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Boyle McCauley News

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The Piazza Has a New Owner

Teresa Spinelli steps up to protect community investment.

PAULA E. KIRMAN

Italian Centre Shop owner and McCauley resident Teresa Spinelli has made what she believes is a bad business decision – but for a good reason.

She recently purchased The Piazza, the commercial strip mall located at 108th Avenue and 95th Street. She paid an undisclosed amount and will only admit that she paid more than the original purchase price of the property. “I don’t want to share what I paid, because it was not a good business decision. But I paid enough so that all the investors were left whole,” she says.

The Piazza was purchased in January 2020 by the McCauley Development Cooperative, which formed in 2019 and was made up of area residents who wanted to encourage businesses in the strip mall that were a better fit for the community in terms of values and safety issues. Spinelli was part of this initiative and was one of its leaders.

However, these good intentions were not enough to make the project financially viable. “The building had a mortgage and there were a couple of empty spots that we were not able to fill,” Spinelli explains. To further complicate matters, in March 2020 - only a couple of months after the purchase - COVID-19 hit.



The Piazza. Paula E. Kirman

The Piazza has become a hub of activity in Little Italy, featuring unique shops and services such as Paper Birch Books, Earth’s Refillery Coop, True Blue Barber & Shop, and Culina Famiglia.

Members had raised \$1.1 million, with the remaining amount of the almost \$2.9 million purchase price supported by a loan from the Social Enterprise Fund, which is operated by the Edmonton Community Foundation.

Five years later, the cooperative was on the verge of receivership.

Selling the property at the original purchase price was one option, but would have resulted in a financial loss to members. Thanks to Spinelli’s intervention, the members will recoup their original investments.

Another reason for Spinelli’s decision to purchase The Piazza was the concern that an unknown buyer would possibly “not be a good landlord or community partner.”

The Piazza has become a hub of activity in Little Italy, featuring unique shops and services such as Paper Birch Books, Earth’s Refillery Coop, True Blue Barber &

Shop, and Culina Famiglia. Its large, paved front area is also the setting for a number of local events, such as Winter in Little Italy and the Hello Market pop-ups.

Spinelli began working towards the purchase of The Piazza in May 2025 and the sale was finalized in late October. She is currently trying to rent out the final available bay to a community-focused business and urges everyone to “please continue to support the local businesses in The Piazza!”

Paula E. Kirman is the Editor of Boyle McCauley News.



DINING OUT: YEMENI PALACE RESTAURANT

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EVERYDAY ACTS OF CARE AND CONNECTION

“I’ve been thinking about the power of the everyday acts of care and connection that we can each take to help build a strong community.

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MCCAULEY: THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

“The McCauley of my childhood, of 40 years ago, and of tomorrow, are very different, but they are nonetheless a part of me.

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THERE IS POWER IN COMMUNITY

“Remember, friends, even when things seem dark and hopeless, there is power in community, in solidarity, and in showing up for each other.

■ **PAGE 9**



Midwinter in McCauley

The McCauley Community League is glad to continue connecting neighbourhood residents. We have a friendly, safe place for children, teens, and adults.
Look for more information at the community league space (107th Avenue and 96th Street).

The skating rink is open weekdays 4-9 p.m. and weekends 2-9 p.m. as weather permits.

English as a second language classes are Wednesday and Friday 10 a.m. to noon at the rink.

WECAN Food Basket Society distribution from the rink space on the third Thursday of the month. For more information visit wecanfood.com.

Family Day party will be hosted by the community league at rink space.

Look for details on MCL's website (mccauleycl.com) or updates on Facebook ([@mccauleycommunityleague](https://www.facebook.com/mccauleycommunityleague))
Become a member for free online at mccauleycl.com

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The Way We Read



PAULA E. KIRMAN • BMC News Staff

MCCAULEY MUSINGS

Setting goals is important. A goal I set for myself is to read a certain number of books in a calendar year, usually a minimum of 25. At the time I am writing this, I am taking part in my annual year-end reading marathon to reach that number. I don't set restrictions on the genre (non-fiction and poetry are usually my main areas of interest), length, or format. In recent years, audiobooks have become a large part of my reading habits.

Yet there are some people who do not consider listening to an audiobook as "real" reading. Speaking as someone trained as a professional librarian, "reading" can include engaging with

written work in a variety of different ways. Listening to an audiobook is one way and one in which I may connect with a book differently than traditional reading in terms of understanding and remembering the material.

Here at *Boyle McCauley News* we offer different ways to read our community newspaper. Many people enjoy the tactile experience of reading the print edition. Others read the online versions of our articles at our website. Yet others download the PDF of each issue from our website and scroll through the edition on their computer, tablet, or phone.

The way that someone chooses to read the paper is a personal decision likely based on convenience and accessibility. Having multiple options also lets us reach readers beyond the area. Regardless of how you read the paper, we thank you for spending time with us.

Boyle McCauley News

Boyle McCauley News is a non-profit newspaper published six times yearly by the Boyle Street McCauley Community Newspaper Society. The Society is made up of the people who live and work in the Boyle Street and McCauley neighbourhoods.

Opinions expressed in the newspaper are not necessarily those of the Board of Directors. Any submissions may be subject to editing for length and suitability.

Advertisements from political parties and politicians are paid for. *Boyle McCauley News* does not support or endorse any political party or viewpoint.

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Our goal is to report issues fairly and provide a variety of perspectives on issues affecting this community. The opinions expressed in Boyle McCauley News are those of the people named as the authors of the articles, and do not necessarily reflect those of the Board, staff, or Editorial Committee of the paper.

EDITOR'S NOTES

We've made it to the start of another publishing cycle here at *Boyle McCauley News*. Welcome to the first issue of Volume 47.

Our fundraising casino happened on December 30th and 31st. Thank you to all of the volunteers who chose to spend the final days of 2025, including New Year's Eve, helping ensure the financial security of the paper. Special thanks go to Colleen Chapman, our Volunteer Coordinator, who organized the casino, ensuring that volunteer positions were filled.

Speaking of volunteers, if you are interested in writing, photographing, or delivering the paper, please let me know at editor@bmcnews.org.

OUR NEXT ISSUE. . .

Volume 47, Issue 2 (April-May 2026) will be published April 1st, 2026. Articles and photos concerning community news, events, and opinions are welcome for both our print and online editions. We also occasionally accept submissions of poetry and cartoons. Deadline for the print edition: March 12th, 2026. Send submissions to: editor@bmcnews.org. Articles should be 400 words or less and accompanied by photographs (JPG format, in high resolution) whenever possible.

If you live in McCauley or Boyle Street (or are an active volunteer with us regardless of where you live), you can apply for a free membership at our website (bmcnews.org/membership). Members occasionally receive information and have a vote at our AGM.

Have you visited our website lately? At our website we publish exclusive content and extra classifieds, along with an events calendar, a searchable archive of back issues, and the chance to sign-up to receive our free e-newsletter.

Don't forget to follow us on social media. We are on X (formerly Twitter) at [@bmcnews](https://twitter.com/bmcnews) and Bluesky at [@bmcnews.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/bmcnews.bsky.social).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Do you want to respond to something that you read in these pages or that is going on in the community? Share your thoughts and opinions with a Letter to the Editor. Send your letters to editor@bmcnews.org. Letters should be 200 words maximum, may be edited for length or clarity, and include a full name and contact information. Publication is not guaranteed. The deadline for letters for our next print issue is March 12th, 2026.

BOYLE STREET AND MCCAULEY CRIME & SAFETY RESOURCES

24/7 Crisis Diversion: Call #211 + press 3 when you see a person in distress

Needle Debris (public property): 311

Needle Debris free clean-up on private and public property:

Boyle Street Ventures: (780) 426-0500

Sharps Containers: free sharps containers:

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Litter/Graffiti: 311 or capitalcitycleanup@edmonton.ca

Problem Properties: To report a problem property call 311, contact 311 online or use the confidential reporting form at edmonton.ca/problemproperties

To report an unsecured vacant property:

Call 311 or email: communitypropertysafetyteam@edmonton.ca

EPS Healthy Streets Operation Centre (HSOC) teams are regularly and proactively patrolling several downtown neighbourhoods to combat crime and disorder.

Citizens are encouraged to speak with officers in person when they are available.

EPS Non-Emergency: (780) 423-4567

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EPS Emergency: 911

EPS Website: edmontonpolice.ca

EPS Crime Prevention: Facebook @epscrimeprevention

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Stay informed & get involved: safermccauley.ca and on Facebook @safermccauley

UPDATE FROM CITY COUNCIL

Everyday Acts of Care and Connection

ANNE STEVENSON

The start of a new year is always an exciting time and an opportunity to reflect on our hopes for the coming 12 months. I've been thinking about the power of the everyday acts of care and connection that we can each take to help build a strong community.

Showing up for one another doesn't need to mean grand gestures. Sometimes it looks like shopping locally, holding the door for someone, letting a car merge into traffic, or simply offering a wave or a smile. These small moments of recognition and generosity help shape the kind of city we all want to live in.

Across O-day'min, I see this spirit of connection every day. It shows up in volunteers who give their time, in neighbours who look out for one another, and in residents who choose to support local businesses and community spaces. While they seem small, these everyday actions remind us that we are not navigating city life alone and have been proven to have a profound impact on our sense of safety and belonging.

Staying connected also means knowing what resources are available and feeling welcome to use them. From libraries and recreation centres to transit and skating rinks, these shared spaces are an important part of how we care for one another and stay engaged in city life. If you haven't been there in a while,

consider checking out what's happening at the Stanley Milner Library, or go for a swim at Commonwealth Rec Centre for a break from the winter weather (and check out the upgraded lockers!). The City Hall skating rink has great events happening too!

These services belong to you. Library cards are free and the City offers great programs like the Access Leisure and Low Income Transit Pass to make sure that recreation, fitness, and cultural activities remain within reach for all individuals and families, supporting both physical and mental wellbeing. If you face barriers to accessing these services, don't hesitate to reach out to let me know how I can help.

Speaking of staying connected, please be sure to keep in touch with City Hall. My team and I are always eager to learn from your experiences and hear your ideas and concerns. Please don't hesitate to reach out to our office, and you can also sign up for my newsletter at annestevenson.ca

Thank you for continuing to show up for one another and helping make O-day'min a caring and connected place to call home.

Anne Stevenson, City Councillor for Ward O-day'min

Email: anne.stevenson@edmonton.ca

Phone: 780-496-8333

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Do You Have Your Stadium Parking Permit?

Call 311 or email RestrictedParkingPermits@edmonton.ca for annual Stadium parking permits, or ParkingAssets@edmonton.ca for temporary parking permits. Or, visit edmonton.ca and search "parking permits" to apply online. Save yourself, and your guests, the pain of a very expensive parking ticket and possibility of being towed.

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Where to Find Boyle McCauley News

Boyle McCauley News is delivered by our volunteer Block Carriers (in McCauley) and Apartment Ambassadors/Condo Connectors (in Boyle Street) to approximately 2500 homes in the area.

If you do not receive the paper at your home, there are numerous places where you can pick up a copy:

NEWSPAPER BOX UPDATE

The City of Edmonton has discontinued permitting privately-owned newspaper racks on City property following a review of its Newsrack Program, as well as community feedback. If you have a business and are willing to be a distribution location for the paper, please contact us!

BUSINESSES

We drop off copies at a number of businesses in and around the area:

Tony's Pizza (9605 111 Ave.)	The Moth (9449 Jasper Ave.)	Kim Fat Market (9905 107 Ave.)
Italian Centre (10878 95 St.)	Betty's Corner 9208 Jasper Ave.	Little BonBon Ice Cream (seasonal) (9660 106 Ave.)
Lucky Supermarket (10725 97 St.)	Boa & Hare (10520 97 St.)	Earth's Refillery Coop 10831 95 St.
Sprucewood Library (11555 95 St.)	Zocalo (10826 95 St.)	Chai Coffee Day 9665 101A Ave.
Felice Cafe (10930 84 St.)	Paper Birch Books (10825 95 St.)	
Panini's (8544 Jasper Ave.)	Van Loc (10648 98 St.)	

VOLUNTEER TO DELIVER THE PAPER

Would you like to volunteer to help deliver the paper to your block or building?

Contact editor@bmcnews.org for more information.

MCCAULEY COMMUNITY LEAGUE UPDATE

Midwinter McCauley Community League Update

What's been happening during this snowy season.

RUTH SOROCHAN

The community skating rink is a success with so many beautiful souls coming out to find exercise. This welcoming space is created by Roma Stephaniuk, Gail Silvius, and Dan Glugosh.

There was a delightful New Year's Eve party with all the usual happenings and folks. We enjoyed skating, food, a bonfire, and could see the early downtown fireworks from the rink.

In the middle of December, Viva Italia District Association (VIDA) and various vendors work together to offer a free festive event called Winter in Little Italy. It took place over two weekends, and during the first weekend on December 7th the McCauley Community League set up a tent and table at the entrance of Giovanni Caboto Park. It was a community offering with a fire and Italian wedding soup. The community league was glad to add to the good energy of people coming to the festival and people passing by. It was a cheerful affair and many thanks to Holly Payne and Dylan Morgan for their generous hospitality in setting up and hosting for the community league. Thank you



New Year's Eve at the McCauley Rink. Dan Glugosh

to Corine Demas for her cheerful support in the event. Thank you to Dan Glugosh who was working at the rink, getting the ice ready and also helped to bring the community firepit and wood.

There has been a lot of snow this season and that has created beautiful snowdrifts. Hopefully they stay all winter for our neighbourhood trees to get a good drink in the spring. However, lots of snow on the ground means lots of snow to move and sometimes climb over. This can be time and energy consuming to keep side-

walks maintained so we can move around our neighbourhood. If you need help or can offer help, please reach out to the League at the rink space or online in one of the neighbourhood groups on Facebook like McCauley Neighbours and McCauley Connect & Share Community Aid.

WECAN Food Basket Society distribution will continue at the rink on the third Thursday of the month. For more information, go to wecanfood.com.

Another continuing tradition will be

the McCauley Community League Family Day festivities in mid-February. This is traditionally hosted by a neighbourhood family, and all are welcome and invited to come out to skate, eat, and enjoy the day.

At the end of winter our attention will turn to projects of spring. There will be some upgrades made to the rink space, hopefully including the regrading of the rink asphalt. We will also complete the repairs to the fence that was damaged earlier in the winter by a road accident.

In the past we have had spring parties and gardening with the Cultivate McCauley group and Sustainable Food Edmonton. This work will be continued. If you would like to participate or be a part of any of these groups, please visit us at the rink space or contact us by email at mccauleycl@gmail.com.

See you in the neighbourhood!

Website: mccauleycl.com
Email: league@mccauleycl.com
Facebook: [@mccauleyclcommunityleague](https://www.facebook.com/mccauleyclcommunityleague)

Ruth Sorochan lives in McCauley with her family and is the Communications Director with the McCauley Community League.

Chinatown's BIA Lunar New Year 2026 Celebration

Mark February 22nd in your calendars to welcome the Year of the Horse.

The Edmonton Chinatown Business Improvement Area (BIA), in partnership with the Royal Alberta Museum, invites the community to celebrate Lunar New Year and welcome the Year of the Horse on Sunday, February 22nd, 2026.

First, the outdoor celebration begins at 10:30 a.m. in front of Lucky Supermarket (also known as Lucky 97). This will feature a Dragon Dance, Lion Dance, and firecrackers.

Then, join us from noon to 3:30 p.m. indoors at the Royal Al-

berta Museum. This free, family-friendly event will feature Lion Dance and Cree dance performances in the main lobby, along with cultural performances and activities that highlight the traditions and symbolism of the Year of the Horse while celebrating the rich heritage of Edmonton's Chinatown.

Residents of McCauley and neighbouring communities are warmly invited to attend and celebrate together.

Information submitted by the Edmonton Chinatown BIA.



A Journey of Flavour and Culture

Yemeni Palace Restaurant brings a taste of the Middle East to Chinatown.

DINING OUT

Yemeni Palace Restaurant
10704 97th Street NW
825-480-2699

ALAN SCHIETZSCH

Nestled in the heart of Edmonton’s diverse culinary landscape, just off the bustling corridor of 97th Street, lies Yemeni Palace Restaurant, an authentic journey into the rich flavours of the Southern Arabian Peninsula.

Opening at the beginning of December, Yemeni Palace has established itself where Lee Palace used to be, just across from Lucky Supermarket (known to many as Lucky 97). It’s quickly becoming a go-to destination for the Middle Eastern community and for food explorers seeking culinary adventures. As you step inside, an aromatic symphony of cardamom, cloves, and slow-cooked lamb envelops you, immediately signalling the beginning of a truly traditional feast.

Our party of five was warmly welcomed and shown to a table amid wall banners displaying Yemeni culture and important landmarks. There were plenty of other diners, mostly enjoying their cultural heritage in an inviting, communal atmosphere. The menu is a vibrant roadmap of Yemeni cuisine, highlighting ancient recipes that celebrate slow-cooking techniques and hand-blended spices.

To start our journey, we began



A family platter of food at Yemeni Palace Restaurant. Alan Schietzsch

with the Lentil Soup. Earthy and perfectly seasoned, it providing a comforting start that awakened our palates. For the next course, the Fattoush Salad brought the classic trio of cucumber, tomato and lettuce, enlivened by the crunchy textures of toasted Yemeni flatbread and crisp radishes. A mild, sweet vinaigrette has hints of pomegranate molasses.

For the main course, we made the easy choice of the Family Offer 2: a huge platter-sized bed of fragrant seasoned Basmati long-grain rice, topped with chicken and lamb, accompanied by sahawiq - spicy tomato and green chili chutneys that provide a zesty kick cutting through the richness of the meats perfectly. Each of the sauces are stirred in to satisfy each individual’s taste. The red sauce is like a fine salsa, while

the white sauce is yoghurt based, like a tzatziki but with more green spiciness.

I couldn’t resist the Lamb Mandi - the restaurant’s crowning jewel. The meat was incredibly tender, literally falling off the bone at the slightest touch of a fork. The whole Chicken Mandi was massive and moist, and that was joined by Haneeth Lamb and Saltah, the traditional bubbling root vegetable stew with fenugreek. Every dish was not only pleasing to the eye but also a celebration of taste.

As a dessert, we ordered cups of Adeni Milk Tea. Infused with evaporated milk, cardamom, and cloves, it arrived steaming and fragrant. The creamy, spiced warmth of the tea was a delightful finish that tied the entire meal together.

When it comes to value, Yemeni Palace impresses: our extensive spread, complete with soup, salad and tea, averaged around \$30 per person - a steal for such quantity and authenticity. We had about twice as much food as we could possibly eat, so were grateful at lunch the next day too!

Yemeni Palace is a testament to the continued evolution of food culture in our community, seamlessly blending ancient flavours with charming hospitality. Whether you’re exploring with friends or enjoying a relaxing family meal, this gem is definitely worth a visit.

Alan Schietzsch lives in McCauley and is a member of the paper’s Board of Directors.

King Thunderbird Centre Opens

A large, modern interior space with a high ceiling and a curved wall. The room is filled with people, mostly children and young adults, who are gathered around several long tables. The tables are covered with blue cloths and have various items on them, including books, toys, and informational materials. The atmosphere appears to be a community event or an open house. The lighting is bright, and the overall design is clean and contemporary.

Visitors explore Boyle Street Community Services’ *okimaw peyesew kamik* / King Thunderbird Centre at the open house on December 16th. Located at 10740 99th Street, the site offers programs and services for youth and adults experiencing homelessness. Operating from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday to Friday, the site’s approach features an emphasis on connection, inclusion, and cultural responsiveness. Paula E. Kirman

Christmas at the Hull Block

A group of people, mostly young adults, are standing behind a long table covered with a red and white patterned cloth. They are all smiling and waving at the camera. The table is filled with various items, including boxes of food, bags of snacks, and some small gifts. The background shows a large room with other people and decorations, suggesting a festive event. The overall mood is cheerful and community-oriented.

On December 6th, more than 60 volunteers filled 1500 brown bags that were distributed to community members in Chinatown and area. Christmas at the Hull Block also featured free photos with Santa, face painting, crafts, and other activities for all ages. It is an annual signature event organized by the Chinatown Transformation Collaborative Society in conjunction with local residents and families, and community partners. Sandy Pon

McCauley: The Gift that Keeps on Giving

A personal reflection about history and memories.

ABIGAIL STRUTHERS

I was sitting in a university lecture hall one day when I saw this photograph* pop up on the screen.

My first reaction was to gasp and say: “Garry Spotowski!” as though the person doing the presentation would have no idea who was in his photograph. Once the guest lecturer continued his presentation, a little more confused after my outburst, I turned to the person next to me and said:

“I know him! That guy in the photo!”

Not only did I know the guy in the photo, but he was the reason I was sitting there in that lecture hall. Garry Spotowski met my parents when they had both just moved to Edmonton in the late 1990s. He was my dad’s roommate and the officiant at my parents’ wedding a few years later. When he passed away in 2017, he left me and my sister a small inheritance, enough to pay my university tuition.

This is a story I’ve told many times to old friends and people I went to high school with. It’s a story that ties me to McCauley, a place that was so intertwined with who Garry was, and what he cared about. Ultimately, that’s why I shared this story with even more people this summer while workshopping an idea for a McCauley heritage project – part of my learning experience as an interpreter for the Edmonton City as Museum Project. McCauley is a character in and of itself in my



Garry Spotowski (left) and Ryan Boyce sit in a living room made of furniture picked from the Clover Bar Landfill. The photo’s purpose was to illustrate how much perfectly usable stuff is thrown out every day. Supplied

memories of Garry: in the park, in the backyard, and on the balcony and the back deck. That sense of place is what continues to bring me back to McCauley, in hopes that I could learn more about this person whose life continues to weave with my own.

I embarked on this project a little starry-eyed. I wanted to interview people and publish their stories and memories in a way that would contribute to the fabric of the neighbourhood. It was ambitious, but I was lucky enough to talk to people for this project who were gracious enough to just pick up the phone and meet with me despite not necessarily knowing where it was going. At times I felt like a

journalist, chasing a story or a source, and at other times like an historian, collecting and curating information to share with the public. In doing so, I realized that those two things aren’t as far apart as we think they are. You’re considering your audience, your content, your delivery method, and your process.

My considerations for this project revolved around those four things, and how they could reflect the McCauley I knew and loved. Community-centred. Diverse. Resilient. Forward-thinking. In the end, although I was unable to complete the project due to time constraints, I learned that when imbued with meaning and memory, places become not just pins on

a map, but living things that are constantly shifting and changing. The McCauley of my childhood, of 40 years ago, and of tomorrow, are very different, but they are nonetheless a part of me. A part of who I am. And that will never change.

Abigail Struthers is a student at the University of Alberta. She worked with the Edmonton Heritage Council’s Edmonton City as Museum Project over the summer.

**The photo accompanying this article is the one that was used in Abigail’s class and is believed to be taken in the early 2000s, although the photographer is not known. Garry Spotowski worked in the Waste Management department at the City of Edmonton.*

Winter in Little Italy Warms 95th Street Once Again



The annual Winter in Little Italy (organized by the Viva Italia District Association) took place on December 7th and 14th with horse-drawn wagon rides (left), free hot chocolate in Zocalo, and roasted chestnuts outside the Italian Centre Shop from Amici Italiani (right). A Holiday Market was also at The Piazza on both weekends, and the McCauley Community League had a table with soup and tea on December 7th. Paula E. Kirman

Fire at The Mustard Seed Church



Firefighters work to extinguish a fire that broke out at The Mustard Seed Church on November 30th. The church, located at 106th Avenue and 96th Street, closed in October 2024 due to structural issues and was decommissioned this past August. The building was scheduled for demolition. Jodine Chase

A Grand Opening for Earth’s Refillery Coop



The grand opening for Earth’s Refillery Coop happened on November 22nd. From left: coop members Michael Kalmanovitch, Christina Neumann, Rebecca Swityk, Kenzie Fragoso, and Peter Marche shortly before the doors opened to welcome the first customers. Earth’s Refillery Coop is located at 10831 95th Street. Paula E. Kirman



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Teaching Gives Me Hope

Volunteering with newcomers boosts my spirits.

GAIL SILVIUS

My classroom is a small space, but well suited to teaching a group of newcomers intent on learning English. Two mornings each week, we make the McCauley Rink shack our school. The African students are surrounded by ice skates, hockey sticks, and shovels. As it turns out, they love the rink as much as I do.

I placed a notice for free classes last summer. By September, I had students. Gernay, Mehari, and Samson are from Eritrea and all live in McCauley. Before my class, they didn’t know each other. They also have different long-term goals. In 10 years Samson wants to drive semi-trailers, Gernay wants to be in nursing, and Mehari wants to speak perfect English.

When the snow fell in December, my students hit the sidewalk with shovels. The group included mom Tigist and son Nahom, who live in nearby

Delton. Back in Ethiopia, Tigist was a welder. Nahom is a young man and proud son with plans to launch his own company one day, just like his mom did back home.

I am retired, having worked in community roles for most of my career. Community is important to me, and my students inspire me. My students are slowly reading *As Long as the Rivers Flow*, by Larry Loyie, a Cree author and residential school survivor. They understand the issues, having come from colonized countries. One student shared that he had worked for 14 years in Israel as a temporary worker. They have toughed it out to get to Canada.

I believe in them. They are committed to Canada and to their studies. As Tigist, a mother of three, shared, her commitment is “to work hard to build a good life for my children.”

My immigrant students boost my spirits. Their enthusiasm is infec-



Students with their snow shovels by the McCauley Rink. From left: Gernay, Samson, Nahom, Mehari, and Tigist. Constance Brissenden

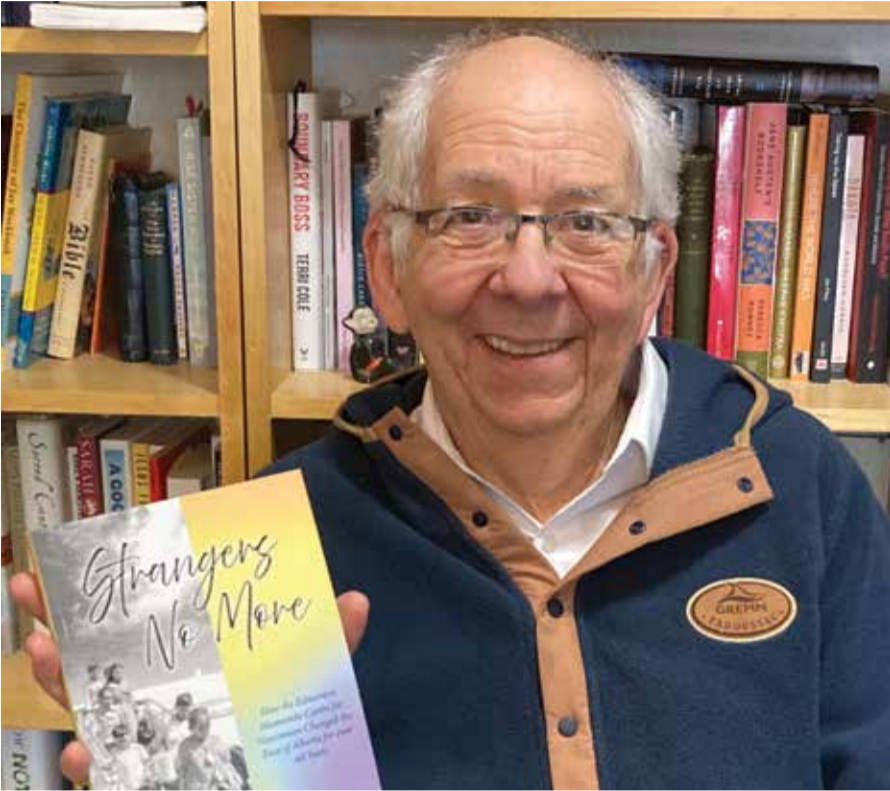
tious. On New Year’s Eve 2025, Nahom tried skating at the McCauley Rink. His mom Tigist wrote a story to celebrate: “I saw the children skating on the rink. It made me feel happy. The kids were beaming. The firepit smelled good. My family did a tour of the celebra-

tions downtown. Next year, I will see the fireworks as I am skating on the ice.”

I hope to be there to see her.

Gail Silvius is happily retired and living in McCauley.

New Book Explores History of the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers



Gary Garrison. Sara Coumantarakis

ANITA JENKINS

Gary Garrison has written a book about the history of the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers. Entitled *Strangers No More*, the book celebrates the agency’s Mennonite origins and its over 40 years of operation before it was renamed the Edmonton Newcomer Centre in 2023. The name change occurred because the board and employees now include people of various ethnic origins in addition to members of the three Mennonite churches involved at the outset.

The book could have been a compilation of statistics and dates, of interest primarily to those involved. But Garrison, an accomplished writer, has given the book colour and drama, through stories such as the one about the Centre’s \$22,220 1981 budget. (The 2025 budget was over \$22 million.) The board didn’t actually have the total amount but balanced it by including a line for “Other Income \$6,618.50” - money they hoped to raise later.

In the Author’s Note, Garrison says, “Rather than attempt to include every person involved, every program, and every event - there are oh, so many - the book dramatizes the spirit of the EMCN’s work at defining moments in its history.” This engaging story describes how Edmonton (and Alberta) became the functioning multicultural place it is today, beginning with a large influx of approximately 60,000 immigrants from Southeast Asia following the Vietnam War.

In the foreword, Senator Paula Simons writes, “We need the lessons the Centre has been busy teaching

Edmonton for decades: lessons about how to build an inclusive, loving, diverse community where everyone is accepted and respected, both for who they have been and for who they can become.”

Garrison’s style is evident in the first few sentences of the introduction: *Mennonites punch way above their weight in Canada and around the world. But a boxing metaphor would be anathema to them. Nonviolence and pacifism are central principles of their faith. They would more likely use a Biblical comparison, like a tiny mustard seed that grows into a huge tree or a pinch of yeast that leavens a loaf of bread . . . a small number of Mennonites develop broad community connections and collaborate with people of all backgrounds to serve people in need.*

Strangers No More is currently available on Amazon.

About Gary Garrison
Garrison, who was an active member of the McCauley community for a couple of decades, worked for the Mennonite Central Committee, coordinating a visiting program at a maximum security prison. This experience resulted in his book entitled *Human on the Inside*. Garrison co-authored *McCauley Then and Now*, a booklet about the history of McCauley, with Sara Coumantarakis, and he wrote the copy for smaller booklets about Church Street and Chinatown. Garrison is also a former board member of *Boyle McCauley News*, including as chair.

Anita Jenkins is a retired writer and editor who lives in Boyle Street.

Taking Care in the Winter

IAN YOUNG

ABILITY AND COMMUNITY

“Ice and snow, take it slow.”- Author unknown. Common saying concerning safety.

The winter weather brings an abundance of challenges, such as the need for snow to be cleared on roadways and sidewalks. While the above quote applies to everyone, snow and ice buildup is especially treacherous for someone like me: a person who uses a mobility aid to get around.

Well, it happened: I had my first, what I call “winter wipeout” of the season. Slick ice caused a fall, and my ankle and knee were injured.

Getting proper equipment and

professional help is the best way to heal.

If you suffer a mishap, contact a doctor or medical professional as soon as you can. You might need rehabilitation or medication. If you need medical equipment on a temporary basis, there is the Canadian Red Cross Short Term Health Equipment Loan Program. It is free, but requires a referral from a health care professional such as a doctor or occupational therapist. You can contact the program by e-mail: ABHELPProgram@redcross.ca.

As I have learned a lot through my journey, I thought this information should be shared with all. Winter can be a beautiful season, but be careful and cautious.

Ian Young is a columnist and Block Carrier with the paper. He lives in the area.

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10527 96 Street
780-423-2285
We have been serving the downtown community for more than 115 years with our mission front of mind: working in community, we remove barriers and support people as they move out of poverty.

Office hours: Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Housing program services are available Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Free tax clinics are open at Bissell East (10527 96 Street) every Monday from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. (except in February).

BISSELL CHILD CARE
780-429-4126
9331 105 Avenue
Full-time and part-time child care services in downtown Edmonton for only \$10 a day. Plus, free respite care one day a week. Call to discuss what child care options will work best for you.
bissellchildcare.com

RADIUS COMMUNITY HEALTH AND HEALING (Formerly Boyle McCauley Health Centre)
10628 – 96 Street
Monday - Thursday 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Dental: Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

SANCTUARY OF PEACE
10527-96 St. NW
(780) 424-7652
Pastor: Quinn Strikwerda
Associate Pastor: Maria Kruszewski
Sunday Service: 9:15 a.m.
Take-away snack bags Sunday at 10 a.m.
Visits and other pastoral services on request.
Contact us for information about conversation groups, Bible study, and individual support at info@icpmedmonton.ca or (780) 424-7652

THE ROCK OUTREACH
11004 – 96 Street NW
Phone (780) 426-1122
Breakfasts: Tuesday to Thursday 7-9 a.m.
Kids Club: Fourth Monday of the Month

THE SALVATION ARMY Edmonton Centre of Hope
12520 140 Avenue
(780) 244-2962
Transitional Housing, Addictions Recovery, Stabilization, and Supported Housing.

Transitional Housing for Downtown
9304 103A Avenue
(780) 428-4405
For more information:
salvationarmyedmonton.org

HOPE MISSION
9908 106 Avenue
(780) 422-2018
HOPE MISSION MEALS:
Monday - Friday
Breakfast 7:30 - 8:15 a.m.
Lunch 12:00 - 12:45 p.m.
Supper 5:00 - 5:45 p.m.
Weekends & Holidays
Brunch 10:45 am - 11:30 a.m.
Supper 4:15 - 5:00 p.m.

HOPE MISSION SHELTER:
Men, Women, Youth
Doors open 8:30 p.m. - 12:00 p.m.

HOPE MISSION COMMUNITY CHURCH:
Sunday: 2:00 p.m. Hope Mission Centre
9908 106 Avenue
7:00 p.m. Herb Jamieson Centre - 10014 105A Avenue

HOPE MISSION HEALTH CLINIC:
Hope Mission Health Centre
Family Doctor Monday to Friday
Walk-in: 9:00-3:00 p.m.
Psychiatrist Monday to Friday
by Appointment only - call 780-422-2018 Ext. 278

NEW DESTINY CHURCH
10605 - 96 St.
780-424-6422
www.newdestinychurch.ca
*Tuesday - 7:00 p.m. The Alpha Course-Introduction to Christianity and/or General Bible Studies
*Wednesday - 7:00 a.m. Men's Prayer Group
*Sunday Morning - 10:00 a.m. Worship Service. Also available on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/newdestinychurchedmonton>
Street Level Outreach - Once a month on Saturday from 12 noon - 2:00 p.m. Sandwiches, clothing personal items, and prayer (front of church).

SACRED HEART CHURCH OF THE FIRST PEOPLES
Address: 10821-96 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta, T5H 2J8, and Tel: (780) 422-3052.

Daily Mass:
Monday to Saturday: 9 a.m. at Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples.

Sunday Masses:
Sunday: 10 a.m., 11:30 a.m., and 7:00 p.m. at Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples. All are welcome.

For more information, please view our weekly bulletin, our webpage, and our Sacred Heart Facebook.

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
10759-96 Street
Tel: (780) 422-0059
evjohn@telus.net

Sunday Services:
1st Sunday English at 11:00 a.m.
2nd and 4th Sundays German at 9:30 a.m., English at 11:00 a.m.

Videos available on YouTube and Facebook.

THE LEARNING CENTRE LITERACY ASSOCIATION is seeking volunteer tutors to help adults develop reading, writing and/or math skills. Volunteers participate in group learning, tutor one-to-one, or assist drop-in learners.

Skills and Experience: High school level reading, writing, and/or math skills. Openness to tutor and learn with adults with various life experiences, including living with homelessness.

For more information:
tlcla.org/get-involved-3/
780-429-0675

NETWORKS ACTIVITY CENTRE
780-474-3363, EXT. 302. Volunteer! JOIN OUR TEAM! Networks Activity Centre provides adults with brain injury a program that promotes an active lifestyle through opportunities for social interaction, physical activity, and community involvement.

Volunteering with Networks Activity Centre is a wonderful way to enrich your life and touch the lives of those we serve.

If you are interested in joining our volunteer team please call 780-474-3363 ext. 302.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME TO JOIN MCCAULEY CLUB
Kids from age 6 to 17 are invited to join after-school programs that run from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. Mon., Tues., Wed., & Fri., & from 2:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Thurs. Programs include arts & culture, physical activity, health & nutrition, academic support, life skills, and leadership. Drop in at 9425 109A Ave. or call (780) 822-2549 for details. Offered free of charge.

P.A.L.S. PROJECT ADULT LITERACY SOCIETY NEEDS VOLUNTEERS
Work with adult students in the ESL - English as a Second Language program. Training, materials, and supplies provided. Call (780) 424-5514 for more information.

BUILDING BRIDGES
Building Bridges All Nations First Nations Fusion Church Services Sundays, 3 to 6 p.m. at St. Faith's Anglican Church, 11725-93 Street.

ADULT ENGLISH CONVERSATION CLASS
Wednesdays 10 a.m. to noon.
Community Rink 10750 96th Street.
Come and practise your English.

BOYLE STREET PLAZA YMCA FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE CHILD AND YOUTH PROGRAMS
YMCA Boyle Street Plaza offers Sportball every Saturday! Visit bit.ly/sportballymca for more information and to register.

DROP-IN GYM
YMCA Boyle Street Plaza
9538-103A Avenue
Drop-In Fee: \$6.50

Badminton (ages 16+):
Sundays: 1:30-4:30 p.m.
Fridays: 8:15-11:15 p.m.

Pickleball (ages 16+):
Sundays: 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Wednesdays: 12:30-3 p.m.
Fridays: 5-8 p.m.

COMMUNITY EVENTS/ ACTIVITIES/ SERVICES

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MLA UPDATE

There is Power in Community

JANIS IRWIN

Friends,

I write to you on a mild day here in our Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood constituency. Despite the warm temperatures, I know that this winter has been tough for many Albertans, especially our unhoused neighbours who have endured frigid weather and harsh conditions.

We’ve seen heartbreaking statistics of increased frostbite amputations in our community, and I’ve heard from so many of you who are deeply concerned about the safety of our neighbours. Please know that these concerns are always on my mind as your local representative, and that I remain unequivocally committed to advocating for better - because every Albertan has the right to safety, dignity, and a place to call home.

I continue to be so proud to represent the Boyle Street and McCauley neighbourhoods in the Legislature and be part of an NDP Caucus team that puts forward tangible solutions to address the issues that you’ve told me are important: access to health-care, affordability, education, and housing. And as our spring legislative session commences at the end of February, these issues and more will be top of mind.

Last session we put forward legislation to lower household bills, protect workers’ rights, raise the minimum wage, and strengthen our health care and education

systems. Disappointingly, the UCP government moved in a completely different direction and voted down all of our proposed legislation.

They also forced teachers back into overcrowded classrooms, restricted the human rights of trans Albertans, and approved legislation that will cut benefits for disabled Albertans. But as an optimist and believer in change, I want you to know that I remain fully committed to demanding better policies and action from our government, and I won’t stop fighting for the things that matter to you.

Remember, friends, even when things seem dark and hopeless, there is power in community, in solidarity, and in showing up for each other. I promise to keep fighting because I know more than ever that better is possible here in this province and community I love.

I hope to see you out and about, especially as we get closer to spring. Please continue to share your priorities and concerns with me and my team – we are just an email or phone call away.

Take care of yourselves, and each other.

Janis Irwin, MLA for
Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood

Email:
Edmonton.HighlandsNorwood
@assembly.ab.ca

Phone: 780-414-0682

Recovery, Wellness, and Resilience at Prosper Place Clubhouse

CORINE DEMAS

Prosper Place Clubhouse is located in the new Canadian Mental Health Association building at 10232 106th Street on the main floor. It provides programs and services that may be of interest to people in our area.

I spoke recently with Nelson Sanchez and Colin Simpson, the co-managers of Prosper Place Clubhouse. Colin explains that, “Prosper Place is a community of people with lived experience of mental health challenges or addictions concerns. People come here to have the dignity of exploring, discovering and choosing their own personal paths of recovery, wellness and resilience.” The clubhouse falls under the umbrella of Canadian Mental Health Association.

Colin said, “Membership is open to adults 18 and over. People do not need to be referred. They need to identify as a person with a mental health challenge or an addictions concern or both. There is no membership fee to join Prosper Place.”

Prosper Place is run with the assistance of a peer directors board. Nelson and Colin firmly believe that the programming should be developed under the direction of members.

Nelson Sanchez explains that there are four pillars that guide the programming at Prosper Place.

“The first pillar is skill building. Members can come and learn different job skills like working in front reception, working in the canteen, using the debit machine, receipt balancing, stock management, washing dishes.” This is done through a mentoring system. Prosper Place employs peer leaders who are trained in these areas and then in turn train other members.”

The second pillar, says Nelson, is, “personal growth; we offer a lot of different workshops and drop-in sessions. We have ‘wellness’ every week which

is a drop-in group, yoga, an art workshop, and several workshops coming in the new year.”

The third pillar is food security. Nelson says, “At Prosper Place we have a cook who makes meals for our members that are only \$5. We also have a cantina. Members can have free coffee and tea and buy low cost snacks like pop and chips. The other part of food security is that we are a satellite area for the food bank. Members can go into our food pantry and take a few bags of groceries home. We are also tied in with the closed food hamper program where someone fills out an application and people can either pick a hamper up from the food bank or we can organize it for someone to drop it off here.”

Nelson explains the fourth pillar: “Socialization is one of the most important things with mental health care. People often live in isolation and don’t have the opportunity to socialize. Some of our members don’t have the means to go out and do things. We have social rec every Wednesday and the activities range from karaoke to bingo and card games or board games. Once a month we throw a special event. These are usually ticketed events; they are low cost and include a meal and entertainment.”

“What’s really exciting about Prosper Place,” Colin says, “is that we have just moved. We are adding in new programming, a visual arts class, an improv theatre group with a partnership with The Grindstone Theatre, and there is in the works a digital literacy/confidence workshop series for small groups.”

People are welcome to come for a tour Monday afternoons and Wednesday mornings.

Corine Demas lives in McCauley where she is the President of the McCauley Community League, the Executive Director of the Heart of the City Festival, and a board member with Boyle McCauley News.



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HEART OF THE CITY FESTIVAL SOCIETY ARTIST PROFILE SERIES

Jackie Bayne Murray: Ignited to Inspire

"I'm grateful for the opportunity to be able to do what I do now."

RACHAEL ROBERTS

Driven by passion and powered by song, Jackie Bayne Murray has had an affinity for connecting with others through music since she started singing at the age of eight. In 2025, Jackie performed at Heart of the City and for her it was a full circle moment.

Jackie remembers working at the Boys and Girls Club after moving to Edmonton from Thompson, Manitoba, where she received her undergraduate degree. Giovanni Caboto Park was familiar. "It was a hub of activity. I was front line with the kids; that's always been what I've always wanted to do." Jackie then moved on to Early Childhood Special Education for the better part of her career. "We were doing a lot of early childhood movement games. We had a tape recorder, we were recording the kids singing and playing it back and

building confidence that way." She retired early in 2017. "That really opened up a whole new world for me. I'm grateful for the opportunity to be able to do what I do now."

Jackie is a natural performer. "I'm the youngest of five. Both of my sisters were hippies. When I was about 11, my two brothers and two sisters acted out a song, 'Rocky Racoon'. They acted that out for my 11th birthday."

She sang solo singing performances throughout elementary and during high school Jackie sang in the school choir. A teacher she admired recognized her talent and encouraged her to keep pursuing music.

Eventually, Jackie learned the guitar so she could accompany her own vocals. "We do a lot of house jams. It's a lot of fun and

it's nice to have a lot of people there." She says her musical influences are mostly classic rock and music from the '70s such as the Talking Heads and Bob Marley and the Wailers." She describes her early days of playing: "We'd all sing along and jam and if you had a few songs that you wanted to play, you'd get called up there." Some of the songs she writes speak to her own personal struggles: "Rising through the struggles like a flame of a fire, fueled by your soul, ignited to inspire."

Her song "Mom is Her Title but Betty is Her Name" is a testament to the love she has for her family. She enjoys bringing music into her granddaughter's daycare and her mom's seniors' centre. Alongside performing, she strives to give a hand to aspiring musicians. She will encourage anyone to take advantage of "any opportunity that you get. It's really hard to build confidence if you're not going out there and jamming." More recently, she has played on Friday nights during the summer with Smile-Edmonton, across the street from Hope Mission. Smile-Edmonton is a group that seeks to help Edmonton's unhoused community.



Jackie Bayne Murray. Rob Swyrd Photography

"It's not just for performing, but it's also for peace of mind. It gives me my peace and lessens my stress and brings me back." Jackie's band jacqued-up plays in pubs, halls, and at community events like Heart of the City.

Rachael Roberts is a board member with the Heart of the City Festival, where she has volunteered since 2013, and recently joined the board of Boyle McCauley News. She is a mother, a teacher, and a lifelong Edmontonian who loves this community.

Janis Irwin

MLA

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