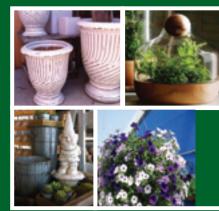


SPRING WORKSHOPS

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Terrariums: May 5th, 10-12 am or May 5th, 1-3 pm

Please visit **www.csgcl.com** for details and more classes. Come see us during our

Garden Centre Open House April 21st, 1 -5 pm.

Garden Centre Opens April 16th

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SCHOOLS (S) denotes Separate (FR) denotes French Immersion

	s) aenotes Se	eparate (FR) aen	otes French Immersion		
Heritage Heights School	K9	403-938-1400	St. Paul's Academy Virtual School	1-12	403 938-4119
Big Rock Elementary	K6	403-938-6666	& Okotoks Homeschooling Services		403 938-8046
Dr. Morris Gibson School	K6	403-938-6221	De Winton Play Group & Play School	PS	403 938-2525
Ecole Percy Pegler (FR)	K6	403-938-4449	Open Arms Catholic Preschool	PS-Jr.K	403 852-8273
Ecole Okotoks Junior High (FR)	7-9	403-938-4426	Learning Experience	PS-K	403 256-1417
Foothills Composite High School Alberta High School of Fine Arts	^(FR) 10-12	403-938-6116	Calgary French & International	PS-9	403 240-1500
Foothills School Preschool Progra Big Rock Elementary School	m K	403-938-6666	School (FR) Glenmore Christian Academy	ECS-9	403 254-9050
Holy Trinity Academy (FR) (S)	9-12	403 938-2477	Edison School	PK-12	403 938-7670
Good Shepherd School (S)	ECS-6	403 938-4318	Strathcona-Tweedsmuir School	1-12	403 938-4431
John Paul II Collegiate (FR) (S)	7-9	403 938-4600	Green Learning Academy	PS-9	403 873-1966
		SCHOOL BUS	INFORMATION		
Foothills School DivisionTransportation Department403 652-654Transportation Officer, Virginia MacLeod			Christ the Redeemer Catholic Scho Transportation Department Transportation Officer, Bonnie Smith		403 938-2659
CHURCHES			Millarville Community Church Hwy. #549, east of Hwy. 22 mcc@plat	inum.ca	403-931-1618
DeWinton United Church okunited@telus.net Trinity Mennonite Church DeWinton office@Trinity.MennoniteChurch.ab.ca Christ Church Anglican Church Millarville Hwy. #549, 6.4 km east of Hwy. 22 www.meotaparish.ca		403-938-4357 403-256-7157	Red Deer Lake United Church Hwy. 22x West (1 km west of 37th Street SW) www.rdlunitedchurch.org		403-256-3181
		403-933-3620	Canyon Creek Christian Fellowship 333 Midpark Way SE		403-256-3167
			Connexion Christian Fellowship 14500 Bannister Road		403-201-0404
HOSPITALS	& W	ALK-IN	CLINICS		
High River Hospital 509 9 Ave W High River	10π	403 652-2200	Urgent Care Centre 11 Cimarron Common Okotoks		403 995-2600
Rockyview General Hospital 7007 – 14 St SW Calgary	Admin	403 943-3000 403 943-3449	Midnapore Medical Dental 37, 240 Midpark Way SE Calgary Shawnessy Medical Clinic		403 256-1272
E Alberta Children's Hospital 2888 Shaganappi Trail NW	Emergency Admin	403 943-3449	138, 70 Shawville Blvd SE South Calgary Urgent Care		403 254-8703
	Emergency	403 955-7070	31 Sunpark Plaza SE		403 943-9300
DeWinton Community Hall	Owner's As	sociation	. www.dewintonca.com . www.thelake@heritagepointe.ca		403 938-2525
Dunbow Recreation Board			. www.dunbowrecreation.org		
Shawnessy Library 333 Shawville Blcd. SE Newsletter Advertising Sales					403 221-2072

One song can spark a moment,

One flower can wake the dream One tree can start a forest, One bird can herald spring.

One smile begins a friendship, One handclasp lifts a soul. One star can guide a ship at sea, One word can frame the goal

One vote can change a nation, One sunbeam lights a room One candle wipes out darkness, One laugh will conquer gloom.

One step must start each journey. One word must start each prayer. One hope will raise our spirits, One touch can show you care.

One voice can speak with wisdom, One heart can know what's true, One life can make a difference, You see, it's up to you!

~Unknown

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of each month for the next month's issue







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Canada's most famous castle, **Casa Loma**, is located in the heart of Toronto. Originally the residence of financier, industrialist and military man, Sir Henry Mill Pellatt, Casa Loma, is now a museum, and one of Toronto's most popular tourist attractions. It was designed by architect E.J. Lennox, who was responsible for this Gothic Revival design as well as several other city landmarks. The 98 room house cost approximately \$3.5 million at the time, and took a team of 300 workers to build over a three year period, from 1911 – 1914, construction being interrupted due to the start of World War 1.

Notable amenities included an elevator, two vertical passages for pipe organs, central vacuum, two secret passages in Sir Henry's ground floor office and three bowling alleys that were never completed. An underground tunnel connects Casa Loma to the Hunting Lodge and the Stables located on Walmer Road.

Most of the third floor was left unfinished, and today serves as the Regimental Museum for the The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada. Pellatt had joined the Regiment as a Rifleman and rose through the ranks, eventually becoming the Commanding Officer. He was knighted for his dedication to the Regiment.

Casa Loma offers five acres of breathtaking, specialty gardens spreading over an escarpment (Davenport Hill) that overlooks downtown Toronto. The dazzling displays of rare annuals and perennials, fountains and sculptures provide a quiet, relaxing retreat from the bustling city, and inspiration for your own garden. The gardens are open May through October and are included with castle admission. Guided garden tours for groups are available as well.

Casa Loma, the "house on the hill" is located on Austin Terrace, at the north end of Spadina Road on an escarpment above Davenport Road.

YOUR COMMUNITY/CITY EVENTS

- May 2 5 Love Lies Bleeding performed by Alberta Ballet featuring the music of Sir Elton John and Bernie Talupin. 403.245.4549 / www.albertaballet.com
- May 3 6 May Classic at Spruce Meadows. This tournament welcomes horses and riders to the first outdoor tournament of the season – weather permitting. Admission and parking are free.
 www.sprucemeadows.com
- May 5 June 3 Sweeney Todd The most murderous musical of all time presented by Vertigo Theatre, through special arrangement with Music Theatre International. 403.221.3708 / www.vertigotheatre.com
- May 6 Jayme Stone at Southwood United Church. Juno award winning Stone has been described as the "Yo-Yo Ma of the banjo". 403.263.0079 / www.fishcreekconcerts.com
- May 11 Smokin' Joe Kubek & Bnois King part of Epcor Centre's Acoustic Blues Series at Engineered Air Theatre. Concert begins at 8:00 pm. 403.294.9494 / epcorcentre.org
- May 12, 19, 26 & June 2 Sleeping Beauty presented by Stage West for Kids. True to the classic fairy tale, this play is dreamy, full of adventure and excitement for children. 403.243.6642 / www. stagewest.calgary.com
- May 13 & June 17 Free Family Skating at Winsport Canada Olympic Park Markin MacPhail Centre (ice complex), from 10:30 am – 4:00 pm. These skates are free and open to all community associations. Please show your community cards upon arrival. No purchase necessary. *Helmets are mandatory for all public skaters at all times. Hockey or All Sport helmets are accepted. No shoes permitted on the ice – only skates. www.winsportcanada.ca
- May 13 15 Earth Science for Society Exhibition at the TELUS Convention Centre. Many hands on activities – participants will have the opportunity to pan for gold – find hidden treasures and more. Family Event on May 13th – admission is FREE. www.geoconvention.com/esfs
- May 18 & 19 Play! A Video Game Symphony performed by Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra. Evening performances at 8:00 pm; Saturday matinee at 2:00 pm. 403.571.0849 / cpo-live.com
- May 22 26 Calgary International Children's Festival presents critically acclaimed professional theatre, music, dance, puppetry and more for young audiences at Epcor Centre for the Performing Arts. 403.294.9494 / www.calgarychildfest.org
- May 26 & 27 The 17th Annual Festival of Quilts is western Canada's largest outdoor quilt show, held at Heritage Park 9:30 am - 5:00 pm. www.heritagepark.ca
- May 30 POPS in the Park live with the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra. Concert beings at 7:30 pm at Heritage Park. 403.571.0849 / cpo-live.com e. & o.e.

MAY 4 & 5 CALGARY INTERNATIONAL BEERFEST

 at Stampede Park, BMO Centre. Over
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 calgarybeerfest



11 MAY 25 12 DRUMS UNITED: WORLD OF 13 RHYTHM AT JACK SINGER 13 CONCERT HALL

14 Pre-show 6:00 pm – Concert 7:00 pm. 403.294.9494 / epcorcentre.org



22 MAY 27 THE 23RD ANNUAL 4TH 23 STREET LILAC FESTIVAL

 from 10:00 am - 6:00 pm. Enjoy food, crafts, and entertainment along the 13 blocks of the festival. www.lilacfestival.net



MAY

JUNE 2 – 9 CARIFEST CALGARY

showcases the arts and culture of the Caribbean along with food, dancing, parades, and reggae. www.carifestcalgary.com

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JUNE 9 FOCUSED AT THE CALGARY **ZOO**

A ticketed event for photographers of all skill levels to photograph animals and gardens between 7-9 am. Participants must be 18 years or older. www.calgaryzoo.org



JUNE 22, 23 & 24 **GREEK FESTIVAL**

Celebrate Hellenic culture and enjoy music, dance, wine and food. "Efharisto" (Thank you) for sharing with us! Held at the Hellenic Community Centre. http://calgaryhellenic.com/ greek-festival/



YOUR COMMUNITY/CITY EVENTS AT A GLANCE.

June 2 & 3 Calgary Ukrainian Festival Vitaemo! (Welcome!) Enjoy food, dance, and shows at the 3rd annual Festival, held at the Acadia Recreation Complex. www.calgaryukrainianfestival.ca until June 3 Ring of Fire at The Military Museums features the stories of three Victoria Cross recipients. 403.974.2850 / www.themilitarvmuseums.ca June 3 Roald Dahl's Snow White & the Seven Dwarfs Symphony Sundays for Kids presented by the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra combines puppets, actors and musical storytelling that will have your children laughing and learning. 403.571.0849 / cpo-live.com June 6 – 10 The National opens the Summer Series of world class show-jumping at Spruce Meadows. www. sprucemeadows.com/tournaments June 7 Beatles Forever Tribute (Dinner Show) at Deerfoot Inn & Casino. Wristband 5 pm. Dinner 6-7 pm. Show at 8 pm. 403.236.7529 / www.deerfoot inn.com until June 10 Summer In The City plays at Stage West Dinner Theatre. A pop music explosion of some of the greatest songs and artists from the 60s and early 70s. June 14 – August 19 The Marvelous Wonderettes A non-stop pop musical at Stage West Dinner Theatre. 403.243.6642 / www.stagewestccalgary.com June 15 Calgary Stampeders vs Edmonton Eskimos in their first preseason game. 7:00 pm at McMahon Stadium. Broadcast live on AM 770 CHQR and TSN www.stampeders.com/schedule until June 24 Jump For Glee at Jublilations Dinner Theatre. All the high school drama, romance and great music made popular on the hit TV show. 403.249. 7799. www.jubilations.ca June 27 – August 11 Shakespeare in the Park - A Midsummer Night's Dream performed by Mount Royal University and Theatre Calgary at Prince's Island Park. Weather permitting, showtimes are 7 pm Wednesdays - Sundays with added weekend matinees at 2 pm. www.theatrecalgary.com

June 28 - July 1 Canada One is one of the finest outdoor tournaments at Spruce Meadows featuring riders from across North America. www. sprucemeadows.com/tournaments e. & o.e.

DEWINTON COMMUNITY WESTERN DANCE

We are happy to announce the continuation of the DCA Western Dance. Dust off your cowboy hats, shine up your boots and get ready for a stomping good time at De Winton Hall on **June 2nd.**

Tickets are available for pre-purchase at the DeWinton Community Hall by contacting Facility Manager Greg Davenport (403-938-2525), and are \$25/person for Members , and \$35/person for non-members. Based on last year's attendance, we do anticipate that we will sell out.

Doors open at 6:30 pm with a buffet dinner at 7:30 pm. This year's live band is Casino, who will be playing from 9 pm - 1 am.

Hosts for the Western Dance, back by popular demand, are Kathy and Randy Evans.



Fitting Your Bike

It's the time of year when the mornings feel brighter, the evenings feel warmer, and the sun brings us all more energy. Maybe this summer you've got big plans to get away, camp more, or stay away from the computer. Or maybe you are going to pick up a new hobby that will help you in all aspects of life, like getting exercise and staying active by riding your bike.

If just getting started, one of the most important things is ensuring your bike fits.

Here are a couple of keys in brief form. Search 'fitting your bike' online for additional points including crank length and others. Please consult medical professional advice to ensure these are accurate for your body type and medical history, and hit your local bike store for bike specific help. These are mostly tips for comfort and safety, and not necessarily performance.

Seat tilt:

You should be sitting on the seat, and not sliding forward and forcing yourself into your handlebars. You actually should be sitting using your Ischial Tuberosity (sit bones) which will keep any discomfort from materializing. The front of your seat should actually be a bit higher than the rear.

Seat height:

At the bottom of your leg stroke when riding, your leg should have a little bend in the knee with your foot parallel to the ground and pedaling with the balls of your feet.

Frame size:

This is one of the more important points. Straddle the main top tube of your bike and note the clearance between the tube and your body. Your biking type (road vs. mountain) and personal preference may define the necessary clearance, but a good place to start is 11/2 inches of clearance.

Handlebars:

Experiment with your handlebar position to achieve the proper position. Hands should be approximately shoulder width apart. The height of the bars should minimize any back strain. Happy trails.



A Bird's Eye View B.G. Rose

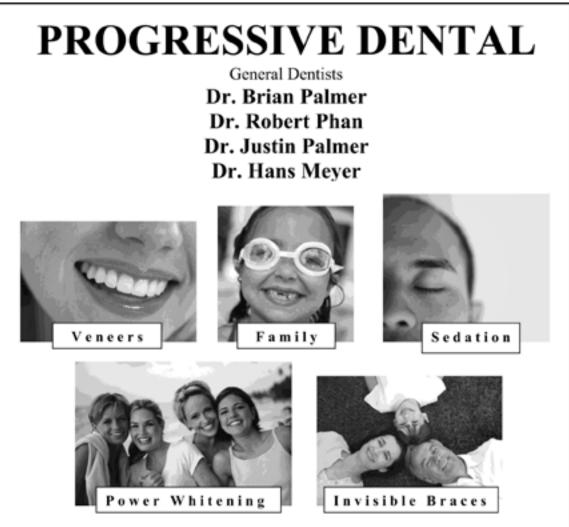
A harbinger of spring, the American Robin is a welcome sight to many. Robins are popular birds, and easily recognized for their warm orange breast and cheery, musical voice. Familiar sights in cities and towns, they are also at home in wilderness areas, including mountains and plains.

Robins act as potters, smoothing mud over twigs, paper, and feathers and then line their nest with fine grasses. Nests are often hidden on a horizontal limb of a shrub or tree just below a dense layer of leaves. They will also nest in gutters, eaves, on outdoor light fixtures and other building structures.

The time of day determines the type of food a robin looks for. Watch for them stalking earthworms in your yard in the morning, and foraging in the fruit trees later in the day.

Some say the robins' beautiful blue egg colour keeps them hidden from colour-blind predators. At birth, babies are helpless, and basically naked, except for a spare whitish coloured down.





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ASPARAGUS

Although we have year-round access to a wide variety of fruits and vegetables, peak availability is still the best time to enjoy them. Fresh asparagus is at its peak throughout the months of May, June and July.

Choose bright green spears that are brittle and have tightly closed purplishgreen tips, and stalks that are at least two thirds green. Store them in the refrigerator upright, with stem ends in water, or wrap the cut ends in wet paper towels and enclose in a plastic bag.

To prepare, break asparagus spears by hand where they snap easily. If the stalks are thick, use a knife or vegetable peeler to remove the tough outer peel at the stem end. Leave whole, or cut diagonally into pieces.

Asparagus can be boiled, steamed, sautéed or roasted, and can be used many different ways. Serve it chilled as a salad with mayonnaise, vinaigrette, or other salad dressing; serve hot, dressed with butter, oil or Hollandaise Sauce. The tips make a great garnish for salads, soup, rice and pasta dishes; for omelette and quiche fillings; and for stir-fries.

SAUTEED ASPARAGUS

- 2 lbs. asparagus (approx. 30 stalks)
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon chili sauce
- Coarsely ground sea salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

Break the ends of the stalks and slice diagonally into 3-4 inch pieces.

Warm the butter and olive oil in a large sauté pan over medium heat, and then add the asparagus pieces. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Cook over medium-high heat for approximately 10 minutes, tossing occasionally, until tender, but still crisp – not limp. Add the chili sauce and toss to coat the pieces evenly, cooking for an additional minute or so. This adds a nice glossy finish to the vegetable pieces, and just a hint of heat to keep it interesting!

Sprinkle with additional finishing salt if desired, and serve hot.

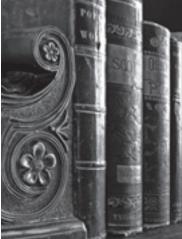
Variation:

Omit the chili sauce and sprinkle with freshly grated Parmesan cheese. Serve with lemon wedges.

Sauteing has become my favourite way of preparing asparagus. Enjoy!

BG Rose

COMMUNITY READERS RECOMMEND...



Fiction

- Rules of Civility Amor Towles
- The Beggar's Opera Peggy Blair
- Death Comes to Pemberley P.D. James
- Half-Blood Blues Esi Edugyan
- Lone Wolf Jodi Picoult
- The Language of Flowers Vanessa Diffenbaugh

Non-fiction

- The End of Illness David B. Agus, MD
- The Vow Kim Carpenter, John Perry
- Cornered Ron MacLean
- Persuasion Arlene Dickinson
- Thinking, Fast and Slow –
 Daniel Kahneman
- Edible Plants for Prairie Gardens June Flanagan

Classics

- The Great Gatsby F. Scott Fitzgerald
- A Passage to India E.M. Forster
- The Pickwick Papers Charles Dickens



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120 Heritage Isle Two Storey. Unbelievable valley views! Huge lot! Many built ins & upgrades. Fully finished with a walkout basement.



175 Heritage Lake Drive Bungalow on the ravine. Amazing views. Geo thermal heating/cooling system. Many upgrades!



76 Heritage Cove Two Storey. Fully finished walkout basement. Backs on park. Many new built ins! Two fireplaces.





by Katie O'Dwyer

Strictly speaking, windows, along with walls, floors and ceilings, form the "shell" of any room. Your windows may be treated to blend unobtrusively into the background, or take center stage in your room's design. However you chose to treat your windows, they are really a decorating opportunity to help you set your room's mood and style.

Before you look into the wide range of possibilities, analyze your window needs and determine just what you want your window beauty treatment to do. Here are some terrific window treatment tips to help you along in the process!

Want to hide an unattractive view without shutting out sunlight? Why not try framing your windows with beautiful printed or textured sheer side panels?

Add some splash! Try accenting your window treatments with tiebacks, fringe or beads. It's not only a clever way to get an even more custom look, but will add a splash of the unexpected to your design.

Add some drama! Decorative rods, brackets and finials have expanded dramatically and beautifully in today's marketplace. From wood, to metal, to unusual materials, today's rod choices are varied, unlimited and gorgeous!

Large Room? Small Windows? By extending your window treatment side panels and top treatments beyond the edges of small windows, your room will actually appear just a bit larger and more expansive.

Small Room? Small Windows? Try to keep your window treatment design, and color simpler in style. You'll definitely find that your room will tend to appear larger.

Scrumptious Side Panels! Consider framing the beauty of your windows with scrumptious side panels. From silks, to tapestries, to sheer fabrics, side panels truly add beauty, flair and excitement to any window design.

Shady Shades! Never before have Roman shades been as popular as they are today! These beauty shades provide privacy in the most decorative of ways!

around your

AHS - Window & Balcony Safety

Window & Balcony Safety

With the return of warmer weather, Alberta Health Services EMS would like to remind parents of an often overlooked hazard in the home – open windows.

Every year, paramedics respond to emergencies where a child has fallen from an open window in their house– often from the second floor. Falls such as these are preventable by taking time to assess your home and ensuring windows are safe.

Windows and screens

• Move furniture such as cribs, beds, stools, and change tables away from windows to prevent access to them.

• Keep drapery cords out of children's' reach. Wrap excess cord around cleats or tie-downs to avoid a choking hazard.

• Remember: screens are designed to keep bugs out, NOT to keep children in!

Balconies

Do not underestimate a child's ability to climb. Furniture and other items stored on balconies and decks can be used to climb, resulting in falls over the railing.
Consider installing a balcony guard to eliminate access between the vertical bars of a balcony or deck.

Further prevention tips

• Children aged one to four have the highest risk of falling from a window or balcony.

• Direct supervision of children is the single most effective way to prevent falls from windows and balconies.

• Consider installing safety devices which limit windows opening to a maximum of 4 inches or 10 centimeters.

• Ensure the safety device can be released quickly so the window can be used for escape in case of fire or other emergency.

AHS EMS is proud to be a member of the Partners Promoting Window and Balcony Safety. Take time to assess your home for window and balcony hazards and eliminate the risks before a preventable fall occurs.



Learning doesn't stop just because school is out

A summer at Oxford Learning is all it takes.





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around your cont'd

FRIENDS OF FISH CREEK PROVINCIAL PARK SOCIETY

World Water Day Announcement CREEKFEST - Water Festival to be held in Fish Creek

Awaken your senses to the splendours of nature and see the Bow Valley Ranch transformed into a festival of knowledge and environmental conservation. The Friends of Fish of Creek are pleased to invite you and your family to experience CREEKFEST!

CREEKFEST

Saturday, June 23, 2012 11:00 am – 4:00 pm FREE FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY! Bow Valley Ranch, Fish Creek Provincial Park (south end of Bow Bottom Tr. SE)

This one-day celebration of water will feature amazing musical acts like Juno-award winning Peter Puffin's Whale Tales, who performed at CREEKFEST last year. Children will learn about protecting local watersheds through interactive games and a performance by Alberta Parks' Flow Factor. Guests will enjoy a variety of presenters in the environmental field, dance and groove to local bands, take part in guided walks and water sampling demonstrations, and get in touch with many local community groups working to protect water.

The quality of the water in the creek helps support a diversity of plant life and is essential for healthy wildlife populations. Have a great time with your family and learn how you can help protect the Fish Creek watershed so future generations will enjoy this park as much as we do. CREEKFEST kicks off Phase 2 of the Friends' Watershed Public Awareness Campaign designed to spread the word in communities near the park about protecting our local waterways.

To see photos from CREEKFEST 2011 visit http://bit. ly/CREEKFEST Phase 2 of this project made possible through a grant from the Alberta Real Estate Foundation. AREF supports real estate related initiatives that enhance the industry and benefit the people of Alberta. The Foundation's revenues come from the interest earned on public money deposited in real estate brokers' pooled trust accounts. Learn more at www.aref.ab.ca

CREEKFEST also sponsored in part by Total E&P Canada, Alberta Ecotrust Foundation, First Calgary Financial, Bow River Basin Council, and ALS Group.

Chris Lalonde, Communications Coordinator 403-238-3841 / chris@friendsoffishcreek.org.

in & around your community

St. Mary's University College

Open House May 10, 6 – 8 pm

Are you thinking about going to university in the fall? Are you a high school student ready to research post-secondary options? Stop in at St. Mary's University College's Open House on Thursday, May 10 from 6 – 8 pm. You will meet professors, tour the campus with our student ambassadors and find out all you need to know about studying at South Calgary's liberal arts university.

Free Public Lecture May 24, 7:30 pm

Martinho Isidro Correia, a former art teacher with the Calgary Catholic School District, decided in the late 1990's to broaden his skills as an artist in the grand tradition of Catholic art and architecture. His quest took him to Florence, where he studied at the Angel Academy of Art, and to Rome, where he completed a Masters in Architecture, Sacred Art and Liturgy at the European University/Pontifical Athenaeum. Correia's work now appears in the Vatican and in private collections in Italy, England, Portugal, Colombia and Canada. Join us as Correia shares his experiences with an illustrated talk: *The Resurrection in Art and Liturgy: A Renewal in Sacred Art.* St. Mary's University College Speakers Series events are free of charge and open to all. www.stmu.ca

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Dog knees don't bend that way either!

Most of us have friends who have "blown their knees" or anterior cruciate in one type of athletic pursuit of another. Did you know dogs can suffer an almost identical injury and it is one of the most common orthopedic conditions veterinarians see in dogs?

Even with the obvious four versus two-legged difference between us, the anatomy of the knee is remarkably similar in people and pets. The stifle or knee is not a ball and socket like the shoulder or hip. The knee bends and straightens in one direction, like a door hinge. A number of ligaments hold the thigh bone or femur onto the top of the shin bone or tibia so the bones do not slip apart as we walk on the cushioned cartilage. Two ligaments medially and laterally, the joint capsule, and two ligaments crossed inside the joint capsule stabilize the knee. The ligament most commonly injured or ruptured is inside the joint and is called the anterior or cranial cruciate ligament.

Two groups of patients are commonly seen in veterinary medicine with "blown knees"; young athletic dogs that abruptly over extend the joint, or elderly overweight small dogs jumping on or off the furniture. In both cases the pet usually comes up lame suddenly. Owners come to their veterinarians with the animal hobbling on one hind leg; if a week or two has passed there may be some minor improvement as the initial inflammation settles.

Usually the diagnosis is simple. The stifle is swollen and painful, and the veterinarian is able to elicit a drawer response, or



slide the two bones on either side of the joint in an abnormal manner relative to each other. Sometimes the stifle clicks if the cartilage is torn. Some powerful stoic pets can hide the response when conscious by tensing the leg. These animals must be sedated to examine the stifle adequately. Partial ruptures of the ligament can make diagnosis much more difficult. Severe sprains with stretching of the ligaments will resolve with rest and the joint is stable when examined.

Without surgery to stabilize the joint the lameness will usually improve over weeks as scar tissue forms, but as time continues to pass and the joint slips with each step rubbing the cartilage surfaces, arthritis sets in. This arthritis can be crippling. No surgical treatment, rest, and anti-inflammatories are only considered for a very old small breed dog. Otherwise recommended treatment is surgery to stabilize the joint and stop further damage to the joint surfaces.

Most veterinarians do one of several surgeries where the ligament's job is taken over by non-absorbable nylon suture to stop the joint movement. Dogs over fifty pounds, especially young dogs, have another option available, specifically developed for four-legged patients. A surgeon will perform a procedure called a TPLO or tibial plateau leveling osteotomy where the physical forces in the dog's leg are redirected to spare the joint. Because there is no nylon suture to rupture as the ligament did, chances of re-injury are less. Recovery from all surgeries requires rehabilitation for several weeks and the patient being confined. Weight control is imperative.

Statistically dogs that rupture the ligament in one stifle are predisposed to injuring the other stifle in the same way. I would consider injuries of this nature, and our ability to successfully treat them with surgery, one of the best reasons to consider pet insurance when your dog is a puppy.

Jennifer L. Scott, D.V.M. www.sundanceanimalhospital.com

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