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Join The Club At The Up Here Pub

We've got some tasty news that's brewing right here at the Aven Pavilion! Our long-awaited **Up Here Pub** is set to open its doors officially in early September. But before we dive into the fun details, let me introduce you to the incredible woman behind the magic: **Joanne MacDonald**!

"The Up Here Pub embodies the spirit of community we cherish at AVENS, providing a safe and welcoming atmosphere that celebrates the friendships and experiences that enrich our lives. We can't wait to raise a glass together and toast to the wonderful moments ahead!"

Daryl Dolynny, President/CEO AVENS

Joanne recently made the leap from the metropolis of Vancouver to Yellowknife. And let me tell you, she's taken a refreshingly unique approach to opening her new venture. For the last month, she's been running what she calls a "soft opening," which has turned out to be more

like a cozy coffee chat! She's been serving delicious lattes and other coffee options on the house and inviting tenants and staff to share their ideas about what they'd love to see in their new local pub. Talk about community spirit!

Joanne has been all ears, soaking up your suggestions like a sponge (a very caffeinated sponge, mind you). And the buzz is real! Residents are already raving about her lattes, and it seems coffee lovers are in for a treat. But that's not all—her breakfast menu will feature down-to-earth favorites like grab-and-go sandwiches, yogurt parfaits, and even hearty oatmeal. Who knew breakfast could get so exciting?



Joanne MacDonald, owner/operator of the Aven Pavilion Up Here Pub

Now, let's talk about the real fun: the pub side of things! When **Up Here Pub** officially launches, you can expect a classic selection of draft beers, spirits, and wines to toast to the good times. And if you have a hankering for something tasty, fear not! Think nachos, chicken wings, and the pièce de résistance—Joanne's "unique charcuterie boards!" We can't wait to see what those are; they already sound fancy!

But here's the twist that makes **Up Here Pub** truly special: it will be a member-driven space. That means only resident tenants of our campus

will have direct access—kind of like an exclusive club! For our friends living off-campus, you'll need to find a resident to sign you in, just like at the Legion. This way, we can keep that cozy “membership with privileges” atmosphere while ensuring the security and safety of our AVENS campus.



So mark your calendars for early September and get ready to raise a glass (or a latte) to new beginnings and new community connections. We're all excited to see what Joanne has in store for us, and we hope you are too!

From Desk To Dirt- A Greenhouse Adventure

With Fall just around the corner, I wanted to share with you the unique role of our **Chief People Officer, Lindsey Dwojak**, in her unexpected “side desk gig” as our greenhouse

logistics coordinator. Who knew that a little bit of dirt could lead to so much joy and nutrition?



NEW for 2027 “Fresh from AVENS Greenhouse” Snack Packs and Salads found in our resident snack coolers

Since July 17, 2026 our greenhouse has transformed into a bustling hub of activity, and I'm here to spill the beans—literally!

Our **CPO** has crafted a remarkable **88 snack packs** and **27 salads**, all lovingly prepared and added to the snack fridges in the manor and cottages. Talk about fresh and healthy choices for our residents!

Now, let's chat about her zucchini adventure. While the zucchinis didn't take off quite like she hoped, they inspired her to be a bit more creative with the limited harvest. Thanks to these stubborn little veggies, we've enjoyed **zucchini bread, chocolate zucchini cake, lemon blueberry zucchini muffins**, and even a casserole made with zucchini, tomatoes, and basil, cooked up alongside longtime Yellowknifer and resident **Sandra Piro**. Who knew zucchinis could be the stars of the kitchen?



Lindsey Dwojak, our Chief People Officer, showing off the tomato skyscrapers

And let's not forget about her ambitious tomato plants! Two of them have reached towering heights of **12-13 feet**—I think we might have to start calling them “the skyscrapers of the greenhouse.”

This year was also a first for our greenhouse with its very own **seedling sale**. Imagine the chatter as our staff and community visitors picked up tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, and squash, sharing stories about their gardening tips. ***“I enjoy talking to our staff who bought some and hearing how their plants have been growing,”*** Lindsey said, clearly proud of the new connections made with fellow green thumbs.

As for the flowers, they've been an unexpected joy. ***“This year, I think it was the wildflower mix,”*** she shared. ***“You never know what is going to bloom, and I enjoy seeing each morning what kind of beautiful mix there was.And those snapdragons? Absolute showstoppers!”*** She has a soft spot for their vibrant colors, which have brought so much cheer to the greenhouse.



From strawberries, to cucumbers, to tomatoes, to red peppers and even jalapeno's

Upcoming delights that Lindsey has indicated are to stay tune for her upcoming crops of potatoes, cabbages, and beets, and get ready for some artistic fun with focaccia bread art!

Looking ahead, our CPO has some ambitious plans. By **2028**, she hopes to grow most of our flowers for outdoor use. She's also looking to expand the snack pack season by planting some items, like cucumbers and peas, for multiple harvests. And while broccoli and cauliflower didn't thrive this year, she's still hopeful for mini corns—because who doesn't love a good corn on the cob?

She plans to expand the growing areas in both the Manor and Cottage backyards, with an eye on applying for funding. ***“I am definitely not a gardener by any means,”*** she chuckled, recalling a childhood memory of being “fired” by her mom for not being able to tell the difference

between lettuce and weeds. Yet, despite her initial horticulture miss-diagnosis as a youngster, she has found immense joy in this project. *“I have really been enjoying taking on this project and seeing the ‘fruits of my labour’ come to be,”* she said, with her unique grin



Mini corn on the cob and cabbage are still growing

So here's to our **Chief People Officer** and everyone else who helped make this greenhouse a thriving success (We need to thank others she mentioned who played a helpful hand this season; Frances Marshall, Carol Norwegian, Emma-Lee Marks, Liz Belanger, board member Lani Cooke, & resident's Helena and Sandra) Whether you've lent a hand or simply enjoyed the fruits of her labour, your support has made a meaningful difference in the health and happiness of our community. Let's keep nurturing this green adventure together with Lindsey and her trusted green thumb gang—who knows what next year will bring?



Even while doing this story, Lindsey, picked up a basket and indicated, “I just got to get this picked now, what was your question again?...” You just have to love that enthusiasm!



Community Corner

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

You're invited to our upcoming Annual General Meeting to receive updates, ask questions, and interact with the team.

Meeting Details

24 September, 2026

Start 7:00pm

Pavilion Dining Room

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