



THE

May/June 2026

WEST'NER



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Community Food Series

Our Community Food Committee had a great time at Seedy Saturday—decorating cookies, connecting with neighbours, and hearing what kinds of food programs you'd like to see in Bowness. Thanks to everyone who stopped by to chat and share ideas! View a couple of our upcoming events below and register at mybowness.com/hubs.

If you're interested in getting involved in community food programming at the BCA, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to Abby at communityhub@mybowness.com.

Food Convo & Budget Saving Ideas

Wednesday, May 13 | 6:30 – 8:00 PM
Registration required | mybowness.com/hubs

Join us for an open, welcoming conversation about food access in our community.

Food Mapping & Community Cookbook – Part 1

Wednesday, June 10 | 6:30 – 8:00 PM
Registration required | mybowness.com/hubs

Take part in a fun, interactive food mapping activity and help us start building a Community Cookbook!

I ♥ MAINSTREET BOWNESS

2026 Community Events



MAINSTREET'S CRITTERS & COWBOYS **Stampede Party**

- ★ PETTING ZOO
- ★ LIVE MUSIC
- ★ CRAFTS
- ★ GIVEAWAYS

Saturday, July 11
11 - 2pm
Mainstreet Bowness

TOUR DE BOWNESS RACE + FESTIVAL

Races | Music | Food Trucks
Local Vendors

MAINSTREET BOWNESS 10 - 5PM

AUGUST 3, 2026
Save The Date

Community Partners & Sponsors:

- I ♥ MAINSTREET BOWNESS
- FIRST AID CALGARYFIRSTAID.COM
- Tim Hortons
- BOWCYCLE
- Kellig Carter events

Rooted in Bowness

ADOPT A PLANTER PROJECT

COMMUNITY VOTES - JUNE 1 - SEPT 1

TRICK - OR - TREAT ON MAINSTREET

SATURDAY OCTOBER 31 ST
100 - 330 PM

THANK YOU KATHY!



For many years, Kathy Labbee has served as the Official Photographer for the Bowest'ner and has been a dedicated supporter of the Bowness Community Association. Through her lens, she has captured the people, events, and everyday moments that reflect the heart of Bowness.

Her photography has helped preserve the community's story in a way that is both beautiful and enduring—bringing warmth, care, and consistency to every event she attended.

While Kathy has stepped down from her role, her contributions remain a lasting part of the Bowest'ner and the community's visual history. We extend our deepest thanks for her years of time, talent, and generosity.



Kathy is such an outgoing and outspoken volunteer. She has a real ability to have a conversation with anyone. And she'll chat up everyone. I appreciated Kathy volunteering at events and taking pictures to help share the story of Bowness and the BCA. But what I appreciated even more was when I'd see her out in the community and she'd stop her car to say hi to me while I was walking around the neighbourhood. Kathy is a true Bowesian and I wish her all the best.

– Jessica Clark, BCA Board Member

Kathy Labbee has been a wonderful member of the BCA Communications Committee for years now. She brought her sincere passion for the Bowness Community, always ready with camera in hand to document any event, or interview. I always enjoyed her irrepressible spirit and curiosity, and especially loved her stories of her childhood and family in Newfoundland. Your presence will be missed Kathy. Wishing you all the best.

– Sophie Stocking, Volunteer Writer

Kathy, your passion for Bowness is unmatched. Thank you for everything you've done for your neighbours and for your community.

– Logan Renaud, Bowest'ner Editor (2021-2024)

Kathy! Thank you so much for everything you've done! You made my start at the BCA so much more special. I'll be using your photos for The Bowest'ner for years to come. Be seeing you around Bowness!

– Zoë Decker, Bowest'ner Editor

2026 QUALITY OF LIFE

led by the Bowness Community Association

This summer, the Bowness Community Association will be conducting our 2026 Quality of Life Survey!

This survey happens once every three years, and it's an opportunity for us to check in with the community and find out whether they feel happy, well, and connected to their community. It's a snapshot of where we are now, and a roadmap for where we want to go in the future.

Our team will be out in the community this summer connecting with residents. We can't wait to hear from you!

If you are interested in volunteering to get out into the community and encourage your neighbours to take the survey, please email Abby at communityhub@mybowness.com!

You can check out our 2023 Quality of Life survey and action updates explaining how we've used the survey to guide our operations and programming on our website at mybowness.com/qualityoflife.

Enjoy the Sun

Issue 122
May/June 2026

Welcome to the 122nd issue of *The Bowest'ner*! As spring settles in and the sun starts to linger, it's the perfect time to get outside and enjoy it—and this issue reflects just that. From community events and outdoor gatherings to stories celebrating the people and businesses that make Bowness feel like home, these pages are rooted in the season. However you like to spend your time outdoors, you'll find something here that connects you to it.

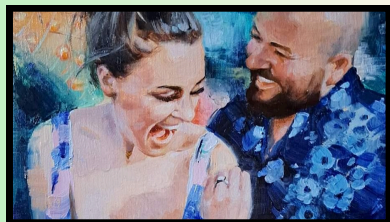
Last issue's egg hunt (thanks to **Paul Ackerman**!) was won by Rhea S., who chose a gift card to Salt & Pepper. Congrats, Rhea! This time, Paul is in a bit of a bind—he's lost all his running shoes while getting ready to support Run Bowness! They're all scattered throughout the pages, and we need your help to find them. Count all of Paul's running shoes you can spot and email your total to iheartbowness@mybowness.com for a chance to win a \$50 gift card to a Bowness business, courtesy of Paul.

The Bowest'ner continues to grow thanks to the many Bownesians who share their stories, talents, and time—and to the sponsors who help bring it all together. We always love hearing from you, so send your ideas, feedback, or summer plans to editor@mybowness.com.

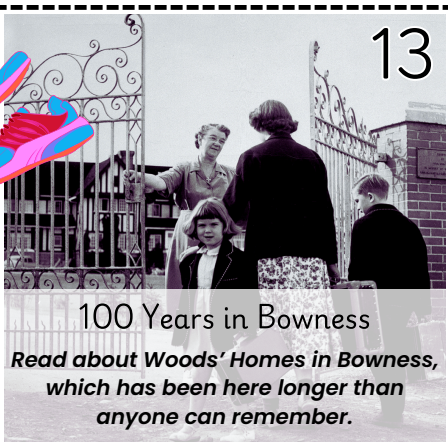
Here's to fresh air, familiar faces, and a season spent outdoors.

— Zoë Decker
Editor, *The Bowest'ner*

On the Cover:



Painting by Bowness Painter:
Daria Shemiakina-Akderli



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100 Years in Bowness
Read about Woods' Homes in Bowness, which has been here longer than anyone can remember.



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Where Wonder Grows
A glimpse into how Bowmont children learn care, responsibility, and belonging through everyday moments in nature.



20

From Broken Boards to Built Design
Discover Adrian Martinus and their striking trash-to-treasure furniture.



23

Right Plant, Right Place
Ready to plant draught-tolerant plants? Explore this helpful guide from native plant expert Ben Hartney at ALCLA.

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BOWNESS Community Association

At the Bowness Community Association, we believe the heart of a community is how it shows up for one another. We are proud to support our 2SLGBTQ+ neighbours and are committed to fostering a space where everyone feels safe, welcome, and respected. Community is strongest when people feel they belong—when differences are valued, and everyone is free to be themselves.

Whether you're joining us for a program, attending an event, volunteering, or simply stopping by, you are welcome here—exactly as you are.

We are always learning and working to do better. If you ever have an experience at the BCA that doesn't feel inclusive, we want to hear from you:
iheartbowness@mybowness.com



The Garden Season Starts Here!

Raised garden beds in the community garden beside the BCA are now available for the 2026 season! Head to mybowness.com/communitygarden to apply—spaces are limited and fill quickly, so don't wait. Beds are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis.

A BCA membership is required to rent a bed. Register online, call (403) 288-8300 or stop by the office during business hours to sign up and secure your spot.



BOWNESS

We're also recruiting new garden committee members—email garden@mybowness.com to get involved!



BOWNESS SPRING CLEANUP



NEW LOCATION!
RockPointe Church
12 Bowridge Drive NW

May 9, 2026 | 9 - 1PM

mybowness.com/annualevents



Volunteers Needed!



Email: volunteer@mybowness.com



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BCA Events & Happenings

Events happening at the BCA and Arena | 7904 43rd Ave NW

Run Bowness

Sunday June 7 | 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Location: BCA Greenspace

Registration required to participate | FREE to watch

Run Bowness 2026 is set to be the biggest yet! Participate in the races or cheer on participants in this family-filled-fun day with a live DJ! Visit the Brewsmith Beer Gardens, grab a bite from the many food trucks, and cheer on the runners.



Truth & Reconciliation Talk

Thursday June 4 | 10:00 AM

Location: BCA Community Room

Registration required | mybowness.com/hubs

In recognition of National Indigenous History Month, the BCA Hub is honoured to welcome Elder Cheryle Greyeyes-Chagnon for a presentation on Truth & Reconciliation. A light lunch will follow.



Neighbours Nursery Plant Sale!

Saturday, May 23 | 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Location: Bowness Community Garden

No registration or fee required

Support local and visit the Bowness Community Garden situated right next to the BCA to buy all the plants you'll need for your garden this season!



Summer Skating Parties!

Friday, June 26, July 24 & August 28 | 4:30 PM – 7:30 PM

Location: BCA Arena

No registration or fee required

Join us for Summer Skating Parties—community evenings on the ice where you can cool down, connect with neighbours and skate your cares away. Skaters under 18 need a helmet to participate.



Mothers Day Market

Saturday & Sunday, May 9 & 10 | 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Location: BCA Main Hall

No registration or fee required

Celebrate the 4th Annual Mother's Day Market with Taylor Markets, featuring over 70 amazing local vendors, food trucks, workshops, pony rides, and face painting. The first 100 moms receive free loot bags!



HoliGay Smorgasbord Soirée!

Saturday, May 2 | 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Location: BCA Main Hall

No registration or fee required

Holigay Events YYC presents Smorgasbord Soirée: A Chaotic Curio Curated Market—a vibrant celebration of queer local artists, bursting with creativity, colour, and community. Come explore a joyful, love-filled space!



Building a Coping Skills Toolkit

Monday, May 11 | 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Location: BCA Community Room

Registration required | FREE to attend

Learn realistic coping tools to deal with everyday stress. For adults +18. Light refreshments and snacks will be provided. Registration now open! Go to mybowness.com/events.



The City Resource Centre

Mondays & Wednesdays | 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Tuesdays & Thursdays | 10:00 AM – 7:00 PM

Location: Through the main BCA doors, first door on the left

Chat directly with City staff about the BSFM project and get support during construction. Staff will be available to listen, answer questions, and share updates about the project.



Bowest'ner Contest!

All May long | Winner randomly selected on June 1

Location: *The Bowest'ner*

Entries sent to iheartbowness@mybowness.com

Find all the lost running shoes in this issue of *The Bowest'ner*! Send in your best guess for a chance to win a \$50 gift card to a Bowness business of your choice! Sponsored by Paul Ackerman, RE/MAX Realty Professionals.



bowness LIONS CLUB

*Call the Lions!
We're here to
help!*

contact:

daryl reinke

☎ 780.608.9884

✉ dwreinke@gmail.com

marilynne hall

✉ mrwhall@shaw.ca



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to enhance our
community?*



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Owner

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The Place
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403-288-7608
Mobile 403-383-1825

6308 Bowness Road NW
Calgary, Alberta T3B 0E5



**St. Edmund's Foodbank
Outreach Association**

**GARAGE
SALE**

Saturday, June 27 | 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
8336 - 34 Avenue NW

The Landing Events & Happenings

These events take place at The Landing, located on the second floor of the BCA (7904 43rd Ave NW)



The Landing at the BCA

Warm, casual, and built for connection, The Landing is open weekdays from 9:00 AM–5:00 PM for pay-what-you-can coffee and tea, and every evening from 5:00 PM–10:00 PM for food and drinks. Elevator accessible and always buzzing with neighbours, events, and conversation. Check out the events below and see you soon at The Landing!



Weekends at The Landing!

WEEKEND

Saturdays & Sundays | 4:00 PM – 10:00 PM

No registration or fee required

Did you know that The Landing is now open on the weekends?? Well, now you do! Stop by every weekend to watch the game, cheer on your kids on the ice below, or enjoy food and drinks with friends.



Food Convo & Budget Saving

Wednesday, May 13 | 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM

Registration required | mybowness.com/hubs

Join us for an open, welcoming conversation about food access in our community. Share your experiences, challenges, and helpful tips, and exchange practical ideas for saving on food costs while connecting with neighbours.



Money Made Simple Workshop 2

Tuesday, May 12 | 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Registration required | mybowness.com/hubs

Led by Tietje White who's a certified financial coach, this FREE workshop explores credit, debt, saving, and investing. Discover tools and strategies to manage debt and grow your money confidently.



Coffee, Culture & Conversation

Monday, May 11 & June 8 | 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

No registration or fee required

Join us for a welcoming monthly gathering to meet neighbours, explore different traditions, and share experiences. Coffee and snacks provided! For info, contact Clara Yuen at clara.yuen@calgary.ca or 403 370 7352.



Stitchers

Tuesdays | 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM

No registration or fee required

Bring your latest craft and join this cozy group every Tuesday! Don't have a craft? No worries! Start a new craft or get some ideas from fellow crafters. All levels and ages are welcome!



Book Club

Last Wednesday of the month | 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

No registration or fee required

Join the Bowness Book Club for another round of books, laughs, and good discussion. **May's book** is *The Buffalo Hunter Hunter* by Stephen Graham Jones. **June's book** is *The Left Hand of Darkness* by Ursula Le Guin.



Food Mapping & Cookbook

Wednesday, June 10 | 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM

Registration required | mybowness.com/hubs

Take part in a fun, interactive food mapping activity and help us start building a Community Cookbook! Bring 2–3 recipes featuring one main ingredient and share in a celebration of food, culture, and community.



THROW A BLOCK PARTY. WE'LL HELP COVER IT.



Bring your neighbours together and get up to \$500 to make it happen.

We want to see Bownesians—and our neighbours in Montgomery and Greenwood Village—coming together this Neighbour Day for block and condo parties across our communities!

With the Ripples Grant, you can get up to \$500 in funding to help cover food, activities, supplies, and more. Our new simplified application makes it easier than ever to plan your celebration and bring your neighbours together. See mybowness.com/ripples to apply or email communityhub@mybowness.com for questions!

IMPORTANT



We will not be accepting new Ripples applications after June 30, 2026. Stay tuned for what's next as we transition to a new way of supporting community celebrations!



RIPPLES
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Bowness • Greenwood Village • Montgomery

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Must mention this ad at time of scheduling. Bowness only.

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Bowness Community Events & Happenings

These events happen within the community of Bowness and NOT at the BCA

The Community of Bowness

Bowness is a vibrant, tight-knit community in Calgary with deep roots and a strong sense of local pride. Nestled along the Bow River, it blends natural beauty with a rich history, an independent spirit, and a welcoming, small-town feel—brought to life through a wide range of local events that bring neighbours together all year round.



Spring Cleanup!

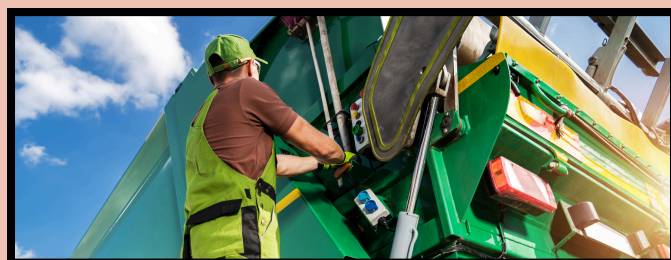
Saturday, May 9 | 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Location: RockPointe Church | 12 Bowridge Dr. NW

No registration or fee required

Free garbage drop-off for the Bowness Community! Please read about the dos and don'ts of Spring Cleanup by visiting mybowness.com/annualevents.

WE'VE
MOVED



St. Edmund's Garage Sale!

Saturday, June 27 | 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Location: St. Edmund's | 8336 34th Ave NW

No registration required

Come on down to St. Edmund's for some major finds and good deals! Located at the north end of the lot (inside the garage). Access is through the laneway off 83rd Street.

Sale!

Firefighter Storytime

Sunday June 14 | 2:00 PM – 2:30 PM

Location: Bowness Library | 6532 Bowness Rd NW

Registration not required | Ages 2 – 5 (approx)

Drop in and join Library Staff and a Calgary Fire Department firefighter for a special family storytime! Firefighter is subject to availability.



Parade of Garage Sales!

Saturday, May 9 | 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Location: Houses around Bowness & Montgomery!

View the Garage Sales Map: mybowness.com/garage

The Parade of Garage Sales is a community event in Bowness and Montgomery featuring many registered garage sales. Visitors can explore multiple stops across the neighbourhoods to find great deals and enjoy a day!



Spring Tea & Bake Sale

Saturday, May 2 | 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Location: Shepherd of the Hills | 8007 Bowness Road NW

No registration required | Suggested donation \$10

Enjoy a cozy spread of sandwiches, pickles, cheese, desserts, tea, and coffee, along with a bake table full of homemade pies, cakes, cookies, and squares. Come visit and spend some time with friends at Shepherd of the Hills.



Drop-In English Practice

Thursdays | 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Location: Bowness Library | 6532 Bowness Road NW

No registration required | 18+

Want to practice your English? Come by the Bowness Library and practice English with others in this safe environment. See more adult programs at calgarylibrary.ca/programs.



Brews & Beats

Thursdays | 7:00 PM

Location: Brewsmith Brewing | 6311 Bowness Road NW

No registration required | FREE to attend

Missing the old days where you could grab a pint and listen to some live music? Well, Brewsmith has sourced the talent and created the good bevies. All you gotta do is show up!



Dreaming in Colour

Daria's Story

By: Zoë Decker

When you meet artist Daria Shemiakina-Akderli, you don't just hear a biography—you feel a story unfolding like brushstrokes across canvas. A wife and mother of three, Daria is also a professional artist whose work carries both tenderness and strength, shaped by a life lived across continents and through profound change.

Born and raised in Ukraine, Daria spent most of her life immersed in its rich artistic tradition. She studied art from childhood, guided early on by her mother who enrolled her in art studios, setting her on a path that would lead through art school, art college, and eventually a Master's degree from the National Academy of Fine Arts in Kyiv. Today, that foundation lives quietly beneath every painting she creates.

Three years ago, when war reshaped her world, Daria and her family made a new home in Canada. Their first landing place was Bowness—a neighbourhood that, for her, quickly became something more than just a place to live. The river, the lagoon, and the quiet rhythm of nature became both sanctuary and inspiration. "I love this neighbourhood for its beautiful natural surroundings," she shares. "It is peaceful and very inspiring."



That sense of atmosphere—of emotion held gently in space—is at the heart of her work. For Daria, painting is not only about image, but about feeling. She is drawn to capturing what cannot always be said aloud: a mood, a memory, a fleeting presence. Her subjects shift fluidly between landscapes, still lifes, portraits, and genre scenes, each offering a different way to translate life into colour and form.

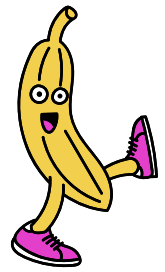
Portraiture, however, holds a special place in her practice. From intimate individual likenesses to large family compositions, wedding portraits, beloved pets, and even childhood homes, her commissioned works become something more than decoration. They become memory made visible. "They are a way to preserve a moment, a feeling, or a memory that can be passed down," she reflects.

Daria's work can be viewed at Grasby Art Studio on Main Street in Bowness, as well as through her social media pages (@shemiakina_art), where she continues to share available pieces and works in progress. As she prepares to launch her own website, her artistic presence continues to grow—quietly, thoughtfully, and always rooted in story, place, and feeling.



Daria's art is pasted all throughout The Bowest'ner! Check out her other paintings as you read. Check out her instagram @shemiakina_art

A Bite of History



Ta'ameya: The Egyptian Breakfast That Fed Generations

By: Chef Emad H, Owner of Flame & Bite

Before Cairo fully opened its eyes, the city was already stirring. Metal shutters rattled upward, radios crackled to life, and familiar morning voices floated through narrow streets like steam rising from fresh bread. School children hurried past in blue uniforms, while workers moved toward long days in offices, workshops, and markets. Then came the sound that truly announced the Egyptian morning: the hum of the *ta'ameya* grinder.

Inside tiny neighbourhood shops, soaked fava beans tumbled with fresh coriander, parsley, scallions, and leeks, turning into a bright green mixture as vivid as spring leaves after rain. Spoonfuls of that batter met hot oil and burst into a joyful crackle, sending out an aroma that could wake a whole street. Nearby, polished pots of *ful medames* shimmered in the early light, while *baladi bread* arrived hot from the bakery, like little pillows of morning warmth, soft and ready to carry breakfast across the day.

For Egyptians, this was never just breakfast. It was memory, ritual, and belonging wrapped in warm bread.

Long before the world called it *falafel*, Egypt had *ta'ameya*, the fava-bean fritter that has long anchored the country's morning table. Many historians connect its rise to Egypt's Coptic Christian communities, whose fasting traditions called for nourishing meat-free meals. Fava beans, affordable and rich in protein, became both sustenance and symbol: food that could carry faith, labour, and family through the morning.

Even the name carries history. *Ta'ameya* comes from Arabic roots connected to taste and food, while the word *falafel* has several debated origins and no single settled explanation. In Egypt, the dish remains distinct: fava beans, fresh herbs, and the unmistakable green center that tastes like the country's own breakfast identity. In places like Alexandria, people may also say *falafel*, but *ta'ameya* remains the more rooted Egyptian name.

For Bowness readers, that rhythm may feel surprisingly familiar: the comfort of a favourite local breakfast spot, the smell of fresh bread on a cold morning, and the quiet ritual of food before work, school, or a walk along the Bow.

That is why *ta'ameya* and *ful* have fed generations so deeply. They gave students the strength to sit through long school days and workers the energy to keep going until afternoon. Affordable, filling, and deeply satisfying, they were the kind of food that felt less like a purchase and more like a daily promise.

To remember *ta'ameya* is to remember the whole morning: the radio in the background, the bakery steam in the cool air, the hiss of oil, the green perfume of herbs, and the neighbourhood unfolding like a slow sunrise. It is Cairo before noon, alive, hungry, and full of life.

And here in Bowness, that tradition continues at Flame & Bite, where *ta'ameya* is still made the Egyptian way, with fava beans and the same spirit that has fed generations. What began as a neighbourhood breakfast in Egypt now arrives in Calgary as a crisp, fragrant reminder that some foods do more than nourish. They carry history, and they make a new neighbourhood feel like home.

See Chef Emad's recipe for Easy Egyptian Ta'ameya (Falafel) Sandwich on p.23

ALCLA Native Plants: Ben's Top 5 Native Plant List

Top 5 for Beginner Gardeners

If you're just starting out, these are forgiving, resilient plants that adapt easily and fill space beautifully:

- **Blanket flower** (*Gaillardia aristata*)
- **Beebalm / wild bergamot** (*Monarda fistulosa*)
- **Yarrow** (*Achillea millefolium*)
- **Early blue violet** (*Viola adunca*)
- **Blue grama grass** (*Bouteloua gracilis*)

These species tolerate a wide range of soil, moisture, and sun conditions—and once established, they tend to thrive with very little input.

alclanativeplants.com

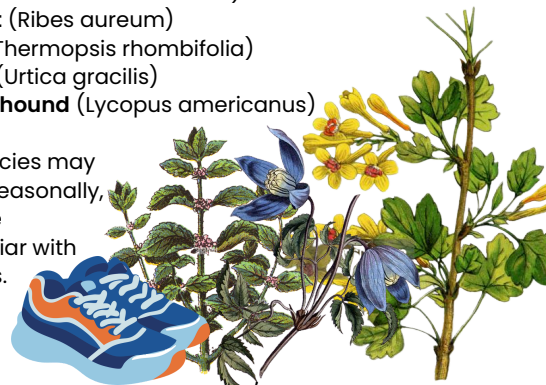


Top 5 for Experienced Gardeners

These native plants can be incredibly rewarding, but they require more patience or specific conditions to succeed:

- **Blue clematis** (*Clematis occidentalis*)
- **Golden currant** (*Ribes aureum*)
- **Golden bean** (*Thermopsis rhombifolia*)
- **Slender nettle** (*Urtica gracilis*)
- **American horehound** (*Lycopus americanus*)

Some of these species may also go dormant seasonally, which can surprise gardeners unfamiliar with native plant cycles.



The Bowtanical Garden

"You Eat *That*?" The Surprising Origins of Popular Vegetables

By: Beverley Sheridan

What are the 10 most popular home-grown vegetables in Canada and the U.S.? According to Statistics Canada and the U.S. Gardening Association, gardeners plant (in order of popularity): tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, onions, beans, lettuce, carrots, sweet corn, radishes, and cabbage.

The tomato is the runaway leader of this group, with over 85% of home gardeners cultivating 500-plus varieties of this fruit. Yes, it's a fruit. But the "King of Fresh Produce," and many of its edible cousins, was not always held in such high regard.

From Poisonous to Pantry Staple

Tomatoes spent a long time being deeply misunderstood. Native to South America, they made their way to Europe in the 1500s, where citizens promptly decided they were probably poisonous. People avoided eating them and instead grew them as ornamentals.

The Pilgrims in North America considered growing tomatoes an abomination, equivalent to dancing, card playing, and theatre-going. Those caught with the fruit in their possession were displayed in the public square. Remember that when you are putting up your tomato cages.

Fortunately, people later realized how delicious tomatoes are. The North American consumer now eats, on average, 13 pounds of tomatoes a year, plus an additional 20 pounds in the form of ketchup, salsa, and BBQ sauce.

Carrots: Not Always Orange

Are you planning to plant several rows of carrots this year? Today, they're the poster child for crunchy goodness and beloved by rabbits and dentists alike. But carrots did not start out orange in colour. Early carrots were purple, yellow, and even white.

The now-iconic orange varieties were selectively bred in the Netherlands, possibly as a tribute to the royal House of Orange. When carrots first arrived in England, women used the tops to decorate their hair and hats—the roots were discarded. It was not until the 1600s that carrots were eaten as food.

It was also claimed that cows fed orange carrots produced the richest milk and the most yellow butter. Those with less well-fed bovines coloured their butter by adding carrot juice.



Corn: A Crop That Needs Us

I always anticipate the arrival of Taber corn each summer. Corn is sweet, golden, and utterly incapable of surviving without humans. It was domesticated from a wild grass called teosinte, which looks nothing like the plump yellow cobs we know today.

Early versions of corn had tiny kernels encased in hard shells—not something your teeth would enjoy at a corn roast. Through centuries of selective breeding, humans transformed it into the juicy treat we now enjoy. In return, corn became completely dependent on humans to reproduce.

The Potato's Unlikely Rise

The humble potato has its own dramatic history. Originally native to the Andes, it was brought to Europe in the 16th century and, like tomatoes, met with suspicion. Some thought potatoes caused disease; others believed they were unfit for human consumption. In France, they were even associated with leprosy.

It took a clever bit of marketing by French agronomist Antoine-Augustin Parmentier to turn things around. He planted fields of potatoes and had them guarded during the day, creating the illusion that they were valuable. Of course, people stole them at night.

Today, the estimated consumption of potatoes in North America is 51.8 kg (114 lb.) per person per year. We went from "this will kill you" to "supersize it," and unfortunately learned very little in between.

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Radishes: A Medicinal Marvel

Most people today prefer small, bite-sized radishes. In Greek and Roman times, however, radishes were very different. They were often grown as a winter storage crop, with individual radishes weighing 50 to 100 pounds.

Chefs served these giants cooked or raw, often seasoned with honey and vinegar. By the 17th century, the radish had evolved from a culinary staple to a pharmaceutical wonder. It was used as an antidote for poisoning, a cure for snake bites, and even to remove freckles.

When mashed and mixed with honey and dried sheep's blood, the resulting paste was said to cure baldness. Move over, Rogaine™.

A Shared Gardening Tradition

Whether gardening in Calgary or California, the lineup of home-grown vegetables in North America is remarkably similar. Gardeners seem to agree on a few essential principles: grow tomatoes, then grow more tomatoes, and add a supporting cast of salad greens and root crops—plus, of course, those two zucchini plants that somehow produce enough to feed a small city overnight.

Vegetable gardening, it turns out, is not just about growing food—it's about participating in a long and slightly bizarre history of shaping the natural world to our tastes. This spring, when you're planting your garden, take a moment to appreciate the strange journeys that brought these plants to our plates.





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100 YEARS IN BOWNESS

By: Dalton Ulrich, Woods' Homes

In 1926, a quiet riverside corner of Calgary's then-independent community of Bowness became the setting for a defining moment in the history of child and family care in Alberta. That year, George and Annie Wood brought 32 children to a new home on the Bow River, beginning a century-long legacy that would grow into Wood's Homes.

The story, however, began well before that move. George Wood first opened a home for children in Innisfail in 1914 with his wife Annie, driven by a simple but powerful belief: every child deserves safety, belonging, and care. As need quickly outgrew each space they secured—first in Innisfail, then Olds—the couple continued to expand their efforts. By 1925, they were once again searching for a permanent solution.

That answer appeared in Calgary when George Wood came across the vacant Hextall Mansion overlooking the Bow River. The property offered something they had not yet found: enough room to grow, stability for children in care, and the possibility of building something enduring. In November 1926, the Woods and dozens of children made the move to Bowness, setting down roots that would last a century.

At the time, Bowness was still a small resort-style community on the edge of Calgary, shaped by strong neighbourly ties and its origins as a planned riverfront destination. Its residents quickly responded to the arrival of Wood's Homes with what historical accounts describe as "marvelous enthusiasm". Local families, churches, and business leaders offered donations of clothing, furniture, and supplies, while community members stepped forward to join boards and support fundraising efforts. From the beginning, Wood's Homes was not simply located in Bowness—it was embraced by it.

Life on the early campus reflected both hardship and hope. The home functioned much like a large, busy household where children attended school, shared daily responsibilities, and spent significant time outdoors. Small-scale farming—including cows, chickens, pigs, and a large garden—helped sustain the campus while also teaching life skills. Photographs from the era show rows of cots and shared dining spaces, but also moments of play, routine, and connection that grounded children in stability.



Over the decades, approaches to care evolved dramatically. What began as an orphanage model shifted alongside broader changes in child welfare toward therapeutic, family-centred support. Wood's Homes expanded clinical services, established a social work department in 1961, and began early partnerships with education systems in the 1950s. A pivotal moment came in 1969, when the organization temporarily closed to reassess its direction, reopening in 1970 with a renewed focus on supporting children with complex needs.

Innovation continued into the modern era, including research partnerships with the University of Calgary and the creation of a community-based Research Chair in children's mental health led by Dr. Angelique Jenney. These developments reinforced a shift toward evidence-based, trauma-informed care.

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Today, the Bowness campus continues to evolve. Facilities such as the Vermilion Energy Family Centre and long-standing cottages reflect both growth and ongoing renewal. Community landmarks like the Douglas Fir Trail remain part of the shared landscape, while seasonal traditions such as the Calgary Stampede Breakfast continue to connect campus and neighbourhood.

As Wood's Homes looks toward its next century, plans focus on modernizing facilities, expanding capacity, and improving access to care for children and families across Alberta. The challenges facing youth today are complex and urgent, but the guiding principle remains unchanged: to be here when it matters most.

Meela & Anne

Community Resource Centre Support

By: Pene Yuen, City of Calgary

If you've visited the Bowness Community Association lately, you may have met Meela Gunawardena and Anne Sureshkumar. Both are dedicated team members at the Community Resource Centre. They can help answer questions about construction updates, provide a needs assessment focused on impacts to your daily life, or offer referrals and resources.

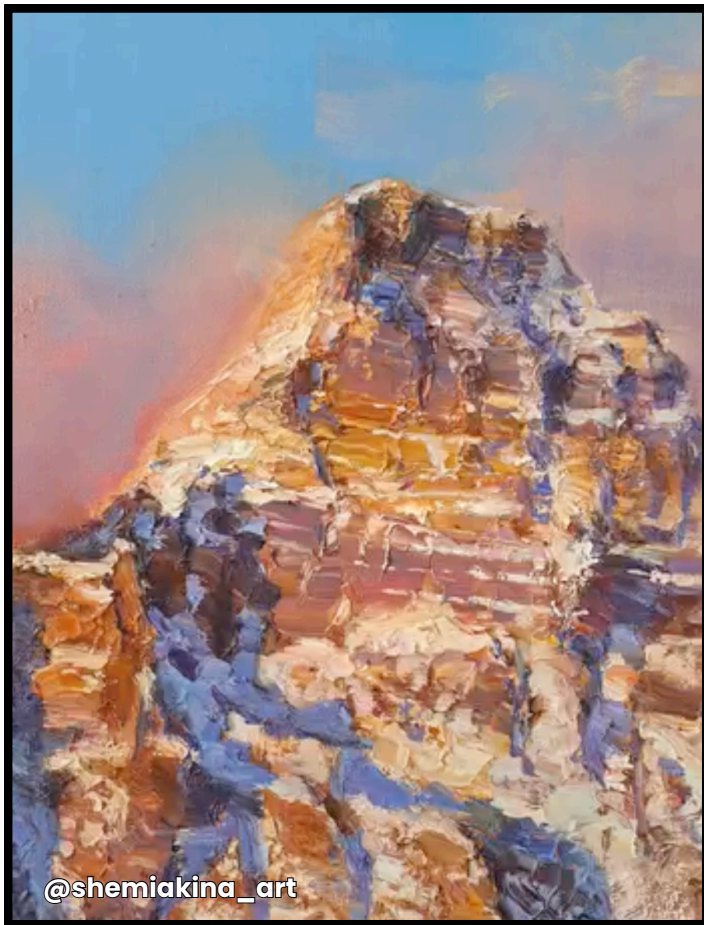
Meela brings over 20 years of experience as a Social Worker and is registered with the Alberta College of Social Workers. She is passionate about supporting youth and families, and since 2009, has been a member of Calgary Emergency Management Agency's Emergency Social Services team, stepping up during major disasters. Her expertise in resources and her friendly nature make her a go-to for anyone in need of guidance or support. When she's not working, Meela enjoys spending time with her son and husband.

Anne, a Registered Social Worker with more than 15 years of experience, has worked in clinical settings, community development, public speaking, and education. Raised in Zambia, Nigeria, and South India, Anne's commitment to social justice and empowering individuals from diverse backgrounds shines through her work. Outside of work, she enjoys music, cooking, and spending time with her family. Her approach to life is guided by the power of compassion, gratitude, and humility.

Meela and Anne are here to support you and everyone in our community. They are available Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 AM to 5 PM, and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11 AM to 7 PM at the Community Resource Centre. You're always welcome to drop in for a chat.



For more information, please visit calgary.ca/bears pawfeedermain. If you have any questions, or would like to contact the Bears paw South Feeder Main Community Resource Centre, you can email BSFMProject@calgary.ca, call 311 or submit a service request online.



Where Wonder Grows

By: The Bowmont Community Preschool Team

At Bowmont, we see children as mighty learners and thoughtful citizens. They are not just in our care—they are part of a living community, capable of caring, contributing, and belonging.

This belief comes to life through our commitment to the environment. When children are seen as citizens, their small, everyday actions—caring for each other, their spaces, and the earth—take on deeper meaning. These moments are filled with empathy, responsibility, and connection.

We often wonder: what kind of future do we hope for? A future rooted in care and respect begins in the early years.

One way we nurture this is through our “worm family”. After snack, children feed the worms and watch as scraps transform into rich soil. It feels a bit like magic—seeing what was once leftover become something full of life.



We're Adrian, Martinus, and Anne - the team behind AdrianMartinus Design, based right here in Bowness!

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In spring, the wonder grows. Children use this soil to nourish seedlings, which are later planted in a nearby community garden. Over time, they return to water, tend, and harvest—sometimes even digging up potatoes to cook and share together.

These moments come full circle. Children see how the land cares for us when we care for it.

These are more than activities—they are invitations. Invitations to notice, to care, and to belong. Through them, children discover something powerful: their actions matter, and they are part of something much bigger than themselves.

in the NOW!

Tips to Healthier Feet

By: Annie, NOW Nails & Spa

Feet carry us through everything—supporting our weight, absorbing impact, and keeping us balanced. Yet they're often one of the most overlooked parts of our body. The good news? A little awareness goes a long way in keeping them healthy.

Common Foot Issues & Causes

Ingrown toenails

While some cases are genetic, most come from trimming nails too short or rounding the edges. Tight shoes and repeated pressure (like running) can make things worse.

→ Trim nails straight across, lightly file corners, and avoid cutting into the nail.

Calluses

These thickened patches of skin form to protect your feet—but often signal uneven pressure. High heels push weight onto the toes, while flat shoes or slippers reduce shock absorption, leading to buildup on the heels. Both can cause long-term issues like bunions or joint pain.

Cracked heels

Usually caused by dryness, walking barefoot, or wearing unsupportive shoes like sandals or thin-soled footwear. Without support, heels expand and crack under pressure.

Fungal infections

Fungal toenails become thick, brittle, and yellow, while athlete's foot causes itching, peeling, and irritation between toes. These infections thrive in warm, damp places like locker rooms or sweaty shoes.

→ Risk increases with tight footwear, damp socks, and shared surfaces.



There are also other conditions—like bunions, corns, warts, and flat feet—that may be genetic but are often made worse by daily habits. Over time, these issues can affect how you walk and even lead to knee or back pain.

The encouraging part? Most of these problems are preventable with a few simple habits. Here are your top 7 tips for healthier feet to help you avoid these common conditions:

Top 7 Tips for Healthier Feet

1. **Trim smart** – Cut nails straight across before they become painful
2. **Moisturize daily** – Help prevent cracks and dryness
3. **Keep them clean** – Wash and dry thoroughly, especially between toes
4. **Choose better shoes** – Proper fit and support make a huge difference
5. **Give your feet space** – They swell, so allow room to expand
6. **Don't go barefoot** – Protect against hard surfaces and infection
7. **Stay hydrated** – Healthy skin starts from within



The Bottom Line

Regular pedicures every 4–6 weeks aren't just about appearance—they're part of good preventative care. Nail technicians can often spot early signs of concerns like fungal infections, skin changes, or circulation issues, helping you address them before they become more serious.

Prioritizing foot care now pays off in the long run. Healthy feet mean better movement, less pain, and more confidence—so they can keep supporting you every step of the way.

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From Broken Boards to Built Design

Award-Winning Bownesians and Internationally Recognized Designers

By: Zoë Decker

Adrian Martinus began in a garage—but not in the romantic, polished version of that story. It was a real working space, shared ambition, and a lot of sawdust.

What started as three people experimenting with wood has grown into an internationally recognized design studio built on one unusual, stubbornly specific material: broken skateboards.

The spark came from Japanese sculptor Haroshi, one of the first artists to explore recycled skateboards as a sculptural medium. At the time, the team was just beginning carpentry apprenticeships and learning the fundamentals of woodworking. Inspired, they started collecting boards—first their own, then those of friends, and eventually from local skate shops that saved damaged decks skaters returned for replacements. A material that most people would throw away became the foundation of everything.

But skateboards don't behave like traditional wood. They're unpredictable—different shapes, different wear, hidden cracks, layered colours, and limited supply, especially in a place like Canada where winter slows everything down. That scarcity and inconsistency became part of the design language. Every piece had to be efficient, intentional, and responsive to what the material could actually do.



The neighbourhood itself has quietly shaped the work. Walks through Bowmont Park and along the river valley often double as informal design sessions. One end table, inspired by the curved geometry of electrical boxes in the park, eventually evolved into their R5 design. It's a reminder that inspiration doesn't always arrive in the studio—it shows up on dog walks and in everyday infrastructure.

Sustainability has remained central, even as the studio has grown. Early on, they combined skateboards with salvaged hardwood flooring from construction dumpsters, forcing them to design with extreme efficiency and minimal waste. While they now rely more on new materials for larger furniture commissions, that early mindset still defines their process. Almost nothing is discarded—offcuts become smaller products, and only skateboard grip tape is consistently thrown away.



In 2016, the studio made a pivotal move to Bowness. What was meant to be a temporary upgrade from commuting to a garage in Airdrie quickly became something more permanent. They found a house with a workable garage almost immediately, and within 30 days they were renovating and building a functioning studio. Today, Bowness is still home—not just to the workshop, but to their families, kids, dogs, and daily life.



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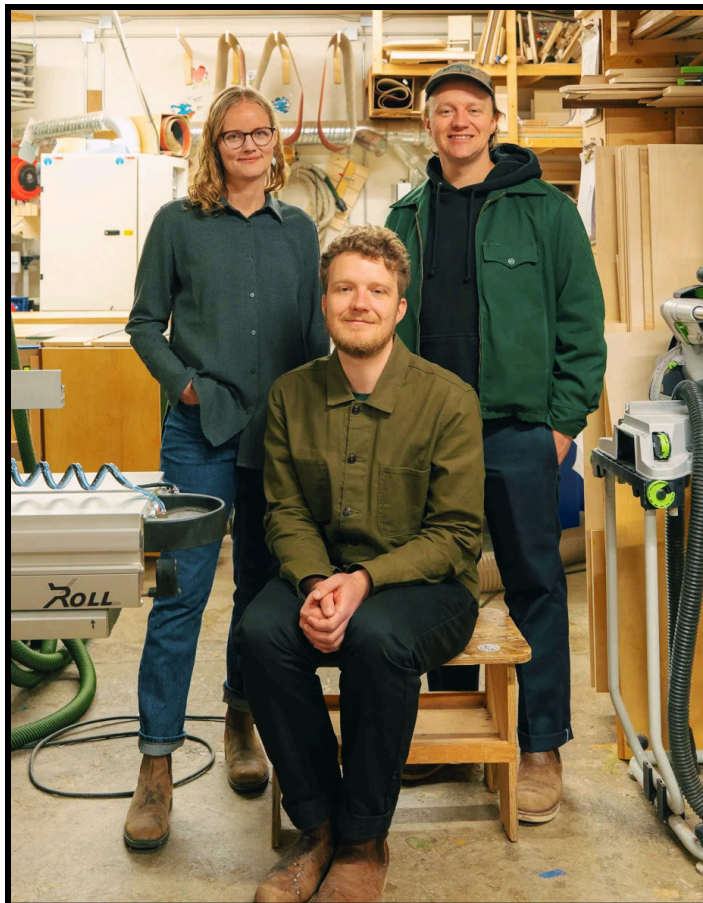
Their workflow follows a yearly rhythm: collecting boards in spring, stripping grip tape in summer heat, and building a full inventory of skateboard veneer that carries them through the year. This cycle not only ensures material variety but also shapes how clients experience the work, often seeing the palette of their piece before it's even built.

Not every challenge is aesthetic. Working with fractured skateboards requires constant structural judgment—especially for turned objects, where hidden cracks can become dangerous under pressure.

Among their achievements, the 2020 Etsy Design Award stands out. Their “Stackton” credenza pushed their process further than anything before it, and the recognition brought both validation and growth, funding a major upgrade to their shop and expanding production capacity.

Looking back, even earlier experiments like their first skateboard baseball bats in 2013 feel foundational. They revealed what was possible: not just reusing material, but transforming it entirely.

Today, AdrianMartinus sits at the intersection of craft, constraint, and curiosity—still shaped by broken boards, but no longer limited by them.



Use the coupon code “BOWNESS10” to receive 10% off any in stock AdrianMartinus product.



Photo by Lucy Houchen

more than just BUBBLE TEA

By: Zoë Decker

In Bowness' sister neighbourhood, Montgomery, Bubble Tea Brewers has become a familiar stop for locals—but behind the counter is a family story built on new beginnings, cultural pride, and a strong commitment to giving back.

The owners of the Montgomery location of Bubble Tea Brewers are not the original founders of the brand, but they brought the business to life in Alberta after previously living in Ontario. When they relocated to Calgary, they were inspired by a shared family love of bubble tea and the idea of starting something fresh together. More than just opening a shop, they wanted to create a space that felt welcoming and meaningful, while also finding ways to support people in need.

Montgomery was an easy choice for them. They were drawn to its small-town feel within a city—where neighbours know each other, local businesses are supported, and community ties actually matter. From the beginning, they felt it was the right place to put down roots and become part of something close-knit.



While the core drinks come from the Bubble Tea Brewers brand, the family has added their own personality through snacks and pastries, many of which are inspired by their Filipino heritage. That cultural influence plays a big role in shaping the warmth of the space and the flavours customers experience.

Community support is at the heart of their business. They regularly use tips collected in-store to give back. In their first year, they helped send over 300 school supply packages and provided groceries to approximately 300 families in the Philippines. More recently, they supported children locally by donating toys to a children's hospital, made possible through a combination of their own contributions and customer donations.



For them, giving back isn't a campaign—it's a reflection of how they were raised. They believe in sharing blessings and staying connected to both local and global communities.

Customers in Montgomery have embraced them in return, especially their real-fruit smoothies and unique drinks like halo halo, mango float, and creative lemonade and cheesecake-inspired series. In turn, the family values the feedback and support that helps them keep improving.

For them, Bubble Tea Brewers is simple: more than just tea, it's a place built on care, connection, and community.

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Chef Emad's Easy Egyptian Ta'ameya (Falafel) Sandwich

Ingredients:

Falafel mixture:

- 1 cup dry split fava beans, soaked overnight
- 1 small onion
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 cup fresh parsley and cilantro (mixed)
- 2 green onions
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp coriander
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp baking soda

For frying & serving:

- Oil, for frying
- Sesame seeds (optional)
- Pita bread or buns
- Tomato, cucumber, lettuce, pickles
- Tahini sauce

Chef's Tip:

This authentic Egyptian falafel is packed with plant protein, fiber, iron, and fresh herbs, making it a delicious vegetarian breakfast or lunch. Or taste the original fava-bean falafel right here in Bowness at Flame & Bite!

Instructions:

- Drain the soaked fava beans well.
- In a food processor, blend beans, onion, garlic, herbs, green onions, spices, salt, and baking soda until the mixture is coarse and bright green (not smooth).
- Shape into small patties or balls. Lightly press sesame seeds onto them if using.
- Heat oil to medium-high and fry for 2–3 minutes per side, until golden and crisp.
- Drain on paper towels.
- Serve warm in pita or buns with fresh vegetables, pickles, and tahini sauce.



Toys: A Boy's Best Friend

Optimus Prime and the Bowness Battle Between Worth and Value

By: Brad

As any good child of the '70s, I got to grow up in the golden age of toys. I watched Saturday morning cartoons with apt anticipation for the commercials that came with them. We grew up poor, so when I finally wore my parents down into buying a toy, it was as close as I would get to another sibling. I remember watching with awe as Skeletor sat perched and mocking atop Castle Grayskull, or as overstimulated kids in commercials dropped plastic, manhole-shaped bombs from the Party Wagon while Leonardo drove.

It was a good era.

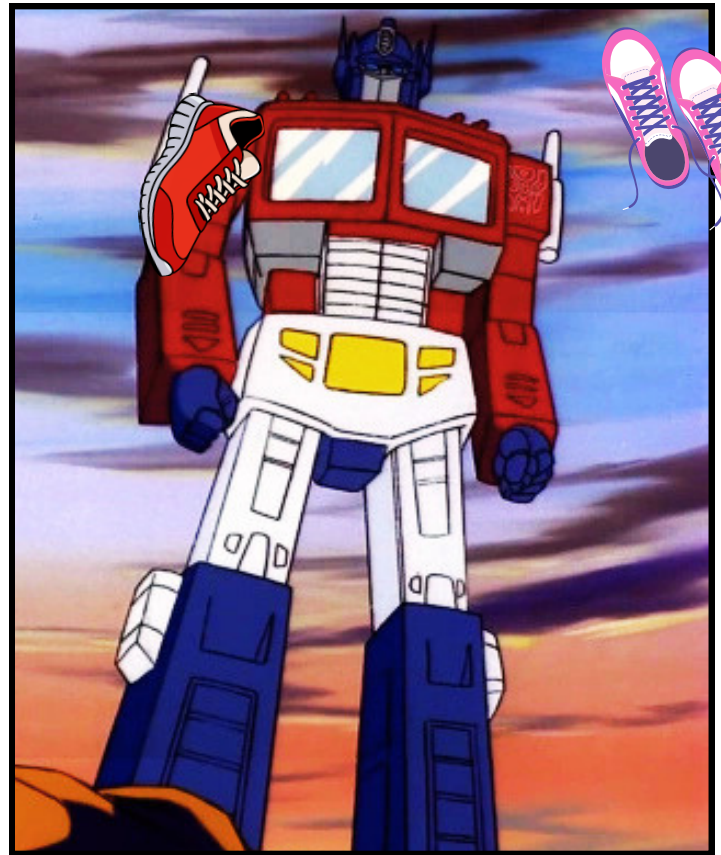
I, myself, was a Transformers kid. And I remember when we moved from Saskatchewan to BC when I was six years old, my father bought me an Optimus Prime. It must have set him back a fortune, but my father knew the only true antidote to leaving every friend I'd ever known behind was an anthropomorphic 18-wheeler. And of course, he was correct. I played with Optimus for all 1,800 kilometres as he fought the good fight against both the Foot Clan and the Decepticons.

At the end of the trip, in our new community, I showed Optimus to the first kid my age that I met. He showed me his Bumblebee. We still grab beers when we can, 40 years later. Optimus wasn't plastic; it was a bridge.

Nostalgia isn't often a good market indicator, but if my generation has done anything with resounding success, it's putting a dollar sign on longing. I can't tell you what those 22 hours of driving are worth, but I can tell you that had I left Optimus in his box with the shiny plastic intact, he would now be worth over \$2,000. I'll leave it to you to decide how ironic it is that this is also the rent for a one-bedroom apartment in a gentrified Calgary neighbourhood.

Douglas Coupland once wrote that the problem with my generation is that we are the first generation without God. It wasn't meant to be about religion, but about purpose. Those who came before us lived life as though it had a finish line, with the self-righteous confidence of a predetermined path. My generation rejected that, but in our hubris created another God: excess. We turned wealth into sport. We confused monetary gain with social value. We took the toy out of the box and, instead of asking what it was for, we asked what it was worth. Our generation made cynicism an art form and, in the wave of social change, forgot that worth often means more than value.

Watching a community become gentrified in real time feels like the personification of this idea. Bowness is one of the last of a generation of communities with cause and purpose. The borders of our neighbourhood feel increasingly pressed in by glass towers and curated pocket gardens. We're a community that values continuity and is shaped by memory—something that gives places a human outline, much like the toys we once played with.



To those who have been here long enough, Bowness is less a series of postal codes and more a neighbour we greet every time we open the door. We all knew it would grow and evolve. Much like outgrowing Saturday morning cartoons, expansion is a freight train you can't stop. But it stings, because you know what comes after will often lack the character that comes from being taken out of the box.

Optimus in the box is worth more. It has value. But what it lacks is worth. It has no scuffs from being pushed down a Hot Wheels track. His sword has never been stolen by a sibling's Mr. Potato Head and wielded against an oncoming horde of Cobra. He's never gone on sleepovers or road trips. Boxed Optimus has stature; he is a conversation piece, something to be displayed over drinks or discussed at work. My Optimus has no value. That is worth.

Our neighbouring communities are attractive, polished, expensive, and successful by all modern standards. They are beautiful, and I'd never speak ill of them. But they feel like boxed toys. They have value, not worth. Bowness still has the scratches. Someday soon, it too will have the new-car smell of increased value as homes rise and businesses evolve. Gentrification is a wave no one can stop. And the scuffs on our community will slowly be polished away.

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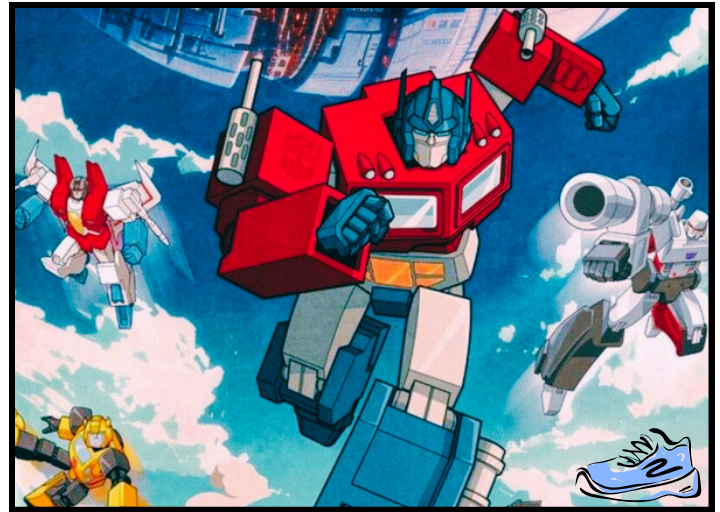
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Right now, Bowness feels like Optimus taken out of the box—lived in, worn, shaped by use. It has endured struggle and change. Generations have left their marks here, building something imperfect but real. The laminate is peeling, but we remember every tile. And now that we've built a well of worth into the community, it feels like the inevitable moment when that worth is converted into value. As though we are trying to place Optimus back into the box and hoping he somehow keeps both.

But we will remember. And many of us will resist the change, even if only in small ways. We'll miss the homes we grew up beside, the businesses we knew by name, the alleyways and shortcuts where we once believed that if we waited long enough before going home, our parents wouldn't smell the cigarette smoke. We'll resist swapping familiarity for efficiency, names for customer numbers, memory for branding. We won't just buy books online—we'll go down to Bowness Records and Books. We'll remember every mark left on the tables at the Bowness Pub, and every pothole that became part of the landscape.

For many of us, no amount of polish will replace what we know is still in the bones of the place.

Gentrification is a force, not a concept. And no matter how much we resist, nothing stands in the way of change or profit. But we'll remember. And I think my generation has learned to carry one lesson more than most: regret. And the hope that in



whatever we build next, we don't lose enough of ourselves that we stop recognizing what we once loved.

And maybe that's the final irony of it all—Optimus Prime was never just better in the box or out of it. He mattered because he moved between worlds. He was just as important displayed on a shelf as he was dragging through carpet battles and cardboard cities. Maybe communities are the same. Not meant to stay boxed, not meant to be endlessly worn down either—but something we carry forward, scuffs and all, remembering that value without worth is hollow, and worth without value is fragile.

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Money Made SIMPLE

By: Tietje White

Making Sense of Credit and Debt



Credit and debt can feel heavy—but they don't have to! Understanding the system and practicing a few good habits will help you manage and use credit wisely. And if you're hoping to make changes here, it's absolutely possible.

In earlier articles, we focused on understanding your financial starting point and building a spending plan. Here, we're looking at how credit and debt fit into that picture.

IMPORTANT

Quick note about me: I'm a recently retired midwife who now enjoys helping people with their personal finances as a certified financial coach. I've navigated my own bumpy road to financial independence and want to help make the process more approachable and less intimidating to others.



What is Credit?

Credit is simply borrowed money. It can help smooth cash flow, cover emergencies, or finance large purchases like education or a home. Problems tend to arise when credit is used to support spending that isn't sustainable, or when high interest quietly compounds in the background.

Interest and Why it Matters

In the context of credit, interest is the cost of borrowing money. When you carry a balance, interest compounds—meaning you pay interest on interest over time.

This is why high-interest debt, like credit cards, can grow quickly. Many experts consider debt at or above 7–8% to be high interest because of how significantly the cost can drag on your long-term goals.

Something to consider:

The power of compounding interest can work against you (debt) or for you (saving and investing).

Understanding this can help you make informed choices about how to use credit, what to pay down first, and how to prioritize your goals.

Is Debt “Good” or “Bad”?

Debt is often described this way, but it's not always that simple. Instead, when considering taking on debt, ask yourself:

- Does this debt align with my financial goals?
- Is it manageable within my cash flow?
- Is the interest rate reasonable?
- Do I have a clear repayment plan?

Paying Down Debt Strategically

Carrying high-interest debt can feel like swimming with a weight tied to your leg, so eliminating it should be a top priority. Two common approaches include:

- Paying off the highest-interest debt first (the avalanche method)
- Paying off the smallest balance first (the snowball method)

The avalanche method saves the most money, but the best strategy is the one you'll stick with.

Depending on your situation, you may also consider debt consolidation to simplify payments and reduce interest.



Using Credit Intentionally

A few simple habits can support a healthy relationship with credit:

- Pay credit card balances in full whenever possible
- Use credit in ways that align with your financial goals
- Avoid relying on credit to cover ongoing shortfalls
- Automate bill payments where you can

Your Takeaway

Take one small step this week: review your interest rates or check your credit report (see Sarah's article on credit scores in the last Bowest'ner for helpful tips!).

Credit and debt are simply tools. With clarity, intention, and steady progress, you can reduce stress and use credit in a way that supports your long-term goals.

Next time, we'll explore saving and investing—including Canadian tools that can help you build security and flexibility for the future.

Questions or feedback? Feel free to reach out:
tietjewhite@gmail.com

Bearspaw South Feeder Main

Construction for Stage B of the Bearspaw South Feeder Main replacement project is coming to Bowness.

Stay connected, informed and engaged every step of the way.

Visit the community resource centre located at the *Bowness Community Association*

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Open:

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Email bsfmproject@calgary.ca to connect directly with the project team.



Phone 311 to ask questions, learn more, or share your thoughts.



Visit calgary.ca/bearspawfeedermain to learn more about area construction impacts and find community updates.



Thank you for your continued support



Right Plant, Right Place

A Practical Guide to Growing Native Plants in Your Garden

By: Ben Hartney, ALCLA Native Plants

Growing native plants is all about working with your landscape instead of against it. When you match the right plant to the right place, gardens become lower maintenance, more resilient, and full of life—from pollinators to birds and beneficial insects.

Below is a simple guide to help you choose native plants based on light, moisture, and garden type, along with tips to help you succeed.

South-Facing Areas

South-facing spaces tend to get intense sun, wind, and dry conditions. These areas are ideal for prairie-adapted plants that thrive with less water and lots of light.

Best choices:

- Blue grama grass (*Bouteloua gracilis*)
- Little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*)
- Blanket flower (*Gaillardia aristata*)
- Prairie smoke (*Geum triflorum*)
- Leafy arnica (*Arnica chamissonis*)
- Harebell (*Campanula alaskana*)

Why these work: These species are naturally adapted to prairie environments, meaning they handle full sun, drought, and lean soils with ease.

North-Facing Areas

North-facing gardens receive less direct sun and often hold more moisture. These conditions suit shade-tolerant native species.

Best choices:

- Early blue violet (*Viola adunca*)
- Wild strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*) – can also handle full sun
- Northern bedstraw (*Galium boreale*) – adaptable to sun or partial shade
- Red elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*)

Why these work: These plants typically thrive with about 3–4 hours of sunlight per day and prefer slightly moister soils.

Garden Types: Matching Plants to Space

In-Ground Beds or on Terraces

These are tougher plants that compete well and help stabilize soil:

- Goldenrod
- Fireweed
- Green needle grass

Raised Beds

Raised beds drain more quickly, so drought-tolerant and adaptable species perform best:

- White pussytoes (*Antennaria parvifolia*) – makes excellent groundcover
- Yellow prairie coneflower (*Ratibida columnifera*)
- Nodding onion (*Allium cernuum*)

At the End of it All

Starting a native garden comes down to one simple idea: right plant, right place. Pay attention to sun, moisture, soil, and how water moves through your space, and choose a mix of plants that bloom from spring to fall to support pollinators. Be patient—native plants can take a couple of years to establish—and don't be too quick to assume they're gone, as many go dormant seasonally. Once settled, they need far less water, no fertilizer, and minimal upkeep. By letting your garden grow a little more naturally, you'll create a resilient, low-maintenance space that supports pollinators, birds, and healthy soil—all while working in balance with the local ecosystem.





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Where the Wild Things Wander

Coyotes, Deer, and Springtime Life in Bowness

By: Zoë Decker

Bowness is one of those rare Calgary communities where wildlife isn't something you "go see"—it's something you live alongside. Coyotes trot along pathways, deer slip between trees, birds fill the canopy, and sometimes even moose and bears will make an appearance.

To better understand this shared space, I spoke with Scottie Potter, Communications Coordinator at the Alberta Institute for Wildlife Conservation (AIWC), a wildlife rescue and rehabilitation facility just outside Madden, AB. Their team cares for injured and orphaned wildlife before releasing them back into the wild.

One of the reasons Bowness is such a hotspot for wildlife is its natural diversity. Scottie explained that "Bowness has a wonderful combination of forest, wetland, and river habitat that is highly appealing to a variety of species". That mix creates everything from food sources to shelter, making it an ideal corridor for animals moving through the city.

Spring is when the neighbourhood really comes alive. Birds are singing constantly, nesting in trees and shrubs, while other species are on the move in search of food or mates. Scottie notes that "May and June are the peak of breeding season for many of Calgary's wildlife", which explains why residents often notice more movement—and more surprising encounters—this time of year.



It's also baby season, which often leads to concern from well-meaning residents. Fawns and young hares are frequently left alone for long stretches while their parents forage nearby. Scottie emphasizes that this is normal behaviour, not abandonment. If you're unsure, AIWC always recommends calling their Wildlife Hotline at 403-946-2361 before taking any action.

Encounters with wildlife are also common along pathways and near the river. The most important rule is simple: give animals space. Large mammals like deer, moose, and coyotes can feel threatened if approached too closely. A good guideline is to stay at least three bus lengths away from most large wildlife, and about ten bus lengths away from bears or cougars. Backing away calmly or choosing an alternate route can make a big difference for both people and animals.



Coyotes in particular are often misunderstood in urban areas. Scottie addresses a common myth directly: "One of the biggest misconceptions about coyotes is that they will lure dogs to their pack members so they can attack together". In reality, coyotes are usually cautious and will retreat quickly, often returning to their families out of self-preservation rather than aggression.

Spring also brings fascinating bird activity. While most ducks nest on the ground, some species in Calgary's wetlands nest in tree hollows. If you look closely near water, you might spot common mergansers or wood ducks raising their young inside trees—an unexpected reminder of how adaptable urban wildlife can be.

Even smaller creatures offer surprises. Bowness is home to at least one garter snake hibernaculum, a communal winter den where snakes gather together. In spring, these sites can become active with courtship behaviour, sometimes forming what Scottie describes as a "mating ball" of snakes competing for mates.

Living alongside wildlife also means making small choices at home. Securing garbage, pet food, and compost is one of the most effective ways to avoid attracting animals like skunks, coyotes, and even bears. Other helpful steps include using window decals to prevent bird strikes, cleaning up fallen fruit from trees, and keeping yards clear of debris that could become shelter.

Ultimately, Scottie sums it up best: "The best way to coexist with wildlife is to always consider their presence". In Bowness, that mindset turns everyday walks, bike rides, and backyard moments into something richer—a reminder that we're sharing this landscape with a whole other community of wild neighbours.



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The Landing

Daytime Drop-in:

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