

Mill Woods **Mosaic**

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The Multicultural Voice of Edmonton Southeast

Independent • Non-partisan • Interdenominational

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Spoiled Canadians

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Canadian Senator Paula Simons denounces Alberta's anti-immigrant referendum questions.

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Forever Canadian!

On Oct. 19, Albertans will have the opportunity to vote in the referendum about Alberta remaining a province of Canada or separating from Canada.

The referendum also includes five questions about immigration and four constitutional questions. See articles on pages 4, 6, 9 and 12 of this issue.

Photo: Thomas Lukaszuk, leader of the "Forever Canadian" campaign, with volunteers in front of the "Unity Bus" at the Canada Day celebration in Mill Woods on July 1.

Photo: Forever Canadian

Canada supports new projects to promote Francophone immigration

Collaboration is essential to addressing Canada's workforce needs and responding to the realities facing Francophone communities. Given the challenges posed by labour shortages and the ongoing need to attract and retain talent, Canada is joining forces with its partners and reinforcing its commitment to Francophone immigration.

On Sept. 29, Lena Metlege Diab, Canada's Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, alongside the Lin Paddock, Minister of Jobs, Growth and Rural Development of Newfoundland and Labrador, announced an investment of approximately \$1.2 million to support new projects funded under the Government of Canada's Francophone Immigration Support Program.

Led by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, the first project aims to strengthen the province's Francophone minority communities by creating a sustainable corridor for Francophone and bilingual talent that supports both population growth and the province's labour market needs. Through targeted overseas recruitment, the project aims to attract individuals who can contribute to key sectors of the economy, including education, health care and early childhood education. Increasing the number of Francophone and bilingual workers in the public and private sectors will expand the availability of services in French, improving access and inclusivity for Francophones across the province.

The second project is an initiative of the *Conseil économique et coopératif de la Saskatchewan* aimed at increasing Francophone immigration to Saskatchewan

through a turnkey approach that directly matches local labour market needs with international talent. This approach will be implemented through initiatives such as the creation of an interactive mapping platform, the organization of in-person and virtual activities, support for the recognition of academic credentials and professional certification exams, and the hosting of cultural transition workshops. The project is aimed at employers in Saskatchewan in key sectors such as agriculture, health care, mining, energy, technology and the hotel industry.

Minister Metlege Diab also announced the implementation of the coordinated promotional strategy developed by the Carrefour francophone de Sudbury as part of the first phase of a project funded by the Francophone Immigration Support Program in 2025. The strategy "Osez le Nord" will bring together all key stakeholders in Francophone immigration in the northern part of the province to promote the regionalization of immigration and highlight the opportunities offered by Francophone communities in Northern Ontario.

These investments and the commitment of all stakeholders and partners reflect a shared determination to join forces and address the realities and needs of Francophone minority communities.

"Once again, our government is reaffirming our commitment to Francophone immigration and our recognition of the valuable contributions that every French-speaking and bilingual newcomer makes to Canada," said Minister Metlege Diab. "The partnerships and investments made through the Francophone Immigra-

tion Support Program are a reflection of our shared commitment to foster the growth of our Francophone minority communities, strengthen their vitality, and help build a more dynamic and vibrant Canadian Francophonie."

"Francophone immigration plays a vital role in strengthening Newfoundland and Labrador's communities, workforce, and economy," said Minister Paddock. "Through this funding from the Government of Canada, we are creating new opportunities to attract and retain Francophone and bilingual newcomers who will help address labour market challenges, support population growth, and contribute to the long-term vitality of our province's Francophone communities."

"Funding for the Francophone Immigration Support Program is a key driver to enhance our province's appeal and economic vitality," said Kouamé N'Goandi, Executive Director, *Conseil économique et coopératif de la Saskatchewan*. "It addresses a two-fold challenge – meeting the labour needs of employers in provincial priority sectors and fostering the welcome and integration of Francophone workers. Through the Destination Saskatchewan initiative, our communities will welcome new talent that will directly contribute to the prosperity and visibility of the Francophone community."

"Funding for the coordinated promotional 'Osez le Nord' campaign will bring together all the key players in Francophone immigration in Northern Ontario under a single brand to enhance Northern

Continued on page 2

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New Francophone projects

Continued from front page

Ontario's appeal to Francophone families, workers and students," said Thomas Mercier, Director, *Réseau de soutien à l'immigration francophone du Nord de l'Ontario*. "By highlighting the career opportunities and quality of life in our communities, 'Osez le Nord' will showcase the unique realities of Northern Ontario in a warm, authentic and engaging tone."

Quick facts

- As part of the Action Plan for Official Languages 2023–2028, the Government of Canada is investing \$25 million over 5 years in the Centre for Innovation in Francophone Immigration.
- To date, 23 projects have received funding. Taking into account the additional funding allocated to existing projects, investments now total approximately \$19.8 million over 4 years (2024–2025 through 2027–2028). All of these projects aim to increase the number of Francophone and bilingual applicants admitted, and to support the participation of Francophone minority communities in the immigration continuum.

- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's ongoing commitment to Francophone immigration is reflected in several achievements from the past year, notably reaching 8.9% of admissions of Francophone permanent residents outside Quebec in 2025.

- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada has consistently met or surpassed its admissions target for French-speaking permanent residents outside Quebec over the past 4 years.

Provincial Overreach

Edmonton City Councillor Jo-Anne Wright

The recent announcement from Premier Danielle Smith and Municipal Affairs Minister, Dan Williams, forces Edmonton to reinstate its former zoning bylaw and parking minimums. Comprehensive and thoughtful public engagement on the Zoning Bylaw Renewal began back in 2018 and came into force in January 2024 with recent amendments made to address height, built-form and density. The province's shortsighted and rushed decision will make Edmonton a less affordable and accessible city, all while making it more expensive to maintain our current infrastructure and deliver quality city services.

Alberta was calling and Edmonton stepped up to build more diverse housing options for people to call home. Sprawling development outwards is not a financially responsible way to grow a city. Relying on new neighbourhoods for growth just means higher property taxes or crumbling infrastructure. This is not something Edmontonians should have to choose between. Redeveloping mature neighbourhoods that have seen a decrease in population helps to bring back vibrancy to the community. By adding new homes to existing neighbourhoods, we provide the option to

live in communities that already have nearby schools and hospitals, so that people don't need to wait the decades that it has taken for the provincial government to build them.

I want Edmonton to be a welcoming city. That means well-paved roads, responsive emergency services, and

homes at prices that people can afford. This is why I have supported building new homes in existing neighbourhoods throughout my time on Council.

Edmonton has experienced immense growth pressures over the past few years, and I am proud of the work our city has done to meet the challenge while keeping housing affordable by reducing sprawl and improving our long-term financial position. Increasing the housing

supply to meet these demands maintains Edmonton's ranking as one of the most affordable places to live in Canada. I have grave concerns about any future provincial plans that restrict us from maintaining the high quality of life and affordability that Edmontonians deserve.

As always, if you have any comments or concerns, I encourage you to reach out to my office at 780.496.8148 or e-mail: jo-anne.wright@edmonton.ca



Coun. Jo-Anne Wright

Letters to the editor welcome

We invite you to write letters to the editor. A maximum of 275 words is preferred. Letters must carry a first name or two initials with surname, and include an address and daytime telephone number. All letters are subject to editing. We don't publish letters addressed to others or sent to other publications. Send to: The Editor of the *Mill Woods Mosaic*, mwmosaic@telus.net

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Malcolm Tweddle School celebrates 50th Anniversary

Malcolm Tweddle School, which is located in the Millbourne neighbourhood, celebrated its 50th anniversary on Oct. 1, bringing together students, staff, families and community members for a special day of festivities.

The celebration included a hot dog lunch, entertainment by The Joe Show, and a Community Open House featuring special guests, cultural performances by Monty Sunchild-Baptiste of the Cree Confederation drum group, and Indigenous dancers.

The event honoured five decades of learning, achievements and community connections while celebrating the legacy of Malcolm Tweddle, Edmonton's Finance Commissioner from 1953 to 1971, whose public service helped shape the city's growth.

The milestone served as a meaningful reminder of the school's lasting impact and commitment to leadership, citizenship and community.

Guests at the event included Saadiq Sumar (Chair of the Edmonton Public School Board), Christina Gray (MLA for Edmonton-Mill Woods), and members of Malcolm Tweddle's family.



Students of Malcolm Tweddle School form the number 50, celebrating the school's 50th anniversary on Oct. 1.

Photos: Grey Johnson



The staff of Malcolm Tweddle School posing for a group photo in front of the school. The public elementary school provides regular programming for Kindergarten to Grade 6 and is a District site for the Cogito alternative program for grades 4 - 6 and Interactions classes.

**Discrimination and racism
have no place in our hearts,
our homes and our world.**

An Indigenous dancer performing during the school's 50th anniversary celebration.



Mill Woods Mosaic

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The Mill Woods Mosaic publishes a variety of opinions.
Unsigned editorials express the view of the publisher.
Signed pieces express the views of the writers only.

Our Opinion

Plan ahead for safe Diwali celebrations

As families and communities prepare to celebrate Diwali this November, the City of Edmonton is encouraging residents to plan ahead for safe and joyful celebrations.

The City has developed resources to help residents and community organizations understand Edmonton's fireworks rules, access safety information and find community celebrations featuring professional, permitted fireworks displays. A community toolkit, including key safety information, posters, postcards and fact sheets in multiple languages, is available at edmonton.ca/Diwali.

Using fireworks without a permit is illegal in Edmonton. Residents are encouraged to celebrate at events with professional fireworks displays and not discharge fireworks illegally in yards, driveways or public parks. Unpermitted fireworks pose serious fire risks to homes and can result in fines of up to \$10,000 and potential criminal charges.

Community groups planning events on City parkland or at City facilities can access support with event coordination, venue bookings and noise exemptions. Submit an event application at least six weeks before the event at edmonton.ca/EventApplication.

Safe celebrations start with us. Together, we can ensure a safe celebration of light, community and joy.

For more information: edmonton.ca/Fireworks

Are separatists spoiled Canadians or acting for some dark forces?

When my wife Susan and I arrived in Canada in 1988, we landed in the small City of Wetaskiwin, Alberta. We had met in Germany where I grew up, and Susan is from the Philippines. We didn't know much about Canada, and when Wetaskiwin was mentioned, I had to look at a map to find out where Alberta is. When we arrived here, it was the year of the Winter Olympic Games in Calgary, and the extensive media coverage helped me to learn more about Canada.

When I talked with our first landlord and other Albertans, I was surprised that so many of them hated former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau. I thought Trudeau was a pretty cool prime minister who was rather young, well-educated, well-spoken, progressive and had a vision of a better Canada. But I did not know the history of the National Energy Program (NEP) which was a controversial federal policy introduced in 1980 by Trudeau's Liberal government. Many Albertans hated the NEP, because they felt screwed by Ottawa, and they have never forgiven the Liberals which explains why they are still quite unpopular in Alberta, but now we have a Liberal prime minister, Mark Carney, who is more popular in Alberta than our conservative Premier Danielle Smith.

When I worked as a reporter for the daily newspaper *Lethbridge Herald* in

the early 1990s, I had the opportunity to interview Preston Manning who was the leader of the new Reform Party whose motto was "The West Wants In", catering to unhappy Western Canadians, and when we

Arnim Joop

From the Desk of the Publisher



campaigns for David Kilgour to be reelected as Member of Parliament for southeast Edmonton in 2000 and 2004, I read his two books *Uneasy Patriots* and *Inside Outer Canada* which were about Western Canadians in Confederation and Western alienation, the long-standing political sentiment in Canada's western provinces that feels the federal government and Central Canada hold disproportionate political and economic power.

Separatism is nothing new in Alberta, but what is new in 2026 is the fact that the separatist movement has grown significantly, is rather well-organized

and well-funded, and they are pressuring the United Conservative Party government to say good-bye to Ottawa.

When Alberta's former Progressive Conservative Deputy Premier Thomas Lukaszuk launched the campaign "Forever Canadian" in July 2025, he did not expect that almost half a million Albertans would sign that petition to keep Alberta in Canada, but it showed that the majority of Albertans are not separatists.

What is wrong with these separatists? I don't really get it. We are living in one of the best countries in the world, and Alberta is Canada's wealthiest province, thanks to our oil and gas industry, but these people want to separate. Are they just a bunch of spoiled Canadians who don't appreciate all the privileges and benefits we are enjoying in this country, or are they a radical special interest group acting for some dark forces?

What I really don't like about the upcoming referendum are the five questions about immigration. These questions are suggesting that immigrants are a problem in Alberta, but that is just not true. This province has been built by immigrants and would be nothing without immigrants. Two years ago, Premier Smith wrote a letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, telling him that Alberta needs more



Alberta's Premier Danielle Smith denies to be a separatist, but she has called a referendum for Oct. 19, asking Albertans if Alberta should remain a province of Canada or separate from Canada. As leader of the governing United Conservative Party, Smith tries to please both sides, but this strategy could backfire, because many Albertans don't like the other nine questions of this referendum which are targeting immigrants, and that could result in the end of Premier Smith.

Cartoon by Susan Moshynski (www.bythebay.squarespace.com)

immigrants. The five immigration questions in the referendum are confusing, manipulative and suggesting that immigrants are freeloaders which is not true and very offensive.

As publisher and editor of this multicultural community newspaper, I am nonpartisan which means that I don't endorse or favor any political party, religion, or ideological group, but when it comes to certain controversial issues, I can not be "neutral." One of these issues is racism. I will not publish anything racist in my two newspapers or anything discriminating 2SLGBTQI+ individuals, people with disabilities, women or other people.

In this case of separating from Canada or not, I have chosen to be "partisan", because this is one of those issues where we can't sit on the fence. We can not be undecided. Therefore, I have not provided any space in this newspaper to propagate separatism, because I think that it is wrong and destructive, and I refuse to participate in this demolition derby.

So, if you haven't voted yet, I recommend to say "No" to the first nine questions of the Oct. 19 referendum, and "Option 1" for question # 10 (Alberta should remain a province of Canada). Forever Canadian!

Arnim Joop is the founder, publisher and editor of the Mill Woods Mosaic. He also publishes the Albertaner which is the only German language newspaper in Canada.

Gateway to the Universe

Growing up in the 1950s must appear boring and drab to younger generations. Their reality is multi-dimensional, fast-moving, and hyper-stimulating. Therefore, their perspective is understandable. I mean, how exciting could a childhood be without access to television, computers, the internet, social media, or Artificial Intelligence (AI)? Just the same, life then as it is now, was exciting and provided many lasting treasures. One of them, book reading, is worthy of mention, retention, and promotion. Here's why.

Let me begin by declaring emphatically that I value technology and science, which continue to provide us with great benefits. Nevertheless, their progress and its many outcomes have led us to overlook important personal development skills. But I digress, so let me return to technology and its evolution.

I can still vividly recall my family's excitement when we bought our first television set. Suddenly, our horizons expanded, allowing us visual access to news and entertainment with movie-like quality. The early TV shows, despite being few, were mesmerizing. They soon grew in number and quality. However, by then we became focused on a new technological wonder.

In the early 1980s, computers became common and our access to information expanded rapidly. Using diverse types of data storage devices called disks we could rapidly store or process words and figures, play novel games, and watch movies. Computers improved by leaps and bounds and soon became multifunctional, portable, affordable, and omnipresent. Our ability to process information grew exponentially and we thought we had reached a pinnacle. Not so!

By early to mid-1990s, we were introduced to the internet, and its

countless webpages and multimedia content (i.e., the World Wide Web). Social media, starting with Facebook, which began in 2006, further stimula-

**Ron
Kuban**

*Time
Passages*



ted our senses, and increased our reach and exposure to a wide range of topics. By surfing the net, we became able to reach people across the world, and access troves of documents, pictures, and videos. We started to investigate countless new ideas, listen to an endless list of tunes, and watch numerous movies, presentations, and podcasts. The proverbial floodgates were opened.

More recently, when AI became public, we were wowed by its seemingly magical ability to answer our questions and provide detailed solutions to any problem. Not surprisingly, AI use grew rapidly and was integrated into all our enterprises. What does this mean for us today?

Technology has gifted us with faster, more capable, multifaceted and interconnected tools for nearly all our needs and wishes. While its many services and instruments continue to be useful, they also contain flaws which already seem to limit our individual growth. As I see it, these glitzy and addictive tools have progressively kept us preoccupied and reduced our opportunities to think independently.

A dispassionate analysis of our cur-

rent use of these tools would highlight several concerns. One of them is our preoccupation with the endless choices available to us. Consider the abundance of documents, videos, movies, pictures, and blogs at our disposal. We are frequently encouraged to surf the net, explore social media or blogs, and respond or comment on posts. The endless programming now available on television or streaming platforms constantly entices us to engage with them. While some programs are interesting, educational, or entertaining, many have become mind numbing fluff focused on hyped-up dramas and bizarre shows designed to capture our attention and, therefore, time.

On a related note, think of the ads, pictures, videos, or articles that suddenly appear unbidden following your internet search for an idea or an item. This is not accidental. It is driven by ever-present algorithms which strive to influence our thoughts and actions. Sadly, they too are accepted as normal.

Let me return to my opening narrative about the pre-internet era when books, magazines, and newspapers provided information and entertainment. Having spent a lifetime reading books on diverse topics, I see great value in promoting book reading today as a counterweight to the negative impacts of the electronic media. The reasons may surprise you.

When we read a book, we do so at our own pace. We are not driven by the compressed timeline of a movie, video clip, or other visual presentation. We

are also more likely to select a book or a story which we find attractive, versus one encouraged by an algorithm. Interestingly, the experience of reading stimulates our mind in a more profound way than the passive watching of visual media. This has been proven through various MRI tests of brain activity. They discovered that when we read, our brain is highly stimulated because we are actively engaged with the storyline. We need to imagine the scenes, characters, or ideas to make sense of them. All of this is absent or significantly reduced when we passively watch visual presentations.

How we use our time is also important. Books are less addictive than the visual offerings of social media, the internet, television, or streaming services which typically encourage an endless search for the next episode, news updates, or messages. Technology discourages downtime and, therefore, reduces direct interpersonal connections. Here too we need a counterbalance and reading books is a great start.

While I greatly appreciate our current technology, I am also a strong believer in the value of reading books. Their vast array of topics is bound to meet any person's interest, and I strongly encourage reading broadly. This offers a fascinating gateway to the universe and helps develop independent-minded and better informed people.

Feedback is welcome at
rkuban@shaw.ca

Ron Kuban is a long-time community volunteer and builder.

The next issue of the *Mill Woods Mosaic* will be published on November 15, 2026. The deadline is Friday, November 13, 2026.

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Alberta's Future Deserves More Than Divisive Referendum Questions

Dear Readers and Fellow Albertans,

As we approach an important moment for our province, I would like to share my thoughts on the upcoming referendum and what it means for Alberta's future.

On October 19, Albertans will be asked to make important decisions about the future of our province. With ten referendum questions on the ballot, including five related to immigration, four proposing constitutional changes, and one concerning Alberta's future within Canada, this vote raises serious questions not only about the proposals themselves, but also about the priorities of the provincial government.

At a time when Albertans are struggling with rising living costs, difficulties accessing health care, overcrowded classrooms, and growing economic uncertainty, families are looking for practical solutions and meaningful leadership. Instead, the provincial government is spending an estimated \$120 to \$130 million on a referendum that was not a central commitment during the last provincial election campaign. It is reasonable for Albertans to question whether these significant public resources could be better invested in strengthening our hospitals, supporting our schools, and making life more affordable for families.

Gurtej Singh Brar

**MLA
for
Edmonton-
Ellerslie**



Of particular concern are the questions surrounding immigration. Alberta has been built through the hard work, determination, and contributions of people from different backgrounds and communities. Newcomers have helped strengthen our economy, fill essential positions in our workforce, establish businesses, and enrich the cultural fabric of our province. Placing blame on newcomers does nothing to address the underlying problems and risks creating unnecessary divisions within our communities.

The proposed constitutional changes also raise important questions about their practical implications and poten-

tial outcomes. Albertans deserve clear information about what these proposals would mean, how they could be implemented, and whether they would bring meaningful improvements to their daily lives. At a time when our province faces pressing challenges, it is important that public resources and government attention remain focused on strengthening essential services, supporting economic opportunities, and building a better future for the next generation.

The growing influence of separatist voices in Alberta's political discussions is another reason this referendum deserves careful consideration. While polling has generally indicated that more Albertans favour remaining in Canada than pursuing separation, we must never take public participation for granted. I firmly believe that Alberta's strength lies in its people, its diversity, its entrepreneurial spirit, and its place within a united Canada.

We can stand proudly as Albertans while recognizing the opportunities and stability that come from being part of our great country. Our energy sector, agricultural communities, small businesses, skilled workers, and future generations all benefit when governments focus on cooperation, economic growth, and shared prosperity rather than unnecessary division.

As the MLA for Edmonton-Ellerslie, I hear regularly from constituents who want better access to health care, stronger public education, affordable housing, and a government that listens to their concerns. These are the priorities that deserve our attention, our resources, and our collective determination.

My position is to vote No on the first nine questions and choose Option 1 on the tenth question, affirming our commitment to remain part of this great nation, Canada.

Democracy is strongest when citizens are informed, engaged, and willing to participate. Whether you choose to vote by mail, participate in advance voting, or cast your ballot on October 19, your voice matters. The decisions we make today will help shape the Alberta we leave for our children and grandchildren.

Let us choose a future built on unity, opportunity, responsible leadership, and a stronger Alberta within a stronger Canada.

Gurtej Singh Brar is the Member of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta for Edmonton-Ellerslie and Senior Advisor on Small Business to the Leader of the Official Opposition. Constituency Office: 5732 - 19A Avenue, Edmonton, AB, T6L 1L8 Telephone: (780) 414-2000, e-mail: Edmonton.Ellerslie@assembly.ab.ca



MLA Gurtej Singh Brar speaking to constituents at the Edmonton-Ellerslie nomination meeting on Sept. 11, 2026.

Photos: Office of MLA Gurtej Singh Brar



MLA Gurtej Singh Brar reading to students at Ellerslie Campus School during READ IN WEEK on Oct. 9, 2026.

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Mill Woods Town Centre – More Than a Mall

As I near the end of this series of articles about Mill Woods, paralleling the book I'm writing about the community, this article focuses on the idea of the Mill Woods Town Centre as a suburban core, which will be covered in Chapter 8.

The concept of a suburban town centre with a vibrant, central community hub combining shopping, jobs, homes, and public services in one walkable place was introduced in post-war urban planning. The Mill Woods Town Centre, the most comprehensively developed town centre in Edmonton, was a key element of the 1971 *Mill Woods Development Concept*. The intention was that it be both aesthetically pleasing and very lively.

The *Development Concept* outlined ambitious goals for the town centre:

"Anchoring the centre will be the regional commercial complex, which will require in excess of 60 acres (24 hectares) of land ... Office space, auxiliary service buildings and dental and medical clinics will be incorporated into the centre. Uses can be related to open space by contemporary design solutions, for instance restaurant and entertainment facilities may be extended over the recommended lake ... The central core area will establish the quality and character of the Mill Woods community. An unparalleled opportunity is presented to achieve both urban design of the highest order and maximum benefit to related functions and activities."

The end result includes most of the features listed in the *Development Concept* but did not meet the urban design goals.

The Mill Woods Town Centre was to be developed on 250 acres (101 hectares) of land in the centre of the community. Most of the land had been acquired through the land assembly, and the City acquired holdout properties. The Tawa neighbourhood (meaning welcome in Cree) is adjacent to and conceptually part of the town centre. Along with the more northerly and residential neighbourhoods Greenvale and Hillview, they form the Woodvale Community League.

From the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, the City prepared a series of reports about the area – district studies, concept plans, structure plans, urban design guidelines, and development studies – as they grappled with how to execute the concept. The 1970s plans

**Catherine
C. Cole**

History of Mill Woods



proposed a beautiful, pedestrian-friendly core for the community that would merge land economy and aesthetics and encourage community-based uses after hours to ensure vitality. The plan proposed a town square by the lake as a focal point and meeting place and to retain existing trees in the southern section in general landscaping. The retail/service commercial area on 28 Avenue called Main Street was intended to tie the hospital and offices in Tawa and the shopping centre together. The area was intended to become a destination, not unlike Whyte Ave. or 124th Street, but without the intrinsic appeal of a heritage district, it needed strong urban design. They expected the project to take five years, with housing to start in 1979.

The Town Centre was the most complex aspect of the entire Mill Woods Project because of the number of players involved, including multiple City departments (e.g., Parks and Recreation, Community and Family Services, Transit, and the Public Library); the Province (Grey Nuns Hospital); the Edmonton Public and

Separate School Boards; Grant MacEwan Community College; and commercial and residential developers. Some of the institutions have gone through their own challenges, the closure of Grant MacEwan and changes to the Grey Nuns, for example. Mill Woods was successful in securing the Southeast Division of the Edmonton Police Service.

It was a question of which development came first in this area, as commercial developers waited for infrastructure and density to be in place before building what were expected to be magnets for further development. The project took much longer, and the delay impacted what could be built there because of commercial development beyond Mill Woods. There were several factors for the delay including the lack of public transit, lack of commitment from the City to urban design guidelines, and the 1980s economic collapse and resulting slowed growth citywide in the 1980s. While the Town Centre is more than a shopping mall, the mall is a key component. Intended to be a regional shopping centre, the mall was one of the later components of the Town Centre to be developed. The area did not develop commercially as planned because of competition from Southgate and Heritage Malls, the closure of Woodward's and reduction in the number department stores generally, the expansion of West Edmonton Mall, proximity to South Edmonton Common and the Calgary

Trail corridor, and a societal change in consumer shopping patterns.

Mill Woods Town Centre continues to be reenvisioned. In 2017, RioCan, which had bought the mall in 2011, announced a plan to redevelop the site over the next 25 years, to include the Mill Woods LRT stop (which did not open until November 2023), and two new 18-story residential towers. In July 2022, Co-op announced that it would be closing its Mill Woods Town Centre location at the end of January 2023, and No Frills opened a locally owned and operated grocery store in that space on June 19, 2025. In December 2022, the mall was bought by local developer MacLab Development Group with plans to redevelop the site over time. Since 2023 they have been consulting with the community to create their redevelopment plans. Stay tuned!

Join us at the Edmonton Public Library, Nov.12, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

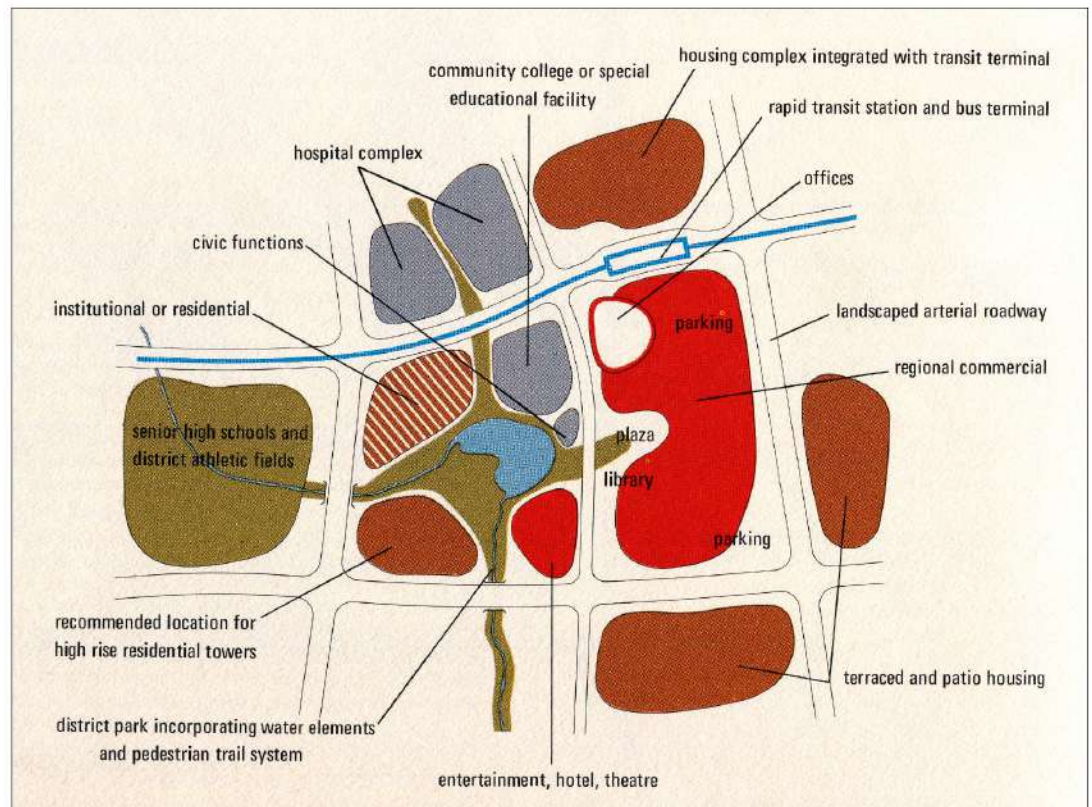
If you have information about the history of Mill Woods or photographs to share, please join us on November 12 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. or contact me at catherinec.cole@telus.net. Next month, I will explore the cultural diversity of Mill Woods. I am very grateful to the Edmonton Heritage Council and the Canada Council for the Arts for supporting the research and writing of this manuscript.

Catherine C. Cole is a writer, curator, and consultant. Her last book, GWG: Piece by Piece, a history of Edmonton's Great Western Garment Company, was published by Goose Lane Editions in 2012.

Letters to the editor are welcome

We invite you to write letters to the editor. A maximum of 275 words is preferred. Letters must carry a first name or two initials with surname, and include an address and daytime telephone number. All letters are subject to editing. We don't publish letters addressed to others or sent to other publications.

E-mail your letter to the editor of the *Mill Woods Mosaic*: mwmosaic@telus.net



The initial design concept for the Mill Woods Town Centre.

Credit: City of Edmonton. *Mill Woods Development Concept*, 1971, p. 46.

https://webdocs.edmonton.ca/infraplan/plans_in_effect/Mill_Woods_Development_Concept_Consolidation.pdf

A Hidden Gem: Discovering the Legacy of Jane Flett MacKay

Did you know that tucked away in downtown Edmonton, overlooking the river valley, is a beautiful historic building that once served as both a school and the home of Alberta's first legislature?

Historic McKay Avenue School, built in 1904, is Alberta's oldest surviving brick schoolhouse. Today, it is home to Edmonton Public Schools' Archives and Museum, where visitors can explore the fascinating history of public education in our city. The site also includes the original 1881 Schoolhouse, offering a glimpse into what education looked like more than 140 years ago.

But have you ever wondered how McKay Avenue School got its name?

The school was named in honour of Dr. William Morrison MacKay, a pioneering physician who spent 34 years providing medical care to communities across northern Canada. Working for the Hudson's Bay Company, he travelled enormous distances, often under extremely difficult conditions, to care for patients. Interestingly, his surname was actually spelled MacKay. A spelling error when the avenue was named eventually carried over to the school!

**Jan
Sawyer**

**Edmonton
Public Schools
Trustee
(Ward I)**



While Dr. MacKay's contributions have long been recognized, the remarkable story of his wife, Jane Flett MacKay, is less well known.

Jane was a member of the Gwich'in First Nation who married Dr. MacKay in 1874. She was much more than a doctor's wife. She worked alongside her husband as a nurse and interpreter, helping provide medical care to people throughout northern communities. Her skills, knowledge and resourcefulness made her an invaluable partner in his work.

On October 3, I had the pleasure of attending the official opening of a

beautiful new permanent exhibit celebrating Jane's life and legacy at the Archives and Museum.

The exhibit tells the story of a woman whose strength, determination and devotion to her family deserve recognition. Through photographs, historical artifacts and personal stories, visitors can learn about Jane's contributions and her Gwich'in and Scottish family heritage.

While the displays were impressive, what I enjoyed most was hearing members of the MacKay family share the stories and memories passed down through generations. There is some-

thing very special about hearing history through the voices of those whose families have lived it.

One particularly striking feature is an 11-foot-tall family tree mural tracing seven generations and more than 200 family members. It is a beautiful reminder that history is not simply a collection of dates and events, but the stories of real people and the generations that follow them.

I encourage Edmontonians to visit this remarkable historic site. It truly is one of our city's hidden gems.

Jane's exhibit reminds us that understanding our history means recognizing the contributions of people whose stories have not always been told.

As always, if you have questions about this, or anything else, please feel free to contact me:

trustee.jan.sawyer@epsb.ca



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Advance Voting

Tues, Oct 13 to Sat, Oct 17, 2026

Election Day

Monday, October 19, 2026



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Barrier-free access is provided at voting places where possible. For more information visit elections.ab.ca/accessibility

Your Guide to Voting in a Referendum

In this referendum, electors will be asked to vote on 10 questions. Nine questions require a "Yes" or "No" response. One question asks electors to choose between two options.

You have two ways to vote:

- 1. Vote during Advance Voting** from October 13 to 17, 2026, at an advance voting place in your electoral division.
- 2. Vote on Election Day, October 19, 2026** at your designated voting place.

Note: Special ballots must be received by mail at Elections Alberta by 5:00pm on October 16.

Find everything you need to be referendum ready at elections.ab.ca

Senator Simons denounces Alberta's anti-immigrant referendum questions

On Oct. 19, Albertans will vote on five referendum questions, specifically designed to scapegoat recent immigrants for Alberta's planning failures. The questions seek to create the illusion that Alberta is suffering from some sort of immigration crisis. Nothing could be further from the truth. In this fiery speech, given on Oct. 6 in response to Senator Tony Loffreda's inquiry on the economic value of immigrants to Canada, Senator Paula Simons denounces Alberta's racist referendum questions, and calls attention to the essential economic value of immigrants to Alberta's future.

Here is the full text of Senator Simons' speech:

Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to Senator Loffreda's Inquiry No. 12, calling the attention of the Senate to the vital role that immigrants have played in shaping Canada's economic growth.

It would be easy for me to stand here as an Alberta senator and talk about the long history of the utterly essential roles that immigrants have played in the economy of my province, from the first fur traders and pioneer settlers through to the present day. However, that would be far too easy because Alberta stands at a critical inflection point. For my province, this is a time of reckoning, as our own government has embarked on a scurrilous smear campaign designed to scapegoat recent immigrants for Alberta's chronic planning failures and to incite a backlash against new Canadians. The leadership of my province has invented an imaginary immigration crisis – a crisis that simply does not exist. It has crafted five noxious referendum questions – questions that no one in Alberta asked for – to better convince ordinary Albertans that their newcomer neighbours are some kind of social or economic threat.

These anti-immigrant questions are confusing on purpose

These questions are confusing on purpose. They are designed to create some kind of anti-immigrant hysteria and whip up a fervour of resentment against the very people Alberta needs to grow, prosper and thrive: workers, skilled professionals, investors, entrepreneurs, academics and artists. The questions are strategically designed to create an impression that immigrants, international students and temporary foreign workers are somehow stealing jobs and social services from "real Albertans." They propose to reduce the number of immigrants allowed into Alberta. They propose things such as denying education and health care to legal residents of the province until they have lived in Alberta for a full year, meaning that children of refugees and new arrivals will be robbed of their chance to go to public school. They create an utterly false impression that non-citizens are somehow voting illegally in provincial elections. The moral and the socially divisive implications of all of this are deeply disturbing.

Right now, in the spirit of Senator Loffreda's inquiry, I'm going to speak specifically to the economic risks of



Senator Paula Simons

Photo: Aaron Pedersen

this kind of populist rabble-rousing. I want to thank Senator Loffreda for providing me with this timely opportunity so close to the October 19 referendum.

In this moment of existential crisis for the future of my province and my country, I want to call on any and all Alberta voters who happen across this speech online to defeat these questions, which are both socially toxic and fiscally disastrous.

We actually have a labour shortfall in Alberta

First, let it be said that Alberta is not in the midst of some economic crisis or malaise. Thanks to high oil prices, the province is booming. The government is on track to post a budget surplus of at least \$2 billion. GDP is on track to be the highest in the country. Many of Alberta's key export sectors have been pretty well insulated from the full import of Trump's new tariffs. The result is that we actually have a labour shortfall in the province.

Despite having the highest employment rate in the country, Alberta has about 63,000 jobs sitting vacant. That means many employers are unable to find the workers they need, whether they are looking for convenience store clerks, construction workers, pharmacists, packing plant staff or software engineers.

The problem is particularly acute in rural areas, especially in the north of the province. I hear anecdotal reports all the time of restaurants that have had to severely limit their hours because they simply cannot find staff. There is a crying shortage of medical professionals in rural communities. Many of those towns rely on immigrant doctors, nurses, lab techs and health care aides to keep their local hospitals and extended care facilities open.

Nor is Alberta facing an immigration crisis. There simply is no flood of newcomers overwhelming public services. In the first quarter of 2026, Alberta actually saw negative immigration.

Immigrants still arrived, but even more left, a net loss of 648 people. In the second quarter, there were 10,770 net international migrants to Alberta. That was still a 37.5% decrease from the second quarter of the previous year.

Overall, Alberta's population grew by just 1.52% last year. That was the lowest growth rate since 2021, during the COVID pandemic. Indeed, the last time Alberta's population had such low growth was in 2016, during a major crash in world oil prices.

So, this immigration crisis? It's imaginary.

But even if Albertans do manage to resist Danielle Smith's efforts to scapegoat and bamboozle, even if these xenophobic referendum questions fail, the damage will already have been done. By presenting itself to the world as an insular and intolerant province, we are chasing away the very workers, academics, investors, inventors, creators and entrepreneurs we need to continue to grow and prosper, the newcomers who don't just fuel our economy but enrich our communities and culture. It is so perverse and self-destructive.

Almost 40% of Alberta's tech founders come from visible minority backgrounds

Since the very first day the University of Alberta opened, the province's universities have relied on immigrant professors and graduate students to teach and research. Today, our major research universities need international doctoral and post-doctoral students if they hope to stay at the cutting edge of medical, scientific and technological innovation. These are the people we need to boost our high-tech start-up sectors, the innovators who are turning academic research into new enterprises that, in turn, attract investment and create new jobs in engineering, biomedical research, AI, high-tech agriculture, et cetera.

According to the Alberta Enterprise Corporation, 14% of all technology start-ups in Alberta have a new or very recent immigrant as their founder. Almost 40% of Alberta's tech founders come from visible minority backgrounds. By pandering to anti-migrant populism, we run the risk that newcomers won't choose Alberta. We also run the risk that long-settled immigrants and their Canadian-born descendants will opt to leave a province that no longer feels welcoming, inclusive or even safe.

Alberta is chasing away potential overseas investment in real time

Meanwhile, at a time when international investors wary of the unpredictability of Trump's America are looking to Canada as a stable place to invest, Alberta is chasing away potential overseas investment in real time by purposefully creating uncertainty about our future in Canada.

What more are we risking? Well, immigrant entrepreneurs are the backbone of the small-business economy. Over 36% of small- and medium-sized businesses in Alberta with paid staff are immigrant-owned. That's well above the national average of 23.7%. Indeed, 65% of business owners with

paid staff in Alberta's food and beverage sectors are immigrants.

Think about where you live. Think about the small businesses that make a community vibrant and exciting and that make people want to live in a particular municipality or neighbourhood. Think about the number of newcomers who open restaurants, bakeries and butcher shops, or operate food trucks, introducing us all to diverse new cuisines and making our cities more cosmopolitan and delicious. Think about the new arrivals who open their own cobbler or tailor shops, corner stores, nail salons or pharmacies, making our lives so much more convenient and our neighbourhoods so much more walkable.

Without immigrants, Alberta's economy risks stagnation

In major cities, immigrant entrepreneurs play a vital role in the cycle of urban renewal, breathing life back into aging strip malls and once-vacant main street storefronts. They are perhaps even more essential in smaller, more rural communities, where one or two new immigrant businesses may make all the difference between life and death for the economy and the vitality of an aging Prairie town.

Without immigrants and without temporary foreign workers, international students and people on temporary work visas, Alberta's economy risks stagnation. Where will we find the workers to build new pipelines, power lines, new homes, data centres and to staff daycare centres? Where will we find the people to develop our biotech and pharmaceutical sectors, to harvest our vegetables, perform our surgeries, conduct our symphonies and deliver our packages?

We can't let the anti-immigrant, anti-migrant rhetoric of the toxic Trump regime colonize our imaginations and trick us into thinking that Alberta has an immigration problem when it doesn't. We can't let fear and prejudice overwhelm common sense and enlightened self-interest.

Thank you again, Senator Loffreda, for allowing me this opportunity.

Thank you, hiy hiy and mahi'cho to all the thousands and thousands of Albertans from across the political spectrum and from every kind of community who are mobilizing and fighting now to protect the reputation, the social cohesion and, yes, the economy of the province we so love and which I am so proud to represent in this chamber.

Paula Simons, who was born and raised in Edmonton, is a Canadian politician and former journalist who has been a senator from Alberta since 2018. Simons was appointed to the Senate of Canada on the advice of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and sits as a member of the Independent Senators Group (ISG) caucus. She is best known for her work with the Edmonton Journal, has worked as a producer for CBC Radio and is the host of her own political podcast, Alberta Unbound (www.senatorpaula-simons.ca/en/media/alberta-unbound).

Celebrating the newcomers who make a difference

Twenty Albertans have received an Alberta Immigrant Impact Award in recognition of their achievements and contributions to communities across Alberta.

The Alberta Immigrant Impact Awards recognize the excellence and outstanding achievements of Albertans born outside of Canada who have made significant contributions to our province through professional accomplishments, entrepreneurship, innovation, charitable work, artistic expression and community leadership.

The awards celebrate the many ways newcomers are making a positive impact in communities across Alberta, regardless of how long they have lived in the province.

"Congratulations to the recipients of the 2026 Alberta Immigrant Impact Awards," said Muhammad Yaseen, Alberta's Associate Minister of Multiculturalism. "The success of these individuals demonstrates what's possible when newcomers choose Alberta as the place to build a future for themselves and their families, while making meaningful contributions to the province we call home."

Nominated by their fellow Albertans, the 2026 recipients reflect the many ways newcomers are helping shape communities, industries and institutions in every corner of our province. Their accomplishments span a broad range of fields and demonstrate the hard work, determination and initiative that continue to strengthen Alberta.

"Receiving an Alberta Immigrant Impact Award is a truly humbling honour," said Rishi Nagar, one of the recipients of this year's Alberta Immigrant Impact Award. "I am deeply grateful that the work I have devoted my life to, sharing our community's stories, amplifying its voices and bringing people together, has been recognized in this way. I accept this award with heartfelt gratitude and a renewed commitment to serving others."

Each award recipient is an Alberta resident who has contributed to communities throughout the province. The eight award categories reflect the wide range of talent recognized through the program, with recipients representing different professions, experiences and backgrounds. To qualify, nominees must have been born outside Canada but now be permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

Alberta continues to attract people from around the world seeking opportunity, and these newcomers play an important role in our province's continued growth and success. By contributing their skills, experience and effort, immigrants can help support a strong economy, vibrant communities and a prosperous future for all Albertans.

The 2026 award recipients are:

Art and Sports

Kimoya Edwards is an athlete, scholar, and community advocate whose accomplishments in academics, sport, and leadership inspire others to succeed. A graduate of the University of Lethbridge, she excelled as a national-level athlete while championing student and community initiatives.



The 2026 Alberta Immigrant Impact Award recipients who could make it to the ceremony, alongside Associate Minister Muhammad Yaseen, Minister Myles McDougall, MLA Chantelle de Jonge, Elder Clarence Wolfleg Sr., Lieutenant Governor Salma Lakhani and other honoured guests.

Photo: Government of Alberta

Through mentorship, advocacy, and leadership, Kimoya creates opportunities for youth and emerging leaders.

Amandeep Singh Sidhu is a cultural leader, educator, and founder of Young Bhangra, dedicated to preserving and celebrating Punjabi culture in Alberta. Through performances, workshops, and mentorship, he helps young people build confidence, cultural pride, and leadership skills. His work strengthens cultural understanding and brings communities together through the arts.

Career and Academics Contribution

Dr. Samer Adeeb is an engineering educator, researcher, and academic leader whose work has advanced engineering education and research across Alberta. A Professor and Chair at the University of Alberta, he has developed innovative learning tools, led internationally recognized research, and mentored future engineers. Through leadership, education, and innovation, he has strengthened Alberta's engineering profession and expanded access to high-quality learning.

Dr. Gerlinde A. S. Metz is a neuroscientist, researcher, and community leader whose groundbreaking work has enhanced Alberta's global reputation for scientific excellence. A Professor at the University of Lethbridge, she leads internationally recognized research on health, stress, and resilience. Through innovation, mentorship, and global collaboration, she has strengthened Alberta's research capacity and inspired future generations of scientists.

Shahid Qureshi is a business leader, governance expert, and community

advocate with international expertise in finance, risk management, and corporate governance. A Chartered Professional Accountant and trusted advisor, he has supported organizations across sectors while championing newcomer success. Through leadership, mentorship, and volunteer service, Shahid has advanced inclusive leadership and strengthened Alberta's business and nonprofit communities.

Dr. Renate Weller is a veterinary academic, clinician, and educator whose leadership has strengthened veterinary medicine in Alberta. As Dean of the University of Calgary Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, she has expanded educational opportunities, advanced research, and improved access to animal care. Through innovation and academic excellence, Renate is helping shape the future of veterinary education and animal health.

Entrepreneurial Spirit

Monika Gupta is an entrepreneur, health-care leader, and educator whose businesses have created jobs and expanded access to health care and education across Alberta. As Founder and CEO of CGA Medical Imaging and MCG Career College, she combines business success with community impact. Through mentorship, scholarships, and newcomer support, Monika empowers Albertans to achieve their goals and build brighter futures.

Arshad Mahmood is a pharmacist, entrepreneur, and community leader dedicated to improving access to health care in Alberta. Through his pharmacy and travel clinic businesses, he has expanded patient-centred care while creating employment opportunities. A committed mentor and volun-

teer, Arshad supports newcomers, youth, and families, strengthening both health outcomes and community well-being.

Aminat Popoola is a professional engineer, entrepreneur, and mentor whose businesses have contributed to Alberta's infrastructure and transportation sectors. As Founder and President of RHAY Engineering and RHAY Logistics, she has created hundreds of jobs and supported economic growth. Through mentorship and community leadership, Aminat empowers newcomers and aspiring professionals to succeed.

Immigrant Excellence

Shakeel Ahmed is a publisher, volunteer, translator, and advocate whose decades of service have strengthened newcomer communities across Alberta. As the founder of one of Alberta's bilingual English-Urdu newspapers, he has helped immigrants access information, resources, and opportunities. Through volunteerism, outreach, and community leadership, Shakeel fosters inclusion, civic engagement, and belonging.

Vadym Bukatko is a community leader and newcomer advocate whose initiatives have supported thousands of immigrants across Canada. As founder of the largest online community for Ukrainian newcomers in Canada, he helps families access information, services, and connections. Through innovation, volunteerism, and civic engagement, Vadym strengthens communities and helps newcomers build successful lives.

Continued on page 11

Creativity takes on elder abuse

There are few more painful experiences than to be betrayed and hurt by someone close to you. Elder abuse- when an older person is robbed or assaulted or injured by someone in a position of trust in their life- is such an event.

An Edmonton organization is working to raise awareness and understanding of this often unspoken and hidden crime, to ensure more people can recognize the signs it may be happening and know what to do if they are concerned.

Canadians for a Civil Society is launching the second phase of its project this autumn and is seeking seniors to be involved.

"We will be using every sort of creative activity- music, visual arts, performing arts, poetry, crafts of every sort," explains project coordinator Esther Numfor. "We invite any senior who has some craft or art activity they enjoy to join us, learn, share about the issue, and work with other concerned community members to raise awareness."

The project, Creative Expressions Opposing Elder Abuse, hopes to attract individuals who enjoy some creative activity. They may join a small group with a similar interest, or create a group with a particular interest, to develop some presentation or product that educates about elder abuse.

"We are inviting individuals, but small groups who already get together around some creative activity and would be open to use it to take on elder abuse are especially welcome. And we



Elder abuse touches many lives in many ways. This web exercise where individuals document their connections with the issue is a good reminder ending this dangerous reality calls for everyone to do their part.

Photo: Jim Gurnett

would like to connect with people willing to take a lead role with a small group in some activity too," explains project coordinator Jim Gurnett.

"As many as one in ten Alberta seniors may be a victim of abuse," says Numfor. "A World Health Organization study found over 11 percent of older people had experienced psychological abuse and nearly seven percent reported being victims of financial abuse. Alberta is the third highest province for cases of elder abuse."

The new initiative follows one from earlier this year, Elders Supporting Elders to End Abuse. Information about that initiative, including a magazine of activities, and the new project can be found at www.ccsorg.ca.

The project will present a community event featuring the creations of those involved, in June 2027 to mark World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Anyone wanting information or to be involved is asked to contact Gurnett at jimgurnett@yahoo.ca.

For more information:

www.alberta.ca/get-help-elder-abuse

www.edmontonpolice.ca/CrimePrevention/PersonalFamilySafety/ElderAbuse

www.cssalberta.ca/Our-Services/Elder-Senior-Citizen-Abuse-Support

Celebrating the newcomers who make a difference

Continued from page 10

Major Singh Dhaliwal is a dedicated volunteer and community leader committed to serving seniors and newcomers in Alberta. Through free tax clinics, advocacy, and practical support, he helps individuals access essential services and benefits. His

longstanding leadership and commitment to community service have strengthened support networks and fostered greater inclusion for immigrant families.

Aleksandr Gubskiy is an engineer, entrepreneur, photographer, and volunteer who enriches Alberta's multicultural communities through creativity and service. He has supported cultural initiatives, mentored robotics students, and promoted Alberta's natural beauty through his photography. Through volunteer leadership and community engagement, Aleksandr inspires innovation, cultural pride, and connection.

Rishi Kumar, widely known as Rishi Nagar, is a journalist, broadcaster, educator, and community leader who has empowered multicultural communities across Alberta. As News Director and host at RED FM Calgary, he connects newcomers with vital information and services. Through media, advocacy, and public engagement, Rishi strengthens civic participation and community inclusion.

Immigrant Women's Impact

Milica Opacic is a community leader, advocate, and Honorary Consul of the Republic of Serbia in Alberta. Through volunteer service and multicultural engagement, she supports newcomers, women, and youth while

fostering collaboration across communities. Her leadership promotes inclusion, belonging, and cross-cultural understanding, helping strengthen Alberta's diverse social fabric.

Dr. Jean Walrond is an educator, health equity advocate, and community leader whose work has transformed awareness and support for individuals living with sickle cell disease. Through decades of advocacy, research, and volunteer leadership, she has improved access to resources and care for families across Alberta. Her dedication continues to advance inclusion, health equity, and community well-being.

Amina Younas is a criminal defence lawyer, mentor, and advocate committed to improving access to justice for Albertans. Providing multilingual and culturally informed legal services, she helps newcomers and marginalized individuals navigate complex legal systems. Through mentorship and professional leadership, Amina supports greater diversity and inclusion within Alberta's legal community.

Inclusive Workplaces

Dr. Nonsikelelo Mathe is a health scientist, entrepreneur, and advocate advancing health equity and inclusion across Alberta. As Scientific Director of the Health Equity and Systems

Transformation portfolio at the University of Calgary and co-leader of Gateway Holistic Care Group, she creates opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities. Through compassionate leadership, she fosters workplaces where everyone can thrive.

Small Community Enhancement

Deborah "Debbie" Mpofu is a health-care professional, educator, and pioneering midwife whose leadership transformed maternity care in northern Alberta. By establishing Fort McMurray's first permanent midwifery practice, she expanded access to family-centred care and supported future health-care professionals. Through service and innovation, Debbie has strengthened health outcomes and community well-being.

Young Leader

Kamal Khatiwada is a social worker, scholar, and community leader dedicated to supporting newcomers, refugees, and vulnerable populations. A PhD candidate at the University of Calgary, he creates culturally responsive programs that promote mental health, inclusion, and community connection. Through advocacy, mentorship, and service, Kamal empowers individuals to overcome barriers and thrive.

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Referendum Puts Alberta on Dangerous and Unnecessary Road

On October 19, Alberta voters will be voting on four proposed amendments to the Canadian constitution and five moves to limit or disempower immigrants. As well, voters will vote to proceed to holding a clear question on Alberta's separation, which if it passes would begin a complicated process of dis-entangling ourselves from Canada. Either that or voters will vote to end the separation process right now. But these referendum questions arise from weirdness, are clouded by murkiness, and avoid what seems to be Alberta's major grievance.

First the weirdness. Only two years ago the Alberta government was advertising across Canada for more new arrivals, as Premier Danielle Smith said she hoped to double Alberta's population in the next couple decades. And now she is calling for Albertans to sign off on restrictions on new arrivals and on denying some of them access to public services that they historically have received.

Then the murkiness.

A couple of the questions use the term "Albertans" when there is no clear definition of what it means to be Albertan.

Also the question of separation or remaining in Canada is open to interpretation. The Alberta referendum on October 19 may be thought to be just a sampling of whether or not people want a later real referendum on separation. Or it can be taken as a sign that people merely want a better deal from the federal government. Or it may be considered a chance to say "stay in Canada" with no need for leverage on Ottawa and no need for separation. Some will see it one way; some will see it differently.

Either way, no matter if the majority of Albertans vote to stay in Canada, the government may go ahead with a separation referendum later anyway. The Premier is sitting on the fence saying she is in favour of Alberta staying in Canada but with better treatment. But meanwhile she is seemingly doing all she can to encourage a vote for separation.

Is the federal equalization program really so bad?

Separatists point to the federal government's equalization program as grounds for divorce from Canada. But the program is merely the federal government spending its money as it wants, to aid poorer provinces. And each of the provincial governments agreed to it in the past.

Dropping the equalization program will not necessarily put one more dollar in Albertans' hands. Barring some change to the income tax schedule, we will pay the same amount to Ottawa anyway.

But if the equalization program is so bad, why do we not get to vote on it on October 19? It looks to me like the reason is that we already did – back in 2021. Almost exactly five years ago to the day, on October 18, 2021, Albertans voted in a two-question referendum. A majority voted in favour of the federal government cancelling the equalization program, and in the other question a majority voted to retain seasonal Daylight Savings Time (DST).

These votes had no effect. Ottawa's equalization program stayed in place, and Alberta will be adopting permanent DST this fall when we do not fall back with a clock change. (Whether we want to or not, we are going to be seeing how we like the sun coming up

**Tom
Monto**

A Different Perspective



at 9:30 a.m. on Christmas morning!)

Perhaps because the 2021 vote result on equalization was simply ignored, the government did not bother to have us waste our time on it a second time.

Too bad the government did not use the same common sense to save us from these nine questions this time round. It seems no matter how we vote the result may be ignored or overturned anyway.

But this time we have the serious question of proceeding on the convoluted path of independence or simply shutting it down now. However this time again how most of us vote may be ignored or purposefully misrepresented and used against us.

We should not forget what our neighbour to the south is capable of

Quebec historically has held two referendums on separation. They went off relatively smoothly and resulted in majority-no votes. (Montreal though has never rebounded from the impact on its economy that those votes caused.)

But this time such sampling of public sentiment is different.

This time Alberta's act of recording the vote may actually open the door to U.S. President Trump copying Russian President Putin and doing to Canada what Russia did to Ukraine. Russian expansionists and militarists used slanted reportage of public sentiment as grounds to hive off part of Ukraine in order to solve a strategic problem. The U.S. could view Alberta's oil and other strategic resources in the same way that Russia saw its need for security from NATO expansion.

Irrespective of how Canada and Alberta deal with the cries for Alberta independence, we should not forget that our neighbour to the south is capable of trying to use what we think of as fair dialogue as grounds for intervention. Trump certainly has his own problems, and it would not be the first time that a beleaguered U.S. politician used a foreign war to take attention away from internal problems.

With strong U.S. dependence on Alberta oil and Alberta's proximity to the U.S., public disorder arising from the evolving political situation and political violence erupting between separatists and modern-day Loyalists

may be used as justification for U.S. military intervention.

A review of the history of Katanga's secession from Belgian Congo in 1960 may be illuminating about how badly what might seem like a simple redrawing of political borders can go. Belgian

military support for Katanga's secession, civil war, isolated towns cut off from protection, and widespread lawlessness led to a coup d'état in the capital and overthrow of the elected president Patrice Lumumba. Lumumba then fled, was tracked down by Canadian army officer Jean Berthiaume on duty with the United Nations, and was executed.

A truly murderous situation. And what one might

expect when billions of investment and personal and political pride is at stake.

And already we see U.S. officials and operatives actively involved in our private referendum.

"Send separatists a message. Choose Canada" on October 19

And we can expect that the government of an independent Alberta would be compliant to U.S. demands, especially if Alberta and Canada part on bad terms (which is likely if they part at all). A sizable segment of Albertans are loyal to Canada. We should expect that people will be people. Protests and acts of sabotage (or worse) are likely if Alberta pushes ahead with separation. Such could be taken as grounds for U.S. military action to preserve important supply chains, eventually leading to complete takeover.

U.S. troops have invaded pretty much every country in the Americas at least once to protect U.S. investments. Why would Alberta be different?

When Germany invaded Norway in 1940, Vidkun Quisling stepped forward to serve as head of a puppet government. His name is now a general term for all such characters.

Fifth columnists assisted German armed forces attacking France when that country's turn came and so forth. Divide-and-conquer was a well-practiced strategy of the old Roman Empire. And Canada may be just as vulnerable as any of the nations that were conquered in the past.

A strong vote on October 19 in favour of remaining in Alberta would be a signal to the U.S. to keep its hands off. I say "Send separatists a message. Choose Canada" on October 19.

The referendum will be on Monday, Oct. 19. Advance voting runs Oct. 13-17. To know where to vote visit the website of Elections Alberta: map.elections.ab.ca/Index.aspx or call the service center: 1.877.422.VOTE (8683)

Tom Monto is an Edmonton historian. His books *When Canada had Effective Voting and Proportional Representation*, and *Protest and Progress (the lives of Harry Ainlay, Rice Sheppard and Margaret Crang)* are available at *Alhambra Books near Whyte Avenue*. His blogsite *Montopedia* has hundreds of articles on contemporary events, history, politics and elections.

For Albertans who need more information about the 10 questions of the referendum before voting, this is a good website: www.beforevoting.ca. It has links to many interesting articles and resources, explaining the different aspects of the referendum and how to vote. The website was created by a group of people who care about Alberta, including Canada's former Deputy Prime Minister Anne McLellan and the former Publisher and Editor of the *Edmonton Journal*, Linda Hughes.



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The Disguise Everyone Recognizes, but No One Admits

Imagine an enclosure full of goats. Moving among them is someone completely different, wearing a sheep's skin stitched together to look like a goat. The horns sit crooked. The walk is off. The whole place feels uneasy.

The goats know it. The farmer leaning against the fence knows it, too.

Yet everyone keeps chewing the dry grass. We keep our heads down and nod politely when that person walks past. We play this fake game: you scratch my back, I scratch yours. We call it keeping the peace. We call it being professional. We call it being diplomatic.

Underneath that act, an inescapable weight sits on all of us. Are we really ignoring it? Or are we just carrying the burden quietly?

The brutal truth is that silence isn't always weakness – it is often just survival. When speaking up means risking your job, your livelihood, or your family's security, keeping quiet is a calculated choice. The system holds all the leverage. In rooms like that, standard advice like "set boundaries" or "have an exit plan" feels completely hollow, because every option you have left still forces a compromise. So people trade away pieces of their own peace and dignity just to keep their footing. But having to swallow that compromise every single day takes an exhausting toll on the human spirit.

Sharan Sandhu

Moments in our Community



In a workplace, bullying doesn't stay between two people. Even if it didn't happen to you directly, it happened to all of us. It happened not directly, but directly.

It happens quietly: humiliating someone in front of their peers, brushing off their work until they doubt their own worth, excluding them from meetings, walking past them as if they are invisible, and silencing them until they realize staying quiet is the only way to keep their job.

And what does leadership do? They meet. They listen. They take notes.

Just two weeks ago, on September 30, everyone was marking Truth and Reconciliation Day. Statements went out. Leaders put on their orange shirts, added ribbons to their emails, and talked warmly about healing, listening,

and safe spaces. Phyllis Webstad said our responsibility today is simple: to thrive, and to bring as many people with us as possible.

Now the date has passed. The pins are put away. The emails are back to normal. And the contradiction is right there in front of us: how can leadership talk about healing while letting a bully dismantle another human being in the next

room?

You might even have trusted this person once. You listened to their advice. They might tell you the keys to a good life, the keys to kindness, the keys to being a good person. And then you realize they were using those same keys to silence someone else. Doesn't that make you question everything they ever said?

And what do leaders do when they chicken out?

They usually do what weak leaders have always done: they find a scapegoat.

They pick one person who doesn't have political backing and pin the whole mess on them. Suddenly the story changes: all the problems are because of this one difficult person, and once they leave, everything will be

fine. Leaders change their stance overnight without any rhyme, reason, or explanation. Yesterday they praised you; today you are the problem, simply because blaming you is easier than confronting the person doing the harm.

History shows that never works. The problems never vanish. The rot stays.

Leaders will never admit they feared an uncomfortable conversation. They don't want to dig deeper because they say they don't want to create an "unpleasant" environment. Really? Avoiding an awkward conversation matters more than protecting a human being?

Instead, they go on their ego trips. They praise themselves, list their achievements, and hand out awards. But deep down, they know the reality.

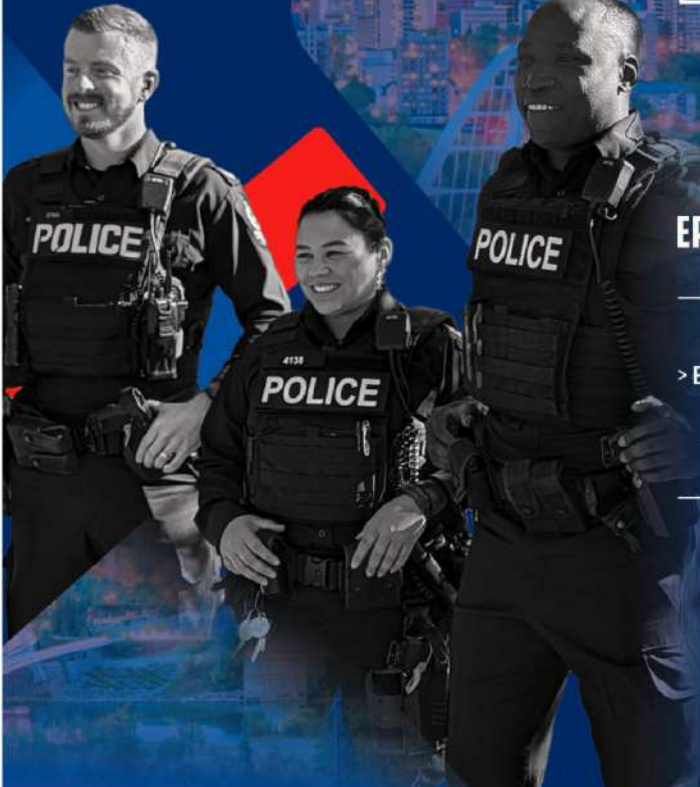
How can a person live a life built on lies? How do they sleep well? How do they go home to their kids and grandkids and say they are teaching them real values, when they looked the other way when it mattered most?

Wearing an orange shirt for one day costs nothing. Real reconciliation doesn't live on September 30. It starts in the rooms where leaders actually have the duty to do justice, and choose to do the right thing.

Sharan Sandhu is a resident of Mill Woods and volunteers with BNT Foundation and StopHateAB.



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Important addresses for immigrants and other newcomers

If you are new to Edmonton and don't know anybody, it can be tough to find a place to stay, a job, the right school for your children or good health care services, but there is plenty of help available.

Here are some of the main agencies specializing in helping immigrants and other newcomers in the Edmonton area:

Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers

11713 - 82 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5B 2V9
Tel. (780) 424-7709
Website: www.emcn.ab.ca

The Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers offers a wide variety of programs for newcomers and helps immigrants to find a place to live, a job and English classes.

Welcome Centre for Immigrants in Mill Woods

Mill Woods Town Centre Professional Building
Suite 304, 6203 - 28 Avenue NW
Edmonton, Alberta
T6L 6K3
Tel. (587) 401-1129
Website: <https://newcomercentre.com>

The Welcome Centre for Immigrants in Mill Woods offers many programs and services for immigrants, including settlement assistance, language and educational counseling, employment assistance, citizenship classes, English classes, computer classes, public speaking classes, and youth programs.

Changing Together Centre for Immigrant Women

3rd Floor, 9538 - 107 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5H 0T7
Tel. (780) 421-0175
Website: www.changingtogether.com

Founded in 1984, Changing Together is a non-profit, charitable organization operated by immigrant women for immigrant women. Its mission is to help Edmonton and area immigrant women and their families overcome personal and systemic barriers that keep them from participating fully in Canadian Society.

Catholic Social Services

8212 - 118 Avenue NW
Edmonton, Alberta
T5B 0S3
Tel. (780) 424-3545
Website: www.catholicsocialservices.ab.ca

For more than 50 years, Catholic Social Services has welcomed immigrants and refugees to Alberta. The services are free and offered in both official languages and more than 50 other languages. In the Meadows, CSS runs a drop-in group for women of all ages and backgrounds. Participants connect through diverse activities like speaking English, sharing cultural experiences, learning to use computers and connecting with useful resources. The program, called Tea Connections, runs every Friday from 10 a.m. to noon, in the room of The Meadows Community League on the 2nd floor of the Meadows Community Recreation Centre, 2704 - 17 Street. For more information, contact Raminder Dhindsa at raminder.dhindsa@cssalberta.ca or 780-391-3204.

Family Futures Resource Network

5704 - 19 A Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T6L 1L8
Tel. 413-4521
Website: www.familyfutures.ca

The Family Futures Resource Network (FFRN) is a non-profit organization providing support to families and parents in the areas of early childhood education, child and youth, family and adult support and parent education. The FFRN has three separate

locations in Mill Woods: Millhurst Site (5704 - 19 A Avenue), Knottwood Site (1733 Mill Woods Road) and Millbourne Community Site (3756 - 78 Street).

Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative

9538 - 107 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5H 0T7
Tel. (780) 423-1973
Website: www.mchb.org

The Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative is a registered worker's co-operative with members from immigrant and refugee communities, providing culturally and linguistically relevant prenatal education, post-natal outreach, parenting support, family liaison and community development support to immigrant and refugee families.

Indo-Canadian Women's Association

9324 - 34 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T6E 5X8
Tel. (780) 490-0477

The Indo-Canadian Women's Association is a not-for-profit organization for enthusiastic volunteers committed to full participation of immigrant and visible minority women and men in economic, social and political life in Canada.

The Shaama Centre for Seniors and Women

(formerly Multicultural Women & Seniors Services Association)
329 Woodvale Road West
Edmonton, Alberta
T6L 3Z7
Tel. (780) 465-2992

The Shaama Centre for Seniors and Women (SCSW) is a non-profit, organization. The focus is to provide service and programs for immigrant women and senior men and women. Program goal is to promote and enhance the well-being and self-reliance of seniors and women especially those at risk and isolated before a crisis situation occurs. SCSW provides social support, information sessions, and skill building classes, home and hospital visits, as well as translation, and referrals to other service providers. It also offers family support and crisis intervention. For youth, there are Urdu and math classes and homework help, and there is also an Urdu library with more than 2000 books. The SCSW is open from 9 am to 4:30 pm Monday to Friday.

Youth Empowerment and Support Services

9310 - Whyte Avenue (82 Ave.)
Edmonton, Alberta, T6C 0Z6
Tel. (780) 468-7070
Website: www.yess.org

The Youth Emergency Shelter Society is a not-for-profit organization serving young people between the ages of 15-18 who are in crisis, at risk or homeless.

Alberta Employment Standards

Edmonton Office - Main Floor Sterling Place
9940 - 106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta, T5K 2N2
Tel. (780) 427-3731
Website: www.employment.alberta.ca

Alberta Employment Standards is a provincial agency responsible for the administration and enforcement of employment standards in Alberta. AES has publications available for temporary for-

eign workers and their employers to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under Alberta's employment standards and workplace health and safety legislation. These publications are available in Chinese, English, French, German and Spanish.

NorQuest College

10215 - 108 Street NW
Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 1L6
Tel. (780) 422-2020
Website: www.norquest.ab.ca

NorQuest College is a public college offering many programs, including English as a Second Language classes and employment programs for immigrants.

Alberta Health and Wellness

Edmonton Office
Telus Tower North, Main Floor
10025 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
Tel. (780) 427-1432
Website: www.health.alberta.ca

Alberta Health and Wellness answers any questions about health care and health care insurance coverage in Alberta.

Immigrant Access Fund Canada

45, 9912 - 106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 4M9
Tel. (Toll Free) 1-855-423-2262
Website: www.iafcana.ca

The Immigrant Access Fund provides micro loans to internationally trained immigrant professionals, trades people and skilled workers so they may obtain the Canadian licensing and/or training that will allow them to obtain employment in their field.

Other important phone numbers:

Edmonton Police Service

Emergency calls only 9-1-1
Police - Fire - Ambulance
Life & death, injury accident, crime in progress

Non-emergency calls
(Dispatch) 780-423-4567
Report of suspicious activity, calls for assistance, advice, etc.

Poison Centre 1-800-332-1414

Hazardous Material Spills 9-1-1

Utility Trouble Calls Only:

Power Emergency 780-412-4500
Within Edmonton

Gas Emergency 780-420-5585
Edmonton & Area

Drainage Trouble 780-496-1717

Sewer Trouble 780-496-1717

Wastewater (odour hotline) 780-469-8176

Water Emergency Service 780-412-6800

The next issue of the Mill Woods Mosaic will be published on November 15, 2026. The deadline for advertising and editorial is Friday, November 13, 2026.



Daughters of the Year

Daughters Day 2026 took place on Sept. 19 at Edmonton's City Hall. Organized by Canadians for a Civil Society, it was the 15th anniversary of the event. To mark the occasion, there was a special presentation to the founders of Daughters Day: Gurcharan Bhatia, Satya Das, Charan Khehra, and the late Didar Pannu (with his daughter, Devinder Pannu, standing in for him). The event's emcee was the CBC's Adrienne Lamb, who was the emcee of the very first Daughters Day in 2011 held in Churchill Square. Entertainment included *The Raging Grannies* (also performers at the first Daughters Day), *Fusion* (violin and guzheng), the *Natyam Dance Academy* (South Asian dance), and Paula Kirman who ended the event with the *Daughters Day Song*.

This was also the final Daughters Day to be held in City Hall. In 2027, the event will be pivoting to an evening gala on Saturday, Sept. 18 with the theme "Empowering Our Daughters: Mentorship for a Stronger Civil Society." More details at daughters-day.com.

Seven women were honoured as Daughters of the Year: Rev. Audrey Brooks, Marilynn Burch-Harvey, Andrea Heinz, Colleen Matheson, Sanhita Pal, Dayle Poitras-Oster and Shelley Sabo.

Nominations for the 2027 Daughters of the Year will open in the spring. Keep checking daughters-day.com for more information.

Photo: This year's Daughters of the Year (from left to right): Colleen Matheson, Marilynn Burch-Harvey, Andrea Heinz, Rev. Audrey Brooks, Shelley Sabo, Sanhita Pal, and Dayle Poitras-Oster.

Photo: Dan Hempel

What's up?

Community events in Mill Woods

- Oct. 19** - Alberta Referendum
More information:
www.elections.ab.ca/elections/referendum/
- Oct. 20** - High School Career Fair Expo
hosted by Covenant Health
Stelmach Community Health Centre
7319 - 29 Avenue NW, Mill Woods
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- Oct. 23 & 24** - Oktoberfest in the Ballroom
with Live Band *Rule of Nines* and
The Bavarian Schuhplattlers of Edmonton
German-Canadian Cultural Centre
8310 Roper Road NW, Edmonton
More info: 780-466-4000 or www.gcca.ca
- Oct. 24** - Grounded Resilience for Righteous Resistance
by A Common Word Alberta
Christian-Muslim Interfaith Dialogue
Exploration of Sumud through Faith
Holyrood Mennonite Church
9505 - 79 Street NW, Edmonton
9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
More information: <https://acwalberta.ca>
- Oct. 30** - Children's Halloween Movie Night
Feature Movie: *Hotel Transylvania*
Ridgewood Community Hall
3705 Mill Woods Road East NW, Mill Woods
Doors open at 6:30 p.m., Movie starts at 7 p.m.
An adult must accompany children.
Email ridgewoodcl3705@gmail.com to register
- Oct. 30** - Boo-Gie & Belt It Out! 18+ Halloween Party
with karaoke, dancing, music, and fun
Millhurst Community Hall
5811 - 19A Avenue NW, Mill Woods
7:00 p.m. - midnight
Register at www.millhurst.ca/general-clean
- Nov. 11** - Remembrance Day - "Lest We Forget!"
- Nov. 14** - Mistletoe Market
Ridgewood Community Hall
3705 Mill Woods Road East NW, Mill Woods
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
More information: <https://ridgewoodcl.org>
- Do you have a community event in Mill Woods or The Meadows to announce?
Please send us the information,
and we will include it in this community calendar
in the next issue of the Mill Woods Mosaic.
Tel. 780-465-7526 or e-mail to: mwmosaic@telus.net*

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Beyond the Diagnosis: Understanding Cerebral Palsy

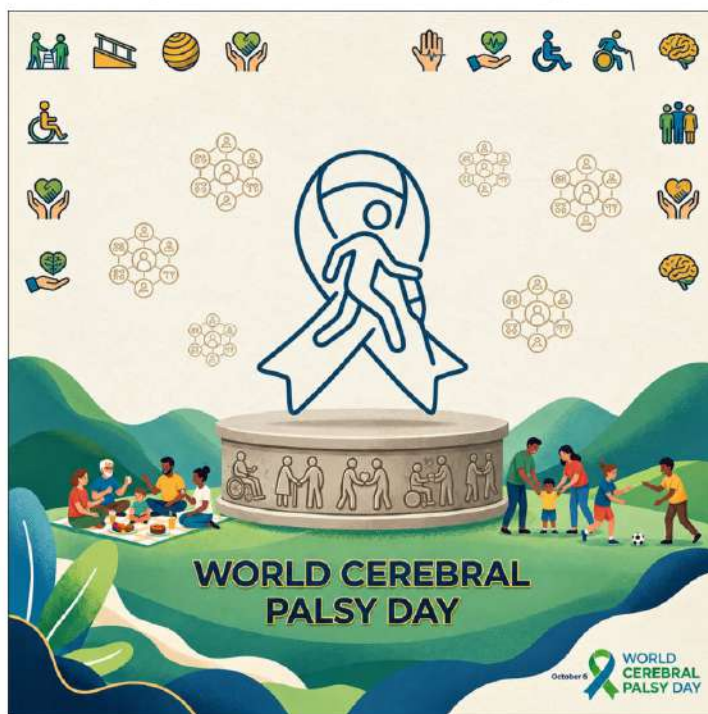
By Ramneek Pandher

When people hear "cerebral palsy," they may picture someone having difficulty walking. But cerebral palsy is not a single condition with a single set of symptoms. It is a group of neurological conditions that can affect movement and posture in very different ways. With World Cerebral Palsy Day taking place on October 6, it is an opportunity to understand why cerebral palsy can look so different from one person to another.

Cerebral palsy develops because of differences or damage to the developing brain, often before or around the time of birth. The areas of the brain involved in movement may not develop or function as expected, affecting how the brain communicates with the muscles. This can lead to differences in muscle control, coordination, balance, and posture.

There are several types of cerebral palsy, and each can affect movement differently. Some people may experience muscles that are unusually stiff or tight, while others may have involuntary movements or difficulties with coordination and balance. The severity can also vary widely. One person may have relatively mild movement difficulties, while another may require significant assistance with mobility and daily activities.

Cerebral palsy can also affect more than movement. Depending on the individual, it may be associated with difficulties involving speech, vision, hearing, swallowing, or learning.



However, these experiences are not the same for everyone. This is one reason it is important to look at the individual rather than assuming what cerebral palsy means for them.

Support for cerebral palsy is also highly individualized. Physiotherapy and occupational therapy can help

with movement and everyday activities, while speech-language therapy may support communication or swallowing. Medications, assistive devices, and other treatments may also be used depending on a person's needs. Rather than following one standard approach, care is often

adapted as a person grows and their needs change.

For children with cerebral palsy, early support can be particularly important. Identifying differences in development and providing appropriate therapies can help children build skills and participate in daily activities. As they grow, their goals and support needs may change, making continued care and adaptation important throughout life.

Although cerebral palsy is a lifelong condition, there is no single experience of living with it. Understanding this can help us move beyond the assumption that the condition looks the same in everyone. For some, cerebral palsy may be noticeable immediately; for others, its effects may be less apparent.

This World Cerebral Palsy Day, learning about the neurological differences behind the condition can help us better understand the experiences of those living with it. Cerebral palsy may shape how someone moves through the world, but understanding the condition begins with recognizing that every person's experience is different.

For more information:

Cerebral Palsy Canada Network

<https://www.cpcanadanetwork.com/>

Ramneek Pandher is a BSc (Honours) Neuroscience student at the University of Alberta and a 2024 recipient of the Gene Zwodzesky Scholarship. She lives in Mill Woods and is passionate about neuroscience research and raising community awareness about neurological conditions.

You have news for the Mill Woods Mosaic?

Please give us a call: 780-465-7526

The comeback of Mahatma Gandhi

A bust of Mahatma Gandhi, the legendary Indian lawyer, anti-colonial nationalist, and political ethicist, who lived from 1869 to 1948, has found a new home in Mill Woods. The bust was originally unveiled in 1986 at the Main Branch of Edmonton Public Library (now known as the Stanley Milner Library) but was several years in storage while the downtown library was undergoing a renewal and expansion project. On Oct. 2, Gandhi's birthday, there was a small event with a traditional garland ceremony at the Mill Woods Library to celebrate the comeback of the bust. The bust was designed by Sushil Kalra and constructed by sculptor R. Jagannathan of Madras, India.

Photo (from left to right: Jitendra Shah (past president of the Mahatma Gandhi Canadian Foundation for World Peace), Simone Shirvell and Shanti Singh, who are present board members, with the bust of Mahatma Gandhi at the Mill Woods branch of the Edmonton Public Library.

Photo: Supplied by Simone Shirvell

