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Infill development frustrates residents

Unfinished duplex on Alberta Avenue has been sitting for years



A neighbour stands in the alley looking at the unfinished house at 11535 95A Street. | Rebecca Lippiatt

MIMI WILLIAMS

Bubbling under the surface of one of the prettiest blocks in Alberta Avenue is growing anger and frustration among neighbours forced to live near an infill development gone horribly wrong.

After five years of reporting concerns about the unfinished duplex at 11535 95A Street, Donna Paliwoda said the experience is a perfect illustration of why people in central mature neighbourhoods are averse to this kind of development.

"It's got nothing to do with opposing density," Paliwoda said. "We have a beautiful street with beautiful homes and beautiful yards that we take pride in. That property is negatively impacting everybody forced to live around it."

Public records indicate a land transfer took place in 2013, the same year that a development permit was granted. The old house was demolished in the spring of 2014 and the new basement was dug in May of

that year. Construction of the house proceeded through that winter and then stopped.

Paliwoda said the project was a problem from the beginning. After the previous home was demolished, the neighbours had to contend with a large open pit that extended right to the sidewalk with no fence around it for over four months.

"We had a block party that June and the neighbours were scrambling to put fence around the property to ensure that children didn't fall into the pit," Paliwoda recalled. After numerous complaints from neighbours, the developer finally installed a fence that August. The fence, however, was installed so that it partially blocked the sidewalk and it took almost four more years of complaints to have it moved.

The project was mentioned in a feature about infill in this paper in December 2014. A neighbour complained that construction caused the destruction of a portion of their fence. The developer, Gaurav

Singhmar, expressed understanding about the neighbours' concerns. "I don't want to alienate my neighbours," he said in an interview, and promised to have the fence rebuilt at his expense the following spring. That never happened.

According to neighbours, the list of complaints reported to the city is long and includes grass and weeds as tall as four feet; a scummy pond of water in front; the fence sitting on the sidewalk; no house number visible on the property; and snow not being cleared off the sidewalk. Folks up and down the block have taken to calling the project the "Pit of Doom."

Neighbours worry that someone could break into the structure and start a fire, putting adjacent properties at risk. They're also curious why the project, originally granted a permit to construct a duplex, has three power supplies going into the property.

The city established an infill policing team in 2016 to address

the numerous complaints being raised throughout the city. Darren Anderson, a peace officer who has worked with that team, confirmed that he has been out to the property twice and has issued one fine. He explained there is an open file and that a development compliance officer is looking into it, but was unable to provide the nature of the file or the name of the officer due to privacy regulations.

While development rules require that front and side yards visible from a public street be landscaped by property owners within 18 months of occupancy, there is nothing protecting neighbours from eyesores created by incomplete or unoccupied properties and, as long as a developer has a valid development permit, there's nothing residents can do.

"A developer with a permit can basically do whatever they want," he told me. "They can come by once a month and move a wheelbarrow or they can not come by at all."

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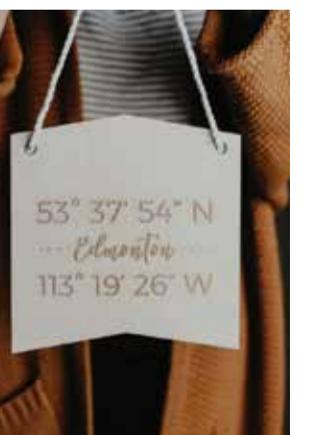
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ArtsCommon project moves ahead

Partners now seeking remaining funding from various other sources

KATE WILSON

A major transformation of Alberta Avenue is moving steadily toward the first groundbreaking, with the grassy space at 92 Street and 118 Avenue to house the four-storey ArtsCommon 118 community hub.

But before they move ahead, partners Arts on the Ave (AOTA) and Edmonton Community Development Company (ECDC) still have funding and zoning work to get through.

On Aug. 29, the partners held a public consultation on the grassy space, where about 120 residents shared their vision on the future arts-and-food centre.

“We wanted to get people’s ideas and feedback before moving to detailed drawings,” said Mark Holmgren, executive director of ECDC.

There was, overall, significant support for the project and lots of ideas shared, he said.

As Alberta Avenue district’s arts, culture and community-building hub, the ArtsCommon 118 design includes 78 affordable live-work art studios, plenty of market space, a performance and exhibition space holding up to 200 people, and a free music program for disadvantaged youth.

Arts on the Ave is part of the genesis of the project, with AOTA executive director Christy Morin starting talks

with former mayor Stephen Mandel back in 2007.

“We began talking about this with the mayor, and it is really great that this vision is coming together,” said Morin. “We are delighted and happy that ECDC has reached out in support of it.”

The city donated the grassy lot for the two-building project. ECDC bought the narrow strip of ground at its southern edge and the vacant lot next to the Nina Haggerty Centre, both of which provide footage for surface parking.

Some significant features include rooftop farming and market space for fresh produce.

“Educational programs on [things like] urban farming,

beekeeping, and food preparation are a part of our intent,” said Holmgren. “Having farmers and night markets will add to the local economy, support the buy local movement, and bring people together from all walks of life.”

ArtsCommon 118 will cost roughly \$43 million. The city has already contributed \$4 million, but ECDC is now seeking grants from other levels of government to cover some of the rest.

Proposals are either out or being drafted to the province, the federal government, and the city, said Holmgren.

“Our goal is to have a zero or very minimal mortgage in order to keep rents low.”

Given the time needed to assemble funding and go through the development/zoning phase, ECDC envisions breaking ground in late 2019 to early 2020. The open date is anticipated for late summer or fall 2021.

The report on public engagement is available at www.edmontoncdc.org

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



ArtsCommon will cost approximately \$43 million. | Supplied by ECDC

Cont. From Page 1

Paliwoda provided me with copies of emails that show Ward 7 Coun. Tony Caterina has been contacted about the situation dozens of times over the past few years. Aside from numerous promises from his assistant Rocco Caterina to follow up on the matter, Paliwoda said neighbours have received little support from city hall.

“They don’t respond to me at all,” she said, “and in their last response, to another neighbour who wrote in to complain, they blamed the provincial government. It is just so much bulls&t. Do people in Glenora or Riverbend have to put up with this kind of bulls&t? I doubt it.”

Calls to Caterina’s office requesting comment for this story

were not returned by deadline.

The developer, Singhmar Developments Inc. (headed by Gaurav’s father Prem) has a long history of positive press. Prem was inducted to the Alberta Business Hall of Fame in 2017 and has been lauded for his philanthropy, with the Singhmar family donating as much as \$7 million to organizations such as NorQuest College, the Art Gallery of Alberta, the University of Alberta, and the Citadel Theatre. They also found themselves with some negative press last month when their downtown hotel was stripped of its Hyatt brand. The hotel had a pigeon infestation and Alberta Health Services involvement, but the Hyatt chain didn’t confirm the reason for the split. Singhmar

Developments also did not return our calls requesting comment.

Paliwoda and her neighbours have had enough. “It’s been five years of nothing but our complaints being ignored,” she said. “The stupidity around all of this is rampant. If you want to know why people in mature neighbourhoods hate infill developers, you need look no further than right here.”

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

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

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Serving 12,500 community members.

DELIVERY

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

Community Soles collects shoes for the needy

New charity makes a difference in the Alberta Avenue community

C A HOLLOWAY

Imagine you are an at-risk person on the streets of Edmonton with ill-fitting, tattered shoes or no shoes at all. It is hard to imagine, especially with the seasons turning so quickly.

After one year of living in the tight-knit community of Alberta Avenue, Katherine Autio and Gregory Toogood noticed this was a common problem among the destitute people of the area.

While walking her dog in the neighbourhood, Autio met a deaf man on the street without any footwear. She insisted the man wait as she ran home to grab a pair of Toogood's shoes he no longer needed.

Toogood said, "I saw him the other day in front of the corner store with one shoe on. The other was in his hand as he showed his companions who were touching the shoe as he showed it."

Autio decided to contact her friend who works at Boyle Street Community Services and similar agencies to find out where she could donate more footwear.

Autio said, "What I discovered was that footwear was the most under-donated item and most of the agencies are not equipped to accept and store shoe donations."

She then polled her friends on the Internet on how to solve this dilemma. Local businesses such as Norwood Dental Centre, The Carrot Coffeehouse, and NAIT's math department offered to set up donation bins for her cause, and Community Soles was born.

They have a mission, too: "We want to collect 500 pairs of used shoes and boots to donate directly to agencies that work with persons at risk and in need of footwear."

Toogood created a website and Facebook page to help spread the word and the logistics of how to reach people with their newly-developed charity. He said they're still trying to navigate social media.

Why 500 pairs of shoes? Autio said, "At first, I wanted to do it for 30 days...but then I wanted a stretch-goal. It's not that I will stop after [500 pairs], but I will have a sense of satisfaction." Toogood added, "Having a measurable to stack yourself up against is a really good idea because it keeps you going, it keeps you focused, but [it] also validates if what you're doing has an actual purpose...there is a real need for shoes and it is a perishable item, so the need is continuous...and it really is the most trifling thing to do to go through your shoes and donate the ones you don't need anymore."

Any clean, lightly-used footwear for all ages will be

accepted for donation, but as winter quickly approaches, they're hoping for warmer boots or at least closed-toed shoes.

Community Soles will pick up shoes for free at your house or workplace if you have 10 pairs or more to donate. Please contact them if you would like to help with their cause.

CA Holloway is a civil servant by day and writer by night. She is excited to have the opportunity to write for the RCP and believes it is a positive stepping stone to further her career in writing.

DONATE TO COMMUNITY SOLES

During regular business hours only:
 Norwood Dental Centre (11660 95 St)
 The Carrot Coffeehouse (9351 118 Ave)
 NAIT math department (11762 106 St)

Contact Community Soles
communitysolesdrive@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/CommunitySoles
sites.google.com/view/community-soles/home



Our feet are the foundation of our everyday lives. Donate your gently-used footwear to give someone at risk the start of a good foundation. | Amanda Nielsen

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Halloween event brings fun to the community

The Great Pumpkin Event has a line-up of spooktacular activities

TALEA MEDYNSKI

This Halloween season, get prepared for a festive and family-friendly evening during Bent Arrow's Great Pumpkin Event on Oct. 30.

"It's one of our greatest events in the community," said Arlysse Wuttunee, communications staff member at Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society. "It's always been a way for us to mingle with the community beyond our clientele."

Wuttunee explained that it's Bent Arrow's practice to be inclusive and inviting to the community.

"Ever since we moved into Parkdale, we wanted to introduce ourselves in other ways," said Wuttunee. "We're not

closed off to other community members."

The Great Pumpkin Event has always been a family-friendly Halloween celebration with indoor and outdoor fun, but this year organizers have added a few more activities.

The event starts at 5 pm, and visitors can expect a variety of Halloween-themed craft tables. Crafts include decorating mini-pumpkins and colouring. Wuttunee explained a number of different partners are participating in the event, and some of them are in charge of those tables and will provide the crafts. Some partners include Norwood Family Centre, Sprucewood Library, and Boyle Street Community Services.

And of course, there will be candy. These candy stations will

include traditional Halloween candy, cotton candy, and a popcorn machine.

"I don't know what the parents will think, but we're excited," laughed Wuttunee.

A costume contest will take place during the evening and Bent Arrow will be giving away prizes. Organizers also have a freeze dance planned for the children.

Some old favourites of the event include the Haunted Hallway.

"Children will be able to walk through and staff members will dress up."

Outdoor activities are also planned. Participants can stop and warm up by one of the fire pits and roast hot dogs over the fire.

A horse-drawn hay ride will

also be featured that evening. Wuttunee laughed and speculated that since it's late October, there may already be snow. "It'll get kids excited for the next big holiday. The hay ride is good for people who are stuck in the city."

And, at 8 pm, people can expect a surprise finale to end the evening.

Wuttunee said that although a lot of inner-city residents attend the event, "the more, the merrier. For the past few years, we've really been getting the community involved. We have people who come in from all over Edmonton."

She said Bent Arrow gets positive feedback from the people who attend.

"As a non-profit organization, you have to be fueled by

heart and compassion. We're driven by smiles on people's faces. We put a lot of work in, but we get a great reward."

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

GREAT PUMPKIN EVENT

Oct. 30, 5 to 8 pm
Free

Bent Arrow Traditional
Healing Society
Parkdale School
11648 85 St



A participant from a previous Great Pumpkin Event enjoys the festivities. | Supplied



Organizers have a lot of activities planned, like decorating mini-pumpkins. | Pixabay

Provincial loan program a boon for seniors

Program gives seniors independence and an opportunity to stay at home

KATE WILSON

A loan program giving seniors the flexibility to put money into home repairs wherever they're needed has given hundreds the chance to remain in their home, safely and independently.

"The Seniors Home Adaptation and Repair Program was designed to strengthen supports already in place to help senior home owners remain safe in their homes," explained Kirsten Ganske, director of seniors financial programs with the Alberta government.

Known as SHARP, the provincial program places virtually no limitation on possible home repairs.

"Shingling the house or doing walk-in renovations for a bathroom," she suggested. "Anything that is reasonable to maintain independence in their home."

Launched in July 2016, SHARP goes beyond an older Alberta loan program, the special needs assistance for seniors

program, which is more restrictive in what it covers.

"Not all home repairs were within that program's scope," explained Ganske. "Things like foundations, windows, or exte-



SHARP applicants must be at least 65, with a household income of less than \$75,000 per year. | Pixabay

rior repairs."

The vision for SHARP was to allow seniors to use their home equity to get a loan. It's also to improve accessibility, mobility, and the energy efficiency of their homes. Project examples include furnace and hot water tank upgrades, widening of doorways, or stair lifts.

It's been very successful, said

Ganske.

"From an analysis of the first year, about 70 per cent of people who applied got a loan. Of the 30 per cent of those who didn't qualify for a loan, about 60 per

cent got a grant," she said. "We were able to cover 99 per cent of the client's requests."

Another big change from the special needs program is the allowed maximum. What was capped at \$950 per year is now a maximum of \$40,000. And the loan can be extended over a period of time.

The reason behind the change

is to help seniors for quite a long time and so they can get a number of things done.

"Most seniors are using only a portion of that [possible] \$40,000," she said. "It gives them a lot of flexibility to remain in their home."

To be eligible, the home must be a primary residence and clients must be at least 65 years old. The household income cannot be over \$75,000 to ensure resources are going to people who are less likely to get a loan, said Ganske.

"It's not for rental property or a summer home, and they must have at least 25 per cent equity ownership," she said. "That helps secure the loan so it can be repaid."

Successful applicants can pay back the loan whenever they like, but when the home is no longer a primary residence or they sell, it becomes due.

"They should have the money to pay the loan, because they're selling the home," explained Ganske, noting repayment is

based on simple interest.

Because the requirement for home ownership will leave some clients without access, the grant that was under the special needs program has been moved under the SHARP grant program.

"So for a mobile home owner, for example, the grant looks like it did under the special needs assistance program, to a maximum of \$5,000," explained Ganske.

Staff will contact every applicant and help them through the entire process.

To find out more, visit www.seniors-housing.alberta.ca/seniors, call Alberta Supports Contact Centre in the Edmonton area at 780.644.9992, or call toll free at 1.877.644.9992.

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

Local gallery is ready for the new season

Bleeding Heart Art Space brings plenty of heart this coming year

JENNIFER STEWART

Discover Bleeding Heart Art Space on Alberta Avenue and you'll find a small, welcoming art gallery. But it's more than that. It's also an invitation to explore the many ways that art and faith come together to manifest beauty and inspire possibilities for consolation, hope, love, and new ways of seeing the world.

Founded in 2011 and operating in partnership with St. Faith's Anglican Church, this contemporary art space has a storied past. It's drawn diverse artists and visitors to the gallery for curated exhibits, including painting, sculpture, and installation art. It's also been home to poetry readings, concerts, artist workshops, and an annual faith and art retreat.

Through exhibits and gather-

ings at the Art Space, the sacred and the spiritual are embraced in creativity, performance, conversation, and celebration.

On Oct. 17 from 7 to 9 pm, everyone is invited to drop in to the Art Space for a season preview showcasing the line-up of artists, exhibits, and workshops for 2018-2019. This will be a great opportunity to meet the lead creative team, learn more about the vision and ideas that inspire the gallery, sign up as a volunteer for the coming year, and donate to support gallery operations.

The gallery features a new exhibit each month, starting in October with *Young Expressions: The Freewall*, a diverse collection of painting, drawing, craft, and music by artists 13-24 years old. The exhibit offers a window into the world of youth and an opportunity to hear their voices.

November's exhibit, *Prunus Virginiana*, will be an eclectic and reflective solo show of paintings and figurative sculpture by Alberta artist Alyson Davies.

In December, the Art Space will reach out to the community with *Open Walls*. This popular event is a call-out to artists of all ages to bring a painting, photo, sculpture, or other creative work for display, and is a testament to the dazzling creative talents in Edmonton.

Check out the Bleeding Heart Art Space website for more information on juried exhibits throughout the year. Selection of artists and their work is guided by the founding vision for the Art Space, including community-building, social justice, and support for emerging artists from diverse backgrounds.

The Bleeding Heart Art Space will also host a number of work-

shops and community events this year. Artists interested in hosting a workshop in 2019 are welcome to contact the gallery to learn more. Plans are also underway for the annual faith and art retreat in the spring.

Many volunteer opportunities are available at the Art Space and those interested in volunteering are welcome to connect with the team at the preview or through the website.

Donations to support the not-for-profit Art Space are always welcome, and can be made at the gallery or online.

The gallery is open every Saturday (except the first Saturday of each month) from 11 am to 3 pm.

To get to the Bleeding Heart Art Space at 91 Street and 118 Avenue, go through the front door, up the stairs and turn right. You'll find a warm welcome and a beautiful space.

Admission is free. Donations are appreciated.

Jennifer is a writer living in Parkdale, and a believer in the vision for the Bleeding Heart Art Space.

BLEEDING HEART ART SPACE

9140 118 Ave
bleedingheartart.space/contact or art@bleedingheartart.space

Open Saturdays (except the first Saturday of the month), 11 am-3 pm

Season preview: Oct. 17, 7-9 pm
Young Expressions: The Freewall on Oct. 13, 20, 27 11 am-3 pm



Joline Arcand's artwork will be featured in the October exhibit. | Joline Arcand



Joline Arcand's work will be some of the art featured in October's exhibit. | Joline Arcand

EDITORIAL

Rethinking how we approach disposability

Using less to begin with will result in a healthier environment

STEPHEN STRAND

Landfills are an eyesore, a blemish, a stink. Yet, they remain a necessity because we have become a disposable society that, on a whim, will discard the lightly-used for a shinier, newer version. Or we take more than we need, discarding the leftovers without a second thought. The waste ends up in the landfills that we rush past, with noses held tight and eyes averted.

Our landfills are filled with the evidence of our excessive lifestyle. Many of the objects don't even need to hit the garbage bin if society hadn't stepped away from moderation, reusability, and self-sufficiency.

It is often believed, as with most aspects of our lives, that someone else will dredge through our waste and divert the non-waste to where it belongs. But this is not true. There is only so much that can be done.

According to an *Edmonton Journal* article published on Feb. 2, 2018, 25 per cent of recyclables found in blue bags go back to the garbage facility "partly because the recycling team not being able to sort it properly" and because waste management staff still sort through the recyclables.

The official report from the city auditor stated waste diverted away from landfills in 2016 was a mere 35.7 per cent, lower than the 49.5 per cent diversion rate in 2013 and significantly lower than the 90 per cent goal for 2012. The 2018 goal was eventually lowered to 65 per cent, but that still seems unattainable at our current rate.

We are in a downward trend, dropping further away from our goal. We have become some of the worst offenders in the country for filling up our landfills with unnecessary

rubbish.

Something needs to be done. But what are our options? Stay in our downward spiral of gratuitous wastefulness? No. We

lost more than their nostalgia.

Give items a second life. Learn to sew and stitch those pants with the slight tear or bring your shoes to a cobbler

or the Reuse Centre. Both are free, environmentally-friendly options to discard your unwanted objects.

But still, so much ends up

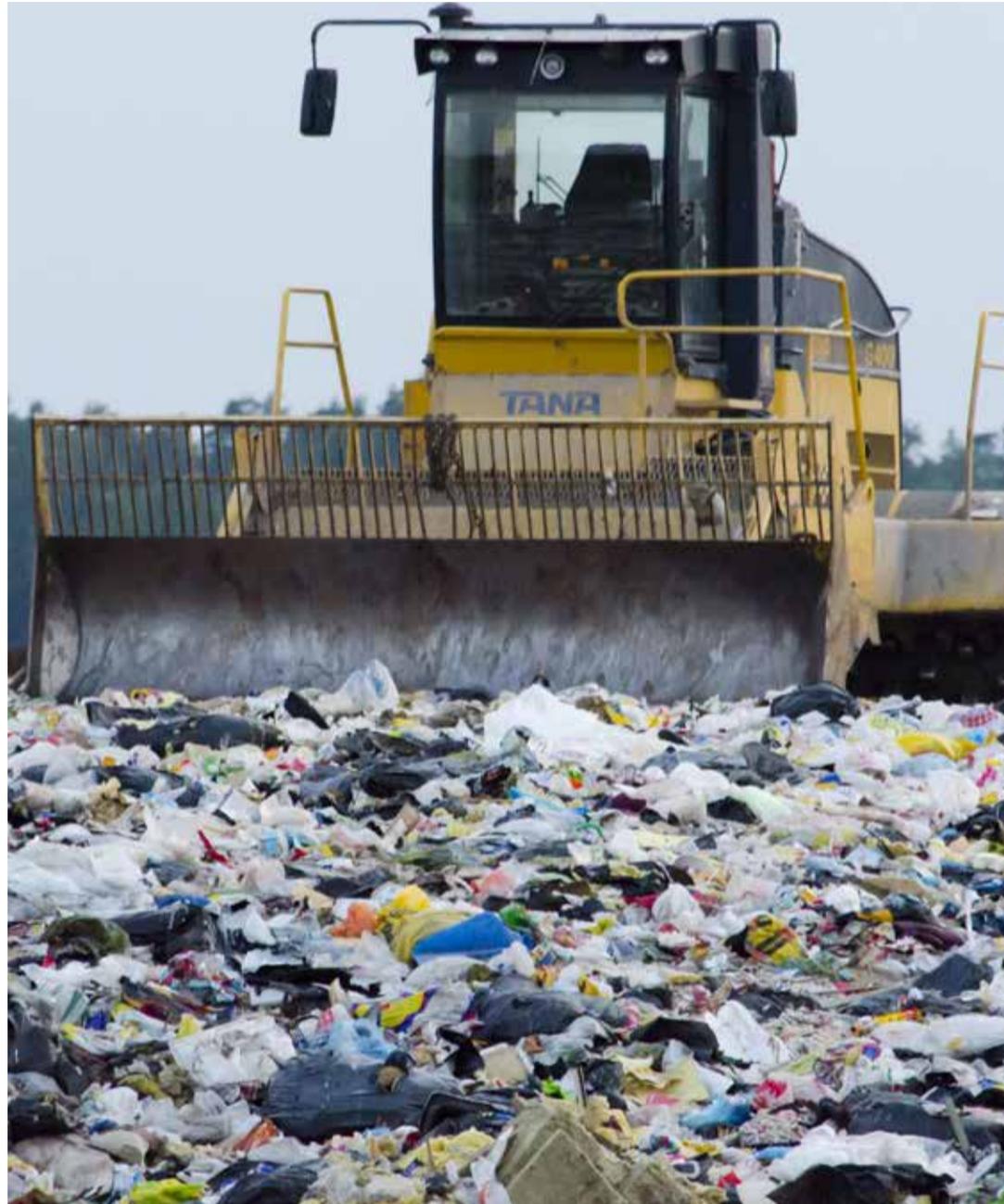
for compostable items, with a new composting facility (anaerobic digester) due to open this fall. The City of Edmonton is also looking at introducing green bins for compostable household products and would require households to divert organic waste into the bins. The city will be offering them to 5,600 volunteers in the spring, with the goal to have one for each home by 2020.

But composting options have been available for some time. Backyard composters have been available to purchase for years and with a little research, instructions for DIY composters can be found online. What has stopped people from scraping their plates into a composter as opposed to their garbage pile all of this time? The action is the same, just a slightly different location. Could the belief that others will do our dirty work prevent us from taking any necessary proactive steps?

Society needs to step back from pedestalizing disposability and over-consumption. We are addicted to the idea of newer and better. Many of us do not think of the consequences and do not want to put in the work of reducing our waste. Otherwise, we would not be seeing a decrease of diverted waste to our landfills or seeing a rise in "environmentally-friendly" products equally as troublesome, because not all of them are recyclable and they still end up in the trash.

This is our shared planet, so let's recycle the conversation again and again until we have learned to produce less waste.

Stephen works in broadcasting and writes for fun. He can be seen walking through the neighbourhood with a bag covered in pins and filled with books and notepads.



It's up to us to do our part to divert waste from landfills. | Pixabay

need to do better. We can do better.

To start, find ways to reuse your belongings. Use them again and again until they have

for repair. Or, give them to someone who knows how to do such things.

Another option is to donate items to a second-hand store

in the trash, like compostable products that become mixed in with non-compostable products.

We're lucky to have options



Composting is a fairly straightforward way to dispose of plant waste. | Pixabay

Fun events planned for upcoming months

Neighbour Connect will continue through the fall and winter

TALEA MEDYNSKI

Since the Neighbour Connect project launched, community members have been busy getting to know each other, one block at a time.

From the efforts of the project's neighbourhood connector, summer students, and interns, 37 block parties were held over the summer, with an average of 15-20 people attending.

This fall and winter the work will continue, both indoors and outdoors.

"There's quite a few things happening," said Lenn Wheatley, neighbourhood connector.

Many of these events will take place at Alberta Avenue Community League.

On Tuesdays from 5 to 6 pm is a ladies' freestyle workout night in the gym. Some equipment is provided, but participants can feel free to bring their own equipment. The gym

is also available Thursday evenings for drop-in activities or programs if there is interest.

"Community league programs are a great way to meet new neighbours and do activities together with the neighbours you already know," said Karen Mykietka, facility and program manager with Alberta Avenue Community League.

Alberta Avenue Community League members also have access to the Commonwealth Recreation Centre on Saturdays and Sundays.

"Take advantage of the community access time at Commonwealth Recreation Centre and invite neighbours to join you," said Mykietka.

Continuing from last year is math tutoring for Grades 1 through 12 from 7:30 to 9 pm on Thursdays as well the collective kitchen on Sundays, so far scheduled for Oct. 28, Nov. 25, and Dec. 16.

On Oct. 21, Neighbour Connect is organizing an inter-

cultural night, which will be a banquet-style potluck.

"There will be music and a chance for people to connect around tables and share where they're from. It will be a chance for people to share their stories. There's a plurality of diversity in the area and we're hoping to bring that diversity together."

At some point, organizers also want to screen *Won't You Be My Neighbor?* The plan, said Wheatley, is to hold monthly events, "ranging from banana split parties to waffle nights. We might go out to a cafe together and connect over coffee."

Block parties aren't just for summer, either. Neighbour Connect organizers will still be planning block parties in the winter, with the addition of firepits and hot chocolate or coffee. During the Halloween season, stay tuned for a Halloween block party by checking neighbourconnect.ca.

Safety will also be addressed in the form of community

safety meetings addressing different topics and issues. The first one will be on Oct. 15 at 7 pm and will focus on home and property safety.

"Anyone who's interested could be a representative of their block, join the discussion, and meet with police," Wheatley said. Watch the league website and e-newsletter for signup and more information.

He said during block parties, many people talked about issues they're facing.

"It's the safety side of the project. Building a vibrant community and allowing children to play in front yards."

The project is an important one for the community because it helps create change at the neighbourhood block level.

"Problems start in the community, but they can be solved in the community if neighbours can become more connected. Meaningful connections can lead to social change. Fun and exciting opportunities can be

good for neighbours."

Wheatley said neighbours can connect with each other over the winter very easily. It can be as simple as going next door and saying hello, or leaving a nice card to introduce yourself. Or, it can be more physical by helping one another out with shoveling and raking, especially if your neighbour is a senior.

"Invite your neighbour over for a cup of hot chocolate and get to know them," suggested Wheatley. "Or connect with your neighbour at a community drop-in event at the league."

Provide input on what you'd like to do with your neighbours and see what others would like to do by visiting neighbourconnect.ca and clicking on Neighbour Knowledge. Here you can share ideas for activities and give feedback.

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



Expect more block parties this fall and winter. | Supplied



Neighbour Connect had a lot of fun, outdoor activities this summer. This fall and winter, expect indoor activities as well. | Supplied



Expect some events involving food, like banana split parties or waffle nights. | Supplied

Preserving and canning food fills the pantry

Use this simple and economical way to store food

MARI SASANO

The process of canning food is simple: food is sealed in clean, sterilized jars, then heated to kill any remaining microorganisms. You can fill a pantry with food that is good for a year or more.

Home canning used to be commonplace, but the process has become intimidating for many. But Virginia Potkins, an Alberta Avenue resident, encourages us all to give it a shot—generations of families have been safely preserving their food for hundreds of years.

“I grew up on a farm in Northern Alberta, Spirit River. My family had a large garden and every year my stepmother and grandmother would have a week of canning. Everything: sauerkraut, pickles. We weren’t very well off, so that was our food for the winter.”

Potkins still cans once a year: pick-

les, jams, sauces, and soups. Despite the availability of store-bought canned goods, she finds canning produce from her own garden to be better.

“For me, I’ve always had a passion for cooking, and I’m involved with the community garden. It gives me a sense of accomplishment, and I like to experiment. This year, I did a cherry tomato roasted tomato soup. Everything tastes better when you make it yourself.”

It’s also quite economical. You can purchase canning kits from stores like Canadian Tire, but you don’t need much in the way of special equipment.

“I don’t have professional equipment,” said Potkins. “I have a huge stock pot, and I sterilize jars in a roasting pan. It works the same. You can get jars, rings, and lids at Superstore or Canadian Tire. You need vinegar, salt, spices for pickles.”

You’ll also need wire racks for the jars to rest on in the pot and tongs to move

them in and out of the boiling water. You can find jars by the case at Superstore, Canadian Tire, or the Italian Centre Shop, or you can use second-hand jars if they have no chips or cracks (you will need new lids every time).

“When you break it down with the ingredients and equipment, it’s pretty cheap. And you can go through a jar of pickles every couple of weeks.”

Potkins will complete large batches of canning and trade with her friends, and finds other ways to preserve foods that aren’t easily canned.

“I blanch beans, beets, and beet greens and freeze them. And I have so much kale this year,” she said. And canning and preserving means having veggies available all winter. Jars of preserves and a freezer full of produce are convenient when you haven’t had time to shop.

As long as the basic rules are followed

(keep everything clean, boil the jars for the recommended amount of time), the sky’s the limit. Potkins said the important thing is to just get started.

“Experiment! There are so many recipes. Just Google them. It can be intimidating, so you should reach out to someone who has experience and watch them, then you can share the work and the products. There are thousands of cookbooks, Pinterest, family recipes. If you’re thinking about doing it, just jump in. If it doesn’t work, it doesn’t work.”

Helpful links:

canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/general-food-safety-tips/home-canning-safety.html

bernardin.ca/en/howtoguide.htm

Mari is a writer and civil servant.



Canning food is easy and economical. | Virginia Potkins

A love letter on why I adore Cider Days

An annual tradition that rescues fruit and builds friendships

NADINE RIOPEL

Every Labour Day weekend, our backyard becomes a cider factory. My husband and I set up two borrowed barrel presses and a motorized apple crusher I had built (after years of struggling with rented ones) and spread the word that everyone is welcome, especially those with more backyard apples than they can use.

People come from around the neighbourhood and around the city, bringing bags and boxes of apples to turn into delicious cider. Any size and type of apple is welcome. We find a cider with a mix of apple types has the richest flavour, and crabapples add a welcome tartness.

Every year, we are stunned by the quality of apples growing in Edmonton, and every year we end up setting a few aside for fresh eating because they’re too nice

to crush.

There are always some people who have never tried fresh pressed cider before, and they are amazed by the unique and delicious flavour. I get a kick out of watching them taste it for the first time.

This year, some of the neighbourhood children parked themselves by one of the presses with their dixie cups and consumed a steady stream of the liquid flowing out until we were afraid they’d overdo it and give themselves stomach aches.

We have some regulars; neighbours and friends who come back year after year. As time goes on, it gets easier to run the event because these steady folks just get to work without needing any explanation. One neighbour lends us a mesh tent to keep the wasps at bay. Another brings his stock pot and sets up in the kitchen to pasteurize and can jars of cider to last through the winter. The woodworker

who built the crusher drops by every year to see how his machine is running and make some tweaks. A farmer I know takes the dry pulp from the presses to feed to her animals.

My family prefers the non-alcoholic cider, but some of our guests take their share of cider away unpasteurized to turn into hard cider, or even apple wine. In the weeks and months to come, they will bring us samples of it. This year, one neighbour brought a couple of bottles of last year’s vintage to Cider Days to share with everyone.

Crushing and pressing rescued apples is the only way I know of to get a supply of this delicious drink, and that alone makes it worth doing. But Cider Days is more than a beverage-making enterprise. It brings people together on common ground: whether they share a neighbourhood, and interest in urban agriculture, a love of the cider itself, or something else,

conversations start over the whirring of the crusher or the cranking of the presses.

During the event, I lost count of the number of people who told me they were leaving, only to become embroiled in yet another fascinating conversation about gardening or canning or whatnot and were still there a half an hour later. That’s the sort of thing that makes my heart sing.

As time goes by, more and more people hear about our little backyard cider-making operation, so we are able to rescue more fruit and make more friends. It’s one of my favourite weekends of the year, and we plan to keep doing it for many years to come.

Nadine Riopel is a professional facilitator and connector. She is also an enthusiastic member of the Spruce Avenue community, where she lives with her husband and young son.

Arborists improve tree health and beauty

Investing in proper tree care now pays off in the long run

STEPHEN STRAND

Proper tree care is a tricky business, but it's an investment that can improve more than just the tree's health and attractiveness. For most of us, proper tree care is beyond our capabilities. That's why there are people who specialize in this field.

Jesse Macdonald is an International Society of Arboriculture (I.S.A) certified arborist and a self-proclaimed tree hugger. He got started in the arboriculture and silviculture industries by way of tree planting throughout Alberta. Because it is seasonal work, he sought employment throughout the year.

"I started working with the City of Edmonton in 2007 with the urban forestry department as a groundsperson, assisting arborists with the care and maintenance of the city's urban forest," explained Macdonald.

He said he found the work interesting and fast-paced and eventually worked towards his I.S.A certification. He then became an arborist with the city until he started his own company called Zenith Tree Services in 2011.

Macdonald said arborists focus on a tree's health and safety and these professionals should know about tree biology and physics. "Working at heights with a chainsaw is pretty standard practice too, whether you're climbing to remove an 80-foot hazardous spruce between two houses or limb-walking 30 feet out on an elm branch to make a pruning cut," he said.

Arborists can correctly identify a tree and its needs, prune without causing unnecessary damage, safely remove a tree, and safely climb a tree.

Zenith Tree Services specializes in tree pruning, tree planting, tree removals, stump

grinding, and hazard tree assessments.

"Pruning and removing trees (especially large trees) can be potentially hazardous work. Arborists are specifically trained and equipped to work safely in trees," Macdonald explained. "Proper tree care is an investment that can have substantial benefits. Well cared-for trees are attractive and can add considerable value to your property. Poorly-maintained trees can be a significant liability."

Macdonald explained it's important to consider the time of year before pruning a tree.

"The best time to prune living branches is late in the dormant season. So very early in spring before leaves form is best or late fall. Growth is maximized and wounds close faster." He goes on to say that leaves are like batteries. "The more batteries, the more energy the tree has, so when we prune live branches (batteries) in the summer, the

tree does not receive 100 per cent of the energy it gets from the sun. It relies on that energy for the cold winter months and the next year's leaf production."

Local regulations also limit when certain trees can be pruned. In particular, elm trees cannot be pruned between April 1 and Sept. 30.

"Dutch elm disease is a deadly disease that can affect any elm tree. Dutch elm disease is caused by the fungus *Ophiostoma ulmi* that is potentially carried by the elm bark beetle and is destructive to elm trees," Macdonald said.

For those who are doing some pruning themselves this fall, Macdonald recommends removing the dead, dying, and diseased branches before trimming live branches. Always make proper cuts. "Do not make flush cuts or stub cuts. If you cannot identify the branch collar, call an arborist!" Flush cuts are made close to the trunk

or main branch, while a stub cut doesn't take enough of a branch.

And never do topping, which is the indiscriminate and dramatic cutting of branches. "Topping is a crime against trees," explained Macdonald, and adds that we should all plant more trees.

Stephen works in broadcasting and writes for fun. He can be seen walking through the neighbourhood with a bag covered in pins and filled with books and notepads.

ZENITH TREE SERVICES

780.297.0580

zenithtreeservices@gmail.com or
zenithtreeservices.ca



Zenith Tree Services provides a variety of arborist services. | Supplied by Jesse Macdonald



NORWOOD
DENTAL CENTRE

Preparing Your Child For Their First Dental Visit

Parents play an important role in setting their child up for a lifetime of positive oral health. The Canadian Dental Association recommends a dentist assessing your child within six months of their first tooth erupting or by your child's first birthday, whichever comes first.

Why so young? The goal of the first dental visit is to get your child comfortable with dental professionals and to identify any issues with your child's teeth before they become problems.

Happy Visits

Many dental offices, including my practice, offer no-charge Happy Visits. The purpose of the Happy Visit is to ensure your child is relaxed and at ease at the dentist. During Happy Visits at Norwood Dental Centre, we give your child a spin in our cool dental chair, count their teeth and look for any issues, and show your child our dental gadgets, such as the air/water syringe and the suction (a.k.a. Mr. Thirsty!). From there, the child receives a take-home hygiene kit and gets to pick a toy from our toy treasure chest. The more interested your child becomes in his or her dental care, the better chance of great oral hygiene!

Happy Visits are also important for mom and dad, as they allow

time to discuss any dental issues I've seen as well as any questions you, as a parent, may have.

The First Check-Up and Cleaning



Once your child is comfortable with going to the dentist, typically between the ages of two and four following the Happy Visit, it's usually time for your child's first official check-up and cleaning. During this visit, we complete a formal oral health exam, clean your child's teeth, and take x-rays if the child allows. (And, as always, we end the visit on a high note with a trip to the toy chest!).

Preparing For Your Child's First Dental Visit

As a parent, you can help prepare your child for a successful first dental visit.

My top tips on how are below:

1. Be a good role model.

Let your kids see you brush and floss daily. Seeing you maintain your oral health signals to your kids the importance of strong dental hygiene. Talk to your kids about why you're brushing and flossing, and engage them in a dialogue about why it's important they do the same.

2. Check out some dental-themed children's books.

There are lots of great children's books about visiting the dentist. Reading these books together can help familiarize and mentally pre-

pare your child for what a dental visit is like. Some of my favourite titles include:

Peppa Pig™ Dentist Trip (Scholastic Inc.)
Dora the Explorer Goes to the Dentist (Random House)
Jarod Giraffe Goes to the Dentist (Leelah Hope)
Noah's Visit to the Dentist (Speedy Publishing, LLC)

We have copies of all of these books at our practice, so parents can read them

to their little ones before heading into their appointment.

3. Introduce oral care into play.

Keep the conversation going and introduce oral care into play. Play is important to your child's learning and development, and is a relaxed way to continue discussion about dental hygiene.

There are numerous dental-specific toys out there, such as Dentist Barbie, Playmobil® Dentist and Patient, Play-Doh Doctor Drill

and Fill Set, and JOYIN Doctor/Dentist Play Set. These toys are great, but you can just as easily incorporate oral health conversations with other toys too. Does the doll or action figure need to brush their teeth too, perhaps?

4. Make use of YouTube.

In addition to many excellent cat videos, YouTube has some great educational content to help prepare your child for their first dental visit. Parents have told me they've found "Caillou at the Dentist," "Dentist Video (Sesame Street)," "Dudley Visits the Dentist," and "Billy Blue Hair - Why Do I Have to Go to the Dentist?" quite helpful. These videos offer another medium to introduce your child to dental visits in a friendly and fun manner.

With these tips in mind, you'll be setting your child up for a great first dental visit and great oral habits for life. Thanks for reading and happy brushing and flossing!
~ Dr. William Chin

About Dr. William Chin

Dr. William Chin is a general dentist and the owner of Norwood Dental Centre. His practice is focused on delivering surprisingly friendly dental care with no white coats, no judgement, and no pressure.

Connect with Norwood Dental Centre at 780-474-2456 or at www.norwood-dental.ca.



**WHERE NEIGHBOURS MEET
and GREAT THINGS HAPPEN**
EDMONTON FEDERATION of COMMUNITY LEAGUES

ALBERTA AVENUE COMMUNITY LEAGUE

9210 118 Avenue, 780.477.2773,
info@albertaave.org
albertaave.org

Membership: \$10 individual, \$20 family, seniors free.
Buy online at albertaave.org or in person during
office hours.

Meetings: Second Tuesday of the month, 7 pm.

**alberta avenue
COMMUNITY LEAGUE**

**DELTON COMMUNITY
LEAGUE**

12325 88 Street, 780.477.3326,
admin@deltoncommunity.com

deltoncommunity.com
Membership: \$5 senior, \$10 individual, \$15 single
parent family, \$25 family. Buy Sept. 15 or online at
efcl.org or call Bev at 780.455.3496.

EASTWOOD COMMUNITY LEAGUE

11803 86 Street, 780.477.2354, ewcl@shaw.ca
eastwoodcommunity.org
Membership: \$5 individual, \$15 family. Buy
online at efcl.org.
Meetings: First Wednesday of the month.



**ELMWOOD PARK COMMUNITY
LEAGUE**

12505 75 Street, 780.479.1035,
epcl@shawbiz.ca

elmwoodparkcommunity.org
Membership: Free at any events
through September or available
through EFCL website for \$20.

Meetings: Second Thursday of
the month.

**PARKDALE-CROMDALE COMMUNITY
LEAGUE**

11335 85 Street, 780.471.4410,
pccl.info@gmail.com

parkdalecromdale.org

Membership: \$5. Buy online at park-
dalecromdale.org or at an event.

Meetings: Last Thursday of the month,
7 pm.



SPRUCE AVENUE COMMUNITY LEAGUE

10240 115 Avenue, 780.471.1932, president@
spruceavenuecommunity.com

Spruceavenuecommunity.com

Membership: \$7 seniors & individuals, \$15 family.
Buy online at efcl.org or call 780.479.8019.
Meetings: Fourth Tuesday, 7 pm



**WESTWOOD
COMMUNITY LEAGUE**

12139 105 Street, 780.474.1979, admin@westwoodcl.ca
westwoodcl.ca
Membership: \$10 senior, \$15 individual, \$20 family. Buy
at efcl.org or contact the league admin@westwoodcl.ca.
Meetings: Second Tuesday of the month.

COMMUNITY LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS



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pm for Alberta
Avenue, Eastwood,
Westwood

Sundays, 1-3 pm
for Alberta Avenue,
Parkdale-Cromdale,
Spruce Avenue

COMMUNITY LEAGUE WELLNESS PROGRAM

Show your league membership card and receive 20% off
annual or continuous monthly membership or 15% off
multi-admission passes.

Share your skills with your neighbourhood

Community leagues can always use more people resources

KAREN MYKIETKA

Our community leagues are always in need—in need of people willing to join the board, work on a committee, lend a hand, or buy a membership.

Leagues are where citizens can build great neighbourhoods, advocate, and have their voice heard on city issues. The Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues website says, “Bringing neighbours together: Community leagues run sports, cultural and social programs, and host events.”

The EFCL is an umbrella organization for the 157 leagues in Edmonton. Each league, however, is an independent non-profit society governed by a board of directors. The members of the society vote in directors at the annual general meeting to carry out the organization’s business. Any resident can become a member of their local community league.

Four out of seven of our area leagues have their AGM (annual general meeting) this month.

Delton is a well-established league run by a tight-knit group of family and friends who are mourning the recent loss of Walter Gurba, their long-time president. They have a strong sports focus and run a variety of membership events throughout the year.

Eastwood has worked diligently the last couple of years to make necessary updates to their building and have begun the process of envisioning a major facility overhaul. They are seeking facility staff to take some pressure off the board, and they are hoping to do community engagement work next spring and summer. However, their board is very small and they need more board members to guide the work.

Spruce Avenue has a fantastic board of committed community members and a well-

managed hall and rink. They are involved in neighbourhood watch, Front Yards in Bloom, and recently conducted a history project. They are always in need of assistance with organizing and planning community events and programs as well as staying on top of development and safety concerns.

The Westwood league has recently completed a major park upgrade, finished some building updates, and completed their neighbourhood renewal. They are open to having more programming and events, but need more bodies at the table to envision the future and carry out the work.

“I am here to tell you that solid citizens who are committed to making their community, their school, and their world a better place—those willing to raise their hand for board service—are among the single biggest needs in our society.”

Joan Garry from [https://www.joangarry.com/reasons-](https://www.joangarry.com/reasons-join-nonprofit-board/)

[join-nonprofit-board/](https://www.joangarry.com/reasons-join-nonprofit-board/)

Considering joining your league board? Here are some things to know. Most community league boards are working boards. This means they lead the organization, but also double as the staff because they do not have employees. In addition to the executive positions, directors are needed for a variety of roles such as fundraising, civics/development, communications, facilities, rentals, membership, programs, rink, socials/events, sports, and sustainability.

Don’t expect your league to have it all together. It’s run by volunteers of all skills, abilities, and backgrounds and there is regular volunteer turnover. People with board experience are valuable, but so is anyone willing to learn and put in some time. How much time? Leagues have monthly board meetings and then there are duties and tasks outside of meetings. Expect a minimum of four hours a month, but most help-

ful would be about two hours a week.

If dealing with board business and administrative tasks isn’t your thing, or if you are just interested in one particular area, ask about joining a committee instead, such as the park redevelopment committee, the safety committee, or the development committee. Don’t be surprised if there isn’t a committee yet; that’s fairly common due to lack of bodies and leaders, but if people come forward with interest, most leagues would be willing to start and support a committee!

A community league is a vital component to building a great neighbourhood. Support your league in whatever ways you can, even if it is only attending the AGM and expressing your appreciation for board members’ volunteer commitment.

OCTOBER AGMS
 Westwood: Monday, Oct. 15 at 7 pm
 Eastwood: Wednesday, Oct. 17 at 7 pm
 Delton: Monday, Oct. 22 at 7 pm
 Spruce Avenue: Tuesday, Oct 23 at 7 pm

OTHER AGMS
 Alberta Avenue: April
 Parkdale-Cromdale: May
 Elmwood Park: September

Five reasons to attend your league’s annual general meeting

1. You will get to meet and visit with some interesting and cool neighbours.
2. There will likely be some snacks, sometimes even alcohol.
3. Your presence will encourage the people who have been selflessly volunteering their time to better your community.
4. You will learn about what your league has been doing and what future plans they have.
5. You can share your thoughts and opinions and vote on matters.

Five reasons to join your league board

1. You can share your skills and experience to better your community.
2. You can learn new skills and gain experience that enriches your resume.
3. You will make new friends and expand your networks.
4. You can influence the direction of your community.
5. You can share the love for your community with others.



“Being a board member can be one of the greatest adventures of your life. Your participation can change your life, and you can change your community for the better.”

Board Development Program, Alberta Culture and Community Spirit.

When a smile makes all the difference

Local man is on a mission to make his neighbourhood better, one candy at a time

TEKLA LUCHENSKI

Driving down 111 Avenue between Kingsway and 81 Street, you might see Lucien Facciotti walking energetically, wearing a long black trench coat, dark coke-bottle glasses, and carrying a staff. You'll especially notice his hat. He sports a large, green replica of the Mad Hatter hat from Lewis Carroll's classic, *Alice in Wonderland*. He salutes passing drivers with the American Sign Language (ASL) sign, "I love you". Facciotti isn't kidding; he has a heart of gold.

"So, where are you going?" I ask him, as we settle down in the Italian Centre Shop on 95 Street. Settling takes a while. He removes his hat and coat, and retrieves a large bottle of San Pellegrino sparkling water from the grocery section. The barista gives him a champagne flute with ice. Staff greet him amicably. He bestows his grin—a little mischievous but good-humoured—and says, "I'm already there. People want more. That's all there is." Ah, but there is more.

If you are fortunate to meet Facciotti, he will likely give you a single Werther's Original candy. He said, "There is magic happening on 111 Ave. I get to be the person who creates this energy." The energy is love.

Facciotti has faced challenges. A "sheltered" childhood in an idyllic St. Albert setting with horses, including a Shetland pony, ended suddenly, just shy of his 14th birthday when his father died unexpectedly. Facciotti's family disintegrated. His mother became ill with multiple sclerosis. "Everything disappeared." He drank excessively for 38 years. He became

homeless and was diagnosed with mental illness, for which he continues to receive treatment. Although he held many jobs in the past—including as an usher at the Roxy Theatre—he is now unable to work.

Sober since February 15, 2013, Facciotti is positive. He marvels that he has everything he needs: a home, food, and medical care. He said, "I don't need physical stuff. I'm spiritual. I only need love. I never ask for stuff, but people give me money and stuff."

In September 2017, Facciotti donned his iconic hat and began what he calls his "candy mission." He uses the money people gift him to buy Werther's Original candy, which he gives to anyone he meets. "Anything else gets sticky in my pocket," he grinned. "I have to do it. It gives me a buzz when I make people happy." Facciotti especially enjoys giving candy to the homeless. "They

look like they could use a surprise."

Facciotti's mission has

they couldn't afford the \$25 every two months, in January 2018."

"I have had 'my' people on the avenue in August contribute \$41.15 and I invested of that... \$32.20. Then in September, I put the rest in and now have about 10 pounds of Werther's candies in the apartment, still." Facciotti says that some neighbourhood businesses are interested in donating Werther's candy to his candy mission.

Facciotti feels successful in making people happy. He says, "Just my presence makes people happy. The people you meet walking around are amazing. I have changed the way I see the world and the world changed around me."

Facciotti envisions the community helping him to place one piece of candy into each of the lunch bags the Hope Mission distributes daily through their various outreach programs. According to Ryan Harding, manager of outreach for Hope Mission in Edmonton, that number varies throughout the year, but it is approximately 1,500 lunches a day.

In the meantime, Facciotti is philosophical. "When you get to walk up and down an avenue and have people wave at you, you must be doing something right."

Tekla has lived in the Parkdale neighbourhood since 2013. Trained as a cultural anthropologist, she is a freelance writer, excited to contribute to The Rat Creek Press as a passionate observer of lifestyle and community expression.



You may have seen Lucien Facciotti along 111 Avenue. | Rebecca Lippiatt

momentum. He said, "Save-On sponsored it for a few months, then pulled their help, stating

After that, he found a good deal on Amazon.com where he could buy 40 oz. bags for \$30.

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With special thanks to the Alberta Avenue Initiative

nina
Neighbourhood Initiative Network
Average Initiative
Emotion

Red Hat clubs bring friendship and fun

Local club enjoyed a Ukrainian luncheon in September

RUSTI L LEHAY

It is clear the word “lonely” does not belong in a Red Hatter’s lexicon. Across America and Canada, the only rules for Red Hatters are wearing purple clothing with red hats, adorning themselves with bling, and having fun.

Red Hat clubs were inspired by a well-known Jenny Joseph poem, *Warning*, which begins “When I am an old woman, I shall wear purple, with a red hat which doesn’t go.” Wikipedia says, “There are over 50,000 members in the United States and over 30 other countries.”

The Red Hat Society is an organization for women, and Red Hat Queen Ruth Hamaliuk is the longest-reigning queen in Edmonton at 18 years. At a Sept. 8 Ukrainian luncheon Hamaliuk organized, the rules were strictly adhered to as the Parkdale-Cromdale

Community League Hall became a sea of purple complete with waves of laughter and endless conversations as red hats bobbed and swayed.

The room only quieted twice, once for an attendee’s young niece, Olivia Mitchell. Dressed in mauve with a pink hat, Mitchell sang four songs for the group. Then, two dancers from the Veeteretz School of Ukrainian Dance performed. Both the dance group and Mitchell equally charmed the audience.

Hamaliuk said, “We are old ladies who worked our [entire] lives, raised our kids, and just want to have fun.”

On June 1-3, 300 Red Hatters from near and far attended the Red Hat Convention at Edmonton’s DoubleTree Hilton. Special hat events, Paint Nite, charm and apron exchanges, high tea, pirate/princess dinner, dinner theatre and more filled their

convention calendar.

Known as the Diva of Desserts, Hamaliuk also attended a convention in Las Vegas, meeting Red Hatters from all over the globe. Hamaliuk said, “The African American Red Hatters sure know how to dress.”

Committed to planning fun events for her group, the Red Hat Cats, Hamaliuk is determined to carry out her queenly duties as long as possible, though she is looking for someone to share the planning tasks. She currently plans gatherings without a cell phone or computer. Recent events have been a picnic at Rundle Park, lunch at the Beverly Crest Cafe, and dinner at the Sawmill.

At events during your birthday month or in March, the society’s birthday, members can wear red clothing and purple hats. Women under 50 may wear lilac or mauve with pink hats. There are special ceremo-

nies for Pink Hatters turning 50. In October, almost everyone shows off their witch costume at a yearly witch’s luncheon.

Meeting many women she now calls friends, Hamaliuk said, “There are many widows in the Red Hatters. We share the handy husbands.” Her own husband does yard work for two women.

Hamaliuk’s favourite thing to plan is her Ukrainian luncheon. At the event, Herma Hogendorp, member of the Free Spirits, said, “I came originally with two friends 15 years ago. I’m still attending and am a widow now. Friendship is the best part.”

Though only one queen reigns per club, all the women bling their red and purple like royalty and the chatter at the feast vibrates with friendship bonds practiced and worn true through life’s ups and downs.

The numerous groups in

Edmonton and area include the Rambling Royals, Red Hat Cats, Red Hatter Angels, River City Hatters, Wrinkled Rubies, Flaming Floozies, Scarlet O’Hatters, Bling it on Beauty, Hattitude Sisters, Wild Rose Mamas, Merlot Bells, Red Hat Chili Peppers, New Sarepta Red Hats, Foxy Roses, Free Spirits, Regal Gems, Rosebud Rascals, Dames Royal, and Crimson Cats with Hats.

To find and join a group close to you, visit www.red-hatsociety.com and use their search function.

A member of the Professional Writers Association of Canada since 2003, Rusti has been writing professionally since 1999. Her favourite word activity is immersion editing with memoir writers.



Members of the Red Hat Cats attended a Ukrainian luncheon at Parkdale-Cromdale Community League. | Rusti Lehay

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Randy Boissonnault MP/Député - Edmonton Centre



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Brian Mason, MLA

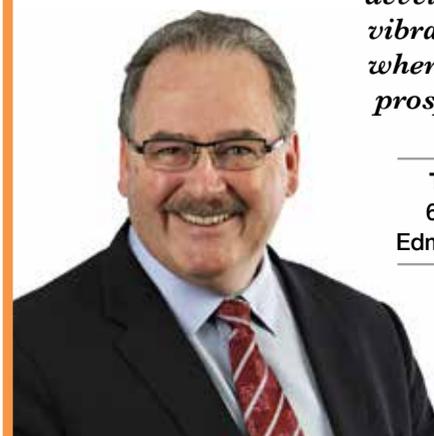
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~ develop strong and vibrant communities where everyone can prosper



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Integrating new employees into the workplace

Paving the way for a longer lasting employer-employee relationship

SHAREE ALUKO

Recruiting is time-consuming and expensive, so employers have a vested interest in hiring the right candidate. It is equally important to retain such candidates, otherwise the resources expended cannot be recouped.

But many disgruntled new employees quit the job within the first couple of months of being hired. In most cases, the root cause of an employee's rapid departure is because of a failure to implement a systematic and enriching onboarding experience. After extending an offer, the employer's biggest challenge is to provide the employee with a smooth transition into the new organizational culture. It can be overwhelming to learn new processes, tasks, and procedures. Therefore, during this stressful

period if very little support is available, even the best employee would be at a disadvantage.

Organizations can pave the way for a successful employee journey by adopting structured and formalized orientation. In orienting employees, ensure information sources are accessible. The code of conduct, performance expectations, and all other pertinent materials should be disseminated. If people are oblivious of the policies, it becomes too easy to unknowingly violate the rules. By clearly communicating the standards, it's less likely bad habits will transfer through the grapevine.

It is best practice to have a designated trainer who has proven to be an expert. This individual should have the desire to impart knowledge as well as the capability to train. It's also important to find out the learning

style of the individual receiving training. Some people prefer job shadowing whilst others learn by doing, or a combination of both. Deliver the information in stages to make it more manageable to grasp and retain.

Managers falsely assume that high performers can teach. This is a common underlying factor for prematurely terminating employment. The new employee may be frustrated with an incompetent trainer or the employer arriving at a wrong conclusion regarding the trainee's ability to assimilate the new concepts.

Inclusion is becoming more of a priority, but some organizations still encourage segregation. Too many impenetrable silos within the office causes a feeling of isolation. Having to work in an atmosphere where fun is non-existent can have severe

psychological impacts, such as work-related anxiety and depression. We spend most of our time at work, so it is not ideal for work to be unbearable.

Employers should also be aware of senior bullies who believe they have earned the right to delegate and who refuse to share their work and knowledge. This territorial mentality creates a toxic environment, giving rise to ongoing conflicts. Some tenured staff may also feel intimidated, which makes them less willing to divulge relevant work procedures.

Executives should not spend time and money recruiting if they are unwilling to facilitate or implement strategies for positive integration. It's important to gather feedback, provide continuous evaluation, and get the new employee's perspective. Determine what changes can be

made to improve the process. Provide tactful feedback and this should be reciprocal. The hiring manager should be receptive to constructive criticism because this is an opportunity to identify and correct process gaps.

The onus is on leaders to create a good impression because the employee will also be assessing and deciding whether to continue their employment. The probationary period will not be meaningful if employees are not given the tools to perform satisfactorily. In fact, this would be a disservice to both parties.

Sharee has a Masters in Business Administration and is passionate about sharing information. She currently works full-time in the banking sector.



It's important that new employees receive thorough training and a positive integration into a new job. | Pixabay

CHURCH SERVICES

ANGLICAN PARISHES ON ALBERTA AVE ST. FAITH AND ST. STEPHEN

Two Traditions – One Faith.
11725 93 Street

St. Stephen: 780.422.3240

Sunday Worship:
8:30 am - Low Mass
9:00 am - Morning Prayer
9:30 am - High Mass
7:00 pm - Evensong

St. Faith: 780.477.5931

Sunday Worship:
9:00 am Friday Prayer

11:00 am Sunday Worship
1st Sunday Common
2nd Sunday Trad. Anglican
3rd Sunday Aboriginal Form
4th Sunday Trad. Anglican

AVENUE VINEYARD CHURCH

A friendly, informal, non-judgmental and safe place to grow spiritually. Traditional Christian values in a non-traditional way.

8718 118 Avenue
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nuevineyard.com
Sundays at 10:30 am

AVENUE CHURCH

A community to belong in...a community to serve with.

11335 85 Street
(Parkdale Hall)
avenuechurch.ca

Sundays
coffee fellowship - 9:30am
10:00 am Service

BETHEL GOSPEL CHAPEL

A Bible-based, multi-ethnic fellowship.

11461 95 Street
780.477.3341

Sunday Meetings:
9:30 am - Lord's Supper
11:00 am - Family Bible Hour

NORWOOD WESLEYAN CHURCH

Meeting needs with love and compassion

11306 91 St
10:00 am Sunday School
11:00 am Sunday Service

EVANGELICAL BAPTIST CHURCH

'Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you... Therefore encourage one another and build each other up'

Eph. 4:32, 1 Th. 5:11a
12317-82 St.
780.474.4830

Sunday School 10:00 am
Sunday Worship 11:00 am
Wed. Study/Prayer 6:30 pm

ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

8715 118 Avenue
780.477-8677

Service Times:
Sundays at 11 am

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THE SALVATION ARMY CROSSROADS COMMUNITY CHURCH

A Place for Worship and Service
11661 95 Street
salvationarmy.ca/alberta

Sunday Worship - 3:00 p.m.
Call for other program information
780.474.4324

THE HEADLESS CARROT HALLOWEEN PARTY



Saturday, October 27, 2018
7pm – til late

AT THE CARROT (118 AVE & 94 ST) | THECARROT.CA

Trick or treat?! Prizes for best costume. Join us for fire pits, marshmallows, music, games, and more spooky fun!
Create your pumpkin masterpiece! To apply for the pumpkin carving, email manager@thecarrot.ca

Sponsored by:



arts on the ave

Community

BOARD

LADIES' FREESTYLE WORK OUT

Join other neighbourhood ladies and do your thing, whether it's hula hooping, jumping rope, doing yoga or Pilates, stretching, or whatever you want! Tuesdays, 5-6 pm in the gym at Alberta Avenue.

AFFORDABLE ACCESS TO HAND & POWER TOOLS

If you're a do-it-yourselfer, enjoy making things, or want to connect with a community of builders, check out the Edmonton Tool Library: edmontontoollibrary.ca.

CREART IS BACK!

Drop-in guitar lessons with Sebastian Berrera. 10-11 am for beginners and 11 am to 12 pm for advance students at Parkdale-Cromdale. Violin with Gautam Karnik 10 am to 12 pm.

CreArt is always looking for free instruments to give away to participants in their programs. Email creartedmonton@gmail.com or visit creartedmonton.com for more donation needs.

ANNUAL EVENTS

2018

- Headless Carrot, Oct 27
- Great Pumpkin Event, Oct 30
- Potters' Sale, Nov 17
- Yule Ave, Dec 15

2019

- Deep Freeze, Jan 12-13
- SkirtsAFire, March 7-17
- GOBfest, April 12-14
- Bloomin' Garden Show, May 11
- Thousand Faces, May 24-26
- Heart of the City, June 1-2
- Pure Speculation, June 21-22

FREE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

ESL & LANGUAGE

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

PRACTICE ENGLISH
Conversation circle, Mondays, 7-8 pm at Sprucewood Library.

GLOBAL VOICES CHOIR
An informal way to practice English. Song books and light lunch provided. Thursdays, noon-1 pm at Mennonite Centre (no classes in August). More: Suzanne 780.423.9682.

ENGLISH CONVERSATION CIRCLE
Fridays, 10:30-11:30 am at Highlands Library. Part of Catholic Social Services LACE program. More: 780-424-3545.

LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION FOR NEWCOMERS TO CANADA (LINC)
More: Edmonton Mennonite Centre 780.424.7709 or info@emcn.ab.ca.

FOOD & SUPPORT

EDMONTON URBAN NATIVE MINISTRY
Drop-in Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, 10:30 am and 3 pm for social, spiritual, and practical support, including computer access. Lunch Tuesdays and Fridays, noon-1:30 pm. Small food hamper every second Thursday. Meal provided after 4 pm Sunday service.

BENT ARROW TRADITIONAL HEALING SOCIETY
Various programs and services, including a soup & bannock lunch once a month. 11648 85 Street. 780.481.3451. www.bentarrow.ca.

PRAYERWORKS COMMUNITY
Hot meals & warm friendship at St. Faith's/St. Stephen's Anglican Church hall. Thurs: serving 11 am-1 pm; open 10 am-1:30 pm. Fri: serving 5-6 pm; open 3:30-7 pm. Sat: serving 8:30-9:30 am; open 8-10 am. More: 780.477.5931.

COLLECTIVE KITCHENS
Cook with friends, try new recipes, help your food budget. St. Faith/St. Stephen: 2nd Tuesday, 1-3:30 pm. Call ahead. Trish: 780.464.5444. Parent Link: Second Wednesday, 11:30-2:30 pm. Call ahead: 780.474.2400. Parkdale hall: Last Sunday of the month, 1-4 pm. Check parkdalecromdale.org for details. Alberta Avenue: Sunday, 1-4 pm. Check albertaave.org for details.

PARENTS & PRE-SCHOOLERS

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

SING, SIGN, LAUGH & LEARN
Mondays and Tuesdays, 10:30-11:15 am at Sprucewood Library. Wednesdays and Thursdays, 10:30-11:15 am at Highlands Library. More: 780.496.7099.

BABY LAPTIME
Stories, songs, books, rhymes, & finger play for babies up to 12 months. Tuesdays, 10:15-10:45 am at Highlands Library.

FAMILY STORYTIME
Share stories, songs, and games. Wednesdays, 10:30-11 am at Sprucewood Library.

NORWOOD CHILD & FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE
Parent & family education, early childhood education, community events. 9516 114 Avenue. 780.471.3737. www.norwoodcentre.com.

PARENT LINK CENTRE
Information, support and a variety of free programs. 11666 95 St. 780.474.2400. Mon to Fri, 9 am-7 pm.

CHILDREN

LEGO AT THE LIBRARY
Design and build a lego creation. Ages 6-12. Saturdays, 3-4 pm at Highlands Library.

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

TEEN LOUNGE JR.
Play video games, make a DIY project, meet friends. Thursdays, 3:30-5 pm at Sprucewood Library and 3:30-4:30 pm at Highlands Library.

YOUTH

EVIL GENIUS CLUB
Robot battles, Arduino hacks, DIY music, art, Minecraft, photography, 3-D design & printing are just the beginning. Fridays, 4-5 pm at Highlands Library.

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

GLOBAL GIRLS
Build new relationships, develop self-confidence, and identify pathways to achieve goals. Every other Thursday, 3:15-5:30 pm at the Mennonite Centre for ages 16-22. Drop-in. More: 780.423.9691.

TEEN LOUNGE JR.
Play video games, make a DIY project, meet friends. Thursdays, 3:30-5 pm at Sprucewood Library and 3:30-4:30 pm at Highlands Library.

AIR CADET SQUADRON
Youth program for ages 12-18. Aviation, drill, deportment, music, marksmanship, survival, physical fitness. Thursdays, 6:30-9:15 pm Sept to June. www.570squadrone.com.

ADULTS

COFFEE WITH COPS
Join a roundtable conversation with EPS. First Wednesday of month from 10-11:00 am at The Carrot Coffeehouse.

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

YOGA CLASS
Focus on senses, breathing techniques, and postures that build strength and flexibility. Thursdays, 7-7:50 pm at Parkdale-Cromdale hall. Back in November.

GUIDED MEDITATION SITS
Perfect for beginners. Saturdays, 7 pm. All welcome, no charge. Land of Compassion Buddha Temple. 9352 106A Ave. 780.862.7392.

COFFEE FRIENDSHIP CLUB
Have coffee with individuals who are single, divorced, or widowed and looking to meet new people in the area. Wednesdays, 1-2 pm at The Carrot Coffeehouse.

COMMUNITY ART NIGHT
Free art workshop for adults. Tuesdays, 6:30-8:30 pm at the Nina. Register/info: 780.474.7611.

WELLBRIETY SUPPORT GROUP
Mondays, 7-9 pm at Canadian Native Friendship Centre, upstairs room #200.

SENIORS

CENTRAL LIONS SENIORS ASSOCIATION
Programs, clubs, drop-in activities, fitness centre. 11113 113 St. 780.496.7369. www.centrallions.org.

NORWOOD LEGION SENIORS GROUP
Cribbage, Wednesdays at 1 pm at NorwoodLegion.ca.

SENIORS BREAKFAST & SOCIAL (55+)
Join us for breakfast, visit, or play cards or billiards. Wednesdays, 11:30 am-12:45 pm (10:30-11:45 am during the summer) at Crystal Kids.

FAMILIES

DENE DRUMMING
Wednesdays, 1-3 pm at Canadian Native Friendship Centre, upstairs room #200.

TRADITIONAL ARTS & CRAFTS
For ages 12+. Wednesdays, 5-7 pm at Canadian Native Friendship Centre, upstairs room #200.

POP-UP MAKERSPACE
Makey Makey hack, DIY music, art, 3-D design, and more. First Wednesday of the month from 6:30-7:30 pm at Highlands Library.

HIP HOP SHOWCASE
Listen to sick beats and step up on our open stage for hip hop artists, rappers, spoken word, and poets. Rated PG. Third Wednesday, 7-9 pm. The Carrot Coffeehouse.

TABLE TOP GAMES NIGHT
Choose from over 20 board games and let fun fill your table. Tables are free! Oct. 24, 4-9 pm at The Carrot Coffeehouse. Hosted by Catrin of GOBfest.

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

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

FREE COMMUNITY REC ACCESS
At Commonwealth Stadium on Saturdays from 5-7 pm: Alberta Ave, Eastwood, Westwood. Sundays 1-3 pm: Alberta Ave, Parkdale-Cromdale, Spruce Avenue

OPEN MIC NIGHT
Open to performers of all stages and ages! Sip a latte and enjoy original music, poetry, comedy, and more at The Carrot's uniquely warm and personal open mic night. Saturdays, 6-10 pm at The Carrot Coffeehouse.

LOCATIONS

Bent Arrow	11648 85 St
Bethel Gospel	11461 95 St
Cnd Native Friendship	11728 95 St
Community Leagues - see page 12	
Crystal Kids	8715 118 Ave
Highlands Library	6710 118 Ave
Mennonite Centre	11713 82 St
Norwood Family Centre	9516 114 Ave
Norwood Legion	11150 82 St
Sprucewood Library	11555 95 St
St. Faith/St. Stephen Church	11725 93 St
St. Andrew's Church	8715 118 Ave
The Carrot Coffeehouse	9351 118 Ave
The Nina	9225 118 Ave





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Neighbour Connect organizers held 37 block parties over the summer. | Supplied

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Parkdale resident offering services to the area

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THE GREAT PUMPKIN EVENT

Tuesday, October 30, 2018
5:00 to 8:00 pm
Parkdale School Grounds
11648-85 St

- * Hayrides
- * Haunted Hallway
- * Costume Contest
- * Craft Tables
- * Hot Dogs
- * Cotton Candy
- * Popcorn
- * Surprise Finale

And LOTS of candy!!!

For more information
780.481.3451
www.bentarrow.ca

