



Varsity VOICE

APRIL 2024

The Official Newsletter of the
VARSITY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
www.vccalgary.com



Varsity Open Stage Night: April 12th
Food Trucks: April 19th

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Varsity Community Association

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General E-mail: info@vcacalgary.com Website www.vcacalgary.com

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Casino	Doug Smith, gm@vcacalgary.com
Crowchild Twin Arenas	Jim Courchesne, 403-288-3617
Parks	Sue Davison, atbowmontpark@gmail.com

Community Office Staff

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Building Coordinator	Dalmain Davis, building@vcacalgary.com
Accountant	Cheryl Yowney, accounts@vcacalgary.com
Childcare Services (Out of School)	childinfo@vcacalgary.com
Director	Shelley Harrison
Assistant Director	Sherry Smith

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Councillor	Sonya Sharp, 403-268-2430
MLA	Luanne Metz, 403-216-5436
School Board	Dana Downey, 403-617-7933
Catholic School Board	Myra D'Souza, 403-500-2761

Varsity Voice

Editor & Article Submissions:

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The ad booking deadline is the 14th of the month prior to the distribution month.

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In Our Community

Councillor Report

Hello Ward 1! April is sure to be a busy month at City Hall. Here are the latest updates on what's affecting your ward and city:

Blanket Rezoning

The Public Hearing on blanket rezoning is happening this month on April 22. I strongly encourage everyone with an interest in this change, no matter their views, to consider registering to speak or to submit comments in writing. Sharing your feedback directly with Council will help us make an informed decision that reflects the views of as many Calgarians as possible. Visit calgary.ca/publichearing to register or submit your comments.

All landowners who are directly affected by the proposed rezoning should have received a formal notification by mail in March. You can learn more about exactly what's being proposed and view a map of the changes at calgary.ca/rezoningforhousing.

A special thanks to everyone who was able to attend my townhall in March and to everyone who has submitted feedback so far.

Drought Conditions

The City and Government of Alberta are continuing to monitor the water situation in southern Alberta. We ask all Calgarians to observe any water restrictions put into place in order to protect our ecosystems and drinking water supply. Taking steps year-round to reduce water consumption can help lessen the impact of drought and reduce the need for restrictions. Learn more at calgary.ca/droughtresilience.

River Valleys Project

The Government of Alberta recently released new draft flood hazard maps for the Bow and Elbow Rivers. These maps are used by The City to inform how land is used in areas that could be affected by flooding. The City will be updating its policies related to flooding and land use later this year. While these policies affect all Calgarians, they are especially important residents of areas like Bowness in Ward 1. Learn more at calgary.ca/rivervalleys.

Sonya Sharp, Councillor, Ward 1

Food Truck Fridays at the VCA

April 19, 2024, 4:00 – 7:00 pm
(weather permitting)

Varsity Open Stage Night

Live Music in Varsity!

7:00 to 10:00 pm, Friday, April 12th, 2024

Varsity Community Centre

4303 Varsity Drive NW

Come out and enjoy live music/performances by local talent in an all-ages venue. Doors open at 6:15 p.m. At 7:00 p.m., Bittersweet will start the evening with a 30-minute set. Open mic sign-up starts at 7:00 p.m. For Open Mic, there will be two sessions for 3-4 performances, two songs each (10 min max), running from 7:30 to 8:15 pm and 9:00 to 9:45 pm. In between the Open Mic Sessions we will have a 45-minute set by our feature performers, The Fragments. A full sound and lighting system and complimentary refreshments are provided. Free admittance, donations are accepted and go to the VCA. We encourage audience members to purchase a Varsity Community Association membership. Thank you!

Call Gillian (604-349-2511) or email gm.donald@gmail.com for more details. See the Varsity Open Stage Night Facebook group for photos and future dates.



VCA Programs Spring 2024

Visit www.vcocalgary.com to register
Registration opens Mar 1st

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

- Chinooks Grassroots Soccer (3yrs-8yrs)
- Loose Parts – Kids Play (all ages)
- Run_Jump_LEAD (Girls 7yrs - 12yrs)
- Sportball (2yrs - 8yrs)

ADULT PROGRAMS

- Tai Chi – Beginner & Intermediate
- Cardio Dance, Strength, Flexibility
- Hatha Yoga
- Qi Gong – Fusion Fitness

SENIOR'S PROGRAMS

- Cardio Combo 55+
- Seniors Art Classes
- Seniors Yoga 55+
- Senior Fit +55
- Silver Swans Ballet Fitness 55+

Varsity Child Care

School Age Child Care at Varsity Out of School

We offer child care for children Gr. 1 to Gr. 5 attending Varsity Acres. The program is operated at the Varsity Community Centre. Our program is full of fun, games, various child friendly clubs, sewing, hockey and much, much more. We are an accredited and licensed program with the Alberta government. We offer full day care on professional days, teacher convention and Spring break for children enrolled in the Out of School programs.

We offer child care for children attending the A.M. Kindergarten program at the Varsity Acres School. **There is still space available in our Kindergarten Care Program.**

Information and Registration: www.vcocalgary.com
Contact: childinfo@vcocalgary.com 403-247-1145 ext 2

What We Are In Need of In Childcare...

Seashells, Lego, Yarn,
Costume Jewellery

Varsity Civic Affairs Committee News

City-Wide Blanket Upzoning of Residential Lots – Public Hearing April 22, 2024

The City plans to amend the Land Use Bylaw to change the zoning for low density residential housing to allow up to 8-10 dwelling units on a 50 foot wide lot (including secondary suites). This will apply to all residential lots in the city and will eliminate RC-1 and RC-2 zoning. It is proposed to rezone all lots to R-CG (townhouse/rowhouse). The public hearing to amend the Land Use Bylaw will be held on April 22, 2024.

One of the main differences between these designations is that RC-1 and RC-2 have a maximum of 45% lot coverage and height of 10 metres while R-CG allows for 60% lot coverage and a height of 11 metres. Another zoning that is similar to R-CG is H-GO. This zoning allows for greater density with a maximum of 12 metres in height and is to be used within 600 metres of LRT stations.

The City believes this will increase density and housing supply. However, this is a major and controversial change to existing planning policies which target activity nodes and corridors for increased density (eg. Four storey buildings east and west of Market Mall; apartment buildings near LRT stations).

However, this type of building can have a dramatic impact on next door neighbours due to reduced setbacks, overshadowing, and overlooking. It reduces the urban tree canopy and creates a higher amount of impervious surfaces increasing storm water runoff. Another concern is the storage of garbage, compost, and recycling bins which totals 3 bins per unit or 24 bins for 8 units. There is also concern with lack of on-site parking as the requirement is only 0.5 stalls per unit. One of the recommendations of the Housing and Affordability Task Force adopted by Council in September is to eliminate all minimum parking requirements for residential developments. A public hearing has not been set for this recommendation.

Currently, any property owner can apply for a land use redesignation to change from RC-1 or RC-2 to R-CG or H-GO. A public hearing would be held to hear from affected parties and a decision rendered by City Council. The blanket upzoning to R-CG would eliminate the public hearing process which is a key part of the democratic process. The Varsity Community Association has taken the position that the city-wide blanket

upzoning is not appropriate and will have minimal impact on affordability. Therefore we oppose this initiative.

The deadline to submit letters to the public hearing is April 15 at 12:00 p.m. Go to: <https://forms.calgary.ca/content/forms/af/public/public/public-submission-to-city-clerks.html>. You may also register to speak at the public hearing.

Please also send a copy of your letter to civic@vcacalgary.com. You can use this email if you wish to sign up to receive updates or further information.

South Shaganappi Local Area Plan

The Local Area Plan engagement process is well underway. More information can be found on the City's website at engage.calgary.ca/Shaganappi.

University Innovation Quarter (formerly University Research Park)

The University Innovation Quarter is a 76 acre site north of 32 Avenue, south of Crowchild Trail, and east of 37 Street. Planning for redevelopment of this site is underway and public engagement sessions will be held. Go to uiqcalgary.com for more information and sign up for their updates.

Playground Review Subcommittee

This project is on hold until after the April 22 public hearing.

For information regarding the Civic Affairs Committee, please contact JoAnne Atkins, Director of Civic Affairs, at joanneatkins@shaw.ca.

Free Seminar

Saving for your Future

Varsity Community Centre

April 9, 2024

4:30pm – 5:30pm

Increase your financial knowledge and feel confident about your future.







How can I save more money?


How can I grow my investments?

How can I retire with confidence?

How can I save for my children?

In Our Community

SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE...	JULY 2024				
	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Week One	1 	2 Space Day @ Centre 	3 Telus Spark Science Centre 	4 Drumheller Tyrell Museum 	5 Library / Park 
Week Two	8 Western Day @ Centre 	9 Bowness Park 	10 ZOO 	11 Calaway Park 	12 Library / Park 
Week Three	15 Multi-Cultural Day @ Centre 	16 Prairie Winds Park 	17 Movie @ Theatre 	18 Heritage Park 	19 Library / Park 
Week Four	22 Sports Day @ Centre 	23 Valley View Splash Park 	24 ZOO 	25 Calaway Park 	26 Library / Park 

SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE...	August 2024				
	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Week Five	29 Camping @ Centre 	30 Edworthy Park 	31 Movie @ Theatre 	1 Calaway Park 	2 Library / Park 
Week Six	5 	6 	7 	8 	9 
Week Seven	12 Inventors Day @ Centre 	13 Bowness Park 	14 ZOO 	15 Calaway Park 	16 Library / Park 
Week Eight	19 Games & Weird Hair Day @ Centre 	20 Prairie Winds Park 	21 Movie @ Theatre 	22 Heritage Park 	23 Year End BBQ @ Centre 

Summer Day Camps

Leap into Summer – Registration Ongoing

Varsity Out of School Care offers fabulous, full day summer camps for ages 6-12 years. Our days are full of arts/crafts, games, activities and amazing field trips. We go to many child friendly local attractions. Up to 4 field trips per week i.e. Calgary Zoo, Calaway Park, Wave Pool, Splash Parks and much much more. Reasonable weekly rates and professional transportation. Our qualified staff are trained in childcare, first aid and have obtained a police check.

VCA Collecting for the Veterans Food Bank

As of February 29, 2024, VCA has collected 489 pounds of food plus \$545.00 in cash for our Veterans. Thank you for your continued support!



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Learn To Play Pickleball

Learn To Play Pickleball - Adults And Seniors

Tuesday Mornings -June 4th to July 30th (9:30-11am)
9 Sessions-\$75 (Max 10 participants)

VCA is excited to offer pickleball lesson for Beginners (someone who has NEVER played pickleball before) and Novices (someone who might have come to open play once or twice but is not comfortable playing with others yet). These lessons are intended to teach players the basics of pickleball, from the court, equipment and scoring to hitting the ball and how scoring works.

Lessons will include:

Safety (proper footwear, balls entering the court, running backwards, etc.), court layout, rules of the game, scoring and how to hold the paddle. Beginning with small strokes, and how to follow through with the paddle players will get the feel of the paddle and add to their game play selections and strokes during the 9 sessions of instruction. Our instructors are seasoned players offering their experience during this program.

Learn To Play Pickleball – Children Ages 9-12

Saturday Afternoon -May 4 to June 29 (Noon-1:30pm)
*Except May Long, May 18th no session
8 Sessions-\$60 (Max 8 participants)

VCA is excited to offer pickleball lesson for children ages 9-12 as an introduction to the game of pickleball. These lessons are intended to teach players the basics of pickleball, from the court, equipment and scoring to hitting the ball and how scoring works.

Lessons will include:

Safety (proper footwear, balls entering the court, running backwards, etc.), court layout, rules of the game, scoring and how to hold the paddle. Beginning with small strokes, and how to follow through with the paddle players will get the feel of the paddle and add to their game play selections and strokes during the 8 sessions of instruction. Our instructors are seasoned players offering their experience during this program.

Check the website www.vccalgary.com for more information and to register.

Calgary Robins: Nesting

Beginning in March and April, an American robin pair will work together to gather materials that include grass and mud. The male helps bring materials, and the female usually constructs the nest. The female robin uses her wrist (mid-joint on the wing) to press the grasses into an outer circle. The inner layers of the nest are made of a mud cup and some finer grass or materials. This process can take a few days to a couple weeks to complete depending on whether it rains (making available mud).

A little variety in the nesting materials is normal, however, synthetic materials, especially strips from tarps for example, are often lethal to hatchlings (baby birds). The fine strips of plastic entwine themselves around their legs, hindering their development and ability to leave the nest. Keeping natural areas free of garbage and putting away old tarps that birds might pull threads from, can help prevent the hatchlings from becoming ensnared in the nest.

Once the nest is complete, 3 to 4 light blue eggs are laid. The female will incubate them for about 13 days. American robin hatchlings are blind, featherless, and helpless. This type of young is called altricial. Both parents help feed the hatchlings until they develop feathers and their flight muscles, as they prepare to leave the nest.

American robin young, who are preparing to leave the nest, are called fledges. They cannot yet fly but will hop or do short flapping flight attempts. Learning to fly takes around two weeks. Fledges are at risk for predation, so keeping pets indoors or on leash can improve their survival chances.

It's easy to mistake fledges learning to fly for birds who cannot fly (due to injury or illness). Healthy fledges have a parent checking in with them every fifteen



minutes to an hour and overall appearance is uninjured, alert, and active. Fledglings that need help have been handled by a cat (even if no injury is visible, the bird will need treatment), have obvious injuries, or the parent has been absent for longer than a few hours.

How do we tell fledges from adults? Fledglings often have shorter tails, a few remaining fluffy down feathers on their head or wings, and bright yellow edges on their beak (gape flanges). American robin fledges are also distinguished from adults by a speckling of dark brown spots on their chest feathers, which help with camouflage.

What are the robins doing in your neighbourhood? Do they have a nearby nest?

Uncertain whether wildlife needs help? Found injured or orphaned wildlife? Please call Calgary Wildlife at 403-214-1312.

Calgary Wildlife



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Water Conservation: A Change in Perception & Action

By all predictions, Calgary will experience unprecedented drought this summer, another example of drastic worldwide climate change events we've all seen in the news. Years of decreased precipitation, and especially for this year, low snowpack in the Rockies, has contributed to all-time low stream flows through our Bow & Elbow Rivers. It's hard to believe that this is the same city hit by torrential flooding only eleven years ago!

The City of Calgary identified that between 1993 - 2003 "the amount of water we used per person has remained higher than many other North American and European cities."** We've since made strides but clearly, our wasteful water habits must change. There simply may not be enough water to go around. Watering restrictions will be implemented. Water is about to become scarce and very expensive.

How can YOU decrease your water use (and waste) AND save on utility bills? The good news, is well... LOTS! Read on!

In the Bathroom

- Toilets are the #1 water waster, responsible for up to 25% of household use. Low flush toilets can save up to 30% and can be purchased for as little as \$125. Trash should be thrown away, not flushed.
- Check for and fix faucet & toilet leaks which can result in up to a 10% loss**. Add a few drops of food colouring into the toilet tank, and check if it leeches into the bowl.
- Turn off the sink faucet when brushing your teeth or shaving. Turn off the shower faucet while you lather, shampoo and shave.
- Take showers, not baths. The average bath uses 150 litres, an average shower 60 litres. Put a timer on to help you keep track!
- Add a bucket under your shower to catch the spray while the temperature increases. Use it for watering plants, cleaning or flushing toilets.
- Water-conserving faucets (kitchen, too) & shower heads can reduce flow by 30%.

In the Kitchen & Laundry Room

- Keep a jug of water in the fridge for quick cold beverages.
- Don't leave water running, especially when washing dishes.
- Catch water from rinsing or boiling to be used later in

the garden.

- Only run the washing machine when full, not for just a few articles.
- Switch to water-efficient appliances.

In the Garden

- PLEASE ensure you aren't watering sidewalks and driveways with your sprinkler!
- Utilize water from rain barrels and grey water from your house to water plants
- Insert plastic pots into ceramic ones to prevent evaporation.
- Consider drip-watering to give roots time to soak up moisture. Irrigate with care.
- NEVER water outdoor plants or the lawn in the heat of the day or when it's windy to reduce evaporation loss.
- Lawns are a 'green desert' and support nothing! Consider leaving a brown lawn brown, saving water for pollinator favourites. Leave grass long enough so that longer blades can protect roots from the sun.
- Add mulch to your flower beds and around tree bases to help retain moisture.
- Plant drought-resistant, native species.

Outdoor Stuff

- Clean your car at the car wash only when necessary, as a single carwash can use up to 302 litres!
- Use a broom and some muscle instead of the hose to clean off your steps, driveway and sidewalks!

These strategies aren't difficult, but the shift to new habits will make a huge difference. Water conservation is the right thing to do!

The City of Calgary website contains lots of helpful information:

- Homeowner Water Guide: <https://www.calgary.ca/water/programs/homeowner-water-guide.html>
- Lawn & landscaping tips: <https://www.calgary.ca/water/programs/lawn-care.html>
- Fall Check list: <https://www.calgary.ca/water/programs/seasonal-water-checklist.html>

* Link Magazine 'Prioritizing urban water conservation strategies' 10 June 2021

** Consumer Reports 2015



In Our Community

Keeping Storm Drains Clear This Spring

Storm drains are a part of Calgary's stormwater system. There are about 60,000 storm drains in Calgary working to capture water and melting snow off sidewalks, streets and roads.

If it's safe and possible to do, remove debris or snow blocking the drain. Create a channel, if need be, to help water flow.

Pooled water on your street

In communities built after 1990, The City installs devices in the storm drain to control how fast water flows into the system. During and after a rainfall event, these devices allow water to pool on the road (usually in a depression or low spot, called a trap low), until the stormwater system can accept the extra water.

Take a picture

If the storm drain remains submerged for more than 90 minutes or you cannot safely clear ice and snow away, take a photo and submit it via the 311 App or a web request. Attaching a photo goes a long way in helping our crews respond on a priority basis.

For more information on storm drains and to locate the closest one to you, visit calgary.ca/stormdrains.

City of Calgary



Unleash Adventure: The Power of Risky Play in Child Development!*

In today's world, parents often find themselves navigating a delicate balance between fostering their child's development and ensuring their safety. However, amidst the rise of structured activities and safety concerns, there's growing recognition of the importance of risky play in children's lives.

*To read the Canadian Paediatric Association position statement visit: <https://cps.ca/en/documents/position/outdoor-risky-play>

Friday March 15	2-3:30pm
Thursday March 21	2:30-4pm
Thursday April 11	2:30-4pm
Saturday April 27	3-4:30pm
Thursday May 9	2:30-4pm
Thursday May 30	2:30-4pm



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Bicycle Helmet Safety

Most injuries occur when a cyclist suffers a fall, strikes a stationary object, or collides with another cyclist/pedestrian. It is the law in Alberta that cyclists under the age of 18 must wear a helmet (and highly recommended for all ages). Helmets should be CSA approved and worn during recreational activities such as skateboarding, in-line skating, and cycling.

Getting informed

- Wearing a helmet while cycling can prevent significant injury, or even save a life;
- Brain injuries can cause permanent disability or death;
- Reduce your risk by always wearing your helmet;
- Replace any helmet that has been involved in a crash, even if it appears undamaged.

Getting started

- Allow children to assist when buying their helmet. Cyclists who choose their own helmet are more likely to wear them;
- Start the habit early. Young children learning to ride need to wear helmets;
- Parents can lead by example – always wear a helmet when cycling.

Getting the right fit

- Take the time to properly fit and adjust your helmet to ensure maximum protection in case of a crash;
- When worn properly, helmets should fit level, not tilted up, or down over the forehead;
- Helmets should feel snug, but not too tight. To assess the fit, the helmet should not fall off when you shake your head from side-to-side while the straps are unfastened;
- Adjust the chin straps to form a “Y” below and slightly forward from the ears;
- Only one finger should be able to fit under the chin strap when it fastened;
- Do not forget to use the sizing pads included with the helmet. They will help improve the overall fit, comfort, and safety.

Alberta Health Services



Weekly Green Cart Returns End of April

Weekly green cart pickup returns the last week of April. Check your schedule at calgary.ca/collection and sign up for reminders, including email, phone or download the Calgary Garbage Day app.

While you're preparing your yard or garden for spring, fill your green cart first, then put extra yard waste in paper yard waste bags. Roll tops of bags closed and set at least two feet to the side of your green cart for collection.

Compost giveaway

Compost will be available for pickup from April 15 to June 1, 2024, by appointment only. Planning is underway and the appointment booking tool will be available on calgary.ca/compost by April 9.

City of Calgary



VCA Commercial Kitchen Rental

Available daily Monday – Friday
9:00am – 4:00pm or
6:00 – 9:00 pm

If interested please email
gm@vcacalgary.com

Corporate Memberships

Starting September 1st, we are pleased to share that we are introducing new levels to our Corporate Memberships.

Our new Bronze Membership will be for smaller business looking to get some initial exposure to VCA members and residents.

- \$50 annually, runs from September 1 to August 31
- Listed on our website as a Bronze Member, bulletin board at VCA
- Able to offer discounts to approximately 700 VCA Members
- Listed on Corporate Member page in the Varsity Voice reaching 5600 residences.

Our new Silver Membership for businesses

- \$125 annually, runs from September 1 to August 31
- Includes Bronze benefits plus
- 5% discount on Varsity Voice ads
- 1x per year corporate profile in Varsity Voice
- Co-sponsor opportunities for VCA Events
- Newsletter profile 1x per year (700 VCA Members)
- Free tickets to one paid VCA Event

Our new Gold Membership for businesses

- \$250 annually, runs from September 1 to August 31
- Includes all of Silver and Bronze benefits plus
- Sole Sponsorship of one VCA Event
- Inhouse advertising on TV display
- Onsite Advertising opportunities (Rink Boards, Tennis Court, Room Naming)*
- *some additional fees may apply to development of rink and tennis courts signs

We look forward to continuing working with our community partners and businesses to encourage members and residents to shop local in 2023/2024.

Corporate Members

Gold Corporate Members

Colin Ongyerth - Realtor Remax
Things to do in Calgary

Silver Corporate Members

ATB Brentwood
Always Best Care Senior Services
Chinooks Grassroots Soccer
Dance Fitness by Ruth Winnitoy
Farideh Abbasi - WFG Associate

Joyride Automotive
Minus One Club
Organized Place
Run.Jump.LEAD!
Sportball Sports Instruction
The b. Class & Girl Be YOU
The Calgary Dance Club
Things To Do In Calgary
Varsity Open Stage
Western Pizza Express
Zenith Music

More info at www.vcacalgary.com

Featured Corporate Members

Things To Do in Calgary

Welcome to Things To Do In Calgary, your ultimate destination for socializing, sports, hiking, and endless adventures! Join our vibrant community for exciting social events, exhilarating sports activities, breathtaking hikes, and so much more. Whether you're looking to meet new friends, stay active, or explore the beauty of Calgary, we've got you covered. Come join us and experience the best that Calgary has to offer! Check them out on our website.

Minus One Club of Calgary

Established in 1963 we are Calgary's longest-running singles social club! We are an incorporated Non-Profit Organization (NPO). We offer bi-weekly social dances for singles and couples with a live band and a 3,648 sq. ft. wood dance floor. We are excited to welcome all members and guests (familiar and new) to our dances in 2024. Check them out on our website.



YES!

I want to be a supporter of my community and all the good it does!
Purchase online at:
www.vcacalgary.com

Names: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Postal Code: _____

E-mail: _____

Type of membership: Community (Household) - \$36.75
 Senior (55+) - \$10.50/senior

Payment: \$ _____ Donation: \$ _____

Please issue a tax receipt for my donation

* Memberships are valid from September to August of the following year.
Please mail or drop off, along with your cheques made payable to:

Varsity Community Association,
4303 Varsity Drive NW, Calgary, Alberta, T3A 0Z7