/vision2020/survey](http://northlands.com/vision2020/survey). Send us your thoughts on Northlands Vision 2020 in a Letter to the Editor.

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# Celebrating women

International Women's Day examines equality, challenges, and progress

TALEA MEDYNSKI

*"Women, like men, should try to do the impossible. And when they fail, their failure should be a challenge to others."* – Amelia Earhart

International Women's Day, which falls on March 8, is a global event celebrating the economic, social, and political achievements of women and calling for change and equality.

## International Women's Day trivia

- The first International Women's Day was held on March 19, 1911 in Austria, Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland.
- International Women's Day takes place every year on March 8.
- Women still struggle with gender equality, of which equal pay and upper management positions are an issue. In 2014, women were 47.2 per cent of the workforce. Note: Information referenced from Status of Women Canada and newswire.ca.

## Fight for your rights: women's right to vote

It was only in 1916 that Albertan women could vote in provincial elections. Effective 1919, most Canadian women could vote in federal elections, although there were conditions attached. In 1929, through the efforts of the Famous Five, a group of Canadian

women were instrumental in overturning the Supreme Court's definition of a "person". Before their work, a "person" did not include individuals of a feminine gender.

The rights all women now enjoy have been in effect for less than a century. On March 8, take a moment to appreciate the huge battle historical women fought.

## Timeline on women's right to vote

- Provincial voting rights
- 1916:** Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta
  - 1917:** British Columbia and Ontario
  - 1918:** Nova Scotia
  - 1919:** New Brunswick and Yukon
  - 1922:** Prince Edward Island
  - 1925:** Newfoundland and Labrador
  - 1940:** Quebec
  - 1951:** Northwest Territories
- Federal voting rights
- 1918:** Women over the age of 21 receive the right to vote federally. In effect on Jan. 1, 1919. Conditions attached: "age 21 or older, not alien-born and meet property requirements in provinces where they exist."
  - 1919:** Women can run for federal elections.
  - 1920:** Federal electoral law changes include universal right to vote for men and women regardless of provincial law.



Women have come far in less than 100 years. | Pixabay

## Famous trailblazers

*"Women hold up half the sky."* - Mao Zedong

- Emily Howard Stowe:** In 1868, Stowe became the first woman to practice medicine in Canada.
- Marie Curie:** famous for her work in radioactivity, Curie won the Nobel Prize in both Chemistry (1911) and Physics (1903).
- Eileen Vollick:** In 1928, she became the first Canadian woman to earn a private pilot's licence.
- Mary Pickford:** Toronto-born Pickford was a famous silent movie star and in 1929, was the first Canadian-born woman to receive an Academy Award.
- The Famous Five:** Nellie McClung, Emily Murphy, Henrietta Muir Edwards, Louise McKinney, and Irene Parlby.

These women forged a path for women's rights in Canada. In 1929, through their efforts, the Supreme Court overturned its decision on the definition of a person, which now includes persons of the female gender.

- Amelia Earhart:** In 1932, Earhart was the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean.
- Emily Carr:** famous Canadian artist and writer, known for her vivid paintings of the natural world.
- Mary Greeyes-Reid:** In 1942, she joined the Canadian Women's Army Corps. She was the first First Nations woman to do so.
- Rosemary Brown:** the first black woman to serve office in a provincial government as an MLA for the NDP party from 1972-1986.
- Sharon Wood:** In 1986, Wood, a Canadian mountaineer, became the first North American woman

to climb Mount Everest.

- Roberta Bondar:** In 1992, Bondar was the first Canadian female astronaut in space.
- Kathryn Bigelow:** In 2009, she was the first woman to receive an Oscar for best director for the movie *The Hurt Locker*.
- Malala Yousafzai:** A Pakistani activist who campaigns for women's rights to education, she survived being shot in the head by the Taliban. She is also the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, awarded to her in 2014.

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

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# The sound and story of The Secretaries

The decade-old Edmonton band is playing at SkirtsAfire

MARI SASANO

The Secretaries are having brunch in Amy van Keeken's kitchen on a Sunday afternoon, before rehearsal. Happy dogs lie at their feet. It's a cozy domestic scene, but don't be mistaken—this band isn't made up of shrinking violets.

Colleen Brown, Natasha Fryzuk and Amy van Keeken work hard for the money (so hard for it, honey).

"We just wanted to jam," said guitarist van Keeken. Six people showed up at their first session, but by the second, the band was distilled to its core members.

"Colleen and I just started playing, and it was Hey Girl. Our very first song. We just kept playing and I just sang the words. And after that, well, that's a song. Now let's write another one," van Keeken said. Drummer Fryzuk agrees.

"It was pretty alchemical."

At the time, they were relatively new to their instruments, though all three had been involved in the music scene for many years—van Keeken and Brown as singer-songwriters and Fryzuk as a music journalist and DJ. Despite their experience, playing in a band was new to them. Ten years later, they've developed musically from three-chord rock with a punk attitude to a full band with Miss Mannered on synth, and the Brassholes, a horn section. They mash up the harmonies of the Wilson sisters of Heart with a riot grrl sensibility.

"I think the whole point is we've been a band for 10 years now and there has been a number of times when we've had to talk ourselves into our own worth," said Fryzuk. Brown, whose ascending solo career is taking her to Toronto this month, notes they built their confidence and discovered new dimensions within themselves.

"I felt powerful in this band. Compared to Amy and I playing together at the Sidetrack in 2005—I remember that and everyone was like, "How quaint. Two lovely women and their pretty songs and pretty voices. What lovely young ladies."

Leaving her ladylike demeanour behind was a welcome change.

"Suddenly, we're onstage playing rock 'n' roll and swearing and drinking tequila and it's just those rules, those labels no longer apply. Now we have our own rules."

The Secretaries are unabashedly feminist. They have had to be in order to stand up for themselves in an industry that has often tried to dismiss them as a "girl band." van Keeken describes one show where their opener performed songs with misogynist lyrics. She said although it was a horrible situation, they approached it as an opportunity to have the best show of their lives.

They are looking forward to playing at SkirtsAfire, where they are unlikely to encounter such shenanigans, but Fryzuk notes that they have built a community that reflects their values. "We have a pretty good audience of all genders who have been really supportive and stuff, which is great because making music our way is attracting the right crowd."

Brown leaving doesn't mean the end of the band. They will be heading into the studio this spring, and Brown will be travelling enough to manage rehearsals when they need to prepare for a show.

"It's just the way it goes. But I miss the songs like an old friend when we don't play for a while. I start get an itch. I feel like I need to do something with those songs. Those songs are beloved."

Mari is a writer and civil servant.



Band members from The Secretaries are ready to perform on March 11. | Darren Radbourne

**THE SECRETARIES**  
 March 11, 9:45-11 pm  
 Alberta Avenue Community League  
 9210 118 Ave  
 SkirtsAfire March 10-13  
 skirtsafire.com for more info & full schedule.

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11AM - 1PM			YOGA IN THE ART 9:45am, 10:45am & 11:45am NINA HAGGERTY GALLERY	BELLY DANCING WORKSHOP 12:00pm - 1:00pm BEDOUIN BEATS
1PM - 5PM			THE KEY OF SHE 1:00pm - 3:00pm THE CARROT	THE KEY OF SHE 1:00pm - 3:00pm THE CARROT
			FOR WHEN SHE WAKES 1:00pm - 2:00pm NINA HAGGERTY GALLERY	GIDION'S KNOT 1:30pm - 2:45pm BLACK BOX THEATRE
			A PLACE FOR PROSE 3:00pm - 5:00pm NINA HAGGERTY GALLERY	PEEP SHOW 3:00pm - 4:00pm NINA HAGGERTY GALLERY
5PM - 9PM	OPENING CEREMONIES 5:00pm - 7:00pm NINA HAGGERTY GALLERY	JUSTINE VANDERGRIFT 6:00pm - 7:00pm SLOPPY HOGGS ROED HUS	CALEIGH CARDINAL 6:00pm - 7:00pm SLOPPY HOGGS ROED HUS	<b>VENUE INFORMATION</b> NINA HAGGERTY GALLERY 9225-118 Avenue SLOPPY HOGGS ROED HUS 9563-118 Avenue CABARET SPACE Alberta Avenue Community League 9210-118 Avenue BLACK BOX THEATRE Alberta Avenue Community League 9210-118 Avenue THE CARROT 9351-118 Avenue BEDOUIN BEATS 11805-94 Street ST. FAITH'S CHURCH 11725-93 Street
	A-LINE VARIETY SHOW 7:30pm - 9:30pm CABARET SPACE	WORDS UNZIPPED 7:00pm - 9:00pm NINA HAGGERTY GALLERY	PEEP SHOW UNLEASHED - WELL SPRING 7:00pm - 8:00pm NINA HAGGERTY GALLERY	
		GIDION'S KNOT 7:30pm - 8:45pm BLACK BOX THEATRE	WOMEN'S CHOIR FESTIVAL 7:30pm - 9:00pm ST. FAITH'S CHURCH	
9PM - 11PM		THE DIRTY SHOW 9:15pm - 9:40pm CABARET SPACE	GIDION'S KNOT 7:30pm - 8:45pm BLACK BOX THEATRE	
		THE SECRETARIES 9:45pm - 11:00pm CABARET SPACE	THE 11 O'CLOCK NUMBER 9:15pm - 9:40pm CABARET SPACE	
			KIMBERLY MACGREGOR & TZADEKA 9:45pm - 11:00pm CABARET SPACE	

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# Everyone can be a little bit Irish

The Serca Festival of Irish Theatre showcases celtic culture on Alberta Ave

ALOUISE DITTRICK

For many people, St. Patrick's Day is an opportunity to wear green and celebrate Irish culture, but organizers of Serca Festival are hoping to engage Edmontonians in Irish theatre.

Mark Henderson, the creative director and founder of Serca, explained the festival goes beyond a literal definition of Irish theatre. The plays featured at the festival could be about Ireland or by Irish playwrights, or they could be translations of non-Irish plays by Irish playwrights. They could also, as festival producer Michael Clark said, "be about the Irish experience."

"It got me to thinking: what is Irish? There are all these English writers you think of as being English, who are actually Irish [like Oscar Wilde and George Bernard Shaw]. There is also Canadian culture that we don't really realize is Irish, like [Newfoundland comedy troupe] Codco," said Henderson.

Some of the plays being staged include *The Good Thief* by Conor McPherson. It is a one-man show about a Dublin thug telling the tale of a job gone wrong and stars local actor Frank Zotter. Another play is *Airswimming* by Charlotte Jones. *Airswimming* is about two women who were put in an Irish mental asylum in the 1920s. The play stars Kendra Connor and Jenny McKillop and is directed by Amy DeFelice.

"[In] the Irish stories and the Irish theatre, there's a simplicity to

the storytelling. It goes right to the heart of the human condition. Even if it is bleak, it is incredibly full of heart and quick of mind at the same time," said Henderson. The plays run from March 18 to 23 at Alberta Avenue Community Centre and the Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts.

While Irish theatre is showcased, the festival is evolving. Last year, organizers started to include more family-friendly events like a puppet show and dance workshops. This year, Serca is staging *Finn McCool and the Fish of Wisdom and Other Ticklish Tales*, a show about "legendary thumb-sucking Irish warrior giant, who has everything but the brains he needs. Along his journey to wisdom we meet an enchanted salmon, a wise woman, and terrible invaders from across the sea." There is also a family-friendly event on March 17. St. Patrick's Day will kick off the festival with an Irish ceilidh at the Alberta Avenue Community Centre. The ceilidh, a term for an Irish social gathering, will include dancing, a five piece band led by Juno award winner Jeremiah McDade, a sing-along, performances, and an Irish stew and soda bread dinner.

About 15 per cent of Edmontonians claim Irish ancestry, according to figures from Statistics Canada. However, everyone is encouraged to come to the festival to learn about Irish theatre and culture. Or, as Clark said, "Anybody who wants to be Irish can come to the festival."



Miranda Allen, Jenna Dykes, Jenny McKillop star in *Medea*, translated by Northern Irish poet Tom Paulin. *Medea* was staged in the 2013 Serca. | Ami Farrow

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The Good Thief | Airswimming | Finn McCool and the Salmon of Wisdom



# The surprises of life lessons

## What I've learned on my journey in motherhood

CYNTHIA C. MONDESIR, MD

Katherine Noreen arrived on a sunny July morning with a wide-eyed, questioning glare, as if to say, "Why was I just pulled out of my warm comfy place?" Those words have been the metaphor for the last six months of my life.

At 42 years old, I had nine months to contemplate what my life had become. Three years prior I was a pediatrician working in rural Bethel, Alaska. My parents were deceased and I was so engrossed in my work that I had no intentions of getting married or having children. Everything changed when I met my now-husband Justin while on vacation in Mexico and he showed me that life could be different. I took a leap of faith, moved to Edmonton and now I am a mother.

Considering I am a pediatrician, you would think I was well-prepared for motherhood. Well, not so much. My two worlds came together in a startling fashion on the day she was born. When I brought Katherine home, I was terrified but up for the adventure. My education taught me how to take care of sick children and ensure they are developing properly. I also learned how to stay up all night while functioning the next day. This has been a very useful skill. At work I gave the children back at the end of the visit. Now I had to take care of my little one 24 hours a day.

I had assumed that being a mother was intuitive. I had the same ideas about breastfeeding. I was wrong. I had to get acquainted with Katherine's habits, needs and wants. She had to figure out I was her

mother and could depend on me. And breastfeeding is a learned technique just like everything else we do. It takes time, patience and practice.

Learning how to be a mother is an evolving, complex process. I spent the first two weeks crying, mothering and hoping that I was doing a good job. All the things I didn't know about babies in the practical day-to-day events surprised me. Babies make a vast array of noises while sleeping and they sleep at least up to 18 hours. I kept checking on her to make sure she was still breathing. I also wondered whether there was something wrong with her since she made so much noise. I could not shut off my medical brain and was constantly thinking of things that could be wrong. I calmed down when I realized it was just her vocalizing sounds.

Katherine has given me a world of knowledge I get to share with my patients' parents when I return to work. Becoming a mother has made me a better pediatrician. All the pieces have come together and I still have a lot to learn. I feel empowered by all the women I have encountered in my journey. There is no shame in asking for help or asking questions. There was so much support from friends both from Alaska and from my new home.

I have found a warm comfy place in Edmonton. I am excited and curious to discover more about my daughter and myself.

*Cynthia is a newcomer to Edmonton and a pediatrician in Bethel, Alaska. She is excited to learn more about this great city.*



Cynthia with her family at Christmas. | Supplied

# Looking for butterflies

## This year, let's resolve to help others

LORRAINE BERGSTROM

Have you ever been in a room when someone walks in and everyone is immediately drawn to that person? That individual exudes easiness, openness, and genuine warmth, making them approachable. That person has a healthy self-image and is a soaring butterfly.

In order to experience happy human relations, we must consider self-image. Depending on the way we perceive ourselves, self-image dictates how we behave.

Let's use a butterfly as a metaphor since it evolves and grows. Our self-image is crucial. We need consciously to decide everyday not to be hurt and not to hurt others. Everyday we have the opportunity to lift up someone and help him or her soar. Sometimes we soar and other times we need a boost. We all need each other.

We are a caring society that believes in healing and making things better. However, leader are needed to get things rolling. Leaders are people who set the tone and vision and aren't afraid to

run into obstacles and make mistakes. Leaders recognize the value of a team or family. They inspire us so that we collectively can make things happen. We can all be soaring butterflies. Even the smallest step taken by one person can create change.

Part of the journey to forgiveness is using past failures to create a better way forward. It's important to continue this conversation with our government and our leaders. We need to hold ourselves in high esteem because if we don't, others will not.

Loving others and being loved in return is the greatest gift. We are past the holiday season that reminded us all about kindness, peace, and understanding. Let's truly use that as a springboard for a better year.

So let's encourage butterflies and not crush them.

*Lorraine, a Parkdale resident for almost 11 years, loves the potential and inclusiveness of this community. She's currently helping facilitate jam sessions for community musicians and performers.*

## CHURCH SERVICES

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# Sowing seeds for savings

Growing sustainable food from seed to table

NIKKI-KARYSSA SCOTT

Urban agriculture is on the rise in Edmonton. With tough economic times ahead and food prices steadily increasing, it's a good time to turn that overgrown patch of lawn into a garden.

Gardening can seem overwhelming, but it is simpler than it sounds. All you need is a few square feet of the great outdoors along with water and time. Even if you don't have a yard, you can still grow food. Consider container gardening if you have a sunny balcony or patio, or even a herb garden on a bright windowsill. It's amazing how many tomatoes or peppers can grow out of one pot. Another option is to take advantage of a community garden.

Starting a small co-op with neighbours and friends is both cost effective and a great way to involve everyone. Some people have yards ideal for full sun, high heat crops, while others may grow cool season crops better. Variety in your own garden is important, but why not expand and vary harvest, having fun with others doing it?

Edmonton has a relatively short growing season due to late snowfalls and frosts. This limits the crops we can grow; however, this can easily be overcome by sowing seeds indoors beginning this month and into April. This will also allow ensure the plant matures. Starting seeds indoors can be fun for everyone and an important way to connect with where our food comes from.

Some of the easiest crops to start indoors are herbs, strawberries, tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, artichokes and onions. Watermelons need extra time indoors before being transplanted into the ground.

Most vegetables are so easy to raise from

seed that you can become overrun with them. Seed packets contain far more seeds that you'll need in a season, so don't sow the whole packet. The most affordable seed is usually in bulk, which you can buy from catalogues such as Stokes, Veseys, and OSC. Brands like McKenzie are great.

Growing plants need space, so start small. If you are growing with friends or neighbours, share the seeds to provide smaller quantities and keep costs low.

You can also buy seedlings from stores. Canadian Tire's prices are very reasonable, giving the best return for your money, with the plants in great shape. Additionally, the Edmonton Horticultural Society has a plant exchange and sale in May and has information on local sales. You can also check out the Green and Gold Garden's sale at the University of Alberta.

But don't buy seedlings too early to plant in your garden. Many garden centres start bringing out plants in April. Unless you know how to cover pots and protect plants from frost, seedlings may not survive in the garden that early. Instead, wait until end of May.

With a little bit of effort, you can grow all kinds of vegetables, fruits, greens and herbs in large and small containers, window boxes and gardens. There are so many good reasons to start gardening and really no reason not to.

*Nikki-Karyssa grew up in the Okanagan Valley working in orchards and vineyards before moving to Edmonton in 2007. She received her BSc in Production Horticulture in 2012. She lives in Alberta Avenue and is the plant growth manager at the University of Alberta's research greenhouse.*



Starting vegetables indoors provides a longer growing season and allows us to experience the freshest produce. | Pixabay

# Explore mindfulness meditation

Parkdale-Cromdale offers free meditation classes on Tuesdays

CHARLES MARROW

A mindfulness meditation class is held every Tuesday between 7 and 8:30 pm at Parkdale-Cromdale Community League (11335 85 Street). This free class gives neighborhood residents an opportunity to explore how sitting meditation practice

can help you become more calm. Over time, meditation helps develop serenity not only during class, but also in everyday life. People practicing mindfulness meditation use a relaxed yet upright posture and pay attention to the natural flow of breath. All are invited to attend.



Join a free mindfulness meditation class at Parkdale-Cromdale Community League. | Talea Medynski

## North East Zone BASEBALL & SOFTBALL Registration for the 2016 Season:

Watch for registration dates in your home community. This is where you should register if they are taking baseball or softball registration.

If your home community league is not taking registrations then register at Northeast Zone Central Registration.



- Saturday, February 20 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm
- Saturday, February 27 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm
- Sunday, March 13 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm
- Wednesday, March 23 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm
- Wednesday, March 30 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm

NEZ Office: 7515 Borden Park Road (behind the tennis courts in Borden Park).

[www.playnezbball.ca](http://www.playnezbball.ca)

# Opening the door to change

Pursuing your passion with measured, thoughtful steps

DAVE VON BIEKER

Sitting across from me at the Carrot, Alex shares a slideshow on his iPad. A year ago, he left a well-paying job to become a writer and photographer. It's clear he's still excited by his choice.

Okay, Alex didn't exactly leave his job. His employers laid him off when the economy sunk. This cold shower awakening helped him hear his dreams shouting for attention.

Around the same time last year, my dreams were getting louder. I told my boss I wanted to leave my secure job for the great unknown. In response, he gave me a book called *Quitter*.

I was grateful. Jon Acuff's *Quitter* is a book about moving with measured steps towards a dream. Quit your day job, Acuff encourages, just maybe not yet. I stayed another year.

I am now three months into life as a freelance writer and musician. What I lack in financial stability, I've made up for in opportunities. I've landed a gig as an arts columnist for CBC Radio Active. This delightful surprise came as a direct result of making myself available.

Change calls you through a doorway. You can squint inside, but you cannot see the whole room until you cross the threshold. Until you enter, you will never know what is hiding behind the door.

Plans can empower, but they can also paralyze. Some things can only be known by taking action. Sometimes we have to believe before we see. This takes faith.

Are you standing outside the doorway of some great change? Take a breath. Just before you step inside, consider the

three big 'Rs' if you hope to find success: Relationships, Responsibilities and Resources.

Relationships matter more than qualifications or even past successes. You cannot pursue your passions in isolation. Cultivate strong relationships today so they will flourish when you need them. Don't underestimate support from those who know you best. Develop a network who will fund your 'life's work.' Writers need readers. Musicians need an audience. Painters need patrons.

Relationships bring responsibilities. I am responsible for my children and my marriage. I keep our house (mostly) clean while my wife works full time. We have a mortgage and car payments. At the very least, our Netflix subscription must be maintained.

Responsibilities require resources. So do dreams. Time is a resource we often lack, so we quit our day job. But you will need more than time. You'll need talent, money to invest, and an income to keep up those responsibilities, or stress will strangle the life out of your creativity. Without my wife's steady income, I couldn't take risks and keep up my responsibilities. My relationships are too important to let those responsibilities slip.

Maybe, like Alex, circumstance has led you to a doorway. Peek through that door and smell the fresh thrill of possibility. Maybe, like me, you are waiting, hand on the doorknob, to take your brave little step.

*Dave holds a Bachelor of Theology and is Artistic Director of the Bleeding Heart Art Space. He lives in the inner city with his wife, two children and dog.*



Planning for change is important. | Unsplash

## your neighbourhood... your community league!

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westwoodcommunity2@gmail.com

**Rezoning meeting  
March 9, 6-8 pm.**

### Delton

12325 88 St  
admin@deltoncommunity.com

**Learn more  
deltoncommunity.com**

### Elmwood Park

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epcl@shawbiz.ca

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various dog events.**

### Spruce Avenue

10240 115 Ave  
spruceaveleague@shaw.ca

**Garage Sale April 29-30.  
Book a table. 780-479-8019**

### Alberta Avenue

9210 - 118 Ave  
info@albertaave.org

**Come meet neighbours.  
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### Parkdale-Cromdale

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**We're starting a community  
garden. Interested?**



# Improving neighbourhood connections

Elmwood Park is a tiny league making a big impact on the surrounding community

CHANTAL FIGEAT

Travel north from 118 Avenue on 75 Street and you will come across the Elmwood Park Community League. Situated by the Trans-Canada Highway to the north and surrounded by parkland, it's an easy building to overlook. As league president Melanie Spitzer said, "we're so tucked in, even the community hall is tucked into a corner of the community."

Despite the location, league board members are making a difference in their community. "At our last few events, the awareness and participation has gone up," said Spitzer, whose quiet enthusiasm for her task as president is obvious.

The community league has a history of which to be proud. In October, I met Spitzer and learned about Elmwood Park while writing an article on vintage documents discovered in the building (see the November 2015 *Rat Creek Press* issue). The files had been stored and forgotten under a water pipe.

The documents revealed that the community league was founded during post Second World War settlement and resulting community participation. Approximately 55 per cent of the area housing consists of single-family homes, many of which housed war veterans and their families. The name Elmwood Park was coined due to the elm trees veterans planted along the boulevards.

The league has a lot going on for community members. On May 7, the league is hosting a safety fair where a police constable will be present to answer questions. Board members are also considering a community walk.

Membership in the community league is free. Members are entitled to a free swim at the Commonwealth Pool on Saturdays from 5 to 7 pm. They are also provided with skate tags which give free access to community skating around the city.

Board members are working to be responsive to their community. As Spitzer stated, they are "very interested in seeing what members of our community would like us to provide for them."



Elmwood Park board members from top left to right: Ricky Spitzer, Melanie Spitzer, Joleen Mazurat, Geri Redekop. Bottom left to right: Gillian Daley-deGroot, Cindy Verner, Carissa Morrissey. | Supplied

## MEET THE BOARD

Melanie Spitzer – President  
 Geri Redekop – Vice-President  
 Joleen Mazurat – Treasurer  
 Carissa Morissey – Secretary  
 Ricky Spitzer – Member at Large  
 Gillian Daley-deGroot – Member at Large

Cindy Verner – Member at Large  
 Tracy Richard – Member at Large  
 Gord Richard – Member at Large  
 George Blanchett – Member at Large

**ELMWOOD PARK COMMUNITY LEAGUE**  
 12505 75 St  
 Amenities: playground, baseball diamond, park space.  
 Phone: 780.479.1035  
 E-mail: EPCL@shawbiz.ca

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# EYES On The Street



LETTER

## The small things make all the difference

I moved to the Alberta Avenue neighbourhood in 2006. I didn't move here to be its savior. I moved here because I could afford it. The neighbourhood wasn't even on my radar initially, but my then boyfriend (now husband) suggested I look here as he had previously lived in the area. My realtor said she wasn't willing to show a single woman houses in this area so I got a new realtor and a new house. I couldn't be happier with the outcome! I love living here!

I have made friends of neighbours, ranging from young professionals who just moved here to seniors who have lived here for over 60 years. They have all become important to my husband and I. And I have seen amazing changes, small and large, occur in the decade we've lived here.

I am not an overly involved person. I don't volunteer at our neighbourhood festivals or at The Carrot and I feel intimidated when I'm in large groups of unfamiliar people. But I love connecting with people.

I am awed by the amount of large scale effort being put into our neighbourhood and the people doing this work. What I can and want to contribute comes on a smaller scale. This doesn't make me less important to the efforts of the neighbourhood revitalization. This may even be the next step to ensure the large efforts, such as our festivals, actually create lasting change. Regular people like you and me can do these small things.

Over the past few years, my neighbour and I have organized a block party. From this has come the opportunity to meet neighbours, learn names, and find common interests. I've met neighbours who I can now ask for a cup of sugar and entrust with keys to my house.

After celebrating our third block party, a small dinner club has begun with a few couples. We meet monthly and patronize local restaurants. From this dinner club, a crafting group has evolved. These smaller group activities make this neighbourhood feel cozy and like a community. It's the type of neighbourhood I want to live in. This has all come from small efforts.

So if you (like me) aren't the type of person to get involved on a large scale, or feel that you can't make change, know that simply saying hello to your neighbours, going for a walk through the area, or lending a cup of sugar all have lasting positive effects.  
- Andrea Ruelling

*Andrea is a speech-language pathologist who works as a clinical assistant professor at the University of Alberta. She is also an avid gardener and world traveler. She has lived in Alberta Avenue since 2006.*



RESOURCE

## Getting Help & Reporting



Community and social services information and referrals CALL 211 or visit [ab.211.ca](http://ab.211.ca) or [linkyeg.ca](http://linkyeg.ca)

**City of Edmonton**

Info on programs and services or report concerns on roads, sidewalks, traffic signs, litter, graffiti, parks, trees and more. CALL 311 or visit [Edmonton.ca/311](http://Edmonton.ca/311) or use 311 app.

[edmontonpolice.ca](http://edmontonpolice.ca) or EPS App

**Community Liaison Constable**

Jeff Thomsen  
Email: [jeff.thomsen@edmontonpolice.ca](mailto:jeff.thomsen@edmontonpolice.ca)  
Voicemail: 780.391.4551

**Health Link Alberta**

24-7 health advice and information  
CALL 811 or visit [MyHealth.Alberta.ca](http://MyHealth.Alberta.ca)

**Report a John**

Call 780.421.2656 with licence plate and details  
Or visit [How do I...at edmontonpolice.ca](http://HowdoI...at.edmontonpolice.ca)

**Library outreach social workers**

Are you struggling with homelessness, lack of income, or just need some help? Visit:  
Highlands Mondays 1-5pm  
Abbottsfeld Tuesdays 10am-6pm  
Sprucewood Thursdays 10am-6pm  
Stanley A Milner Daily

**Crime Stoppers**

[crimestoppers.ab.ca/edmonton/](http://crimestoppers.ab.ca/edmonton/)  
Call 1.800.222.8477 or online at [tipssubmit.com](http://tipssubmit.com)

Anonymously report all types of info related to suspicious or criminal activity as well as concerns related to animal abuse, child welfare, domestic abuse, fraud, human trafficking, sexual assault, traffic offenses and more.

**Edmonton Police**

Non-Emergency  
Call 780-423-4567 or #377

**linkyeg.ca**

Times are tough for many people right now and many newcomers are arriving in our city. You may encounter people in need anywhere, anytime as you live, work, shop or play around the city.

One useful tool is this mobile-optimized website that connects homeless and low income residents with critical and lifesaving resources nearby.

Quickly look up resources by category (food, shelter, clothing + essentials, etc.) and sort by distance or name and whether the service is open or not. A map with walking route and time will be displayed.



Call 2-1-1 when you see a distressed person on the streets.

ACTION

## Be a connector



Community is built one connection and friendship at a time. One thing I'm mindful about is that while I'm quite outgoing, not everyone is. Part of my "job" in the community is facilitating connections. I love it. I've been immeasurably enriched, and I'd like to think my friends have been enriched as well.

I was riding the bus home with another local resident and got to introduce her to my co-worker/classmate Ben who also lives in our neighbourhood. Turns out he lives close to another workmate/friend (and her husband)

for whom I've babysat. We're all within blocks of each other! Yeah!

Making the most of serendipity is helpful and can't be stressed enough! I know it, I do it, and it works.

- Susan Allebone, Parkdale

*Susan lives, creates, socializes, shops and volunteers in the "United Nations" of Edmonton— Alberta Avenue. "We believe in 118" is not just a slogan for her, it's a way of life.*



Ruelling's dinner club meet up at T & D Noodle House. | Supplied





# Community Calendar

## ESL & LANGUAGE

**CREE LANGUAGE CONVERSATION CIRCLE**  
Free drop-in program by the Canadian Native Friendship Centre. Mondays 6-8 pm at Highlands Library.

**PRACTICE ENGLISH**  
Conversations about many different topics using materials from the library. Mondays 7 pm at Sprucewood Library.

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

**ESL PROGRAM**  
Including free parent & tot classes. Wednesdays & Fridays 9:15-11:15 am at Parkdale-Cromdale. More: Sarah 780.887.6825 or sarahdelano@hotmail.com.

**ENGLISH CONVERSATION CIRCLE**  
Drop in and practice your English (LACE program). Fridays 10:30 am at Highlands Library. More: 780.424.3545.

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

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

## FOOD & SUPPORT

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

**PRAYERWORKS COLLECTIVE KITCHEN**  
Cook with friends, try new recipes, help your food budget. Second Wednesday of each month, 5:30-8 pm at St. Faith/St. Stephen. Cost: 4 one serving meals \$3. More: Trish 780.464.5444.

## PARENTS & PRE-SCHOOLERS

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

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

**RHYMES THAT BIND**  
Rhymes, finger play, songs and simple movement games. Wednesdays 6:30-8:30 pm at Parkdale-Cromdale. More: Sarah 780.887.6825 or sarahdelano@hotmail.com.

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

**SPRUCEWOOD LIBRARY**  
Sing, Sign, Laugh & Learn, Sundays 2:30 pm and Tuesdays 10:30 am. Baby Laptime, Mondays 10:30 am. Family Storytime Wednesdays 6:30 pm. More: 780.496.7099.

**HIGHLANDS LIBRARY**  
Family Storytime, Mondays 10:30 am. Sing, Sign, Laugh & Learn, Wednesdays & Thursdays 10:30 am. More: 780.496.1806.

## CHILDREN

**LEGO AT THE LIBRARY**  
Design and build a lego creation. Share your tips and tricks. Ages 6-12. Second Saturday of the month 2-3 pm at Highlands Library.

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

## YOUTH

**SMART SPACE**  
Do homework, work on projects, or learn about tech gadgets and other online tools. Ages 13-18. Thursdays 4-5 pm at Highlands Library, except March 31.

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

**TEEN GAMING**  
Hone your skills by playing some of the best games out there! Thursdays 6:30-8:30 pm at Sprucewood Library.

## ADULTS

**SITTING MEDITATION IN THE BUDDHIST TRADITION**  
A period of mindfulness meditation and a short reading and group discussion. Tuesdays 7-8:30 pm at Parkdale-Cromdale. More: charlesmarrow@yahoo.ca.

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

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

**NASHVILLE SONGWRITERS ASSOC INTERNATIONAL (NSAI)**  
Second Monday of the month 6:30-10 pm at The Carrot. Confirm attendance email Colleen: col\_kside@hotmail.com

## SENIORS

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

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

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

## FAMILIES

**POP-UP MAKERSPACE**  
Robot challenges, Makey Makey hacks, DIY music, Art and 3-D design - Try things and make fun stuff. Saturdays March 19, April 23 & May 21 from 2-3 pm

at Highlands Library. All ages.

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

**THE CARROT'S POETRY OPEN MIC NIGHT**  
Share your work with an encouraging crowd on March 31, 7:30-9 pm.

**FAMILY ART WORKSHOPS**  
Dive into the wonderful world of art with FREE all-age workshops Tuesdays 6:30-8 pm at Parkdale-Cromdale.

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

**MUSIC LESSONS BY CREART**  
Free group music lessons Saturdays at Parkdale-Cromdale. Voice 10-11 am, guitar 11 am - 2 pm, and violin from 12-1 pm. More: Mackensie at cheftthemusical@gmail.com or Sebastian at cbastianb44@gmail.com.

**FREE REC CENTRE ACCESS**  
Free access to Commonwealth Recreation Centre on Saturdays from 5-7 pm for members of participating leagues. Eastwood does not participate.

**FREE SPORTS EQUIPMENT**  
All kinds of sports equipment for kids in need. Obtain a referral from your school, community league, or other agency you are involved with. More: sportscentral.org or 780.477.1166.

## LOCATIONS

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

# WHAT'S ON IN MARCH

**CARROT GALLERY OPENING**  
Featuring local artists Mariam Qureshi and Ellen Andreassen. Artwork presented is available for sale. March 3 from 7:30-9:30 pm.

**POET WITHIN**  
Two nights of poetry readings. March 8 & 9 from 7-9:30 pm at The Carrot.

**SKIRTSAFIRE**  
Check out this multidisciplinary festival celebrating the work of women. March 10-13. More: skirtsafire.com.

**SERCA FESTIVAL**  
Celebrate Irish theatre & culture March 17 to 23 at Alberta Avenue. More: sercafest.com.

**SWEET JESUS**  
Step inside a life-size colouring book from March 19 to April 30 at Bleeding Heart Art Space (9132 118 Ave).

**SEEDY SUNDAY**  
A gardening event focusing on native

plant collectors, seed companies and agricultural conservation groups. Sunday, March 20 from 11am - 4pm at Central Lions Seniors Rec Centre (11113 113 St). More: edmontonseedysunday.org.

**PLAYGROUND PROGRAM**  
Drop-in Green Shack from March 1-26 every Tuesday & Thursday 4-7 pm and Saturday 1-5 pm at Parkdale-Cromdale.

**MAKE TAX TIME PAY**  
Free tax services for people with low income, including assistance with applying for government benefit programs. March 8, 15, 22 from 10 am to 2 pm at Highlands Library. Tuesdays 1-5 pm and Saturdays 11am - 4 pm in March at Sprucewood Library. More info & appointments call 2-1-1.

**OPEN MIC**  
Original music, poetry, comedy and more. Saturdays, 7pm at The Carrot.

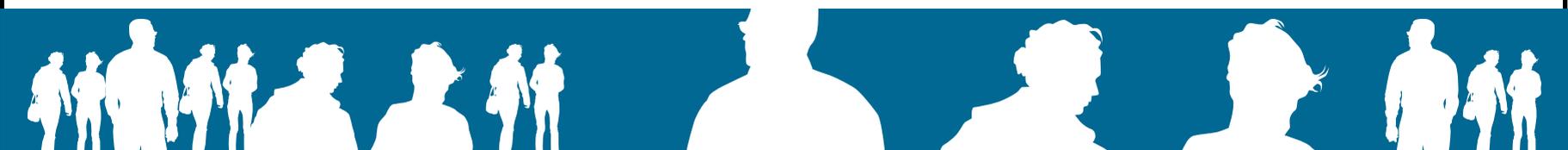
## SAVE THE DATE

**GOBFEST**  
Edmonton's Board Game Convention. Saturday & Sunday, April 9 & 10 at Alberta Avenue. More: gobfest.ca

**PENNY CARNIVAL**  
Good old fashion games and fun. Saturday, April 16 from 1:30-4 pm at Alberta Avenue.

**20th ANNUAL COMMUNITY GARAGE SALE**  
Friday & Saturday, April 29-30. Donations of gently used items (sorry no large appliances or sofas) accepted starting April 25th, with proceeds going to the continued Spruce Avenue Community Park Re-Development Project. A limited number of tables available for \$10/table. Book yours early by calling Verna @ 780-479-8019.

**BLOOMIN GARDEN SHOW & ART SALE**  
Great shopping and gardening information. Brunch & lunch fare by Creative Quality Catering. Bring your mom out for Mother's Day. Saturday, May 7 at Alberta Avenue. Call for participation and volunteers. More: albertaave.org





## IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO SHAPE NORTHLANDS

We've recently announced our exciting new plan for future development and we want you to tell us what you think about it.

Take our public survey at [northlands.com/vision2020/survey](http://northlands.com/vision2020/survey) before it closes March 7.



## Neighbourhood Summer Daycamps



City of Edmonton offers amazing summer daycamps at local community halls! Get full camp details in the 2016 Summer Daycamps guide available at schools, public libraries, City recreation centres and online.

	Week 1 July 4-8	Week 2 July 11-15	Week 3 July 18-22	Week 4 July 25-29	Week 5 August 2-5	Week 6 August 8-12	Week 7 August 15-19	Week 8 Aug 22-26	
<b>Half Day</b> 9-11:30 am	Kinder Art Ages 3-5 \$20 560291 Elmwood		Exploring Nature Ages 3-5 \$19 560688 Beverly	Kitchen Kapers Ages 6-9 \$17 560695 Boyle Street	4 days		Wee Adventures Ages 4-6 \$20 560801 Beverly	Musical Mites Ages 3-5 \$19 560808 Parkdale-Cromdale	
<b>Half Day</b> 1:30 - 4pm	Swinging Safari Ages 4-6 \$20 560293 Central McDougall	Wee Adventures Ages 4-6 \$20 560312 Central Lions (Prince Rupert)	<b>Registration Opens March 16!</b> <b>Register by calling 311 or online at <a href="http://edmonton.ca/daycamps">edmonton.ca/daycamps</a></b>						
<b>Full Day</b> 9 am - 4 pm	Creative Campers Ages 8-12 \$36 560310 Parkdale-Cromdale	Adventure Us Ages 6-9 \$36 560685 Delton	Great Treasue Hunt Ages 6-9 \$31 560691 Jubilee Park (Beacon Heights)	Keep Active Ages 8-12 \$47 560786 Alberta Ave	Secret Agent Camp Ages 8-12 \$42 560791 Eastwood	Creative Campers Ages 6-9 \$36 560797 Montrose	Creative Café Ages 6-9 \$36 560804 Spruce Ave	Around the Word Ages 9-12 \$36 560812 Boyle Street	
			Science Discovery Ages 8-12 \$36 560694 Westwood		1,2,3 Blast Off Ages 6-9 \$29 560789 Queen Mary Park		Extreme Action Ages 8-12 \$62 560807 Bellevue	Adventure Us Ages 6-9 \$36 560810 Newton	

## LOOKING FOR AN INTERCULTURAL DAYCARE?



The Intercultural Child and Family Centre at McCauley School (9538-107ave) has child care spaces for children from 12 months to 12 years and is open from 6am to 530pm. ICFC is a non-profit, accredited centre providing a culturally enriched play and learning environment. Two healthy snacks and lunch are provided. Subsidy is available.

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