



Graffiti Goes and Bank Account Grows for Charities



2009, remodelling it to be a combination grant and graffiti paint-over supply program.”

This year, groups that just want to clean up their neighbourhoods with a Wipe Out can still be supplied with all the GMP tools, including rollers, trays, paint, food and drinks, to do the job. But non-profit groups that sign up will be able to collect \$1 per square foot painted.

“It’s an interesting double approach to community service,” notes Irfan Kherani, last year’s project manager for the pilot, which had youth from the Edmonton Shia Imami Ismaili community take part. Their group, Challenging Ismaili Volunteers in Communities, or CIVIC, raised close to \$1,500 through the Graffiti Wipe Outs for another charity—Habitat for Humanity.

It was, says Kherani, “an amazing opportunity for Ismaili youth to gather while offering service, both integral parts of Ismaili culture.”

But the Wipe Outs also helped create relationships with other volunteer organizations. “We were fortunate to work alongside members of Edmonton’s Sri Lankan community during this project and the Downtown Business Association.”

It was also a terrific way to learn a new skill, says Kherani. “While it was a rather early start to the day at 8 a.m.,” says the university student, “the whole experience of meeting up as a community, having breakfast, putting on painting gear, actually painting over, thus removing, graffiti from our community, was great fun.”

“And amidst music and the warm summer sun, a whole bunch of us learned how to paint for the first time!”

For more details, call the GMP at 780.442.5302. Application forms will be available on the Capital City Clean Up website by mid-March.

Last year’s launch of Graffiti Wipe Outs was such a hit that the Graffiti Management Program (GMP) hopes to help even more non-profit groups “clean up” this year.

“It was a huge success,” says GMP manager Sharon Chapman. “We’ve built on what we learned last year to make it even better for

More Cleaning Power in New Graffiti Removal Kits

This year’s graffiti removal kits will include extra tools to help property owners eliminate spray-paint vandalism, says the manager of the Graffiti Management Program (GMP), Sharon Chapman.

“We had a positive response to the city providing paint removal kits last year,” says Chapman. Users last year expressed a need for something that could lift graffiti from windows, sidings, metal and other smooth surfaces. It was only this winter that

the city found a product was safe for citizen use. Two individual graffiti removal wipes are included in each kit, which still require that user follow important safety guidelines including wearing gloves and keeping away from children. If that doesn’t take care of the graffiti, Chapman urges property owners to use professional graffiti removal firms. “Graffiti removal chemicals are dangerous,” says Chapman. “It’s important to have trained professionals cleaning the graffiti to ensure citizen safety and protect property.

Also included in this year’s kit is a paint coupon. Combined with the wipes, paint rollers, trays, coveralls, rags, paint scraper, stir stick and spray bottle, the kit is worth \$60. To get one, property owners can call 780-442-5302. Owners will need to provide a photo of the graffiti and a police incident report number.

“We want property owners to report to police to increase our enforcement efforts,” says Chapman.



Changes Strengthen Adopt-A-Block Program



Changes in this year’s Adopt-A-Block program will allow business and residential block captains to enjoy the same Capital City Clean Up benefits, while freeing more resources to develop the Business Supporting Community program.

When CCCU started in 2005, only businesses were involved. Residential block captains joined in 2006 with their own newsletter and recognition events. But CCCU program manager Don Belanger says combining the two groups will allow volunteers to be part of a single, larger event, and that block captains have experiences to share regardless of where they’re picking up litter.

“Litter doesn’t discriminate between residential or business blocks and our perspective is that we won’t either.

We think it’s going to attract even more participation for us.” Belanger wants to see combined block captain participation grow from 856 in 2008 to 1,000 in 2009.

The change will also allow staff to focus on developing the Business Supporting Community program, which allows businesses to hire non-profit groups to patrol their block for litter on their behalf. (see the “WANTED” story, page 3).

CCCU Volunteer Coordinator Tamara Brunelle says changes in this year’s online registration should make the process even easier. Group registrations also allow for registration under a team name, whether it’s the name of a business, family, community league or non-profit group.

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Volunteers Make the G.R.A.D.E. by Signing Up!

If you're a returning Capital City Clean Up volunteer, you probably know already that you're doing a fabulous job of keeping Edmonton clean by picking up litter and reporting graffiti. And while that's a great motive for registering again this year, the following five reasons also make the G.R.A.D.E.

G: Volunteers will tell you they do so because it feels good to give back to the community. "You can have a satisfied feeling that you're doing something major," says CCCU volunteer coordinator Tamara Brunelle.

R: It's great recreation—an afternoon stroll with friends, a lunch time get away with your co-workers or an evening walk with the dog offers exercise, fresh air and a chance to get to know your neighbours.

A: You're raising awareness in and about your community. "It's setting a tone for social responsibility," says Brunelle. Picking up litter shows that people care about where they live, work and play.

D: Your actions discourage others from littering. "You're setting a positive example for others," says Brunelle.

E: The environment benefits—from wildlife to water tables—when there's no garbage on the ground.

Signing up is easy. You can register at www.edmonton.ca/capitalcitycleanup/ by clicking on "Get Involved" on the left side. Online signup will be available the first week of February; or pick up a form, starting March 1, from Tim Hortons or City of Edmonton locations to fax or mail in. Keep your eye out for the next issue, when we'll announce dates and times for two pick-up parties. Enjoy a meet and greet with the CCCU staff, grab your new block captain kit, and get ready for a top-GRADE year!

Report Now and Help Wipe Out Graffiti



Just because our city's blanketed with snow doesn't mean we should ignore graffiti, says Sharon Chapman, manager of the Graffiti Management Program (GMP), which is amping up for the 2009 campaign.

"We want to encourage all the citizens of Edmonton to get on board and start reporting graffiti again. That's the quickest way to

address it," she says, adding that reporting is easy—just dial 311 with a description and location.

By building this kind of inventory, the GMP will be able to work with property owners and city departments to begin removing graffiti as soon as the weather cooperates. "We're anticipating having logged 800 instances of graffiti by spring on both city and private property," says Chapman. "We want to get a jump on cleaning it up once the weather warms up."

In the meantime, Chapman still asks that property owners take steps to cover or remove graffiti that is hateful or profane. She's hoping to build on the success of last year's campaign, which removed or painted over 83,185 sq. ft. of spray-paint vandalism, by asking the 2009 Adopt-a-Block volunteers to help by reporting graffiti once they start doing their rounds.

CCCU is on the Move

Now that Capital City Clean Up has become part of the Community Services Department in the City of Edmonton's Neighbourhood and Community Development Branch, CCCU has pulled up stakes and moved to temporary new digs on the west side of City Hall.

The litter and graffiti-fighting team abandoned its old Century Place offices last fall for temporary space on the main floor of the Churchill Building (formerly the Centennial Building), at 10010 103 Ave.

Don't mark that address in ink, though. Come later on this spring, CCCU makes its final move, to the Beaufort Building, 10835 120 St., on the western edge of downtown.

But even though the address is changing, the phone numbers are the same. Call 780.944.5470 for general information; 780.496.8047 for volunteer info; 780-496-8252 for Business Supporting Community (BSC) details, and 311 to report graffiti and litter.



WANTED: Non-Profits Needing Funds; Businesses Needing Litter Cleanup

Last year's Business Supporting Community (BSC) initiative was such a success that Capital City Clean Up is hoping to expand it for 2009.

The initiative matched seven businesses—7-Eleven, Shell Canada, McDonald's Restaurants, Tim Hortons, West Edmonton Mall, United Cycle and Boston Pizza—with a number of different organizations such as school sports teams, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Young Life and Kids on Track. These groups were paid \$640 for every business site and city block they cleaned up for an

hour a week over 16 weeks. "We see this as a viable option for businesses that do not have the staff to do the cleanup themselves," says CCCU program manager Don Belanger.

"The non-profit group members not only took part in keeping their city clean," says Thomas McDade, CCCU Senior Program Planner. "They were able to send youth to camps and sporting events, raise funds for conferences and educational tours, and, in some cases, purchase uniforms for less advantaged children. Without the generous

support of the BSC business partners, many of these opportunities would not be possible."

In total, \$46,000 was paid out last year. BSC is sure to grow in 2009. "If you are involved with a non-profit organization and are looking for new fundraising opportunity, the BSC program might be for you. Also, if you work with or know of a business location that could benefit from this program please let us know," says McDade. You can reach him at 780.496.8252 or at capitalcitycleanup@edmonton.ca.

CCCU Volunteers Just Doing What's Right

"It's such a totally positive experience. Maybe others think it's dirty or garbage, but it gets you out there and it gets you to know the people in your community"

"The time is always right to do what's right," said Martin Luther King Jr., and for Jasmine Hohenstein, that time is now, as she signs up with Capital City Clean Up again.

"It's such a totally positive experience. Maybe others think it's dirty or garbage, but it gets

you out there and it gets you to know the people in your community," says the enthusiastic two-time residential and business block captain. "It doesn't cost you anything; it's a great way to get fresh air and exercise and it's something everyone at every age and ability can do."

Hohenstein loves King's quote, and believes passionately that her small actions can make a huge difference. "I may be only one person, but if I can get two or three other people in my community involved, the big job becomes a smaller job for everyone. And we can set an example for others."

When she started patrolling her residential route, Hohenstein dropped letters into neighbourhood mailboxes to introduce

herself and explain her actions. "People started coming out of their houses when they saw me and introducing themselves to me. And it's made a difference. There just isn't the amount of garbage there used to be."

As a business block captain at Scotiabank, she and a friend incorporate the patrol into a weekly, hour-long walk. Business people strolling along Jasper at lunch hour are often puzzled by two adults laughing and racing each other to get to the trash first. "We like to make it fun," she says.

"You should do something for your city and your community. It shows you're interested and it just makes it a better place. What's the downside about making it a cleaner place?"