

Boyle McCauley News

FREE (in Boyle Street & McCauley)

August 1997

New family housing coming to McCauley

by Anna Bubel

More family housing is coming to McCauley.

At a meeting on July 9, 12 community members approved an application to build two duplexes. The south side of 109 Avenue between 96 and 97 Street will look very different in the fall. What are now empty lots (except for garbage and an abandoned car) will soon contain two duplexes and four families.

The community was shown detailed drawings of the proposed buildings by the developer, Menno Klaasen of SkilTec. Each duplex will have one three bedroom unit (1164 ft²) and one four bedroom unit (1400 ft²).

Menno has designed attractive units, all of which have entrances which face the street. The sides of the units have also been staggered so that the neighbours don't face long blank walls.

As neighbour Tom Hucal explains, "I agree with it. Definitely better than the empty lot. New construction will bring up property values. The main concerns are who is renting, and parking on the street".

The units conform with the DC1 zoning for the area, which permits two units on one lot.

Ele Gibson, co-chair of the McCauley Community League was "delighted. It's an innovative design. It will attract fami-

lies to the area and help stabilize the community."

The Planning Department is supporting the application. "I think that this is exactly what the Area Redevelopment Plan called for. We hope this will provide an excellent example of what can and should be done by other developers" said Ken Zahara of the Planning Department.

While the owners, Camilla and Bert Witt, don't live in the community, the Witts are not going to be traditional absentee landlords. During the community meeting, Camilla encouraged neighbours to call if they encountered any difficulties. She also emphasized that the Witts will pick their tenants carefully.

Ms. Witt explained, "We wanted to come up with something that would provide a hand up: stable, decent housing for people who might not be able to find it.

Our particular focus was on families with children. We wanted the housing to be decent and affordable so people can have stability, better health, and can concentrate on a good family life".

Glenna Roper, long-standing resident concluded, "I think it's a positive move. An improvement. I hope there will be children as part of the development because we have all the facilities. I hope it's a happy place".



The making of Kimo's Mai Tai at his birthday celebration.

Kimo announces retirement

Story and photos by Ping Chen

On Friday, July 4, Kimo Trent celebrated his 75th birthday by announcing his retirement from most of the community work he is so well known for. About 50 friends attended a party at his residence to celebrate and to say goodbye. As Ed Laboucane said,

Kimo is the one man responsible for getting everybody to take the community back from the drug dealers and the slum landlords and the like. Kimo never said no to anyone, just took on their problem and found a way to help. His home and his heart were always open to anyone who needed him. Kate Quinn could not be there but send a card which was read aloud.

It said that it is time for Kimo to move from creating stories through active work to telling stories like the grandfathers of old. Then his children's children will know what it means to be a community activist - a person who actively cares for his community, who listens and who works for the good of the community. Kimo chose July 4 for his retirement because it is American Independence Day and being

American himself, it was his independence day, too. He did admit that he is going to keep working a little, that he could never lay down and fade away. As Kimo said, he will still be keeping an eye out! Kimo has played a major role in projects of value to the community and been instrumental in children's programming.

He has taken part in the Children and Community Project, been a board member of the Avenue of Nations, past chair of the McCauley Community League, member of the board of the planning and co-ordinating committees of ARP, board member of the Community Planning Office, and chair of the Crime and Safety Committee. Last month Kimo was central in the organizing of the NIP celebration.



Kids splash and spray water in a fire engine hot tub at the McCauley community After School and Day Care Center, July 3. The converted fire truck was just part of the fun for their summer start party.

Photo courtesy of Rob McKinley, Sweetgrass

INSIDE:

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Reflections

Travelling tent ministry plants seeds

by Peter Van

6 a.m. on a damp Wednesday morning and the tent flaps rustle softly in the breeze as the night watchman is awakened by the crunch of tires on rough asphalt. A lone police cruiser stops for a quick check at the 96 Street liquor store.

The regular customers have not begun to assemble yet. Perhaps this morning a new hunger will displace their chronic thirst, a hunger ignited by the fire that burns in the hearts of those working the "Gospel Tent Ministry".

Allan O'Soup, former street alcoholic, confesses compassionately "After a while, you begin to think that this is all there is to life."

He's been on the night watch over the tent, making sure the chairs don't exercise their legs. A trio of early risers are shuffling along, bringing back his memories of desperation.

As one of the group approaches us, Allan remembers "The drinking and wandering becomes who you are and nothing matters much any more."

To see Allan now, a happily married father of seven, it's difficult to believe he was once one of our city's

"lost sheep". His confident, clean cut stature is tempered with an air of humanity and humour that testifies to his cause. Allan, his wife Carole, and son Kurtis travel with his gospel tent ministry.

The shuffler gets right into Allan's face and asks for a few bucks to buy morning coffees.

"What's your name?" asks Allan. "Daniel".

"What's your last name and where are you from?"

Searching Allan's face, Daniel reveals his last name and home area. From his extensive past travels, Allan brings up a few names of possible relations to Daniel.

For the past 12 years, Allan has been travelling with his tent ministry throughout the western provinces and the territories. From July 20 to 27, the ministry, under the banner of the Almond Tree Ministries, was located on an empty lot opposite the 96 Street liquor store.

Allan O'Soup is native and was saved at just such a tent mission by Mac Hyland, rodeo cowboy turned preacher. Mac and Allan share the ministry with Allan's brother-in-law Walter Stevenson and a host of oth-

ers.

The travelling salvation ministry is referred to by some as the "Cowboy and Indian" show. Later Allan will tell the crowd "You can either hear it from me, the little Indian, or come tomorrow night and listen to the old cowboy."

The message is refreshingly old, to the point, and effective. The warm up tunes are the old gospel standards, but ring with new expectation for the night's meeting. Each night miracles do happen.

Some of the people that most of us have given up on as not only lost, but doomed, "git their fire lit" or "git their light turned on".

Allan concedes that he has seen some of the faces of those that come forward before, but maintains "The seeds are planted and somewhere along the way it gets watered and grows; God provides the increase." A testimony to those words is evident by the number of attendees at the meetings that have found the increase and are supporting his ministry.

Daniel thanks Allan for the three bucks and leaves with a "maybe I'll come to your Jesus Pow-Wow tonight".

Allan shakes his head watching them go. "I usually never give money, but I know that this time they are going for coffee. When asked if he thought they would come to a meeting, he replied, "We've got to pray them in".

The three masted tent went up in three hours and was taken down in half that time. Everything fits into a 16 foot horse trailer and 3/4 ton truck. Next stop Slave Lake and then on to Saskatchewan.

Yes, inner city drinking is a serious problem around the Boyle-McCauley liquor store, but there are those who would help by working towards salvaging lives. Allan O'Soup, with his travelling tent ministry, is one of those people. God bless you Allan.

(Peter Van grew up in the neighbourhood and attended St. Michael School and Sacred Heart Church. His family is considering moving to McCauley.)

Park Trade Is a Go


by Ele Gibson, Co-Chair of McCauley Community League

McCauley will not be losing much needed parkland. The Community League gave its support to a proposed development on the site of the present West McCauley Park on the condition that the money from its sale be used to purchase land and develop a new park close to the existing park. City Councillors gave their support to this proposal on June 17 and have indicated their commitment to supporting of the rezoning of the new park site.

The Community League are working with representatives of Community Services, formerly Parks and Recreation, with the design of the new

park. A location on land presently owned by the City has been identified on the east side of 97th street immediately north of the underpass. The location is perfect as it has visibility from the street and is already used as a walkway by community members. It will also improve the streetscape of 97 Street by providing green space in a densely developed area.

The park will have the same facilities as the present West McCauley Park including a gazebo, shade trees, picnic tables and a water fountain. It is, however, in no way to be thought of as a "drinking" park. It is no way connected to that proposed development proposed earlier this year immediately south of Bissell Centre.



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Barbecue is Inner City Answer to Klondike Days

Story and photo by John Zapantis

Off duty firemen from Number 5 Fire Dept. and soldiers from Edmonton's C.f.B. Canadian Airborne served over 1000 people at the 13 annual inner city barbecue at Giovanni Caboto Park, July 20.

The barbecue was sponsored by the Boyle Street Co-op and the Bissell Center working together with other agencies and small businesses. "This is the inner city's answer to Klondike Days," said Ele Gibson, who works at the Bissell Center.

Local talent was featured in a talent show. First prize, consisting of watches and T-shirts, went to the folk rock duo, Dougie Carlson and

Darcy Letendre.

"There's a lot of talent in the inner city. We've got some awesome prizes, plus it builds up self esteem and gives you something to enjoy while eating," said Shane Lafond outreach worker at the Boyle Street Co-op. Dorothy Gladue, a visitor from Grand Prairie, attended the barbecue while in the Boyle McCauley community. She had nothing but compassion for those in attendance.

"This is my first time here and I'm happy to for a lot of people who have something to eat," she said. "But you see this now, they should have this everyday."

Hungry people line up to be served by off duty firemen at the Inner City Barbecue. ➔



Reflections withdraws bid

by Anna Bubel

For the second time, Reflections Acute Relief Society has withdrawn its application for a development permit.

The permit to run "counselling offices and storage for dispensing household items" was appealed by the McCauley Community League (MCL) on the grounds that the zoning does not conform with Reflections' proposed uses. The building in question, on the west side of 96 Street just south of 106 Avenue, is zoned RA8 - Medium Rise Apartment District.

The Development Appeal Board (DAB) hearing was scheduled for June 24 at 6 p.m. Gathered to speak for the proposal were two supporters of Reflec-

tions. About 10 people were prepared to speak against the application; these people were comprised of MCL representatives, local residents and business persons.

At 6:30 p.m., the group was informed that the City Clerk's Office had just received a fax from the law firm Cruickshank Karvellas. The fax stated that Reflections was withdrawing its application permit. No explanation was given; the move came as a surprise to Reflections' supporters at City Hall.

At 10:00 p.m., the DAB heard the case. Although the permit had been withdrawn, the MCL decided to present its concerns.

"There are 23 churches and agencies with six food banks within a five block

radius of this site. If all of them are considered "religious assemblies" there would be no end to the philanthropic activities," the League argued in a brief.

League co-chair Ping Chen stated that the MCL has always supported community projects that serve local residents. She indicated that Reflections ignored the Area Redevelopment Plan and hadn't consulted with local residents or community agencies prior to applying for the permit.

Susan Wissink, speaking for the League, indicated that she was "disappointed that the decision couldn't have been made in such a way as to inform the Planning Department of our issues and concerns.

"Basically the Religious Assembly

use was completely unacceptable. Having the DAB agree with that would have been helpful. We will have to pursue this other ways and will be writing a letter to the Planning Department".

Speaking about the DAB process, Wissink added, "This is the second time we went around on this, and at great inconvenience. We had to organize community meetings, met with the Planning Department and Reflections.

"They (Reflections) were very inconsiderate."

Chen concluded that "By withdrawing at the last minute, Reflections showed no respect for the community or for the Development Appeal Board."

What does RA8 Zoning allow for?

- Apartment Housing
- Stacked Row Housing
- Boarding and Lodging Houses
- Limited Group Homes
- Minor and Major Home Occupations
- Single Detached, Semi-detached and Duplex Housing
 - Fraternity and Sorority Housing
 - Foster Homes
 - Child Care Services
- Personal Service Shops and Convenience Retail Sales
 - Professional Offices
 - Religious Assembly
 - Residential Sales Centre

What Does "Religious Assembly" Mean?

Religious Assembly means development used for worship and related religious, philanthropic or social activities and includes accessory rectories, manses, meeting rooms, classrooms, dormitories and other buildings. Typical uses include churches, chapels, mosques, temples, synagogues, parish halls, convents and monasteries."



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Ten McCauley grads get Puck perks

by Alyssa Hopkins

Ten graduating grade 9 students from McCauley Elementary/Junior High School received scholarships from Peter Pocklington this past June.

Before writing this article, I interviewed one of the 10 students, Joanna Gallivan-Smith. She filled me in on why these scholarships were created, who is eligible, what they cover, how long the scholarship has been offered, and how much longer it will be offered.

To qualify for these scholarships, you must live in the inner-city and attend McCauley school for at least two years of junior high, including grade 9. To receive the scholarship, you must have at least 80 per cent as your final report card mark. There is no limit on the number of students who may receive it. Even if an entire grade 9 class were to have over 80 per cent as their over all average, they would all be awarded the scholarship.

These scholarships completely cover a post-secondary degree. Not only does it cover tuition, it also covers books.

This scholarship was created by Peter Pocklington (owner of

back row: (l. to r.): Emily Westwood (Principal), Gumpwa Luong, Micah Luong, Boe Lefebvre, Samuel Ngai, Peter Pocklington.

front row: Huong Dao, Anna Ly, Susan Nguyen, Yin Tran, Cleo Espiritu, Joanna Gallivan-Smith

the Edmonton Oilers) in the hope that it would motivate people who normally wouldn't be able to afford to go to university. It gives students a reason to try in school when they otherwise might not have.

When Pocklington first started awarding this scholarship three years ago, he set it to continue for the next 10 years. Therefore these scholarships will continue for the next seven years.

At the end of my conversation I had just one question for Joanna:

Me: "Since Peter Pocklington is selling the Oilers, do you have any concerns about him following through with the scholarships?"

Joanna: "The thought crossed my mind, but I wasn't really worried because I trusted he wouldn't make a 10 year commitment if he couldn't keep it."



Leo Regehr

by Linda Dumont

"It's a lawless atmosphere in the inner city, like the wild west in the United States," said Leo Regehr. Regehr is just one of the advocates whose services are available through the Inner City Advocacy Network (ICAN) op-

Inner City Advocacy Network Fights Slum Landlords

erating out of Mustard Seed Street Church. With the Tenants Protection Program, Regehr is there to help tenants who are having problems with their landlords, but he will help landlords with troublesome tenants as well. According to Regehr, there are many problems. Lack of health standards is probably number one: just unsafe and unhealthy housing. Other severe problems include illegal evictions and illegal seizures. "We are there for the lockouts, thefts, B&Es, theft of tenants property. There's enough of that to keep us busy,"

Regehr explained "Sometimes the landlord is intimidated 'I've got some drug dealers in here, how do I get rid of them?' 'I'm asked.'" Regehr has been working with ICAN since April. He does the investigations, then the lawyers take it to court. Lawyer Derek Chapman is the first to take a case in the program. He works "pro bono", donating his services. Regehr and Chapman are currently working together on the court case on behalf of Norman Gaucher. Gaucher paid two month rent plus damage deposit on an apartment. The caretaker assured him that the premises were cockroach free, but when Gaucher went to move in, he found the place infested. He then refused to move, and asked for the return of his two months rent plus damage deposit. The caretaker and the landlord both refused. In civil court, Gaucher is asking for the return of money he paid plus costs. "This is the opening shot in the war against slum landlords," said Regehr. "We need private litigation as in the O.J. Simpson case where the victims established a money claim. That is what is needed to attack the slum landlords. It will take the money out of it for them."

ICAN is there to help with problems where advocacy is required. They can be reached by phoning the Mustard Seed. Leo Regehr handles problems which are of a serious nature regarding landlord and tenant problems. Rayna Haythorne co-ordinates programs, handles some of the problems personally, or connects you with someone else who can help. Mike Trevil is available for problems dealing with the workplace, U.I.C. claims, and workmans' compensation problems.

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Safe housing saved!

by Harvey Voogd

Safe, appropriate and decent housing is a necessity for everyone in our city. This was the message City Council heard and listened to in July when it voted to keep the Safe Housing Committee (SHC) and Landlord Tenant Advisory Board (LTAB).

"Safe housing is not a privilege; it is a right for all citizens."

These words by Jane Russell captured the feeling at public hearings held by City Council on July 16. Many neighbourhood folks and organizations came to speak out in support of the SHC and LTAB.

"I turned 75 on July 4 and had gone into full retirement," said Kimo Trent. "But I'm here today on behalf of the McCauley Community League because I've attended funerals of people who have died in rooming house fires."

"Why axe a program that has proven itself and whose work is still not done?" questioned local resident Rosalie Gelderman.

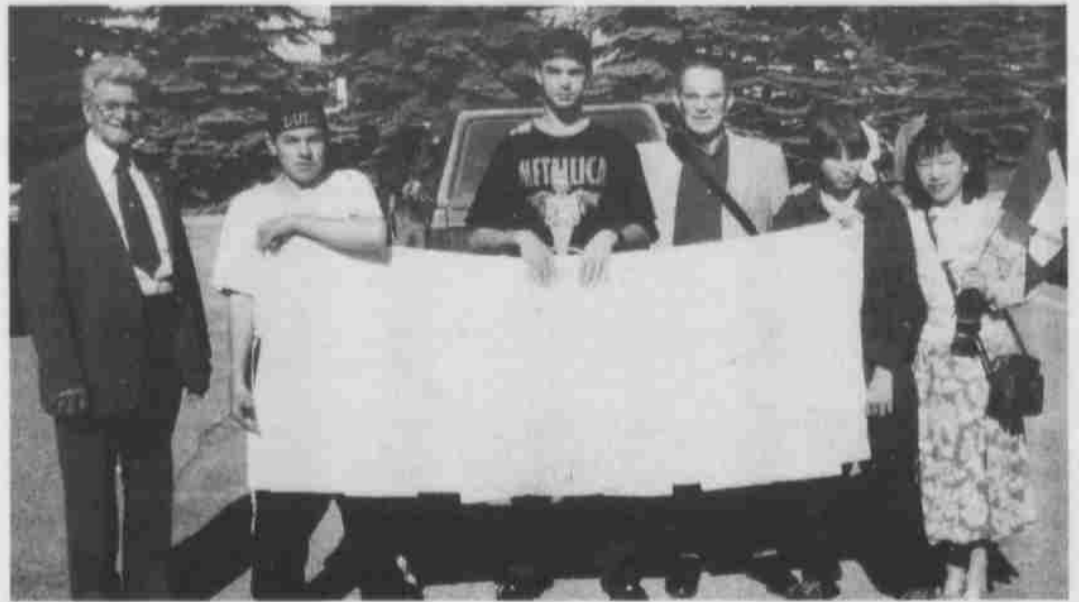
Speaking on behalf of Operation Friendship, Rosalie stated, "SHC works!"

"Our most vulnerable citizens' lives are at stake in rooming houses and low rental housing. The prompt response because of departmental coordination is what is valuable and was not existing before SHC."

Dr. Sandor Demeter, Deputy Medical Officer of the Capital Health Authority, backed up Gelderman's remarks. "Coordination reduces duplication. The SHC is economical, comprehensive and efficient."

In five years, the SHC has inspected over 340 properties and caused some 582 units of housing to be upgraded. As well, 30 buildings have been closed as unsafe. Yet, there are still 1,300 buildings on their list to be inspected.

Support for the LTAB came not only from tenants, but also landlords. McCauley resident Kate Quinn spoke of how valuable the advice of LTAB had been in the eviction of a tenant.



From left: Kimo, Jim, Moki, Ed, Steven and Ping carried a banner "McCauley Salutes Giovanni Caboto, in the first Giovanni Caboto Days Parade on June 29. The Nazionale Marinai d'Italia Society sponsored the parade, and due to this years sucess, the society is looking forward to this becoming an annual event.

As George Kelly, of Edmonton Inner City Housing Society, pointed out, "The LTAB is the one service any citizen of Edmonton - be they tenant or landlord - can use to get information about their rights under the law."

"As a landlord, we have made use of this service many times seeking information and advice. We cannot stress too strongly how valuable it has been to us."

LTAB has been in service 25 years and last year handled 52,000 requests, one-third of which came from landlords. It helped with 600 mediations and made 12,500 referrals.

Hard to find decent place to rent

by Harvey Voogd

At the end of February, my partner Marie and I began to look for a new place to rent. We could afford up to \$600 in rent and utilities and needed a place with a garage for Marie's business.

Our first choice was to stay in McCauley.

We walked throughout McCauley and quickly decided we only wanted to live north of 107A Avenue. Our search led us to look at only one place, but the inside turned out to be dirty and rundown. The rent was \$450.

Next we decided to expand our search to the area from 111 to 118 Avenue and between 97 and 90 Streets. We drove down all the blocks and came up with a short list of seven places. We looked at about five and then found the place we now live.

It's in Norwood, has a double garage and 900 square feet on

the main floor with a finished basement. We've got good neighbours, an excellent landlord and signed a 1 year lease for \$500 a month.

A check with the City and Northwestern Utilities confirmed the gas and utilities will cost us no more than \$100 a month based on an annual average. A place we could afford!

Though I'm happy with my new home, I'm sad that after 12 years living in McCauley the only decent place I could find was in Norwood. I'm concerned that other people like us, especially families with children, may have to leave McCauley because of the shortage of decent family housing.

Sometime in the future, Marie and I will be looking for a house to buy. Will we be able to find a good place to buy in McCauley? I hope so, but I fear we may once again be looking north of McCauley in Norwood or Parkdale.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

by Gail Campos, Ping Chen & Cameron McDonald

Submissions for the Community Calendar must be received by the last Wednesday of the month. Phone: 424-2870 or fax 424-2868.

Boyle McCauley Health Centre

10628 -96 Street
NEW HOURS:
 Mon. to Thurs. 9 am -9 pm (Friday 9 am - 4:30 pm)
 Immunization Clinic for Children: Mon. 1-3 pm
 Foot Clinic (Wed. 1-3 pm)
 Lab Hours: Mon. to Fri.: 9 am to 4:30 pm, Sat: 9:00 am - 12 noon.
 Dental Clinic & Streetworks: open during clinic hours. "Watch for new hours in September."

Operation Friendship

9526 -106 Avenue
 McCauley Seniors Drop in:
 Mon - Fri. 9 am - 6:30 pm
 Sat and Sun. 10:30 am - 6:30 pm

Wecan Food Coop Members

Pick up food on the 2nd last Friday of the month, 3 - 5 pm
 St. Peter Lutheran Church
 9606 -110 Avenue
 (New members welcome, contact 424-2870.)

Edmonton Family Worship Centre

10605 - 96 Street (424-6422)
 Sunday Worship - 10 am & 7 pm
 Intercessory Prayer- Tues and Fri 6-8 am
 Church Picnic at Rundle Park on Sun., Aug. 31 from 1:30 pm to 7:00 pm. Phone 424-6422 for further details.

McCauley LETSystem

Trading event last Monday of the month.
 7:00 pm Info: 424-2870.
 (New members welcome, come and check it out.)

The Rock

c/o St. Peter Lutheran Church
 96 St. and 110 Ave. 426-1122
 Community Breakfast
 Tues and Thurs 7:30-9:00 am
 Kids Club, Mon. 6:00 - 7:15 pm.
 Martial Arts Jeet Kune Do 15 yrs.+, Sun. 6:30 - 8:00 pm

Bissell Centre

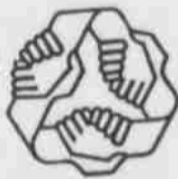
Women's Self-Defence
 Thursday 1:30-3:00 pm
 Native Circle: Wed. 7 pm
 Movie Night: Thurs. 7 pm
 Women's Lunch: Fri. 12-1:00 pm

McCauley Community League Board Meeting

First Monday of the month at 6:30 pm, McCauley Community Hall 10750-96 Street
 All members welcome

Boyle Street McCauley Community Hub

Volunteer Leadership Development Course starting in September (5 sessions). Call 424-2870 for more details.



Salvation Army

9611 -102 Avenue
 Men's Residence.
 Anchorage Addiction and Rehab Program.
 Chapel Services -Wed 1:00 pm - Sun - 6:15 pm.
 Community Food Services - Every Wed. and Fri. 3-4 pm.
 Men's Clothing - Mon-Fri 11 am - 11:00 am; starts 1 pm
 Phone 429-4274

Boyle Street Co-op

11016 - 105 Avenue
 Income tax services: free to people living on a low income, Wednesday 1-4 pm.

Boyle Street Community League

9515 -104 Avenue
 Bingo Sat & Sun. doors open 11:00 am; starts 1 pm

McCauley Community League

If you want to join the McCauley Community League, call 425-8883. There is an excellent package of useful information for new MCL members.

Pam Barrett



M.L.A.
 Edmonton
 Highlands

Legislative Office:
 415-0944

Constituency Office:
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 414-0682

Town Hall Meeting: Sept. 10, 7-9 pm
 Highlands Community Hall, 11333 - 62 St.



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Under-11 team with coach Woody Skani

Good season for soccer teams

All four of McCauley's soccer teams made the North Zone playoffs, but unfortunately none of them made it past the first round. In spite of our early exit from the playoffs, each team had a very good season.

The U-9, U-11 and U-13 teams were each placed in a higher group midway through the season because of their good play.

Good enthusiasm existed on all teams and each team celebrated the season's end with a pizza party at Pizza Hut and the awarding of trophies to each player.

Because of the success of this past outdoor season, the McCauley Community League has agreed for the first time to sponsor a team for the indoor season. The team will



Under-9 team with coaches Caroline Stuart and Dorothy Henneveld

be an Under-11 team.

Registration for this team will be held in early September.

Information will be sent home with children who attend Sacred Heart, McCau-

ley, St. Michael or Norwood school the first week of school.

If your child does not attend these schools or you would like more information, please call Harvey Voogd at 474-2576.



Under-15 team with coach Wally Lysz



Under-13 team with coach Harvey Voogd

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At the old Fishing Hole

by Tom Hind

It was a sweltering day. Few clouds flew the blue ocean of sky overhead. Cal and I had our lines set in the North Saskatchewan, still fishing. The lines were still, no twitch.

No breeze. Only the movement of sun and cloud. I lay on my back, letting my unmoored feet feel the delight of freedom. An ant ran across the big toe of my right foot. Of a sudden, Cal yelled, "You got a bite, Tom!"

I sat up immediately and watched my line. Sure enough, it took a big dip, curling my rod. Whack! I dipped furiously. I grabbed my rod and gave it a huge yank, setting my hook well into whatever was on the end of the line.

I felt a large struggle as the fish tried to pull away from the searing hook lodged in its mouth. "O boy," I thought, "I got a big one." "What is it, Tom?" Cal yelled. "I don't know," I replied, "Whatever it is, it's a whopper." T

he line flew from the rod as the fish ran with it. I let it run about twenty feet before putting a hold on the fish, slowly reeling it in. I felt the fish jolt as I put the brakes on its run. This was going to be a violent battle.



It took me an hour and a half to bring the sucker in, with Cal coaching from down bank. "Ease up. Let the line out. Let it run!" Cal instructed. Finally I got a look at the fish about thirty feet from the bank as it surfaced. I couldn't believe what I saw. Neither could Cal. "Wow!"

he yelled. I ain't never seen one of them before in the river. My rod bent like a sapling as the fish took one last attempt to dislodge the sharpened hook. But it was too well set. Finally I managed to land the huge fish. Not bad for a twelve pound test, I thought.

Cal had to give me a hand in lifting the fish out of the water, it was so heavy. It was about nine feet long and a yard wide, weighing in at about three hundred pounds. "What the hell kind of fish is it," I asked Cal, "I never saw one like it before." Cal took a good look at the gasping fish, stuck his tongue in his right cheek, and said: "It's a minnow, Tom. They grow OOOOOOOO' m big in this river."

Needless to say I let the minnow go. Cal and I rolled it back into the river. With a mighty splash of its tail the minnow took off.

After all, you gotta let the little ones grow, eh?

The McBryan Court Challenge

by Linda Dumont

"When people are cut off welfare, they just accept it. They're on the street. I've become concerned that it's a systemic prevalent problem for people on assistance to successfully challenge a negative government decision.

They don't have the confidence or the funds," said lawyer Shirish Chotalia. "They are disenfranchised members of society. I believe it's a human rights issue for Albertans throughout the province."

"When I've been really demeaned by somebody, I won't stick up for myself. Intimidated people don't enforce their rights," said Leo Regehr, advocate for landlord and tenancy problems. "That's why we have a problem, a big problem."

I attended two fund-raising art sales put on by Theresa McBryan, a woman who has decided to challenge the system by taking the Department of Social Services to Court of Queen's Bench. McBryan was cut off supports for independence in April. At that time she was attending a mandatory course, Goodwill's Power of Work, designed to get her into the workforce. She had been living on tea and potatoes for weeks. "My body just broke down," McBryan



explained. She came down with a bad case of bronchitis. The doctor prescribed ten days of rest. When she returned to the course with her doctor's note, she found out that she had been cut off assistance for non-compliance. An

appeal was unsuccessful even with her medical report as evidence. McBryan was going to take refuge in a shelter, but a friend, Penny Frazer, convinced her to move into her garage for the summer, and advocated for her in launching a court challenge.

Her lawyer, Shirish Chotalia is taking the case before the courts and is willing to accept whatever McBryan can raise through art sales and other sources as payment. Whether or not McBryan is reinstated, this is an important first step in the route to empowerment for people who feel abused by the welfare system.

We must remember that social assistance is a legal right. Regardless of whatever prejudice exists, the system came into being to serve those who use it. If the system is not working, it can be changed through legal channels. Change only comes when enough people insist on change and take appropriate steps

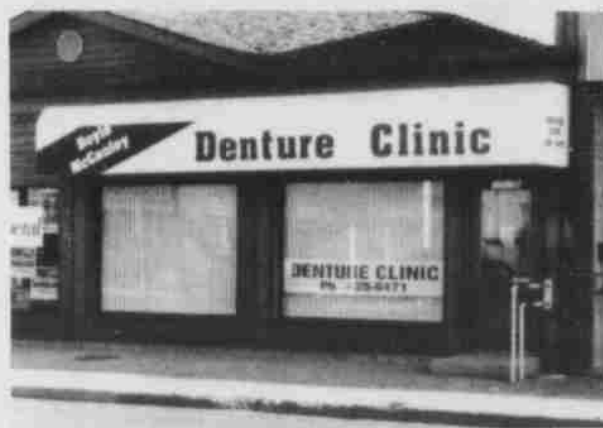
to initiate change. The present welfare system came about because of the mass need and unemployment of the thirties. We have to do more than just complain to our friends and neighbors and find fellowship in discontent. Unfortunately, those who share in the suffering and need are often not in a position to challenge the system. The welfare diet alone is enough to rob initiative. Pat Caponi, in her book "Dispatches from the Poverty Line" describes its effect on social workers who went on the welfare diet for a week. They found that it led to chronic fatigue, lack of motivation, and depression. Perhaps what is termed laziness is simply a side effect of poor nutrition.

Change can be made. There are those who are willing to give of their time and resources to help: lawyers like Shirish Chotalia who is helping Theresa McBryan, and Derek Chapman who donates time to work with ICAN, advocates like Leo Regehr, the others at ICAN, and Leslie Regelous, concerned citizens who are in a position to work towards change like Senator Ermine Cohen, friends who believe in you like Penny Frazer.

"God grant me the strength to change the things I can, the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, and the wisdom to know the difference."

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