

The Riverbend Ragg-Times

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Cartmell for Mayor?

Riverbend's councillor sets his sights on the big chair

By Michael Ganley

In November, Ward pihêsiwin Councillor Tim Cartmell announced he will run in October's election to be the City of Edmonton's next mayor. The two-term councillor says he's running on a platform of "safe streets, tough on taxes and build back better."

His first message hearkens back to an earlier time, when he says parents didn't have to be concerned for their children's safety. "Now I get feedback that people don't feel the same way," he says. "There are no simple solutions, but it starts with accountability, and that starts with council properly attending to a public spaces bylaw. It would strike an expectation of behaviour in our public realms. If people aren't meeting that behaviour, they will be challenged. If they need accountability they get accountability and if they need support they get support, but the idea that we turn a blind eye to disorder and bad behaviour in public spaces has to stop."

He wants to continue efforts to get people living and playing downtown and says the senior levels of government need to be part of the solution. The federal government needs to be at the table with funding for health care and housing, and Ottawa is also central to the relationship between settlers



Cartmell, seen here at the TRAC fun run last May, says the City's relationship with the province right now is "very challenged." "We need to rebuild a relationship with our provincial partners to talk about how we're going to supply the supports that are needed."

and Indigenous Canadians. "Where is their effort to talk about urban reserves?" he questions. "Where is their effort to talk about enhanced and new relationships that build on that nation-to-nation treaty?"

Cartmell describes the City's relationship with the province right now is "very challenged." "We need to rebuild a relationship with our provincial partners to talk about how we're going to supply the supports that are needed around

addictions and mental health," he says.

On the tax front, Cartmell voted against recent property tax increases of 6.1 per cent for 2025 and 6.8 per cent for 2026. He says when you factor in rising property values, the average homeowner will face a 14.2 per cent increase in 2025. "We need to hit upon a way to properly fund the services people are asking for," he says. "We need to tear our organizational structure down to the

continued on p.11...

Three Little Birds

Magpie, Blue Jay or Chickadee?

Thousands of Edmontonians flocked online for the first round of voting to determine Edmonton's official city bird and the competition is coming down to the wire. The Boreal Chickadee, the Black-billed Magpie and the Blue Jay soared smoothly through the first round, which saw the Downy Woodpecker, the Red-breasted Nuthatch and the Northern Saw-whet Owl tarred and feathered.

This exercise is no idle migration. It's a way to celebrate birds for their unique contributions to habitats and to ensure our urban environments are safe havens rather than a source of threats. From predation by domestic cats to window and car collisions, cities and towns can be an Albatross around the neck of birds with a gaggle of preventable hazards.

So whether your preference is the cinnamon-coloured Chickadee, the blue-eyed Magpie or the pesky Blue Jay, get a bird's-eye view of the importance of birds and vote at birdfriendlyedmonton.org.

The final pecking order will be determined after the voting period closes on March 31. Be an early bird and go online now!

Reporting Crime Online

Edmonton Police Service has an online reporting system

By Staff Sergeant Michael Elliott, Edmonton Police Service

No one enjoys coming home to discover someone damaged your vehicle, stole your property or broke into your garage. These events can be traumatic and impactful on you both emotionally and physically. Questions arise as to how I should report this incident to the police? There are several avenues one can take to report a crime. If it is an emergency, where life, safety or property is in immediate danger or there is a crime in progress, please call 911. If it

is a non-emergency, the number is 780-423-4567 or #377 from an Edmonton mobile number.

However, did you know you have another option? The Edmonton Police Service has an online reporting system.

The online reporting allows you to submit reports for certain crime types that meet specific criteria. For details, visit edmontonpolice.ca/ContactEPS/OnlinePropertyCrime

The site will provide you options on how

to report break-and-enters, property damage, vehicular damage, lost property, theft-from-vehicle under \$5,000 and theft under \$5,000.

I hope this information is helpful. If you would like to see other topics of discussion, please contact your local representative in your community league to pass along your query, and I will do my best to answer your question or topic.

Full Circle

An ending much like the beginning

By Michael Ganley



My first editor's note for the Riverbend Ragg-Times was in September, 2020. It was six months after governments had declared states-of-emergencies and ordered lockdowns in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Students were anxious about wearing masks in school, if they were going at all. Business owners were trying to figure out plans to survive. Everyone was dealing with extraordinary circumstances.

I wrote then that it was in times of turmoil that people turn to community more than ever, to our neighbours, friends and family and to the support systems that Canadians have built up over the generations: the schools, the hospitals, the institutions of our democracy.

Well, it seems we've come full circle. This is my final editor's note for the Ragg-Times, and we are once again dealing with extraordinary circumstances. I'll highlight three of them, each of which tumbles into and affects the others. First is the second Trump presidency, with his threats of tariffs and invasions, his affection for autocrats and his general lack of moral fibre. He will test our mettle as a nation.

Then there is the ongoing catastrophe of global warming, with ever-worsening damage to the natural world, our built environment and ourselves, an example of which we have just glaringly witnessed in Los Angeles.

Overarching both of the above is a broad confusion over fact and fiction, truth and lies, what can be seen and believed and what cannot. Social media behemoths Facebook, X and TikTok contribute to this confusion, and their oligarch owners are, if anything, only worsening the situation as they bow to President Trump.

I believe in standing up to bullies, in building resilient and sustainable communities and in taking advantage of good information and expertise. I've been a journalist for much of my career, and believe in the value of professional reporting and fact-finding, governed by professional standards, norms and accountability. In some small way, I like to think the Ragg-Times helps fill the information and news voids that threaten our communities.

But through it all, the people of Riverbend and Terwillegar will continue to give of their time and talent to build strong, welcoming, caring communities. The three terrific community leagues in the area will continue their leadership and we will work together to nurture the systems that enable our schools, our hospitals and the institutions of our democracy.

And the Ragg-Times will continue to tell the stories of the people who have created this inheritance and of the people who carry it forward. It has been a privilege to be the editor of the Ragg-Times and to bring you these stories for five years. I look forward to continuing to write for this small but mighty publication in future.

Riverbendonline.ca

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RCL Board Note



Oh, the Places We'll Go!

I'm excited for what lies ahead for this extraordinary community league

By Miep Raedschelders

A new chapter is beginning for the Riverbend Community League, and we're brimming with excitement! I'm delighted to introduce Mike Lupien as the new president of our Executive Committee. Please join me in giving him a warm Riverbend welcome!

As we reflect on 2024, it's clear it was a year of growth and progress for our league. Heartfelt thanks to the Executive Committee leadership and all the dedicated committees who worked tirelessly to serve our community with passion and pride.

Among our highlights was the successful pilot of the Brookside off-leash dog park, which we look forward to expanding with your input in 2025. The Brookside Hall mural project also came to life, thanks to the incredible artistry of Dave Thomas and the skillful coordination of April Fair. With support from the Edmonton Mural Festival Society and the City of Edmonton's Capital City Cleanup mural grant program, Brookside Hall is now a vibrant, fully rebuilt hub for our community.

Our newly formed events committee kicked off their journey with the fantastic Pets in the Park celebration, and what a success it was! Building on that momentum, they're already planning even

more exciting activities for the coming year. From an East Coast kitchen party to cake decorating workshops, cooking classes, wreath-making sessions and beyond, there's truly going to be something for everyone to enjoy. Additionally, we were thrilled to collaborate with the Alberta Esports Association to host engaging video game tournaments at the Riverbend Community Centre. These events combined fun and friendly competition with valuable lessons in online safety, fostering connections among neighbours of all ages.

If you've ever thought about giving back to the community, we'd love for you to join us. Whether you're full of creative ideas, love organizing events or prefer hands-on volunteering, we welcome all talents and interests. And if you're looking to meet new people, why not take a yoga class, join our gardening groups in Brander Gardens or Brookside or attend one of our many events?

We also have board and leadership opportunities available and are eager to support and mentor new community leaders. Don't be shy – reach out! We're a friendly group, and there's nothing quite like the joy of building a strong, connected community.

A warm welcome to Melissa



The Brookside Hall mural project came to life thanks to the incredible artistry of Dave Thomas and the skillful coordination of April Fair.

Walker, our new Ragg-Times editor, and Tammy Aab, our new rentals and facilities manager. To Mike Ganley and Rod Ponech, we wish you all the best on your next adventures and thank you for your invaluable contributions. Congratulations to Nancy Wendt, Gina Thede, and Deann Stein-Hasinoff on their election to the Board of Directors, joining Mike Lupien as Officers following November's AGM.

It's been the honour of a lifetime to serve as president these past few years, and I'm so proud

of what we've accomplished together. As I pass the torch, I'm excited for what lies ahead for this extraordinary league that means so much to me.

Here's to another amazing year at the Riverbend Community League!

Please support your Community League by purchasing a membership, volunteering and participating in our programs! Advertise your business in the Riverbend Ragg-Times and check out our hall rental opportunities at riverbendonline.ca!

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Making a Difference Everyday

Jessa Kuchmak says representation matters and that ‘servant leadership’ is important

By Dave Rumbold

Jessa Kuchmak is a local entrepreneur, community leader and volunteer who is making a big impact in Edmonton. Apparently, she’s not busy enough raising two kids and acting as a corporate co-CEO to find time for several leadership and community-building activities here in Edmonton.

Born and raised in the Philippines, Jessa emigrated to Canada as a teenager with her family. She served in student government at school before moving to Edmonton. After completing high school here, she graduated with a commerce degree from the University of Alberta and then attained the CPA accounting designation. While at the U of A, she co-founded the Network of Empowered Women and the Philippine Students Association, organizations which continue to thrive today. Jessa was also awarded the inaugural HSBC Women in Business Leadership Award and other scholarships while at U of A. As a young professional after graduation, Jessa served on the U of A Alumni Council and as president of the U of A Business Alumni Association. She was also recognized with a Deloitte Foundation Award and a CPA Alberta Early Achiever Award early in her career.

Jessa articulated at a big-four accounting firm, then moved into a management role in industry. Seven years ago, her entrepreneurial drive led her to co-found Pontem Innovations,

a software solutions company, with a focus on data consulting, analytics and web applications. Pontem has now grown to 15 employees and is firmly established here in Edmonton. Jessa has also consulted with the World Bank, recommending project improvements and assisting in international development projects.

Jessa has volunteered with the Visayas Mindanao Association of Alberta (VISMIND) since moving to Canada and currently serves as its president. VISMIND is dedicated to preserving Filipino culture and traditions and creating a strong and connected local community. She’s also volunteered for many years with other Filipino community organizations, including for the annual Edmonton Filipino Fiesta. In other volunteer work, Jessa has served on the City of Edmonton Non-Profit Housing Corporation (HomeEd) Board and its finance, audit and risk committee. She is a frequent featured guest and keynote speaker at business events and seminars supporting post-secondary education, the accounting profession, entrepreneurship and women in business. Jessa actively mentors young people entering the business world, especially young women.

Jessa believes in being proactive in life and giving back. If an individual sees a problem in our shared community, they need to think about what they can do to help fix it. She says representation



Jessa is a frequent keynote speaker at business events and seminars supporting post-secondary education, the accounting profession, entrepreneurship and women in business.

matters and that ‘servant leadership’ is important. Jessa clearly lives by this principle and will undoubtedly continue to create positive change here in Edmonton.

The State of Public Education

Alberta has the lowest per-student funding in the country

By Rakhi Pancholi, MLA, Edmonton-Whitemud



Hello 2025! As we welcome the new year, I want to thank all of you for your continued engagement in our community and your advocacy for the issues that matter most.

One issue that remains at the top of my mind is the state of public education in Alberta. Recently, education support staff with Edmonton Public Schools took to the picket lines to demand fair wages and better funding for classrooms. Educational

Assistants are key to our classrooms. They ensure that students, especially those with complex needs, get the support they require to learn in an inclusive environment. These workers have not seen a meaningful raise in over a decade and, like many Albertans, are struggling to keep up with the rising cost of living.

But it’s important to keep focused on how we got to this point in our province. Alberta has the lowest per-student education funding in the country. And the government’s current education funding model means that more than 4,000 Edmonton Public School students are not funded at all. It’s clear that properly funding our children’s education is not a priority.

It was particularly shocking to hear the government try to blame underfunded school boards and shockingly underpaid education workers for the situation when the UCP had just voted to give themselves a taxpayer-funded pay increase, living allowance increase, and an increase to their own budget.

As I knocked on doors in the constituency and spoke to many of you at winter community events, I heard again that cost of living stresses remain a top concern for many of you. One cost which remains much higher for Albertans than other Canadians is auto insurance. This has been the case since the cap on car insurance premiums was removed by the UCP in 2019.

So it was surprising to see the government announce in the fall that their new auto insurance model will include a minimum 15 per cent increase in premiums over two years. So if you’re a man paying \$3,000 per year to insure your F-150, in two years, you will pay \$500 more a year. It sounds like the government is listening to the interests of insurance companies over average Albertans.

But it doesn’t have to be this way. Albertans deserve a government that invests in schools, builds attainable housing, and listens to Albertans instead of special interests. We’ve seen what’s possible when we work together for meaningful change, and I’m committed as always to bringing your voices to the Legislature.

I will be hosting an in-person town hall on Thursday, March 13 at Brookview Community League at 7:00 p.m. to discuss your concerns and questions. Please join me for a great conversation!

And if you cannot make it on March 13, as always, I encourage you to share your thoughts and ideas with me at Edmonton. Whitemud@assembly.ab.ca. Your stories, experiences and advocacy inspire me every day to keep building a future that works for everyone.

Good Riddance to Bad Rubbish

Seniors Connection News for those 55+

By Colleen Crozier

Remember that old phrase, “good riddance to bad rubbish”? We used to use it as a farewell to all troublesome or irritating things in life. Rapid changes in technology have given us a wealth of products we waved goodbye to with a resounding, “good riddance!” Here are a few:

Rooftop TV Antennae In the 1950s here in Edmonton, TV arrived. Soon, families who could afford the luxury learned that they needed a rooftop antenna to capture the “waves” that would bring the signal to the TV set. They sprouted like mushrooms, bristling metal sticks and prongs, literally shouting from the rooftops that a TV was within. Later, motorized versions would allow the antenna to rotate to capture signals from other stations. Then, “rabbit ears” could sit on the TV set itself as long as the home was not too far from the broadcast centre. Good riddance!

Iceboxes A precursor to the refrigerator,

iceboxes were marvelous for keeping perishables fresh for city dwellers. They consisted of an insulated box (about the size of today’s small fridge) with three doors at the front: open the largest one and find shelving to hold food in need of cold storage, open the smaller to reveal a metal-lined cavity that held a huge block of ice. The “iceman” would come a couple of times a week, wearing a big black rubber apron, using giant tongs to carry the blocks over his shoulder into the house. But ice melts, and lest water leak all over the floor, it was collected in a pan behind door number 3. Good riddance!

Party Line Telephones When telephones became available and affordable, every household wanted one. In the city, most families could have a private line. In rural areas, however, costs were prohibitive unless users shared. Each household had a crank-operated phone, used to create its unique ring code.

When a call came in for one household, its ring would be heard in all of them. Theoretically, only that family would answer the call; in reality, “rubbernecking” was rampant as the neighbours listened in on calls. Good riddance!

Low-speed Dental Drills They were noisy. They were slow. They consisted of belt-driven segments of sci-fi engineering that scared the daylights out of children and adults alike. Enough said. Good riddance!

Let it be said that all of the above, and many more, were welcomed and rejoiced over when they first came in. Some people, where economics and infrastructure require it, still welcome and enjoy them. It is only when we look back that they pale in comparison to what we enjoy now.

If you’d like to welcome and enjoy some great experiences, why not join South West Edmonton Seniors Association? Our winter programs are just starting, and you will find a warm welcome here.



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Meet the RCL's New President

Mike Lupien takes a leadership role with "a well-oiled machine"

By Michael Ganley

Mike Lupien comes to his new role as president of the Riverbend Community League with a wealth of leadership and volunteer experience. He is or has been on the board of a sports league, an arts festival and a literacy organization. But he says he wanted to get more involved in the Riverbend community, so now he'll bring his skills to the RCL, which he says has been running like "a well-oiled machine" under outgoing president Miep Raedschelders.

Lupien is a professional communicator, having worked in marketing and communications for a number of corporate stalwarts, including Enbridge, Syncrude, Atco and Sobeys. He also took a turn with the Government of Alberta's public affairs bureau in the early 2000s. He now runs his own public relations consulting business, Unrestricted Public Relations.

On the volunteer side, he started coaching with the Terwillegar Riverbend Soccer Association in 2013, when his son was playing U6. He's now playing U19, but Lupien has joined the board because he knows he still wants to be involved after his son ages out.

In the arts, Lupien has been involved with the Edmonton International Film Festival since 2016, and took over as board president in 2018.

The festival features short films, animated shorts and documentaries, and is an Academy Award qualifying festival, meaning winning here makes a film eligible for an Oscar. "We had a great festival in 2019, but then COVID hit," he says. "We're just about back to our pre-COVID numbers."

Lupien also served on the board of the Centre for Family Literacy, which runs programs aimed at improving literacy for children and adults, from 2013 to 2019. He continues to help organize the Centre's premier fundraising program, An Evening of Wine & Words, which has featured artists Jim Cuddy, Corb Lund, Kathleen Edwards and Danny Michel over the years.

Lupien's father was in the Canadian Armed Forces so he moved around a bit when he was young, growing up in Fort McMurray and splitting time between that community and Edmonton as he went through post-secondary education (MacEwan University) and began his career.

Lupien and his wife, Erin, have raised their four kids in Edmonton (the youngest is 15) and currently live in Terwillegar Park Estates.

"What I'm looking forward to is getting out to the events in the community and seeing how people access the community league's programs



Mike Lupien is or has been on the board of a sports league, an arts festival and a literacy organization.

and what sorts of new things we might do," he says. "For me, the next little while will include a lot of fact finding and meeting people."

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Ready to Sprout

Much-loved program returns this year

The Southwest Edmonton Farmers' Market (SWEFM), is pleased to announce that the much-loved Sprouts Program is continuing for the 2025 season!

This is a free children's nutrition program for children ages 4-12 that gives them the opportunity to purchase fruits and vegetables with

a token worth \$2. It will run from May 14 until October 8 this year.

The purpose of the Sprouts program is to introduce kids to nutritional food choices, empower children to make their own healthy eating choices, educate them about where their food comes from, and encourage them to lead a healthy

lifestyle.

We hope to see you at our market this season, and we look forward to meeting our community members and their families! Visit our website (swefm.ca) or follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter for more information.

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Ottawa in Uncertain Times

Prorogation shuts down debate and committee work at a time when Canadians face pressing issues

By Matt Jeneroux, MP, Edmonton Riverbend



With the new year upon us, I wanted to share a few updates on the situation in Ottawa and on our community events.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's resignation, coupled with the prorogation of Parliament until March 24, leaves Canada in a period of political uncertainty. Parliament's prorogation effectively shuts down debate and committee work at a time when Canadians face pressing issues such as affordability, health care challenges, and economic uncertainty. By pausing legislative activity, the Liberals are prioritizing internal party politics over the needs of Canadians.

The Liberal Party's board of directors met on January 9 to discuss the rules and timeline for the leadership election, confirming that a new leader will be chosen on March 9. However, even with a new leader, questions remain about whether the Liberals can address the divisions within their party and govern effectively in a minority setting.

It is critical that the government returns to Parliament in March with a renewed focus on addressing the issues that directly impact Canadians'

daily lives. The next few months will reveal whether the Liberals can rise to the occasion or if it's time for Canadians to consider a new direction. Stability and strong leadership are what our country needs more than ever.

I'd also like to share an update on our 2024 MP Youth Leadership Awards. After carefully reviewing over 100 impressive candidates, five outstanding young students from Grade 7 to Grade 12 were chosen by my office for their exceptional leadership, dedication, and contributions to our community. Their achievements reflect the values of resilience, innovation, and social impact that define the spirit of youth leadership. Our 2025 MP Youth Leadership will be open for nominations this spring and we look forward to receiving more nominations that highlight the exceptional leadership and contributions of young individuals in our community.

My colleagues and I are committed to advocating for Canadians to the best of our ability. A key part of this process is hearing directly from you. As always, please don't hesitate to reach out to my office with your thoughts and concerns.

Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and... Digital Citizenship!

Children need to navigate digital environments in a safe and responsible way

By Julie Kusiek, Trustee and Board Chair, Edmonton Public School Board



With online polarization, bullying and misinformation, it's no wonder that preparing students for the future extends beyond the traditional reading, writing and arithmetic. While the perspectives on citizenship you and I may have grown up with haven't gone away, what citizenship looks like behind a screen is a continually evolving space. Canada's centre for digital media literacy, Media Smarts, defines

digital citizenship as "the ability to navigate our digital environments in a way that's safe and responsible and to actively and respectfully engage in these spaces."

Edmonton Public Schools teaches digital citizenship at every grade level and has responsible use of technology agreements for all students. The teaching emphasizes that we can support each other in growing a digital culture that respects and protects self, others and property within Edmonton Public Schools and beyond. Parents and guardians are important partners in this teaching.

In May 2023, the Board of Trustees held a parent appreciation night with

a presentation for parents on digital citizenship. The evening included tips for parents and guardians on how to have conversations with their children about online apps, social media and digital citizenship. There is even a game you can try at home around the dinner table to get the conversation flowing. The presentation slides can be found on School Zone.

Want further resources to support your child? Families can find several additional resources in SchoolZone. Just log into your parent account then navigate to "Resources" → "Parent and Student Resources."

There, you can find a tip sheet on digital citizenship and another posting with links to six additional resources for students and parents. These resources align with the standards for the International Society for Technology in Education.

Wishing you and the children in your life a safe and enjoyable online experience.

If you have questions or comments about this or anything else about public education, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me via email at trustee.julie.kusiek@epsb.ca or by calling 780-429-8087.

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Fall Review

A big thank you to board members and volunteers who donate their time to help build community at The Ridge Community League! With your help, many things have been accomplished in the past few months. Our Fall Festival was a fantastic family event; new cedar garden beds have been installed at both Haddow and Henderson Parks; seasonal tasks were looked after during the fall work bee; a new sign has been installed at The Ridge Community Centre; we have both ice rinks up and running and being enjoyed by skaters of all ages; and we hosted two new events — Games Night and Family Movie Night!



Skating at The Ridge!

The Ridge has new equipment to maintain the outdoor ice rinks! We have a new John Deere tractor, with a powerful snow blower, front-end scoop and an amazing Zamboni attachment, that will help us create and maintain a top-notch skating surface.



Congratulations to Paul Lange for submitting the winning entry for naming our Tractor and Zamboni.

The Grinch and Max are well suited as the tractor can be grouchy and temperamental like the Grinch, and Max the Zamboni does most of the work and brings joy to all the skaters! Enjoy your restaurant gift certificate prize to Oliveto in Riverbend Square where Ramero and his hard working staff will ensure an amazing experience.

Join Us for Family Fun at The Ridge Winter Festival!

Horse drawn sleigh rides, skating, milk jug curling, tobogganing, and snowshoeing, will all be part of the outdoor fun at our upcoming Winter Festival on Saturday, February 15 from 1:00 – 4:00 pm. You may also step indoors to warm up from the cold, play some games, and learn more about the community gardens. Hot chocolate, mini-donuts, and other snacks will be available for purchase from Big Wayne's Food Truck. Activities are sponsored by City of Edmonton and The Ridge Community League.



We Are Hosting Our First Pub Night!

We are excited to be hosting our first pub night, 7:00 – 11:00 pm, Saturday, March 15th just in time for St. Patrick's Day! It's the perfect opportunity for friends and neighbours to get together at The Ridge Community Centre for some springtime shenanigans and lots of fun! We can't guarantee leprechauns, but there will be lots of food, drinks, music and games! Purchase your tickets at the upcoming Winter Festival or at the door Saturday, March 15th. The Ridge Community League members \$5; non-members \$10 each. Snacks are included in the ticket price and drinks will be available for purchase. We look forward to seeing you there!



Mark Your Calendars

Winter Festival Saturday, February 15, 1:00-4:00 pm. Activities are sponsored by The City of Edmonton and The Ridge Community League.

Pub Night Saturday, March 15, 7:00-11:00 pm. Tickets go on sale in February (see website).

Community Gardens Info & Learning Session Thursday, April 3, 7:00 pm.

Family Leisure Skate Saturdays, Sundays and statutory holidays 2:00-3:00 pm on the large rink. No pucks or sticks allowed during this time.

You Are Important!

We'd like to hear from you! Let us know by emailing info@theridgeonline.ca if you:

- have ideas for future events
- would like to volunteer
- would like to find out more about The Ridge Community League
- would like to tell us what you enjoy about being part of The Ridge Community League

Planting Time Is Coming!

It may seem early, but gardening season is just around the corner! Are you an experienced gardener looking for gardening space, or are you new to gardening and looking for an opportunity to learn? This might be your chance to blossom! After three years of planning, two community gardens have been built for the 2025 growing session in the Haddow and Henderson neighbourhoods. Our kickoff meeting/learning session will be on April 3, 2025 at 7:00 pm at The Ridge Community League Center on Haddow Drive. If you are interested in planting a garden bed in 2025, information will be posted on our website Community Gardens Page, or you may contact us at gardens@theridgeonline.ca. Application forms will be available early in March.



Volunteer Opportunities

In order to maintain vibrancy in our community, we need more volunteers. If you would like to help out with the outdoor rinks, monitor the warmup spaces, volunteer for upcoming events, or help with the gardens in spring & summer, please email volunteer@theridgeonline.ca.

The Ridge Community League 2024-2025 Board

President	Jim Bradshaw	Social Media	Trevor Mayowski
Vice President	Charlotte Powell	Rental Manager	Dianne Dowsett
Secretary	Peter Kunkel	Community Gardens	Frank Engli
Treasurer	Brenda Pierce	Casino Director	Keith Johnson
Membership	Martina Kunkel	Director at Large	Kevin Arnott
Social Director	Dianne Kossowan	Director at Large	Gordon Edmiston
Website	Keith Johnson	Director at Large	Larry Shaben
Communications	Colette Bischoff & Charlene Boyko	Building & Grounds Maintenance	Ken Kozoway
TRAC Ambassador (Haddow)		Gordon Edmiston	
TRAC Ambassador (Henderson)		Peter Kunkel	
TRAC Ambassador (Falconer)		vacant	

Vacant: Volunteer Director, Rink/Courts Director, Program Director, Grant Writer, Rental Manager

Thank you to Loretta Bieneck for her contributions to the board over the past several years, serving as Director at Large and TRAC Ambassador for Falconer.

From the Archives

Thanks to the talented Viewpoint Photography for capturing some of our favourite pooches at Pets in the Park last summer!



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...continued from p.1

Cartmell for Mayor?

wood and rebuild it properly. When we talk about core services like cutting grass and shoveling snow, how many vehicles do we need to get that done in a reasonable amount of time? How many people does it take to operate those vehicles and how many does it take to supervise them? Let's start by organizing those workforce structures in a responsible way."

He then wants to attach budgets to all City activities. "When we get lower down the priority list and run out of money, then that's where we cut off the services," he says. "That's going to mean some things we do now we're not going to be able to do anymore."

Cartmell's tear-down language extends to the way the City runs capital projects. "We need to be far more efficient with the dollars we spend on projects," he says. "We're taking far too long to deliver projects. We're overwhelmed by process and policy. We need better processes, better structures, less policy, fewer motherhood statements, more coordination, less top-heavy staffing structures. We need to build it better in just about every way."



"The idea that we turn a blind eye to disorder and bad behaviour in public spaces has to stop," says Ward pihësiwin councillor and mayoral candidate Tim Cartmell.

Cartmell has chosen to form a political party under the new provincial Bill 20 legislation, which increases spending limits for candidates and allows for donations from corporations and unions.

He says he is concerned that the legislation will allow money's influence on politics to grow, but says he needs to do so to compete with the other parties he expects will be created.

"I want to take a skills approach to building a team that presents itself

to voters as a slate," he says. "We'll check the boxes of the party system because if we are going to compete with politically oriented parties, which seems to be the province's goal, we need the resources to do so. It becomes a bit of a money race. I don't particularly like it, but I want to turn it on its head and talk about skills, capacity and knowledge and take it away from a political divide."

Former city councillor Tony Caterina is the only other declared candidate thus far.

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Managing Municipal Finances

“I'm cautiously optimistic about three key initiatives Council has approved”

By Tim Cartmell, City Councillor, Ward pihêsiwin



I hope you've had a chance to rest and spend time with loved ones over the holiday season. As the decorations come down and we settle back into our routines, City Council is already hard at work tackling the challenges ahead in 2025. Despite the financial pressures we face as a city, I remain hopeful that this year will bring positive changes in how we manage our municipal finances.

As we begin 2025, I want to share important information about recent City budget decisions. This past December, Council approved property tax increases of 6.1 per cent for 2025 and 6.8 per cent for 2026. I voted against these increases, and here's why: The real impact on Edmonton homeowners will be substantially higher than

these numbers suggest. When we factor in rising property values, the average homeowner will face a 14.2 per cent increase in 2025, not the 6.1 per cent being reported. From 2023 to 2025, the cumulative property tax increase will reach 21.3 per cent. This means the City's property tax revenue will grow by \$500 million in just three years.

While the 2025 increase was reduced from 8.1 to 6.1 per cent, this was accomplished by borrowing from future years, leaving a financial burden for the next Council. This approach isn't sustainable, which is why I've pushed for fundamental reforms in how we manage your money.

Looking ahead, I'm cautiously optimistic about three key initiatives Council has approved: establishing an infrastructure committee that includes private sector experts; pausing major project spending; and introducing zero-based

budgeting – a method in which all expenses must be justified for each new period – for a comprehensive review of City finances.

For 2025, my priorities include implementing these new oversight mechanisms effectively, reviewing the Neighborhood Renewal program's scope and spending, finding departmental efficiencies without compromising essential services, and ensuring every tax dollar is justified through zero-based budgeting.

These reforms will take time to implement, but they represent an important shift in how we manage City finances. I remain committed to fixing our budget process once and for all.

As always, I want to hear from you. Your input matters to me; it's what keeps me grounded and helps me fight for what our community needs. Drop me a line at tim.cartmell@edmonton.ca or call 780-496-8130. I want to hear your thoughts on these changes and what matters most to you.

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Make way for 2025!

Happy New Year from Brookview Community League, with Chinese New Year approaching!

Happy New Year to all our community members and wishing you a safe and successful year ahead. If the internet is to be believed, the Snake encourages introspection, wisdom and transformation.

Winter Festival Appreciation Thank you to all community members who came out to enjoy skating, curling, fire pits and sleigh rides.

Brookview Community Casino Volunteers Needed - 2025Q3, Day Shift and Night Shift The BCL is looking for volunteers for the upcoming casino to help fund our operations and programming. More details will be shared as the date is known. Please volunteer to help us maximize the amount we receive in return for our efforts. Email casino@brookviewcommunityleague.ca.

Brookview Community Programming Please visit our website for information on upcoming programs which include breakdancing and yoga. Free drop-in with valid community membership at Booster Juice Recreation Centre, Sunday evenings (5 p.m. to 7 p.m.).

Brookview Rink (and Snowbank Rink) Opens BCL opened its outdoor rink in December. Check the website for rink hours with dedicated family skate times.

BCL Website and Newsletter For more Brookview news, check out brookviewcommunityleague.ca. BCL is planning to circulate a newsletter. Check the website to sign up!




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Join us for Ski Night at Snow Valley!

And the 20th annual TRAC Community Run/Walk is planned for Sunday, May 25

By Karin Shott

Community Ski Night
TRAC is pleased to report that we will be having our annual Community Ski Night at Snow Valley on Saturday, February 8, from 6 to 9 p.m. There are a limited number of tickets available, and participants will be able to enjoy the evening at a great price point which includes a lift ticket, rental and an introductory lesson (if needed).

Save the \$5 Admin Fee
Purchase your community league membership via the TRAC Community Office which is located in the Booster Juice Recreation Centre in Terwillegar (Terwillegar Rec Centre). If you wish to purchase or renew your membership in person, the office is open Mondays



and Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Thursdays 4 to 8 p.m., and the first and third Saturdays of the month from 12 to 4 p.m. Payment options include cheque, cash, e-transfer and debit. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the office at yegtrac@gmail.com or by phone at 780-439-9394.

Outdoor Soccer If you have someone interested in playing outdoor soccer, please check trsa.ca for more information. A current community league membership is required to play soccer. Not sure if your membership is current? Email



It's time to start your training regimen for the TRAC Community Run/Walk

the TRAC Office at yegtrac@gmail.com. All community league memberships expire August 31.

Save the Date The 20th annual TRAC Community Run/Walk is planned for Sunday, May 25. Stay tuned for more information.



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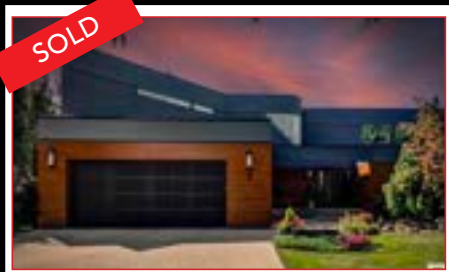
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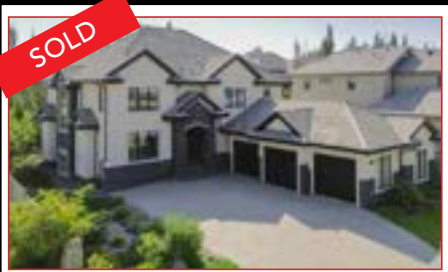
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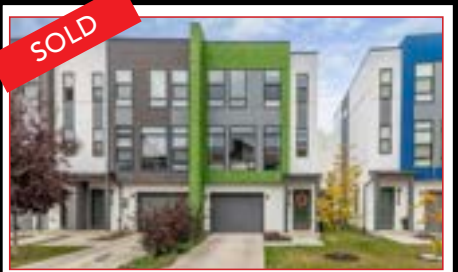
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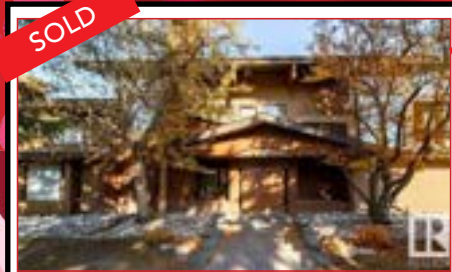
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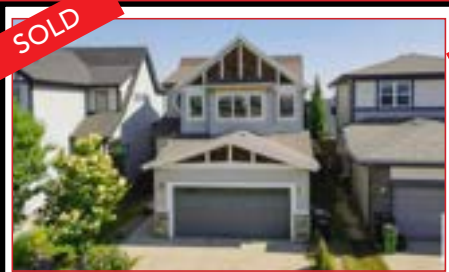
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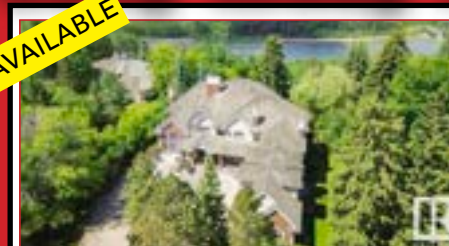
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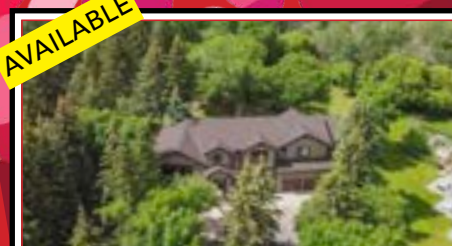
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