

NO (Place Like) HOME

Regina families squeezed by lack of affordable housing

Helmi Scott has experienced the housing crunch first hand.

In April 2007, Scott and her son were given three months notice to leave her subsidized housing apartment in the Al Ritchie neighbourhood. Though she searched everyday with the help of a dedicated network of friends, she was unable to find any suitable housing that she could afford. When the three months were up, Scott was left homeless. She “couch-surfed” for nine months - staying temporarily with friends and relatives.

Finally, in March 2008, Scott secured the small house where she currently lives in North Central Regina. And, this year, settled in a place of her own to call home, she has been able to start planting seeds indoors and preparing her garden.

It is no surprise that affordable housing was so difficult for Scott to find. With a vacancy rate of only 0.5 per cent, there are few rental units on the market in Regina, fewer still within reach of low and moderate-income families. Thanks to a wave of condominium conversions, including 14 applications awaiting approval from the City, there are likely to be fewer every month.

Couch-surfers like Helmi Scott are among the “hidden homeless” who make up the largest part of Regina’s homeless population. “You don’t have to sleep on a park bench or under a bridge to be homeless,” stresses Scott. The YWCA estimates that approximately 80% of those experiencing homelessness are “hidden.” While official counts of homelessness often only include the few hundred emergency shelter users, the November 2008 Roundtable on Homelessness estimated that 4,000 people are currently experiencing homelessness in Regina.

Overcrowding and problem housing often conceal this significant hidden and at-risk homeless population. This group includes those living in substandard conditions, such as garages or abandoned houses, and those at risk of immediate eviction. It also includes the ever more common situation of extended families sharing an overcrowded home, where mattresses often line the basement floors.

While such situations are undeniably difficult, many simply count themselves lucky to have roofs over their heads.



By Carla Jensen

*“You don’t have to sleep
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Homelessness

The number of people experiencing absolute homelessness is swelling. In 2008, every shelter bed in Regina was full almost every night. All emergency shelters and agencies contacted reported substantial increases in demand for shelter and housing-related emergencies over the past year. In 2008, the Souls Harbour Rescue Mission provided 32,850 nights of lodging. Mobile Crisis received 1,608 calls about shelter-related crises. Carmichael Outreach served 150-275 clients every day. These numbers are on the rise.

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Homelessness

Louise Burns-Murray of the YWCA explains that gaps in shelter services are ever more apparent. A demographic shift is underway among the population experiencing homelessness. The 2007 Laird Report notes that what was once largely a single male population increasingly includes substantial numbers of women, children, students, immigrants, the mentally ill, and the formerly middle class.

Joseph Miller, assistant to the director of the Souls Harbour Rescue Mission, confirms this trend. He notes the increase in the number of families, including the working poor, who arrive at their shelters for a variety of reasons. This diversity of clients with new and different needs complicates the job of service providers in ways that agencies are only beginning to realize and address. The lack of shelters and services for families and women, like Helmi Scott, are among service providers' immediate concerns.

Many of the boarded up homes are owned by out-of-town speculators who are hoping to make a profit when housing prices rise.

The lives and lodging conditions of many of the homeless are complicated by addictions and mental illness. For some people who come to them in crisis, says Tim Liesch, Executive Director of Mobile Crisis Services Inc., the only thing the agency can do is to refer them back to friends and relatives, if they have any who will take them. There is simply nowhere else for them to go.

Meanwhile, Scott and others are increasingly frustrated by the number of houses and empty lots that they see sitting vacant in their neighbourhood. Within six blocks of Scott's new rental home, eleven boarded up houses and vacant lots sit empty. Many of the boarded up homes are owned by out-of-town speculators who are hoping to make a profit when housing prices rise.



Helmi Scott

The housing problems in inner city Regina are dire, and for some individuals, they are reaching crisis levels. Despite the wave of economic growth that has transformed the city in recent years, the rising tide has certainly not lifted all boats. In fact, many home renters have floundered under the very same economic pressures driving growth in other sectors of the economy. Regina's housing crisis has left service providers scrambling to fill the gaps across the housing spectrum, including absolute and hidden homelessness, substandard rental housing, and barriers to home ownership.

Many service providers speak of the need for greater support from government and coordination between all levels of government. Helmi Scott laments that, in her view, "all three levels of government have dropped the ball." Louise Burns Murray emphasizes the need for long-term planning and stresses that social housing cannot be left to the marketplace. "Governments have to step up."

Government support plays a key role in getting programs like Rainbow Youth Centre's Youth Express off the ground. Funding from programs such as the federal Homelessness Partnership Strategy (HPS) is essential. The fact that the HPS allocation for the next two years will remain constant at past levels, without even an adjustment for inflation, while the need is rising dramatically, suggests that funding shortfalls may be imminent.

Meanwhile, it is the resilience and creativity of community-based responses to the housing crisis that inspire the greatest hope. In the discussion paper *From the Ground Up: Community's Role in Addressing Street Level Social Issues*, Jim Diers remarks that, "the solutions begin with rebuilding inclusive communities and mobilizing their assets for the common good." Diers also notes that, "we all bear responsibility for homelessness to the extent that we are not doing more to demand living wage jobs, to fund mental health services, and to site affordable housing." Many individuals and agencies are making those demands, with considerable success. They are also organizing around innovative programs, such as Transition to Trades and Youth Express, which use community-based assets to respond to a locally identified need. With continued co-operation and engagement of government, local agencies, and the community at large, Regina has the potential to effectively tackle the housing crisis and perhaps even become a model for other cities grappling with similar problems.

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From the Editor

Carla Jensen



While preparing this feature on housing issues in Regina, I have been moved by the many personal accounts that I have heard.

Some testimonies have come from people that I was interviewing. Others came from strangers who heard that I was interested in the issue and wanted to share their experiences. Several of the stories, like those of the homeless youth who took refuge in garages and on the roofs of local businesses, were heart-breaking and really made the urgency of the current housing crunch hit home. Other experiences, like touring the Beckman family's new Habitat home or hearing Helmi Scott's plans for her new garden, were joyful stories of adversity overcome.

Housing affects every one of us on a daily basis. It is a basic human need. It is also a human right explicitly recognized in Article 25.1 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. International human rights law recognizes the right not only to basic shelter, but to a standard of living which ensures the safety and dignity of all individuals. As we speak, homelessness and the violation of human rights continue right here in our own backyard (for those of us fortunate enough to have a backyard).

I am pleased that in this issue, thanks to the Scott Collegiate Photojournalism Project, we are able to present a student perspective on the housing crisis. Not only are these young journalists keen and critical observers of our community but, by choosing to focus on the construction and renovations going on in North Central, they offer a refreshing and hopeful perspective.

Having spoken to many, many people who are working hard to improve the housing conditions in our community, I am inclined to share the students' point of view. However, my optimism comes with some caveats. We can improve the housing conditions in North Central Regina. We can protect the dignity and human rights of our friends and neighbours. The only way we can achieve this, however, is if urgent and committed action is taken, not only within the community, but at the provincial and national levels as well, to increase availability and access to affordable housing.

Homeless Youth in Regina

Brothers Jade and Micky spent many of their teenage years on the streets of Regina's Core and North Central neighbourhoods. On the bitter winter nights, they would stay with friends and extended family. Less fortunate friends would commit reckless crimes in order to be caught – hoping for the roof over their heads and warm meals that jail would guarantee. Others stole cars to sleep in or used drugs and then checked into detox programs with the same objective: getting off the streets in the winter.

Jade and Micky spent their childhoods in a string of overcrowded homes in North Central, with an average of 12 people living in two or three rooms. As teenagers, they roamed the streets, sleeping in garages or boarded up houses. Sometimes they would remain undetected for a few days or weeks, setting up 'party houses' in abandoned buildings. Other times the property owners discovered them and chased them away within hours. When the street offered no shelter and no peace, they would climb onto the roof of a local business. There, groups of teenagers and young adults would huddle together under heaps of borrowed or stolen blankets, carousing until they fell asleep under the stars.

Now, as young adults, the two continue to search for affordable housing. Jade counts himself lucky to have secured accommodation in a social housing complex. Nevertheless, he still struggles to make ends meet. Micky is still without a permanent address. He suspects property managers of discriminating against young, single, Aboriginal men. He notes that, "once the landlord gets a look at me, the room advertised for rent is suddenly 'not available.'"

In addition to hostile attitudes, both men mention lack of information as a major barrier in their search for affordable housing. "We didn't know where there were shelters," says Jade, "or which ones had space." Jade and Micky stress that the city needs a youth shelter that could provide lodging, counselling and other services specific to the needs of young people on the streets of Regina.

More homes than ever are standing empty in North Central Regina while homelessness – both hidden and absolute – is soaring to crisis levels. In addition to its distressing irony, this situation is leading to some innovative responses to the housing crisis.



One of the buildings that has long been standing empty in North Central is the old Saint Andrews Church at 1475 Athol Street. In November 2008, the **Souls Harbour Rescue Mission** bought this building. They intend to turn it into a youth centre and affordable daycare, aiming to open in September 2009. Souls Harbour also expanded its shelter capacity in July 2008, acquiring the property at 1610 Angus and creating 30 units of affordable transitional housing.



The **Transitions to Trades** program of the North Central Community Association teaches young adults construction and carpentry, among other skills. Though their training program involves construction projects for property owners - they hope to improve the housing situation in North Central, as close to 50 per cent of participants have no permanent address of their own due to the absence of affordable homes.

Jane Gattinger, director of Transition to Trades, envisions an opportunity to provide participants with both personal and professional development - enabling participants to have access to a solid foundation of secure housing. "Almost everyone wants a successful career and a home they can be proud of, but sometimes, there are just too many obstacles in the way," she says.

"At Transition to Trades, we work to address these needs. Many people just need to get a strong start in order to realize their dreams. We are currently looking for affordable boarded up houses in North Central to renovate as part of our training component with the understanding that participants get first consideration to rent these houses when renovations are complete," Gattinger explains. "We are working to restore, recreate, and re-establish North Central by supporting people, housing and careers -one person, one home, one job at a time."



When **Rainbow Youth Centre** staff noticed how many of their participants struggled with their life skills, parenting, and other programs because of underlying housing issues, they initiated Youth Express. A pilot project funded by the federal Homelessness Partnership Strategy, Youth Express addresses basic needs, helping participants find accommodation to rent and supporting them during the rental and moving process. They also provide advocacy support to help transcend the discrimination that many at risk youth face in the housing market.

Between August and December 2008, Youth Express had succeeded in placing 17 participants in their own rental homes. "It's been phenomenal in creating a more stable participant base," raves Shelly Christian, Executive Director of the Rainbow Youth Centre.



Habitat for Humanity is building new homes more intensively than ever before in Regina. After building 20 houses in the past 15 years, the non-profit organization plans to build 17 homes in the next two years alone. Many of these will be in North Central, including seven slotted for construction this year.

Executive director of operations Theresa Overby says she hopes that the blitz of new building will help revitalize North Central Regina. The new buildings should lead to a renewed sense of pride, not only in the house itself, but also in surrounding properties, leading to improved upkeep and rising property values. As families move into their own homes, Overby notes that their previous lodgings will return to the overburdened rental market.



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Habitat for Humanity

Anglican Diocese of Qu'Appelle to build Habitat House in North Central

The Anglican Diocese of Qu'Appelle is proud to announce a partnership with Habitat for Humanity in 2009. This year is the celebration of their 125th Anniversary in the Regina/ Qu'Appelle area, and Bishop Gregory Kerr-Wilson and the Diocese are excited about the opportunity to leave a legacy in the community.

CEO of Habitat Regina, Dennis Coutts, hopes this will be a catalyst and an inspiration for other churches in the city to put their faith into action and help break the cycle of poverty in our city.

Just like the days when communities would join together to build a house or a barn for a neighbour in need, everyone will be able to pitch in by building, painting, cleaning, making lunches for work crews, or fundraising. No one will be left out as all 37 churches join in one amazing effort to make a difference!

Introducing our families



Kamela and her two children (above) received exciting news this week... their dream of owning their own home is going to come true, thanks to the Anglican Diocese of Qu'Appelle.

Kamela and her daughter Roya, 16 and son Belal, 14, came to Canada from Afghanistan 8 years ago. Kamela described her disbelief: "I just put it out of my head, because I thought it would never happen to me".

Today, Kamela and her children are excited about the opportunity to own a home, and look forward to working with volunteers building their house.

Biak and Chin and their 4 children will receive a Habitat House in 2009. They came to Canada from Burma and have been a joy to have working in the ReStore while they put in their sweat equity hours. Biak and Chin are excited to leave their 400 sq. ft. apartment to have a home where their children can have space to play and their Burmese friends can come together in fellowship.

A Home of their Own

Shana Beckman and her three children used to drive by the Habitat for Humanity build site at least once a week. They would talk about what it would be like to one day have a home of their own. They never suspected that very house would one day be theirs.

On December 24th 2008, Beckman, her children Alyssa (12), Ryan (8) and Sean (2), and her mother Cheryl received a visit from Habitat for Humanity. A year after submitting their application, they learned that they had been selected for the house of their dreams. They moved into their new home on February 7th 2009. After renting the house while completing the 500 sweat equity hours demanded by Habitat for Humanity, Beckman will receive an interest-free mortgage and the deed to the 1500 square foot, four-bedroom home.

Beckman remembers her reaction when she first heard the news. "The people at Habitat are so amazing," she recalls. "They are so warm and welcoming – it was as if they'd known us for years. I cried when they first told me about the house and they just said, 'that's okay – that's what Kleenex is for!'"

"It's just amazing that after all those times we drove by that house they would choose to give us that home and not one of the other ones," wonders Beckman. Another surprising fact is that the family only moved two and a half blocks from their previous residence, so the children will not even have to switch schools.

Beckman is thrilled become a homeowner in North Central Regina. "I really like North Central," she says. "Every area has its own problems but I don't think it's worse than any other area. The neighbours are great!"

KALRON Comes Through for Habitat

By Chuck Beaton, Construction Manager of Habitat Regina

When it comes to construction for Habitat, foundation work has always been a challenge. Luckily, the build at 1369 Rae St. received some expert help from Ron Kalaman of KALRON Construction. Ron dedicated an entire day to work with the students and show them the proper procedures for doing foundation work. It turned out to be an excellent experience for everyone involved, and the icing on the cake was that KALRON donated their time and labour.

If that wasn't enough, after another meeting with KALRON they have agreed to donate their precious time and labour not once more, but twice, for our next 2 houses. Foundation work has finally become a thing of joy through the good will of those at KALRON Construction.







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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



The Beckman family in front of their new home

Regina Police Service Supports Integrated Approach to Complex Issue

By Elizabeth Popowich, Public Information Officer, Regina Police Service

Homelessness is an issue which confronts the Regina Police Service on a daily basis. Police don't have the ability, resources or mandate to provide safe housing - but police *are* in a position to work with community and government partners who can assist with the other components necessary to the solution.

Police have to be concerned with any condition that leaves people vulnerable to becoming victims of crime or causes them to turn to criminal behaviour. Even if that vulnerability stems from other issues like poverty, addictions, lack of secure housing or unemployment, when it becomes linked to criminal behaviour, the Regina Police Service has a stake in the issue.

Cpl. Donna Hassman is assigned to the Regina Police Service's Community Service Centres in the city's Core and North Central communities. She and other members of the Police Service look at repeat calls for service in order to identify some of the underlying issues and pressures that drive crime.

In 2004, this approach identified a need to bring housing in Regina up to safe standards and led to the creation of the Housing

Standards Enforcement Team. The Team is a partnership of the Fire Department, Police Service, Health Department, and Bylaw enforcement which inspects slum housing in Regina's inner-city.

This same approach - examining repeat calls for service - also points to the issue of addiction as being a major contributor to the problem of homelessness. Cpl. Hassman says, "Persons who are addicted to drugs, alcohol or solvents may have lost the skills or the focus necessary to keep up a household or maintain a property." It is often at that point that people come into contact with police, either as victims or as offenders. Enforcement action, investigations and even referrals to services in the community are temporary measures, not solutions.

The Regina Police Service has experience in the partnership approach and, with the citizens of Regina, is committed to building a safe, caring community. Helping all people live in safety and security will come as the result of individuals' decisions, supported by efficiently-delivered community supports and services and the integrated and effective use of the authorities of all levels of government.

New Resource and Support Position at North Central

By Jessica Hanna

North Central Community Association is introducing a new program. **Doreen Lloyd** is joining the North Central team as the Resource and Support Facilitator. She will be creating a database of all of the services offered in Regina and will assist people to access any resources they need including: problems with landlords, finding addictions counsellors or getting into any other social programs.

Often it is overwhelming for people to try to find supports. There are so many organizations in North Central doing great things, but unfortunately some of the people who need to use those services are unaware that they exist or do not know how to access them. The Resource and Support Facilitator will be there to direct people wherever they need to go. Lloyd will not just refer people to services. She will follow up with clients to make sure they actually get to the right place and get the help that they want. Lloyd will make sure that people will have the support and resources to get into the available programs and overcome whatever troubles they are having.

Lloyd is the perfect person for the job. She has been a social worker for 25 years and has worked and volunteered at numerous agencies in North Central and throughout Regina. Her work has been so beneficial that she was a recipient of the Saskatchewan Health Excellence Award in 2004.

Lloyd has had real life experiences that will help her connect with clients in her new position. "I struggled for years with my own addiction" says Lloyd. She had to do a lot of healing and go through her own journey in order to get to where she is now.

This program is so important, according to Lloyd, because "it links services to residents in the community and it builds partnerships within the community". The database will help residents and clients but it will also help community organizations find out what other people are doing and allow agencies to identify the gaps in service provision in Regina.

The North Central Community Association is very happy that such a talented person is joining our team. If you or someone you know needs help, for any reason, but does not know where to find that information, call the North Central Community Association office at 791-9888 and ask for the Resource and Support person. Doreen will be happy to help you get the services you need.

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Coalition Demands Extended Transit Service

By Jessica Hanna

Lack of transit service on public holidays and limited service on Sundays is a problem for many Regina residents. The Regina Citizens' Public Transit Coalition wants to see that change.

On February 18 the Coalition presented a petition with 7610 signatures to the City of Regina Parks and Services Committee urging the City to provide public transit on holidays and all day on Sundays. Catherine Verrall of the Regina Citizens' Public Transit Coalition said that the response to the petition was overwhelming. She and Helmi Scott, a North Central resident and another member of the Coalition were surprised by the number of people who came forward to share stories about difficulties posed by the restricted transit hours.

At a meeting of the Parks and Services Committee on February 18th, 2009, concerned citizens spoke out about the importance of the transit system. Some spoke about how public transit is beneficial to the environment. Others commented that holiday celebrations often increase traffic and pose a safety risk.

The limited transit service in Regina does not just affect people who take the bus. It also affects employers who are having trouble finding employees who can get to work on Sundays and holidays. It affects friends and family of the people who have to drive someone around on those days. It also affects the event planners that have trouble getting participants to come out to special holiday celebrations. People need the buses to visit loved ones in the hospital, go shopping, go to work, visit friends, go to public events, and run errands. These needs are not suspended on Sundays and holidays.

Scott is affected by the lack of bus services every Sunday. She would really like to go to church, but does not have a way to get there. She does not own a car and does not have the money to take a taxi. This leaves her at home alone on Sunday mornings - when she would rather be celebrating faith and community. She would also like to spend time with her friends and family on holidays. Without access to public transit, this becomes impossible and she is left spending the day at home.

Verrall wants to make it clear that they are pushing not for a subsidy, but for an investment in Public Transit. People have a right to have access to transportation, and that includes people who cannot afford to buy a car. "Besides", says Scott, "the City spends enough money on vehicles by constructing, maintaining and removing snow on our roads. If the city can spend that much money on private transportation, why not invest some money in public transit?"

In the future, the transit coalition aims to ensure that city councillors are aware of the importance of public transit to the residents of Regina. The Regina Citizens' Public Transit Coalition is committed to ensuring that adequate transit services are provided in the city.



Transition to Trades

Phone 791-9530

Need help?

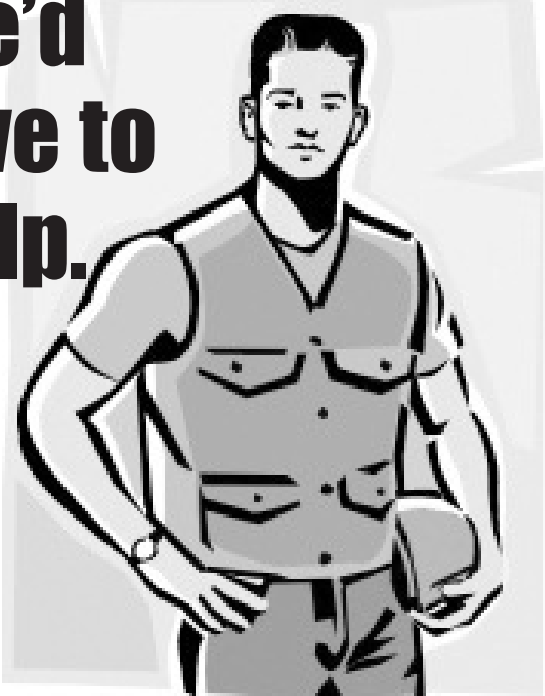
- Renovating your home
- Building / Repairing your Fence or Deck
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Don't want to spend a lot of money?

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* Just Kidding is affiliated with Love Lives Here, Regina

HOUSING RESOURCES

Name	Description	Phone
HOMELESSNESS:		
Carmichael Outreach	Clothing, food, harm reduction services, health education, counselling referrals, and more	757-2235
Ehrlo Community Services	Community-based prevention and intervention	751-5666
Rainbow Youth Centre	Programming for youth 11-25 years of age	757-9743
Red Ribbon Place	Transitional housing program open to all	924-8429
Regina Transition House	Transitional housing for women and children	757-2096
Salvation Army Waterston House	Temporary shelter & soup kitchen for adult men	569-6088
SOFIA House	Shelter for women and children fleeing abuse	565-2537
Souls Harbour Rescue Mission	Emergency and transitional housing-open to all	522-4600
WISH	Second stage shelter for women and children	543-0493
YMCA of Regina	Men's residence	757-9622
YWCA of Regina	Women's residence	525-2141
RENTAL HOUSING:		
Gabriel Housing Corp.	Property management	775-2905
Namerind Housing	Property management	525-0147
Office of Residential Tenancies	Information for landlords and tenants	787-2699
Public Health Inspector	To report mould, insect, rodents or other problems	766-7755
Regina Housing Authority	Social and affordable housing	525-2377
Housing Standards Enforcement Team	Report substandard housing conditions	777-6399
Rental Housing Supplement Program	Low-income housing supplement	787-4723
SilverSage Housing Corporation	Affordable housing management	721-2909
OTHER:		
City of Regina	To report disrepair, untidy yard	777-7000
Habitat for Humanity	Homebuilding/homeownership programs	522-9700
Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry	Anti-poverty advocacy and education	352-6386
Mobile Crisis Services Inc.	24-hr crisis-intervention services	757-7809
Saskatchewan Housing Corporation	Affordable housing programs	787-4177
Social Services	Income support, family services, affordable housing	787-2681
Sask Justice - Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Investigations Unit	To report a property that is unsafe or threatening	1-866-51SAFER (7-2337)
Welfare Rights	Advocacy, housing, and trusteeship services	757-3521



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Spay/Neuter Questions & Answers

What is spay/neuter?

Spaying is a routine medical procedure to ensure a female pet cannot reproduce. Neutering is a routine medical procedure to ensure a male pet cannot impregnate a female.

What are the benefits of spay/neuter?

Healthy Pets. Spaying and neutering prevents dogs and cats from getting deadly cancers and other diseases of the reproductive system. Because spay/neuter reduces the tendency to fight with other animals, it protects your pet from fight injuries and dangerous viruses spread through bite wounds. Spayed/neutered animals are less likely to run away and be hit by cars.

Happy Families. Spayed or neutered animals are less likely to spray (mark objects with a spray of urine), yowl or escape. You won't have to deal with the mess or the inconvenience of a pet in heat. You'll be saved a considerable amount of time, money, and hassle (not to mention property damage!) involved in raising litters of puppies or kittens.

Healthy Communities. Spaying or neutering reduces aggression in animals which creates a safer community for people and other animals. Spayed/neutered pets are less likely to engage in behaviors that could cause problems with neighbours.

No More Homeless Pets. Spaying or neutering reduces the number of pets that lose their lives in our Shelter and on our streets. Having your pet spayed or neutered frees up homes for homeless pets that are already born.

Will my pet's behavior change after the surgery?

Spaying or neutering can result in some behavior changes – for the better! Spayed or neutered pets are often less aggressive, more relaxed, and even more affectionate. Contrary to what some people fear, pets show no signs of “missing” mating or breeding. Rather, they are more content without those raging hormones!

Will my pet become fat? Just like people, pets become overweight when they eat too much and/or exercise too little. A good diet and lots of exercise will keep your pet slender.

How long does it take for an animal to recover from the procedure?

Depending on your pet's age, size, and health, he/ she may be kept at the vet's for a few hours or overnight. Your veterinarian can give you more details. The surgery to fix animals is routine, and they generally bounce back quickly.

I don't have a car. How can I arrange transportation?

The Regina Humane Society will provide pick-up and delivery service for cats spayed under the Low Income Cat Spay Program at owner request. The Spay Squad will contact you to arrange pick-up and delivery times on the day of your cat's scheduled surgery.

How much does it cost?

If you qualify under the Regina Humane Society Low-Income Cat Spay Program, the sterilization surgery is FREE. Your cat will be tattooed and licensed and will receive a one time Get Out of Jail Free privilege which waives all fines should your cat be impounded. Identification allows your cat to be easily returned to your family should they stray. While the Regina Humane Society assumes no liability for any complications, the Society will assist owners with follow-up care costs should they arise.

De-CONSTRUCTING the Crisis: Housing Improvements in North Central

Aaron Pasap

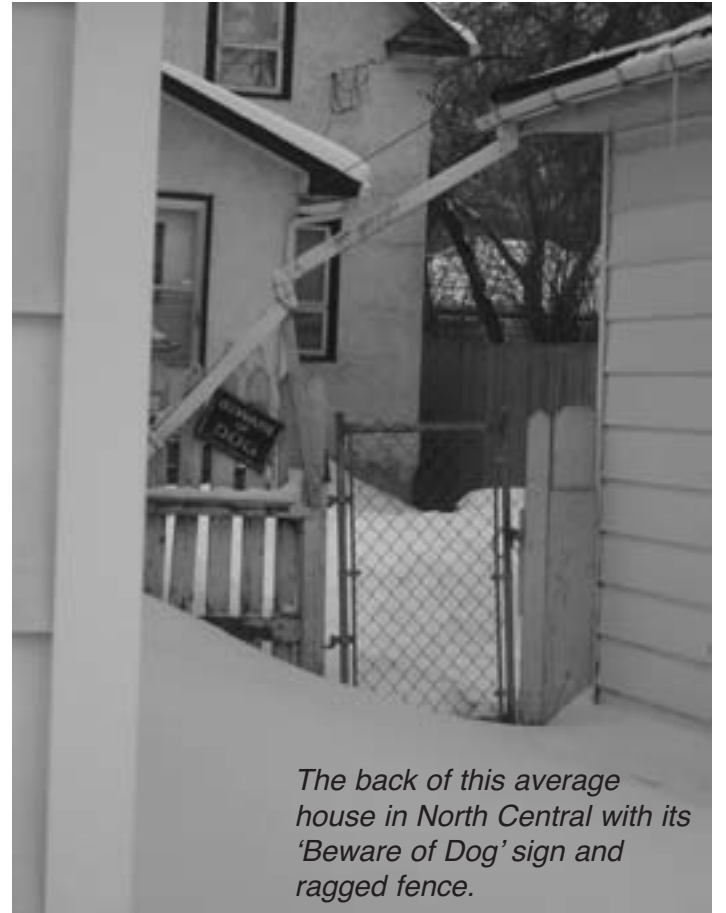
"The things I see in North Central are renovations on the houses that are currently boarded up. The one thing I suggest is that everyone keeps doing what they can do. Maybe the community can help clean up while the renovations are happening. After a renovation is complete, the community can also help to keep the area clean."

Ally Watson

"Sometimes it seems as though nothing is being done about the housing crisis. However, when one walks down the street, they can see renovations taking place on houses. To better the conditions of the housing crisis, I would suggest more renovating more houses and building more apartments. That would be part of a practical solution."



Work is in progress to give this home a new face and a new beginning.



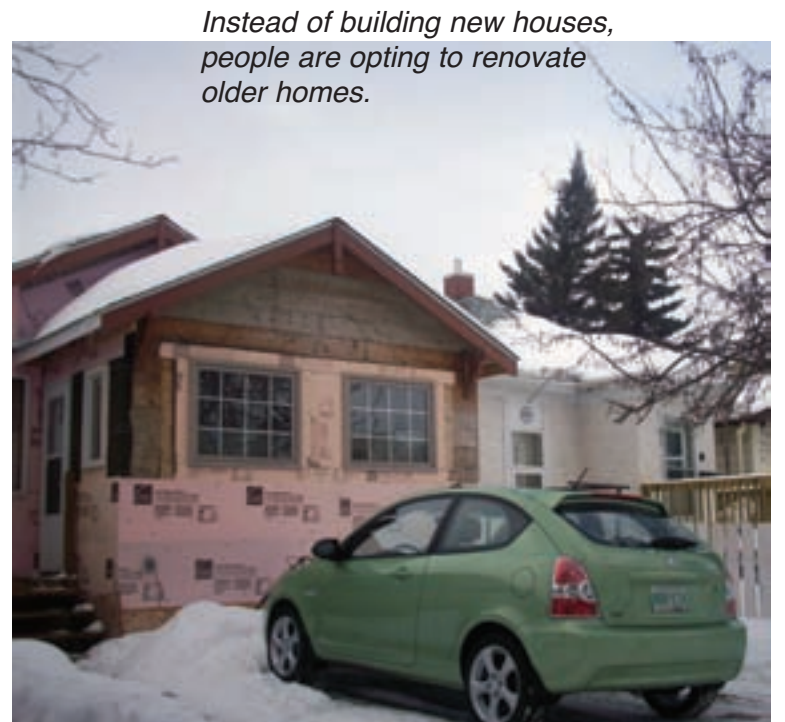
The back of this average house in North Central with its 'Beware of Dog' sign and ragged fence.



The fence is broken, the paint is fading, but this is still a home.

Brandy Watson

"When I walk to school, there are empty houses, new ones that are just built, as well as broken windows and graffiti on some houses. Slowly, old homes are being torn down and new ones built and I'm glad to see that. I am used to seeing old, broken, and ugly homes on North Central streets. Now that better homes are being built and renovations on old ones are progressing, the images of old, broken, and ugly will be replaced with new, functioning, and nicer looking homes."



Instead of building new houses, people are opting to renovate older homes.



Scaffolding suggests an effort to repair and revitalize the big, open, and abandoned spaces in our community.

De-CONSTRUCTING the Crisis: Housing Improvements in North Central



Aaron Pasap



Ally Watson

The Photojournalism Project (PJP) at Scott Collegiate involves a group of grade 11 and 12 students who are writing, creating, and, essentially, immersing themselves in the world of journalism and photojournalism. During the PJP, students can earn grade 12 English and Visual Arts credits. The PJP has been funded by the ArtsSmarts program. (The ArtsSmarts program is funded by the Saskatchewan Arts Board, the Ministry of Education, SaskCulture Inc. and Saskatchewan Lotteries.)

The PJP students are excited to be a part of the North Central Community Connection and hope to stay involved through future projects. For this issue, our students created a photo essay and submitted opinion pieces about the housing crisis in North Central. Students involved in this project are: Spring Crowe, Summer Delorme, Sky Lavallee, Clarissa Lerat, Kyle Lumberjack, Risa Naytowhow, Vanessa Okemaysim, Aaron Pasap, Matthew Pelletier, Chris Quintal, Shantelle Toto, Ally Watson, and Brandy Watson.

We hope you take some time to enjoy and reflect on their work.

Janine Taylor (English Teacher)
Jori Cachene (Visual Arts and English Teacher)



Shantelle Toto



Brandy Watson



Summer Delorme



Sky Lavalée
Efforts are being made to improve houses that have become run down.

Shantelle Toto

“In North Central, I see a lot of houses being renovated. They are looking a lot better and not so run down. Hopefully, this will show people outside of North Central that we are trying to clean it up and make improvements to the area. As a member of this community, I appreciate people making an effort to make North Central a better place. I hope that everything continues to improve for the North Central Community.”

Summer Delorme

“What I see happening in North Central to improve the housing crisis are boarded up houses being renovated or replaced by new houses. On each block, there are houses



boarded up; however, there are also renovations taking place. With rent and buying costs increasing, many people are unable to buy or rent. We need more affordable housing for our community.”



These men have been hired to do upgrades on this house.

Peering through the back fence, an older house is being reinsulated.

Spring Aboriginal Programs @ Albert Library

1401 Robinson St. 777-6076

Learn How to Hoop Dance



Wednesdays, April 22 – May 13
6:00 – 8:00 pm

The Hoop Dance was originally performed by Aboriginal medicine men as a ceremony. Now, Hoop Dancers tell a story of all living things on the earth and how they are connected, grow and change. Youth will learn the form and movement of an eagle, a snake, a butterfly, a flower, a turtle and the earth.

Join **Terrance Littlelent** in learning the art and skill of Hoop Dancing. Free!

Refreshments and hoops are provided. Please call to register.

First Nations Language Speaking Group

Every Tuesday, April 7 until June 16,
6:30 – 8:00 pm

This program is a volunteer-based and free program to learn to speak a First Nations language such as Cree, Dene Saulteaux and possibly other languages. The focus is learning to speak the language. **Language Circles** are a gathering of both “language givers” and “language learners” where language givers share their knowledge of Cree and Dene with Language Students, which focus exclusively on the development of the oral knowledge.

For more information, please call Cathy Wheaton at 924-4177 if you are a fluent speaker and would like to volunteer. Drop-in program with refreshments provided.



Reading with Richard Wagamese

Time: Wednesday, April 29
2:30 – 3:15 pm

Please join us for a reading by Ojibway First Nations author **Richard Wagamese**.

Everyone welcome. Tea and bannock will be served.

Ryan Meili

Our Future Together

For more information or to share you ideas, go to:

www.ryanmeili.ca

Email: meiliryan@gmail.com Phone: (306) 370-4334

Working Together to Create
Healthy and Prosperous
Communities for Everyone

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**Saskatchewan
New Democrats**

Authorized by the Ryan Meili Leadership Campaign

Healthy Christian Aboriginal Elders

Adapted from 1 Timothy 3: 1-7



are Christian aboriginal men and women who ...

Strive for excellence,

Practice sobriety,

Teach the truth in love,

Act gently and patiently,

Manage their own affairs,

Are respected by others.

Honour marriage vows,

Are self controlled,

Promote peace,

Give generously,

Show humility to all,

Welcome strangers into their homes,

and have a mature faith in Christ the Creator.

The Gift of Warmth

Angels 4 Warmth Inc. is a Regina non-profit group that make afghans, blankets, hats, mitts, sweaters, lap robes, and a variety of other knit and crocheted items and distributes them to the cold and needy throughout the city. Founded by Shannon Clark in 1999, the group now has more than 30 members who regularly contribute items. In the past three months, the Angels have distributed 1,466 items to charitable organizations throughout the city.

Most of the members of Angels 4 Warmth are seniors who enjoy knitting and crocheting because it gives them something to do and a way to contribute to their community. The monthly meetings are also an enjoyable social event. "It's rewarding," says Arlene Kenville. "It makes you feel good- and it makes the people who receive the warm clothing feel good."

The gifts of warmth are greatly appreciated by those who receive them. Recipients include cancer patients at the Allen Blair Cancer Centre, seniors at the Sunset Extendicare Home, premature babies at the General Hospital, and individuals in need throughout the city. Member Thelma Childs emphasizes that the group is always in need of volunteers and donations. The members are happy to come visit interested groups to give knitting and crochet lessons and present information about their organization. They accept donations of wool, material for quilts, used clothing, and the drink tabs and stamps that they collect on behalf of the Pasqua Hospital.

Donations can be left at Lorne Drugs at 2255 14th Avenue or at any Old Fashioned Foods in Regina, or you can contact the Angels directly. For more information, contact Thelma at 692-4786 or Arlene at 543-4475.



Healthy Food Store

**Open Monday - Friday
12 to 4 P.M.
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1264 Athol St.**

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Breads & Bakery
Meat, Pasta & Rice
Soups & Juices
and much more...



REACH  

THE ONE WHO COMES AFTER YOU

When you pass by a stick with upturned nails,
Or a broken bottle or two,
Do you pause for a moment to make it safe
For the one who comes after you?

When you've learned all the ropes and been
through it all
Do you help someone that's new?
Or do you smugly say, "Let him shift for himself"...
The one who comes after you?

Life can be beautiful only if we
Make it lovely for others, too...
And remember... somebody you love may be
The one who comes after you.

Care & Share

four dollars. Lunch is followed by a raffle, bingo game and social.

Many, like long time organizer Bea Miloux, who is in her 30th year with Care and Share, have been attending regularly for many years. The outing is a highlight of the week for Helen Thomas and others, who stress the importance of getting out and socializing. At Care and Share, building friendships while savouring a piping hot meal is a chance to nourish both the body and spirit.

For those who need transportation and/or assistance to get to Care and Share, the Four Leaf Clover Club offers a variety of transportation services to members for a modest fee. The Four Leaf Clover Seniors Independence Club is located at 974 Albert Street, Regina, and they can be reached by phone at 502-0305.

Here is what some participants have to say about Care and Share:



Ken Peet

"It gives you something to look forward to. I look forward to being here. I've made some pretty good friendships."



Helen Thomas

"Socializing is the main thing... it's something I look forward to every week."



Bea Miloux

"Care and Share takes people who were just down at the bottom - who have suffered heart attacks or been ill - and brings people out into the community. Soon they're up there having a whale of a time! We always have a good meal."



Doug McCall

"I came the first time in 1993 as an extra driver to help people get to the meal and I have been coming ever since!"

Care & Share



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**SCOTT COLLEGIATE
BLUES**



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Scott Collegiate

A DIFFERENT WAY TO LEARN

by Chasity Benjoe

Following on the success of the Dinner Theatre last year, Scott Collegiate students are doing more project-based learning. The ten students in Mr. Beingessner's and Ms. Kuntz's grade 10 class have been earning their English 10 and Arts Ed. 10 credits by learning about Hip Hop.

In English class, the students have been working on traditional English skills such as reading and writing, and relating their assignments to the world of music and hip hop. The students have been reading novels such as *Hip Hop High* and *Homeboyz*. They have also been writing lyrics and recording them. The students have been studying the history of hip hop and individual artists, analyzing the propaganda and advertising directed at teens related to music, and creating their own projects around the topics given.

In Arts Education, students are learning about beat making, turntabling (scratching) graffiti, breakdancing, emceeing, and writing rhymes. Students have been learning how to make beats with the MPC2500 digital sampler at the University of Regina, working with Dr. Charity Marsh, and her lab assistants, Miranda Mason, Shae Riley, and Daya Madhur. They have also been learning how to make their rhymes into beats with local Hip Hop artist Def3. "I think projects like these give youth a way to connect with something that is more relevant to them," said Def3. "We need to engage youth in a way that they understand. I am honoured to be a part of something with such exponential possibilities and positivity." DJ Quartz also worked with the students, teaching them how to scratch on the turntables. He also showed them the different parts of turntables so that they understand all of their functions.

During the first week of the project, students met Canadian Idol's Farley Flex. He asked them questions about what they want to accomplish in this class and what they want to be when they are done school. He also challenged them to give back to the community. The students are planning on performing a show for the elementary schools to be positive role models and to share what they are learning.



Samantha
Kaiswatum
-Tanner

photo by Chris Beingessner

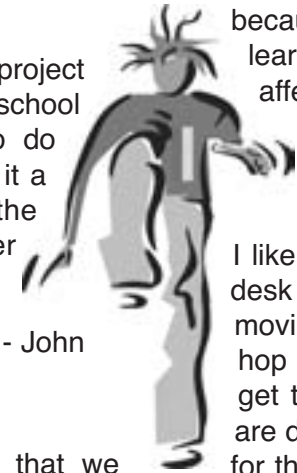


Jordan Harder-Cyre with DJ-Quartz

photo by Chris Beingessner

Here are some of the things the participants have to say about the project:

It is much better doing project style learning than normal school work. It is less boring to do project style work. I enjoy it a lot more, because of the activities and all other things we get to learn.



- John

We get to do something that we want to do and learn things that we want to know.

- Aaron

I like this project-based learning better because we get to go places and learn about interesting things that affect us in this day and age.

- Faith-Marie

I like the fact that I'm not sitting in a desk being bored, that I'm actually moving around when I'm in the hip-hop class. I also like more is that I get to meet new people in what we are doing. I like how we're in a group for the whole morning, and we share a common interest, and get to work together.

- Chasity

On April 3rd at 1:30pm the students will be showcasing what they've learned with a performance in the Scott Collegiate Auditorium. They will perform with the artists they worked closely with - Def3 and DJ Quartz. The community is welcome to attend!

For more information on the project, check out our class blog at <http://scott-hhp.blogspot.com/>

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1	\$30,000
2	\$35,000
3	\$37,000
4	\$40,000
5	\$50,000

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Chili Cook Offs



February is always a chilly month in Regina, but it was chilli-er than usual this year in North Central. The Indian Métis Christian Fellowship hosted two Chili Cook-Offs this month: the Chimatawa Chili Challenge on February 13th and the Inter-Agency Chili Cook-off on February 25th.

The **Chimatawa Chili Challenge** brought together groups of youth from the Indian Métis Christian Fellowship, Morningstar Ministries, Help Eliminate Auto Theft (HEAT), and the North Central Family Centre. Five judges, including special guest Warren McCall, MLA for Regina-Elphinstone, deliberated long and hard before declaring the group from the North Central Family Centre the Chimatawa Chili Champions of 2009. Member of the winning team were: Willie Amichand, Glen Prettyshield, Darian Bird, Robert McKay, Charissa Blind, Feather Moneybird, Daralee Klyne, Keegan Francis and Dylan

Alexson. Donations accepted at the event were given to the Children's Ward at the Pasqua Hospital.

There was heated competition at the **Inter-agency Chilli Cookoff** on February 25, 2009. All Nations Hope AIDS Network, Circle Project, Four Directions Community Health, and the North Central Community Association vied for the trophy and bragging rights. Hosts at the Indian Métis Christian Fellowship provided juice and bannock.

The winning chilli was made by the team at All Nations Hope AIDS Network. The team comprised: Scott Sparvier, Desiree Agecoutay, Brett Friday, and Jessica Parisian. The team would not comment on their secret recipe, but did reveal that their chilli contained half a bottle of hot sauce. Donations at the Inter-Agency cook-off supported the North Central Community Gardens.

Congratulations to the North Central Family Centre and All Nations Hope AIDS Network!



L to R: Scott Sparvier, Desiree Agecoutay, Brett Friday, Jessica Parisian, Warren McCall, MLA and Bert Adema

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Scott Collegiate Hip Hop Project Performance
Friday **April 3** at 1:30 pm
Scott Collegiate Auditorium
Project students perform their original rhymes, beats, turntabling (scratching) and dance as well as showcasing their graffiti art. Also students from the Photojournalism Project will have their photographs on display. The show will feature performances by Regina's own Def3 and DJ Quartz as well as Mystic, a hip hop artist from California. All community members welcome - admission is free!

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

2009 First Nations University of Canada Powwow - 31st annual spring celebration **April 4th & 5th** Brandt Centre, Evraz Place. Admission \$7 daily or \$10 weekend pass (plus \$1.50 Brandt Centre Service Fee), ages 5 & under free. Registration time for all singers and dancers: Saturday 10 am - 7 pm. Grand Entry time: 12 pm and 7 pm daily. For more info: 1-800-267-6304

Community Calendar

Care and Share Easter Dinner
Tuesday **April 7th** at 11:45
Albert Scott Community Centre
Cost \$5 - raffle and door prizes.

V-Day 2009 campaign presents a benefit reading of "A Memory, A Monologue, A Rant and A Prayer: writings to stop violence against women and girls." Regina Performing Arts Centre (1077 Angus St) on Thursday **April 9th** @ 7:00 pm. Tickets available March 9th - \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door. Proceeds benefit SOFIA House. Tickets are available at the Regina Performing Arts Centre box office at 779-2277 or by calling Glacsy Models at 351-0676.

Souls Harbour Rescue Mission Easter Dinner
Saturday **April 11th** Good News Chapel 1380 Elphinstone St. Doors open 11:30 am. Message by Rev. Ken Porter with meal to follow. No cost. Food donations welcome.

North Central Community Gardens will be hosting an information/visioning session for this season's Community Gardens **April 14** at 7 pm at Albert Scott Community Centre 1264 Athol St. Want to learn more about the Community Gardens, want to have a say in the shape that they take? Come check it out. Everyone is welcome.

Oxford House Fundraising presentation for people in recovery **April 17** at 7 pm at Eureka Fellowship Club. www.oxford-house.sasktelwebsite.net

Women of the Dawn 3rd Annual Women of Strength and Distinction Banquet, Fashion Show, Seminar & Trade Show Thursday **May 14** Queensbury Convention Centre Evraz Place \$100 ticket, \$800 table of eight. Seminar Registration: 9 am Guest Speakers: Dr. Roberta McKay, 2008 Citizen of the Year and Chief Tammy Cook-Searson

North Central Community Gardens
Planting Blitz! Saturday **May 30**. Meet at the

Robinson Street Garden (1300-block, across from Albert Community School) at 9 am and we'll split into groups to plant the Rae, Retallack, Robinson & Garnet plots. BBQ lunch provided! In case of nasty weather, planting will be moved to Sat. June 6.

These are your gardens! Help Yourself!

NCCA National Aboriginal Day Celebration Barbeque and festivities **June 19**, 12 pm - 3 pm. Watch for details!

Martin Collegiate is having a 50th Anniversary/Reunion July 3, 4 & 5, 2009. Everyone who EVER attended Martin is invited, you didn't have to graduate from the school. For more information & to register go to www.Mci50.ca. Come join us the 1st Monday of each month at Martin Collegiate library/resource centre at 7 pm & share your ideas for this exciting gathering!

Just Ask

Reprint from Four Directions Newsletter
Summer 2007

Everyone has their struggles. Some of us have problems with addictions, money problems, grief, depression, issues with parenting and other life struggles.

There are things that we can do to help ourselves. We can problem solve and brainstorm solutions. We can read up on the issues. We can talk to our friends and family. There is always a way, you just have to find it!

It is especially important to focus on solutions.

We don't always need to wrestle with our problems on our own. We are lucky to live in a community with many resources and services. There are counselling services, advocates, government representatives, parenting classes, health services, food security programs and many agencies that can point you in the right direction.

When you have a concern, think about the resources in your community. Ask your friends and family what they know about the topic. Check in with your church, your child's school and any other agencies you might already be involved with. They may not be able to help you with your problem directly, but they will be able to find the right help for you.

Tips:

- Don't be afraid to ask for help.
- Don't wait until it becomes a crisis.
- Be clear about what you need.
- Don't give up, keep asking. Try asking different ways and different people.
- Be patient, it may take a few steps to get to what you need.

Don't know where to start?

Try these resources:

- Four Directions..... 766-7540
- Indian Métis Christian Fellowship..... 359-1096
- Aboriginal Family Services..... 525-4161
- North Central Community Association..... 791-9888



Mission Statement of North Central Community Association

❖ WORKING TOGETHER ❖
with the community
of North Central
to enhance the quality of life
by REPRESENTING,
PROMOTING,
DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS
and UNIFYING
our community
and its image.



The North Central Community Connection is a bi-monthly newspaper published by the North Central Community Association (NCCA). The newspaper strives to be fair and balanced in its coverage of news, current events and community issues. The *Community Connection* is written for the people of North Central Regina in hopes of building community and providing valuable information.

Editor: Carla Jensen
Design & Layout: Right Brain Creative Services

Thanks to those who contributed to this issue:

- Chasity Benjoe
- Chris Beingessner
- Jori Cachene
- Jessica Hanna
- Carla Jensen
- Elizabeth Popowich
- Students of Scott Collegiate
- Janine Taylor
- Lisa Workman

The *North Central Community Connection* is distributed to over 4,000 households in the North Central area. Copies are also available at the Albert Scott Community Centre and various North Central businesses.

Opinions expressed in the *The North Central Community Connection* do not represent the NCCA.

We welcome all letters and submissions. The editor reserves the right to accept or reject and edit all submissions.

The North Central Community Connection

1264 Athol Street
Regina SK S4T 7V3
Phone: 791-9888
Fax: 757-1052
e-mail: marketing@northcentralregina.ca



NORTH CENTRAL PHONE LIST

Schools

- Albert Community School..... 791-8539
- Kitchener Community School..... 791-8516
- Sacred Heart Community School..... 791-7290
- Scott Collegiate..... 791-8415
- St. Luke..... 791-7248
- Wascana Community School..... 791-8528

Organizations & Agencies

- Aboriginal Skilled Workers Association..... 337-0400
- AIDS Program South Saskatchewan..... 924-8420
- Albert Library..... 777-6076
- Albert-Scott Community Centre..... 777-7033
- All Nations Hope..... 924-8424
- Bylaw Enforcement..... 777-7000
- Chili for Children..... 359-7919
- Circle Project..... 347-7515
- Circle Project Childrens' Centre..... 569-3988
- Ehrlö Sport Venture Program..... 751-2411
- Fire Safety..... 777-7830
- Four Directions Community Health..... 766-7540
- Gathering Place..... 522-7494
- Indian Métis Christian Fellowship (IMCF)..... 359-1096
- Kids Help Phone..... 1-800-668-6868
- North Central Community Association (NCCA)..... 791-9888
- North Central Community Health Office (Nurse)..... 757-1046
- North Central Community Police Service..... 777-6450
- North Central Family Centre..... 347-2552
- Pasqua Hospital..... 766-2222
- Public Health Inspector..... 766-7755
- Rainbow Youth Centre..... 757-9743
- Regina Alternative Measures Program (RAMP)..... 352-5424
- Regina Education & Action on Child Hunger (REACH)..... 347-3224
- Regina City Police..... 777-6500
- Regina Crime Stoppers..... 545-8477
- Regina Fire Department..... 777-7846
- Regina Food Bank..... 791-6533
- Regina Mobile Crisis Centre..... 757-0127
- Regina Police Substandard Housing Enforcement Team..... 777-6399
- Regina Sexual Assault Line (24 hrs)..... 352-0434
- Rentalsman..... 787-2699
- R Healthy Food Store..... 359-0541
- Safer Communities & Neighbourhoods (SCAN)..... 1-866-51-SAFER
- SaskPower (inspections)..... 566-2500
- Saskatchewan Rental Housing Supplement..... 787-4723
- Souls Harbour Rescue Mission..... 543-0011
- Street Culture Kidz 565-6206
- Welfare Rights Centre..... 757-3521
- Women of the Dawn 791-6504

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