



The Gorge Canada Day Picnic is approaching fast and will bring with it the usual attractions plus some new features, a great entertainment program, and many more happy faces.

Coalition on homelessness & affordable housing to be established in Saanich

The GTCA and the Victoria Native Friendship Centre organized a workshop on Saturday March 18th. It was attended by more than 50 participants, and these people have taken

the first vital steps towards developing a community-based coalition to address the issue of homelessness and the lack of affordable housing in Saanich.

The attendees first heard an eloquent and passionate discussion of the issue by Saanich Councillor Judy Brownoff. This was followed by an informative presentation by Victoria Councillor Dean Fortin, who described the scale of the issue and the approach taken by the City of Victoria. The participants then engaged in an intense and compassionate discussion before breaking into small groups to discuss the five priority issues that emerged from that discussion: preventing people from becoming homeless; meeting the short-term needs of people in crisis or during extreme weather; addressing the need for more affordable housing; raising public awareness, compassion and empathy; and taking a comprehensive approach.

The participants committed themselves to taking several steps over the next six months. They also agreed to meet again in six months to review progress and perhaps formalize the coalition. Among the actions that will be undertaken are the following:

- Within the next two months, Bruce Parisian, Executive Director of the Victoria Native Friendship Centre, will invite all interested agencies in Saanich to a meeting. This group will discuss how they can strengthen inter-agency action on homelessness and affordable housing.
- A community-driven effort will be made to establish, by next winter, a comprehensive "Made in Saanich" extreme weather protocol.
- The group looking into ways to develop more affordable housing will continue their discussions and attempt to propose some innovative approaches.
- A communications group will work to develop better public understanding of homelessness. They wish to highlight who is affected, the scale of the problem, what needs to be done, and what can be done.
- A small workgroup will begin establishing the Saanich Coalition on Homelessness and Affordable Housing. The interim convener of this group is Brad Crewson, Community Relations & Program Development Coordinator of Pacifica Housing Advisory Association.

For further information, contact Paul Gerrard (386 2745); Bruce Parisian, (384-3211.); Trevor Hancock (<green-doc@telus.net>); or Brad Crewson (356-2555 or <home.reg@shaw.ca>).

— by Trevor Hancock
(Chair, GTCA Social Issues Committee)

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Gorge-Tillicum Community Association will hold its Annual General Meeting on

Thursday, May 18th, 2006

in the Lam Room at Pearkes Recreation Centre beginning at 7.30pm. All community members are invited.



GORGETILLICUM Neighbourhood News

We welcome comments—please let us know what you think of your newsletter!

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Unsolicited Articles Welcome.

The deadline for submissions and advertising for the next issue is July 15th.

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All 4000 copies of this newsletter are delivered by volunteers and we could always use more

a word from the president

The GTCA held a retreat last year to brainstorm how board members could best put their talent and energy to work on issues and opportunities in our community. Members were assigned to various committees (listed below). I believe that this has made the GTCA more effective.

Land Use: We have major development proposals for the corner of Tillicum and Burnside Roads, the Cheltenham Motel site at Gorge and Admirals Road, and at Tillicum Centre, as well as various infill applications.

Environmental Issues: We are talking to various stakeholders on long-range plans for Cuthbert Holmes Park and Gorge Park, and we are part of the "Gorge Waterway Initiative," a group of stewards for the Gorge Waterway.

Social Issues: On March 18th, we ran a very successful homelessness workshop. Over 50 committed people from different groups worked hard to find ways to combat homelessness in our communities. We received a Saanich Community Matching Grant to help fund this workshop.

Emergency Preparedness: We received a grant to help stock the emergency kiosk at Pearkes

Recreation Centre. This committee is working on future courses and workshops with the Saanich Emergency Preparedness department.

Transportation: The committees (East and West) continue to work on major and minor transportation projects in the Gorge Tillicum area, and we have developed a good working relationship with Saanich Engineering Department.

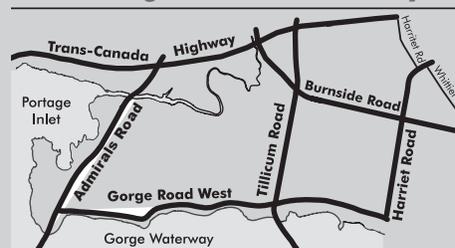
Newsletter: Maybe I am biased, but I believe we produce the best newsletter of any community association. Your \$5 membership is worth it if only to receive this outstanding document, which informs you about what is going on in the neighbourhood.

Picnic: Finally, our Gorge Canada Day Picnic committee is already hard at work on this year's event. Our 8th GCDP will be special this year, as we also celebrate Saanich's 100th centennial year.

Our AGM is on Thursday, May 18th in the Lam Room at Pearkes Recreation Centre. Come along, and you will have an opportunity to personally thank our great group of board members for the tremendous work they do on your behalf.

— Paul Gerrard

Gorge Tillicum Community Association www.gorgetillicum.ca



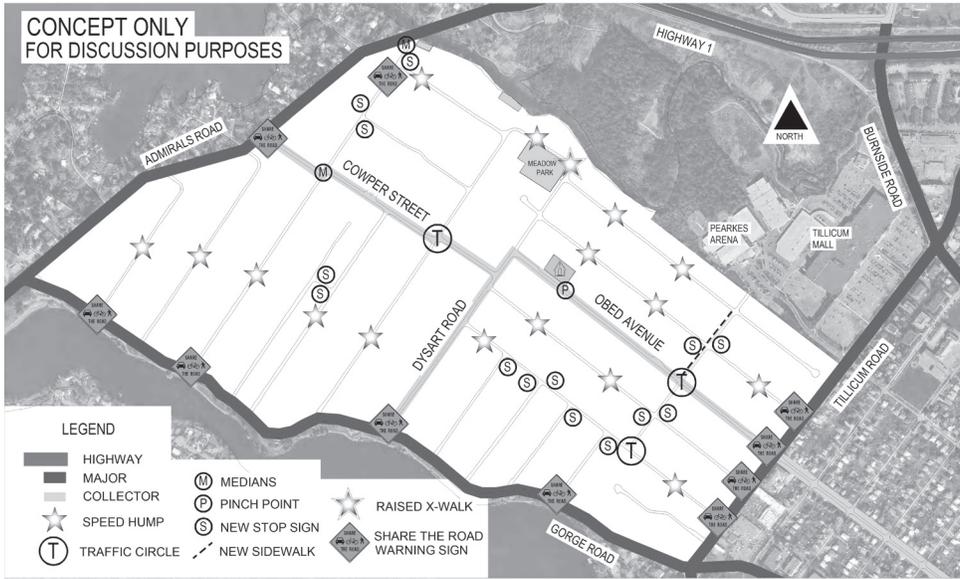
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The Board meets the first Thursday of each month, September to June, at Pearkes Recreation Centre. All members are welcome to attend!

INVITATION FROM Saanich Engineering and the West Gorge Transportation Committee (WGTC)



GORGE WEST NEIGHBOURHOOD TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PLAN

We now need your ideas so that Saanich can finalize the plans.

In coordination with our committee, Saanich Engineering is holding a Public Meeting on Thursday, June 8th from 7-9PM at St. Martin's Church on Obed Avenue. They will present their preliminary plan to residents and obtain feedback. This is your opportunity to talk with Saanich Engineering staff and fill out a comment sheet. If you need more time to think about it, you can email or fax the comment sheet to Saanich after the meeting.

We are hoping to get many of the traffic calming changes suggested on this plan into the budget process for implementation next year. If you would like your voice heard, then it is extremely important to attend this meeting. See you there!

— Donna Roth, WGTC Chairperson

In early March, Saanich Engineers presented their preliminary traffic calming plan for the area between Admirals and Tillicum Road to the WGTC. The WGTC was very

encouraged by the amount of work and thought that has gone put into this project thus far. To get a sense of what Saanich is proposing, please see the map above.

ROAD CLOSURE ADVISORY SATURDAY, JULY 1ST, 2006

On Saturday, July 1st the Gorge Tillicum Community Association is hosting the 8th Gorge Canada Day Picnic, a day celebrating our country, its people, and the place we live. An integral part of the day is the closure of Gorge Rd W. This closure has been approved by Saanich Council and is being coordinated with Saanich staff as well as B.C Transit. Here are the details:

GORGE RD WILL BE CLOSED to traffic between Tillicum and Admirals road from 8am to 6pm.

NO RESIDENTIAL PARKING will be permitted on Gorge Rd W from 8am to 6pm.. Residents are asked to park their cars on the sidestreets on June 30th. If it is necessary to leave on July 1, please access sidestreets by Vincent and Cowper.

VEHICLE ACCESS to and from Gorge Rd W properties will be for emergency purposes only. The westbound lane of Gorge Rd W must be kept open for emergency vehicles.

THE # 10 GORGE BUS SERVICE will be re-routed from Gorge Rd W directly to and from Tillicum Centre along Tillicum Road during the road closure.

Clearly, a road closure as widespread as this is asking everyone to be as understanding as possible. However, we believe this great community celebration is well worth it.

— Paul Gerrard, President GTCA

Standing up for you!



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Victoria - Hillside



SPRING CLEANING IN GORGE PARK

Earth Day found several people in work boots and gloves scouring Gorge Park. They were filling garbage bags and pruning away ivy and brambles around some cedar trees in the centre of the park. We want to thank all who helped out. A special thanks also go out to the Rotary Club, who planted the cedars in the first place; to Saanich Parks for their support and encouragement; and to Tim Hortons for the tent and treats.

Gorge-Us Art on Show

The Gorge-Us Art Group is an emerging group of artists living in the Gorge-Tillicum area. On May 20 and 21, from 10 am to 5 pm, they are inviting people into their homes and studios to see their work.

It is an eclectic mix of dried flower designs, jewelry, masks, paintings, photography, pottery, and stained glass.

This year, the event is in support of Saanich's 100th Anniversary. The tour is one of several studio tours in Saanich in May, and all the tours are part of Art Awareness Month. Sponsors for the Gorge-Us tour include Saanich District Council; Morris Frames & Gallery; and Glass-Smith & Co. The latter two venues will also have special presentations on the tour days.

Whether you are looking for a special gift, shopping for yourself, or are just interested in learning about the artists in the community, come to the Studio Tour; it is a fun and inspirational way to spend the long weekend.

Brochures are available at various locations. For more information contact Glenda at 920-0994 or Lyrica at 360-1707.

Local Heroes **Chuck & Judy**



Chuck and Judy Sigmund aren't really locals, and they probably don't think of themselves as heroes, but they have made a real impact on our community since moving to the neighbourhood six years ago. Both were raised in Detroit, Michigan but, in the early 70s, because of the political climate in America, they decided to move to Canada. They lived for a time in Vancouver; Chuck taught environmental chemistry at Simon Fraser University and Langara College, and Judy worked as a grade

one teacher and then as a nurse at Shaughnessy Hospital. Now retired, they sit on the board of GTCA and give time and energy to local environmental and social issues like the Georgia Strait Alliance, the Veins of Life Society, Shorekeepers and Blockwatch. Currently, they are very involved with the GTCA group preparing a Saanich Centennial project which involves tree planting and other improvements to Gorge Park East. In addition, Chuck has taken on looking after our fledgling website (www.gorgetillicum.ca). So if you are attending any of our upcoming meetings, look out for these two community activists: Judy always in the thick of the debate, and Chuck is always listening attentively to all points of the discussion. Active engagement in local affairs come as second nature to this month's Local Heroes, and we are so pleased to have them in our neighbourhood.

— Harry Lewis

Once there was an otter...

In the last couple of months, while walking along the Gorge, my husband Paul and I were delighted to catch sight of a river otter swimming in the Gorge. His house seemed to be in the storm drain outfall pipe at the bottom of Parkview. Each time we walked, we tried to spot him, and we enthusiastically took pictures. His presence made the walk more exciting and more beautiful.

On Saturday February 11th, as Paul was walking our new baby along the Gorge, he found a river otter that had crawled out of the water onto the beach beside the tilted willow. Sadly, this gorgeous animal had a severe head injury and was in agony and shock. A couple was there and had put a blanket over it. Even though it seemed pretty hopeless, they called a number of organizations, including Wild Arc and the SPCA. The couple took the otter to the animal hospital,

and we learnt later that night, that our little friend had been euthanized. Putting it out of its misery was the only thing that could be done. The otter was later examined by the Wildlife Vet at the Ecosystems Branch of the Ministry of Environment. They reported that the juvenile otter was emaciated, which was more likely the cause of death than the head injury.

After decades of heavy pollution, the Gorge is returning to health and wildlife is gradually coming back. We can hope that the Gorge will eventually be able to sustain the life of smaller sea mammals once more. And we can all contribute to the water's recovery by refraining from using herbicides and pesticides which leach directly through the soil into the Gorge. We hope that, by the time our daughter walks and talks, there will be many healthy otters in the Gorge for her to see.

— Carole Mauriet

GORGE CANADA DAY (Saanich Centennial) Picnic

This year's 8th annual Gorge Canada Day Picnic is going to be very special; not only will it be a local event, but it is also designated as one of Saanich's 100th anniversary celebrations. Over the years, we have had great support from Saanich in putting on our picnic, and we thank them for the chance to demonstrate, once again, the great community spirit that exists in the Gorge neighbourhood.

The return of all your usual favourites is anticipated: Opening Ceremony, Family Parade, Pancake Breakfast, Market, Mainstage Entertainment, Buskers Corner, Kids activities, Canine Corner, Classic Car Rally, Strawberry Tea, Wild Seafood BBQ, and Canoe Ride. Furthermore, while some acts on main stage are yet to be confirmed, we are hoping to welcome an impressive list of performers: The

Naden Band, Daniel Lapp, the Irish Stepdancers, Uminari Taiko Drummers, Alma D'espana Flamenco Dance, Esquimalt High Jazz, Sweet Adelines, and Jake Differ (a kids' entertainer).

We are, however, in need of some specific help for this year's event:

Fri, June 30th (1-2 hrs in afternoon) - moving chairs and tables

Fri, June 30th (evening) - preparing for the Strawberry Tea

Sat, July 1st (7-8 am) - setting up main stage, chairs, and tables

Sat, July 1st (4-5 pm) - breaking down stage, chairs, and tables.

If you can assist us, please phone 384-8460, but even if you can't, we will see you on July 1st!

— Harry Lewis

Keep It Down

What's your favorite backyard activity? Perfecting your flowerbeds? Watching the birds at the feeder? Playing catch with the kids? Chances are, it isn't listening to your neighbour's stereo.

One of the best things about our neighbourhood is the beautiful and expansive outdoor space we enjoy. However, it is sometimes hard to enjoy it when, wafting over the fences, comes someone else's taste in music. While some of us do like to add music to our outdoor experience, we should not impose it on other property owners. A lower volume, one that can't reach beyond, at the most, the next house, is fine; likely, those friends next door will let you know if you are disturbing them. But your music shouldn't reach any further. Furthermore, in this age of MP3 players, there is really no excuse for disturbing others who, like you, just want to enjoy their backyard.

If common politeness isn't enough of an incentive, you should also know that Saanich bylaw # 7059 states that anyone making any noise "which disturbs ... the quiet, peace, rest, enjoyment, comfort or convenience" of neighbourhood residences may be fined \$100 to \$500 for a first offence and \$250 to \$1,000 for subsequent offences.

So, this summer, consider plugging in the earphones, turning down the radio, or just listening to the sound of the birds.

A Celebration Concert

The Hampton Concert Orchestra is giving a concert on Monday, May 15th to help celebrate the Saanich Centennial, and it warmly invites local residents to attend.

The HCO is based in the Gorge Tillicum community. It is the longest continuously-active, community symphony orchestra in the Greater Victoria region. As such, it is proud to be able to help Saanich celebrate this significant milestone in its development.

The program will feature light classical music by various composers, both well-known and less familiar. It will be performed by the whole orchestra

as well as by soloists and small ensembles. Support for the event comes from a 2006 Centennial Matching Grant from the District of Saanich, The Victoria Foundation, and the Coast Community Fund.

The concert will start at 7.30 at the Spectrum School theatre, 957 Burnside West. There is ample parking, and light refreshments will be available in the interval. Entrance is by donation. For further information about the orchestra or this concert, please visit our website: www.hamptonconcertorchestra.ca

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NEW DEVELOPMENT *Proposals*

At their April meeting, three new development proposals were presented to the GTCA Board.

Two proposals were to rezone properties to allow the building of duplexes. One involves the subdivision of two adjacent properties on Lurline, and the other involves a vacant lot at 210 Burnside. In both cases, the Board decided it had no objection to the zoning application proceeding to Saanich. Each case will require a public meeting.

The major project involved the redevelopment of the Cheltenham

Court Motel site, on which the Victoria-based West Coast United Development Group wants to build a condominium complex. The Board rejected their previous proposal as being too dense, too intrusive, and of inappropriate design for the neighbourhood.

The new proposal is more appropriate in design and size. It reduces the number of units to 60; reduces the height; and provides for greatly increased setbacks and some public space. The architect, Herbert H. Kwan, has also advised the Board that the developers intend to engage

a professional traffic management consultant to produce a traffic management plan. This plan will include an emphasis on alternative transportation modes.

The Board decided that it had no objection to the developers proceeding with the rezoning application to Saanich. This will require a public meeting, and the developers may hold a community meeting prior to this hearing to ensure there is maximum opportunity for neighbourhood feedback.

Seniors Living Centre Proposed

The GTCA board has been approached by EY Properties and its architect, Frank D'Ambrosio, about developing the properties on the south east corner of Burnside and Tillicum running to Albina. Currently, these sites house a small professional/office building and some rather dilapidated rental housing units.

EY Properties is proposing to build a seniors' independent living complex with rooms for approximately 90 residents.

Aside from the apartments, there would also be a dining room, exercise room, rooftop garden, and a street front coffee shop (which will be open to the public). The site is deemed suitable for seniors' housing given its proximity to Tillicum Centre, Hampton Silver Threads, Pearkes Recreation, the soon-to-be Tillicum Library, and major public transportation routes.

The main point of debate at the GTCA board meeting -- and the subsequent community meeting, which was rather sparsely attended -- was the scale of the new building. The current proposal calls for eight stories fronting the corner of Burnside & Tillicum, step-

ping down to five stories at the rear facing toward Tillicum School. While the GTCA board has not yet taken a position on this proposed development, it would indeed be a landmark building in the urban village concept proposed for the Burnside-Tillicum intersection.

The proposal will come to a community Open House presentation prior to going before Saanich staff and Council.

The GTCA looks forward to hearing your views.



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PEMBERTON HOLMES



Space

Boulevard Tree Planting

Trees for your street



Last newsletter, we wrote about the great value of trees. Among other things, they are aesthetically pleasing, good for the environment, and beneficial to property values. And with a bit of effort, you can arrange for Saanich to plant rows of beautiful trees on each side of your street. Your neighbours on Earl Grey, Heath, and Vincent have already taken advantage of this opportunity, and they are now seeing their trees get bigger and more beautiful each year.

Here's a method that has worked well in the past. One or two people send a short notice to the neighbours about the Saanich tree-planting program and then follow-up with home

visits. Once they have a number of neighbours interested, they contact Saanich. The trees are planted in the fall just before the rainy season. Each participating homeowner is consulted about the exact location of the tree (or trees) on their boulevard. Saanich Parks provides annual maintenance such as fertilising, mulching and pruning for the first five years, but the homeowner is asked to keep the trees watered.

This year, the cost of each tree (which is subsidized by Saanich and BC Hydro) is \$77. A variety of trees are

available -- including Red Maple, Katsura Trees, Beech, Lindens, and Zelkovas -- and Saanich staff will gladly help you decide which are best for your block.

If you are interested, please organize your block, and then contact Kristine Kelly at Saanich Parks (475-5522) to coordinate an on-site meeting. The deadline for payment is May. 31.

— Richard Price

Let's Organize the Community

As the previous article describes, the Saanich Boulevard Tree Cost Share Program helps the District of Saanich landscape streets by encouraging and subsidizing the planting of street trees by homeowners. According to Schedule I-Sub-Division Bylaw 7452, homeowners can choose from a list of suitable boulevard species, but attention must be paid to what other species have been planted in the neighbourhood and will depend on local availability.

However, what if, rather than planting street trees arbitrarily in the neighbourhood and limiting the coordination to a single block, we had a coordinated neighbourhood street tree-planting program? A neighbourhood plan would identify key streets based on how we navigate through the neighbourhood. For example,

the major roads (Admirals, Tillicum, and Burnside) could be planted one way; the main through-routes (Obed, Cowper, and Colquitz) could be planted another; and the smaller traffic arteries (Dysart, Bodega and Obed); could be planted a third way.

It would improve pedestrian way-finding, define pedestrian routes, calm traffic, and aid in stormwater management. It would also help define our neighbourhood and give us a greener identity.

Home owners would benefit from increased property value, more comfortable living conditions, and more attractive streets.

Colquitz Avenue is a great example of what this type of planning can achieve over time.

Colquitz was planted with English Elm trees after World War II. Now the street is a feature in the neighbourhood. Other examples can be found elsewhere in Victoria and in Saanich. Upper Shelbourne Avenue, for example, has a glorious stretch of mature trees.

Are you interested in developing majestic tree lined streets like these for your grandchildren and future generations? Would you be willing to help?

— Scott Murdoch

We Want YOU....

If you are not a member of the Gorge Tillicum Community Association, please consider joining us. And do it soon. Our AGM is coming up in May, and new members must be registered 30 days beforehand to be eligible to speak and vote at the meeting (existing members can renew at any time prior to the AGM, but it saves us time and money if you do so now).

So don't delay; join up or renew now, and do your part to keep your Community Association strong and vibrant. The cost is a mere \$5 per person. Your neighbourhood thanks you.

Gorge Tillicum Community Association, P.O.
Box 44152, Victoria, BC V9A 2A0

2006 Membership Application/ Renewal (delete one)

Name(s) : _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Cheque enclosed (\$5 per person for individuals, \$25 corporate):

\$ _____



At the Centre

G.R. PEARKES RECREATION CENTRE

Mosaicking Silver's Past & Future's Green

This year we celebrate two amazing milestones: Saanich's Centennial and the 50th anniversary of Les Passmore Silver Threads Seniors Centre. And what better way is there to celebrate than with a creative community art project?

This spring and summer, in collaboration with the Mosaic the City Society – an initiative which fosters 'community unity' through the planning, creation, and recording of mosaic projects – a joint venture is taking place at Pearkes Recreation Centre and Silver Threads Seniors Centre. This unique endeavour focuses on the often undervalued benefits of intergenerational work and play. It acknowledges that rich learning can occur between the young and the old, and uses this to both strengthen neighbourhood ties and create something beautiful.

Mosaicking Silver's Past & Future's Green will bring together seniors from Les Passmore, and youth from the Coredoor Teen Activity Centre. Together they will work on a common project, a series of colour-



ful mosaics that represent what matters to them in their community. Throughout every phase of the project,

the accomplishments of the group will be recorded in written and video journals; these will serve as a reminder of what community unity looks and feels like. Once completed, the mosaics will be mounted in the community as a lasting legacy to the power of creating together.

The project is currently in the outreach phase and is looking for people who enjoy laughing, eating, meeting neighbours, and possibly even a little mosaicking! Everyone is welcome. If you like creative writing, you can join the documentation team; if you have a knack for planning good parties, you can join the celebration team; if you are artistic, you'd fit it perfectly with the design team. No matter your talent, we can use you. For more information contact Chris @ 475-5400 or fillerc@saanich.ca.

Great programs offered this Spring

4 Minute Fitness

May 17, 7:00-9:45pm, Garth Homer Centre, (4minutefitness.com)

Mature Driving Workshop (Free)
Location Saanich Police Station
Several dates and times

Body Sculpting for Women
May, June and July classes

Fusion Fitness
May, June and July classes

Mosaic Tile Sunburst Mirror
June 5 and 12, 6:30-9:30pm, 2 classes

Register Now For These Great Classes

Precision Skipping (7-12yrs)
Sunday Feb 12, Mar 12 9:30-3:30pm.

Cultural Cooking for Kids (10-14yrs)
Japanese Wed Mar 2 5:00-7:30pm.
Malaysian Wed Mar 16 5:00-7:30pm
Punjabi Wed Apr 6 5:00-7:30pm

Ballroom Dance - all styles & levels
Sunday evenings

Dancing With Words- Poetry Writing
Mondays Feb 28-Apr 18 7:30-9:30pm.

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Tuesday 9:00-10:30am

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