



High Tea at Elaine's

By Lee Hunt

Many of my previous columns have dealt with the "long ago" history of Brentwood, but this month I met with a relatively new group. This group, named "High Tea at Elaine's" has started what it hopes will initiate a new tradition in our community.

The idea behind this group is simply to link individuals on a block (or nearby) who share similar interests. This 'common ground' might be jogging, football, gardening, street hockey, walking, volunteering, books, BBQ – the sky's the limit. Group members could be male or female and of any age – from toddler to centenarian. The inspiration for this particular group came about when Elaine Stringer, a Barr Road resident, had High Tea at Victoria's Butchart Gardens. Elaine was so enthralled with the high tea concept that she decided to create a small neighbourhood version of it. The problem was that Elaine didn't know many of her neighbours. So, she wrote up an invitation and hand delivered it. Some neighbours responded, others didn't. Those who did re-



spond now meet once a month at Elaine's – the number of participants varies depending on "who's in town and who is away". Group members have resided in Brentwood from 6 years to 45 years.

The day I met with the group, Elaine served lovely sandwiches, tasty chocolate éclairs, plus tea – in china cups and saucers no less! The conversation topics ranged widely – travels, community, films (Elaine recently made a film about the group) ... but "no politics" as I was firmly told. Asked why they enjoy these gatherings, the women replied that they enjoy the opportunity to relax, to catch up on news, and above all, to meet new friends. The new friendships formed through this group have led to some of the members attending sporting events together, while two members travelled together to Churchill, Manitoba to see the polar bears.

So ... why not follow the lead of the "High Tea at Elaine's" group? Start a common interest group on your street. Elaine, who just happens to be Brentwood's Community Social Worker, would be willing to help you establish your project or to access some funding for it. Elaine's work phone number is 403-974-1900. Once your group is operational, remember to invite this Bugle reporter to drop in! My grateful thanks to Clarice, Jean, Elaine, Jill, Georgina (photo, left to right) and Louise (missing from photo) for your generous hospitality and willingness to share ideas – and high tea!



How Does Our Community Garden Grow?

By Sue Drader

The Brentwood Community Gardening Group (BCGG) is delighted to advise that vibrant new members continue to join our meetings. A heartfelt welcome to Doug, Kirsten and Michael whose ideas and energy are adding greatly to the group!

Our thoughts are with W., A. and L. who are dealing with some of life's most difficult situations. A reminder that your places have been "saved" for whenever you are ready. Thank you for all your enthusiasm, thoughtfulness and contributions!

To all Brentwood residents we extend an invitation to join us at our next meeting. There is no need for gardening experience; willingness is the only quality required. We are receiving guidance from Gael Blackhall of The Community Garden Resource Network; Aaron Taylor, our area Community Recreation Coordinator and Kelly Gaulton, the park Community Liason. The more people that are involved in the process the greater the success will be in making the garden a place where everyone feels welcome. For more information please call Sue at 403-289-4314 or e-mail us at brentwood-community-gardening@googlegroups.com.



THE CITY OF CALGARY
COMMUNITY & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

Why join your local community board or committee....

- Because your local community association is the first stop for people in your area to find out what is happening.
- Because when you join you become part of a powerful network to your neighbours, businesses, groups, schools, the city and more.
- Because being connected helps bring community minded people together and thus provides a friendlier and safer place to live.
- Because being a board member connects the community like nothing else! It's being a resource that helps neighbours make the most of their time, plugging you into the information and resources related to your neighbourhood. Whether it's transportation issues and community activism or sports schedules your voice, skills and leadership would help direct your community needs.
- Because your community needs your help! Get involved!

A detailed vision for the garden is one of the requirements of the City of Calgary's 2010 Community Gardening Projects. Thanks to Doug we have gone one further and have formulated a mission statement as well as a vision statement. Although they have not been finalized we share them now to provide a clearer picture of what BCGG is trying to accomplish for the Brentwood community.

Our Mission: Promote community, sustainable gardening, and urban agriculture, within Brentwood.

Our Vision: Create a beautiful, sustainable garden that will provide:

- Individual garden plots for a wide variety of Brentwood residents who may otherwise not have access to a garden
- All Brentwood residents with garden accessibility including those with mobility or other health and/or age related challenges such as being wheel chair bound or requiring beds of increased height
- Shared gardening spaces for growing friendships and food for charities
- Exchange of culturally diverse gardening philosophies
- Education and promotion of sustainable gardening practices throughout the community
- A sense of belonging by connecting various age groups through initiatives such as youth mentorship programs or senior citizen programs
- Promotion of cooperation through shared activities
- Increased neighbourhood pride
- Dedicated areas for surrounding area schools for teaching and learning opportunities
- A beautiful green gathering place within our community

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