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THE MISSION STATEMENT



The Newsletter of the Cliff Bungalow-Mission Community Association

Fall 2008

Community Celebrating Two Anniversaries

By Bob Lang

The Cliff Bungalow – Mission Community Association is celebrating two anniversaries this fall. One is the 30th anniversary of our incorporation as a Community Association that officially took place on November 29th, 1978. The second is the 20th anniversary of the Community Centre when we officially leased a portion of the former Cliff Bungalow School on September 1st, 1988.

These two things have had a major impact on what has taken place in the community during that time. Without the Community Association and the existence of the community centre, the community could have taken a dramatically different route as redevelopment took place over the years. One of the reasons for the formation of the Community Association was to deal with increasing redevelopment pressures and to be a community voice in creating a vision for the future through the Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) process. While not all residents are happy with what has happened, the Community Association has had a tempering effect on what has occurred as opposed to what might have occurred. We have been able in many instances to minimize the negative impacts as changes have taken place. In addition, the Community Centre has provided a place to meet when dealing with community matters and



has provided a venue for celebrations over the years.

When incorporated, the Community Association was called the Cliff Bungalow Community Association. The area included was just to the west of 4th Street. The area east of 4th Street was under the Mission Community Association that was formed in 1951. It disbanded after the first Mission ARP was approved in 1982. We identified that the two areas actually had a very closely connected history, shared a common natural bounded area

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Cliff Bungalow – Mission Community Association

Annual General Meeting and

Community Anniversaries Celebration

Wednesday, November 26, 2008

CBMCA Community Centre 2201 Cliff Street

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Doors open at 6:00 pm for Registration • Historic Displays
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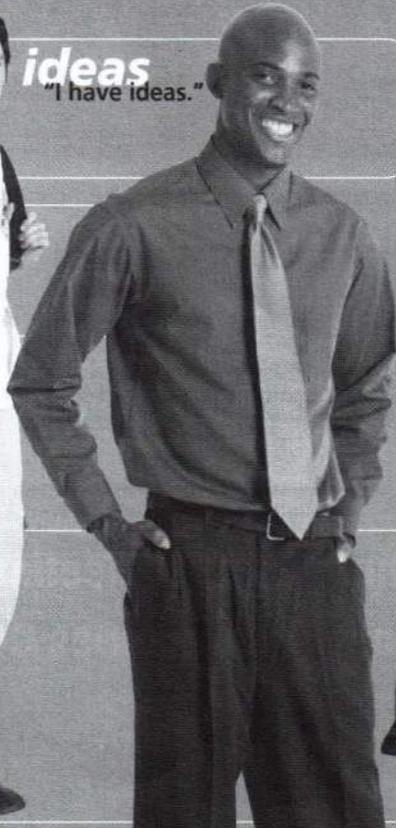
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THE MISSION STATEMENT

Fall 2008

Published bi-monthly by Flexys Systems Publishing Ltd. for the Cliff Bungalow-Mission Community Association

The views expressed by contributors to The Mission Statement are not necessarily those of the CBMCA board or its associates

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LETTERS

Homelessness vs Development

I am very impressed with your front page article on homelessness vs development.

It hits a chord very deep in my heart, as I feel exactly the same as the writer. Kudos to you

for bringing this forward. Thank you.

Joan Landsiedel

Thank you for your comments Joan! As an inner city community we are faced with unique challenges.



New 'Mission Statement' editor, Twyla Yacyshyn, on a beautiful Calgary August evening (when coffee shops were closed due to staff shortages!) meeting about River Path and AGM Fall newsletter content, with CBM Environment Director Paul Varga, former CBM president, Eilish Hiebert, and Bill Longstaff, former CBM Board member, both now co-ordinating CBM River Promenade Project; and CBM Board member Bob Lang, 'Father of Cliff Bungalow-Mission' co-ordinating with CBM AGM November 26th a celebration of the 30th birthday of our community, and 20th anniversary of CBM in its present Community Centre, Cliff Bungalow School. See elsewhere in this issue for details of all of these issues.

Welcome Twyla. We're so glad you came forward! Twyla will have an information booth at the AGM, along with other booths, for anyone who would like to volunteer to get involved!



Tell us what you think

If you have comments of interest to community members, we want to hear from you! Write to: Editor, Cliff Bungalow-Mission Community Association, 462, 1919B - 4th Street SW, Calgary, AB T2S 1W4, or e-mail us at editor.cbmca@hotmail.com. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. Feature articles must be no longer than 600 words.

The City of Calgary Public Open House

2009-2011 Proposed Business Plans and Budgets

City Council and Administration invite you to a Public Open House regarding the proposed 2009-2011 business plans and budgets. Citizens interested in learning about the proposed plans and budgets are invited to a public open house:

Saturday, Nov. 15 – 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
The Atrium, Calgary City Hall, 800 Macleod Trail S.E.

Representatives of City departments will be on hand to answer questions.

The proposed plans and budgets can be viewed after 4 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 6, 2008 at calgary.ca, at all branches of the Calgary Public Library and at the City Clerk's office in Historic City Hall, Municipal Building Complex.

City Council will meet to review the 2009-2011 proposed business plans and budgets beginning on Monday, Nov. 17 at 9:30 a.m. in Council Chamber. Public speakers will be heard after an opening presentation. Any persons wishing to address Council may do so for a maximum of five minutes and may bring 35 copies of their materials for distribution.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, communications concerning this matter should be delivered to the City Clerk:

Mail to: City Clerk (#8007), City of Calgary, P.O. Box 2100, Postal Station "M", Calgary, AB T2P 2M5. Fax: 403-268-2362. Email: cityclerks@calgary.ca. Hand deliver to: City Clerk's, Main Floor, Historic City Hall, 700 MacLeod Trail S.E.

If you have questions regarding meeting procedures please contact the Legislative Assistant, City Clerk's office at 403-268-5861.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It's a Beautiful Day in the Neighbourhood

By Rick Williams

We will be well into Fall as you read this and to me this has always been a reflective time of year. As an inner city community we are exposed to some of the harsher realities of life downtown and in the frantic pace of life in Calgary we sometimes overlook why we decided to move to this community in the first place, or wonder if it is the same community it was when we first got here.

We are neither the bohemian artists colony that we once perhaps could have been, nor the gentrified boutique district that some would like us to become. We are a community where it can take an hour just to walk to the coffee shop because you run into so many of your neighbours. When you get

there you know the person behind the counter and may have an actual conversation with them, maybe share a table with a stranger. The streets are shaded by one of the most magnificent forest canopies in the city and the parks are alive with activity.

You can take a walk along the river and remember the all the rafters, the good ones anyway, that brought a sense of life and fun to the Elbow in the summertime. You can walk home from work in twenty minutes, feeling a sense of relief as you cross 17th and move into the calm oasis of Cliff Bungalow-Mission, past heritage houses, beautiful gardens and fascinating balconies, maybe even one with a cow on it. You can sit on your front porch, watching families,

dog walkers and young lovers out for a stroll, or meander over to Fourth for dinner or a drink at the pub.

The current economic environment has given us a respite from the barrage of development applications over the last months (though at the high cost of vacant sites and loss of built heritage), and the cool months ahead will help give us back our streets and natural areas. We can have positive expectations that solutions will be found to at least some of our problems, and together we can keep working on others. To me, Cliff Bungalow-Mission feels like a community should feel: comfortable, friendly and exciting. Now I remember why I came here. 🐾

May 2008 Casino Results

By Bob Lang

The Cliff Bungalow – Mission Community Association had a casino on May 12th and 13th. The proceeds from our casino were pooled with other casinos held during the second quarter of 2008. During August, we received our share of that pool, a total of \$80,287. There are two components, one for the tables \$35,445 and one for the casino slot machines \$44,842. As you can see, this is the largest fund raising opportunity the organization has. We would like to thank everyone who volunteered for our casino.

The following people volunteered for one shift during our two-day casino: Allison Attree, Graham Bolton, Judy Brown, Sodie Condon, Adrian Dodds, Paul Ellison, Frankie Eng (Walkin' Around), Sheila Ference, Wanda Gorczakowska, Rob Jobst, Jana Lait, Larry Lehr, Bill Leong, Pat Maiani, Angela McKinnon, Val McLean, Ben Millsap, Jan Mulder, Joyce Pedegoodoff, Harry Sanders, Paul Siller, Nora Stewart, Bob van Wegen and Laura Woodward.

The following people volunteered for two shifts, one each day: Martin Bober, Brenda Brown, Georgia Hoffman, Bob Lang, Carl Sullivan, Sue Toker and Rick Williams.

Thanks so much to each and every person who volunteered. Without them, we would not have been able to raise these funds. 🐾

ENVIRONMENT

Green Notes

By Paul Varga, Environment Director.

After a long semi-hot summer vacation, the Green Team is ready to get back into the swing of things this fall! We've got a few initiatives that we are working on at the moment that will be taking up our time until November's AGM. Georgina Jamieson and her Gardening Committee have done an amazing job getting the Community Garden on 25th Avenue re-organized this spring and it looks beautiful.

The 26th Avenue Elbow River Promenade Project is a community grass roots initiative which will enhance our community's natural and historical landscape. The Project is ramping up and construction is expected to begin in the spring of 2009 – to make donations and to find out more please contact elbowriverbank@yahoo.com.

Operation Doggy Doo is still underway, and we've been approved for one waste dispenser for our four legged friends that will be situated on Holy Cross Lane – unfortunately due to the 'no dogs allowed' City designation of the parks in Cliff Bungalow and Mission, we can't get any more dispensers until designations change. We are doing our best at working with the City to change these designations so there can be an off leash park area in the Community. A big thanks to Miriam Palomino, one of our green team members, for all her help on this initiative. We are also looking to get some more of our community parks into the Adopt a Park program in the coming months – if you are interested, check out this link:

www.calgary.ca/docgallery/bu/parks_operations/orientation_manual.pdf.

Speaking of parks, the Green Team has joined forces with the Heritage Committee to find a suitable name for the 'Park With No Name' located at 102-26th Avenue SW and to compile some proposed wording for an informational plaque to be located on the site. We are also working with City representatives to finish this initiative soon.

As you can see, there are a great variety of ways that you can help make your community a brighter and greener place to live, and we'd love for you to join us in any capacity that you are comfortable with. If you have any environment questions or concerns relating to our community, or would like to join the Green Team, please contact us at navyshaker@hotmail.com. 🐾



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Farewell to Summer

By Nancy Tice

As far as wrapping up the 2008 growing season, perhaps it is enough to note that it wasn't ideal for honouring the 100th birthday of the Calgary Horticultural Society. Neither was it a total loss since trees and shrubs luxuriated in the abundant moisture. I've misplaced the thread of staying on schedule (what is the schedule?) with regard to writing for this newsletter due to the past year's editorial/publication glitches. Now I'm caught short without enough garden photos as yet for the colour spread... next issue perhaps.

The community garden (located in William Aberhart Park along 24th Avenue in Mission) looked wonderful this past summer with vigilant guidance supplied by Georgina Jameson who volunteered to become the new garden director. The garden had begun looking forlorn without much active leadership and Georgina accomplished wonders in getting maintenance issues back on track. Energetic volunteers reroofed the garden shed and resurfaced the pathways between the raised garden plots – a tough job which involved shifting many wheelbarrow loads of sandy gravel. The garden is excellently sited to receive whatever sunshine is available so it was quite a colourful spot in spite of so much gloomy weather. Kudos to Georgina and the many allotment gardeners who create such a delightful seasonal community asset. The local Sunday lawn bowlers moved to William Aberhart Park last year after being hassled once too often by weirdos in Lindsay Park open space. Gardeners, lawn bowlers – add the dog walkers, the people watchers, the noon hour al fresco take-away lunch bunch and a group enjoying the children's play area and William Aberhart Park can be a very busy place which feels friendly and safe. It is an excellent example of how successful a

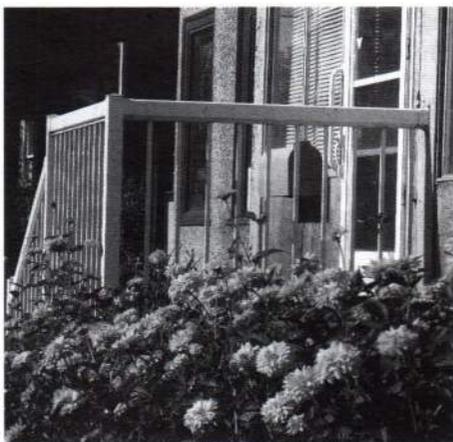
small community park can be when it offers areas suitable for a variety of activities which appeal to local residents. And that provides some food for thought in a community where passive park spaces are usually overtaken by criminal activity.

It was amusing to read in the summer newsletter edition about the Hillsboro Tower parkade reno's site specific plans for noise and dust. Was the plan to make as much noise and dust as possible? I live in the area and the parkade reno was locally infamous for its several months of interminable jackhammering along with thick clouds of pulverized concrete dust which occasionally descended without warning to envelope the public realm. If Neanderthal men had had parkades, they probably would have repaired them in much the same way.

Observant pedestrians may have noticed a few "Heritage Tree" plaques. I've spotted four within Cliff Bungalow-Mission. All the plaques I've seen are visible from the public sidewalks and they are attached to the trees at the approximate eye level of a pedestrian. Here's one hint – it was also cool to see an image of the magnificent Plains Cottonwood on 20th Avenue in Mission

used as a motif for the 2008 Historic Calgary Week brochure.

On a sad note, Gail Carscallen, the owner of the Aberdeen Block on 4th Street where her Gallery of Canadian Folk Art is located, died in September after a long illness. In a past Urban Landscape article, I wrote of my belief that it was Gail who kick-started the attractive trend of improving the summertime commercial district with colourful flowers. The Aberdeen Block with its seasonal flower baskets, wonderful small restaurants, the colourful gallery display window, and our own plywood "Mission Mountie" has contributed enormously to the success of the heart of the local business district. None of this was a happy accident, instead it demonstrated Gail's attention to creating an extremely attractive streetscape. I'm reminded that gardeners often perceive autumn as a season of sadness and loss as we move into winter's long hours of darkness. In the spirit of Thanksgiving, autumn also provides a moment to reflect and take the time to appreciate all that is good in our neighbourhood whether it is lovely buildings, grand trees, kind neighbours, talented chefs, or designers with a lively sense of style in their commercial endeavors. 🌻



Stephen and Kathleen Barley have been our volunteer gardeners for years; they keep the area beautiful, through renovations and mould and lead paint removal. You may see this couple around the neighbourhood lovingly tending our Community Centre and other gardens. Although forced to move from this area by condo-ization of almost their whole street some years ago, they faithfully come back regularly, and garden for us!

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Dreaming of Holy Cross

By Peter Atkinson

Since 1996, the fate of Holy Cross Hospital has been a big question mark within the community. It was in 1996 that the province decided to close the doors of the public hospital and sold the site to private owners. It's been a bit of white elephant since 1996, people knowing that its eventual redevelopment would see the Mission Hospital project go the way of the General Hospital in Bridgeland. Now, to date there are no official plans for the site, but recently Poon McKenzie Architects, on behalf of the site's owner, have begun the process of City applications to have the site's land use redesignated, and ultimately, redeveloped.

The idea of redevelopment of this site is not new, nor is it really a surprise that an 8.2 acre piece of land in inner city Calgary, with riverfront access and close proximity to 4th Street be considered a desirable location for redevelopment. I'm glossing over a lot of the politics that have hung over the site since the '96 closure, leaving that conversation for another table, choosing instead to take the optimistic view of this site's redevelopment. This site represents a major overhaul of the entire Mission Community and presents an enormous opportunity to dream about what our community can become. Let's not be mistaken, I am optimistic about redevelopment, but this piece of property is privately owned, and ultimately the success of its redevelopment relies upon the creativity of its designers and the vision of its owners. Before I get too far, let's review some of the City's restrictions on the site.

The Mission ARP (Area Redevelopment Plan) and the City Bylaw allow the site to be developed to a FAR (Floor Area Ratio) of 4.4 with a maximum height of 17 storeys. A density of 5.4 FAR, max 22 storeys may be considered if the historic McNabb Wing, built in 1928, is retained and designated as a Municipal Historic Resource, ensuring that the most architecturally significant portion of the building is restored and helping to maintain the historic nature of our community. Further to that, the ARP stipulates a maximum amount of office and commercial use to be allowed on site: office space to a maximum of 35%, and commercial to a max of 5%. To give you an idea about the condition of the site, the FAR of the existing structures is 1.4. Further, the ARP states the following 4 points as its objectives for the site:

- Provide opportunities to develop a di-

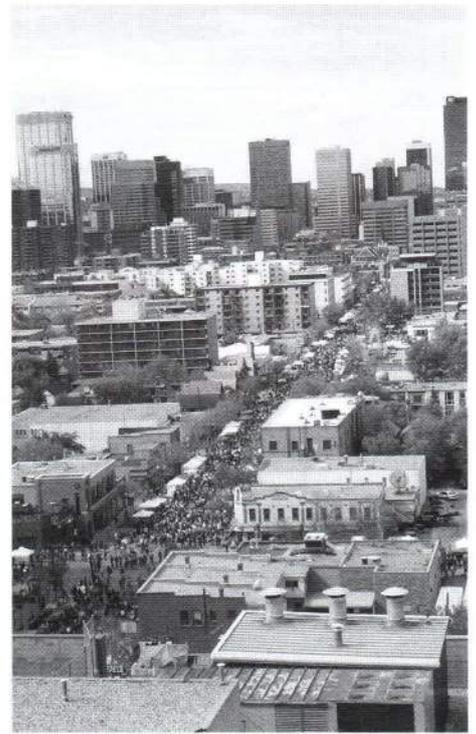
verse stock of residences;

- Allow for continuing function of the site as a mixed use (eg: residential and commercial) and public service (eg: medical and education) centre within the community;
- Utilize the existing buildings and infrastructure as effectively and efficiently as possible; and
- Provide compatible retail and personal service uses to serve the immediate area and that complement the nearby 4th Street SW and 17th Avenue SW commercial districts.

The redevelopment of this site will be one of the largest inner city redevelopments in Calgary's history. What makes this redevelopment even more unique, and potentially perplexing, is that this site is privately owned, meaning that its design may occur without complete buy in from the community that it is reshaping. In my opinion, the make or break of this redevelopment will come from the owner's interest in becoming a part of the community. I'm not just talking about talks between the designers and the Community Association; I'm talking about giving people who live in the neighborhood the chance to communicate what they feel the community is missing and what this project can bring to make its redevelopment a successful one.

The people who live here will be left with the responsibility of incorporating the new buildings into the community's fabric, to make the new commercial uses viable, to make the new residential uses desirable, to use the offices that this building will house, so why not knit the community and the development together early in the process to ensure that the project cannot be anything but a success? There is huge opportunity for many people to dream about the future of Mission with this project, why not harness those ideas through community accessible design charettes. There is huge opportunity to fill the needs of people within the community, why not take the time to find out what the needs are?

When I dream of the new Holy Cross, I have visions of sports fields overlooked by residential development, not unlike the General Hospital site, disc golf courses that provide a recreation for community members while at the same time self-policing the riverbank. I dream of riverfront access for the residents of community to enjoy the Elbow River. I dream of small grocery stores,



small hardware stores, and restaurants to create a diverse community that contains all the services that one needs. I dream of street frontages that use the friendly neighborhood porch concept seen throughout Mission and Cliff Bungalow to promote community. I dream of a development that respects the medical and affordable housing needs that the current site provides and incorporating them in to the new design to ensure that nothing is lost, that only things are gained. I dream of a development that cares about its environmental impact, looking for ways to reduce waste streams, not only through construction, but by taking into account how people will be living in the development and finding innovative ways to turn waste streams into useable fuel for other uses.

The redevelopment of Holy Cross is a remarkable undertaking and its impact on the community will no doubt be the largest single development that our community ever sees. I hope that the owner chooses to involve the community in its design process as I believe this is the only way that a redevelopment can ever truly be successful. That being said, there is also a responsibility for our community members to become involved in the process.

There will be an Open House in the coming weeks or months to introduce the first step in the redevelopment, the concept plan, to community. Watch for signs in the neighborhood. I ask that you all take the time to figure out what your dreams for the Holy Cross are, and to meet the developers and share your vision with them too. 🏡



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HERITAGE REPORT

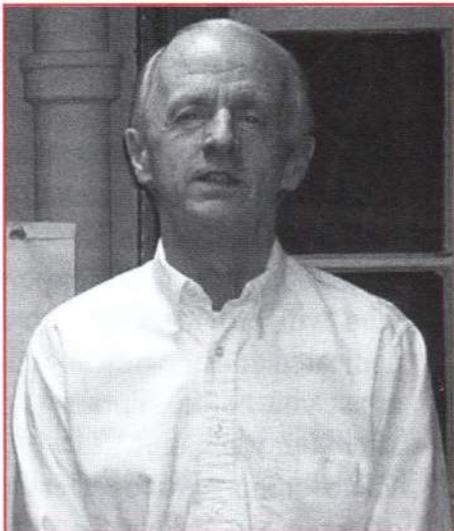
Lions and Francophones

By Marilyn Williams, Heritage Director

Standing Room Only at the June 26th Heritage Partnerships Roundtable Hosted by Our Community

What has the CBM heritage committee been up to over the summer? We started by hosting the June 26th Calgary Heritage Roundtable; the theme for this session was Heritage Partnerships. The Calgary Heritage Authority, the Chinook Country Historical Society, the Calgary Heritage Initiative Society, Lougheed House, and the Calgary Public Library shared information about upcoming heritage initiatives and how their organizations plan to engage community groups and individuals. The round tables are held three to four times a year and are a great chance to network with the city's heritage community.

Cliff Bungalow-Mission Heritage Director presents Community



We're 20 years in the school this month, and are also celebrating CBMCA's 30th birthday!

Bob Lang, grandfather of Cliff Bungalow-Mission Community Association, is planning a special celebration as part of the AGM, with information tables for different areas of community involvement; a photo exhibit, a 2005 video 'snapshot' of CBMCA; various guests from past and present, and birthday cake!

Mark November 26th on your Calendar and plan to attend!

Revitalization Lion Award

This year our community was involved again with the Calgary Heritage Authority Lion Awards. You may recall that when they were last held two years ago, Jim Bowman and the Friends of Rouleau House won an award. On July 30th this year we were invited to present the Community Revitalization Award. The ceremonies were held at the gorgeous Arrata Opera Centre (former Wesley United), and speakers included Gord Lowe, City of Calgary Deputy Mayor, Bob McPhee, General Director Calgary Opera, and Lindsay Blackett, Minister of Culture and Community Spirit – and yours truly! The Lions recognize citizens and groups who have undertaken initiatives in support of heritage conservation in Calgary.

Cliff Bungalow-Mission Francophone Roots Walking Tour August 2nd

On August 2nd about 50 people gathered together to enjoy a lovely summer stroll,



and to learn more about our community's Francophone roots as part of Historic Calgary Week. The dreams of residents like Fathers Lacombe and Doucet, the Rouleau brothers, the Despains brothers, and Beauchemin culminated in the village of Rouleauville. The wonderful part of the tour was that so much of this built heritage is still with us, for us to enjoy; the story unfolded against the wonderfully rich backdrop of our neighbourhood.

Remember that the Heritage Committee meetings are always open to the community. We meet the second Thursday of each month. Contact Marilyn at marilynwilliams@shaw.ca.



A huge 'THANK YOU' to Community Garden Organizer Georgina Jameson! If you happened to walk by the CBMCA wonderful garden at Aberhart Park, and see gardeners lovingly tending their plots, credit for getting and keeping this garden organized go to Georgina. Watch for article and photos in November/December issue of this newsletter.

Go for Some Adventure and Make the World Yours to See!

Uniglobe Custom Travel is proud to introduce our partnership with Kumuka, the worldwide leaders in adventure travel holidays. Established in 1983, Kumuka - whose name originates from Africa and literally translates in to 'the start of a journey', has taken travellers to every part of the globe, offering an extraordinary range of adventure style vacations.

Beginning with one expedition vehicle and a Trans Africa tour, they have steadily extended and broadened operations, which now include tours to Africa, Asia, Antarctica, Latin America, North America, Europe and The Middle East. They are very excited to be connected via UNIGLOBE Custom Travel to the many adventure travel seekers in Calgary and area.

Together Kumuka and UNIGLOBE Custom Travel offer over 450 exciting tours, ranging from two days to thirty five weeks, covering 75 countries, spanning 7 continents, and making use of a wide variety of transport and accommodation styles. UNIGLOBE Custom Travel can provide exciting Family Adventures, Tailor-Made Adventures and Private Group Expeditions to suit the many needs of our clients.

There are three key reasons why adventure seekers should choose UNIGLOBE Custom Travel and Kumuka:

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2. Value for money – Together we offer more inclusions than any other adventure company. Ask your UNIGLOBE Expert to help you with a comparison to see how we help stretch your travel dollars as far as possible.
3. No nasty surprises – We give you the full amount upfront so you are not surprised by any additional charges, fees, or taxes upon arrival.

Although we would like to be able to showcase our full range of Adventure Tours we have chosen three exiting

adventures to highlight to whet your appetite.

Galapagos Islands

Do you want to visit the Galapagos Islands but at the end of the day enjoy the comforts of a hotel rather than sleeping on a boat? Then look no further than our UNIGLOBE Custom Travel Galapagos Explorer Tour. During the day you will visit a selection of the islands and discover the large diversity of species and rare wildlife that thrives on these volcanic landscapes.

Alaska Outdoor Adventure

Our UNIGLOBE Custom Travel Alaska Outdoor Adventure offers family fun and adventure at Kenai Fjords National Park, Matanuska Glacier & Denali National Park. There are great opportunities to view Alaskan wildlife and glaciers, as well as exciting activities such as sea kayaking, dog mushing, and white water rafting. You will start in Anchorage, and head to Seward, gateway to the Kenai Fjords National Park. Here you will walk to the foot of the gigantic Exit Glacier, visit the Alaska Sea Life Centre, and enjoy a fantastic day cruise to the face of a tidewater glacier, looking for whales, sea otters, sea lions and puffins. At Matanuska Glacier strap on crampons, and venture out onto the blue glacier ice on a guided glacier trek. In Denali National Park, take a wildlife tour to look for grizzly bears, moose and caribou, and visit the Dogsled Kennels. Finally we head back to Anchorage on one of the world's greatest train trips.



We also offer our Uniglobe Custom Travel Short Tours which can easily be added to extended a vacation or combined to make the perfect customized adventure holiday. Our featured UNIGLOBE Custom Travel Gorillia Extension is a wonderful wildlife experience with breathtaking scenery and the inspiring spirit of the Rwandan people. Spend a day trekking in the spectacular Virunga Volcanoes and get up close and personal with a mountain gorilla family. Enjoy a guided walk in Nyungwe National Park, a high altitude rainforest with around 275 bird and 86 mammal species. With luck your guide will be able to show you chimpanzees, golden monkeys, black and white Colobus and much more. If you are looking for an adventurous holiday with unique wildlife experiences, ask your UNIGLOBE

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At UNIGLOBE Custom Travel we that travelling should be a genuine experience, not just an observation. These and other great Kumuka Adventures offer travellers unique experiences and as the word Kumuka suggests are just the 'start of a journey'

See your Uniglobe Custom Travel Expert about these and other adventure vacation options. We are conveniently located in the Mission Square Building on 4th Street SW.. Email us at info@uniglobecustomtravel.com or call us directly at 403-272-1000.

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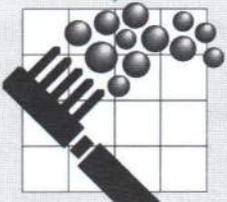
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RESTAURANT REVIEW

El Sombrero Redeems Itself

By Jim Bowman

I left a one-cent tip in a restaurant only once in my life, and it was at El Sombrero (520 – 17th Avenue SW). About three years ago I had dinner there and the service was indifferent. I decided I would leave a 10% tip, less than I usually leave if the service is average or excellent. When the time came to pay the check, I laid a few bills down on the table. My server asked, “Would you like change?” “Yes, of course,” I replied. “How much?” “Well, all of it!” I responded, astonished that she would essentially try to negotiate the tip. When she brought the change, I discovered that I had been short-changed by about sixty cents. Not wanting to cause a scene, I left a one-cent tip to show my displeasure, and didn’t return for almost a year.

Service at El Sombrero can be hit-and-miss. Usually customers are made to feel appreciated, but sometimes they’re treated as an inconvenience. It still seems to be a common practice there for servers there to ask presumptuously, “Would you like some change?” rather than the more polite “I’ll get your change.”

Incidentally, unless service in a restaurant is so bad as to be insulting, customers should always leave a tip. Restaurant workers are usually only paid minimum wage, and they rely on tips to live a reasonably comfortable lifestyle. A reasonable rule of thumb in Calgary is 10% for careless or error-prone service, 15% for average service, and 20% for service that really makes your day. Saying “I can’t afford to leave a tip” doesn’t cut it. If you can afford to dine out, you can afford to tip. Even when breakfasting or lunching at a greasy-spoon café, a tip is in order.

Anyway, back to El Sombrero. I had a Texan neighbour once who complained that there were no good Mexican restaurants in the city. True, I haven’t found a place in Calgary as memorable as a place on the Riverwalk in San Antonio where I once dined, but El Sombrero is the real deal, run by real Mexicans, and is a hangout for real Mexicans.

This brings us back to the question of service. What might be lousy service to me, might be the norm for members of another culture. For example, I thought it was neglectful of the servers at El Sombrero to serve bottled beer without glasses. Then I noticed that Mexican men always drink beer from the bottle. Who am I to impose my

cultural values when I’m a guest in the home-away-from-home of another ethnic group? I decided to visit El Sombrero several more times before writing this review, to make sure my negative experiences with the service weren’t biased by my own cultural prejudices. I’m happy to report that my esteem for this restaurant has elevated a bit.

As an advocate of conservation of historic buildings, El Sombrero is an interesting experience for me. Located in two former apartments of a 1920s vintage apartment building, it gives an insight into the way people lived in past decades. Its division into small rooms and alcoves makes for intimate conversation. Incidentally, this restaurant is not wheelchair-accessible. The walls are cheerfully painted yellow and taupe, and are decorated with attractive ceramic tiles, works of art, photos, and knickknacks. A sizeable patio is available for summer al fresco dining.

Background music consists of mariachi and other traditional Latin musical genres. If you’re lucky, you might arrive on a night when the sound system is turned off, and the roving troubadour takes over for a few minutes. In true Mexican tradition, this singer-guitarist entertains diners with Latin folk songs or pop favorites. As a guitarist, he’s no Oscar Lopez, but he can be a passionate singer.

Um, I guess a restaurant review should include a description of the food and drink. The classic Mexican appetizer is corn chips and salsa, which in most Mexican restaurants is complimentary, but here it’s \$4.50 for enough to satisfy two or three people. The salsa, made in-house, is passable but not outstanding. It’s a bit watery, and is made from chopped pinkish tomatoes of the type that are genetically engineered for a long shelf-life in the supermarket rather than for good flavor. Its flavor could also be enhanced with more cilantro or coriander, and garlic or green onions. The chips and salsa are nicely complemented by an excellent brown ale I discovered here, Negra Modela. It has a hint of a creamy taste.

The entrees, priced between \$16.50 and \$19.00, include the usual tacos, enchiladas, tostadas, quesadillas, and chiles rellenos. But there are some specialties that aren’t found in many Calgary Mexican restaurants. The chicken enchiladas with mole sauce are filled with finely shredded chicken. Mole (pronounced molay) is made from chocolate, nuts, and several varieties of peppers, and here it’s fairly mild. The chuletas de



An Authentic Slice of Mexican Culture

cerda con salsa achiote (pork chops with achiote sauce) features a unique bright red sauce with a floral fragrance, made from the seeds of the achiote tree (also called the lipstick tree because of its use as a source of organic dye), native to Central America. Filete de huachinango veracruzana (red snapper Veracruz style) features a moderately spicy sauce with slices of onion and bell pepper, and green olives.

Entrees are served with the obligatory blob of refried beans with two tortilla chips sticking out of it, and a dryish Spanish rice with two slices of radish and two quarter-slices of purple onion sticking out of it. I would welcome a more imaginative way of serving the accompaniments. A small bottle of green sauce, made from habanera peppers, the world’s hottest, is available at every table. I like moderately spicy food, but there’s a point where the spiciness obliterates the actual flavor of the food. Better to leave the really hot stuff to the macho guys and the heavy smokers.

One time, for dessert, I tried the helado frito (fried ice cream). It consisted of two scoops of vanilla ice cream rolled in crushed corn flakes. This wasn’t the real deal. It actually is possible to fry ice cream, by dipping it in egg whites, then rolling it in crushed corn flakes and quickly deep-frying it. The egg whites insulate the ice cream against melting.

Coffee, if you’re lucky, will have a delightful hint of cinnamon flavor. If you’re unlucky, you’ll get coffee that’s been sitting in the pot too long, which has no flavor except a jangly bitterness.

In spite of its occasional faults, El Sombrero offers some truly distinctive dishes, and an authentic slice of Mexican culture. 🍴



Report from Dave Taylor MLA

Calgary Currie Constituency
2108-B 33rd Avenue S.W.
Ph: 246-4794 / Fax: 686-1543
calgary.currie@assembly.ab.ca

On behalf of my family, I hope you had a Happy Thanksgiving. Amidst all the recent financial turmoil, it's important to be thank-

ful for family, friends and community. I hope as well that you will take time on Remembrance Day to honour those who gave their lives for us by attending the ceremony at the Military Museums or another Remembrance Day service of your choice.

The Alberta Legislature is back in session and will be until early December. I believe the government plans to introduce four health-related bills this fall, one of which will actually legalize the merging of the health regions into one really big and clunky system, another of which will deal with health information. Both have the potential to be contentious and controversial. Neither comes with any clear assurance that you will have a shorter wait for medical treatment or an easier time finding a family doctor. I'd urge you to watch this carefully and please get in touch with me with your concerns.

Although the economy is showing up as the top concern of many Albertans, don't expect government to make it the legislative focus of this session. To an extent, that makes sense. The global economic crisis has taken us all on a wild, seven-coupon midway ride and at times like these – prob-

ably when you're looking at your own RRSP – you're reminded of that admonition to try and keep your wits about you while all around you are losing theirs. The same should go for government. The new budget will be brought down early next spring, which means the serious work on preparing it will begin around the end of this year. By year end, we'll all have a clearer picture of the true state of the economy. Nevertheless, the Official Opposition will be watching out for any signs that ordinary people are getting hurt by this turmoil and we will push the government hard to help Albertans who are hurt.

I'm going to bat for the Calgary Farmers' Market to keep them in their current home if possible – or if they do have to relocate, to keep them in the community. About one in four Calgary-Currie residents regularly visits the Market, and about four out of five say that having the Farmers' Market in our constituency makes this a better community. Let's make sure the Market stays in Currie. If you're interested in getting involved or knowing more, call my office at 403-246-4794 or e-mail me at dave.taylor@assembly.ab.ca.

I wish you a wonderful fall and winter season!

Dave Taylor MLA
Calgary Currie Constituency



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Cold Weather Tips for Cats

By Jorinda Rankin

Calgarians need no reminder that winter is upon us. Of course animal rescue groups do not advocate cats as outdoor pets but, if your cat goes outside, there are things you can do to ensure a little "field trip" into the tundra will not result in tragedy. These tips will also help protect any other outdoor or stray animals exposed to the dangers of winter.

- Be careful with antifreeze. It is a tantalizing but lethal treat for outdoor, stray or roaming cats.
- When cats have nowhere warm to go, they often crawl up into a warm car or truck engine. During the winter, make it a habit to pound on each side of the hood of your vehicle before starting it up in case a cat crawled in to try to stay warm.
- If your cat has any food or water bowls outside, make sure the water isn't frozen. As well, don't use metal bowls in the winter. A cat's warm tongue will not adhere to ceramic bowls in cold weather.
- If your cat goes out at all increase his or her food intake: being outside depletes energy and they'll need a healthy fat layer to be comfortable. A cat that spends any time indoors has less hair and softer paw pads than they need to face cold temperatures.
- Make sure your cat does not stay out for long and, even if trips outside are brief, prepare a box with some blankets or other insulating material for your cat to crawl into to conserve body heat. The mercury doesn't have to dip very far below zero for frostbite and hypothermia to become very real threats and a simple box may save your cat's ears and feet.

The best advice cat owners can take is to keep cats indoors during the winter months. If it is too cold for you to do more outside than run from the car to heated buildings, it is definitely too cold for your cat. 🐾

Anniversaries continued from front cover

(Elbow River and the escarpment), shared a common ecosystem and shared an important business street. So in 1990 after consultations with Mission residents, the community association expanded its boundary to include Mission and became the Cliff Bungalow – Mission Community Association. This amalgamation has turned out to be important to both areas because it increased our ability to impact what occurs in our community and created a vehicle for Mission residents to participate in matters important to them. The boundaries are 1st Street SE on the east, the Elbow River on the east and south, the escarpment and College Lane on the west and 17th Avenue on the north.

The Community Association has been involved in many things over the years. Two of the most important ones has been the Cliff Bungalow and the Mission ARP's. The first approved versions of these documents both had major problems from our community's perspective. We campaigned for getting and were successful in getting these two flawed documents reviewed. Revised documents were approved in 1993 and 2006 respectively. They are not perfect but compared to the originals, they are much improved.

Development has been a major focus of the community over the years and much redevelopment has taken place. A lot of work has been done by our very active Development Committee. Many volunteer hours go into this work and it is ongoing.

We have not been all work and no play. We have held many community social events over the years such as pub nights, barbecues, murder mystery nights, children's events and skating parties. The Community Centre has been a great venue for these events. It was very difficult to hold these kinds of events before getting the Community Centre. The Community Centre has helped to provide a venue for many activities and has helped create a sense of community.

The Community Association has also been a vehicle to create awareness of our community's history. We have done a lot of research of our history over the years such as a building inventory, a social history and a verbal history. One special project has been to install signs that reflect the historic street names before the conversion to the numbered streets system. We hope to complete this project in the near future. This work is continuing with our relatively new Heritage Committee. Just

one example of their work is the new community Heritage Recognition Program through which community-designed plaques are awarded to deserving buildings in the community.

The Community Association was also the vehicle through which the Community Allotment Garden was created. This is one the early community gardens in the city and it has won several awards. Robert Giles, a former Board member, helped initiate this very worthwhile endeavour.

The Community Association also initiated the very successful Lilac Festival. At a meeting on the review of the Cliff Bungalow ARP early in 1990, we identified that we needed something to raise awareness of the community and its value to the city as a whole. The concept of a Lilac Festival was identified as one way this might be done. We approached 4th Street merchants and they thought it was a great idea. Less than four months later, the Lilac Festival was born. It was much smaller then and it was a true partnership between community residents and 4th Street merchants. It rained up until kick off at noon on June 3rd but the sun came out as though on queue and about 10,000 people attended that first year. The night before, we held a balloon blowing up party at the Community Centre and after the festival was over, we held a wonderful barbecue for all volunteers, community and 4th Street merchants.

This Lilac Festival did help raise awareness of the community. It was a catalyst for the amalgamation of Cliff Bungalow and Mission into one community association. It was also the catalyst for the formation of the 4th Street Business Revitalization Zone. The latter has taken over the organization of the annual Lilac Festival

Much more has happened because of the Community Association and the Community Centre but space limits what we are able to list at this time. We will be celebrating these two anniversaries on Wednesday, November 26th, the date of our Annual General Meeting. Doors open at 6:00 pm. Prior to the formal meeting, you will be able to view displays on our history. There also will be information tables on some of our current activities. As in recent years, there will be a reception prior to the formal meeting that starts at 8:00 pm. We encourage you to come out and help celebrate the contributions of our Community Association and our Community Centre to our community for so many years. 🐾



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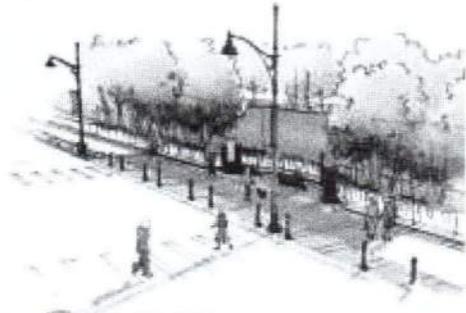
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Mission 26th Avenue Elbow River Promenade Opening Rescheduled for September 20th, 2009

After much deliberation, we have decided to re-schedule our previously-planned October 26 2008 River Path party until Sunday, September 20th 2009. Please note this date (when you get your 2009 calendar!)

We had contemplated celebrating the beginning of construction after two years – delays are all legitimate. However, since the Calgary Foundation Neighbour Grants Program has generously agreed to help us fund this celebration, it makes more sense to use these monies to showcase this complete neighbourhood project (projected start September 15th, 2008; completion June 2009).

This way, all the unique features planned by our community will be in place:

- Freshly widened, paved and edged pathway
- Three viewing nodes with new seating and garbage containers
- Community plaque cairn of engraved bricks (Cliff Bungalow and Mission divide is 4th Street.)
- Plaques commemorating our disappear-

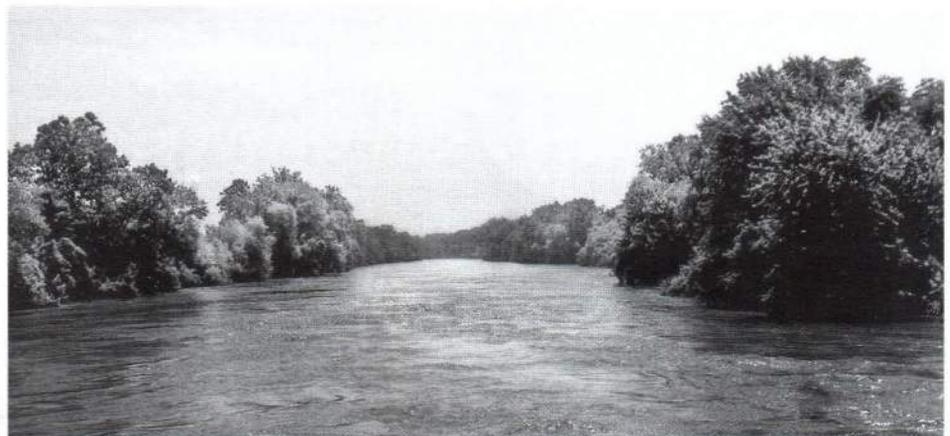
ing history, and celebrating the Elbow River

- New lamp standards (like Elbow Drive), with added pathway lighting, and engraved plaques of donors
- Wonderful Public Art-funded 360 degree kaleidoscope art piece

Also, on September 20th we can have guided tours of historic plaques, pertaining to historic and interpretive installations,

activities involving the river, its flora and fauna, and much more involvement in a safer environment and sign up for volunteer roster to care for this new area. Any sooner, fencing would impede all of this.

Thank you for your continued interest, support and patience! For further information e-mail elbowriverbank@yahoo.com. Keep an eye on our bi-monthly Mission Statement newsletter for progress reports. 🐾



Start the New Year in your new home!

There's still time to ring in 2009 in your new home! If you need to find more space for your growing family, want to be closer to amenities or have decided to downsize, the Calgary housing market has many exciting opportunities available right now. I specialize in Southwest Calgary, a close-in community with homes and amenities to suit every need — including yours.

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Here's a quick snapshot of the last six months of activity in your area.

Mission Cliff Bungalow

Home Type	Number Sold	Avg. Selling Price	Avg. Size (sq. ft.)	Avg. Days on the Market
Two Storey - Single Family	4	\$595,000	1,357	15
Bungalow - Single Family	5	\$271,340	686	59
Three Storey - Condominium	4	\$333,875	945	42
Townhouse	4	\$553,875	1,490	46
Apartment	68	\$305,634	811	47



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