

Block Captain's Family Volunteers at Olympic Torch Ceremonies



Charlene's family in the photo, from left to right: Ede Kootenayoo, Charlene Etzerta, Aaron Kootenayoo, Joel Kootenayoo and Jeremy Schillinger.

When the Olympic torch came to town last month, Adopt-a-Block block captain Charlene Etzerta and her family were front and centre, making sure that litter didn't mess up the celebrations.

"I was so happy when Trudy called and asked if I'd be willing to help," says Etzerta, of Capital City Clean Up's volunteer coordinator, Trudy Raadik. "It really made my day."

Etzerta and her family handed out flags before the torch arrived, which led to one of her many highlights of the day. "I managed to

run up and give a flag to [CTV anchor] Carrie Doll," says the star-struck Etzerta.

She and her family were also pleased to see so few of the flags and Coca-Cola bottles dropped on the ground once the torch had passed. Many people kept the items as souvenirs, but others placed them in the recycling containers, making the job of picking up litter from the event much easier for Etzerta and her family. "We had so much fun," she says. "We weren't athletes, but just to be there as a family and help was really good. It was really a memorable event."

Sign Up for Adopt-a-Block and Enter the Early Bird Draw!

Olympic torch relays, family fun, civic pride... it's all possible when you become an Adopt-a-Block volunteer. Sign up before Feb. 28 and your name will be entered in the Early Bird draw. This year, program partner Tim Hortons increased the prizes from two to three Tim Hortons coffee makers, as well as a supply of their magnificent coffee.

"Signing up is easy," says volunteer coordinator Trudy Raadik. "You can register at our website at www.edmonton.ca/capitalcitycleanup or email capitalcitycleanup@edmonton.ca for further information."

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School Programs Revamped for 2010



Capital City Clean Up (CCCU) is shaking up its school programs to allow students to participate in litter reduction activities throughout the school year.

“We’ve been doing three school programs simultaneously in the spring and we had to make some decisions about where to put our emphasis in 2010,” says senior program planner with CCCU Elvie De Benedetto.

This spring, CCCU is focusing on the Schoolyard Clean Up program, expanding participation from elementary to junior and senior high schools.

“Cleaning up is a shared responsibility, so we’re aggressively promoting the program to all school levels and putting together exciting prize packages that will be announced at the beginning of March,” says De Benedetto. “And as of March 1, schools can register in the program by going to our website.”

The Dream Up a Clean Up contest is being shifted to the fall, allowing more time over the school year for students to design a winning public service announcement about littering. The School Litter Reduction Challenge is being postponed to 2011.

Thanks to the generous support of HSBC Bank Canada, a new partnership with the Wildlife Rehabilitation Society of Edmonton (WRSE) will help Grade 4 and 5 students learn about the effects on wildlife and their habitat of dropping garbage or cigarette butts on the ground. These items can make their way into our river system. Up to 95 per cent of wild animals that show up at the WRSE are injured or orphaned because of human activity.

“Capital City Clean Up and the Wildlife Rehabilitation Society have a common message about litter,” says Cheryl Feldstein, WRSE’s executive director. Young people can really connect to the message when we talk about the impact litter has on small animals.”

Schools welcome these kinds of programs for their students, says Lori Nagy, Edmonton Catholic School Board’s manager of media and community relations. “As future adults, it’s important for children to know they need to be part of the solution in how they’re going to control litter and maintain a clean environment.”

To find out more about school programs and to register for the Schoolyard Clean Up program, visit www.edmonton.ca/capitalcitycleanup or email capitalcitycleanup@edmonton.ca.

City Vans on Vanguard of Spring Graffiti Campaign

Just because it’s winter doesn’t mean Edmonton’s two graffiti vans are parked in some cozy garage waiting for balmy weather.

“Even though we had -40°C temperatures in December and lots of snow in January, the crews were still out, taking an inventory of graffiti around the city,” says Sharon Chapman, who heads the Graffiti Management Program (GMP).

The quantity and size of this year’s graffiti will be compared to the 2009 inventory, to see if the City’s efforts have been effective. (Look for inventory results in the April Clean Up Connector.)

Crews are noting graffiti on City-owned property so they can get a jump on organizing spring cleanup. But they’re also recording spray-paint vandalism on private property, so that those owners can be notified and offered information about the support available to them to get rid of it.

“Notifications will go out to property owners by the end of February, and they’ll be asked to have the graffiti removed by May 15,” says Chapman. “City legislation says property owners must remove graffiti in a timely manner. We’re here to help them meet that deadline.”

For more information about help for property owners to eliminate graffiti, visit: www.edmonton.ca/capitalcitycleanup or email capitalcitycleanup@edmonton.ca.



Soccer Club Gets a Kick Out of Graffiti Wipe Outs

When Andrew Pagnotta's soccer club heard about raising some extra cash by getting rid of graffiti in downtown Edmonton, they jumped right in.

"It's a brilliant idea," says Pagnotta, president of Edmonton AC Milan Soccer Club. "One of our goals with our club is to bring a little bit of a community aspect to our program, and this makes our city look good. It also created a cool bond within the team."


The 17- to 25-year-olds took part in a Graffiti Wipe Out event supported by the Graffiti Management Program (GMP).

"Graffiti reduction is a shared responsibility and this is more cost-effective than hiring a contractor for an enormous cost to paint over graffiti," says GMP program manager Sharon Chapman. Groups have to fill in a certain amount of paperwork, take before and after photos and do the work to be paid the \$10.75 a sq. m (\$1 per sq. ft.).

"In these economic times, when it's hard for communities and non-profit groups to raise money, these funds are free to use as you see fit, whether it's for a soccer tournament, a park slide, community league building maintenance or a volunteer appreciation night."

Pagnotta's team is sold on the GMP's Graffiti Wipe Outs. "We've requested that we do some more."

Did you know

 Last year non-profit groups earned \$7,140 from Graffiti Wipe Outs. To register your organization, visit www.edmonton.ca/capitalcitycleanup and look for the "Wipe Out Application Form".

Edmonton Giants Seek Homes... Really, Really Big Homes

Do you happen to have a large, outdoor wall that needs a bit of pizzazz? Make that some giant pizzazz?

The Graffiti Management Program (GMP) is looking for oversized walls with at least 37 sq. m (400 sq. ft.) of space, particularly those that have been hit with graffiti vandalism, to feature images for their Giants of Edmonton program.

"Taggers and graffiti artists generally leave artwork alone," says GMP manager Sharon Chapman. "We want property owners to understand that murals are a great way to beautify Edmonton,

create interesting spaces in our community and at the same time, deter graffiti."

Diane Kereluk likes the idea so much she's hoping to find a wall along Stony Plain Road, where she's the executive director of the area's business association. "I've seen the murals that have been done to date and I really think it would be a nice added feature to our area," she says. It's also a great way to draw the community together, she adds.

While the GMP pays for the mural and organizes the artists, the giant images are recommended, and voted on, by the

radio listeners of program partner 630 CHED. "The GMP then works with the community to ensure that the mural is a good fit," says Chapman.

Giants to date include former Lieutenant Governor Lois Hole, sports fan Joey Moss, the Canadian Forces and Edmonton volunteers.

"We are actively looking for buildings with the space," says Chapman. If you have a wall you'd like to keep graffiti-free, call 780-442-5302.



Improvements for Business Supporting Communities Program in 2010

Last year's drop in Business Supporting Community (BSC) program participants has prompted improvements for 2010.

"The change in the economy affected us. We dropped from 85 business participants in 2008 to 43 in 2009," says Don Belanger, program manager for Capital City Clean Up.

But businesses still have customers who drop bags, food wrappers and drink containers on the block around their sites, and non-profit groups still need—now more than ever—money for their programs. BSC joins businesses with community groups that do weekly litter collections around their block for a fee.

West Edmonton Mall is a returning BSC participant. The mall appreciates the extra support for its own anti-litter efforts, as well as helping youth groups such as the Girl Guides earn extra money.

It helps get the cleanup done and you're also cleaning up your community...

"We are thankful for the Business Supporting Community program. The groups that have worked with and helped us in the past have been great partners and we are pleased to support them in their efforts," says mall manager Stacey Claffey. "West Edmonton Mall is committed to the Capital City Clean Up program."

Improvements for 2010 include:

- **new, lightweight brooms and dustpans in the cleanup kit to help with collecting cigarette butts and other small litter,**
- **lightweight sidewalk sandwich boards for better program and sponsor visibility while the cleaning occurs, and**
- **simplified, end-of-season billing.**

"It makes sense to incorporate BSC into the maintenance plan of your business," says Belanger. "It helps get the cleanup done and you're also cleaning up your community, supporting nonprofits and sending a positive message to your customers that you're willing to go the extra step to keep things clean."

To find out more about the BSC programs and/or to register, visit www.edmonton.ca/capitalcitycleanup or email capitalcitycleanup@edmonton.ca.



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