

Contents

- 01: From Loss To Strings Of Support- A Community Story
- 02: Celebrating Generosity With The DeJongs
- 03: Sara Fullerton's MBA Journey
- 04: Leading In Care- NVCI Training With Lindsey Dwojak
- 03: Community Corner

From Loss To Strings Of Support- A Community Story

It's amazing how a challenging moment can bring out the best in people! We want to take a moment to express our sincere gratitude for the overwhelming support we've received following the unfortunate events of January 12th, 2026.

"I want to thank our amazing community for the overwhelming support after the break-in at Aven Pavilion. Your generosity in recovering guitars and donations inspires us to expand our music program. Together, we're ensuring our seniors have a safe and joyful environment!"

Colleen Wellborn, AVENS Board Chair

In the early hours of that Monday morning, our Aven Pavilion Dining Room experienced a break and enter. Two individuals unlawfully entered our dining room, stealing most of our sandwiches, desserts, and canned pop. Most distressingly, they took several guitars and electric guitars that were part of our beloved Aven Pavilion tenant-run voluntary guitar program. These instruments held significant emotional value, as they were cherished by our tenants and represented many joyful memories shared through music across the NWT.



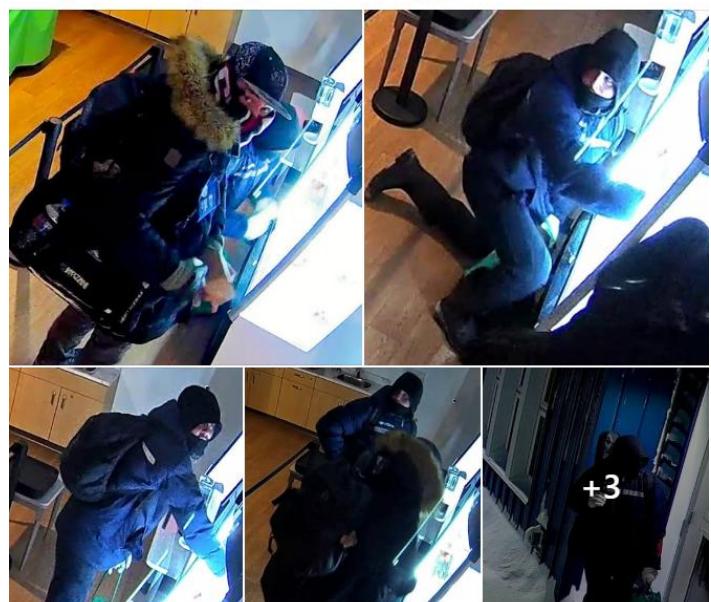
AVENS: A Community for Seniors

January 13 at 11:28 AM · 3

We at AVENS are deeply saddened to share that on Monday, January 12th, 2025, around 4:25 AM, our Aven Pavilion experienced a break and enter. Two individuals unlawfully entered our dining room, stealing all of our sandwiches, desserts, and canned pop. More distressingly, they took several guitars and electric guitars that were part of our seniors' voluntary guitar program. These instruments held significant value, not just financially but also emotionally, as they belonged to our residents and were cherished memories. We urge our community to stay vigilant. If you witness any guitars being sold in the Greater Yellowknife area, please report any suspicious activity to the RCMP. As well, should you recognize the individuals in this post, please, for privacy sakes, do not post names, rather please notify the proper authorities. Your awareness could help us recover these stolen items.

Additionally, if anyone has spare guitars or electric guitars they can donate, it would mean the world to our seniors and help us continue our guitar lessons. Together, we can ensure that our residents have the resources they need to pursue their passions.

Thank you in advance for your support and understanding. ❤



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AVENS posted on Facebook for community assistance

From the CEO's desk

ISSUE #254

Jan 19, 2026



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Thieves stole food and guitars intended for seniors, Avens says

Ollie Williams - Tuesday January 13, 2026 at 12:31pm MT



A photo published by Avens shows the Aven Pavilion facility.

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Thieves stole guitars of significant value "not just financially but also emotionally" in an early Monday break-in, Yellowknife seniors' group Avens says.

Avens operates a range of seniors' housing facilities in the city, including the new Aven Pavilion, which the group said was the target of the break-in.

Writing online, Avens said two people took food and drinks from the building's dining room and "several guitars and electric guitars that were part of our seniors' voluntary guitar program."

Thank you, Cabin Radio for getting the message out



Thank you, NNSI, for getting the message out.

MyNorthNow

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Daryl Dolynny, Avens president, said the residents have received a tremendous outpouring of support in response including the donation of guitars (submitted photo)

CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

Police investigating alleged break and enters at Avens Seniors Community

By [Lisa lesse](#) | January 14, 2026

Thank you, Vista Radio for getting the message out



The Trailbreaker with Shannon Scott



Finally, thank you, Shannon Scott and CBC Trailbreaker radio for allowing us to share our story live on the air

From the CEO's desk

ISSUE #254
Jan 19, 2026

Despite this unfortunate incident, we were deeply moved by the swift response from our community. In just 24 hours, not only did we manage to recover two of the stolen guitars, but we also received an outpouring of donations from generous individuals who offered spare guitars to help us continue our guitar lessons. Your kindness has not only restored our musical program but has also inspired us to think bigger!

We're now exploring the possibility of expanding our guitar program with our long-term care residents and even collaborating with local schools to kick off beginner guitar classes.

We may not be able to replace these memories, but we can make new ones



Within hours of the incident, Aven Pavilion resident, Maggie Alanak, ran downstairs to donate her belated son's guitar. She expressed joy knowing her son will now be able to hear the music of his elders

What started as a difficult week for AVENS quickly transformed into a beautiful testament to the strength of our community. Your willingness to support our seniors has not gone unnoticed, and we cannot thank you enough for your understanding and compassion.



An incredible donation from St. Joe's School was received



(L to R) Mark and Valerie LeClerc showing off their guitar donations for our volunteer music program. (Note- we had other anonymous guitars also dropped off, so thank you too!)

Additionally, we're excited to share that the Pavilion Dining Room is undergoing a makeover to enhance our security measures. While it's already one of the safest buildings in Yellowknife, we're committed to making it an even more secure haven for our seniors to enjoy and live.

Thank you once again for your incredible support. Together, we're not only recovering from this setback but also creating new opportunities within our AVENS community.

Celebrating Generosity With The DeJongs

We had the pleasure of welcoming Simon and Lenore DeJong from the **DeJong Family Foundation** for a recent visit, and what a delightful experience it was! Their ongoing support has made a tremendous impact on our community, with generous donations such as the \$10,000 for our Operation Care on Call in November 2021, \$5,000 this past summer and many other smaller ones over the years.



(L to R) Daryl Dolynny, AVENS Pres/CEO, Lindsey Dwojak, AVENS Chief People Officer, Frances Marshall, AVENS Chief Nursing Officer, Lenore DeJong, Simon DeJong, Sara Fullerton, AVENS Chief Financial and Technology Officer

During their visit, we proudly showcased our facilities and the meaningful wellness programs that their contributions help make possible. It's through the kindness of individuals like Simon and Lenore that we can provide essential safety measures, including our Real-Time Location Systems (RTLS) call bell program, ensuring our

residents and staff feel secure and always in communication.

Thank you, Simon and Lenore, for your continued support and for being such a vital part of the AVENS family. Your generosity truly makes a difference in the lives of our residents!

Sara Fullerton's MBA Journey

This week, I'm excited to highlight the incredible work of our Chief Financial and Technology Officer, Sara Fullerton!



Sara Fullerton, AVENS Chief Financial and Technology Officer and UFred MBA student

From the CEO's desk

ISSUE #254
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Sara is currently pursuing her MBA at the University of Fredericton, and we couldn't be prouder of her dedication and leadership.

As part of her program, Sara has taken the initiative to consider AVENS as a group project, rallying her online MBA colleagues to participate in an **"Enterprise Integration Project."** We're thrilled that AVENS has been chosen as the sponsor for this endeavor! The team will conduct an in-depth analysis of our customer base, services, operations, workforce, internal metrics, strategic leadership, and governance. They'll be identifying strengths and opportunities, which is perfectly timed as we prepare for our new strategic planning process (more on that in a future article!).



A recent online introduction of the UFred MBA student leadership team who are conducting the Enterprise Integration Project. (Clockwise, top right) Daryl Dolynny, AVENS Pres/CEO, Sara Fullerton, AVENS CFTO, Iwona Borowka, TD Bank Executive, Bonnie Noble, Nurse practitioner Nunavut, and Abdirahman Abdirahman, Procurement Specialist Gov't of Saskatchewan

The project is set to wrap up in March/April 2026, and I look forward to sharing their findings with you. A big thank you to Sara and her team for their hard work, and best of luck completing your MBA—we are all incredibly proud of you!

Leading In Care- NVCI Training With Lindsey Dwojak

I would like to take a moment to shine a light on the fantastic work done by our Chief People Officer, Lindsey Dwojak, along with several dedicated staff members who recently completed a two-day **Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCI)** course.



A look at our newest graduates of the NVCI training

Lindsey, with her years of experience, led this insightful training, using real-life AVENS situations to highlight the nuances of dementia and improve safety for both our residents and staff, especially in challenging moments.

Through a mix of classroom instruction, videos, and role-playing, we're confident that our team is now better equipped to handle dementia-related crises effectively and safely.

A huge thank you to Lindsey and all participants for their commitment to enhancing our workplace and ensuring the well-being of our residents. Together, we're making AVENS safer and more supportive for our residents.



Lindsey Dwojak, AVENS Chief People Officer and trainer of AVENS NVCI (in the background)

Community Corner

