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THE OFFICIAL BRENTWOOD COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER



*Cover Photo by Madhur Singhal*



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# Brentwood COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

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**Linda Van Holst – Office Manager • Steve Dietrich – Arena Manager**

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SANTINK, Lori	Secretary	Lori.Santink@brentwoodcommunity.com
BOYCHUK, Lisa	Treasurer	Lisa.Boychuk@brentwoodcommunity.com
VACANT	Casino Coordinator	
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### News, Events, & More



### Crime Statistics



### Real Estate Statistics



## Leapers and Leaplings Special Day

Four million leap day babies? Did you know the odds of being born on February 29 is one in 1,461! Leap day babies are better-known as 'leapers' or 'leaplings'. Hats off to these time-defying, once-in-a-blue-moon birthday legends!



## Off the Bookshelf

by Rosemary Brown

Harold R. Johnson's *Peace and Good Order: the Case for Indigenous Justice in Canada* makes a compelling argument for why Indigenous peoples in Canada need to reassert their jurisdiction over justice.

A member of the Montreal Lake Cree Nation in northern Saskatchewan, Johnson served a stint in the Navy and worked as a logger, miner, and trapper before going to law school and earning an M.A. at Harvard. He worked as both a defence lawyer and as a crown prosecutor in Saskatchewan and was also a prolific author of fiction and non-fiction. He died in 2022 from cancer, at the age of 64.

*Peace and Good Order*, based on his experiences in law school and as a practicing lawyer, is a critique of the justice system in Canada, which he described as “rooted in white western thought and property rights.”

He characterizes law school as a mechanism for “keeping undesirables out”, designed for “wealthy white men”, and that it changed him, making him “think like a settler”.

The justice system in Canada is designed on the basis of punishment as deterrence—but it doesn't work. Incarceration rates of Indigenous peoples, including Indigenous women, have been on the rise since the 1960s, a process he referred to as “incarceration contagion”. Yet studies have shown that increased incarceration does not reduce crime.

Johnson argues that this incarceration/punishment model does not work. Many crimes committed by Indigenous peoples are related to alcohol, which in most cases serves to medicate intergenerational trauma. Until the underlying trauma is addressed, crime and incarceration rates will not improve. Furthermore, families and communities are not healed in this process.

Johnson points out that before colonization Indigenous peoples had their own justice systems and methods for dealing with offenders. These systems were based on redemption, with communities deciding how an offender could “earn their way back into the community”, thus taking accountability for their behaviour and leading to more healing for the community and the offender.

Johnson believes that a justice system based on redemption, one in which the community is involved, and one which is sufficiently resourced to address underlying trauma, is the solution. He offers as a model his experiences with the Northern Alcohol Strategy. This strategy involved going to the community to ask for ideas on how to reduce alcohol abuse and sought the endorsement of Indigenous communities and leaders before being implemented. Changes were made in how alcohol is sold in the North and in turn this has led to a decrease in alcoholism, crime, and hospitalization rates.

Johnson argues that Indigenous peoples and communities cannot wait for things to change, but that Indigenous Nations need to reassert their jurisdiction over justice and implement systems based on redemption not punishment.

I wonder whether Canadian society as a whole could learn from a redemption model. For those interested in what traditional justice systems looked like I would recommend *Doing Things the Right Way: Dene Traditional Justice in Lac La Martre, NWT*, by Joan Ryan.



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### Brentwood Cares - Little Food Library and More!

With your donations and support, we continue to stock the Brentwood Cares Little Food Library twice daily, for use by people of all ages and circumstances, from elders to students.

Unopened, sealed items can be dropped off in the library itself or in the box beside the door at 3624 Boulton Road at any time. Hats off to Brentwood for your continued support!

*Liza and the Brentwood Cares Team*

### Buy Nothing Brentwood

Give freely; share creatively! Post anything you'd like to give away, lend, or share; ask for anything you'd like to receive or borrow.

Check out the Buy Nothing Brentwood/Charleswood/Collingwood Facebook page, or [buynothingproject.org](http://buynothingproject.org).

### Your Representatives in Brentwood

**City Councillor:** Sean Chu (Ward 4):  
[info@seanchu.ca](mailto:info@seanchu.ca); 403-268-3727.

**MLA:** Luanne Metz (Calgary-Varsity):  
[Calgary.varsity@assembly.ab.ca](mailto:Calgary.varsity@assembly.ab.ca); 403-216-5436.

**MP:** Len Webber (Calgary Confederation):  
[Len.Webber.c1@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Len.Webber.c1@parl.gc.ca); 403-220-0888.



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Dear Brentwoodians,

As usual, this issue features an excellent Development and Transportation Committee report from Brentwood DTC chair Melanie Swales. She once again raises concerns about the City's proposed blanket rezoning plans, which are touted as a solution to Canada's housing affordability crisis through densifying neighbourhoods. However, Melanie points out that the loosening of zoning restrictions will end up being a boon for developers, but with no accountability or enforcement, it is extremely unlikely that affordable housing will actually get built.

After all, developers are businesses and want to maximize their return on investment just like any other – so it follows that redevelopments and infills in desirable neighbourhoods like Brentwood will be aimed at the middle end of the market and higher. This will have minimal impact on ever-spiralling housing prices and will not help people struggling to get onto the first rung of the property ladder.

There is no question that more housing is needed at the lower end of the market; and if developers lack the economic incentive to build it, who will? In the mid-20th century, many North American cities built high-rise housing "projects" which adhered rigidly to modernist architecture and planning principles while ignoring the human element. These design failures, combined with a lack of funding for maintenance and security, led to crime and social breakdown in these developments.

But it would be wrong to completely reject public housing based on past mistakes. Many countries around the world have extensive government housing programmes: in some European countries, up to a third of rental stock is government-owned and managed. Singapore boasts a 90% home ownership rate, and almost 80% of total housing units are controlled by the government, which oversees rental management as well as resale of privately-owned homes. This extreme level of involvement likely won't work, either practically or politically, in Calgary, but neither has simply leaving the issue in the hands of the market.

All three levels of government should examine solutions that have worked elsewhere and engage in meaningful consultation (this means listening as well!) with

communities and developers to find effective solutions to the housing issue in Canada.

### Photo Contest

*The Bugle* is looking for Brentwood's best amateur photographers to provide cover images each month. If you have a great snap of our neighbourhood saved on your phone or posted on your social media feed, send it in for a chance to be featured on the cover of an upcoming issue! Photos must be 300 DPI or higher (i.e. from a newer model phone or good digital camera) and 2400 x 1600 pixels minimum size. If submitting pictures of minors, please make sure that you have direct, express permission to submit the picture from a parent or guardian. Send your photos, or any questions, to [bcabugle@telus.net](mailto:bcabugle@telus.net).

Yours sincerely,

*Jonathan Jucker*

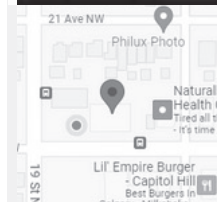
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# Will “Upzoning” Work to Make Housing More Affordable?

*Submitted by the Development and Transportation Committee*

Mark April 22, 2024, on your calendar. This is the day City Council will start a Public Hearing where they propose “blanket rezoning”, probably Calgary’s most significant zoning change ever. If approved, all single-detached housing properties (currently zoned R-C1) could be redeveloped as townhouses (R-CG zoning). Potentially, the house next to you could be torn down and replaced with a four-unit townhouse with four additional secondary suites (eight housing units in total). Affected neighbours would not be able to oppose or appeal such a redevelopment if it complies with other bylaw requirements.

Housing purchase and rental costs have soared compared to the inflated costs of other necessities, while wages have not kept up. Many people struggle to make ends meet and housing is commonly their largest monthly expense. How did we arrive at this point? Clearly, some market-driven issues have increased demand, including population growth in Calgary. Added to this are increased borrowing and mortgage costs, higher costs of groceries, insurance, utilities, and so on. Renters have to compete to find a home, while potential buyers have to compete with investors, developers, and Short-Term Rentals, additionally reducing the affordable housing supply.

Is housing affordability solely a supply-and-demand issue, as some industrial and governmental voices suggest, or are other factors at play? Effectively, the voices supporting a market-only solution suggest that additional housing units of any kind, at any price point, will have a trickle-down effect, reducing prices and making housing more affordable. Such an approach is advocated by our Civic and Federal governments who have provided the housing industry with reductions in approval timelines and taxes without requiring the housing industry or rental property managers to achieve any housing affordability performance measures. The houses being built are not necessarily “affordable”.

While such housing demand and inflationary financial pressures are real, two questions should be asked:

1. Are single-family homes really the main problem such that “upzoning” and densification will make Calgary more affordable?
2. Is an increased supply of housing likely to make Calgary housing more affordable independent of the price of new housing units that become available?

To answer the first question, densification alone does not automatically equal affordability. Not everything trickles down into an “affordable” or lower sales price and rent. If we “just” needed to build more houses, there should be solid historical data that increasing housing supply drives down prices, even in the face of increasing demand, making housing more affordable for those with the greatest affordability needs. That doesn’t seem to be the case: individual townhouse unit prices are often about the sale price of the entire previous older house and property that was replaced.

As for increasing the supply of housing, yes, almost everyone agrees more housing needs to be built. However, blanket upzoning of existing R-C1 homes assumes that those are some of the only possible places to build more. Little heed is placed on all the other “brownfield” properties in the City that have been promoted as desirable building locations. For example, the new arena deal advocates for all the increased residential buildings that will be built in Victoria Park. Another example is the large Westgate LRT area which has been vacant for many years. The redevelopment at Northland Mall is a good example of higher-intensity use of existing lands. There are many areas of the city with empty or under-utilized lots, where building could start without first removing existing homes – homes that in many cases are the affordable or lower cost homes.

What if blanket upzoning actually serves to increase the price of houses in existing developed communities? Older houses that are cheaper to rent or buy (sometimes referred to as “NOAH” - Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing) are usually the first ones to be replaced by new and more expensive units, further decreasing affordability within any area. Potential community residents who want to buy a family home have to compete against developers to make a purchase. Developers seeking to build an eight-unit building



have more leeway on what they can afford to pay for the property because they can divide the lot cost by multiple units. Speculation means that land values may go up in an area, not down. Developers make their money through building, so their best interests are served by building what is most profitable, and it is unlikely to be a low-cost affordable dwelling. Building larger, higher end units (with items such as granite countertops and expensive finishes) doesn't help those seeking affordability.

R-CGs bring substantial other changes because they can cover 60% of a property (compared to 45% for R-C1). In most cases, mature trees are ripped out and there is little room to ever plant any new trees. Green spaces and vegetation should not be considered mere niceties, they are necessities! Shading and massing are also concerns because R-CGs can be three storeys tall. Given the many bungalows in Brentwood, the increased height difference can be quite jarring.

We urge you to inform yourself about this issue. Read and learn more. You can express your opinions either by attending and speaking at the Public Hearings on April 22, 2024, or by writing to the Mayor and City Councillors prior to the Hearings.

## Brentwood Arena Public Skating

**Mondays from 10:00 to 11:30 am**

January 8 to March 25, 2024

**Wednesdays from 1:30 to 3:00 pm**

January 10 to March 27, 2024

**No Public Skating Dates:** February 19, 2024

\*No public skating on Statutory Holidays

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Public skating only. No sticks, pucks, sleds, or strollers. We do not supply skating assistance equipment. Anyone under 18 years old must wear a helmet.



by Anne Burke

Some features produce a positive response in visitors, as a focus for passive recreation, education, and interpretation; they remain opportunities for interpretation of bedrock themes in the park. Among the landscape features are large sandstone boulders several metres across. Those in north slope coulees may contain fossil clam shells, as remnants of a wave cut terrace which tumbled onto valley glaciers.

The Nose Hill pre-glacial gravels in the eastern portion of the Hill extend throughout the hilltop. In the Burnco gravel pit - and the slopes leading to this area from 19 Street and from Charleswood Drive - several trails and junctions in the south-facing areas are where exposed gravel from the Hill use in the 1960s and 70s would have been visible unless remediation was done with nurse and native grasses, after re-rooting foot traffic while the repair was undertaken.

A review of land uses of Nose Hill revealed that areas more severely damaged by vehicles, horse and cattle grazing, and gravel extraction were slowly regenerating. Although rutted trails remained, some already had grass growing in them due to less traffic. Ravine trails were heavily overgrown by tall grasses, thistles, and nettles, so that people used them less.

Firefighting, weeding, and controlled burns with vehicles damaged the plateau and slopes above the Porcupine Valley bike path. Widened and two-track trails are from social use; trail braiding on steeper hillsides due to wet, icy, or poor conditions. An on-hill project was raking to prevent new desire lines. Work was needed on the old motorcross routes up the bluff south of Porcupine Valley and along the Many Owls Valley Road where the trails had been washed out or deeply grooved. Pedestrian use of old vehicle roads slowed regeneration and remediation was warranted.





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## Talk About Energy!

by Lee Hunt

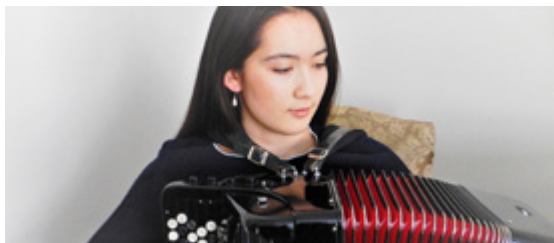
Wow! Talk about an energetic person! I recently interviewed Rachel Shutt, whose family moved to Brentwood when Rachel was only one year old – and they are still here.

As a younger person, Rachel played soccer and tennis organized by the Brentwood Community Association. She learned to swim at Sir Winston Churchill Rec Centre and took tap and ballet lessons at the McDonald Wilson Dance academy in Brentwood's "Old Hall".

Rachel attended Play Group at Hope Lutheran Church and takes joy in the fact that a number of the students from that Play Group went on to attend U of C together. Even more astounding is that some of the group still teaches together at Senator Patrick Burns (SPB), located right next door to Brentwood.

And that brings me to Rachel's teaching career. Initially, she was a substitute for a music teacher on maternity leave at Webber Academy. There Rachel taught and thoroughly enjoyed her students, aged 3 to 9. When that posting ended in spring 2023, Rachel moved to SPB to substitute in Spanish and Physical Education. In September of that year, Rachel became a full-time teacher for some 200 students in Grades 6 to 8. The day that I interviewed Rachel, she had been teaching rock climbing; SPB has a climbing wall on the stage in the gym. All instructions and conversations are in Spanish.

But Rachel's talents aren't only in teaching – she is also a musician. Rachel began playing piano when she was only six years old, then took up the accordion at age nine, "when I was just big enough to hold it" she said. Now Rachel has two full sized accordions for her own use, plus several smaller ones for the children to whom she teaches accordion. During our interview, Rachel took time out to play for me on the accordion a German song entitled "Snowball". That was certainly the first time in 16 years of doing interviews for *The Bugle* that I have been treated to a concert!



Rachel's story doesn't end there. She is also a keen traveller. Many of her travels have taken her to Europe – Belgium, Norway, England, plus destination Spain to help her maintain her Spanish language skills. She frequently visits the Italian town of Castelfidardo where many accordions are made and where she has taken a number of accordion classes.

In addition to teaching and travelling, Rachel finds time to volunteer at the Alberta Children's Hospital once a week, providing a music therapy program for the young patients.

Rachel also cares about her Brentwood community. From her very first paycheck, she donated to the creation of our tennis court mural on Northmount Drive. She is also grateful to have had long-time Brentwood volunteer and Whispering Woods organizer Polly Lee Knowlton Cockett as her U of C Practicum professor.

As I said at the beginning, Rachel has incredible energy. She has a zest for all that she does –teaching, creating music, travelling, and volunteering. Rachel does it all! I thank her for agreeing to be interviewed – and especially for the mini accordion "concert".

## Don't Get Stung by the Bee!

The shortest month of the year is one of the most misspelled words in the English language. February is like that mischievous word that trips up even the most seasoned spellers! It's the spelling bee's sneaky little riddle, playing hide-and-seek with that elusive "r" and making a twisty-turny challenge out of a seemingly simple month!







## Update for the Brentwood Community Garden

by Cynthia Sim

A brilliant winter solstice sunrise greeted us at the advent of the season. The weather has been unseasonably mild for this time of year, with little snow cover for our yards and gardens and very poor conditions for any outdoor ice rinks. However, February is with us now and there is a very slight lengthening of our daylight hours accompanied by brilliant sunshine and blue skies. Cooler weather may be here, but it is time to think about our garden plans for the upcoming season. Seed catalogues are probably out now, and seed packets are in abundance at the garden centres.

Most of last season's garden members have already renewed their garden beds for this year, but we will still have many beds available for newcomers. So, if you have friends who might be interested in joining us, they would be very welcome.

New garden memberships for this gardening season will be available this month, so renewal of the Brentwood Community Association (BCA) membership will also be available. The BCA membership can be renewed online but the garden membership has to be processed through the BCA office as the number of available garden beds is limited.

We hope to complete more repairs on some of the deteriorating bed frames early in the spring before planting begins. More information on this issue will be forthcoming. Think spring!

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## Medieval Tinder

Wearing your heart on your sleeve is more than just a phrase. Did you know that in the Middle Ages, love was a fashion statement? Back then, singles played a name-tag game, pinning their Valentine's name on their sleeves for a week! Talk about wearing your heart on your sleeve - literally!





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## 2023 Legislature Wrap Up

*On behalf of Luanne Metz, MLA for Calgary-Varsity*

On December 6, 2023, the Government motioned for “closure,” which limited debate and ended the fall session earlier than expected. We stayed late into the night, debating a number of bills until time ran out and the session closed, just past midnight.

The Government passed several bills on the last night of session, including:

- Bill 2 put in place the process to pursue leaving the Canada Pension Plan
- Bill 5 increases the salaries for public board executives
- Bill 8 removes the monetary limit on gifts for MLAs

All Government MLAs voted in favour and all Opposition MLAs voted against.

Our Opposition introduced two bills earlier in the session, reflecting the priorities we hear from our constituents:

- Bill 201, to prohibit private payment for insured health care services
- Bill 202, to require reporting of class size data to establish school funding standards

The Government voted against both of these bills.

For more Legislation details from the past Fall Session, visit [www.assembly.ab.ca](http://www.assembly.ab.ca). The Legislature is expected to resume sitting in the next month.

### Health Care

As the Health Critic for the Opposition, the biggest issues in my inbox are long wait times for surgery and emergency rooms. Resolving this crisis requires urgent action to recruit and retain health care professionals. This must be the government's priority. As the Official Opposition, my colleagues and I will continue doing everything we can to advocate for a better plan.



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