

The Riverbend Ragg-Times

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Fort Ed Receives Award for New Indigenous Peoples Experience

The exhibit was the centrepiece of a recent three-year, \$165 million renovation

By Ragg Times Staff

Fort Edmonton Park has received an international award recognizing the unique brilliance of its new Indigenous Peoples Experience exhibit. The Fort received the Thea Award for Outstanding Achievement - Heritage Centre in November.

The Indigenous Peoples Experience was the centrepiece of the Fort's recent three-year, \$165-million renovation. It is history told with the most modern tools: Visitors are greeted with a CGI rendering of the prairies that evolves seamlessly from time immemorial when the buffalo roamed to the present day overlaid with cities and roads. The exhibit explores the cultures of local First Nations and Métis Peoples throughout that period through photography, video and, perhaps most remarkably, startling quotes from Indigenous people past and present. This opportunity to tell more profound and complex Indigenous stories comes at an important time as Canadians seek methods of reconciliation.

"This exhibit is a breathtaking reflection of Indigenous communities in the sacred territory of Treaty Six," said Edmonton Mayor Amarjeet Sohi. "It is such an honour to have a space to share the rich history and legacy of the First Nations and Métis peoples who originally called this land home."

The Thea Awards were created by the Themed Entertainment Association and are internationally recognized for celebrating



Courtesy Fort Edmonton Park

The Indigenous Peoples Experience explores the cultures of First Nations and Métis Peoples through photography, video, quotations and the latest CGI.

outstanding work on educational, historical and entertainment projects.

"We want to express our deepest gratitude to the many Indigenous voices from the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations and the Métis Nation of Alberta for their partnership and

collaboration in bringing this amazing experience to life," said Darren Dalglish, president and CEO of Fort Edmonton Management Company, in a statement. "This transformative experience is a result of years of partnership, cooperation and deeper understanding between all parties."

City of Edmonton Approves \$3.1 Billion Operating Budget

Move comes with 1.91 per cent tax levy increase

By Ragg Times Staff

In December, the City of Edmonton approved a \$3.1 billion operating budget for the coming year and a property tax increase of 1.91 per cent. Councillor Tim Cartmell says that, considering the inflationary pressure on the economy right now, keeping the increase under two per cent was a pretty good result. "To think we can stay to a zero per cent increase in an inflationary environment is a difficult goal to achieve," he says. "To have kept it under two per cent... it certainly could have headed in another direction."

That said, Cartmell says the City has some work to do in the current Council's mandate

to ensure Edmontonians are getting value for their tax dollars. "There is a lot more efficiency to be found in the City," he says. "We didn't have the conversation around the workforce, and not necessarily just in terms of reductions, but in terms of matching the resources to the requirements of the City. There's a lot to do there."

Two big-ticket items that got the go-ahead are recreation centres at Coronation and Lewis Farms, which come with price tags of \$160 million and \$280 million, respectively. Cartmell says he's of two minds about the projects, which are similar in concept and cost to the

large recreation centres in Terwillegar and The Meadows. "The commitments have been made for a long time," he says. "To not build them would be to renege on commitments we made to those parts of the City. Also, these are shovel-ready projects and, going back to that inflation discussion, to delay them means they get more expensive." But he says they might be the last of the mega-centres. Going forward, he'd like to see more cost-efficient, neighbourhood-scale recreation opportunities. "Things like small outdoor pools, or a twin-pad arena, or a library. A smaller scale will let us move on to projects in Ambleside and Glenriding and Windermere."

A Tale of Two Pandemics

COVID-19 has exposed fault lines in our society

By Michael Ganley



My teenaged daughter recently signed up for a TikTok account after having dropped the social media platform a year ago when she found herself spending too much time on it. She's back to laughing at dumb-but-funny videos and learning the latest dance move, but she's also back to criticizing things she sees on the platform. She wishes people wouldn't get so political about everything (much of the content comes from the U.S.) and also mentioned a new trend: people debating who has it worse as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some argue it's the kids who graduated in the spring of 2020, who haven't had a regular coming-of-age period post-high school; others say the classes of 2021 or 2022, who have seen so much disruption to their schedules; still others argue the upcoming class of 2023 has it worst, since their entire high school experience will have been marred by COVID-19.

I sympathized with her for a moment, then pointed out that it's not so much your graduation year that determines how hard you've likely been hit by the pandemic: it's more likely to be your socio-economic status.

Low-wage workers — many of them in the “essential worker” service sector — have borne the brunt of the pandemic. They've been less likely to be able to work from home or to take time off to get vaccinated. Being consumer-facing, they've been exposed and contracted the virus more often. They have less money to spend on N95 masks and rapid antigen tests and fewer supports around them when they or their child gets sick or has to self-isolate. They're more likely to live in crowded homes and to use public transit. They're even more likely to die: Statistics Canada reports that the COVID-19 mortality rate of people in low income was almost 1.4 times higher than for people not in low income, and it was 1.7 times higher for one-parent households in low income.

Over the last two years I suspect we've all spent time feeling sorry for ourselves, or for our kids, friends and family members. We've all lost a lot and pray for this thing to end (or at least to go endemic). But amid it all, let us not forget where the heaviest burdens have been laid. COVID-19 has exposed fault lines in our society. We'd do well not only to recognize them, but to address them in our recovery.

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A YEAR IN REVIEW RIVERBEND REAL ESTATE MARKET 2021

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*Based on sales for single family & condominiums

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President's Note



RCL Board Welcomes New Members

The League is also seeking a Sustainability Director

By Miep Raedschelders, President, Riverbend Community League (RCL)



What a start to 2022! Our beautiful snow-capped river valley and skyscapes helped keep my shivering smile on while temperatures made for a chilly and slower start for skaters using the Community Rinks! RCL members have dedicated leisure skate time at our Brookside Rinks on Sundays from 11-1. Please check our website or join our Facebook page for rink schedule updates and enjoy the great ice! Please note that washroom and changeroom access is limited due to the ongoing pandemic and the Restrictions Exemption Program.

Your RCL Executive Committee has new members working on league initiatives and goals. I am thrilled to welcome Vice-President Nancy Manchak and Secretary Gina Thede as officers of the Committee. Our league is also fortunate to have members-at-large Ray Hawrelak and Michelle Smith join the team. We still have openings on our board for neighbourhood ambassadors to the Terwillegar Riverbend Advisory Council (TRAC) to represent Brander Gardens and Brookside. To find

out more about this volunteer opportunity to make a difference in your community, please contact info@riverbendonline.ca.

The RCL is also looking for a Sustainability Director to join our board. The Sustainability Director will liaise with government programs to convey critical information and initiatives regarding sustainability to the Board and our members. Please contact us for more details.

If you have ideas for community events or want to plan or collaborate on a project with the RCL's help, reach out and let us know!

Thanks to all who donated food to the AMA Food Drive before the holidays. The RCL participates in this friendly competition with other South West Area Council communities. Together, we collected 2,481 pounds of non-perishable food for the Edmonton Food Bank. Kudos to Heritage Point Community League for leading the way with 568 pounds of food donated!

Please support your Community League by purchasing a membership safely online by visiting EFCL.org.

Our Healthcare System Needs Support

And we need an evidence-based approach to fighting the pandemic

By Rakhi Pancholi, MLA, Edmonton-Whitemud



As I write this in the first week of January, Alberta is in the early stages of the fifth wave of the pandemic. We have yet to see what impact the Omicron variant will have on hospitalizations and ICU

capacity and on our healthcare system as a whole.

While we hope the impact will be minimal, there is no doubt that our healthcare system has been deeply affected by the pandemic to date. In late 2021, thousands of surgeries were cancelled after the fourth wave overwhelmed ICUs. In December, the government said the backlog of surgeries cancelled by the pandemic sat at more than 80,000 people. We have all heard the heartbreaking stories of the impact of all those cancelled surgeries on patients. I've heard these stories directly from some of you – of the pain, uncertainty, and potentially life-changing implications of having treatment and diagnoses delayed.

Alberta will be dealing with the implications of these delayed surgeries on our health and

well-being for years. Now is the time to take measures to protect our public healthcare system so all Albertans can access care and treatment when they need it.

We need to recognize that doctors, nurses and other healthcare providers have stepped up in extraordinary ways over the past two years and are exhausted. We must ensure we give them the support and respect they deserve to stay in Alberta.

Last year, the UCP government passed legislation to make it easier to operate private, for-profit, surgical clinics. But we know from experience in other jurisdictions that this approach doesn't lead to reductions in wait times over the long term. It depletes resources – healthcare workers and equipment – from the public system. It also doesn't save the system money, and it penalizes those people who are most in need because they have more complex conditions that need to be treated in hospitals.

The past two years have also highlighted the importance of mental health. In December 2020, my NDP Caucus colleagues and I proposed that each Albertan receive up to five provincially

covered mental health sessions with a registered provider. We have also repeatedly called for a mental health worker in each school to support children and youth. As we move forward, we need to ensure that every Albertan who needs mental health support can access it.

Finally, we need to have an evidence-based approach to fighting the pandemic, rather than the political whiplash we've endured over the last two years. My NDP Caucus colleagues and I have called for an independent Covid-19 science advisory table, like in Ontario, to review the latest research data and provide recommendations to Alberta's public health officials and the government. That information should be public so all Albertans can see why changes to public health measures are being recommended. We need clear thresholds for when public health measures might be escalated so that people can see what lies ahead. If we do this right, we can reduce the likelihood of future waves getting out of control and reduce the need for stringent restrictions.

As always, you can reach me at Edmonton. whitemud@assembly.ab.ca.

Riverbend Community League Swim Program

Terwillegar Community Recreation Centre

2051 Leger Road NW
Sundays: 5:00pm-7:00pm
Start Date: January 2, 2022

Confederation Leisure Centre

11204 43 Avenue
Saturdays: 4:00pm-5:30pm
Start Date: January 8, 2022

Community swims are open to Community League Members only. They do not take place on Statutory Holidays or when facilities close early (eg Easter Sunday)



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A Big “Thank You” to Santa

Seniors Connection News for those 55+

By Colleen Crozier

Dear Santa, This is the first time we’ve written a thank-you note to you, Santa. We here at South West Edmonton Seniors Association (SWESA) are so grateful. Before Christmas, we sent you a wish list of four things that would help our organization, and you have really helped us!

We asked for more members, and people have been renewing their memberships or joining our association for the first time. They are signing up for our fitness, arts and crafts, and educational programs, and for social activities and games. Thank you for getting the word out about the affordable, accessible and just plain good things we do at SWESA.

We asked for donations so we can continue to run SWESA. COVID has meant we need to limit group size, and even suspend some activities, so our revenue is reduced. Members and friends have responded so well to our Annual Appeal, bringing us very close to our goal.

We asked for a busy Home Support program. Our co-ordinator, Barb Newell, took a little break over the holidays, but not before she spent many productive hours with service providers and seniors. Thanks for getting the word out about the services helping seniors continue to live independently in their homes with “just a little help from their friends.”

We first wished for an end to COVID restrictions so we could gather in large groups again, go on bus trips, attend plays, have more people in our fitness classes, learn from interesting speakers in person, be in close contact with others and take off our masks. We know that was a lot to ask,

Santa. Do you think we should have written to someone who has a magic wand?

Santa, we were so happy to see you at our “Photos with Santa” event on December 16. We were careful to keep our distance from each other, but we missed being able to sit on your lap. We hope you enjoyed the music and talking with our members, both naughty and nice.

Speaking of your lap, we wonder if you would like to sign up for a fitness class. We have yoga, zumba, Essentrics and cardio, for many fitness levels. If you are rested up from your big trip on Christmas Eve, and after all the milk and cookies, this would be a good time to start. No offense, Santa.

How would you like to serve on our Board of Directors? We are looking for smart, interesting, capable, willing volunteers like you to steer SWESA into the future. We’d be so proud to have you, and we’d understand when you have to be away near Christmas time. There’s an application on our website under the “Get Involved/Join the Board” tab.

We appreciate everything you brought us this Christmas.

The gang at SWESA



Blue Quill Community Centre 11304 – 25 Ave NW
Phone: 587-987-3200 Email: info@swesa.ca Web: swesa.ca

Why Not Winter Cycle?

The options are out there, both in bicycle styles and in cycling opportunities

By Blake Johnson

Do I need a new winter bicycle? Most cyclists answer “yes” or “I’m thinking about it.” Bicycle options have changed wildly in the last 30 years to fill niches. From the ubiquitous 10 speed (road bike), to cyclo-cross, mountain bike (cross country, all-mountain, enduro and downhill), BMX, hybrid, recumbent, cruiser, fat tire and gravel, many cyclists already have a couple of bicycles. In the past decade, cyclists have added a larger wheel-size mountain bike, opting for a 27.5- or 29-inch tire versus the traditional 26-incher. The fastest growing part of the bicycle market right now is electric bicycles. Most bicycle styles have an e-bike variant.

The easiest way to get ready for winter bicycling is to take your bike (or pictures of it) to your local bike shop. They can help you convert it for winter riding, which primarily involves getting proper winter tires – typically studded.

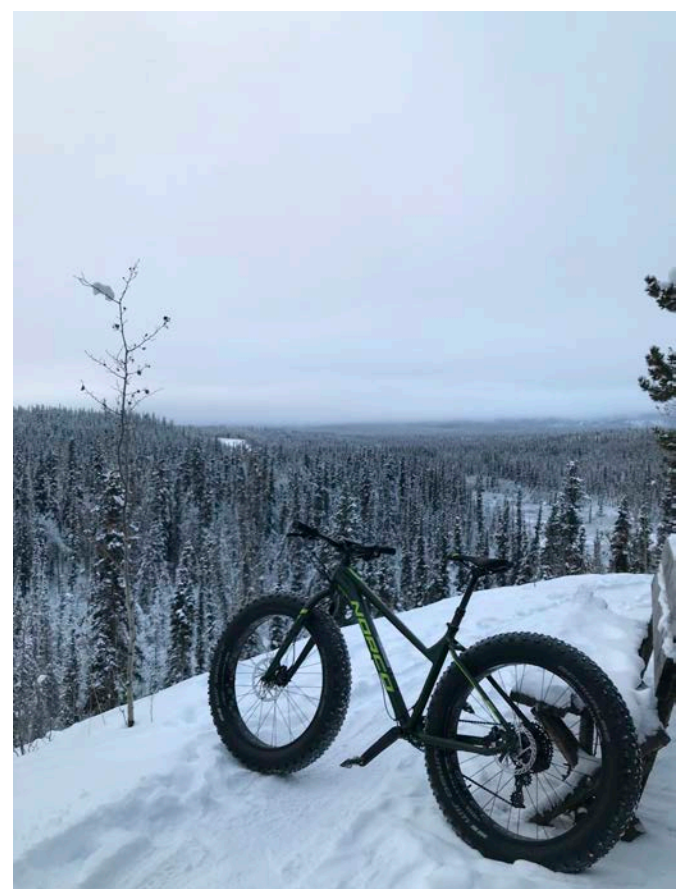
If you don’t want to convert your bike and want to buy a bicycle to help you negotiate Edmonton’s snowy and icy winter trails, the best option is a fat bike bicycle. The concept is to run relatively low pressure in fat tires so your bicycle gets maximum traction on soft surfaces like snow (and sand). Add in some studded tires and you can build a lot of confidence as you get comfortable in winter conditions. If you get an e-fat bike, remember that battery life is diminished in the cold.

From a safety perspective, make sure to get

proper lights for your bicycle if you’re using it in the dark or twilight. A reflective vest is a good idea if you’re going to be encountering vehicles in your winter journeys. Winter or summer, always use your mandatory bell to let pedestrians and other bicycles know that you’re passing them, and be courteous on the roads and trails. Bicycles can stress out other trail and park users and good communication from cyclists is paramount.

Bicycling was already enjoying a worldwide renaissance in the lead up to the COVID-19 crisis, and since then demand for bicycles and bicycle parts and accessories have set sales records. Cities around the world have seen unprecedented use of their urban bicycle and multi-use trail networks. Edmonton has one of the best urban bicycling networks in the world. We’re fortunate that years of bicycle-friendly municipal planning, a preponderance of excellent local bicycle shops, bicycling advocates and countless volunteers have given us options that few other places can offer. While we might not be a leader in any one area (we’re not like Amsterdam for commuting, or Whistler for mountain biking), if a gold was given out for overall bicycling opportunities, YEG would be a contender.

If you end up using your bicycle for winter fun, remember to book a major tune-up or overhaul



Edmonton has one of the best urban bicycling networks in the world. If a gold was given out for overall bicycling opportunities, YEG would be a contender.

in the springtime. Winter riding puts more wear and tear on your components, and good spring maintenance will help your minor wear-and-tear issues stop from becoming replacement issues.

Canada's Inflation Plight

The cost of living will be a focus in the next federal budget

By Matt Jeneroux, MP, Edmonton Riverbend

As your Member of Parliament, I wanted to keep you updated on what's been happening in Parliament and our community since the end of December and what can be expected as we head into the first couple of months of 2022.

Having concluded the fall session in late December, most parliamentary business (committees, question period etc) has been put on hold and many Members have returned to their communities. However, in the coming months, we will likely see an increased focus – by all levels of government – on the inflation crisis that has really affected soaring prices on a huge variety of items right here in our community. This includes at the grocery stores, household purchases, prices on everyday items and it also extends to home prices and the increase in housing affordability across Canada.

Many of us know or are young families trying to afford the cost of living these days, which extends to first-time home buyers. There has been increasing pressure on governments to consider what this means in terms of housing policies, taxes and incentives. There have been many debates in Parliament that have focused on the best path to address the cost of living and as

always, I want to hear from you some of your thoughts. There have been proposals from limiting foreign ownership in some of the major markets to increasing supply of land in and around major cities like Edmonton. I would be curious to hear any perspectives that our community wants me to push for in Parliament on this topic.

We will likely see this be a focus in the next federal budget (expected in the spring) and I would suspect in provincial and municipal budgets as well. At this point of the year, the federal government is currently in the process of going through the annual consultations on budget requests so if you have some thoughts or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to me directly so I can continue to advocate on this.

The House of Commons resumes sitting on January 31. At the time of writing, we're still unsure as to if we will be a virtual or in-person option (which will be largely due to the case projections of the Omicron variant in Ontario).

As always, if you have any comments about what's happening in federal politics, I'd be more



MP Matt Jeneroux discussing community topics with University of Alberta President Bill Flanagan

than happy to discuss. Please contact my office at 780-495-4351 or email matt.jeneroux.C1@parl.gc.ca. We would be pleased to assist you on these or any other federal matters.

The Future of Terwillegar Park

For now, Terwillegar is in maintenance mode, meaning upkeep of the parking lot, emptying of garbage bins and some grass cutting in the main field. Should there be more?

By Blake Johnson

The North Saskatchewan River Valley gives Edmonton the largest urban park system in Canada, and, at 174 hectares (430 acres), Terwillegar Park is one of the biggest and most highly-rated spaces in this ribbon of green. Prior to it becoming a park, the floodplain that is now Terwillegar Park was used as a quarry. There are a few spots left where hints of its industrial heritage can be found. But now, the park is known as an off-leash dog area and a place where mountain bikers can find lots of wide trails and single track.

In 2009, a development guide for the park was created by consultants contracted by the City of Edmonton. Various user groups provided input and the resulting report identified several potential projects that could be completed in the park, including shelters, bathrooms, picnic areas and a paddling pond. Total cost was estimated at \$14.9 million. City Council chose not to fund these improvements, so the park is currently being cared for in a maintenance mode. This includes upkeep of the parking lot, emptying

of garbage bins and some grass cutting in the main field, but that's it.

The City wants to keep Terwillegar Park pretty much the way it is, to preserve the essence of what it represents: an area where users can interact with flora and fauna with minimal human encroachment. The idea is to keep the park as an area that future generations will be able to use as it is now. There will likely be some improvement in the wayfinding signage to reflect the City's visual identification standards for the park system, but no more.

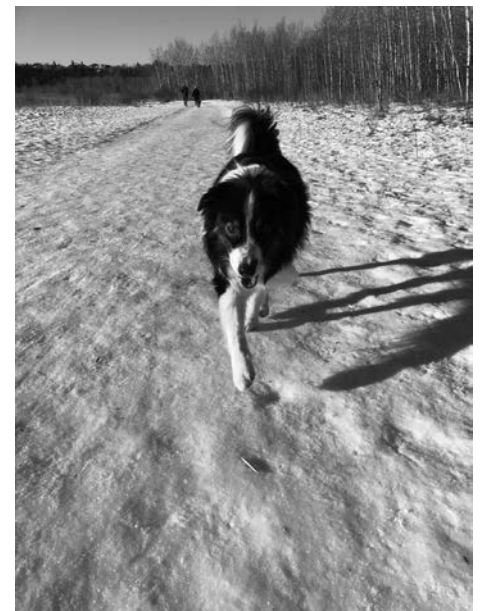
With the enthusiastic embrace of the parks system by residents and visitors during COVID-19, there has been a significant increase in park usage, and Terwillegar Park is no exception. With more people, there has been more conflict with user groups, but nothing that can't be managed with proper education and etiquette. The vision for the future is for it to continue to be an off-leash dog park. That said, dogs must be under the control of their owners, and owners have to clean

up after their dogs. Luckily, most people understand their role as a responsible dog owner.

Terwillegar Park will also continue to be an area friendly to bicyclists. With a huge resurgence in the popularity of bicycling in the past few years, the most important thing cyclists can do to reduce conflict with other park and trail users is to use their bell (a legally required item in Edmonton) to notify other users that you are approaching. Slow down when passing pedestrians, especially those with children and dogs. This is critical for e-bikers as they are both heavier and faster than most other bikes.

If you're looking for a park devoid of bicycles and off-leash dogs, nearby options include Jan Reimer Park (across the Terwillegar Park Footbridge) and Whitemud Ravine.

I use Terwillegar Park almost every day and I see the value in keeping it as natural as possible. Not every park has to offer the full array of services and Terwillegar Park is already busy at peak



Tucker enjoys a crisp winter day in Terwillegar Park. Park staff ask that you not feed wildlife, even birds. Seeds are also popular with rodents, which bring larger predators like coyotes.

times. Better wayfinding signs and etiquette information at entrances would be of help, but other than that I like the idea of people in 50 years experiencing Terwillegar Park pretty much as I did when I started using it in the 1980s.

Update from Edmonton Public Schools

Upcoming forum to focus on traffic safety, bus service and active transportation

By Julie Kusiek, EPS Trustee, Ward F



The return from Winter Break has been busy. To every parent, student, administrator, staff person and community member working to keep transmission of COVID-19 as low as possible, thank you. I truly appreciate your efforts and consideration for the needs of the most vulnerable in our community.

Here are few updates you might be interested in:

- **Open Letter** - Trustees issued an open letter to the Minister of Education and to families of EPSB on Jan. 6, 2022. It outlines what EPSB is doing to reduce COVID-19 transmission and makes requests of both families and the Province to help do more, together. You can view the full letter at epsb.ca or on my website at juliekusiek.ca.
- **Ventilation** (as of Jan. 7, 2022) - Trustees Hole, Estabrooks and I put forward a Request for Information regarding ventilation, including information on in-room HEPA filters, cost and opportunity to partner with parents. We expect this report back at a public board meeting in

January. The Division also issued an update on ventilation at Edmonton Public Schools, which is also linked in the open letter and at epsb.ca.

Events:

- **Joint Ward Forum on Transportation** (Feb. 17, 7 pm - 8:30 pm) - Trustee Ip and I are co-hosting this special event. It will include a panel discussion with special guests and breakout rooms for participants. Topics covered will include school traffic safety, bus service and active transportation. All are welcome. You can RSVP at juliekusiek.ca.
- **Ward F Conversations** - Thank you to everyone who came out to the November and January Ward F Conversations. I enjoyed the opportunity to get to know you, provide an update from the board and hear your feedback. I look forward to another conversation in March! Questions? Feel free to email me at trustee.julie.kusiek@epsb.ca anytime. You can also find me on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

Skiing, Skating and Soccer

Update from the Terwillegar Riverbend Advisory Council (TRAC)

By Karin Shott

TRAC is pleased to report that Snow Valley was booked for a community ski night on Saturday, December 18th., from 6-9 pm. Participants were able to enjoy the evening at a great price point which included lift tickets, rental and an introductory lesson (if needed). A great time was had by all!

Community league memberships for the TRAC area community leagues are available from the TRAC Community Office in the Terwillegar Recreation Centre. If you wish to purchase or renew your membership in person, the office is open Tuesdays 9 am-12 noon and Thursdays 4-7 pm. Payment options include by cheque, cash, e-transfer or debit. Memberships are also available by mail. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the office at yegtrac@gmail.com or by phone 780-439-9394.

A reminder that a community league membership is required for access to any outdoor community skating rink. Remember to request skate tags when purchasing your membership.

“The best way to create the type of community you want to live in, is to get active and get engaged with your neighbours and with your league. When we all work together, we create safer, healthier and more enjoyable neighbourhoods – ones we are proud to call ours.” – Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues

These tags give the rink attendant an easy visual that you are a member. Each community skating rink is maintained by that particular community league – so please support your community!

If you have someone interested in playing outdoor soccer, please check



trsa.ca for information. A current membership is required to play soccer. Check your membership card to see if it is still valid. All memberships expire August 31st.

Membership fees provide much-needed funds for community leagues to accomplish their mandate of improving the community and the quality of life for all residents.

We are hopeful that the 16th annual TRAC Community Run/Walk will be able to go ahead as an in-person event on Sunday, May 29th. Stay tuned for more information.

TRAC had a meeting on January 18th. No update was available at time of print.

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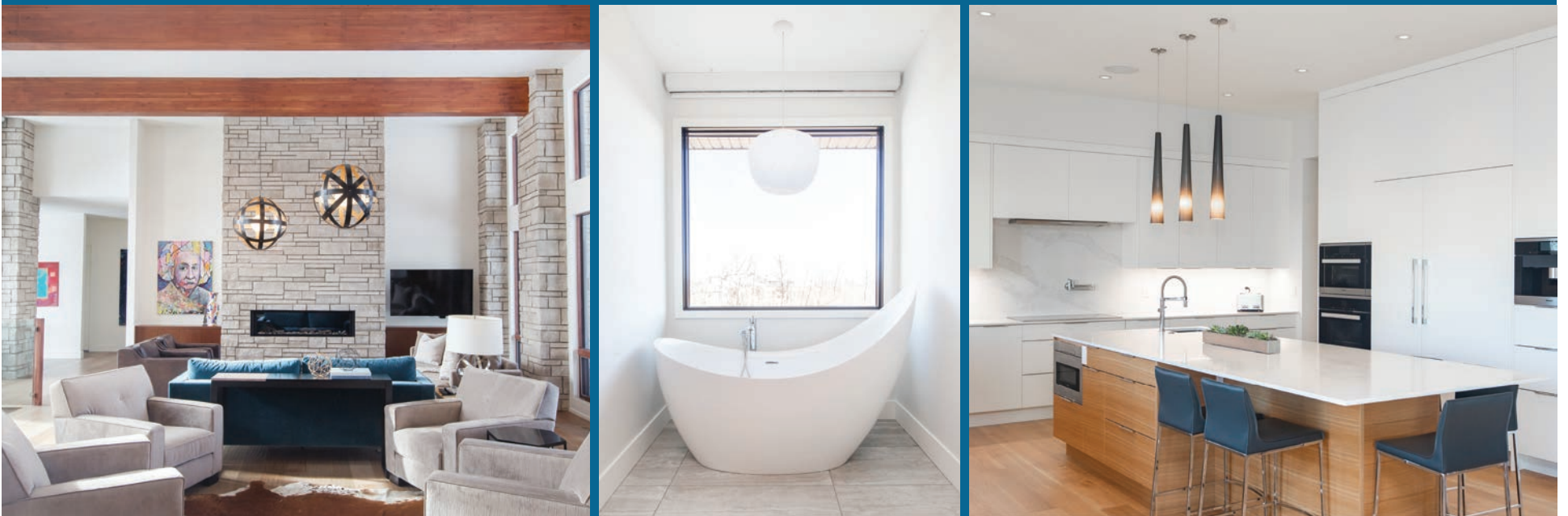
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Council Votes to Reduce Police Budget

Edmonton Police Services to receive \$10.9 million less than expected

By Tim Cartmell, City Councillor, pihêsiwin



Happy New Year! On December 17th 2021, Edmonton City Council voted 8 to 5 in favour of an ongoing decrease to the Edmonton Police Service (EPS) budget — by \$10.9 million starting in 2022.

During the election campaign, residents of pihêsiwin told me they wanted to see an increase in police presence. I heard concerns about theft in the neighbourhoods, loud, speeding vehicles, traffic safety, and the safety of our transit system. With the decrease in funding, there will be fewer EPS members to respond to these concerns.

I am a firm supporter that the money we put into the social services ecosystem, which includes the EPS, needs to accomplish far more than it does now. As a city — as a society — we need to get more for those dollars. For all the money we put in, we should see the situation improving, not worsening.

During budget deliberations, I brought forward a motion to fund a snow-and-ice operational yard in Ambleside. Council passed this motion unanimously, which means we will see the design and construction of this yard start immediately. That will result in quicker, more efficient snow removal in the southwest.

In response to campaign feedback, I brought forward a motion to add one trimming cycle to the turf maintenance budget. With this change,

we will see two trimming cycles in 2022.

We will see a significant engagement effort from the City regarding the potential naturalization of the spaces around storm drainage ponds. This engagement will take place fairly early in the new year. Please stay tuned for more details.

For more details on the budget deliberations, please see my blog at timcartmell.ca.

Ultimately, Council arrived at a tax levy increase of 1.91% for 2022. The average Edmonton household will pay approximately \$15 more in property taxes for every \$100,000 of their assessed home value in 2022.

The time to file an objection regarding property taxes is with receipt of your notice in January, not in June.

The City will send out 2022 property assessments in January, and you are strongly encouraged to review this notice carefully. The time to file any objections regarding property taxes is with receipt of this January notice, not in June when you receive your actual tax invoice. Please contact my office if you have any questions.

Please feel free to contact my office with any questions regarding City operations at 780-496-8130 or at tim.cartmell@edmonton.ca.

Edmonton's Wildlife Bridges get Noticed

Guardian article looked at nature projects around the world

By Harvey Voogd

Edmonton is featured in a recent article in The Guardian newspaper entitled "10 Great City Projects for Nature." It looks across the world where people are welcoming wildlife into cities and highlights 10 of the most exciting and innovative urban biodiversity projects.

The article states more than a dozen wildlife bridges and passages have been built in Edmonton to maintain habitat connectivity and reduce human-wildlife conflict. One of the largest is a 30-metre bridge near Big Lake in the northwest corner of the city designed to be a corridor for moose and other ungulates.

Trees on the bridge provide shelter for animals as they cross. Smaller bridges include special passes for salamanders and frogs so they can avoid the road as they move between the wetlands and forest.



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Smudging Brings us all Together

Exploring an important Indigenous tradition

By Christie Pace

To begin, I would like to acknowledge that we are on Treaty 6 territory, home of the first peoples, also known as amiskwacîwâskahikan, meaning Beaver Hills House.

We are the keepers of the land for as long as the sun shines, the grass grows, and the river flows. We are on the traditional lands, referred to as Treaty 6 territory, and the City of Edmonton. All people here are beneficiaries of this peace and friendship treaty. Treaty 6 encompasses the traditional territories of numerous Western Canadian First Nations such as the Cree, Sauteaux (so-toe), Blackfoot, Métis, Dene (de-nay), and Nakota Sioux (sue). We acknowledge the many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people who have called this area home since time immemorial.

Smudging, an especially important Indigenous tradition, is a ceremony of praying with traditional medicines. We use sage, sweetgrass, fungus and cedar. These items are placed in a small cast iron frying pan or shell, and are lit with a match if possible. When the smoke from the smudge is burning our message to the Creator, we use the smoke to cleanse ourselves while praying. Take the smoke over your head to think good things, over your eyes to

see the way, over your ears to hear good things, over your mouth to speak good things. Inhale to give yourself strength. Move the smoke over your body to help you do what you need to do, and over your feet to take you where you need to go. While you smudge, you pray to the Creator. Those that know their traditional language will pray in that language as it is sacred, and the Creator will hear it more clearly. We give thanks for all things: the sky, the sun, the birds, the animals, the fish, the moon, stars and our fellow humans. We are all connected, we are all related.



After the prayer, those who have been gifted with songs, drums and rattles may share a song.

We are all traditional people of our Creator who continue to walk together on Turtle Island and pray as one through prayer, kihsakitin, and

love one another.

We cannot take one tradition alone and separate it from all the others. Our way of living is connected like the wind, water, fire and earth. When you smudge our medicines to pray, you cleanse your mind, body and spirit. They all work together. Everything is a circle of life; one requires the other. When you speak about smudging you are speaking of ceremony,

and when you speak of ceremony you speak to prayer, song and language. This is what we call wahkotowin: everything is related and connected to one another. Smudging brings all together.

It is not a simple task to choose just one Indigenous cultural tradition to describe, as traditions are paramount to the Indigenous peoples. Many Indigenous nations who called this land home had intricate societies with governance systems in place, and they guided our principles, spirituality and livelihood. Our ancestors, elders, ceremonial knowledge keepers and ceremonies bless our way of living and being. Traditions are things that come from Indigenous people, but those things do not define Indigenous Peoples.

It is also important to remember the things that happened after contact — treaties, the Indian Act, residential schools, the Sixties Scoop, and the loss of language and culture. All of Canada must face the consequences of those injustices together. We will see this unfold as we collectively watch the numbers rise of the remains of Indigenous children being found on residential school properties.

The way through this, through the atrocities of residential schools, through our collective mourning, the way to heal is through ceremony.

This story originally appeared in the Rat Creek Press.

WINTER 2022 DANCE CLASSES IN RIVERBEND!

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4:30p Hip Hop 3-5 yr (parented optional)
6:15p Latin & Ballroom beginner 8-15yr
7:15p Adult Country & Two-Step
8:10p Adult Hip Hop

WEDNESDAYS (Starting Jan 12)
5:00p Ballet 3-5yr (parented optional)
5:45p Ballet 5-7yr

SATURDAYS (Starting Jan 15)
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11:50a Hip Hop 6-8yr
12:45p Hip Hop 9-13yr

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Twenty Years of Bringing Art to Riverbend

Debra Bryan has introduced ceramic art to a generation of Riverbend residents

By Marina Bryan

It started with a bird bath and grew into a career spanning 20 years. My mother, Debra Bryan, had built a career as a ceramic artist, showing in galleries and selling at craft shows. After her children began attending St. Mary Catholic School in 2002, she started sharing her talents with the next generation.

Debra volunteered to build a clay bird bath in a secret garden with my Grade Two class. Soon, she was creating a tile mosaic to bring colour and life to the concrete cross that overlooks the school. That tile mural still stands today, and it kickstarted a career as an artist-in-residence at schools across Edmonton and the province. From Earl Buxton School to Brookside Elementary, Archbishop Joseph MacNeil to St. Mary and St. Monica Catholic Schools, and countless more, a drive around Edmonton shows the creations she has done with thousands of children over the years.

Year after year, she has returned to schools in Riverbend to introduce students to ceramic arts, focusing on everything from self portraits in clay to large murals that bring students' drawings to life. Mary-Jean Miller, a long-time teacher at St.

Monica and St. Mary Schools, has invited Debra to return to her class many times, most notably for the Creation Mural which was installed as part of St. Monica's outdoor classroom in 2017. As Miller says, "the students were totally immersed in the process from beginning to end. Debra always encourages students to be creative and explore colour and design. This newfound appreciation of art will last them a lifetime!"

For those first students, now adults, who took part in Debra's earliest projects, seeing their art at their childhood schools still brings a spark of pride. Alysa Holmes attended Earl Buxton when Debra was the artist in residence in 2004. For Alysa, creating a tile mural with Debra was one of the most memorable artist-in-residence experiences she had in elementary school. Alysa's tile still greets new students who start school there, and she says that "almost 15 years later, my family still likes to point out the tile that I painted when we walk past the mural."

With her inspiration and guidance, Debra has given an entire generation of Riverbend residents a love of art and a sense of pride in their own abilities. Her mission to share a love of art



Together with thousands of schoolchildren, Debra Bryan has created giant tile mosaics at schools around the province.

with children and parents continues, so keep an eye out for new masterpieces showing up in your neighbourhood.

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The Ridge Community League

Serving the neighbourhoods of Falconer Heights (Terwillegar Hill Estates), Henderson Estates (River Ridge, Eagle Ridge, Promontory Point) and Haddow (Riverside, College Woods)

By Jim Bradshaw

Main Outdoor Rink and Snow Bank Rink Open

The Ridge Community League (Ridge CL) main outdoor rink and snowbank rink are now open. The concept for a building and rink was a long journey. It started in the Fall of 2004 when The Ridge CL executive received a written request from a group of residents in the Haddow neighbourhood. They requested that the league consider building a permanent outdoor boarded skating rink with change room and washroom facilities in Haddow Park. The Ridge CL had a snowbank rink for over 26 years, first in Henderson Park and eventually moving between Haddow Park and Henderson Park.



Throughout the planning stages, revisions, fundraising and consultation, the initial request evolved to include the main building that not only houses washrooms, but also a kitchen, hall, storage space and office.

Haddow Park now has a walking trail, toboggan hill, playground, Ridge CL building, two skating rinks and park areas. All of this was fundraised and built by The Ridge CL with the sports fields installed by The City. What great amenities and space for our residents!



The new boarded outdoor rink is NHL-sized, and by installing a concrete base was built for both winter and summer use. In the summer, a number of to-be-confirmed activities ranging from pickleball and basketball to badminton are being considered. We will be looking for your input.

Many thanks to a number of community leagues and the City of Edmonton for

sharing their insight, experience and knowledge of both the art and the science of making and maintaining ice. For many of our volunteers, ice was for skating and to enhance their beverages; the thought of freezing a few inches (5 to 10 cm) over 17,000 sq. ft. (1,580 sq. metres) was overwhelming. The assistance provided the background, not only on how to build and sustain ice, but what equipment was needed. A larger snowblower, powered brush, backpack blower, and all new hoses and reel were purchased and added to the equipment inventory.

Our volunteers have been fantastic. Without them, we would not be able to operate and maintain the facility and ice surfaces. Strong and dedicated, they have flooded and cleared snow off the ice surfaces in extremely cold temperatures. Others have monitored the facility and ice so users have washrooms and space to warm up. The change room and washrooms are only open if a volunteer is in the building or on the ice and checking regularly. If you are interested in volunteering with the facility or ice surfaces please contact Charlotte

Powell at 780-435-1723 or info@theridgeonline.ca. Many thanks also to The Ridge CL volunteer board for their continued leadership and direction with respect to operating and animating the facility and amenities.

Surprisingly, even with the cold temperatures, the ice surfaces have continually been used. What truly Canadian moments to see all ages enjoying skating and playing shinny hockey. As the weather gets warmer, we anticipate greater use. Our schedule continues to evolve based on demand so please visit Facebook Ridge Community for the most current schedule. Our website schedule will be regularly updated as well.

Fundraising

As mentioned earlier, the plan is to animate the main rink during the long non-ice/concrete season. Longer than the ice season, the concrete season provides an opportunity to provide a number of warm-weather activities.



We continue to review the demand and viability of different activities (ball hockey, pickleball, badminton, basketball, etc.) and are currently fundraising to support these activities. Nets, backboards and

more are needed. In addition, funds are needed to purchase other items that are not permanently attached to the facility. The building was funded, but all furniture, fixtures and equipment were not. Some has been purchased through previous fundraising, but more is needed (for example, a dishwasher and signage). To buy these items, we have established a goal of \$100,000. Currently, we have raised \$30,230. If you are interested in donating, please contact info@theridgeonline.ca

Another major source of funds are memberships to The Ridge CL. Contact membership@theridgeonline.ca to purchase a membership that helps us cover the costs of keeping the facility and rinks operating.

2021 / 2022 New Year's Fireworks Cancellation

The Ridge CL Board made the difficult decision to cancel the 2021/2022 New Year's fireworks and family party in late December. The fireworks, horse-driven sleigh and most importantly the cookies had been ordered. Unfortunately, with the uncertainty of COVID-19 and the impending cold weather, it was decided to cancel. With 12 consecutive years of fireworks, we know that the decision to cancel was disappointing for many of you. Our apologies... That said, stay tuned for possible fireworks show for Family Day weekend.



City Approves \$50 Million for Renewal Project at Zoo

Spending will build new exhibits and replace ageing infrastructure

By Ragg Times Staff

In its December budget, the City of Edmonton approved \$50 million for an ongoing renewal project at the Edmonton Valley Zoo. The spending will allow for new exhibit space and a refurbishment of underground utilities

The new exhibits, dubbed Nature's Wild Backyard, Phase 2, try to immerse children — and adults — in the world in the same manner as the animals that inhabit it. They include areas dedicated to the creatures that live in the tree canopy, those in riparian zones, those on land and those underground. The project is also supported by the Valley Zoo Development Society, which says the new exhibits will complement the Zoo's vision to

be a leader in conservation, education and environmental stewardship.

The refurbishment of utilities will replace and repair infrastructure that has been in place since the zoo opened as the Storyland Valley Zoo in 1959. Councillor Tim Cartmell says many of the repairs are desperately needed. "It's an area of the zoo that is hanging by a thread," he says. "There are failures imminent in the area that is being renewed. From a maintenance perspective, this work must be done. It's not unlike that 100-year-old pipe that's underneath Jasper Avenue."

The construction is expected to take place over the next three years.

Brookview Community League Update

We're seeking help at the rink and at the casino!

By Sandra Green

Brookview Community League (BCL) is offering two weekly interactive Zoom Yoga Classes: Wed. mornings, 10–11:15 am. (Jan. 5–Feb. 16) and Thurs. evenings, 7:00–8:15 pm. (Jan. 6–Feb. 17). You can join the ongoing sessions or join classes that will be offered again beginning Feb. 23.

Gentle Hatha Yoga Classes with Paige Elniski

Paige's gentle Hatha yoga classes are suitable for both beginners and those with previous yoga experience. Classes include asanas (postures), yogic exercises and breathing techniques that will help create strength, mobility and stability in the body. A current Edmonton community league membership is required. (Visit efcl.org to purchase yours). To register or for more information about Paige, see yegtownyoga.ca.

BCL's Holiday Lights Contest is a Bright Success!

Every year, Brookview becomes festive and bright with a variety of holiday decorations and lights! It was a delight to drive and walk around the neighborhood and enjoy the holiday spirit.

We received a huge number of nominations from residents of the Brookview neighborhood for the Holiday Lights contest. Gift cards and Certificates of Congratulations were presented to the top 4 most nominated addresses: 400 Butchart Drive; 946 Burley Drive; 507 Buchanan Road; and 514 Buchanan Road.

Special thanks to Shamez and Ali Jivraj from the Marble Group for their donation of four Pizza Hut gift certificates. And thanks to all of those who decorated their homes for neighbors to enjoy!

BCL Sleigh Ride Rescheduled to Sunday, February 20th (Family Day Weekend) from 12-4pm

Owing to the bitterly cold weather and the City of Edmonton's limit on

outdoor gatherings in December, BCL needed to reschedule our family sleigh ride. There is still space available for this magical event, so check out the details on how to register at brookviewcommunityleague.ca.

Help make our rink fun for all!

Have you got a few hours a week to help ensure our rink is a fun, safe place to enjoy? Brookview needs volunteers to monitor the rink activity and check for skate tags/community memberships. Best of all, you can help out at times that work for you! Contact president@brookviewcommunityleague.ca if you can lend a hand. The rink rules are outlined on the BCL website.

Casino Volunteers Needed

Many of the BCL facilities and activities that we all appreciate are funded through regular casino nights. Our next casino is scheduled for April 9 and 10. It takes a large number of community volunteers to run a casino. If you can help, please contact the casino director at casino@brookviewcommunityleague.ca or Kyle Fodchuk at 403-831-1477.

BCL Community Swim Sundays 5pm-7pm

Looking for a family activity on Sunday evening? As of January, the BCL Community Swim and Facility Access at Terwillegar Recreation Centre has resumed. A current BCL membership card is required and the Restrictions Exemption Program is in effect. Please note that pandemic protocols may change at any time. See the TRC website for updates.



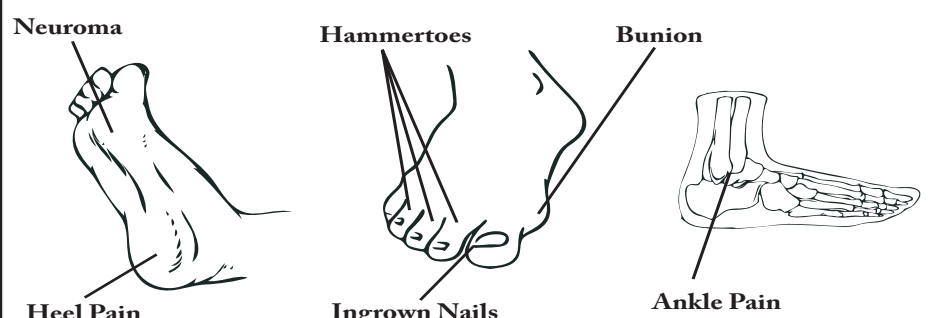
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Memories from Another Era

Marg Ritchie and her husband, Max, bought a three-acre lot in Riverbend in 1965. At the time, most neighbours had horses

By Dave Rumbold

When you're in Brander Gardens these days, it is hard to imagine the area being anything other than the housing, schools and retail we're familiar with. More traces of the past are disappearing with the demolition and listing of original properties like Soaring. Long-time neighborhood resident Marg Ritchie recently shared fond memories of the area before the City grew around it.

When Max and Marg Ritchie bought three acres on the riverbank flats in 1965, there were only acreages, farms and stables around. Their land was at the north end of 58th Avenue, where it goes down to the riverbank and connects with trails to Fort Edmonton Park and the nearby footbridge over the North Saskatchewan River.



A painting of the Ritchie's barn.

The Ritchies moved into a two-bedroom split-level just back from the riverbank which they quickly expanded to accommodate their four kids, ages five to 12. A few years later they sold a portion of their land and another house was built on the river's edge. There was also an existing farmhouse and barn further back which was rented out by the original owners to the O'Brien family. The land east of the Ritchie's home (where Fort Edmonton is now) was farmed by Bob McLaughlin, and further east was the

Tommy Fox farm and then Leecoll Stables, which eventually became the Whitemud Equine Centre.

At that time, Whitemud Road was a country road following the riverbank west from Saskatchewan Drive and 76th Avenue (via Keillor Road) to the Ritchie property. There, it turned and climbed to the top of the riverbank and continued on its present day path southwards. The Love, Jenner and Mactaggart families owned properties between the the riverbank and Whitemud Road, and the Owens and Clarke families had properties on the other side of Whitemud Road, extending east to 149th street (Riverbend Road today). Further south were the Rhatigan and Henderson farms, remembered today in local subdivision and park names.

The Ritchie kids loved the outdoors and routinely encountered all types of wildlife. Most of the families had horses, and trail rides and wiener roasts were common. Marg vividly remembers being surprised by a mountain lion, as well as often having to go looking for their white pony (Leprechaun) which had a habit of getting out.

A fun tradition developed in the 1960s when the Fox family began hosting large Klondike Days breakfasts at their farm. Guests would then head over to the Ritchie's property for a baked-bean lunch to watch the Klondike raft race float by up close! Up to 150 friends and neighbours would join in the annual celebrations. In the winter, Whitemud Creek was a popular spot for skating. It seemed like you could go for miles up its winding route.

Things began to change when residential development began in south Brookside (Old Riverbend) in the mid 1960s and moved quickly north and west from there. Subdivision and housing started in Brander Gardens around 1970 and continued south on the top of the riverbank. Development at Fort Edmonton, next door to the



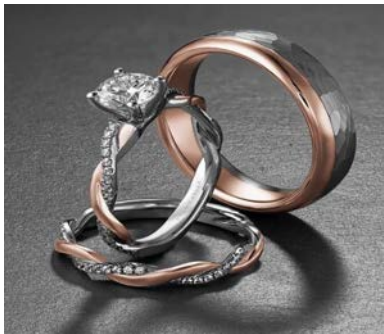
Beginning in the 1960s, Marg Ritchie, pictured, and her husband Max hosted a baked-bean lunch so people could watch the Klondike raft race up close.

Ritchies, began in 1969 and quickly grew into what we are familiar with today. Riding horses was not really compatible with living beside a residential neighbourhood!

The Ritchie family stayed in their beautiful riverfront location until 1995, when they sold it and the property was further subdivided. All that remains of their property is a garage which is still in use. Today, the river valley flats remain a tranquil location seemingly outside the urban area, but easily accessible on the City trails. Max passed away in 2002, but Marg and three of her children, and their families, still live in the Riverbend area, with special perspectives on how our neighborhood used to be. Thank you to Marg for sharing her memories with me!

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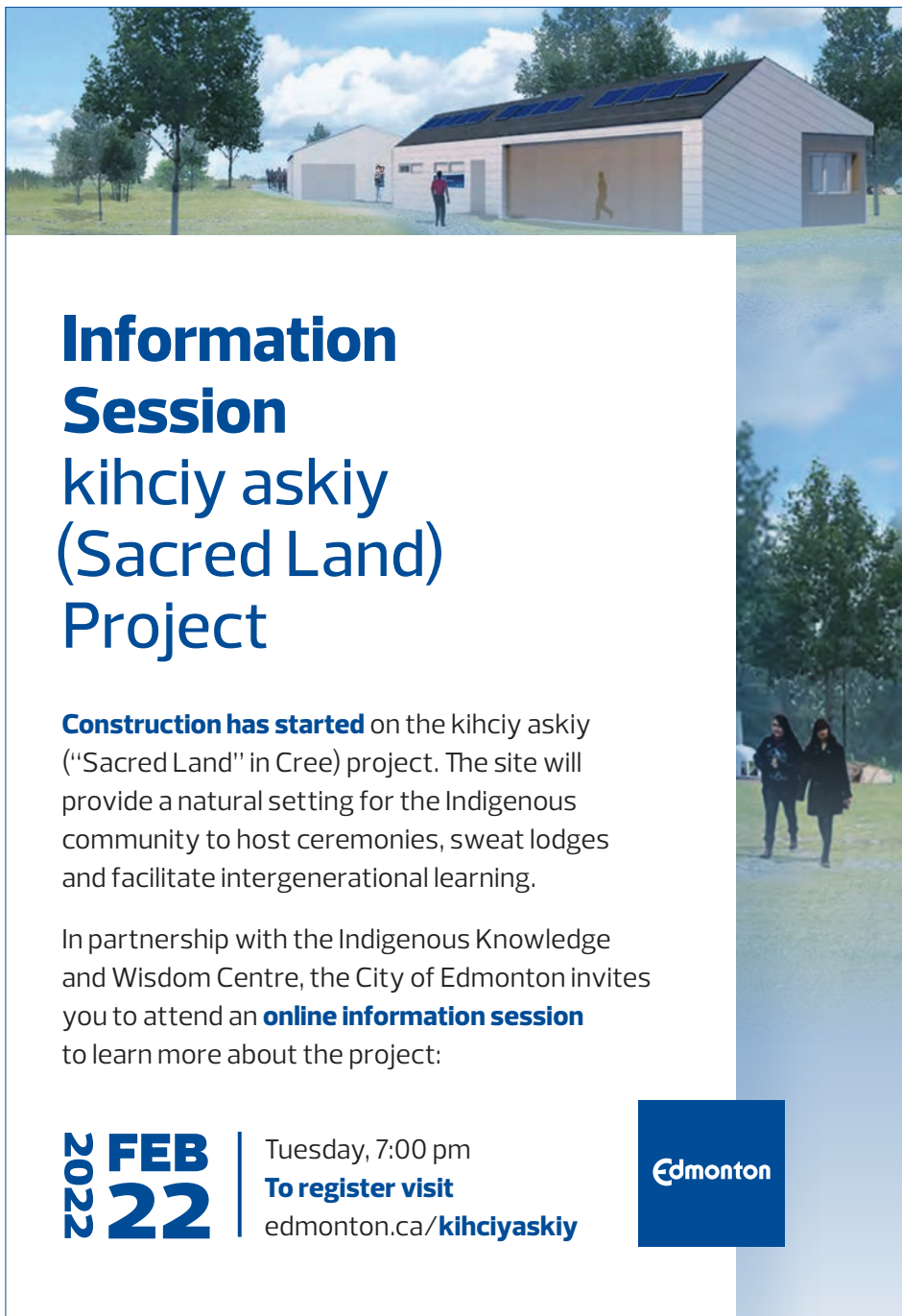
Information Session
 kihciy askiy (Sacred Land) Project

Construction has started on the kihciy askiy ("Sacred Land" in Cree) project. The site will provide a natural setting for the Indigenous community to host ceremonies, sweat lodges and facilitate intergenerational learning.

In partnership with the Indigenous Knowledge and Wisdom Centre, the City of Edmonton invites you to attend an **online information session** to learn more about the project:

2022 FEB 22 Tuesday, 7:00 pm
 To register visit edmonton.ca/kihciyaskiy





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Happy New Year!

Best Wishes, *Sally*



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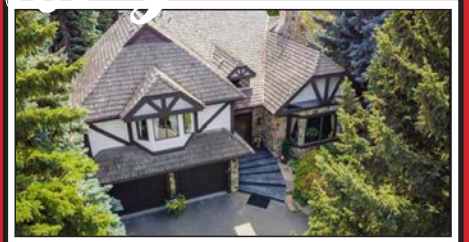
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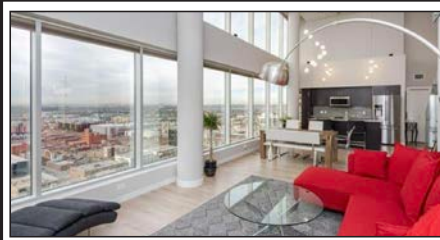
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1/2 duplex home in a ravine community. 1859 sq ft plus 1254 sq ft ff basement ML# E4241611



Falconer Heights \$498,000
Design & build on the last undeveloped lot. (9000+ sq ft) walk out pie shaped. ML# E4268332



Westwood \$468,000
1/2 Duplex move in ready. 1,561 sq.ft, 2 storey 3 bed, 2.5 baths. FF basement. ML# E4269910



Ambleside \$199,900
TOP FLOOR open concept condo. 10ft ceiling. Exercise room, one U/G parking stall. ML# E4262127

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