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## A culinary tour of Alberta Avenue

Buy tickets to sample some of the Ave's diverse cuisine



Battista Vecchio, owner of Battista's Calzone Company, serves his calzones to customers. | Rebecca Lippiatt

### TALEA MEDYNSKI

This September, Edmontonians have an opportunity to participate in four separate culinary tours of Alberta Avenue restaurants.

Joachim Holtz, executive director of Alberta Avenue Business Association (AABA), explained the idea for the pilot project started in January.

"I talked to the board about the economic situation in the province. I wanted to come up with a promotion to help the businesses out. As a previous banker, my experience is that the hospitality businesses feel the pinch first."

Holtz explained 118 Avenue is a busy thoroughfare used daily. It's home to plenty of restaurants, but people don't always stop to try something new.

It's hoped that Eats on 118 will introduce people from all over Edmonton to those restaurants. Supported by the City of

Edmonton and AABA, Eats on 118 is a month-long culinary tour on Sept. 11, 14, 21, and 28. Tickets are \$30 for each tour. Sept. 11 is a brunch tour and the remaining dates are dinner tours, starting at 10 am and 6 pm respectively.

Each tour has samples from four restaurants, giving ticket-holders a chance to try a variety of cuisine.

Some participating restaurants include El Rancho, Koultures, Handy Bakery, Battista's Calzone Company, Passion de France, and T&D Vietnamese Noodle House.

Battista's Calzone Company is one of the stops on the Sept. 14 tour. "We'll offer an assortment of samples," said Shawn Tse from Battista's Calzone Company. The restaurant sells a variety of calzones, including dessert calzones: think Nutella and bananas wrapped in a delicious dough.

Tse said when asked to join the tour, "we didn't even hesi-

tate. It's definitely a way to engage in and outside the community," he said. "We hope people enjoy themselves, know we're here, and that we make nationally-recognized food."

The calzones are hand-crafted. The dough itself takes 26 hours to prepare and owner Battista Vecchio is committed to keeping original recipes and traditions passed down from his mother.

"His mom made calzones for him when he was a kid," explained Tse. "It was always one of his dreams to make food and be of service to the community."

The restaurant is known nationally. This May, Battista's Calzone Company was featured on *You've Got to Eat Here!*

Not all the names of the participating restaurants have been released yet. However, Handy Bakery and Passion de France are two of the restaurants on the Sept. 11 brunch tour, and T&D Vietnamese Noodle House is

also on the Sept. 14 tour.

Holtz said part of the tour's purpose is to learn the business owner's stories.

"You meet the owners, learn what brought them to 118 Avenue and what keep them there, and taste the cuisine," Holtz explained. "We want people to have a good experience and we want them to tell other people about it. Word of mouth is very important."

"It's just getting people down to the Avenue to see what it's like," said Judy Allan, the city's Avenue Initiative Coordinator. "I'm in it to help support it, get it going, and help it become sustainable in the future."

Holtz said another culinary tour is expected next year, possibly focusing on pubs.

Buy tickets on Eventbrite and visit Alberta-Avenue.com for more information.

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

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# Tibetan colours to brighten Alberta Avenue

Learn about Tibetan culture at annual Tibetan Bazaar

**KATE WILSON**

Every year, Gaden Samten Ling Society's Tibetan Bazaar becomes more popular.

"It's been growing year by year," said Jeremy Berg, society board member, noting that attendees should anticipate a lot of music and colour.

"Tibet is a very colourful culture. Prayer flags will be everywhere, people will be dressed in their cultural outfits."

He is referring to the 24th annual Tibetan Bazaar being held at Alberta Avenue Community Centre the last week of September. As in years past, a big attraction is the music.

"It will be a live performance in the Tibetan tradition," said Berg.

The artists, a female singer and dancer from the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts, will take the stage twice daily.

Another big attraction is the mo mo booth. These beef and vegetarian dumplings are always big sellers.

"We sell over 5,000 mo mos for the weekend," said Berg.

While the bazaar is a fundraiser for the society's centre, located on the corner of 101 Street and 114 Avenue, it's also a platform for displaying Tibetan heritage.

"Another objective of Gaden Samten Ling is the preservation of Tibetan culture and Tibetan Buddhist philosophy," said Berg. "Which is another reason for the upcoming bazaar, to showcase Tibetan culture, cuisine and way of life."

The bazaar is a rare opportunity to experience the colours and sounds of the Himalayas and Tibet and sample its merchandise. Alberta's population of Tibetans is small, noted Berg, and getting authentic Tibet-made items across the border is still difficult.

With a few exceptions, all the vendors at the bazaar are from Nepal, India and Tibet. They'll be selling art, clothing, books, jewelry and meditation supplies, as well as textiles and soaps, most hand-made.

Gaden Samten Ling is a non-profit organization, established by founding teacher Geshe Ngawang Kaldan who immigrated to Canada in the 1970s after

his escape from Tibet. Since his passing, spiritual director Kushok Lobsang Dhamchöe has carried on with the founder's work, building on its mission to promote the teachings of Tibetan Buddhism and offer meditation instruction to anyone who wants to learn.

Since the new building opened in 2012, programming has expanded under Dhamchöe's care, said Berg.

Dhamchöe described a new program for parents with small children.

"We now have a children's program for three to six years old. Meditation and instruction is upstairs for the adults, while the children are [engaged in] various activities and teachings downstairs," he explained.

The Tibetan Bazaar has been an integral part of programming for more than two decades.

"It's a big fundraiser and a cultural venue," said Dhamchöe. "A presentation of our heritage."

The Society's next big goal is a wellness centre. Funds raised at the bazaar are going toward current operations and

the new wellness facility, which will include children's programming, yoga, a chiropractor and a Tibetan doctor.

"This is Kushok's vision, he's always looking to help other beings," said Berg.

For those wanting to sit with Dhamchöe, he'll be offering dharma talks and an introduction to meditation at the upcoming bazaar.

For more information, go to [www.gadensamtenling.org](http://www.gadensamtenling.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.*

## TIBETAN BAZAAR

Sept. 24-25, 10 am-5 pm  
 Tickets: \$5 at door  
 Alberta Avenue Community Centre  
 9210 118 Avenue



This Tibetan outfit, known as a chuba, is worn by unwed women. The outfit and the jewellery behind is a taste of the colours and textures coming to the Tibetan Bazaar. | Kate Wilson



Some Tibetan accessories. The cloth hanging on the left is a ceremonial item. | Kate Wilson

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### ABOUT US

We are a non-profit community newspaper serving Alberta Avenue, Delton, Eastwood, Elmwood Park, Parkdale-Cromdale, Spruce Avenue, and Westwood. The opinions expressed in the paper are those of the people named as authors of the articles and do not necessarily reflect those of the board or staff.

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Build Community, Encourage Communication, Increase Capacity.

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### CONTRIBUTORS

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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I ♥ my RCP

# Libraries aren't for just reading anymore

Public libraries garner a collaborative maker culture

**SIERRA BILTON**

Think libraries offer only books? Think again. Public library services are moving toward library patrons creating information.

Sharon Day, director of branch services and collections at Edmonton Public Library (EPL), explained Canadian libraries have experienced a steady decline in traditional paperback check out numbers each year, which in turn drives a shift in funding and staffing distributions.

Since fewer people are checking out books, there is less funding for purchasing new copies. In addition, installation of automated check in/out systems means virtually zero staff necessary to do what used to be the bulk of a librarian's work. This also means less funding needed for what was once the hallmark of public libraries.

With recent funding redistribution comes a new perspective on what public libraries can offer their communities. Libraries began discourse with their communities on what was wanted and needed most.

The result is a two-way approach aimed at communication with community and providing services that foster a maker culture. Libraries have reallocated recently freed funding to services and programming that facilitates connection and sparks creation. Day said there has been a mass maker movement in public libraries across North America over the past couple years.

"Makerspace is meant to be a creative and collaborative environment where people can share ideas. It's a shift from people consuming information, the way libraries have traditionally, to creating and collaborating and being inter-

active," Day said. "With the EPL Makerspace, you can come in and print your own book, design a website, edit, animate and finish a movie, or play some Xbox. We have two sound recording studios, a green screen, and four 3D printers."

This year, EPL's Capital City Records recording studios received the Canadian Library Association's Award for Innovative Technology. Day said the sound booths are the most popular services. "They are one of the very few places in Edmonton people have access to high quality recording capabilities. They often get booked a number of weeks to months in advance." The EPL is the second most visited place in Edmonton with more than 14 million visitors last year.

Because EPL is collaborating with the public to inform services, more people are getting involved and creating material.

Day explained EPL's goal is to help people access the world's information and ideas. "We aim to open doors to learning, creating, and growth."

"As the digital landscape has shifted in other sectors, it's the same in libraries. The more the world becomes driven by digital content and digital sharing, the more our services and programs shift in this way," she said. "Basically, we want to give people the content that they want in the format that they want."

As an evidence-based institution, EPL also regularly conducts research to ensure funding and services are constantly on the pulse of the community. By employing a community librarian at each branch to act as a go-between, EPL runs based on a community-led service philosophy.

The best part? Every branch offers the same services, mean-

## EPL SERVICES & PROGRAMMING

Learn more: [epl.ca](http://epl.ca)  
EPL's online Makerspace: [epl.ca/browse\\_program/makerspace](http://epl.ca/browse_program/makerspace)

ing all Edmontonians have the opportunity to create and collaborate.

"We have a philosophy at EPL that is one collection, one library, one staff," Day explained.

*Sierra is a communications student specializing in journalism at MacEwan University. She has a particular love of the art and culture found nestled in Edmonton's Alberta Avenue communities and beyond.*



Youth playing video games at EPL's Makerspace. | EPL



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# Fill your heart during Kaleido Festival

Capture festival magic during the dog days of September

## SIERRA BILTON

One of Kaleido Family Arts Festival's greatest strengths is that it presents art and performance in a casual way to everyone.

Another strength is the community focus. Artistic director Christy Morin explained the heart of Kaleido has always been local talent, including organizers, performers, athletes, and artisans.

That's because 11 years ago, the festival began with a grass-roots group of artists from the Alberta Avenue area. Morin explained Kaleido began as a way to show Edmonton the robust community of artists who live and work around Alberta Avenue.

When the festival began to grow, the doors flew open, welcoming talent from across North America.

"Expanding is exciting and we always welcome the travelling

talent," Morin said. Regardless of the free agents that come to the festival, Kaleido's core talent, both production team and performers, remain predominantly locally sourced.

Every year, festival organizers add something new for people to enjoy. This year, new features include lip sync battles, a night market, basketball skill competitions, and a series of front porch performers along Alberta Avenue from 90 to 95 Street.

Embracing Alberta Avenue's history, this year introduces a five-year partnership with the Enoch Cree Nation. Indigenous performers and artists will be featured throughout the weekend.

"They are very excited to be a part and it is important to us as well being on Treaty 6 land and having such strong indigenous roots in the community," Morin said.

William Prince, a Winnipeg-based storytelling singer-songwriter whose vocals organizers

compared to Johnny Cash, will perform this year.

Some new far-travelling performers include Ottawa-based Peking Opera Soirée performing Friday and Saturday night, a Nashville singer-songwriter performing Sunday afternoon, and New York saxophonist Jacques Schwarz-Bart performing jazz Friday and Saturday.

Of all the talent being debuted, one series seems to capture Kaleido's essence best. The Front Porch Series features performers set up on various front porches along 118 Avenue in the afternoons. "The series is meant to welcome festivalgoers to our community and showcase our beautiful streets and homes," Morin said.

Also new is a night market on Friday, which kicks off the festival after the parade. Organizer Katt Bell said festivalgoers could expect to see various vendors, artisans, buskers, and food trucks.

"The atmosphere will be

warm and ambient with string lights and acoustic guitars—maybe even some saxophone players," she said. Birds of Bellwoods, a new folk-urban band from Toronto, will entertain on Friday night. Beyond a lovely place to soak in a fall evening, the night market will be a great place to shop for Christmas gifts, Bell said.

"We have five blocks of the Avenue that we use as our canvas and we bring in artists from the Alberta Avenue community, from Edmonton, from the province and then from outside the province as well to create the festival's environment of imagination and creativity," Morin explained.

She added, "Kaleido is a ritual in our community at this point and I think traditions are important for our community because we have specifically worked to foster ways to bring the human spirit back to the neighbourhood. For our families and our neighbours it is like a barn rais-

ing for our community now."

*Sierra is a communications student specializing in journalism at MacEwan University. She has a particular love of the art and culture found nestled in Edmonton's Alberta Avenue communities and beyond.*

## KALEIDO FAMILY ARTS FESTIVAL

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Fire dancers are a regular part of Kaleido Festival. | Epic Photography



Listen to a variety of musical performances during Kaleido Festival. | Epic Photography



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# Kaleido and local students create art

## Arts festival and schools make a perfect partnership

**RAYMOND GARIEPY**

Something edgy is coming to 118 Avenue as rumours circulate of an “exquisite corpse.” Is a zombie invasion imminent?

Despite its hair-raising name, exquisite corpse is art at this year’s Kaleido Family Arts Festival. Local schools are spearheading this event, said Christy Morin, executive director of Arts On The Ave.

This year, seven schools are participating in the festival, the highest number to date.

“The beauty this year is that although we’ve always involved schools, the actual schools in our community are now becoming Arts Core schools,” she said. According to Edmonton Public

Schools, Arts Core programming incorporates “visual and performing arts into everyday learning. Students explore their creativity and self-expression through art, music, dance and drama.” Students’ artwork will be featured during Kaleido at The Studio (11739 94 Street.)

Not to be outdone by his students, Brad Burns, Highlands School principal (and artist) will complete a live performance painting at Kaleido. The artwork will then be auctioned.

Then there’s the contribution festival performers make to the schools. This year, American singer and songwriter Steve Seskin and Spruce Avenue School will create a song they will perform on Sept. 11.

“Seskin’s skill in bringing

audience into his story is unbelievable,” Morin said. During a performance at The Carrot, the Grammy-nominated songwriter “spoke about his stories and involvement in schools, and I knew we had to bring him to the festival.”

While Spruce Avenue School students are strumming and singing, students at St. Alphonsus Catholic School will be tumbling and soaring, thanks to the Kalabanté acrobats from Quebec and Guinea.

National and international artists keen to perform and showcase their art speaks to the festival’s reach and popularity. New York jazz musician Jacques Schwarz-Bart is footing his travel costs to Edmonton because he wants to perform

at Kaleido. “We’re beginning to become known as leaders in community arts festivals,” Morin said.

This year, Kaleido celebrates its 11th anniversary. “It is a milestone and for us it has been a good year for reflecting and asking: ‘who are we and what are we?’ ” said Morin. “We know our roots are in the community, in the arts district, in building neighbours, community pride and in teaching. These are all really important pillars.” Equally important: “there is no door to this festival, no lock—it is accessible to everyone.”

But with ups come downs. In the spring, the festival experienced a shortfall of \$40,000 in federal funding. “The bottom line is we need financial sup-

port to make Kaleido continue because it is a vibrant ritual and tradition in our community.”

A fundraising campaign was launched in July. Visit [kaleido-fest.ca](http://kaleido-fest.ca) to donate.

“Arts for everyone” is truly what Kaleido is all about. “Creating together and playing together are things Kaleido wants to continue, and we want to dig deeper to find ways to express ourselves and to discover how we fit together.”

*Raymond is a writer and artist living in Edmonton. He was the managing editor of a newspaper and a magazine published by the Alberta Teachers’ Association.*



Children dance along with Spandy Andy during Kaleido Festival 2015. | Epic Photography



Festivalgoers greet fairy book characters during last year’s Kaleido Festival. | Epic Photography



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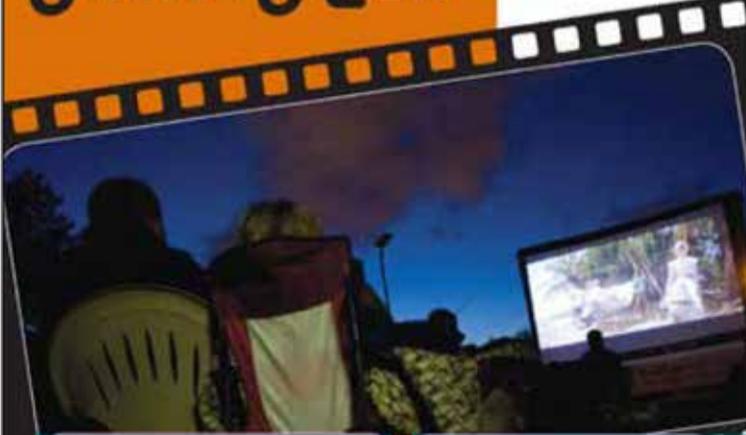
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## EDITORIAL

# The unexpected price of higher education

Canadian students have world's fifth-highest tuition cost

SIERRA BILTON

I am a communications student specializing in journalism at MacEwan University. Money quickly became a large factor in my decisions, including my choice of school to attend. I decided to take the first two years of my degree at a college with tuition costs nearly half that of Edmonton rates, but needed to transfer to a university to complete my degree.

Even after making financially stringent decisions, my student debt will fall slightly below the national average of \$27,000, as per the Canadian Federation of Students.

My debt is not an isolated case. My three siblings, all of whom have or are studying for undergraduate degrees, have similar numbers to reconcile.

You could say inflation determines tuition costs, but consider this.

In 1984, average tuition was \$1,000 per year. According to Statistics Canada, aver-

age tuition in 2015/2016 was \$6,191. The Bank of Canada offers a handy inflation calculator that predicts the price of services according to national inflation rates. The average \$1,000 tuition from 1984 calculated for 2016 should be approximately \$2,139. That is a difference of roughly \$4,000 above what inflation rates account for.

Similarly, The Canadian Centre for Policy Awareness noted a five-fold tuition increase from 1990–2017 and mandatory fees nearly tripled in the same time span. Tuition costs are exponentially increasing at rates students can no longer afford.

Despite these figures, post-secondary enrolment has only gone up in recent years. The steady increase is likely to continue as university degrees have become necessary to keep pace with the rapidly transitioning global economy.

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) states 70 per cent of new jobs in the coming decade will require post-secondary education.

Many students take advantage of split-loan programs from both federal and provincial sources, which offer holds on interest until one year after graduation. Many also take out weighty bank loans with interest rates that begin immediately.

In a survey conducted in 2010, half of Canadian undergraduates owed money to their loan source (both governmental and private), 41 per cent of which was over \$25,000. Any education beyond an undergraduate degree entails even higher amounts of debt.

Debt is one factor among many vexing young students pursuing an education; finding post-graduation work is another concern.

The job market is bleak for many recent graduates looking for a career in their field. Many students end up in service industry jobs even after completing their degrees in order to pay the bills. Others go straight to trades and begin a career that offers quick pay turnaround with short instructional periods. Statistics Canada surveys

have also found parents are even delaying retirement to help their children foot the cost of education. This only exacerbates the problem; each parent still working means one less job opening for another millennial.

With post-secondary debt come unexpected outcomes.

Delayed life milestones for millennials are a result of the vast difference between current tuition and the cost of living. Many young couples end up with significant debts to pay off at a time when their parents' generation was buying a home and starting a family.

In past decades, tuition was much more proportional to the cost of living and milestones therefore came faster. It is only in the past generation that tuition has seen this unprecedented and unstable hike. When adding tuition to the cost of living, the price of a degree adds up quickly.

The Canadian Centre for Policy Awareness report released in 2013 states, "the cost of a four year university education is estimated to reach

over \$80,000; of that, residence is estimated at about \$31,000."

The report also said, "From 1989 to 2009, the proportion of university operating revenue from government sources fell from 81% to 58%, and the proportion funded by tuition fees increased from 14% to 35%."

At the current rates, financial stability and independence is a dubious prospect, only becoming more difficult for Canadian students each year. This snowballing trend can't help but leave myself and other millennials wondering if getting a university degree means putting life on hold.

Employment and Social Development Canada reports 70 per cent of new jobs in the coming decade will require post-secondary education.

Sierra is a communications student specializing in journalism at MacEwan University. She has a particular love of the art and culture found nestled in Edmonton's Alberta Avenue communities and beyond.

## Randy Boissonnault MP/Député - Edmonton Centre



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[Randy.Boissonnault@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Randy.Boissonnault@parl.gc.ca)

TABLE 2 Tuition and Compulsory Fees for Full Time Undergrads (\$Current)

	Canada	NL	PEI	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC
1990-91	\$1,464	\$1,344	\$1,874	\$1,941	\$1,925	\$904	\$1,680	\$1,512	\$1,545	\$1,286	\$1,808
2012-13	\$6,348	\$2,867	\$6,033	\$6,576	\$6,376	\$3,505	\$8,062	\$4,175	\$6,483	\$6,794	\$5,589
2013-14e	\$6,610	\$2,872	\$6,326	\$6,812	\$6,553	\$3,656	\$8,403	\$4,243	\$6,796	\$7,093	\$5,719
2016-17e	\$7,437	\$2,886	\$7,293	\$7,574	\$7,094	\$4,086	\$9,517	\$4,441	\$7,912	\$8,077	\$6,129

Source: Statistics Canada TLAC and author's Calculations

A five-fold tuition increase has been noted from 1990–2017. | Statistics Canada

TABLE 1 Proportion of University Funding by Source

	Canada		Newfoundland and Labrador		Prince Edward Island		Nova Scotia	
	Students	Government	Students	Government	Students	Government	Students	Government
1990	22%	71%	17%	79%	31%	67%	33%	60%
2009	34%	55%	27%	68%	41%	53%	47%	43%
	New Brunswick		Quebec		Ontario		Manitoba	
	Students	Government	Students	Government	Students	Government	Students	Government
1990	28%	62%	15%	78%	25%	66%	22%	70%
2009	36%	53%	21%	69%	41%	46%	29%	58%
	Saskatchewan		Alberta		British Columbia			
	Students	Government	Students	Government	Students	Government		
1990	21%	73%	22%	71%	24%	69%		
2009	30%	61%	33%	58%	36%	55%		

Source: Statistics Canada CANSIM 385-0007

University operating revenue is depending more on tuition fees and less on government funding. | Statistics Canada



**CHILI COOK-OFF** **Sat Sept 17th**  
**3-6 pm**

**Elmwood Park Community Hall, 12505-75st**

Join us for a free chili cook-off and corn bust to celebrate Community League Day! With door prizes, hot dogs and a bouncy castle for the kids, it's going to be a fun and food-filled afternoon!

**Wed Sept 21st**  
**7 pm**



**Sands Hotel, 12340 Fort Rd**

Come out to the Annual General Meeting to hear about new and upcoming events and plans for our community. Bring your ideas, comments and concerns! We will be voting in the members of our Executive Committee and new faces are welcome.

Coffee and snacks will be provided.



Recent graduates struggle with student debt and lack of work. | Pauline Ismael

HAPPY COMMUNITIES

# Go, Pokémon, go! Free game gets youth outside

Getting outdoors creates happy, healthy communities

**AYDAN DUNNIGAN-VICKRUCK**

What do an iPad and outdoor exercise have in common?

Very little, according to a recent lecture I attended on how the predominance of Wi-Fi devices were turning a generation into high-frequency couch potatoes.

Until now. Our world just changed for the better on July 17, when Pokémon Go launched. Enter a new age of Wi-Fied hyperactive youngsters who can't wait to get outside. Apparently it is now impossible for parents to keep their kids from charging off in search of the next coveted Pokémon character. My daughter "complains" her teenager son now insists they walk the dog! Together! Daily! This has nothing to do with the dog of course, but for a mother, any excuse to spend time with

her teenage son, especially outdoors, is welcome.

So there you have it. The new world order. The blending of the hi-tech world and a good old-fashioned walk outdoors. One more in a series of cultural transformations which captures the imagination of our Twitter-soaked world every six months or so.

Remember geocaching? It was the precursor to Pokémon Go and was very big a few years back. My wife Patricia and I had a ton of fun tracking down caches in fields and forests during our last trip in Europe with my son and his wife. Before he married an avid geocacher, Steven would never have ventured outside except to drive to the corner 7-Eleven. Now he and his outdoor-loving wife hike for hours seeking securely hidden little tupperware treasures, with the help of their GPS and website clues.

Geocaching is no longer trending, but still worth pursuing: [www.geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com).

This fickle attachment of the Twitter generation to outdoors and nature does raise the questions, "Are the real treasures of nature still being missed? Is there a possibility that we can appreciate the outdoors without relying on a gadget or motorized transport or some other gimmicky game?" Now here's a leap. How about getting outdoors, walking down a wooded trail with no intended destination, no Wi-Fi access or GPS signal, with nothing to direct our path or determine our destination but our sense of adventure and wonder?

Richard Louv, author of the award-winning book *Last Child in the Woods*, writes that direct exposure to nature is essential for healthy childhood development and for the physical and emotional health of children

and adults. He directly links the lack of nature in the lives of today's wired generation to some of the most disturbing childhood trends, such as the rise in obesity, attention disorders, and depression. He calls it "nature deficit disorder."

This does not mean that we all need to move to the country to maintain mental health or a healthy lifestyle. What it does mean is that we need to make an effort to include nature as part of our daily routine, part of a balanced nature diet. This can start right in our backyard with growing a garden or hosting birdhouses or bee hotels, or even chicken roosts.

We recently returned from a two week trip through British Columbia to visit family and were intrigued at the different approaches each took to yards and gardens. My daughter lives in a housing co-op which has their entire front yard turned

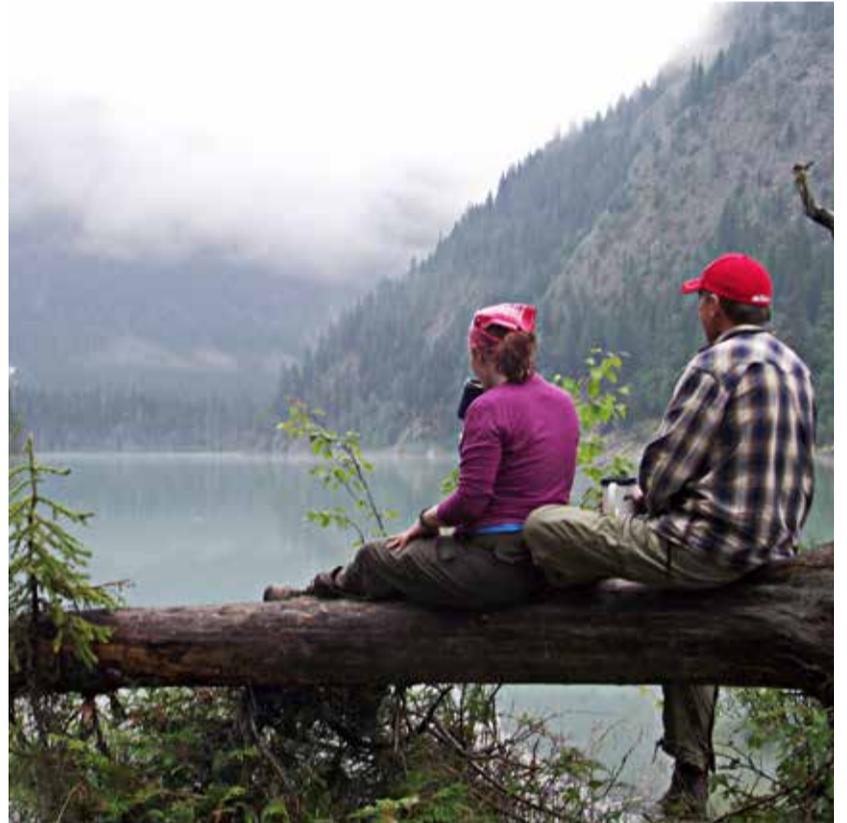
into herbs and vegetables—very messy but productive. My sister has a neatly manicured lawn and flower bed. My one brother is growing his first garden and tickled at his morning adventure of picking newly-ripened tomatoes and figs. My older brother has a virtual barnyard with roaming dogs and cats and free-range chickens. For our part, we return home to a jungle of tomatoes, squash, beans, beets, potatoes, kale, and flower beds running wild.

It may be then that getting your nature nutrients has less to do with chasing down another Pokémon pikachu than putting down your Wi-Fi gadget and picking up a shovel.

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



RCP writer Aydan and his daughter Sara at Berg Lake, Mount Robson. | Supplied



Father & daughter spend bonding time on Lake Kinney, Mount Robson. | Supplied

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PHARMACY

# Community volunteers are leagues ahead

Edmonton has a long history of creating community leagues

**KATE WILSON**

A bird's eye view of Edmonton at the turn of the last century would show an urban core on either side of the river, with outlying subdivisions separated by bush and a few connecting roads. Meanwhile, the surging commercial and population growth meant the city was hard-pressed to keep up with services and infrastructure.

Citizens in those isolated districts responded by creating community leagues and lobbying the city for things like improvements to civic structures and recreational facilities. The first community league, now known as Crestwood, was inaugurated in 1917. Based on a model from the Eastern U.S. and modified to fit Edmonton's interface of frontier know-how with commerce and galloping real estate development, its success ensured eight more soon

followed. Edmonton's community league movement was born, and today it's as vital as ever.

They're an invaluable connection between the city and neighbourhoods, explained Brendan Van Alstine, president of Alberta Avenue Community League. He noted all community leagues are assigned a recreation contact from the city.

"City reps come to meetings regularly," he said. "They bring information about city programs—for example, if they need to approve funding for a community program. And they take information back."

Edmonton's 157 community leagues give citizens a voice on issues ranging from safety and property development to housing and affordable recreation. Edmontonians are often surprised to learn leagues are independent, self-run organizations, sustained by volunteers who raise their own funding, pay for

their community centres, and run their own recreation facilities. While there's an ebb and flow to their operations, Van Alstine said their durability is due to grassroots civic involvement.

"Examples like community garden(s) and the new Abundant Communities Initiative. They exist from a desire to have a sense of community coherence," he said.

Sebastian Barrera, president of Parkdale Cromdale Community League agrees, noting that leagues give residents a unique opportunity to serve their neighbourhood.

"Community leagues should be the beginning of civic engagement by residents," he said, adding they often relay street-level issues to city staff better than developers or business interests can. "Community leagues know what our needs are."

The city provides expertise,

land and funding that augments monies raised by league volunteers, explained Coun. Tony Caterina.

"The community league system has a sterling reputation for outstanding cooperation between three distinct partners," he said. "The level of cooperation between the city, community leagues and the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues ... is the envy of many North American municipalities."

Launched by the original nine leagues in 1921, the EFCL represents all leagues. Debra Jakubec, EFCL executive director, feels its longevity rests on the leagues and city support.

"The 157 leagues speaks volumes about citizens' commitment to community and building great neighbourhoods," she said. "And it is support from the city that helps us grow and get strong."

In celebration of its 100th

anniversary in 2017, the EFCL is working with the city on a significant upgrade to Hawrelak Park, including a new community league plaza. Meanwhile the EFCL's big annual event, Community League Day, is on Sept. 17. Watch your league website to find out what's happening, or go to [www.efcl.org](http://www.efcl.org).

Edmontonians who have a community league membership have a powerful tool in their hands. Membership is open to any citizen—they simply need to live in the league area. Your community league invites you to join today.

*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.*



Richard Williams, Parkdale-Cromdale VP, Brendan van Alstine, Alberta Avenue president, and Cheryl Atkins, Eastwood director, stand at the intersection of their respective leagues at 89 St and 118 Avenue. | Rebecca Lippiatt

## Connect with your community league

Neighbourhood boundary map and league contact details on page 12. | Universal league membership benefits: free access to all league-run community rinks in the city with your skate tags. | 10% discounts at city rec centres, multi and annual passes. | Access to soccer registration. | EFCL promotions. | A voice in community and city issues via your league. | Buy: your league membership through [EFCL.org](http://EFCL.org) (\$5 service fee). Try connecting with league first.

### ALBERTA AVENUE

[www.albertaave.org](http://www.albertaave.org)

#### Membership

**Benefits:** rental discounts, swim at Commonwealth Rec Centre on Sundays 1–3 pm, free outdoor pool swims, free faxing & printing, block party kits and equipment

**Buy:** online on league website or visit during office hours.

**Meetings:** monthly on second Tuesday; AGM in April.

#### Upcoming

Membership BBQ | Sunday Sept 18 from 3–5 pm  
Zumba | Mondays 8 pm  
Nordic pole walking | Tuesdays 7 pm  
Website & Facebook for more.

#### Need

People to connect with neighbours on their block.  
People to organize programs, social events, be rink volunteers this winter.  
Help with communications (social media, website, newsletter).

### DELTON

[www.deltoncommunity.com](http://www.deltoncommunity.com)

#### Membership

**Benefits:** member rates for all Delton functions and access to Commonwealth  
**Buy:** Through EFCL or at a league event.

**Meetings:** Third Monday of the month; AGM in January

#### Upcoming

Annual membership BBQ | Sept 17 from 10 am to 2 pm.

#### Need

Bingo volunteers - contact Susan Nozack at 780.910.3793 or [bingo@deltoncommunity.com](mailto:bingo@deltoncommunity.com)

### EASTWOOD

#### Membership

**Benefits:** hall and skating rink rental discounts & discounts for Eastwood's events such as dog training & Fondue Night.

**Buy:** email or leave a message.

**Meetings:** Sept 14 at 7 pm; AGM in November.

#### Upcoming

CiderFest | Late September  
Fondue Night | Late October

#### Needs

Help vet infill projects and city initiatives.  
Help with garden and park improvements.  
Ideas for local activities and help us go from there.

### ELMWOOD PARK

[www.elmwoodparkcommunity.org](http://www.elmwoodparkcommunity.org)

#### Membership

**Benefits:** 10% off meals at Sands Hotel restaurant and free access at Commonwealth Rec Centre Saturdays from 5–7 pm.

**Buy:** free memberships by contacting us through website, Facebook, or attending a community event.

**Meetings:** Second Tuesday of month at 7 pm; AGM, Sept 21 at 7 pm at Sands Hotel.

#### Upcoming

Chili cook off | Sept 17 from 3–6 pm  
Halloween party | Date/time TBA

#### Need

Help on our board with event planning and other help.  
Volunteers to help with social media.

### PARKDALE CROMDALE

[www.parkdalecromdale.org](http://www.parkdalecromdale.org)

#### Membership

**Benefits:** free access to Commonwealth Rec Centre on Sundays 1–3 pm, access to league programs and workshops

**Buy:** On our website (\$2.50 PayPal fee), in person at a community event, or email [pecl.info@gmail.com](mailto:pecl.info@gmail.com).  
Monthly meetings the last Thursday of the month; AGM in April.

### Upcoming

Singing and music lesson, Senior's bingo, ESL classes. Watch for bonfire nights, community meals and more.

#### Need

Help in supporting and facilitating programs, events, workshops and community connections.

Ideas for programs or classes members would like to run or share as a group.

We'll support them, host, organize and finance.

Turning a member's idea into reality.

### SPRUCE AVENUE

[www.spruceavenuecommunity.com](http://www.spruceavenuecommunity.com)

#### Membership

**Benefits:** rental discounts, free access at Commonwealth Rec Centre on Saturdays 5–7 pm, swim rental discounts.

**Buy:** free membership with two hours of volunteer time, email [spruceave-league@shaw.ca](mailto:spruceave-league@shaw.ca) or call Verna 780.479.8019, or buy at events or rink.  
**Meetings:** Our AGM is Oct 25, 7 pm at Spruce Ave Community Hall.

#### Upcoming

Community League Day Harvest Festival | Sept 17, 2–6 pm  
Watch for free skating lessons in January/February.

### Need

Volunteers for Community League Day, Sept 17.

People to sit on the board, be part of decision making, and be involved.  
Open, close & supervising the skating rink (18 yrs and older).

### WESTWOOD

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

#### Membership

**Benefits:** rental discounts, free access at Commonwealth Rec Centre Saturdays 5–7 pm.

**Buy:** in-person at monthly meetings, events or through EFCL website.

**Meetings:** monthly on second Tuesday; AGM in October.

#### Upcoming

Community League Day | Sept 17  
Pancake Breakfast 9 am to noon & Big Bin Event 9 am - 4 pm.

#### Need

People interested in planning programs or social events.  
People who can deliver flyers.  
People interested in meeting their neighbours and selling/delivering memberships.

# The importance of community involvement

Westwood Community League's history informs its future

**CYNTHIA C. MONDESIR**

Last year, I saw the sign advertising Westwood's Community League Day. Intrigued, I attended the pancake breakfast, met Bev Esslinger, city councillor in Ward 2, and purchased my membership without hesitation.

Since then, I have met several neighbours who felt the community league has provided many benefits. I learned more at the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL).

Catherine Shek is a library administrative assistant who

catalogues old archived materials related to all Edmonton community leagues. She said, "Community leagues are a way for residents to have their voices heard in the municipal government. They help to advocate for the needs of the community, co-ordinate recreational and social functions, as well as provide infrastructure."

Shek located the following excerpt of the initiation of the *Westwood Community League in Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues: A History of the Largest Volunteer Organization in North America*.

"C.B. Bostford founded Westwood Community League in 1951. In October of that year community people met at H.A Gray School. They embarked on many projects. One of which was the construction of a skating rink erected by volunteers. They found an army surplus hut which served as a clubhouse. Social activities such as movies, square dances, bingo, cub scouts, soccer and hockey leagues were abundant during those years. There was also an upgrade to The league's kitchen and hardwood flooring from funds raised by a tea and bazaar."

The demographics have changed as the population has aged and people have moved away. However, activism remains strong in Westwood through the efforts of volunteers.

Throughout

the years, there have been many changes and improvements. In 2014, Triangle Park was renamed in honor of Lorne Larsen and the contributions he made to the community. It is a beautiful oasis along 107 Street. In 2012, the community league and the city led the efforts to redevelop the ornamental pond in Westwood Park. The pond no longer meets health and safety requirements. The final concept design includes a new spray park and construction will begin in 2017.

Currently Westwood is undergoing neighbourhood renewal with sewer and sanitary storm drain replacement, roads, curb and sidewalk reconstruction, and streetlight replacement. Community league meetings were an important part of these changes and began in October 2013. Current board members are Kim Ellis (president), Wally Watts (vice president), Rob Hauk (secretary), and Marlene Larsen (treasurer). "Westwood is a wonderful community that I have enjoyed serving," said Ellis. "I'm excited about the new spray park."

On Sept. 17, Westwood Community League would like to invite residents to their Community League Day Pancake Breakfast and Big Bin Event from 9 am-2 pm. Come by and meet your neighbours. It is a wonderful opportunity to get involved.

As Mayor Hawrelak said during Westwood Community League's inauguration in 1952, "It needs help from everyone—don't let all the work fall on the shoulders of a few."

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



Westwood Community League Building. | Karen Mykietka

**WESTWOOD COMMUNITY LEAGUE DAY**

**Pancake Breakfast & Big Bin Event**

**Sept. 17, 9 am to 2 pm**

**Westwood Community League Hall**

**12139 105 Street**

# Spruce Ave celebrates community and history

Harvest Festival brings residents together to learn about community

**TALEA MEDYNSKI**

For over 20 years, Spruce Avenue Community League has held a Harvest Festival in September.

"It started off with a very low attendance," said Verna Stainthorp, secretary and treasurer of the league. Since then, the festival has grown in popularity, with around 150 people expected to attend this year. "It's been well-received by people. It's a time for people to get together," said Stainthorp.

This year, the Harvest Festival will include celebrating Spruce Avenue's 65th anniversary. While all community members are invited, Stainthorp is

hoping former residents also attend. From 2 pm until 6 pm, residents can hop on a horse-drawn hayride or enjoy some chili. Families can participate in the penny carnival and face painting. Depending on the weather, the spray park may be open. Other activities are still being confirmed.

The festival is also an opportunity for people to learn more about the league. For example, Spruce Avenue has an excellent skating rink and community league members have free access to it.

During the festival, memberships are available to purchase and the Front Yards in Bloom nominees are also announced.

"I think there's about 60

yards this year that have been nominated. When we started participating in Front Yards in Bloom about eight years ago, there was about 15 nominees," said Stainthorp. She explained that yards don't have to be elaborate. "It's the effort that's put in. We have some elderly people still in their homes and many still make an effort."

Because of the community league's anniversary, a history project is underway and a pop-up museum (a table) will be at the festival. The museum will allow residents to share some community history.

"We'd like to invite people to bring in a piece of the history of this community," said Stainthorp. That history might

include something like pictures, stories, or even a milk bottle. "Maybe this information will be in people's basements."

Wesley Andreas, who is helping with the project, recently tracked down photos of Spruce Avenue School under construction. He found the photo in Calgary. "We want to get a feeling of what the community was like 65 years ago."

The history project is still new, with information being gathered. "We had a table at our garage sale and had quite the response. It generated quite a bit of conversation and memories." One goal is to speak to some long-term community members and record those conversations. "We are very lucky to have resi-

dents who are keen on preserving history," said Stainthorp. "I'm just so pleased it's gained some momentum."

It hasn't yet been determined how the project will be presented, but it may be housed at the provincial archives.

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

**HARVEST FESTIVAL**

**Sept. 17 from 2 - 6 pm**

**Spruce Avenue**

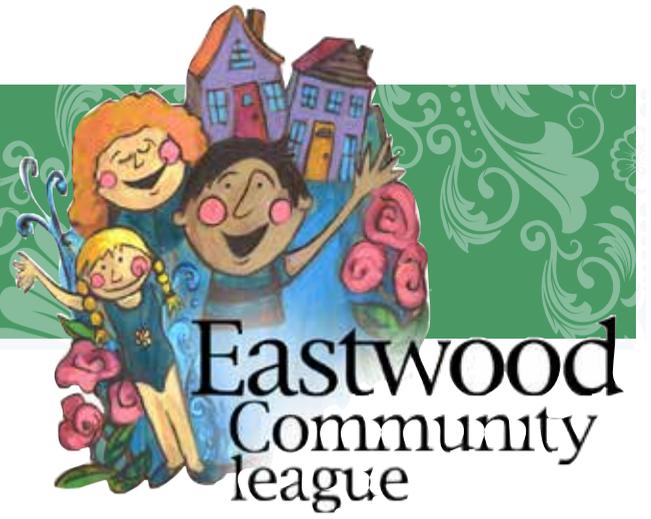
**Community League Hall  
10240 115 Avenue**



Hop on a hayride during Spruce Avenue's Harvest Festival. | Verna Stainthorp

# your eastwood news

*This page sponsored by Eastwood Community League*



## Connect with Eastwood!

Hall: 11803-86 St Phone: 780.477.2354

Email: [ewcl@shaw.ca](mailto:ewcl@shaw.ca)

FB.com/edmontoneastwoodcommunityleague

Twitter @EastwoodCL



## We Need YOU!

The league is off in a new direction, integrating its society status with a more focused approach to community needs. But we need help from all of you. There are vacancies on the board for official positions, but more importantly, we need the input of our fellow residents. Contact the board if you are interested in becoming a block coordinator, are interested in one of our upcoming activities, or would like to start your own social group using our society's status for support. Follow league events and news on Facebook and Twitter, and contact us through email for a quick response.



Eastwood Community Garden has room for more gardeners. | Supplied



Some of the vegetables grown in Eastwood Community Garden. | Supplied

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

### GARDEN UPDATE

The garden has been an incredible success. Based on market value of locally produced organic foods, we have grown well over \$500 worth of food. We have been able to donate these vegetables both to Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers as well as to volunteers. The bag system is easy to operate, efficient, and can be done from anywhere: a balcony or porch, even an addition to a landscaped garden. There is room to grow! Please contact the community league to book a garden space for next year, get more information about the bag system, or expand the program to include fruit trees, public beautification projects, and enjoy camaraderie of like-minded people.

We need a few yards of topsoil, so please contact the community league if you have access to fresh, screened dirt.

We also still have a lot of extra compost for those who need it. Simply write an email or call and leave a message ([ewcl@shaw.ca](mailto:ewcl@shaw.ca) or 780.477.2354).

### SOCCER REGISTRATION

Indoor soccer is now open for registration for the winter season. Please go to the Edmonton Minor Soccer Association's website for more details. Note that we are partnered with Delton Community League for spring/summer outdoor soccer programs, and registration takes place in early January and February. If you would like your child to participate in either of these programs, but are worried about transportation and cost, please contact the league to discuss. The league is here to help, and we love our children!

### ICE SKATING

Our rink is maintained throughout the winter months, so come out and use it! Skate times are usually Tuesday to Friday 5 pm to 9 pm, and Saturday from 3 pm to 9 pm, and Sunday from 2 pm to 5 pm. If you would like to organize a shinny match or skate at other times, contact the league to make arrangements. We are interested in offering skating lessons for all ages, but we need to know the level of interest. So, come out to the next meeting or get in touch with the league to put your name down for future programs in the winter.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

The community league is excited to be hosting the second annual Fondue Night in partnership with the Edmonton Swiss Society. Come out and enjoy this traditional Swiss family meal, with a delectable cheese fondue, various breads, wine, and a host of salads and sweets on Oct. 29. If you're interested, book a space in advance. The Annual General Meeting will be held in early November. This is an incredibly important event, as our community has been forging progressively involved relationships with other groups and societies that are making our community their home.

We need input from all who call Eastwood home, whether you rent or own, or if you're young or old. We will be electing some key positions, and starting some very interactive new initiatives. Follow our Facebook page for regular updates, or email or call to request details of the community's activities and directives.

### UPCOMING MEETINGS & REGISTERED PROGRAMS

Next community meeting: Sept. 14 at 7 pm at the Community League Hall (11803 86 Street). AGM: Early November (date yet to be determined.)

### ETOWN VOCAL MUSIC SOCIETY

ETown Vocal Music Society is bringing two a cappella vocal ensembles to Eastwood Community League this fall!

ETown Minors: For youth from Grade 9 to Grade 12. Rehearsals are Wednesdays from 4:30-6:30 pm. FREE registration. First rehearsal is Sept. 14.

ETown Augmented: For adults of any age. Rehearsals are Thursdays from 7-9:30 pm. Early bird registration: \$325. First rehearsal is Sept. 15.

Visit [www.ETownVMS.com](http://www.ETownVMS.com) for details, registration, mailing list sign up and contact information.

# The biggest risk means following your dreams

Making the decision to return to school was a huge debate

**NICOLA DAKERS**

Some people might call me crazy. During a major economic downturn, why would I leave a full-time, decent paying union job with pension and benefits? That's a big risk to take at 36 years old. Maybe I am crazy. After all, I don't know if this is truly the right career path for me. But this idea has been at the back of my head for a long time.

This idea is to become an elementary school teacher. As a child, I would spend all my free evenings devising classwork for my stuffed animal students, planning lessons and pretending to give lectures. My favourite childhood gift was my very own chalkboard. Even now, when I see interesting things I think, "I would love to teach kids about that," or "wouldn't it be neat if kids learned how to do that?"

I am worried, though. Will teaching kids be enough of a challenge after my years of working with adults? Will I end up with a lot of debt? What if I don't like it? What if I do poorly in school? What if I can't find a job when I am finished? What if it harms my relationship?

"Some principals only hire young teachers," warned my mother-in-law, who made her living as a teacher's aid.

"You are going to be so poor," my mother fretted, as she is also trying to help my niece and nephews with school

costs.

"Going back to university can cause a lot of stress in a relationship," my father-in-law cautioned.

All of these things are true. I will be 38 when I finish school. I will be poor for the next several years. There will be challenges for my relationship. But has letting fear prevent me from doing things ever helped?

I spent many years finding jobs I thought would fulfill me and provide a good income because I was too unsure or afraid of trying anything else. I could stay in my job and perhaps grow into a different administrative position in the city, but would I be truly happy? What about that thought in the back of my head that tells me I want to be a teacher? I don't think I would forgive myself if I didn't try.

A quote my friends sent me helped me make my decision:

"Sometimes I can hear my bones straining under the weight of all the lives I am not living." -Jonathan Safran Foer, *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*

*Nicola has lived in the Alberta Avenue community for 10 years. She likes writing, reading, history, painting, gardening, animals, getting lost in the woods, and the awesome people in her community.*



Writer Nicola Dakers pondered going back to school for a long time. | Mark Parsons



## DISCUSSION AND UPDATE

**Sponsored by Residents' Committee:**

**Alberta Avenue Initiative, McCauley, Central McDougall/Queen Mary Park, and Jasper Place**

**JOIN us for an evening of ideas and solutions to address concerns with problem properties in our communities**

**Discussion and update from the problem property task force.**

**Panel table discussions with key stakeholders in attendance include EFS, Bylaw, Capital City Clean Up, Alberta Health Services, Housing, and Sustainable Development.**

**WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 14, 7 - 9 P.M.**

Ital Canadian Seniors Association: 9111 - 110 Avenue

## BIG BIN EVENT

The City of Edmonton's Big Bin Events accept household items that can't be set out for regular waste collection at no charge.

**September 17th & 18th**

**Commonwealth Stadium**

**112 Ave and 90 Street**

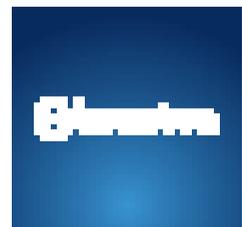
**More info visit: [edmonton.ca/bigbinevent](http://edmonton.ca/bigbinevent)**

**(September)**

**Fondue Night (October)**

**AGM (November)**

**Check Facebook regularly for updates.**



# Enjoying the sensual fruits of summer

Indulging and preserving the fresh offerings of harvest

## CHANTAL FIGEAT

While the warmth of summer unfolds, I invariably find myself repeating my French father's wartime food scavenging habits. Family karma asserts itself, and I find myself eagerly eyeing the raspberry and rhubarb plants edging the laneways while imagining tasty concoctions.

Our summer is so short that it seems shameful not to enjoy the season to the utmost. A summer stroll takes on more dimensions when you stop to pick food and mentally savour the fresh taste of your harvest. Knowing I'm getting much-needed exercise makes me feel virtuous. This virtuous feeling is further enhanced when I think of the copious quantities of vitamin C contained in both rhubarb and raspberries.

I am reminded of the civil law term "usufruct" which sprang from the Latin expression *usus et fructus*, meaning "use and enjoyment." Contrary to the popular notion that property rights are absolute, ancient Romans recognized a legal right to profit from another's property as long as the property is not damaged. Thus, if fruit extends from one property to another, a person can legally harvest the overhanging portion without damaging the tree. Asking the owner for permission to harvest is polite, but the request is not a legal obligation.

While I was growing up, my mother had two standard uses for rhubarb. The simplest use was to take a stem, dip it in sugar and happily munch away. Slightly more upscale was to stew the sliced stems with sugar, honey, and a lemon slice, remove the lemon slice, and let it cool.

The resulting sauce was spread on toast or used as a topper for vanilla ice cream. Now, that's a delicious memory!

As my culinary skills further developed, I began treating my friends and family to a scrumptious rhubarb custard pie. The pie crusts became real crowd pleasers when I learned to handle the pastry lightly, ensuring all ingredients and utensils were cold, and adding some raw egg to the mix.

Perfectly ripe raspberries with a small amount of sugar lightly folded in make for a delicious summer treat that won't add to the heat of your kitchen during a hot summer day. A dollop of whipped cream flavoured with vanilla essence adds decadence.

Once the heat of the day has passed, I can steam up the kitchen by making a pot of raspberry jam and sealing the jars in a boiling water bath. If I'm in the mood for some pampering, I use the steam to enhance the effectiveness of face and hair masques. The heavenly smell and taste of a sumptuous oatmeal raspberry crisp is a fine reward before falling into bed.

Once in bed, my busy thoughts pause to feel grateful rather than allowing myself to drift in protected complacency. For here's the difference between my father and I: Dad harvested food out of necessity while I do it for enjoyment. That's truly something to appreciate.

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



Harvesting rhubarb or "pie plant" growing along back laneways complements a summer outing. | Sam Wagar

## your neighbourhood... your community league!

### Westwood

12139 105 St  
westwoodcommunity2@gmail.com

League Day Sept 17  
Pancake 9 am - noon;  
Big Bin 9 am - 4 pm

### Spruce Avenue

10240 115 Ave  
spruceaveleague@shaw.ca

League Day Harvest Festival  
Sept 17 from 2-6 pm

### Delton

12325 88 St  
admin@deltoncommunity.com

Membership BBQ  
& Indoor Soccer  
registration | Sept 17  
from 10 am - 2 pm

### Elmwood Park

12505 75 St  
epcl@shawbiz.ca

Chili cook off | Sept 17 from  
3-6 pm; AGM Sept 21, 7 pm  
at Sands Hotel

### Eastwood

11803 86 St  
ewcl@shaw.ca

Meetings, events and other  
great info all posted on our  
Facebook page.

### Parkdale-Cromdale

11335 85 St  
pccl.info@gmail.com

Time to renew your membership:  
online, at meeting last Thursday of  
month, or email us.

### Alberta Avenue

9210 - 118 Ave  
info@albertaave.org

Membership BBQ | Sunday,  
Sept 18 from 3-5 pm



WHERE NEIGHBOURS MEET  
and GREAT THINGS HAPPEN  
EDMONTON FEDERATION OF COMMUNITY LEAGUES

EFCL

Connect with your league on  
their Facebook page



# Finding comfort and closure by the river

Traditional Cree ceremonies honour the departed

**CONSTANCE BRISSENDEN**

Night was approaching as I stood by the river, thinking of closure. The beauty of the water, a calm swath winding through low green banks, filled me with appreciation.

I was here because my partner, Larry Loyie, a proud Cree man, writer, and educator died three months before at 82 years old. He asked that his ashes be laid here by the river during the family's annual gathering, in a traditional Cree way.

As a non-Cree person, I had complete trust in Larry's brother and cousins who would guide the pipe ceremony, lay the ashes and organize a feast and giveaway. I just wasn't sure of myself. Would I cry? What if I couldn't stop?

Nature honoured the ceremonies. The sun shone gently on the tipis and tents. The rain left only a few drops in its passing. A fresh wind rustled the leaves in the nearby grove of trees.

In early afternoon, the pipe ceremony began. I joined a dozen family members inside a large painted canvas tipi. As two red coloured pipes were passed around, I cried, but there was also healing laughter. Larry's brother, a pipe carrier, Larry's oldest son, and other relations shared memories of Larry, including his fondness for Northlands racetrack. As laughter rang out, I remembered Larry always said, "If you see a group of people laughing their heads off, they will probably be Crees."

Next, we walked into the grove of trees near the river. Larry's son, Edmund, chose a special tree near one honouring his dad's favorite aunt. We tied four lengths of coloured cloth and four coloured ribbons around it, all facing the same direction. A bowl of "spirit food" was placed at the bottom of the trunk. I chose Saskatoon berries Larry picked last year, salmon from the West Coast where he lived for decades, and a doughnut representing our travels across Canada. Tobacco was added to give thanks.

Edmund gently spread his father's ashes at the base of the tree. More than 60 people walked around it. They spoke comforting words about their brother, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, uncle,

cousin, and friend.

Food is always a blessing. The family prepared a bountiful feast with special dishes such as moose ribs, moose nose soup, vegetables, a giant bowl of potatoes cooked over the fire, handpicked berry desserts, bannock, and fresh buns.

After we ate, joked, and laughed, I laid down two blue tarps for the giveaway. Included were four blankets for the elders who prayed at the start. I had filled 80 clear plastic bags with mementos of Larry's life. When he was in his mid-50s, he returned to school to make his lifelong dream of becoming a writer come true. He wrote nine books by the time he died.

We gave away the gifts, the tarps, and even the bins I brought them in, which is the

Cree way of doing things. I was proud and happy every family member would have several items from Larry.

As I stood by the river remembering the day, I thought of what Larry wrote in 1994, when he was 61 years old: "I marvel at the serene elegance of this place, as I sit by the river, remembering happy times spent here with my family. I envision that I will be part of this awesome beauty one day, when I have completed my circle of life."

With this thought, I finally accepted that Larry was gone. The Cree ceremonies had given me closure.

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



Constance (far right), niece Launa, Larry's sister Louise, niece Roberta, and niece Linda were among those at the ceremony. | Supplied



As a special thank you to our neighbours and volunteers, we're holding a Northlands Neighborhood Community Movie Night in Borden Park on September 17. Just after the sun goes down at 7:45 p.m., we'll begin an outdoor screening of **Finding Dory** at 8:15 p.m.

Bring a blanket and your lawn chairs and don't miss your chance to see Finding Dory in a beautiful park setting!



# Gaden Samten Ling Society continues to grow

## Book spurs health clinic in remote Himalayan valley

KATE WILSON

A smile lights Kushok Lobsang Dhamchöe's face as he queries a young guest at the Alberta Centre for Peace and Meditation, on the corner of 101 Street and 114 Avenue.

Fondly known as Kushok, the spiritual director of Gaden Samten Ling Tibetan Buddhist Meditation Society has been offering teachings and meditation practice to Edmontonians for 16 years. But his journey here was not always so bright.

That journey was what prompted an Edmonton travel writer to find out more. Jane Marshall first met Dhamchöe in 2008 after learning about the centre from a visit to the Tibetan Bazaar with her mother.

"I reached out and called the society ... to be introduced to the teacher. They passed my name to him and he called me," said Marshall. "He said, why don't

you come to the centre?"

That meeting was timely, and being a writer she sensed a crossroads.

"I was drawn to him in particular. Why did he come to Edmonton, this person who studied with the Dalai Lama?" she recalled.

Dhamchöe, invited to Edmonton from Namgyal Monastery in India, holds a Master of Sutra and Tantra degree under the auspices of the 14th Dalai Lama. Orphaned at four years old, Dhamchöe's aunt took him in until his escape from Tibet in 1963.

"When I met him, I felt there was something bigger. For the next week, I really contemplated what that could be," said Marshall, who decided to tell Dhamchöe's story.

Returning to his beginnings was a journey of sacrifice and endurance for both travelers. In 2009, she and Dhamchöe were making their way to Nepal during the Beijing Olympics,

and border crossing was perilous. For the exiled monk, it was impossible and Dhamchöe was unable to make the final leg into his homeland. Marshall continued into the interior of Tsum Valley, an isolated Himalayan wilderness in northern Nepal. There she encountered unexpected friendship and a determination to do more.

"I went there to understand about Kushok's past, and what I saw was how remote it was," she explained. "I got to witness first hand the lack of medical care in this very remote Himalayan valley, with one trail, no roads."

Since returning home, the author has not only published a memoir of her journey. With the help of her Nepalese guide and two others, she's also opened a health clinic in the Tsum Valley. They've launched a charity to support it.

"We've had one full year of operations. Money we raise goes directly to the clinic," said Marshall.

Funds pay for medicine and the salary of a health worker, and this month a Buddhist group is sending two midwives to Tsum by helicopter.

Meanwhile, the Peace and Meditation Centre continues to draw new people through its colourful doors. Anyone wanting to learn and practice meditation is invited to attend the weekly classes.

Marshall's book *Back Over the Mountains* is published by Hay House, India, 2015. Copies are available at the author's website [seejanewrite.ca](http://seejanewrite.ca), at the Alberta Centre for Peace and Meditation, Prana Yoga Studio and Audrey's Books. To learn more about Marshall's charity, go to [compassionfortsum.ca](http://compassionfortsum.ca).

*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.*



Kushok Lobsang Dhamchöe, spiritual director of Gaden Samten Ling, and author Jane Marshall stand in front of the Alberta Centre for Peace and Meditation. | Kate Wilson

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# WHAT'S ON IN SEPTEMBER

Brought to you in partnership with [NorwoodNeighbourhoodAssociation.ca](http://NorwoodNeighbourhoodAssociation.ca)

## BBQ FUNDRAISER BLOCK PARTY

For Stollery Children's Hospital. Sept 5 from 12-4 pm at 11906 90 St. "The people on my block have the power to make it the best block in the city if they want to." James Wiebe

## COFFEE WITH COPS

Sept 6 from 10-11:30 am | The Carrot. Chat about neighbourhood concerns with Cst. Challenger.



## KALEIDO VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION

Sept 6 from 6-9 pm. Train for the festival and eat a delicious supper at Alberta Avenue Community Hall. Meet your teammates and team leads and do a site

walk-through. RSVP to Mike [kaleidovolunteers@gmail.com](mailto:kaleidovolunteers@gmail.com) or call 780.471.1580.

## KALEIDO FAMILY ARTS FESTIVAL

Sept 9-11 | [kaleidofest.ca](http://kaleidofest.ca)



**DELTON MEMBERSHIP BBQ**  
Saturday, Sept 17 from 10 am-2 pm. Membership discounts.

## ELMWOOD PARK CHILI COOK OFF

Saturday, Sept 17 from 3-6 pm. Free chili, corn, hotdogs.

## SPRUCE AVENUE HARVEST FESTIVAL

Saturday, Sept 17 from 2-6 pm.

## WESTWOOD LEAGUE DAY

Saturday, Sept 17. Pancake breakfast 9 am-noon & Big Bin Event 9 am-4 pm.



## NORTHLANDS NEIGHBOURHOOD COMMUNITY MOVIE NIGHT

Saturday, Sept 17 at 8:15 pm in Borden Park. Outdoor screening of "Finding Dory".

## ALBERTA AVENUE MEMBERSHIP EVENT

Sunday, Sept 18 from 3-5 pm. Free BBQ, games and more.

## BIG BIN EVENT

Sept 17-18 from 9 am-5 pm Stadium. Bring your large bulky waste items. More: [edmonton.ca/waste](http://edmonton.ca/waste)



## TIBETAN BAZAAR

Sept 24-25 from 10 am-5 pm Alberta Ave. Admission \$5.

## THE FIRST 5 PLAY & LEARN

Sunday, Sept 25 from 1-5 pm at Parkdale School. Fun activities and games for children 0-5 years. Resources for parents. BBQ from 3-4:30 pm.

## FREE ADMISSION DAY

Sunday, Sept 25 from 10 am-6 pm at Commonwealth Rec Centre. For list of participating facilities and centres, go to: [edmonton.ca/freadmissionday](http://edmonton.ca/freadmissionday)

## ENTERTAINMENT

### 5 PIN BOWLING

Everyday, 10 am-10 pm. | Plaza Bowl.

### KARAOKE

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

### POETRY NIGHT

Last Thursday of month, 7:30-9 pm. | The Carrot.

### LIVE MUSIC

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

### OPEN MIC

Saturdays, 6:30 pm. | The Carrot.

# FREE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Go to [ratcreek.org](http://ratcreek.org) for more information

## ESL & LANGUAGE

**PRACTICE ENGLISH**  
Conversations about many different topics using library materials. 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](mailto: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](mailto:info@emcn.ab.ca).

## FOOD & SUPPORT

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

**COLLECTIVE KITCHEN**  
Cook with friends, try new recipes, help your food budget at St. Faith/St. Stephen. Cost: \$3 for a meal of 4 servings. Second Tuesday of the month: 1-3:30 pm. Trish 780.464.5444. Third Wednesday of the month: 5:30-8 pm. Amanda: 587.930.8238.

## PARENTS & PRE-SCHOOLERS

**GROWING TOGETHER**  
A free drop-in group for pregnant women and women with babies up to 3 months old. Free resources, including milk coupons and prenatal vitamins. Tuesdays, 1:30-3:30 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](mailto:sarahdelano@hotmail.com).

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

**SPRUCEWOOD LIBRARY**  
Sing, Sign, Laugh & Learn. Mondays and Tuesdays, 10:30 am. More: 780.496.7099.

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

## CHILDREN

**LEGO AT THE LIBRARY**  
Design and build a lego creation. Ages 6-12. Third Saturday of the month: 2-4 pm at Highlands Library.

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

## YOUTH

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

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

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

## ADULTS

**ADULT COLORING**  
Join us for colouring and creativity in a peaceful atmosphere. We'll provide the colouring books, felts and pencil crayons. Third Wednesday of month, 2-3 pm at Highlands Library.

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

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

**NASHVILLE SONGWRITERS ASSOC INTERNATIONAL (NSAI)**  
Second Monday of the month, 6:30-10 pm at The Carrot. RSVP: [Colleen\\_col\\_kside@hotmail.com](mailto:Colleen_col_kside@hotmail.com)

## SENIORS

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

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

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

## FAMILIES

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

**FAMILY ART NIGHT**  
A variety of free art activities for school age children accompanied by adults. 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, 12-1 pm. More: Mackenzie at [chefthemusical@gmail.com](mailto:chefthemusical@gmail.com).

**FREE REC CENTRE ACCESS**  
Free access to Commonwealth Recreation Centre on Saturdays from 5-7 pm for Elmwood Park, Spruce Avenue, Westwood and on Sundays for Alberta Avenue, Delton, Parkdale-Cromdale.

## LOCATIONS

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



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**8PM**

**\$15 080**

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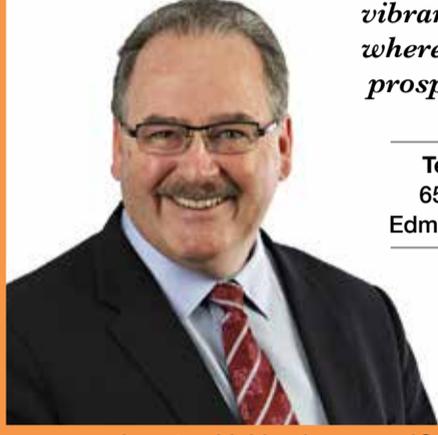



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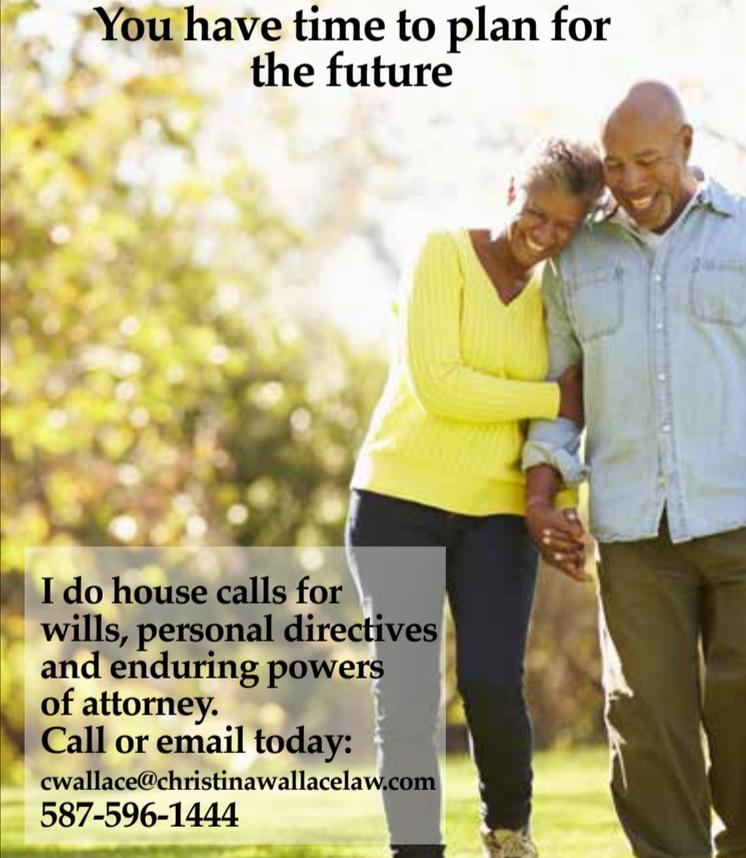
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## LOOKING FOR AN INTERCULTURAL DAYCARE?



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.

FOR INFORMATION OR TO APPLY  
CALL 780.441.1443