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BRIDGES

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Bridgeland-Riverside Seniors Holiday Social

Thursday December 15th
1-3pm

BRCA Hall – 917 Centre Ave NE

- Live holiday music by Paul Lau and carolling
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PRESIDENT/EDITOR'S MESSAGE

What defines a neighbourhood's character? One theory is that neighbourhood character is an amalgam of various elements that may include land use, urban design, visual resources, historic resources, socioeconomics, traffic, and even noise. While these characteristics may provide an accurate definition from an urban planning perspective, I prefer an approach that focuses on the people in the community – in other words, characters rather than characteristics – and identifies what it is that makes a place distinctive and different from other neighbourhoods.

In my humble opinion, Bridgeland-Riverside does have a distinctive character that has more to do with its residents, past and present, than with its physical and socioeconomic characteristics. The strong spirit of volunteerism shown by residents and the independence and entrepreneurship of our local merchants certainly distinguish our neighbourhood. I would go further and say there are also elements of the unconventional and offbeat that are hallmarks of Bridgeland-Riverside.

This quirkiness also exists in our local businesses. Where else can you buy vinyl record albums, bananas, and soft serve ice cream in the same store, and receive a flu shot during your visit? Where else can you combine a Stampede pancake breakfast with falafel and hummus? Sipping great coffee while having your bicycle tuned up and tasting spirits distilled in a former furniture store are further examples of unique activities that you can enjoy right here in the neighbourhood.

Motorists can receive air hugs from our much-loved Helen Jusic and residents can witness Frisbee Rob and his amazing dog Sailor training to break world records in Murdoch Park. Turk the famous freedom-loving turkey decided that he preferred Bridgeland over Ramsay but unfortunately did not anticipate our coyotes.

Our neighbourhood's response to our damaged "Bridgelan" sign is further evidence of our offbeat character. Various anonymous donors bring smiles by adding little "Ds" to the sign pending its repair. This culminated on Halloween when Chris Scott turned himself into a candy-dispensing human "D" to rave reviews on social media.

The phrase "Keep Portland Weird" was introduced in that city 20 years ago as an initiative to support local businesses and has grown to become a source of pride among its residents. Even though Portland's official slogan is "The City that Works," that is not the phrase found on t-shirts and bumper stickers in local stores. I, for one, am proud of our quirkiness as it gives our community a distinctive character and I would not take offence to being told that I live in an offbeat, dare I say weird, neighbourhood.

The BRCA wishes you a safe, happy, and whimsical holiday season.

Alex MacWilliam



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INCLUDING

- **News and Events**
- **Real Estate Statistics**
- **Crime Statistics**

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New and returning members, please apply online at brcacalgary.org/membership or use this form and mail or drop off along with cheque made out to:

Bridgeland-Riverside Community Association
917 Centre Ave NE
Calgary AB T2E 0C6



Membership type: (please check one)

Individual ☐

Family ☐

Senior ☐

For 2022, we will not be charging membership fees but invite members, if they wish, to pay what they can.

Member information: (please print clearly, attach additional family member names)

Last name: _____

First name: _____

Address: _____

Postal code: _____

Email: _____

Phone number: _____

Or, please feel free to communicate with us about community events at events@BRCAcalgary.org

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Message from the Calgary Buddhist Temple

Dear Bridgeland-Riverside friends,

We would like to take this opportunity to address some of the concerns that have been voiced regarding the recent condition of the Calgary Buddhist Temple in the community.

In February 2022, we were the recipients of graffiti and vandalism to our property and the Calgary Police Service documented the incident as a hate crime. We were not the only building targeted and we are grateful that no one was physically assaulted. Unfortunately, over the years, vandalism of our property has become a more frequent occurrence. We have been working hard at finding the best resolution to prevent such incidents from happening in the future.

We would like you to know that we are not neglecting to make all of the necessary repairs to our property

and we value keeping up with the aesthetics of the community. However, we are at a point where repairing the vandalized items on our property, such as the temple signage lettering, is no longer viable or cost effective without first putting in place deterrents from further vandalism. We continue to make strides in our effort to deter future vandalism and to have all the repairs completed.

In the meantime, we have hired a private security and risk assessment consultant to provide some recommendations for our next steps. This has included hiring a security company to do frequent random checks on the property in the evening hours.

We thank you for reaching out to us and voicing your concerns and we hope that you can understand our position and that you continue to be patient with us as we work through these difficult times.

With gratitude and palms together,


Calgary Buddhist Temple

BRCA VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- Seniors Holiday Social – Dec 15 – set up 12pm and tear down 3pm
- Arctic Adventure planning (Nov/Dec/Jan)
- Arctic Adventure event –Jan 20-22 – set up/tear down, etc
- Pub Night Committee – ongoing
- BRCA Events Committee – ongoing
- BRCA Hall Skating Rink – rink flooding/shoveling/maintenance (Nov-Feb)
- Farmers Market –winter season volunteers – ongoing

If you are interested in any of these opportunities or want more information, email membership@brcacalgary.org or go to www.brcacalgary.org





"The BRCA bridges people through engagement across the past, present, and future."

It's time to **RENEW** your **BRCA Membership for 2023**

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VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Dianne Kuliasa, Karen Shaw, and Ilo Torgerson



*Left: Volunteers Dianne K. and Karen S.
Right: Ilo on her walking route in fall 2021.*

We sat down with a trio of passionate volunteers—all seniors—to talk about their experiences volunteering and living in Bridgeland-Riverside.

How long have you lived in Bridgeland-Riverside?

Dianne and Karen both moved to our community about nine years ago. Ilo moved here four years ago because she wanted to be closer to The Zoo, where she was a volunteer.

They love the proximity to downtown, public transit, the multitude of activities happening for people of all ages, and how well BRCA treats its volunteers. They love so many features of the neighbourhood, like the parks and specifically, Tom Campbell's Hill.

How did you get involved in volunteering in our community? What kind of volunteer activities have you done?

Ilo already loved volunteering with The Zoo (in the penguin building!), and then the pandemic arrived and that was not possible. She then got involved in BRCA volunteer activities, like picking up litter. Dianne loves gardening and started gardening in the community and with the BRCA rooftop garden. Dianne and Karen started joining in with beautification efforts, including the weeding and pruning of public spaces. Participating in the BRCA Bridgeland Walks connected the ladies to Deb Lee, who suggested some volunteer activities.

In addition to gardening and volunteering with The Zoo, they have been part of BRCA's Community Cleanup Day. Karen believes that litter really detracts from the beauty of the neighbourhood, and admits she's a neat freak!

What would you tell others in the community about volunteering?

Volunteering connects them to others in the community. While weeding or picking up litter, passersby would stop to chat, and then those folks would also learn about volunteer opportunities that benefit the community. Dianne notes that Bridgeland-Riverside is a diverse community and that we also have many people who come here from other neighbourhoods because of the many activities available. They note that during the pandemic, it was nice to just get out and get some fresh air. The skating rink at the community hall—run by volunteers—brings families and young people out.

What do you like most about volunteering for the Bridgeland-Riverside Community Association?

They love connecting with people in the community, having fun, getting some exercise, and seeing the results of their work appreciated by others.

What is a hidden gem in Bridgeland-Riverside?

Volunteering has incredible benefits for both the community and the individual who is volunteering! There can be the misconception that volunteering is just time that you give away—which takes hours away from other activities or free time. Volunteering creates change, but the change is reciprocal for the volunteer. It is fulfilling, satisfying, and valuable to know that you are contributing directly to the community where you live.



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New Little Free Library in Bridgeland

by Deb Lee

We have lots of readers of all ages in Bridgeland-Riverside who love to use the Little Free Libraries scattered throughout the community. Luckily for them, there is a brand-new library that has sprung up in the 9A Street park. It's a cute bright yellow structure that sits on a post located close to the northwest corner of the park. You can't miss it!

For those who are new to the Little Free Library concept, the statement "take a book, leave a book" is how it works. The books have been donated by community members and can be taken by anyone who would like to read a book. There is no cost and you are not obligated to return the book.

Bridgeland's newest library is now open for business 24/7, in all seasons. Thank you to Mitzi for making the library beautiful, to Craig for helping to install it, and to Jeannie, Cayley, and Stephanie who have stepped up to share the stewarding duties. Thank you also to past BRCA board member Roseanne Penner who originally arranged with the City for three park locations for our Little Free Libraries. The other two are located in Riverside Park near the Rain Garden (stewarded by Vera) and in General Plaza.

We are lucky to have six other Little Free Libraries next to private homes throughout the community in the following locations:


- 4 Ave at 4A St
- 4 Ave north on 7A St
- 4 Ave at 8A St
- Thompson Ave
- 10 St at 1 Ave (beside Bridgeland Market)
- 7A St south of McDougall Rd

Little Free Libraries are seen as a way to foster community engagement and to encourage reading and improve literacy. Contributing your used books also creates more space in your house.

On your next walk around the neighbourhood, be sure to check out the newest library at the 9A St park and all of our other Little Free Libraries.



9A Street Park

**9 PM
ROUTINE**

✓ CHECKLIST

- Remove valuables & garage door openers from vehicles
- Lock vehicles
- Close overhead garage door
- Lock door between garage & house
- Close & lock all external doors
- Ensure windows are shut
- Turn on exterior light

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Bridgeland Real Estate Update

Last 12 Months Bridgeland

MLS Real Estate Sale Price Update

	Average Asking Price	Average Sold Price
October-22	\$384,900	\$370,000
September-22	\$749,950	\$710,000
August-22	\$269,000	\$260,000
July-22	\$324,900	\$320,000
June-22	\$439,900	\$435,000
May-22	\$412,350	\$402,000
April-22	\$350,000	\$342,000
March-22	\$439,900	\$442,000
February-22	\$465,000	\$533,500
January-22	\$449,950	\$431,750
December-21	\$249,900	\$228,000
November-21	\$399,900	\$392,500

Last 12 Months Bridgeland

MLS Real Estate Number of Listings Update

	No. New Properties	No. Properties Sold
October-22	21	13
September-22	16	6
August-22	12	8
July-22	19	11
June-22	20	17
May-22	23	22
April-22	21	19
March-22	30	23
February-22	33	21
January-22	15	16
December-21	7	5
November-21	6	7

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Bridgeland Bees – Fun Facts



Our Bridgeland Bees have had another successful summer foraging and making honey. After all that hard work, they are ready to snuggle in and rest for the winter. Did you know bees don't hibernate or sleep? They'll be awake all winter, huddled together, vibrating their wing muscles to generate heat, keeping the hive warm at 35 degrees Celsius. They've got lots of stored honey to snack on until the spring.



In early spring, the hive will be home to 12,000 bees. The colony is the biggest in July with 80,000 bees.

Honey bees can recognize human faces.

Our bees can visit up to 1000 flowers in one trip, which can take four hours.



All their hard work produced over 20 kilos of extractable honey!

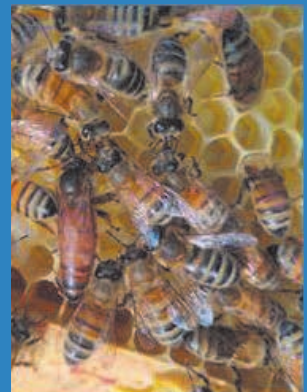
Honey is the only food product that doesn't spoil. The oldest edible honey is 3000 years old. The profession of beekeeping is at least 4500 years old.

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Thank you Benevity for sponsoring the BRCA beehive!

Thank you to our amazing beekeeper Shandril from Alveole, who has cared for our bees all season.



Park Naming and La Piazza

by Deb Lee, Beautification Committee – Park Project

The BRCA Park Project activities conducted from 2020 to 2022 endeavoured to determine how our many small parks and green spaces could be better known and utilized. We identified that most of our small parks did not have formal names or had acquired informal names. In the 2021 naming component of the Park Project, we sought to find names for our 10 little parks and green spaces that would describe the diverse and historic makeup of our community. We consulted with residents in the community for each park and in March 2022, we submitted our recommendations which are now being reviewed by the City.

Most people feel a great fondness for the park currently known as General Plaza. It is located between 1 Avenue and a row of businesses along General Avenue, between 8A and 9 Streets. The park, with its mature Schubert Chokecherry trees whose flowers brighten our spring, has a variety of seating, tables, and lighting that were placed there by the BRCA a few years ago. Roma Pizza donated the foosball game and a Little Free Library offers books to read. Many people of all ages visit here. Local volunteers continue to maintain the furniture, pick up litter, and remove weeds from the plant beds. Thank you, John, Bertina, Allan, Lucia, and Sarah, for your great efforts this year!

Planning is underway to more fully commemorate the former Calgary General Hospital along Centre Avenue. It was suggested that the “General Plaza” park name could move to this new space, so we pursued a new name for this lovely park along 1 Avenue. Many people, local residents as well as visitors, have suggested that the park is unique in Calgary and feels like a European setting. We know that many Europeans did indeed settle here in past years.

Italians were a major group to call Bridgeland home, especially after World War II. Initially, many worked at the General Hospital, in construction, and for the City, and their kids attended St Angela’s School. Businesses such as the Italian grocery store sprang up and the older men met for coffee at tables set up outside 7-11. Gardens were planted in the rich soil and bumper crops of tomatoes were harvested and turned into delicious tomato sauce. The fall also meant the making of wine from imported grapes. The name “Little Italy” described

our community in those days and the Italian Cultural Centre on the west side of 4 Street became an important hub of activity. Over the years, the younger generation moved to new homes in the suburbs so nowadays, there are fewer people of Italian descent actually living here.

An Italian presence is still felt in Bridgeland-Riverside. Several restaurants along 1 Avenue serve traditional Italian fare. Prior to COVID-19, BRCA partnered with the Italian Cultural Centre to organize a Passageatta event that featured entertainment at the Italian Centre, a lantern-lit walk down 1 Avenue, and fun activities like grape stomping, music, and bocce play in the Plaza. The seventieth anniversary of the Cultural Centre was celebrated this past fall along with an Italian cultural event at the community centre.

To acknowledge and celebrate the historical importance of Italians in our community, we have recommended that that 1 Avenue park be re-named “La Piazza,” translating to “town square” or “plaza” in Italian. We believe that this is a fitting name for this much-loved gathering place.

Even though snow is blanketing the streets now, you can still find a place to sit in this park. The City has also provided a firepit where you can share time with friends and warm your hands. Stop by and enjoy the unique ambiance of one of our favourite park spaces. We hope to hear about the City’s decision on the official naming of this park in early 2023.



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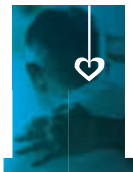


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