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BRIDGELAND RIVERSIDE

BRIDGES

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Call for Youth Soccer Referees!

Hello Neighbours!

We are looking to hire youth soccer referees for the Bridgeland soccer program. If you are between the ages of 12 and 18 and have experience or an interest in refereeing soccer, please contact the soccer coordinator at soccer@brccalgary.org for more information. Games are Tuesday and Thursday nights from May 2 to June 22; the wage is \$25 per game.



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PRESIDENT/EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Repairs to our community hall are finally underway. The fire at the end of November caused over \$300,000 in damage to the building and contents and resulted in our inability to rent the facility. Damage assessment and insurance appraisals were followed by preparation of a repair plan, tendering of the work, contractor selection, and the need to obtain a variety of permits from the City before repair work could commence in early April. Having had our community hall closed for the past six months has been difficult for the BRCA and the many groups that use the facility. We hope the repairs will be completed in time for the BRCA Annual General Meeting on June 7.

As we have come to expect in our community, many businesses, organizations, and neighbours came forward following the fire to offer support and assistance, all of which we were most thankful for. I would particularly like to thank JEMM Properties (The Bridge), Calgary Buddhist Temple, LDV Pizza Bar, Bridgeland Crossings, the Italian Cultural Centre, and Centre Street Church for stepping forward to provide space for BRCA meetings and other events that could not be held in the hall.

A sure indication that spring has arrived is the “green” content of this issue of Bridges. You will find articles and notices regarding the annual Plant Share, the CNIB Secret Garden, growing food, and the resumption of the popular Bridgeland Walks program. I hope you can find time to get outside and enjoy seeing our neighbourhood bloom.

We hope to see you at the AGM.

BRCA Annual General Meeting:

Wednesday June 7, 2023, at 7:00 pm

BRCA Community Hall – 917 Centre Street NE

You will find further information at brccalgary.org.

Alex MacWilliam



Growing Food in Bridgeland-Riverside

by Deb Lee

“Teaching people how to grow so they can grow and teach others.”

Hands on Growing is working with Bridgeland-Riverside Community Association and Calgary Parks to establish a new community garden in the park to the south of Bishops Manor. They are working through the City's requirements and if all goes well, garden boxes will be set up and offered for gardening this year. If you are interested being involved in this new community garden, contact the BRCA Board.



BRAIN GAMES SUDOKU

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FOR THE SOLUTION



Building a Greener Community Through Plant Share

by Rebecca Bruton

Bridgeland-Riverside is a community blessed with a unique plant growing environment. The escarpment bowl that surrounds us provides a sheltered microclimate – less windy and somewhat warmer than many other areas of Calgary with fertile soils left by the meandering, ancient Bow River.

Interest in gardening is seeing a resurgence. Many are new to gardening, but keen to learn the basics and the tricks of growing both beautiful and edible plants in whatever space they have available. Flowery annuals (those plants that can be bought as bedding plants or grown from seed every year) are one choice, as are vegetannuals (your typical market garden plant). For those interested in stewarding a more permanent garden that transforms each year, perennials are an enduring option.

Perennials are a large class of plants that return every spring. Some are great pollinators, which help to support our honeybee populations, some foster shade for other plants and creatures in the garden, and some are edible. All help contribute to a healthy, well-oxygenated microbiology.

Unless the roots have been frozen during an extra bitter winter or dug up by the squirrels, perennials will send up their tender shoots to face each new growing season. Perennials are often quite hardy and expand year over year, either by self-seeding, or extending their growth through underground root systems or widening clumps of plants. To maintain the health of the perennials, it's imperative that this growth is managed, often by splitting the plants or digging up new seedlings. And what to do with these extra and often unneeded plants?

That's where Bridgeland-Riverside's Plant Share comes in! This annual initiative – which returns this year – is a collaboration between BRCA's Rooftop Garden Committee and the Beautification Committee. We invite resident gardeners with perennials to dig up their extras, put them in pots or little bags, mark the kind of plant, and bring them to the Rooftop Garden. These young plants are then shared with others who'd like to start a perennial garden or add to what they already grow. Examples of plants you might see are columbines, yarrow, sedum, perennial grasses, monkshood, and lily

of the valley. We also hope to have some small bags of composted soil available for apartment dwellers who focus their efforts on small containers and pots. Donations are gratefully accepted.

This year, we're also setting up a table for a seed share! As there is a growing contingent of community members developing an interest in growing vegetables, we'd like to encourage seed-saving and heirloom varietal exchange. What's seed-saving? This is when you collect the seeds from the previous year's harvest and store them through the winter. With good planning, you'll be able to expand your seed collection each year, and perhaps have a few available to exchange. This is a great way to save money on veggie seeds, and to promote multigenerational growth of vegetannuals that grow especially well in Bridgeland-Riverside. After several generations of seed-saving, you'll have your own 'heirloom varieties' to share with your gardening neighbours.

This arrangement sounds pretty much like a win-win, but is it? Actually, it's more than that! Plant shares and seed shares are part of a growing concept called the sharing economy. It's also a way to meet your neighbours, who have a similar interest in growing, and to hear their ideas. And it's an affordable way for Bridgeland-Riverside to become an even more beautiful (and delicious) place to live.

Mark your calendars for the Plant and Seed Share on May 27 from 9:30 am to 1:30 pm and check it out at the Roof Top Garden at the Community Centre: 917 Centre Avenue NE!



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News, Events, & More



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Real Estate 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



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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JOIN US AS WE WALK AROUND AND BEYOND THE NEIGHBOURHOOD, FOLLOWING A DIFFERENT THEME AND ROUTE EACH WEEK

Thursdays at 7pm

Meet at the BRCA Hall
917 Centre Ave NE

Email us at bridgelandwalks@gmail.com to be added to our monthly schedule distribution list.

May 4: Intro Walk – A bit of everything, 4 km

Check out the first of our weekly walks and sample the variety that a walk through our community offers. One hill.

May 11: Churches, 6 km, might be some hills

Over 15 churches can be found here. Let's find them all and hear some of the stories.

May 18: Memories of Little Italy, 5 km

Food is a common theme of the presence of Italians in the neighbourhood, but lots of stories about their past here.

May 25: Walk on the Wild Side, 6 km, mostly flat

Follow the pathway by the river and you'll see wild animals and lots of birds – au naturel!

SAFE & SOUND

Window and Balcony Safety

from Alberta Health Services

With the return of warmer weather, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) would like to remind parents and caregivers of an often-overlooked hazard in the home – access to open windows. Every year, paramedics respond to emergencies where a child has fallen from an open window, often from the second floor. These can be avoided by following safety measures. Take the time to assess potential hazards in your home before a preventable fall occurs.

Windows and Screens

- Prevent access to windows by moving furniture such as cribs, beds, stools, and change tables out from under them.
- Keep drapery cords out of children's' reach. Wrap excess cord around cleats, or tie-downs to avoid a choking hazard.
- Remember, screens are not safety devices. They are designed to keep bugs out, not children in.

Balconies

- Do not underestimate a child's ability to climb. Furniture and other items stored on balconies and decks can be used to climb resulting in falls over the railing.
- Ensure that your balcony railings are not more than 10 cm (4 inch) apart. This will eliminate access between the vertical bars of a balcony, or deck.

Further Prevention Tips




- Toddlers and preschoolers are at highest risk of falling from a window, or balcony, but it may happen at any age.
- Direct supervision of children is the single most effective way to prevent falls from windows and balconies.
- Install safety devices which limit the distance in which a window can be open to a maximum of 10cm (4 inches).
- Ensure the safety device can be released quickly, so the window can be used for escape in case of emergency.
- Consider purchasing a portable air conditioner, which will enable windows to stay closed and secure.
- EMS is proud to be a member of the Partners Promoting Window and Balcony Safety. Take time to assess your home for window and balcony hazards and eliminate the risks before a preventable fall occurs.

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Help us document the different pollinators in Calgary!

- 1 Go to inaturalist.ca or download the app. 
- 2 Take 2 clear photos of an insect and 1-2 photos of the plant/flower that it is visiting. 
- 3 Upload your photos to iNaturalist and add your insect observations to the Calgary Pollinators Project. 



 sustain@ucalgary.ca

 [@dollecology](https://www.instagram.com/dollecology)

Meet Your Board Member:

Jess Huffman



How did you first get involved with BRCA as a volunteer?

My first volunteer experience in Bridgeland-Riverside was as a member of the Board. I have a bit of a history of being involved no matter where I have lived. I've always thought Bridgeland-Riverside is one

of Calgary's best kept secrets. As soon as we moved, and got ourselves settled in, it was obvious I had been right. We were staying, and since we were staying, getting involved in the community we now called home was just common sense.

What led you to consider serving on the Board?

When I looked for volunteer opportunities, I saw the Board had positions available. I have previous Board experience so I contacted Sarah MacDonald, the Director of Membership and Volunteers, and was elected at the AGM last May.

What is involved in being a Board member?

BRCA is a working Board, which means it fulfills the role of governance, along with the delivery and management of the association's programs, fundraising, stake-holder relations, and day-to-day operations with the help of one incredibly competent General Manager, Pam Swan. Being able to change hats easily is a definite plus. It's never boring.

What do you enjoy about being a BRCA Board member?

What I enjoy most is being able to positively impact outcomes for the community. Bridgeland-Riverside residents are interested in what is happening around them. It's a different experience than living in suburban developments far from the city centre. There is a definite feeling of commitment to, and caring for, the larger community. It makes working with them and for our community a very rewarding experience. There is so much to do to keep what is best about Bridgeland-Riverside while helping it grow in a positive direction. I also have to say that my fellow Board members are at the top of the list of things that make the BRCA Board enjoyable. I really couldn't ask for kinder, more professional colleagues.

What would you say to community members about joining the Board?

If you consider Bridgeland-Riverside your forever home, as my family does, there is no better way to impact your long term quality of life than being involved on your CA Board. The learning curve is steep. BRCA is a very active community association. That means there are a lot of things with which to make yourself familiar in a short time frame to get up to speed. The good news, as I mentioned above, is you couldn't ask for a better group of people to get you through it. The best part of all that activity is that there is something for everyone no matter what their passion, or area of interest may be.

Pet Waste Pilot Project at Tom Campbell's Hill

from the City of Calgary

The City of Calgary Parks department and Waste and Recycling Service will conduct a small-scale pet waste diversion collection pilot in two off-leash dog parks from April to November 2023. One of the two parks is on Tom Campbell's Hill. A redesigned residential green cart will be located at the park entrance to offer pet owners the option to dispose of pet waste for composting and pet owners will be encouraged to use certified compostable bags. The composting facility staff will assess each load collected for acceptability and contamination to determine if it will be composted or disposed of in a landfill.

Plastic bags are the main contamination issue at the Calgary composting facility and are the reason pet waste has not been going to this facility to date. Most pet waste bags sold at retailers in Calgary and online are still made of plastic or so-called "biodegradable plastic," neither of which are compostable.

As the federal government moves toward banning the sale of certain types of plastic bags, we may start to see more options for "certified compostable plastic bags," which will compost in The City of Calgary's composting facility.

To dispose of pet waste in the green cart at Tom Campbell's Hill, the waste must be collected in a compostable or paper bag and put inside the cart. It cannot be placed inside loose (unbagged).

Pet waste compostable bags are available at pet stores and vet clinics in Calgary. A list of brands and retail locations is available at calgary.ca/greencart.

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Our Secret Garden in Bridgeland

by Debbie Ricalton, Shona Clarke, and Deb Lee

Nestled in the community of Bridgeland-Riverside is one of Calgary's best kept secrets – the CNIB Fragrant Garden at #15 Colonel Baker Place NE (just off 11A Street). This naturally managed perennial garden provides a true sensory experience that is fully accessible to everyone. It offers peaceful, tucked away spaces, a bold and beautiful progression of flowers through the season, lovely and impactful fragrances, and interesting textures. This combination creates an atmosphere for both quiet contemplation and opportunities for community all year round. It is truly one of the few gardens of its kind in the country. Stop by and experience all that it offers.

The Fragrant Garden was established in 1999 and surrounds the CNIB Calgary corporate offices with nearly an acre of lush gardens. Originally conceived to provide those with limited vision a safe, barrier-free outdoor garden to stimulates the senses, it has also become a refuge for the surrounding community and meeting place to create connection. It has accessible pathways, benches to sit and experience the garden, picnic areas, and a fountain – where you can simply enjoy the sounds of water with the rustle of the leaves from the surrounding trees. In recent years, the garden has become a centre of activity while still maintaining its sanctuary for patrons who have enjoyed it for years. You'll find a welcoming green space for residents from nearby apartment buildings and an amazing place for exploration by children.

The Fragrant Garden is open to the public and we invite you to visit often. Plan to take time to experience the garden not only with your eyes but with all your other senses for that truly immersive experience. We hope that with each visit, you find a gem that you haven't experienced before.

The garden itself is entirely supported and managed by volunteers – gardeners, community volunteers, and corporate volunteer groups, but in recent years, it has experienced some decline. A group of master gardeners have taken on the challenge of returning the garden to its former glory.

We're looking for local volunteers to help us. You would be included under the umbrella of the CNIB volunteer program and need to be willing to work six hours a month under the direction of a master gardener on planned morning work bees. For more information, please connect with the BRCA Board.

You're also invited to attend our Open House at the garden on June 25 from 12:00 to 4:00 pm.



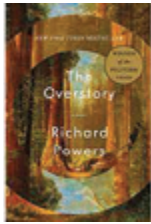
Joke of the Month
What do you call a little bear with no teeth?
A gummy bear.

THE EMERALD

The emerald is May's official birthstone. Unlike some birthstones, emerald is classified as one of four precious gemstones. Although the oldest emeralds date back 2.97 billion years and were first mined in Egypt, emeralds have been found in Canada, although they're rare. Canada's first emeralds were found in 1998 in Yukon Territory!

Cool Facts About Trees from The BRCA Tree Team Book Club

by Laura and Amy



We recently read *The Overstory*, by Richard Powers, a Pulitzer Prize winning novel that looks at human and tree relationships from a poetic, yet gripping perspective – we loved it.

Some of the information about trees was so mind boggling that we thought you might be interested in it. We confirmed these facts from the novel with science/forestry websites to be sure it wasn't all fiction.

Fact 1: Trees build themselves out of air! You've probably all heard that forests are carbon sinks, storing carbon from carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the air. But what we didn't realize is that all the wood of a tree is made from that CO₂. Trees get water and nutrients from soil, but studies have shown that there is no depletion of soil from a tree growing in it, so all the carbon comes from the air.

Here's the science of how that happens. The amazing process of photosynthesis is where chlorophyll (the green part of plant leaves) uses light energy to break water (H₂O) into oxygen (O₂) and hydrogen (H). The pores of the leaves (stomata) take in CO₂ from the air – that CO₂ is broken into more O₂ and carbon (C) which binds with the H from the water to make various carbohydrate (CH) chemicals. Trees use those carbohydrates to stay alive, reproduce, and build their structures, including the roots, trunk, branches, stems, leaves, and seeds, including fruits and nuts. The O₂ is released from the pores into the air, and we breathe it in. Plants and plankton in the oceans are what made the O₂ that allowed the earth to be habitable for animals, including us.

Fact 2: Aspen trees' root systems can live for thousands of years! The trees above ground can live 150 to 200 years, but as we learned on last year's tree educator walk, aspens are a colony of genetically identical shoots off a common root mass, which is a single organism. These root masses can often live from 5,000 to 10,000 years, according to the US National Park Service, and what is thought to be the oldest living root colony in the world, in Utah's Bryce Canyon National Park, is 80,000 years old. Our aspen root masses in Calgary are not likely to be more than about 10,000 years old as that is roughly the end of the last ice age here, and they would have moved north from warmer areas over time.

Fact 3: Trees can communicate with each other and occasionally other creatures through the air. Using pheromones and other scent signals released into the air, some trees can emit signals to surrounding trees or even protect themselves against predators. An example of this is a tree called the wide-crowned umbrella thorn acacia that can emit a distress signal in the form of ethylene gas that, in high enough quantities, has the capabilities of sickening or even killing the large giraffes that snack on its leaves. Another example: elms and pines can detect caterpillar saliva and in response, release a pheromone that attracts a specific kind of wasp to eat the caterpillars, thus protecting the trees from decimation. A recent study also shows that some trees know the "taste" of deer saliva and in response to the animals making a meal of the tree, can release a chemical to make their own leaves taste bad. Trees, it turns out, are not at the mercy of their environment but are in fact active participants.

Our Tree Book Club, though small, is keen, and will be reading *The Hidden Life of Trees*, by Peter Wohlleben next. We don't have a fixed schedule; we just meet for a walk to discuss the book once we have finished it. If any of you would like to read *The Hidden Life of Trees* and discuss it with us, contact us at trees@brcacalgary.org.



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