

POINT *to* POINT

Fall Edition 2019

ARMSTRONG'S POINT COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

From park seating to community symbol: the evolution of two red chairs

by Darlene Irwin

com·mu·ni·ty: We can find as many definitions for this word as there are reasons we identify in groups. Some communities share a strong sense of place. A community may be a group of people that has the same goals and interests, or a group that offers its members fellowship and belonging. To those who live in Armstrong's Point, "community" means all these things.

The "Red Chairs" in West Blanchard Park had become a familiar fixture

and a destination in their own right for so many AP residents and visitors. We have heard "welcoming" and "picturesque" to describe them. "We're going to the Chairs with a picnic lunch." Community sentiment poured in when they were removed, and that process has turned loss into gain, reminding us of some shared values, what we consider to be important, and the rewards of community activism on behalf of worthy causes.



"The Red Chairs"

Photo: Sandy Butterfield



Armstrong's Point THE HERITAGE REPORT

Crescentwood has now been nominated by the City for heritage conservation, in response to protests over the proposed demolition of historic Gordon House on Wellington Crescent.

Armstrong's Point was recently named Winnipeg's first protected neighbourhood, paving the way for Crescentwood and others to seek similar status. Before AP won its designation, our own homes were just as vulnerable as Gordon House was this summer.

AP residents lent their support by joining with protesters on site at 514 Wellington, signing a petition on behalf of their campaign and writing thanks to Councillor John Orlikow for his advocacy. We will continue to stand with Crescentwood, awaiting the finalization of their process.

April McDonald - Kassum
Chair - Heritage Committee



Bear Clan Patrol comes to Armstrong's Point

First formed in the North End in 1992, Winnipeg's Bear Clan Patrol has recently expanded into West Broadway, including Armstrong's Point. This summer we encountered Will, a Patrol member passing through our neighbourhood, and we learned about the group's mission, as an indigenous-led, community-based solution to crime prevention, to go "wherever in the city they find the same kind of issues, the exploitation, homelessness, addiction."

With their visible presence on the streets they can be an early response to problem situations, practising non-violent conflict resolution. Says Will, "We can assist with needle recovery or a vulnerable community member that may need our attention."

"It just takes for people to get off their couch and get into the community and lend a hand where they can, say hello to a stranger. It's really simple."

- James Favel, Executive Director

West Broadway Bear Clan invites volunteers of all backgrounds over 18 years of age to join them on their walks. Operating out of 195 Young St. (located at the corner of Young and Broadway, across from Art City), they meet at 5:30 and walk together Friday and Saturdays from 6 PM - 9 PM.



Will, of West Broadway Bear Clan Patrol

"Just show up! We are a drop-in volunteer organization. No need to register or commit hours. All are welcome to join."

Soon after our meeting, APA received a message: "Thank-you so much for your kind words about Bear Clan Patrol West Broadway. It's love of our community and compassion for our homeless and members suffering from addiction that keeps us driven. Knowing that we are appreciated by our community just keeps us driven even more. Sincerely, Will."

Keeping the Neighbourhood Connected: Summer Solstice gathering was a magical event

Article by Darlene Irwin and photos by Sandy Butterfield

A breeze was blowing, the sky was blue, and a white tent and tables under the trees set the scene for our first ever Summer Solstice potluck picnic in East Blanchard Park.

We were greeted with a tempting array of dishes brought by residents, from appetizers, lasagna and chili to salads, roasted vegetables and desserts. Refreshing lime-hibiscus tea and iced mint maté beverages were provided by the Twelve Tribes. We went "green", bringing our own plates and cutlery.

Mr. Ken, rated Winnipeg's #1 magician, entertained everyone - young and old - after we had enjoyed our food. He had to keep on his toes to prevent community kids Lily and Damon from completely stealing the show. (Visit our facebook page to view the videos) <https://www.facebook.com/ArmstrongPointAssociation/>

Door prizes were donated by residents. Benny, age two (whose favourites are chocolate and ice cream), had the winning ticket for the kids' prize of a racket game and gift

certificate for Decadence Chocolates, and Margaret Firlotte took home the adult prize of a generous gift certificate for Cheesemongers Fromagerie.

There was plenty of food, more than enough to offer Travis and his Bear Clan Patrol refreshments as they dropped in for a visit during their walk through the neighbourhood.

Thanks to APA Board members, Mr. Ken the Magician and especially to Sandy Butterfield, Pete Firlotte, and Jocelyne Hullen for organizing this event, and to Dawn and Liv Zifarelli and Myles and Damon Raichura for volunteering to help out.

It was a pleasure to talk with neighbours we haven't seen in a while and to get to know new residents. Thanks to all who brought themselves, their children, and their food to share. It was your presence that made it such a magical occasion.



Mr. Ken the magician



The audience for Mr. Ken



Travis, WB Bear Clan Patrol



Carla and Shelly - Middle Gate



The food table - Bon Appétit!



Myles Raichura - volunteer



April and Diamond Kassum

Before and After: Presenting 5 East Gate

Article and photos by April Kassum

Some of us were not as far ahead as others when we took possession of our new properties, but in AP, after drawing a deep breath, we just roll up our sleeves and we get to work!

“These were some of the rooms that I DEMOLISHED, CARRIED OUT THE DEBRIS AND REBUILT...these actually are some of the “better” photos.

The side of the house over the driveway had a deck that you could NOT walk on because if you opened the door to that deck, bent over to touch the floor, it would disappear to the ground beneath as the wood was like dried-out paper and you could just crumble it into your hands...I almost fell through to the ground and that was why we tore it all down and rebuilt it. I wish I had a video of crumbling “wood” in my hands!”



Before - “Please, just tell me, you’re not serious...”



After - Today



Before - “Mom, please don’t do this...”



After - “Thanks, Mom, you were right!”

SPOTLIGHT ON SHERBROOK



Thom Barga Coffee and Tea

“There’s something about this place”, says Connor, from the table next to me. He is pointing out the impressive manners of the young person behind the counter. “Did you notice, she shook hands with the customer?”

Seating at our local coffee shop is compact, and it’s the Canadian way to say something polite and introductory before moving into another’s space...so whether by accident or by design, it’s common here to have friendly exchanges with other customers, and to get to know the “regulars”.

Even at liveliest hours, the uncluttered space, with plants, warm wood and brick, pleasant music and plenty of light pouring in through large picture windows has a de-stressing effect. It’s ‘always sunny’, just as the wifi password says.

Everyone in this mixed demographic is comfortable: parents with young children (there’s a warmed milk “Babyccino” for them), grandparents, students, groups of friends, a huddle of co-workers, hipsters, knitters, police officers stopping for takeout.

“I will go back to such a comfortable and welcoming place.”

- Mike M., online reviewer

Ernie and Eli are connoisseurs of gourmet coffee all over the city, but keep coming back here. They say it’s the friendly atmosphere, and with these two, if you can’t find a seat it’s always, “You’re welcome to join us!”

Our local coffee spot has been compared to an English pub, serving double as a community centre.

Thom Hiebert and Graham Barga opened their first of three shops here in 2012. They

have become part of the Sherbrook renaissance, bringing life and energy to the street.

“Truly nice guys”, adds Connor. “I never come in here without a Good morning, what’s going on for you today?” The staff is just as welcoming, and service is excellent. Says Thom, “I love seeing new people in our shop taste fresh coffee that was crafted with care.”

We personally would find it hard to go anywhere else, now that we know excellent coffee plus the special kind of hospitality served every day at Thom Barga, just around the corner.

Hours at 64 Sherbrook: 7 AM-7 PM, weekends open 8 AM. Coffees and teas, beans by the pound, coffee-making supplies, fresh-baked goods and snacks.



Owners Thom and Graham - Winnipeg Free Press

BULLETIN BOARD

West Broadway Biz

Many thanks to West Broadway Biz for generously donating their services to water our new Middle Gate entrance plantings. Said Leah McCormick, Executive Director, "Armstrong's Point is part of the West Broadway community, and we like to keep it all looking good." Armstrong's Point appreciates West Broadway Biz in return!

Bat boxes open for business

Meanwhile, our four new bat boxes are up, and ready for customers. What to look for: In woodland areas or skimming over a river, bats are best seen coming out to hunt insects as the daylight fades. Please report any sightings to Board members Ash or Kelly.



Critter Corner

Don't tread on me! Spotted July 15 at the top of Middle Gate, "Subject: Ugly bug. Do you guys know what this creature is? We found it in our driveway." The following day a second discovery was made in a nearby Middle Gate yard.



Top: Adults feed on nectar of lilac, honeysuckle and viburnum.
Left: Larva stage of Abbott's Sphinx moth.

Research revealed the creature to be both harmless and amazing. Left undisturbed, it will morph into pupa stage and winter underground, in Spring to emerge as an Abbott's Sphinx moth, valuable garden pollinator and wondrous sight.

"Big enough to sit in the hand of an adult, the Abbott's Sphinx is an elegant member of a family of giant moths, wing span 2-2 3/4 inches (5.1-7 cm). Its habitat is woodlands, ranging from Northern Florida, Mississippi, and Texas north to Nebraska." Though not endangered, it's a rare sight this far north. Could this be a signal of climate change?

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The Gallery...



"I feel fortunate to have been a student at a time when fundamentals were stressed - the human figure, a study of drapery, perspective, light and cast shadow."

- Darlene Irwin

"Learn the rules before you can break them" has always seemed right to me, and true self-expression comes not at the beginning, but at the end. Practising the basics is never dull. There is always something interesting to rediscover or something new to be learned.



"Juicy Tomato" Photo: Ash Raichura

Point to Point: Armstrong's Point Community Newsletter

Send contributions, suggestions to: d.irwin@mymts.net

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