



Close to 100 Belgravians joined us at our 2nd Annual Volunteer Gratitude Event — Perogies in the Park — last month. Don't miss out on our Aug. 9 Edible Gardens Tour (see page 6) and our Community League Day BBQ & Belgravia Hustle on Sept. 19 (see page 9).

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Belgravia Community Hall:

11540 73 Avenue
 Edmonton AB T6G 0G1

Next submission deadline:

August 14 for September issue

BCL is a member of the Edm. Federation of
 Community Leagues (www.efcl.org)

Visit us online at belgraviaedmonton.ca
 Follow us on Twitter @BelgraviaYEG
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Hall renewal

At last: the construction begins!

Kevin Taft

After years of effort by hundreds of people, construction will begin this summer on renovating and expanding the community hall. On July 15, the Belgravia Community League board passed a motion to proceed with construction. This is an exciting step for our neighborhood.

When tenders for construction came in two months ago they were higher than expected so the Hall Renewal Committee worked hard to reduce costs and find more funds. The size of the expansion had been reduced once already to reduce costs, and reducing it any more would threaten the viability of the children's out-of-school programs that are so important to the school and young families. Nonetheless, about \$200,000 in savings were identified, in part by design simplifications and in part by deferring some of the finishing work on the second floor.

The construction contract, including GST, will be for about **\$1.4 million**. To address a potential funding shortfall that may arise late in construction next spring, a handful of Belgravia families who had already contributed to fundraising stepped in with

continued on page three

Editor's message

Josie Hammond-Thrasher



Happy summer, everyone! I hope you're taking the time to unplug from your everyday routines and relax with your friends and loved ones.

More than 50 neighbours took part in our June AGM to hear about the exciting work our board members have undertaken over the last year to help our community develop and thrive. Thanks in large part to David Ridley's

hard work, we repealed Belgravia's nearly 50-year-old bylaws and objects, replacing them with a clearer and more concise set (available on our website at belgraviaedmonton.ca). We also welcomed a new board president, Kevin Klein, vice president, Heather Scherer, and two post-AGM appointees, Jennifer Lambert (membership director) and Annette Stupar-Cairns (programs director). Be sure to read Kevin's welcome message on page three.

While our BCL board and committees normally take a well-earned break over the summer, this year is an exception due to the need to keep the momentum going on our hall renewal project. Chaired by Kevin Taft, our Hall Renewal Committee has put in a huge number of hours over the past year to ensure Belgravia will have 'A Hall for All.' With construction set to begin this summer, we will soon see the results of their hard work and the generosity of the donors in our community. Congratulations, Belgravia!

In lieu of a profile of a fellow Belgravian in this issue's Meet Your Neighbour column, I have included photos from our 2nd Annual Volunteer Gratitude Event, which saw close to 100 Belgravians come together to celebrate our volunteers. Our BCL community events are a great way to get to know your neighbours. Check out Barb Krahn's column on page six for details about our Edible Gardens Tour on August 9.

Have a fabulous summer, everyone — unplug and enjoy!

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President's welcome message

Kevin Klein

Hello Belgravia residents! I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as your new president. My name is Kevin Klein and I have been living in Belgravia since 2011 along with my wife Nicole, 20-month-old daughter Keira and our two dogs, a black lab named Echo and a boxer named Kimo (you may have seen us at the dog park!).

I began my community involvement working with Kevin Taft and the rest of the Hall Renewal Committee for about 18 months, while also accepting the vice-president role, working alongside our previous president, Jeanette Boman.

I love living in Belgravia — I love the fact that we are on the river valley, and also in the heart of the city. Our community has such amazing character and I have been lucky enough to meet many of its residents. I look forward to my term as president and am excited about everything we have on the go right now!

The next year in Belgravia will be a very busy one. One of the more exciting events will be the starting

of the construction of our much needed new hall. If everything goes as planned, we should be ready to cut the tape by late 2016. Kevin Taft and the rest of the committee are working extremely hard to make this happen!

We also have several exciting events planned for the next year. The first event will be our annual **Belgravia Hustle and Community League Day on September 19**. Last year's event was an absolute blast and everyone had a fun (and chilly) day. We are still looking for volunteers for the event so if you are interested in helping out with either the race or the BBQ, please email programs@belgraviaedmonton.ca. These types of events rely on the help of the community to work, so please donate your time if you can! Watch for more info. in our September issue of the Belgravian.

I look forward to hearing from you about any concerns or ideas you have for the community. Please don't hesitate to email me with feedback at president@belgraviaedmonton.ca. Have a great summer!



Belgravia Co-operative Playschool is a not-for-profit organization that promotes learning through play. We strive to give children the tools to develop their physical, psychological, social and emotional potential, and to foster their confidence to explore the world around them.

We have a European-trained teacher with a Masters of Education degree.

Registrations are currently being accepted for the 2015-2016 school year.

Email
playschool@belgraviaedmonton.ca
for more information.

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Hall renewal

continued from front page

low-interest loans, even though the community league can offer no security or collateral. Future grants, casinos, and fundraising will be used to re-pay these loans.

The renewed hall, which will be built on the core of the existing hall, is designed to serve for many decades to come. We have benefited from the legacy of those who came before us. It is our turn to keep the legacy strong.

Important things to know

- The contractor is PEMCO, which was chosen through a competitive process. PEMCO has operated for 25 years and has a solid track record, including projects with the private sector and the City of Edmonton.
- Construction is expected to start in August. Security and safety are top concerns, and the site will be properly fenced.
- Please make sure all children are cautioned to never enter the work site.
- The City requires that construction access to the site is from 74th Avenue, near 116 Street.
- The rink is the designated lay-down area for supplies and equipment, so we will have to find other places to skate this coming winter.
- The early stages of construction will involve removing the roof and upper walls. By late autumn the new roof, walls, and extension toward the rink will be closed in.
- Construction will be completed in summer, 2016, except that the following components may be delayed depending on funding: the canopy to the south; the solar panels and solar lighting; the upstairs kitchen; and the finished floors and painting in the upstairs rooms.

The Hall Renewal Committee members are Kathy Brodeur-Robb; Michael Cohen; Kathy Goble; Dale Rowe; Jonathan Sharek; Eugene Silva; and Kevin Taft, chairman. For questions or concerns, please email Kevin Taft at: kevintaft@belgraviaedmonton.ca.

Five reasons for hall renewal

1. Accessibility

For the first time in 60 years, people who use wheelchairs or walkers, or have trouble with stairs, will be able to fully use the hall.

2. Child-friendly

The expanded hall will securely accommodate all out-of-school and playschool programs on the lower level, with washrooms, a snack kitchen, and activity areas. This is a big improvement for young families whose kids are filling Belgravia School, and it means the upper level of the hall will once again be available to the rest of the community during daytimes.

3. Usability

The renewed hall will be a more welcoming space, which many people in the community workshops wanted. The renewed hall will have improved entrances; a sheltering canopy on the south side; a public washroom that is accessible from the playground and rink; a 'community living room;' and a large kitchen on the upper level.

4. Sustainability

The renewed hall will be well insulated, comfortable, and energy efficient. If all goes according to plan, on July 1, 2017, Belgravians will mark Canada's 150th birthday by unveiling solar panels on the hall roof that will offset a large portion of the hall's electrical needs. The Belgravia Hall will be a model of sustainable development.

5. Efficiency

The building will perform like new. The current plumbing, electrical, and heating services are based on systems that are 60 years old and need to be replaced. Our hall is used by hundreds of people a week and the wear and tear has taken a toll that must be addressed for safety, efficiency, and economy.

A message from Councillor Ben Henderson

Construction practices in Edmonton

This construction season has seen a few high profile failures on the part of some builders to be respectful and neighbourly during construction. These problems are not new, but with our recent construction boom I have been receiving complaints into my office with increased frequency. I have been working with administration on a case by case basis on many of these sites, but the tools the City has had at its disposal have been largely inadequate to deal with some problem builders. Ideally our rules will be able to both address problems that do occur and prevent the problems in the first place.

There are many respectful builders out there who take the time and effort to be good neighbours. Construction can be a disruptive process and we all try to be patient as our part of being neighbourly. But the poor practices of some have worn thin our patience even for respectful builders and this is harmful to everyone.

My colleagues and I recently passed a motion asking Administration to provide a report with potential options the City could use to improve builder behavior. These options range from little things like

requiring a copy of permits, including conditions, as well as contact information for the permit holder and the constructor to be prominently displayed at the front of the property; to good neighbor agreements between neighbours and builders; to construction bonds; to a certification or classification program for builders in mature neighbourhoods; and to turning the good neighbour residential infill guidelines into an enforceable document.

Please feel free to contact me with your thoughts on potential rules to ensure good construction practices and I will pass them along to Administration while they write the report. Once the report is written it scheduled to come before Executive Committee on September 15 and members of the public are welcome and encouraged to come speak. The options that we select at committee will become the basis of potential new policies to regulate and ensure good builder behaviour.

Please feel free to contact me anytime at ben.henderson@edmonton.ca or at 780.496.8146.

Follow me on Twitter @ben_hen

Save Belgravia Trees

Deedi Devine, chair, Save Belgravia Trees (SBT) Committee

Have you noticed the beautiful mature trees being clear cut from developing lots? If not, take a look around — it is happening in Belgravia. If you're concerned about the loss of healthy, mature trees on lots slated for development in Belgravia, you're not alone. We're organizing a Save Belgravia Trees Committee to protect and preserve them:

If you want to help save the trees, please contact Deedi Devine, chairperson of this ad hoc committee at savethetrees@belgraviaedmonton.ca.

Our first order of business will be to organize presentations for the August 18 City Council Executive Committee meeting where City Administration will present options and incentives that will hopefully lead to bylaws or regulations regarding the protection of mature trees on private property.



Did you know about 80 per cent of Edmonton's tree canopy comes from trees growing on private property? Get involved with our Save Belgravia Trees Committee and join the conversation about protecting our urban forest.

Garden notebook

Dealing with drought

Barb Krahn, Belgravia resident and obsessive gardener



Most days, gardening offers me connection to the Earth, a creative outlet and a way to clear my head of small aggravations. It's rarely been a source of concern until this dry and smoky season.

California is gripped by intense drought, the likes of which hasn't been seen in more than a millennium. In much of British Columbia, the winter of 2014-15 barely happened. A heat wave across the prairies in early summer saw vast tracts of forest burn like tinder under the searing sun, casting a pall over our normally clear skies.

Environment Canada says central Alberta (including Edmonton) is the provincial region hardest hit by drought this year. I personally don't remember a year so devoid of natural moisture – the low spring run-off, lack of May-June rains and not even our usual intense July thunderstorms, at least so far. Days before K-Days, showers are finally in the forecast but not the sustained rain the parched ground so desperately needs.

Is this a trend? The El Nino effect, linked to warmer temperatures in western Canada in 2014-15, is forecast to continue into 2016. It's hard to tell beyond that, but certainly water conservation and sustainable landscapes are vitally important both here and on a global scale.

For my part, I've become much more curious about xeriscape gardening and how I might move my own yard in that direction. As water-loving plants succumb to the dry conditions or are weakened by insects, I will replace them with drought-tolerant alternatives – perhaps including attractive rock features or garden sculpture, following the example of several beautiful yards in Belgravia. I will also look for ways to capture “grey” (non-potable) water for garden use instead of just letting it flow down the drain. And I will grow and buy more food locally for the betterment of my health, the health of the environment and my wallet.

That brings me to an exciting announcement – on **August 9**, Belgravia will host an **Edible Gardens tour** – a first for our neighbourhood! Five food-producing

homeowners will open their gardens to visitors and be on-hand to answer your questions.

PLEASE NOTE: Each garden will be open only for a one-hour period during the afternoon and plan your visit accordingly. This tour is free and open to all – I look forward to seeing you there!

You're invited to join our new online **Belgravia Gardening Co-op**! Share gardening tips, information, extra produce and gardening space with neighbours. Everyone is welcome to participate — to join, email me at barbkrahn@shaw.ca.

| Edible Gardens Tour Schedule Sunday, August 9 | |
|--|---|
| 1-2 p.m. | 7426 - 118A St (Yardening in Raised Beds) |
| 1:30-2:30 p.m. | 11512 - 75 Ave (Belgravia Bee Keeper) |
| 2-3 p.m. | 11535 - 73 Ave (Classic Backyard Garden) |
| 2:30-3:30 p.m. | 11607 - 77 Ave (Garden by Design) |
| 3-4 p.m. | 80 Ave & 115 St (Urban Farm) |

I'd also like to thank everyone who opened their gardens and attended the ornamental Open Gardens event on June 28. It was wonderful to see so many neighbours out connecting with each other and enjoying the beauty created by the gardeners in our community.

Yours in gardening,
Barb



“Autumn Joy” sedum thrives in hot, dry conditions.

Planning and place

Susan Kamp

With the new bylaw permitting garage suites and “skinny” houses, there are so many applications for development permits being submitted for this type of development in Belgravia that rather than trying to keep everyone up-to-date via the newsletter, we will post updates on the Belgravia website at:

belgraviaedmonton.ca/developmentapplications

In this way, neighbours will know as soon as possible what is being proposed in close proximity to their homes.

The Evolving Infill Good Neighbour Guide

The guide outlines the rules and etiquette for builders. It is a resource for builders and neighbours residing near construction sites and leagues. City staff cannot be at every construction site all the time thus they rely on citizens and knowledgeable league people to alert them of problematic construction behaviors.

Here are some common problems which should be reported to 311:

- Construction vehicles crossing curbs, boulevards and sidewalks without an OSCAM permit (On-street Construction and Maintenance Permit)
- Construction activity within 5 m of city boulevard trees without guidance from Urban Forestry on how to protect trees and tree roots
- Storing of construction supplies or equipment on sidewalks or boulevards
- Portable toilet near neighbour's property or on city property
- Debris not in bins
- No fencing surrounding the excavated site
- Construction noise beyond Monday through Saturday, 7 a.m. – 10 p.m., and Sundays and Holidays, 9 a.m. – 7 p.m.
- Building built larger and taller than allowed in the Zoning Bylaw or specified in the development permit
- Damages to city trees, curbs, roads or other infrastructure.

When reporting or inquiring about a construction site have ready the address and a description of the activity or concern. If known provide the name of the property owner, name of the company involved, and license plate number of vehicles involved. Photos may be helpful. You

will be given a reference number for follow-up.

If construction workers are using the electricity of neighbours without permission, report this to the police. If private fencing or landscaping is damaged by construction work it is considered by the city to be a private matter between the neighbour and property owner. However, if construction activity damages private buildings or blocks entrances to the neighbour's building(s) report this to a city Safety Code Officer. They may be able to enforce safe conditions.

It is advisable for neighbours to take date stamped photos of their yard and buildings before construction begins. Some neighbours have taken extreme precautions and also gotten an engineer's report in order to prove the state of their buildings prior to infill development next door.

If given an opportunity, ask the property owners to instruct the excavators not to dig to the property line, thus reducing the likelihood of damages to the neighbouring property.

It is also advisable for neighbours next to infill sites to speak with infill property owners to discuss the prevention of drainage problems. The next door neighbour to an infill site may want to build up the ground around their dwelling and construct a joint swale in order to prevent drainage problems caused by the change in drainage patterns. League civics directors and city drainage staff could facilitate this discussion.

If the league or the neighbours have called to report bad neighbour behavior to 311 and the problems reported have not been remedied, please document the issue and send the information to Bev.Zubot@efcl.org. Bev is part of a recently formed city Construction Advisory Committee which is seeking solutions to construction issues. Education of builders and greater enforcement may solve some of the issues, but others may require additional rules or different procedures. You may need to speak with your councillor to get major changes made.

Some league civics directors have suggested that a “damage deposit” or bond be required of infill developers to ensure there are readily available funds to pay for damages to city property and perhaps private property. Others have suggested a regulation be created to prohibit excavation within .5 m of neighbour fencing or landscaping.

Do you have suggestions? Share your thoughts with the Edm. Federation of Community Leagues at www.efcl.org/city-construction-guide

The guide is available on the Evolving Infill page of the City of Edmonton website at edmonton.ca

BCL & Belgravia Co-operative Play School

Petting zoo a big success

Jeanette Boman, past president

Animals have a way of bringing people out of themselves and giving them something to touch and talk about with others.

On June 10, children, parents and seniors gathered outside the BCL Hall to see and pet Chicken John's little goats, exotic chickens, baby chicks, ducks, rabbits, miniature pigs and horses. As a joint initiative between the BCL and the Belgravia Cooperative Playschool (BCP), BCL senior members were invited to join the children and share their stories about some animals in their past.

The four-legged 'kids' jumped on anything they could to climb their way to the top of anything and anyone to get a better view of things. Under the watchful eye of the adults present, our two legged 'kids' from the BCP and Belgravia Elementary School walked amongst the animals or sat on chairs to gently hold the furry, feathered and hairy little visitors. Check out the BCL webpage (belgraviaedmonton.ca) for some vicarious 'pet therapy' through photographs.



Events calendar

Save the Date!

Community League Day BBQ & 2nd Annual Belgravia Hustle Saturday, September 19

- Check our September issue of the Belgravian and belgraviaedmonton.ca for more details •
- Volunteers needed for the race route & BBQ. Email programs@belgraviaedmonton.ca to volunteer •

BCL Board Meeting

Wednesday, September 9, 7 – 9 p.m.

Location TBD. Check September issue of Belgravian
Everyone welcome!

Edible Gardens Tour

Sunday, August 9 (FREE)

Tour some of Belgravia's loveliest edible gardens
See page six for details



Walking around our 60-year-old neighbourhood we recognized that a lot of good fruit was falling to the ground and being wasted. We decided to collect fruit such as rhubarb, raspberries, cherries, pears, and apples that were not being used by homeowners.

We are a not-for-profit society with the mission of connecting this wonderful local resource with those who will use it. We make jams, jellies, sauces and condiments that are 60 – 100% “rescued” fruit; we teach preserving courses so people can make their own; we connect homes with excess fruit to those who want to pick for themselves; and fruit that is excess to the above sources goes to local charities, group homes, community kitchens, small food banks and anyone else who will use it (at no charge). In 2014 we redirected about 15,000 kg apples and this is just a small portion of the apple trees in our city.

If you have fruit in your yard that is excess to your needs or you are unable to do the work yourself, here are a couple of options to consider.

1. Tell your neighbours about the fruit and invite them to come and pick. You can arrange with them to leave you a portion in return for your sharing.
2. Call us at 780-244-0129 and we will let you know about coming to pick ourselves. Please note that apples are so abundant that we often cannot pick – but if you drop them off at our kitchen we will make sure they go to someone who will use them.

3. If you don't want others in your yard give us a call. We will tell you where and when you can drop off the fruit or we can arrange for a pick up.

Call us at **780-244-0129** if you want to be a volunteer picker, know of a place that would use some of this free local fruit, or have other questions or comments.

There is a lot more to our story, so please check out the website at fruitsofsherbrooke.ca

Engage 106-76

As you may know, the City is working in partnership with the communities on the public engagement plan for the 76 Avenue / 106 Street concept planning study, called Engage 106-76, to engage the communities differently. It involves the communities of Empire Park, Pleasantview, Allendale, Queen Alexandra, McKernan, Belgravia and Strathcona, as well as members from Strathcona Complete Streets, Edmonton Bicycle Commuters and the Old Strathcona Business Association.

Become a Community Partner to get updates and provide valuable information for the project. Visit the project website at:

<http://engage106-76.info>

The website also includes project timelines and other background information.

Meet your neighbours

We held our 2nd Annual Volunteer Gratitude Event on June 21, serving up free entertainment and a delicious buffet of Ukrainian offerings for our fabulous BCL volunteers. Thank you to Jeanette Boman and Debby Waldman for organizing our Perogies in the Park event, which brought together close to 100 Belgravians. And a HUGE heartfelt thanks to all of our fabulous volunteers who help to make Belgravia a great community to live in!

