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in & around your community

Alberta Bike Swap

Alberta Bike Swap is pleased to continue our series of articles that will help improve your knowledge of safe cycling. A good point to start with this month is the reminder that safe cycling is up to all road users.

A key factor to low stress, and safe time on the road is to ride predictably. That means to behave as another piece of traffic on the street. Bicycles are highly manoeuvrable and while the urge is great to weave out of the way, between parked cars - it is not a predictable behaviour. Travel in a straight line to clearly communicate your intentions of traveling with traffic.

Another important part of safe cycling is your bicycles mechanical Condition. Remember ABC; A - everything related to air (wheels); B - brake and related systems, C - chain and all things chain (drive train). We'll explore this more next month

If a supply of our Safe Cycling card would help your community group could, please email us at alberta.bikeswap@gmail.com.



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**Editorial
Content
DEADLINE**
1st
of each month
for the next
month's
issue

Teeth Whitening Brighten Your Smile and Shed Some Years

Stephanie McIntyre

In our health-focused society, teeth whitening might just provide a safe and non-invasive option to those who want to brighten their smile without turning to restorative dentistry.

The Benefits of Teeth Whitening

Having a healthy smile that includes white teeth can be a big boost to someone's self-confidence. Even the ancient Roman's prized white teeth and came up with many a concoction to achieve the desired look. We're constantly bombarded with glossy images of young people with big white smiles, so that it's only natural to be overly critical of our own pearly whites and focus on every minute flaw. The color of teeth is associated with youth and vitality – or lack of – and sporting teeth that are dull and gray can prematurely age a person. But the good news is that tooth color can be revived and a youthful smile restored in no time – even in cases of staining and mottling of color.

In-Office Whitening Treatment

An in-office system that incorporates the use of a blue and red LED light to activate the whitening gel – Spa Dent's process provides the maximum whitening effect in the least amount of time – all in the comfort of the dental office. This dentist supervised application allows for effective break down of stain – without damaging dental enamel or porcelain dentistry. The additional benefit of Spa Dent is that the light activated process kills bacteria that are present on tooth surfaces – reducing the risk of developing Gingivitis and the more damaging Periodontal Disease. Reducing the amount of bacteria present on tooth surfaces reduces the amount of plaque.

Is Spa Dent Suitable for Everyone?

If you're over the age of twelve then Spa Dent may be right for you. Used by teens, adults and seniors this safe and proven tooth whitening system can even-out the color of teeth after braces, boost a person's smile prior to an important event, and turn back the years by giving a more youthful look.

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FIND SOLUTION ON PAGE 11

CALGARY



WILDLIFE

The Barred Owl

The most vocal of owls

Article: J. Turner
Photo: Ron Kube

The Barred owl (*Strix varia*) is a large owl native to North America. They have been around for a very long time, with fossils dating up to 11,000 years old having been found in Ontario, Tennessee and Florida. They are non-migratory birds; they tend to live in a defined area for their whole lives, rarely wandering from their home territories except in search of food during winters when local food is scarce.

How would you know if you saw one? Barred owls are 40-63 cm long, weigh in at 500-1500 and have a wingspan of 96-125 cm. As with other birds of prey, the female is significantly larger in size than the male. Even more distinctive than their size is their appearance. They are stocky greyish brown birds with large rounded heads, no ear tufts, and large dark brown eyes. They have medium-length rounded tails which, like their wings, are barred in brown and white. Their bellies are marked with vertical brown bars on a whitish background, while their upper breast has horizontal brown bars, as if they are wearing a collar at the neck.

During the day you might see them roosting on an inconspicuous perch in dense old-growth, mixed-wood

forests (growing everything from lodgepole pine and western larch to aspen and balsam poplar) where they are likely to find good hunting opportunities and large trees with good nesting holes. They choose to live near streams, ponds and marshes, as this is a bird that drinks water and bathes when open water is available, even during the winter.

These owls are nocturnal and do most of their hunting at night. They are opportunistic feeders, eating whatever they can spot from their hunting perch. This includes creatures living in or near water, such as grasshoppers, beetles, frogs, turtles, lizards, birds, and small rodents, such as moles, mice and squirrels. While they are out hunting for food, they need to be on alert for the Great-Horned Owl, for whom they are a choice prey.

After dark, when the Barred Owl is most active, you are most likely to be able to track these very vocal birds. And then you are more likely to hear them than to see them. They are vocal during the day as well, and have the widest range of calls of any owl in Alberta. The most common and often heard call is 8 or 9 'hoot' or 'whoop' notes for which it gets its common name of "Hoot Owl." The call is a two-part phrase that sounds like "who-cooks-for-you, who-cooks-for-you-all." But "caterwauling" between two birds, and back and forth courtship duets (in February) of cackles, hoots, caws and gurgles are common too. The young have their own pleading call when seeking food from the parent, and both young and adults snap their beaks during squabbles.

These owls are currently not on federal conservation watch lists; although in Alberta they are on the Provincial "Yellow List" because there are believed to be fewer than 1000 breeding pairs in the province. They need old growth forests to live in and thrive, so we need to protect those spaces for these beautiful native owls.

If you find an injured or orphaned Barred Owl, or other wild bird or animal, please contact the Calgary Wildlife Rehabilitation Society for further instructions.

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Invasive Plants along the Lower Elbow

Photos: M. Mayall, Reader Rock Garden

Calgarians have much to thank Englishman, William Roland Reader. As the City's Superintendent of Parks from 1913-1942, he directed the planting of thousands of trees, established parks and was a founding member of the Calgary Horticultural Society. He trialed over 4,000 plant species in what is now the Reader Rock Garden, a horticulture showpiece and Provincial Historic Resource, tucked between the Stampede Grounds and the Union Cemetery. What was a barren hill just south of the Elbow River was transformed by Reader's vision, green thumb, and imported and transplanted alpine species.

Best intentions aside, some of these plants have proven to be too successful, having escaped and established themselves along the lower Elbow Valley. Referred to as invasive species, they compete for water, nutrients and sunlight, choking out desirable garden varieties and native plants.

Marilyn Mayall of the Friends of Reader Rock Garden Society describes one such menace, the Creeping Bellflower (*Campanula rapunculoides*), that Reader is sometimes said to have introduced to Calgary. This plant goes by many common names: Garden Bluebell, Creeping Bluebell, Creeping Campanula, Garden Harebell, Purple-bell, or Rover Bellflower. Mayall thinks it was inevitable that this very hardy and really quite pretty



specimen was a 'natural' for immigration to new lands from its native Caucasus. "The very characteristics which were probably attractive to early Calgary residents are the ones which now make it a top pick for elimination from our gardens. It is a very hardy perennial and spreads by both underground methods and by seed. I have read that smothering it with plastic will work, but only if you are prepared to persist for a number of years (until the tuber as well as the top growth is starved). And this method does not address the problem of any seeds which will undoubtedly have lodged in the surrounding soil. The best that most of us can hope for is to slow it down by diligent deadheading and digging as much of the fragile root system and tubers as possible."

Other problem weedy plants are Canada Thistle, Toadflax, Baby's Breath, Purple Loosestrife and Leafy Spurge. Some common ornamental shrubs to avoid are Tartarian Honeysuckle and Cotoneaster from Asia, *Caragana* (Peashrub) from Siberia, and Common Buckthorn from Europe. So as you survey your garden this summer, try to identify and eliminate noxious plants that invade the lower Elbow River Valley, ideally before they go to seed. Seeds are carried by wind, water and birds. They can hitch a ride on tire or shoe treads, or even on your dog's fur. Put hardy plant roots and seeds into the garbage, not the compost heap. Select new plants carefully. You can also participate in invasive weed pulls in our local parks and river banks.

More information about invasive species can be found at:
The City of Calgary: www.calgary.ca search "Invasive plant prevention and management"
Alberta Invasive Plant Council: www.invasiveplants.ab.ca
The Weaselhead/Glenmore Park Preservation Society www.the-weaselhead.com/invasive-plant-program/what-are-invasive-plants/
Plant Watch: www.naturewatch.ca
Formed in 2004, S2G+ Preservation Society collaborates to enhance the environment and natural history of the lower Elbow River, its valley and contiguous bench lands from the Glenmore Dam to Fort Calgary. To join our stewardship network or for information contact: Robin McLeod, ramcleod@telusplanet.net or Karen Paul, karenpa@telusplanet.net

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AT A GLANCE...

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- **August 11 to September 6 – The Lion King:** Tony Award-winning director Julie Taymor brings to life a story filled with hope and adventure set against an amazing backdrop of stunning visuals. The Lion King also features some of Broadway's most recognizable music, crafted by Tony Award-winning artists Elton John and Tim Rice. www.jubileeauditorium.com/Event-Details/408/Disney's-The-Lion-King
- **September 5 - One Love Urban Music Festival:** The One Love Music Festival is Western Canada's Largest Hip Hop Music Festival! www.onelovefestival.ca
- **September 5 to 6 – X-Fest Calgary:** Calgary's premier alternative rock festival - happening Labour Day Weekend at Fort Calgary! www.xfestcalgary.com
- **September 16 to 20 – Beakerhead:** The return of Calgary's only "smash-up" of art, science and engineering means five days of pop-up installations, engineering competitions, science-themed talks and more, all of which encourage Calgarians to get creative and innovative. www.beakerhead.com
- **September 19 to October 3 - The Bella Concert Hall Opening Festival:** This one-off festival is made up of four, very different concerts, all of which showcase the acoustics, the ambience and versatility of the new venue. There will be everything from large-scale performances with the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra to solo performances. www.mtroyal.ca/ProgramsCourses/FacultiesSchoolsCentres/TheConservatory/ConcertsEvents/index.htm
- **September 20 - Terry Fox Run 2015:** Head to the Telus Spark Science Centre and run (or walk) 1 kilometre, 5 kilometres or 10 kilometres. Celebrate Terry's life and run for a good cause. www.terryfox.org
- **September 21 to 22 - CAMP Festival:** Learn about cutting-edge technology, effective design and top-notch branding from some of the best in different creative industries. www.campfestival.ca
- **September 26 to October 25 - Autumn Pumpkin Festival Calgary:** Pick a pumpkin to carve at home, dash through the 10-acre corn maze and destroy a pumpkin in the pumpkin destruction zone; they're launched using a trebuchet. www.calgarycornmaze.com

SENIORS IN YOUR COMMUNITY



Planning to Age in Place

Planning is something we hear every day. Plan before you go grocery shopping, plan your weekend, plan for the future. But what does it really mean?

Planning is the process of thinking about and organizing the activities required to achieve a desired goal. Planning for your future, then, is thinking about and organizing the activities required to live the way you want, where you want, with whom you want, etc. It sounds simple enough, so let's take a closer look so we can understand what planning for aging in place encompasses.

The first thing to consider is where do you want to live in your retirement. Your current home? Do you want to downsize? Live closer to the inner city amenities? Stay in your community or find a community better suited for your needs? There are many things to consider with this seemingly easy question!

Many people want to stay put. Live in their current home with their friends and neighbors surrounding them. They like their home, their neighborhood, and the location in relation to amenities, green spaces, etc. Now imagine yourself in five, 10, 20 years. Will this home suit your needs? What if your mobility decreases and you can no longer manage stairs? What if you can no longer drive, how will you get around? And this is just the tip of the iceberg.

When you are 50 and healthy you may not think about these questions. It is easy to get caught up in life, work, kids and activities until the point where you have to be reactive because of a fall or illness. Then you are forced to make quick decisions that may not be in your best long-term interest, or are more expensive now that you

have to make significant changes rather than if you had proactively planned ahead of time.

It is nearly impossible to plan ahead for a fall, for example. However, you can make plans and design your home for decreased mobility that will better prepare you in the event that you or your spouse fall. Planning is about helping you be prepared for the future by taking actions now; considering what you want your future to look like and making choices to move you in that direction over time. It is your life and your future – design it so you can live the way you imagine!

Carla Berezowski, CAPS

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS

Double underline text
CTRL+SHIFT+D

Ooops – made a mistake?
CTRL +Z to UNDO

BRAIN GAMES SUDOKU

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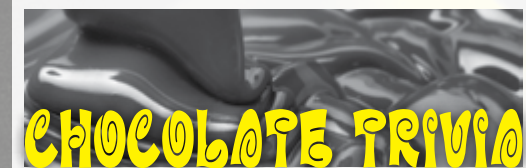
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Alberta Health Services EMS would like to remind parents about precautions they can take to prevent childhood poisonings. Ingesting medications, prescription, or over-the-counter products, is the leading cause of accidental poisoning in children. Even small amounts of adult medications can be seriously harmful, or even fatal to your child if swallowed. Other causes of poisoning are household products, such as dishwasher tablets and personal care items (mouthwash, nail polish etc).

Medication Storage

- Store all medications in a locked container and place in an area inaccessible to children
- Keep medications in their original child-resistant packaging.
- Do not mix multiple medications inside one bottle
- Install child locks on all cabinets, or drawers where medications are stored

Safety Tips

- Ensure visitors to your home keep their personal belongings out of children's reach, as they may contain unsafe items
- Take extra precautions with medicines that appeal to children such as chewable vitamins, or flavoured cough and cold syrups
- Properly dispose of any medications or toxic household products no longer in use.

Prevention

- Store household products, car supplies, and cosmetics in locked cupboards, or drawers.
- Apply child safety latches to drawers and cabinets, if they are within a child's reach.
- Know and label all plants in and around your home and garden.
- Antifreeze, windshield washer fluid, and pesticides are extremely poisonous. Even small amounts of these can cause serious illness when ingested.
- Poisoning information can be obtained by calling the Poison and Drug Information Service (PADIS) at: 1-800-332-1414.
- In case of a poisoning emergency, call 9-1-1.
- Provide the name of the product ingested or, if it is safe to do so, a sample of the substance for EMS to inspect on their arrival.



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