

# **Greenfield Community League Annual General Meeting April 13, 2010**

## **President's Report to the Community**

Friends and neighbours:

Yes, time does fly – I can hardly believe that I'm at the end of a full year as President of your Community League. I fully expected that it would take me a while to find my feet in this role, and indeed I still feel like I am learning the ropes. What actually constitutes a successful year for a Community League? Well, I think this is one of the things I am still trying to figure out, but I sincerely hope you have seen enough from us ("us" being the current Greenfield Board) that you will feel, like I do, that we are moving in the right direction.

What excites me more and more as time goes on is the sense of Greenfield's potential. We are truly privileged to live where we do. A group of community-minded citizens can and does make a positive difference to the quality of life for all of us, and I think we are just starting to scratch the surface of that potential. With your help, I am looking forward to great things for Greenfield in 2010-11.

In the meantime, here is my recap of what we have achieved in the last year, and some of the initiatives we aim to focus on in the coming year.

## **Community Projects**

### **Greenfield Spray Deck and Playground**

These back-to-back major projects were a huge challenge for an organization of our size and type (and were probably the cause of quite a few sleepless nights). The spray deck was completed in time for the summer, and the playground followed during late summer/fall, with completion just before the snow flew in October, 2009.

This was a major investment – both monetarily, and time-wise – for GCL. The final bill was in the order of half a million dollars (please refer to the report provided by Fran Chase for details on final accounting), and we were fortunate to receive both Provincial and City of Edmonton matching grant money, which ultimately allowed us to complete both projects.

Major thanks are due to many people for making all of this happen:

- For GCL, our hard-working Treasurer, **Fran Chase**, was front and centre throughout, and put in major hours to see these projects through. I would also like to acknowledge **Greg Clarke**, **Brian Kerr**, **Grant Noruschat** and **Jana Roppelt**, all of whom made themselves available throughout the course of the projects (including traditional summer break time) to make sure we stayed on track.
- At the City of Edmonton, many thanks go to our Community Recreation Coordinator **Zanette Frost**, and Project Managers **Vic Karaki** and **Becky Redford**.
- Thanks also to MLA for Edmonton-Rutherford **Fred Horne**, for his strong support of our Community Facility Enhancement Program (CFEP) grant application.

We are looking forward to the whole community joining us on **Saturday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010**, when Greenfield celebrates the **official grand opening of the spray deck and playground**.

### **Community Walking Map project**

Since the fall of 2009, we have been working (with the City of Edmonton and two of our neighbouring communities) on a project to develop a neighbourhood walking map for Greenfield, Royal Gardens and Aspen Gardens. This concept has been successfully developed in a number of Edmonton communities, to provide a handy reference map for current and prospective residents, or anyone looking to find the "hidden gems" in Edmonton's neighbourhoods.

Workshops were held in January, 2010, to help us identify points of interest and walking routes in the three communities. We will be concluding the project with a community "walkabout" in the coming weeks, and hope to be launching our map on or about the time of the park grand opening party in June.

Thanks to the members of Greenfield's Walking Map Committee for their efforts: **Mark Herbert**, **Jennifer Warren**, **Norma Rodenburg** and **Luella Yakymyshyn**.

### On-line registration

In early 2010, we embarked on a pilot project to provide existing or prospective Community League members with a way to buy their memberships on-line. Since that time, we have been using the services of Registration Logic, a company new to Canada, which provides low-cost on-line registration services, aimed mainly at non-profit organizations. Recently, we have added Greenfield Tennis Club memberships and lessons to the list of on-line services available.

We hope that the convenience of buying memberships on-line will lead to an increase in our member base, while at the same time helping to reduce some of the administrative burden on GCL volunteers. We will report to you on the success of this initiative at the next AGM.

### Volunteers

Volunteer recruitment and retention is always near top of mind for a non-profit organization, and Greenfield CL is no exception. We continue to have challenges filling some positions, and will always welcome new volunteers. However, on the whole, Greenfield is in a relatively strong position, when compared with some other Community Leagues in the area.

Our sincere thanks go out to the new volunteers who have joined us in the past year:

- **Gloria Wesley**, Secretary
- **Jennifer Warren**, Greenfield Web Site Coordinator
- **Mark Herbert**, Greenfield Gazette Editor
- **Nancy Petersen**, Tennis Director

We must also recognize the tremendous efforts of those volunteers who have served your Community League with distinction, and have either stepped down from their positions in the past year, or are ending their terms at this AGM:

- **Greg Clarke**, Vice-President (and holder of numerous other jobs with GCL down the years)
- **Fran Chase**, Treasurer
- **Jacquie Eales-Webster**, Tennis Director, interim Secretary and interim Gazette Editor
- **Jan Hicks**, Soccer Director
- **Ellen McIntyre**, Gazette Editor
- **Chips Reid**, EFCL Representative
- **Leila Zuniga**, Secretary

As you can see, the number of “outs” is greater than the number of “ins”. We have been lucky enough to identify candidates for some positions, but are still looking for volunteers in the following roles:

- **Vice-President** (elected)
- **Program Director(s)** – currently held by Lorraine Delano and Krista Wintoniak, both of whom are looking to step down imminently
- **Social Director(s)**
- **Soccer Program roles, including Director(s), Referee Coordinator, Equipment Coordinator and Field Lining Coordinator**
- **Shinny Hockey Director(s)**
- **EFCL Representative**

If you have any interest in these roles, please do not hesitate to contact myself or the current incumbent for further information. Job sharing for just about any volunteer position is also an option.

### Employees of Greenfield Community League

We are currently in the process of appointing a new Facilities Manager (hall rentals, buildings and grounds maintenance). Many thanks to **Chantal Umphrey** for her hard work in this role.

Thanks also to **Dave Moore**, who once again provided us with excellent ice on the community rinks this past winter and kept our walkways clear of snow.

The board is currently reviewing the provision of janitorial coverage in the Community League buildings: updates will be provided via the Gazette and the website. **Please contact me if you are interested in providing janitorial services to GCL.** Thanks again to Chantal Umphrey, for continuing to provide janitorial coverage, pending our current review.

**We are also seeking a spring/summer groundskeeper for the upcoming season** – again, please contact me if you are interested.

## Membership

We have sold 247 memberships for 2009-10, representing only about 16% of households in Greenfield. We will continue to pursue ways to encourage more residents to sign up, and to make it easier for people to do so (such as the on-line registration facility mentioned previously – accessible via [greenfieldcommunityleague.com](http://greenfieldcommunityleague.com)).

There seems to be a continuing perception that the Community League is of no benefit if you do not have children in community sports programs. **Please help us to dispel this myth.** GCL represents the interests of all Greenfield residents, and we will continue to try and prove this point by our actions on behalf of the community. Asking your neighbours to read this report (which will be made available via the website) is a great start!

Please check the web site for information on special programs available to Community League members, such as free community swimming, leisure centre access and discount programs (e.g. Eskimos, Oil Kings/Oilers, Capitals baseball).

## Programs

Program Directors: **Lorraine Delano** and **Krista Wintoniak**

Lorraine and Krista have continued to do an excellent job in keeping our Community Hall buzzing, with a great variety of programs for all ages. We have a mixture of Community League-sponsored programs (where Greenfield CL administers the program, appoints and pays the instructors), local non-profit groups and for-profit commercial programs that rent our space and take care of their own administration. In addition, we work with the City of Edmonton to bring day camps and other children's activities to Greenfield throughout the year.

In 2009-10, the following regular programs have been running at Greenfield:

- Parents & Wee Ones (parents and tots group)
- Rhythm, Rhyme & Story Time (young children)
- Rhythmic gymnastics (youth)
- Chinese dancing (youth)
- Karate (all ages)
- Two yoga classes (all ages)
- Two fitness bootcamp classes (adult)
- Seniors' bridge club
- Seniors' lunch social

We are currently seeking (paid) instructors for the Parents and Wee Ones classes: please contact **Lorraine Delano** (780-453-8076) if you are interested or would like to learn more.

We are also looking for volunteers to take over the Programs portfolio from Lorraine and Krista. Please contact either of them, or myself, if you are interested or would like to learn more.

## Community Sports

### Youth Soccer

Soccer Director: **Jan Hicks** (outgoing)

Community soccer (spring outdoor season) remains our largest youth sports program. In the 2009 outdoor season, we fielded 21 teams (over 270 players), ranging all the way from the under-6 (U6) to under-18 (U18) age groups, plus a "learn to play" program for under-fives. We expect to support a similar number of teams and players for the 2010 season.

This coming outdoor season also marks the first time we have offered on-line registration for soccer via the South West Edmonton Minor Soccer Association (SWEMSA), a change which not only makes it easier for parents to sign their kids up, but also significantly reduces the administrative burden on the Soccer Director – and all at no cost to the Community League.

We would like to acknowledge the dedication and commitment of the volunteer coaches in Greenfield, who play a large part in keeping our program so strong (and are a significant reason we receive so many requests from kids in other communities to play in Greenfield). It has been especially gratifying these past two seasons to welcome a number of high school age coaches to our program, and we hope to keep them around for many seasons to come.

The soccer program requires an enormous amount of time and effort to run, so this year we must send out a huge thank you to **Jan Hicks**, who is stepping down after four years in the role. We would also like to acknowledge some unsung heroes, who have been quietly helping us to deliver a great soccer program for years:

- **Kathleen Maraj**, for helping in numerous roles, including looking after equipment, uniforms and referee mentoring for the upcoming season
- **Jeff Bellinger** for the delightfully messy job of field lining, and also mentoring our young referees
- **Rachel DeLeon**, who is in her third and final year as our Referee Coordinator.

### **Tennis**

Tennis Director: **Nancy Petersen**

Greenfield Tennis Club continues to deliver a great program for all ages, including lessons, competitions and numerous activities during the tennis season. This year we will welcome back **Mark Zion** as Head Tennis Professional.

The courts at Greenfield remain some of the best in this part of the city, and we aim to keep it that way by regular maintenance and resurfacing. We are expecting to resurface two courts this year, and will also be replacing nets and wind screens that have reached the end of their useful lives.

The Tennis Club has been working hard to encourage new members, and we hope to increase our membership over the 80-100 families we have welcomed in the past two seasons. To make it easier for prospective members to sign up, we now offer on-line membership and lesson registration – see **[greenfieldcommunityleague.com](http://greenfieldcommunityleague.com)** for details.

### **Youth Softball and Basketball**

Softball Director: **Paul Wagner**

Basketball Director: **Doug Baker**

As has been the case for several seasons, both softball and basketball are now administered at a zone level, rather than by each community individually. Thanks to both Paul and Doug, who continue to represent Greenfield with their respective sports' associations for our zone.

### **Youth Shinny Hockey**

We had hoped to re-start the Saturday morning youth shinny hockey program at Greenfield this past winter, however this ultimately did not work out. Please contact me if you would be interested in running a program next winter.

## **Income from Bingos and Casinos**

Bingo Chairperson: **Grant Noruschat** (West End Bingo Association)

Bingo Chairperson: **Jana Roppelt** (Caesar's Bingo, West Edmonton Mall)

Casino Chairperson: **Tom Rothwell**

Greenfield remains a member of two bingo associations (West End and West Edmonton Mall), and we typically are allocated a casino every 18-24 months. With the gap between casinos as it is, bingo revenue remains an important source of operating funds for Greenfield Community League. Certainly, we do not make as much money from bingos as in the days before the bingo hall smoking ban, however, the revenue has been rebounding steadily ever since the original drop when the smoking ban came into effect.

We are well aware that working bingos is unpopular with many people. We regularly review the income we receive from this source, and at this time, the income justifies our retaining both bingo licenses. You can see a breakdown of our financials in the Treasurer's report – suffice to say that our operating expenses increase year-to-year, and we expect this trend to continue – particularly bearing in mind the age of our facilities, market pressure on tradesperson rates and salaries. It is also no exaggeration to state that, without the income from bingo and casino funds, we would not have been in a position to

undertake major projects such as the spray deck and playground last year. To even start such large projects without gaming revenue, huge fundraising efforts of other kinds are required to meet the criteria for receiving grant funds, and typically such efforts take years to complete.

While we are on the subject of years of fundraising, both **Grant Noruschat** and **Jana Roppelt** have been fulfilling their Bingo Chairperson roles for many years – so our grateful thanks to them for sticking with it for so long. Thanks also to **Tom Rothwell**, who has taken over the casino role, after spending time as both GCL Secretary and Vice-President in previous years.

I would like to share one final issue with you regarding gaming revenue (with thanks to Greg Clarke for bringing this forward). Late last year, three MLAs from the provincial government toured the province, ostensibly to gather input from Albertans regarding distribution of gaming funds. In fact, this was a thinly veiled attempt to sell a new policy, which would see some kind of revenue transfer from the higher earning areas of the province (such as Edmonton, Calgary and Fort McMurray) to the lower earning, lower population areas. In other words, the gaming revenue earned on the back of our volunteer efforts would be used to subsidize shortfalls in smaller communities across the province. Over seven hundred people attended two meetings in Edmonton, and the message given was clear: that these shortfalls should be dealt with using the government's share of the \$17 billion plus in gaming revenues that poured into the provincial coffers last year – and they should not be taking from the portion that was actually earned by (and in) the larger municipalities. The findings from the provincial tour (which, incidentally, cost taxpayers some \$2 million) were due to be released in March, but have not yet come to light. If you agree that revenue earned in Edmonton should stay in Edmonton, please contact your MLA, Fred Horne, to register your opinion.

## Greenfield Gazette and Website

Gazette Editor: **Mark Herbert**

We have recently completed a review of the Greenfield Gazette's future, and were both surprised and pleased by the support for continuing a printed newsletter in the community. The Gazette's production costs are high, however we now have a better understanding of how it is valued within the neighbourhood, and pledge to continue improving it as a major means of connecting all Greenfield residents.

Many thanks to **Mark Herbert**, our volunteer Editor who took over last year. We would also like to express our gratitude to **Gaylene Manuel**, who has donated her time and publications expertise to help us evolve the Gazette. We will be working on both format and content in the coming months, and expect to switch production to six issues per year (one every two months) from the current ten per year, starting later in 2010. This will help us to cut some of our production costs, but still make sure you get timely communications from your Community League.

Of course, the Gazette would not get to you at all without the hard work of our distributor **Loretta James** and all of the Gazette carriers – thank you to all.

As part of our Gazette review, it has become clear that some additional help with aspects of the Editor's job – such as coordinating with advertisers, invoicing and collecting payment – would be beneficial. We would also like to encourage submissions of content from everyone in the community. If you would like to help with producing the Gazette, or if you have a story you would like to submit, please contact Mark or myself for more information.

### Web Site

Web Site Coordinator: **Jennifer Warren**

If you take a look at [greenfieldcommunityleague.com](http://greenfieldcommunityleague.com) these days, I'm sure you will agree, it has improved tremendously in the past year. Thanks for this are due to **Jennifer Warren**, who has been working with our contracted web hosting service – and in concert with Mark, the Gazette Editor - to make our site into a truly useful resource for everyone in Greenfield.

Apart from the informational content, you will now find links to our various on-line registration tools (membership, tennis and soccer), and also an on-line forum for Greenfield residents, started last year by **Correne Refsahl-Jensen** – thank you Correne.

## Greenfield Memorial Scholarship

2009 saw a great response to our call for applicants for this annual award, for which \$1500 each is granted to two Greenfield residents who have been accepted into a post-secondary institution. From the 13 applications received, our Scholarship Committee selected **Shawn Roppelt** and **Dylan Nolan** as recipients of the award.

Congratulations to Shawn and Dylan, and thanks to **Greg Clarke, Paul Wagner** and **Jacquie Eales-Webster** for their work in assessing the applications.

## Future Projects

We intend to undertake some long-term planning, facilitated by the City of Edmonton, in the coming months. As mentioned previously, our facilities are aging, and we are getting to the point where major repairs, replacements or upgrades will be required sooner rather than later. Aside from the Community League buildings, one urgent need that we hope to address in the coming year is to replace the boards on the main ice rink. The existing boards have been patched up many times, but we are now at the point where patching will not be enough to maintain structural integrity.

Other than the type of capital work described above, we hope to further develop our working relationships with other Community Leagues in our area this year. Please watch the Gazette and the web site for news of joint activities, such as social events. Our colleagues in Aspen Gardens are also working on an idea to bring a weekend farmers' market to our area – more information will be shared when available.

## Neighbourhood Issues

No matter how great a community we live in, we are not immune to the types of issues experienced by all urban areas. We have noticed an increase in vandalism around our buildings in the past year, which has mainly manifested itself as graffiti and occasional property damage. One recent incident saw one of our (very heavy) hockey nets somehow end up on the roof of Greenfield School. It is incumbent on all of us to keep our eyes open, and report anything suspicious to the police. One of the aspects of neighbourhood life that we are trying to encourage via our Walking Map project is to get out and about – on foot - in your community. This not only discourages crime, but is also a great way to meet and interact with your neighbours. We have a beautiful green space right in the middle of Greenfield, and there are many pleasant walking routes to explore, so I look forward to meeting you around the neighbourhood!

## Petrolia Mall

It wouldn't be Greenfield if we didn't have a large and controversial issue to deal with every year. Last year we had the Greenfield School drop-off zone, before that was the proposal to put a bottle depot in Petrolia, and not so long ago, the future of the former nuns' residence on 114<sup>th</sup> Street prompted record attendance at a Greenfield meeting.

It appears that the big challenge during my tenure as President is going to be trying to ensure that whatever happens to the Petrolia Mall site will be in the best interests of our community. Please see the separate Petrolia Mall report for an update on this issue.

Respectfully submitted,



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## ***Petrolia Mall Update***

Respectfully submitted by Ian Hicks, President, Greenfield Community League  
Greenfield CL AGM, April 13, 2010

### **Summary of Events**

For those of you who are unfamiliar, here is a brief recap of the story to date:

- Safeway Canada pulled out of the Petrolia site years ago, in favour of their larger stores at Southgate and Century Park (Heritage as was). Safeway's departure precipitated the long, slow decline of Petrolia.
  - Safeway still holds a covenant on the Petrolia lot, restricting uses that would compete with their interests. Family Foods occupied the old Safeway space for a brief spell, but forced Family Foods to sell only Safeway-supplied goods – just one of the factors that led to its failure as a going concern.
- The Petrolia site was sold to developers in 2007, and in early 2008, co-owner and property developer Dan Cameron presented Greenfield Community League his plan to raze the existing mall building in two phases:
  - Phase one would see the demolition of the Certigard service station and the old Safeway space (currently occupied by the Movie Studio), and construction of a four-storey mixed commercial (on the ground floor) and residential development, with underground parking, facing east (onto 114<sup>th</sup> Street). This mixed use would mean no re-zoning required (the property is zoned "Commercial-Shopping Centre" or CSC)
    - Existing commercial tenants would be offered space either in the new building, or in renovated space within the remaining mall building.
  - Phase two would see demolition of the remaining mall building, with potentially a similar commercial/residential building to replace it, or possibly a higher-rise residential development.
- Between the Greenfield AGM in 2008 and today, basically nothing has happened physically to the Petrolia site, other than its obvious deterioration, and the loss of the drug store/post office, the dance studio and the dry cleaner's, leaving the Movie Studio, ABC Day Care and Grandma Pizza as the sole remaining tenants.
  - I am unsure when the ownership change happened, but the Mini Mart convenience store and the liquor store are now owned by a different entity than the rest of the site.
- In late 2009, residents close to Petrolia received notice that a zoning variance had been granted to the Petrolia owners, allowing reduced front yard widths for development on the site.
  - As the details of why this variance was needed were unclear, Greenfield CL served notice to appeal the variance with the City of Edmonton, pending further investigation.
- From subsequent research with the City Planning Department, it became clear that in fact the original phase one proposal that was presented to GCL in 2008 is still in play.
  - The necessary landscaping design and the irregular shape of the lot are what prompted the project's architect to request the front yard width variance.
  - The reason for the variance, and the fact that the project (at least phase one) remains materially unchanged, led us to withdraw the zoning appeal.
- Dan Cameron has, at some point, sold his interest in the property. The only current owner (as far as we know) is a numbered Alberta corporation, registered by Mr. Fred Mok, a property developer and hotel owner (Mr. Mok owns the Howard Johnson Hotel in west Edmonton).
- At this time, no building permits (which would allow construction to commence) have been applied for with the City.

## Current Situation

So where does all this leave us? As I'm sure most, if not all, residents would agree, it is high time we saw SOMETHING on the Petrolia Mall site. In its current state, it is nothing but an eyesore. The buildings and parking lot are in a dreadful state, to the point where I'm sure there are numerous safety hazards. We know there is undesirable activity going on (such as drug deals), and frankly it is surprising that we have not seen even more vandalism than has already occurred. At the very least, the site's owner needs to be held accountable for keeping it in a safe and serviceable condition.

Greenfield Community League is not opposed in principle to the phase one development that has been proposed, but there is no sign that this development is going ahead any time soon. I have tried to contact the owner, Mr. Mok, on a number of occasions (by phone) without success. Eventually, I wrote to him via e-mail and fax, to invite him to this meeting, however, unless something has changed since I printed this report, I have received no response.

Aside from pressing Mr. Mok regarding the current condition of the property, we intend to continue pursuing him in an attempt to get some clarity from him on a number of issues, such as:

- His anticipated time line for construction on the site
- If phase one does go ahead, his intentions with respect to the remaining mall building, and any further phases of demolition and construction
- Whether he would be amenable to allowing even temporary community use of the lot, and possibly even some of the building
- Whether he has any intention to dispose of all or part of the property instead of developing it.

## Next Steps

Greenfield CL will use all means possible to obtain the answers we are seeking from Mr. Mok. This may include:

- Using the good offices of City Councillors Anderson and Iveson
- Publicizing our dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs through the media (Edmonton Examiner, Journal and Sun newspapers, local television and radio stations).

In the meantime, we will also continue to explore ideas for community use of the Petrolia site. This may be in conjunction with other local organizations and/or other Community Leagues. Some of the ideas that have been suggested (in no particular order) include:

- A local farmers' market
- Seniors' drop-in centre (similar to the one in Blue Quill)
- Community coffee/bake shop/internet café
- Public art (e.g. end wall and/or storefront murals)
- Community garden
- Community fitness/wellness centre.

We will continue to keep you informed of any developments via the Gazette and the website. **If you would like to help**, please contact Ian or any member of the Greenfield CL board.