

# The Riverbend Ragg-Times

A PUBLICATION OF THE RIVERBEND COMMUNITY LEAGUE

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## Wing Yum Choy – A Quiet Contributor!

Wing has been instrumental in the development of the fabulous Edmonton Chinese Garden, among many other things

By Dave Rumbold

Local resident Wing Yum Choy is one of those people who hasn't slowed down in retirement. Always a bit busier than he planned to be, he continues to contribute in major ways to Edmonton and to the Chinese community, and to learn and grow along the way.

The fabulous Edmonton Chinese Garden, located in Louise McKinney Park in the downtown river valley, is one of Wing's legacy projects. The Edmonton Chinese Garden Society has done the planning, fundraising and development of the garden and manages its ongoing maintenance. Wing has served as president of the society for the past 18 years and has been indispensable to its success.

When completed, the garden will include 16 traditional elements. It is free for anyone to visit and enjoy. It is intended to showcase traditional Chinese culture and to foster friendship and understanding between Chinese and Western cultures.

Stage I of the garden opened in 2020 and includes a Ting (pavilion), a stone bridge and monument, two stone lions, twelve zodiac signs and landscaping. Edmonton's twin City in China, Harbin, assisted with the design of the garden and the stone lions were gifts from the Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Calgary. Stage II is just being completed and includes a friendship entrance gate, a Nine-Dragon wall and a meandering walking path. The Nine-Dragon Wall is a special feature of the Garden. It is the largest in the Western world, at 60 feet long and 22 feet high, and it was hand carved in China. Stage III is next and will feature a whitewall, a goldfish wall, a rock garden, a square pavilion, an elevated walk and more landscaping.

The stone pillar (Flaming Pearl



The Edmonton Chinese Garden is in Louise McKinney Park, in the downtown river valley. The garden showcases traditional Chinese culture and is intended to foster friendship and understanding between Chinese and Western cultures.

Monument) in the garden includes an arrow pointing to Beijing and is dedicated to the Chinese men who worked as labourers on the construction of the original CPR railway in the 1880s. There is a significant family connection for Wing as his grandfather came to Canada to do this work in unsafe conditions and faced ongoing discrimination in Canada before relocating to Hong Kong. Unfortunately, Chinese people were not welcomed in Canada at the time, and terrible laws were passed over the years to actively exclude them, remaining in effect until the 1940s. The Chinese men who came here were not allowed to bring family and were not welcomed into society. It's a dark chapter in Canadian history.

The grand opening of Stage II of the Edmonton Chinese Garden is on September 23 and includes a celebration banquet at Dynasty restaurant. The Edmonton Chinese Garden is a wonderful addition to Edmonton and provides a tranquil sanctuary in the heart of the city.



Wing stands in front of the Nine-Dragon Wall. In traditional Chinese architecture, screen walls were used to block or prevent negative energy from entering a property.

Wing was born in China's Kwong Tung Province and raised in Hong Kong. He has been in Canada for over 50 years. A proud Canadian citizen, Wing and his wife Agnes raised three daughters and one son, all of whom are in Edmonton. They enjoy babysitting

## Beware the Creeping Bellflower

Invasive species is tough to eradicate

A pretty but pretty devastating plant is making its way around Edmonton. The creeping bellflower has an attractive purple flower, but is a voracious colonizer that can reproduce by seed or root systems, ruthlessly spreading across lawns and neighbourhoods. Like some nightmare predator, it can reproduce either with the help of a pollinator or it can self-fertilize.

A couple of alert Ragg-Times readers recently noticed creeping bellflower plants in Bulyea Heights, in a scrubby City of Edmonton bush area bordering the sidewalk between Whitemud Creek and an adjacent property. They pulled and bagged them.

From an ecological perspective, invasive species lead to a loss of biodiversity because a single species comes to dominate, changing everything about the local ecosystem.

Creeping bellflower is listed as a noxious weed in the Alberta Weed Control Act and property owners are required to control the spread of it, but eradication is not necessary. To control it, dig out the plants with as many roots as possible.

The Edmonton Horticultural Society says creeping bellflower is sometimes confused with native harebells, but harebells have much shorter stems, smaller flowers and different leaf size and shape.



Editor's Note

# A Better Way to Finance Renovations

CEIP is an excellent way for homeowners to save on energy costs, reduce carbon dioxide emissions, improve the value of their home and make it more comfortable

By Michael Ganley



The City of Edmonton and Alberta Municipalities have teamed up to provide an innovative financing solution to homeowners looking to do energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

Called the Clean Energy Improvement Program (CEIP), property owners across Alberta can access competitive interest rates and make repayments through your property's regular tax bill. The big advantage is, should you sell the home, you will no longer be responsible for the loan; it will pass to the new owner.

There are a few criteria for the program: You have to own the home and not have an outstanding tax bill; You need to do at least three projects each with a minimum value of \$3,000; You need to do EnerGuide audits before and after and use a qualified contractor.

Projects that can be approved include things like air sealing and insulation, new windows and doors, heat pumps, solar panels and upgrades to your water heater. You can borrow up to \$50,000 and amortize it over as much as 20 years; the interest rate is 3.5 per cent, which is excellent in today's market.

The most important thing about this program is that the loan is paid back through

your regular property tax bill. That means that if you sell the house, the remaining loan is the responsibility of the new owner. Hopefully, they'll be happy to take it on, knowing they're getting a more energy efficient home and will also save on their energy bill.

Let's look at a quick example. If a homeowner borrowed \$30,000 and pays it back over 20 years at 3.5 per cent, that works out to a monthly payment of \$174.

I think in our home, with some basic air sealing and insulation upgrades, a few new windows and maybe a heat pump, we would save more than that in monthly energy costs, certainly through the winter months (we heat with natural gas). And while we would enjoy the benefits right away (including the cooling effects of the heat pump in summer), we would no longer be responsible for the loan if we sold the house.

The Edmonton program is in a pilot phase this year, but is expected to expand next year.

Alberta Municipalities has so far helped 11 municipalities launch programs. Visit [ceip.abmunis.ca](http://ceip.abmunis.ca) for more information.

This program is an excellent way for homeowners to save on energy costs, reduce carbon dioxide emissions, improve the value of their home and make it more comfortable.

Riverbendonline.ca

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RCL Board Note



# Meet your Neighbours *and* get Cake!

Celebrate the reopening of Brookside Hall on Community League Day, September 16, 2023!

By The Riverbend Community League Board

**Y**ou may have noticed two hard-working young people taking care of Brookside Hall, the Riverbend Community Centre, the tennis courts and the community garden this summer. Thank you to Jasper and Cooper for helping to beautify our neighbourhoods and to the Canada Summer Jobs program for making it all possible!

Headed into another beautiful Riverbend fall, our league is set to celebrate the reopening of Brookside Hall on Community League Day, September 16, 2023! Please come and see our beautifully restored hall and learn about rental opportunities, league plans for the façade, upgrades and solar project, community garden and other benefits of League membership! Join us from 1 - 4 p.m. for live music and a slice of cake. Help summer last just a tad longer with some Kona Ice (shaved ice truck) and bring the kiddos by to see a fire engine and learn more about fire safety!

The Riverbend Community Centre has a new patio with lovely comfortable seating next to our beautiful 50th-anniversary mural. Park your bicycle in the new bike rack and come and check it out! A great new spot to meet up with a friend for a coffee or chat, or to relax after Yoga with Bev!

We wish everyone a happy back-to-school and rewarding fall activities. We encourage you to check out [riverbendonline.ca](http://riverbendonline.ca) for updates about events and initiatives at the league and in our community. Mark your calendars for the RCL AGM on November 27, 2023, and please reach out if you are interested in learning more about joining the RCL Executive Committee. Such a rewarding volunteer opportunity for you to help shape your neighbourhood!



The Riverbend Community Centre has a new patio with seating and a bike rack next to our 50th-anniversary mural. A great new spot to meet up with a friend for a coffee or chat, or to relax after Yoga with Bev!

Please support your community league and purchase a membership. Membership info and benefits can be found at [riverbendonline.ca](http://riverbendonline.ca). You can also find us on Facebook and Instagram!

## JOIN US FOR FALL YOGA CLASSES

Multilevel hatha yoga with Bev Moore  
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Join our volunteer team today!  
To learn how you can help, email [info@riverbendonline.ca](mailto:info@riverbendonline.ca)



# In Support of Public Education

Schools face large class sizes and dwindling supports

By Rakhi Pancholi, MLA, Edmonton-Whitemud



It's hard to believe but another Edmonton summer has come to a close! For my family, it was a time to rest after a busy spring but also to get out and enjoy all that our city and community has to offer, from the Southwest Edmonton Farmers' Market to community dinners with Riverbend Rocks to Canada Day and the Stollery Lemonade Stand Day.

It is also the start of a new school year. As a parent of elementary-aged kids and as the new opposition critic for education, strengthening public education and finding solutions to growing challenges are top priorities for me.

Large class sizes and dwindling supports are challenges faced by schools across the province. While the needs in classrooms become more complex, teachers are managing more students with fewer educational assistants (EAs) to support students who need it. This affects students with disabilities or learning needs the most, but it also impacts the quality of learning

that all students receive.

There are several things that must happen to address this.

First, the education funding model introduced two years ago calculates funding for school boards based on past student enrollment numbers, not current ones. This means growing school boards, like Edmonton Public Schools, do not receive funding for every student that walks through the door. It's a growing problem as enrollment increases with families moving to Alberta from across the country and the world. This funding model must change so that every student is funded properly.

Second, the province must train, recruit and retain more teachers and EAs. During the election, the government committed to hiring 650 teachers and 1,375 EAs. It seems to be stepping back from that commitment, but students cannot afford delays. Key to attracting more education staff is demonstrating that they are valued and respected.

Third, growing communities across the province are in desperate need of new schools, and southwest Edmonton is a clear example of

this. Lillian Osborne High School and Riverbend Junior High are well over capacity and many of our elementary schools are also seeing ballooning class sizes. Only one new elementary school was approved for construction in the government's recent budget. This is not enough, and I will continue to advocate for more schools to be built.

Lastly, supporting children with disabilities or developmental delays is critical for their success later in life. In 2019, the UCP government made devastating changes to Program Unit Funding (PUF) for three- and four-year-olds and cut it entirely for children in kindergarten. Earlier this summer, I called on the government to restore funding to PUF and increase it so that kids can get the support they need.

I will continue to champion strong public education so every child has opportunities for success and inclusion. I can't think of anything more important.

As always, feel free to write to me at [edmonton.whitemud@assembly.ab.ca](mailto:edmonton.whitemud@assembly.ab.ca) to share your thoughts.

## Autumn Skies and Pumpkin Pies (Spiced Lattes, too)!

An Update from the Brookview Community League

Back to School for all the kids too so keep an eye out on the roads.

**Community League Day Saturday September 16, 2023** An event for the whole family, Community League Day is almost here! There will be a BBQ, a bouncy house, face painting, possible body movement sessions, live music, an outdoor movie and kite making/flying! Check the BCL website for schedule and details.



Adventure-comedy film Ferdinand was popular on outdoor movie night!

**50-50 Raffle – Play to Build Brookview!** As part of Community League Day, we are participating in a \$10,000 50/50 Raffle that

will be drawn Sept 18. Check the website for details.

**Hitting the Jackpot with Casino Volunteers** AGLC has awarded BCL another casino to support our operational budgets. These funds are critical for hosting programs and maintaining our outdoor ice rink. Please consider volunteering for this event. The casino dates are February 14 and 15, 2024.

**Yoga Classes – Fall 2023** BCL will continue to offer Mindful Strength and Gentle Yoga classes with Paige Elniski tentatively on Tuesday evenings in person and Wednesday mornings online. Classes start after Labour Day. Please check our website for more details and a finalized schedule or go to [yegtownyoga.ca](http://yegtownyoga.ca) to register.

**Rink Committee Volunteers** We are looking for volunteers to help maintain ice and supervise open ice times for this upcoming rink year. We will be organizing a repair crew to improve the condition of our rink as we develop the rink upgrade project. More information to come through our Facebook page and the Crier.

**Community Feedback** BCL is looking for feedback on the pop-up dog park and pop-

up gardens! Please leave a comment on our Facebook page or make a comment through our website. Check the website for a City of Edmonton link for feedback on the pop-up dog park or at the entrance of the dog park.

Thanks to all volunteers of the pop-up garden and responsible dog owners who have made these spaces a place where community gathers!

**Brookview's Energuide Challenge - Round 2** Complete your EnerGuide assessment to see how energy efficient your home is compared to the rest of Brookview. Plus, if you're in the top three you will win a monetary prize. Complete details are on the BCL website. Join today! Federal rebates are available.

**BCL Website** For more Brookview news check out [brookviewcommunityleague.ca](http://brookviewcommunityleague.ca).



# Can You Dance All Night?

SWESA is holding its first annual Dine and Dance fundraiser September 21 at the Pioneers Cabin

By Colleen Crozier

There she was, after the ball: Eliza Doolittle remembering the beautiful gowns, the tuxedos and military uniforms, the stirring music, the glittering lights, and the heady feelings of gliding around the ballroom in the arms of one partner after another as she triumphantly passed for a mysterious aristocrat in the 1964 Lerner and Lowe film version of *My Fair Lady*.

It is telling that George Bernard Shaw, the author of the book that inspired that film (*Pygmalion*), chose a fancy dress ball to be the testing ground for Professor Higgins' cockney pupil. After all the voice coaching and instruction in manners, Shaw put her where her self-mastery and Prof. Higgins' genius would be most evident: at a dance.

Dancing is one of the most elemental of all human activities, a full-body response to hearing music, a form of expression that needs no words. Dance exists in almost all cultures, having done so since time immemorial. It goes along with celebrations, story-telling and courting. Whether we are dancing ourselves or watching others, we all experience the sensations, the artistry, the passion and the pleasure that dance brings to our lives.

Dancing appeals to all ages: from a toddler rockin' it with the Wii to the four-year-old thrilled to step up onto the shoes of her adult partner and join in; from the 'tween who is relieved to know that he does not have to hold hands to dance with a girl, to the young people whose attraction for one another is plainly evident on the dance floor; and from the married

couple whose years together have refined their moves to the seniors, those who can still "cut a rug" while fondly reliving memories.

Given half a chance, would we all dance all night? Would we let the music give us wings? Would we all want to move like Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, Patrick Swayze, Karen Kane, Chubby Checker, Michael Jackson or Paula Abdul? Or would we simply get onto the dance floor and let the music run through us and move right along with it?

SWESA is holding its first annual Dine and Dance fundraiser September 21 at the Pioneers Cabin. After a fine meal by A Cappella Catering, you'll dance to your favourite hits with DJ Diamond. Tickets are available on our website or at our office. We hope you will come, have a delightful evening dining, dancing and supporting SWESA. We think you'll go home happy, singing, "I could have danced all night!"



Dancing at the Oktoberfest celebration at the German Canadian Club



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

## Home-Grown Home Services

Nice to meet you! My name is Max Yasinski. I am a trustworthy and reliable teenager who has been offering seasonal home and lawn services in the Riverbend area for several years. Along with my dad, Mike, and friends I have been offering this neighbourhood fully insured services that are both reliable and affordable. If you're looking for professional and dependable lawn care or snow shoveling services, Max Snow & Mow is the right choice for you!

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# Love Local Libraries!

Things are heating up at the Riverbend Branch of the EPL

Summer Starts at EPL was a blast at the Riverbend Branch. We ran more than 30 programs including parachute parties, robot battles and embroidery! Riverbend readers logged over 9,000 hours and designed so many creative buttons. Thanks so much to all our participants for filling our summer with fun!

Starting in September, you can

expect more weekly offerings of your favourite library programs. We'll be providing regular *Sing, Sign, Laugh and Learn* programs for you and your child from birth to age three, as well as our *Baby Laptime* classes, designed especially for caregivers and babies (0-12 months).

Our popular *LEGO at the Library* (ages 6-12) and *Discovery*



*Club* (ages 6-8) programs will be back after their summer hiatus.

Our *Book Clubs* for teenagers and adults will continue, and we'll be resuming our popular *Seniors*

*Drop-In* program.

Please visit [epl.ca](http://epl.ca) for more classes and event information.

We look forward to seeing you at the library soon!

## 2nd Annual Pie in the Park

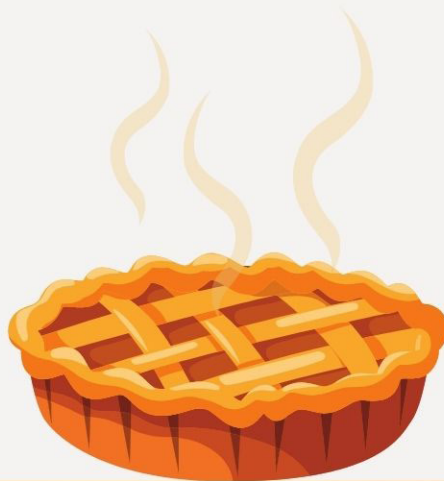
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# Community Building Through Volunteers

Riverbend ROCKS connects people living in the Brander Gardens Civida complex to a range of supports that promote social inclusion, community connection and enhanced quality of life

By Reem Razzouk, Director of Programming and Community Engagement, Riverbend ROCKS



A team of volunteers built five picnic tables in three days. Their efforts are appreciated!



Have you visited the Riverbend ROCKS Garden in our community complex? Thanks to our dedicated team of Water Warriors!

**R**iverbend ROCKS (Reaching Out to Community and Kids Society) is a local non-profit organization that connects families living in the Brander Gardens Civida complex and elsewhere in our community to a range of accessible opportunities and supports that promote social inclusion, community connection and enhanced quality of life.

We are thrilled to express our heartfelt gratitude to all the volunteers who have contributed to leveraging resources and sustaining wrap-around support to our

community in many aspects, such as the community garden project. Volunteers' time, hard work, passion, skills and joyful spirits have made our garden a beautiful and welcoming place for everyone to enjoy diverse and intergenerational activities. We are proud of the amazing work our volunteers have done: they not only helped us plant delicious and healthy food but also strengthened a sense of belonging in our community. Big thanks to everyone who volunteered in planning, planting, watering and keeping the

garden clean; children and youth, Corine Ann-Marie St Jean, Jackie Holmes, Sheryl Bowhay, John Gaunt, Louise Lavers, Donna McGonigle and Alison Hughes (and their families, who never failed to make it fun and easy work). Most importantly, thanks to our kids (the Water Warriors) who, with Nadine Jorgensen's supervision, showed up even on rainy days to prove that our garden is in good hands.

We completed the garden by having picnic

tables in the green space where families can gather and have quality time. This wouldn't be possible without the unique and skilled team of volunteers who built five beautiful picnic tables in three days! We appreciate the dedication of Rob Agostinis, Norman Journault, Bill Bromling, Fisher Smith, Mohamud Warsame, Salman Muhammad, Ali Altaf, Noah Jorgensen, Connor McLuckie, Abbas Abbadi and Ali Al-dallal.

If you haven't yet, we

encourage you to visit our site and volunteer with us, as we acknowledge the impact of our volunteers in building community at Riverbend ROCKS.

Please add us to your network on LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and TikTok to learn more about our programs and support in becoming a community where neighbours know one another, diversity is celebrated and all children and families flourish.

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...continued from page 1

their two grandchildren.

Wing originally came to Edmonton to study civil engineering at the University of Alberta, then worked in industry and various levels of government on construction management on Alberta highways and other key infrastructure for over 40 years. As a professional engineer, Wing led several significant projects and points with pride to his leadership of the Fort McMurray Highway 63 twinning project, which was completed in a short three-year timeline. The highway 881 project (Lac La Biche to Fort McMurray) is another proud achievement, as it was the longest grading and paving highway project in Alberta history.

Wing has been a busy volunteer in other areas as well, with involvement and leadership roles at organizations such as the Edmonton Chinese Engineer Society, the Toi Shan Society, the APEGA Board of Examiners. He has also been active in fundraising and event planning for many Chinese community events. He presents Iron Rings to new engineering graduates at the University of Alberta. Wing is fluent in Cantonese and some Mandarin and supports and mentors Chinese immigrants at ASSIST Community Services. He teaches



The grand opening of Stage II of the Edmonton Chinese Garden is on September 23.

Tai Chi classes at the YMCA, City Recreation Centres and the Derrick, and is teaching and learning Qi Gong. He is a big fan of Elvis and enjoys listening to his music daily!

Wing isn't an individual who looks for recognition or profile, and when pressed for advice he suggests that one should volunteer in their community, always be positive and help people be happy. He also feels strongly that education is the most important thing in life. His long-term commitment to so many great causes has really made a difference in our community!



## PEANUT BUTTER & JAM PLAYGROUP

A parent cooperative playgroup for families with children from infants to 5 years old

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Weekday mornings at Brookside Hall



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or visit [riverbendonline.ca/peanut-butter-jam-playgroup/](http://riverbendonline.ca/peanut-butter-jam-playgroup/)

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**League member exclusive** Save up to 10 per cent on home and auto insurance, and everything in between, with NFP. The Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues has partnered with NFP to bring members exclusive new insurance offerings, including up to 10 per cent savings and best-in-class customer service. Learn more at [nfp.ca/gha](http://nfp.ca/gha). Join your community league at [efcl.org](http://efcl.org).

**Community League Wellness Program** Reduced rates to City of Edmonton recreational facilities through the Community League Wellness Program which offers the following discounts:

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Continuous Monthly Membership: 20% discount on an on-going monthly membership.

**Cloverdale Paint** Show your Community League membership card, mention Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (code 057EFCL) and receive wholesale pricing at any Cloverdale Paint location. Find your closest Cloverdale Paint store.

**Free Skating at Outdoor Community League Rinks** Find the closest outdoor community league rink to you by clicking Find a Facility/League, go to 'Facility Amenities' and select 'Rink'.

Skate tags are available when you purchase your membership.

**House of Wheels** House of Wheels is Alberta's largest indoor skatepark for scootering, skateboarding, BMXing, etc. It is dedicated to ensuring anyone can find and enjoy the world of action sports in a fun and supervised indoor site. Perfect for our city's long, cold winters. Located on 88th street, just off the Whitemud. Show your Community League membership card for a 10% discount on pass prices. Check [houseofwheels.ca](http://houseofwheels.ca) for more.



**Orbis Sports** Orbis Sports has a number of offers available. Find them on Facebook. Promo code: EFCL23.

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Email [training@ualberta.ca](mailto:training@ualberta.ca) or call 780492-1397 to learn more about the training options available or to discuss group training.

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Contact the Bookstore special orders for preferred pricing to community league members on promotional products, sportswear, gift, awards and corporate apparel.

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# City Council Approves New Funding Formula for Police

Move removes the distraction of money conversations. Now, new approaches and partnerships are needed

By Tim Cartmell, Councillor, Ward pihêsiwin



Happy Fall Everyone!

On August 23, Edmonton City Council approved a new police service funding formula. Going forward, the budget for the coming year will take the current year's budget and add increases based on population growth for labour costs and inflation for other operating costs. The police budget is capped at 30 per cent of the civic services budget.

I supported this funding formula, as I firmly believe it will result in an improved relationship between Council, Edmonton Police Service (EPS) and the Edmonton Police Commission.

Earlier this summer, I conducted a survey (you can see the results at [timcartmell.ca](http://timcartmell.ca)) which clearly indicated that safety and security, particularly in our core neighbourhoods and on our LRT system, remain key concerns of Edmonton residents.

While a funding formula will always be imperfect, it is better than ad hoc changes that are impossible to react to year-over-year. That doesn't mean that police budgets can continue to grow unbounded. EPS will need to be more strategic in how it spends tax dollars.

Over the past few years, EPS has stated that constant changes in police budgets have left it in a reactionary mode, not a strategic one. There is some truth in that, but they have leaned on that excuse a little too much.

EPS has work to do. There have been more than a few instances where the actions of individual police officers have been found wanting. That shouldn't mean that the entire force is condemned. It should mean that discipline processes are let to properly play out. One need only look at the latest EPS recruiting classes to see the range and depth of knowledge, the range in ages and the diversity of race and gender to see that the Police Commission is doing its level best to ensure the EPS continues to evolve.

The funding formula removes the distraction that constant conversation about money created and allows the conversation to shift to new approaches to "social policing." More partnerships like the Human-centred Engagement and Liaison Partnership teams and the Healthy Streets Operations Centre are needed. There needs to be more effort on co-dispatch, to ensure the right response to the call. There needs to be stable funding – and stable partnerships.

If you have any municipal questions or concerns please feel free to contact my office at [tim.cartmell@edmonton.ca](mailto:tim.cartmell@edmonton.ca) or call 780-496-8130.

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# The Guides Need You!

Girl Guides of Canada seeking leaders

By Katherine Ewchuk, District Commissioner, Girl Guides of Canada

**W**e are looking for women who want to make a difference in the lives of girls!

Becoming a Girl Guide Leader is a great experience. It is engaging, fun and offers a chance to learn new skills and connect with other women while volunteering. Training is available.

Volunteering in this role is also a great experience for young adults as it provides them with a real life opportunity to gain valuable skills. Previous experience in Girl Guides is not required. We are currently recruiting for Sparks (age 5-6) and Ember (age 7-8) leaders on Monday, Tuesday or Thursday evenings in Riverbend and Brookview.

Please email [emilymurphydc@girlguides.ca](mailto:emilymurphydc@girlguides.ca) for more information.

# Still Married!

Riverbend couple Don and Trudy Sjoberg celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary

By Kathy Trepanier

**R**iverbend couple Don and Trudy Sjoberg celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary in June with an extended family gathering. Instead of “Just Married,” the decorations on their car spelled out “Still Married.” They celebrated with the family, friends and neighbours who have been part of their journey.

Don and Trudy met in 1952 as university students in Saskatoon. Don proposed with three questions: Do you love me? Will you marry me? Will you come with me to Europe for our honeymoon? Trudy answered “yes” to all three.

The young couple borrowed \$1,000, boarded an ocean liner and spent a month visiting relatives in Sweden and Austria who had not seen (Don and Trudy’s parents since they emigrated after the First World War.

The anniversary party was held at the picture perfect Whitemud Creek Community Centre. Don and Trudy danced to the love song *Saskatoon Moon*, by Connie Kaldor, with each other and a host of grandchildren.

Since they moved to Riverbend 12 years ago, Don and Trudy have become an integral part of the neighbourhood; hosting open houses, exchanging cookies for kind deeds, introducing children to the Edmonton Public Library, reaching out to those in need and delivering Meals on Wheels. They would be the first to mention the kindness of their neighbours; shovelling their walks, edging their lawn or sending flowers on their anniversary. Don and Trudy love their community and, at 92 years of age, can often be found walking to the park and chatting with neighbours.



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# Upgrading a '70s Home

Green Homes Grant offsets some of the cost of energy-efficiency retrofits

By April Fair, Sustainability Director, Riverbend Community League

We recently completed some energy efficiency retrofits to our home. They were partially funded by the Canada Greener Homes Grant, a federal program that reimburses up to \$5,000 for eligible upgrades. I thought it might be helpful to share some information about this grant and our experience with it.

Prior to starting any upgrades, we applied in the grant portal to be assigned an application number and a certified energy advisor for an pre-retrofit EnerGuide evaluation. As we couldn't get a hold of the assigned energy advisor, we used a different one. Steve from Map Energy was able to work with us right away. On his advice, we notified the program of this change without issue.

Steve tested our air sealing, assessed the R-value of our building envelope and reviewed our windows and heating appliances. He then provided our EnerGuide rating, which compares our home's energy usage with that of other homes. His evaluation included a breakdown of our home's energy losses (for us it was primarily our basement walls, attic and air leaks throughout the house).

During discussions with Steve, we determined that the

most impactful upgrades for our house, based on our budget and circumstances, were air sealing, replacing basement windows, upgrading the insulation in the attic and foundation walls and adding rigid foam insulation to the exterior as part of an upcoming vinyl-siding-replacement project. Steve prepared a report, which outlined the potential payoff in terms of reduced energy consumption. We also learned about other projects we could take on in the future, such as replacing our furnace with a heat pump and how that, combined with solar, would significantly pay off.

After our retrofits, we contacted Steve again to complete the post-retrofit evaluation, and receive our new EnerGuide rating. We were gratified to learn that our rating had improved by 45 per cent, bringing our 1970s home more in line with a typical new home. (We've tracked our savings through our energy bills, and our results have aligned with Steve's report).

We then logged back into the Greener Homes portal and completed the grant application. This included submitting receipts from and photos of the retrofits and both EnerGuide evaluations.

We received the maximum grant of \$5,600 towards the costs



April and her family replaced basement windows, upgraded attic insulation and added rigid foam insulation to the exterior.

of our upgrades and EnerGuide evaluations (the net cost of both evaluations after reimbursement came to about \$100). While our upgrades cost substantially more than the grant funding we received, the grant was nice to have and worth the effort to apply for.

We'd love to someday have a net-zero home, but in the meantime have enjoyed our lower energy bills and more comfortable home, especially on those extremely cold winter days. And when it comes time to sell, we expect that our retrofits will have increased our

home's resale value.

If you're interested in going through the Greener Homes Grant program, it's good to know that the program is open until 2028 and now includes the option for a \$40,000 interest-free loan to pay for the retrofits.

Regardless of the grant, I'd recommend an EnerGuide evaluation to anyone who is curious about their home's efficiency and if there are any particular upgrades that would have a meaningful payoff.

# High-quality Public Education Serves the Community

Priorities centre on maintaining outstanding learning environments for all students

By Julie Kusiek, Trustee, Ward F



Wow! Summer sure has zoomed by. I hope you were able to find time to relax and recharge with friends, family and neighbours. Our family was able to get out for a couple of quick camping trips and then focus on a home landscaping project. It's been busy! I'd like to extend a special thank you to Vanessa Desa and the entire Riverbend ROCKS community for inviting me to share a meal with you this summer. It was wonderful to connect with community members, and I look forward to seeing you again at future events.

Fall has always been my favourite season. You can feel change in the air, and there's the anticipation and excitement of a new school year.

This will truly be an amazing year for students and for Edmonton Public Schools. We look forward to welcoming over 114,000 students into the classroom!

Thinking about this year and beyond, I am proud of the direction our 2022-2026 strategic plan sets. Our mission reads: "Our commitment to high-quality public education serves the community and empowers each student to live a life of dignity, fulfilment, empathy and possibility." I especially love the focus on public education and its connection to serving the community. Major priorities centre on maintaining outstanding learning environments for all students, continuing action towards anti-racism and reconciliation, and enhancing student and staff well-being and mental health. You can read more at epsb.ca.

Throughout the year, the Board receives strategic plan update reports which are available at epsb.ca. These reports highlight specific work underway in support of the strategic plan. Reports last year included updates on literacy and numeracy, anti-racism and equity, and mental health. Reports on other actions related to the strategic plan will be coming this year. Questions and conversations with families, school councils, constituents and the wider community help me to be prepared to review these reports in a thorough way, so thank you for keeping in touch!

You can reach me by email at trustee.julie.kusiek@epsb.ca or by phone at 780-429-8087. I also publish a regular newsletter and host Ward F events, with brief highlights to keep community members informed. All are welcome! Please sign up via my website at juliekusiek.ca.

# Hope Comes From the Next ReGeneration

Youth-led climate action group advocates for integrating local, regenerative practices into our daily lives

By Nafiza Hasan

Multiple global temperature records have been broken this summer, and the wildfires rampaging across Canada are only a sign of worse times to come. It's not just climate change, but a climate crisis affecting us all. However, we can each be part of the solution.

We are ReGeneration YEG, and our goal is to promote a brighter, greener future for all so future generations don't face the same calamities we face today. We are a youth-led climate action group that advocates for integrating local, regenerative practices into our daily lives. We are aligned with Project Regeneration, an international non-profit organization aiming to put life and climate at the centre of every action and decision (visit regeneration.org).

Centred in Riverbend and Terwillegar, our organization plans to bring the community together to address climate change issues through events and other initiatives. Our primary focus, regeneration, is a practice that many Indigenous people around the world have been integrating in their way of life for years. In his book

*Regeneration: Ending the Climate Crisis in One Generation* (a must read), Paul Hawken defined regeneration as "putting life at the centre of every action and decision." Whereas sustainability seeks to maintain the current environment, regeneration goes beyond that by improving the world around us. We aim to integrate these microchanges into our lifestyle, and hope to create a domino-effect of environmental awareness across the city. Change starts with the individual, and it starts with you.

Future events on our agenda include discussing and initiating activities in schools, supporting local businesses as well as bottle campaigns to improve our understanding of how to better care for ourselves and the world.

These problems in our city require a holistic approach, and we seek to collaborate with other organizations like the Council of Canadians, various Indigenous communities and other



(L to R) Ava Sanagustin, Judy Zhu, May Sharma, Nafiza Hasan and Winnie Limanda have launched ReGeneration YEG, a youth-led organization dedicated to promoting a brighter, greener future.

advocacy groups.

Edmonton is already a front-runner on renewable energy and transit. Together, let's pave a path towards a more regenerative future for every Edmontonian.

Follow our instagram @regeneration.yeg to stay tuned for our upcoming events and find out more!

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# Fire Safety: A Community Effort

October is National Fire Safety Month; it's a good reminder for all of us

By Eilish Lemieux, Edmonton Riverbend Neighbourhood Watch District Representative

This summer, it's been impossible to not think about fires. Whether it was the May wildfire situation in Alberta or the more recent wildfires in NWT and Kelowna, we were all affected by these catastrophic events. While there are many actions we, as a society, need to start thinking about and doing, that is a column for a different day. I'm focusing this column on house fires *not* caused by wildfires.

I know someone whose house burned down recently. Though the cause of my friend's house fire was beyond their control, this fact provided little comfort as they dealt with the shock and devastation. This incident got me thinking about house fires and the simple things we can do to mitigate the risk.

Next month is National Fire Safety Month. This includes a week devoted to national fire prevention (October 7-13) and a day called National Home Fire Drill Day (October 13). Though fire safety is a year-round effort, a dedicated month reminds us that taking stock of what we're doing (and not doing) regarding fire safety is crucial.

Though we know the many potential causes

of house fires, sometimes we become inattentive or complacent about fire safety rules. I hope reading this causes you to continually remind yourself to take basic preventative measures, such as:

- Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, boiling, grilling or broiling food, and always turn off the oven, stove and barbeque before leaving the house;
- Empty your dryer's lint catch and completely snuff out candles;
- Keep matches, lighters and similar items safely stored away from children;
- Observe all fire bans in your area; and
- Set up Christmas trees away from heat sources.

On National Home Fire Drill Day, take some time to ensure you have an emergency action plan. Do your family members know where the escape routes, fire extinguishers and safe meeting places are? Regularly check that your smoke alarms are in good working order and meet Canadian safety standards. If you don't have smoke alarms (and a carbon monoxide detector), there's no time like the present!

There are also steps we can take to better fireproof our properties, including getting rid of clutter that can act as fuel in a fire or block a safe exit, setting up designated areas for smokers with proper ways of extinguishing cigarettes and ensuring all flammable materials are safely stored.

Fire prevention is an important part of neighbourhood well-being as fires can spread quickly. We have a shared responsibility to keep our loved ones, our homes and our communities safe. We also want to reduce the burden on firefighters and emergency services.

Saturday, September 16 is Community League Day. To celebrate this day your Riverbend Community League is hosting a live music event from 1 - 4 p.m. at Brookside Hall. Representatives from Edmonton's Fire Rescue Services will be there (with a fire truck!). It's a great opportunity to meet your neighbours, tour the newly renovated Brookside Hall, climb up on a fire truck and learn more fire safety from the professionals. Hope to see you on September 16!



Edmonton Public Schools  
Trustee | Ward F  
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## Riverbend United Church



### This September Welcome Back to Church!

... after summer fun ... after your last wedding ... or after a long time! Join the vibrant & welcoming community of Riverbend United Church. Our dynamic in-person Sunday service with **Rev. Valerie Oden** is at 10:30 a.m. You can also view our live-streamed services on our YouTube Channel. We are an Affirming congregation and welcome everyone.

- **Welcome Sunday** - join us for Ice cream Sunday on **September 10<sup>th</sup>** and enjoy fellowship and coffee following the 10:30 a.m. worship service. Register for children & youth programs that begin September 10<sup>th</sup>.

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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

## Here Comes the Fall Festival!

As we gear up for winter, we're looking for volunteers to help with ice maintenance, a casino and the festival itself

**The Ridge Community League Fall Festival** Come out to The Ridge Community Centre at 2111 Haddow Drive on September 23 from noon to 4:00 p.m. to celebrate our second Annual Fall Festival! The festival is for all ages, with a petting zoo, face painting, balloon artist, a trackless train that tours Haddow Park, pickleball and basketball, artisans, food trucks and instructors from various programs that call The Ridge Community Centre home. Watch for updates on our website ([theridgeonline.ca](http://theridgeonline.ca)) or at [Facebook.com/ridgecommunity](https://www.facebook.com/ridgecommunity). Keeping things running smoothly during the festival requires additional volunteers. Can you help out for an hour? Contact [volunteer@theridgeonline.ca](mailto:volunteer@theridgeonline.ca).



**Multi-purpose rink/courts** Our NHL-sized rink with concrete base is intended for year-round use. Hockey and skating are the typical winter uses, and in the warm weather it changes over to other activities such as basketball, ball hockey and pickleball. We have three pickleball courts on half the rink. The nets are on wheels that allow users to roll them off to the sidelines when the rink is used for other activities.

1. It is a drop-in facility that relies on users sharing. This seems to work well: We have not had to post hours for pickleball versus hockey or use sign-up sheets. Please help us continue the drop-in concept.
2. League memberships and skate/runner tags to show residence in The Ridge CL area and membership of The Ridge Community League can be obtained at [membership@theridgeonline.ca](mailto:membership@theridgeonline.ca). Skate tags

are used on running shoes or skates to show a community league membership. Funding from memberships helps us keep the facility up and running and in good shape.

3. People with a membership from other community leagues are welcome to use the facility if they also have a Ridge CL Associate Membership. Associate memberships are also available at [membership@theridgeonline.ca](mailto:membership@theridgeonline.ca).

**Casino dates** A major source of revenue for us is a casino for which we supply labour every two years. Our upcoming dates are December 9 and 10 at Starlight Casino in West Edmonton Mall. We will require about 30 volunteers over two days. Reach out to [info@theridgeonline.ca](mailto:info@theridgeonline.ca) for more information or to volunteer.

**Green Shack Program** The Green Shack program, compliments of The City of Edmonton, was a great success at Haddow, Henderson and Falconer Heights playgrounds. The Ridge CL supplied the portable toilets at each park for all park and playground users, and supplied the rec techs with some additional arts and crafts materials.

**The Ridge Community Gardens** Our second year for the pop-up beds at Henderson Park has been a great success! The beds were provided by the City of Edmonton. Special thanks to Lynette Esak and the Henderson gardeners on a bountiful year! Our plans for our permanent beds at Henderson and Haddow parks continue to progress with the intent to have beds ready for next year. If you are interested in participating in the future, please stop by our booth at the Fall Festival on September 23, or contact us at [info@theridgeonline.ca](mailto:info@theridgeonline.ca).

**Skating Rink Ice Maintenance** Like it or not, winter will come. We are starting to ramp up for the next ice season and are looking

for volunteers to help with ice maintenance. Please reach out to us if you can help out for even a couple of hours. We had great ice last year, even with very difficult conditions of freeze-thaw cycles, and we want to meet or beat that standard!

We also have a great warm-up room in the community centre, but a volunteer must be present to ensure all is well in the building. Interested in helping out? Email [volunteer@theridgeonline.ca](mailto:volunteer@theridgeonline.ca).

**Community Centre Hall Rental** Community centre rental guidelines and information such as rental rates

and deposits, details on required insurance, and available dates will be posted in the next month on our website. Most weekday evenings are booked for the next year, with Saturday or Sunday afternoon and evening being common rental times. We have one room of 2,056 square feet with 80 chairs and a corresponding number of tables. The kitchen has a residential stove, fridge and microwave. Self-sufficient caterers with their own insurance are suggested for serving food.

Come join the fun!

**The Ridge Community League**

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# Debate, Discuss, Vote

Bill C-18, clean energy regs and crime rates top the agenda as MPs head to Ottawa for the fall session of the House of Commons

By Matt Jeneroux, MP, Edmonton Riverbend



With fall approaching, MPs are returning to Ottawa and preparing for the start of the fall session in the House of Commons. As we return to vote, debate and discuss, there will be a few major issues which I'm sure will receive our focus. I've included some of those here:

**Beginning with Bill C-18:** Over the past while, many Canadians have noticed their ability to access and share online news stories has been restricted by major online platforms. This is unfortunately a direct consequence of the government's Bill C-18, which would require large tech companies to pay news publishers whenever a link to their news article is posted. Conservatives believe that we need to find a solution where Canadians can continue to freely access news content online, in addition to fairly compensating Canadian news outlets. We offered amendments to the Bill that would fix these issues, but they were voted down by the Liberals and NDP. Now, Canadians are suffering the consequences. As the effects of this legislation continue to be felt, for both independent media and Canadians, my colleagues and I will continue to push for solutions that address these problems the government created.

In other news, Canada's environment minister recently laid out the government's draft Clean Electricity Regulations, meant to ensure a net-zero grid by 2035. Unfortunately, what this draft shows is a lack of concern for the increase in costs Canadians will pay as a result. A memo from the minister's own

department confirmed that this plan will significantly increase the costs of utility bills that Canadians pay every month. Some estimates suggest the cost of the plan could be as high as \$1.7 trillion. Instead of policies which punish Canadians, my colleagues and I will continue to push the government to cut inflationary taxes and red tape so that we can create cheap and clean electricity. Especially at a time of record-high electricity costs, Canada's Conservatives believe technology, not taxes, will reduce emissions without burdening Canadians with out-of-control utility bills.

Finally, in continuing conversations from the last session, another major point of discussion will be on the rising crime rates in our cities, a consequence of failing policies over the past eight years of this government. According to the Edmonton Police Service, Edmonton's violent crime rate per 100,000 people is up 11 per cent from 2015 to 2022. In 2022 alone, more than 15,000 Edmontonians were victimized in a violent crime. This year, from January to June, 8,000 people have been victimized, an increase of 18 per cent from the same period last year. Nationally, according to Statistics Canada data, homicides are up 43 per cent. Canadians deserve to feel safe in their cities and my colleagues and I will continue to push the government to act on these increases in crime to bring home safe cities.

With much happening in Ottawa, if you have any comments about what's happening in federal politics, I'd be more than happy to discuss. Please contact my office at

Matt.Jeneroux.C1@parl.gc.ca. We would be pleased to assist you on these or any other federal matters.

## Hoping to Use a Community Skating Rink this Winter?

Skate tags available for pick-up or mail-out

For anyone who has purchased their 2023-2024 community league membership, please contact the TRAC Community Office to arrange for pick-up or mail-out of your skate tags. Please email [yegtrac@gmail.com](mailto:yegtrac@gmail.com) or phone 780-439-9394.

The skate tags will give you access to any outdoor community skating rink and are an easy visual to the rink attendant that you are a community league member.

The community league rinks are maintained by the respective community leagues and wouldn't be possible without the support of your membership fee! Thank you to everyone who supports their community league!



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# Clean Eating: Five Food Ingredients to Avoid

Choose healthier foods by knowing these five ingredients

By Andrea Dreger, nutrition and food scientist

It's no surprise that our food has evolved over time. Breads that were made in the 1980s contained five ingredients on average; today, some loaves have upwards of 15 ingredients. As a result, consumers are more food literate than they were 25 years ago, when Canadian schools first implemented food-label reading. Interestingly, it wasn't until 2007 that Canada mandated food labelling that included an ingredient list and nutritional facts.

As labelling requirements continue to change, it's important to not only be aware of the nutrition of our food, but also how 'real' it is. A nutritional facts label alone can look amazingly healthy, but it doesn't necessarily show what is making up the food. This is where the ingredient list can be extremely telling as to whether or not you should choose a food item. (As a side note, don't assume that just because a product uses terms like organic, GMO free, or vegan, that they are exempt from label reading).

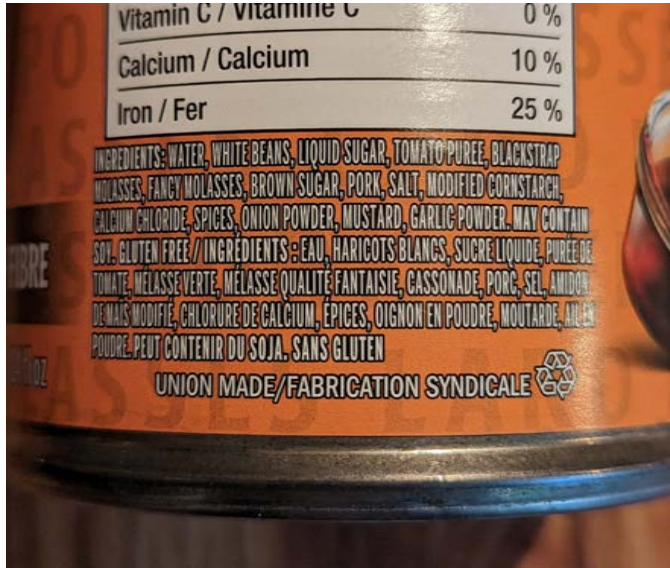
Below are five words or phrases that should get you thinking about the healthfulness of an item and, potentially, cause you to avoid it. If any listed items appear within the first three ingredients listed on a food label, choose a different item. Note that I say avoid, not eliminate.

**Sugar** Names also include fructose syrup, corn syrup solids, cane sugar, honey, fruit juice concentrate, glucose-fructose, dextrose and corn syrup. Found

in candy, pastries, breakfast cereals and inexpensive dairy, these products tend to provide a high amount of calories and are rarely health focused foods. They provide a quick burst of energy shortly after eating, but then often leave the consumer hungry and lethargic after its rapid digestion. Choose products with less than 10 grams of sugar per serving.

**Modified** Often an ingredient in dairy products, this is an umbrella term indicating that certain components in the food have been chemically altered from what is naturally found in milk. This can also refer to certain oils (coconut oil, palm oil, palm kernel oil, peanut oil or cocoa butter) that have been modified by the complete or partial removal of a fatty acid to create a more shelf-stable food.

**Enriched** Enriched ingredients are often found in refined, flour-based products such as quick boil pastas, breads and cereals. This term indicates that some nutrients lost in processing have been added back. Although this sounds good, vitamins and minerals found in natural sources are better absorbed by the body than those obtained through processing.



Those ingredient lists can be hard to read, but you might want to zoom in on them.

**Hydrogenated Oils** This process was developed to prevent food spoilage and keep foods fresher longer. Foods with hydrogenated vegetable oils can include peanut butter, bakery items like cookies, cakes and loaves, and salad dressings. Diets high in hydrogenated products are often linked to inflammation, cancers, diabetes and Alzheimer's.

**High Fructose Corn Syrup** Also known as glucose-fructose, this is not a naturally occurring sweetener like fructose (fruit) or lactose (dairy), but manufactured to create an inexpensive, concentrated and versatile sweet taste that is highly addictive.

We can't do everything, but if you can remember even a few of these words, you'll be making a thoughtful choice that can have a great impact.

## Feds/City Announce Funding to Plant 1.5 Million Trees

Edmonton's goal is 20 per cent canopy cover by 2071

By Harvey Voogd

The federal government will provide \$47.8 million under its 2 Billion Trees Initiative to help plant 1.5 million trees in Edmonton. This grant is matched by \$47.8 million in municipal funding, which is part of the City's \$66 million Greener As We Grow tree planting project.

"Trees are an important part of how people experience life in Edmonton. Trees help clean our air, shade our streets, and shape some of our most beloved public spaces," said Mayor Amarjeet Sohi. "This grant will allow us to expand our planting efforts over the next eight years and bring us closer to our goals of being a healthy and climate-resilient city."

Over the next eight years, Edmonton will increase its urban forest canopy by planting trees in approximately 300 hectares of naturalized areas, boulevards, parks and open spaces. Edmonton has a target of having two million trees planted by 2031 as part of the City's Urban Forest Asset Management goal of achieving 20 per cent canopy cover by 2071.

## Join us at the AGM!

The Annual General Meeting for the South Edmonton Arts & Theatre Society (SEATS) will be held in the Maclab Theatre at Lillian Osborne High School at 7 pm, Thursday, September 14.

Please join us!



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