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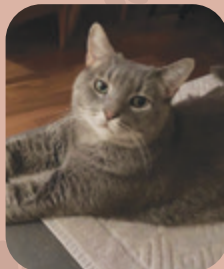
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To have your pet featured, email news@mycalgary.com



The Calgary Cottonwoods

by Garth Paul Ukrainetz

At great bar of Bow River
Drink the Calgary Cottonwoods
Thirsty trees of the prairies
Swill their fill on high plains

Lined along their trough flowing
Massive tree trunks for bar stools
Guzzling grog of the glaciers
Mixed with snowmelts and rains

Another round for the woodlands
Another round for Bow Valley
West Alberta's fine water
To the mountains they toast

Mammoth roots, gentle giants
Anchored tightly to city
Drink the Calgary Cottonwoods
With their Bow River host

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A Small Act of Kindness Can Change a Day

by Rebecca Pink, Registered Provisional Psychologist



Kindness may seem like a simple gesture, but I believe that it's one of the most powerful things we can offer another human being and ourselves.

We live in a world that moves quickly. We are often rushing from one responsibility to the next, reacting instead of pausing, making assumptions instead of asking questions. It's easy to forget that every person we encounter is carrying a story that we know nothing about.

The person that seems impatient may be overwhelmed. The friend who's been quiet may be grieving or dealing with things privately. The parent who appears distracted may be carrying worries they haven't shared with anyone. Even the people who seem to have it together may be quietly fighting battles no one else can see. The truth is that we are all living complex realities. That is why kindness matters so much.

Kindness isn't about having the perfect words or fixing someone else's problems. Sometimes it's a smile, a

little extra patience, a warm greeting, a great big hug, or choosing compassion over criticism. Sometimes it's simply giving someone the benefit of the doubt and being open to their perspective and being aware of subjective realities. Perhaps the person who needs that kindness today is you.

We can be incredibly generous with others while being our harshest critic. What if we extended ourselves the same grace we so willingly offer those we love, respect, and care for? Imagine what could happen if each of us choose kindness first. Every person is carrying a story and lived experiences that we may never fully understand. We may not know what someone else is carrying, but we can always decide how we show up. Kindness, no matter how small, has a way of reaching further than we realize. Sometimes the smallest moments of compassion are the ones that stay with us the longest.

Take good care.

FRIENDS *of* Fish Creek

Making Your Calgary Garden More Drought Tolerant

In partnership with the City of Calgary, we're expanding our Grow with Us program to include native plant plug giveaways starting this September. Thank you to the City and to our partner, the Alberta Native Plant Rescue Foundation (ANPRF), who this wouldn't be possible without. Read on to find out more about native plants, the ANPRF, and how you can sign up to get free native plant plugs.



Sticky Purple Geranium (Geranium viscosissimum)

Why Native Plants?

Native plants are not only beautiful and great for native pollinators and all our other native wildlife—they're also highly drought tolerant. Since Alberta often has long stretches without much precipitation, and these plants evolved alongside its dry climate, they have ways of making it through long dry periods that other, non-native species don't have. A great example is long roots that can tap into water reserves deep below the ground's surface.

This means that once native plants are established, whether in their native grasslands or in your garden, they're extremely resilient. Perennial native plants can not only weather our hot and dry summer conditions;

they make it through our winters to pop back up in spring to show off beautiful foliage and flowers each year. I'm sure many of the gardeners reading this have lost a perennial or two (or more, with some of the particularly frosty winters we've had here) to the cold Southern Alberta climate. While native species aren't totally immune to the effects of the cold, their deep roots are often safe from the deep freeze, and you'll see them coming back strong in spring after some of our colder winters.

Looking For Free Native Plant Plugs?

Sign up for our Grow with Us mailing list at www.friendsoffishcreek.org/gwu. We'll email you letting you know when we're running giveaways and provide a registration link for each giveaway.

When you register for a giveaway, we'll ask you to complete a short survey about your experience with native plant gardening and why you're interested in getting free native plants. We'll be in touch later in the year with a follow-up survey.

Show up, grab your plugs, and get them into your garden! Once you've claimed your plugs, you'll need to wait until our next round of giveaways in 2027 to participate again. If you're interested in sourcing more plugs or mature plants than what were giving away, you can follow our partner, the Alberta Native Plant Rescue Foundation and sign up for their email list to go out to a plant rescue! Follow @albertanativeplantrescue on Instagram for more information.

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Photo Gallery

Images by Syed Adeel Hussain



Widowmaker Eh



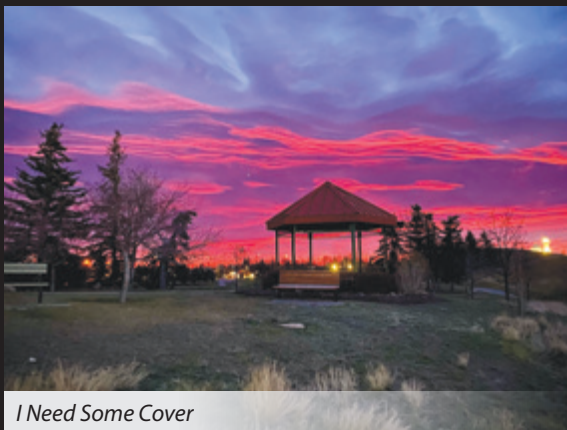
Bow River



Clouds in the Forest

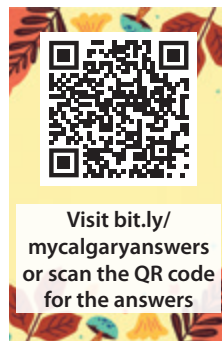
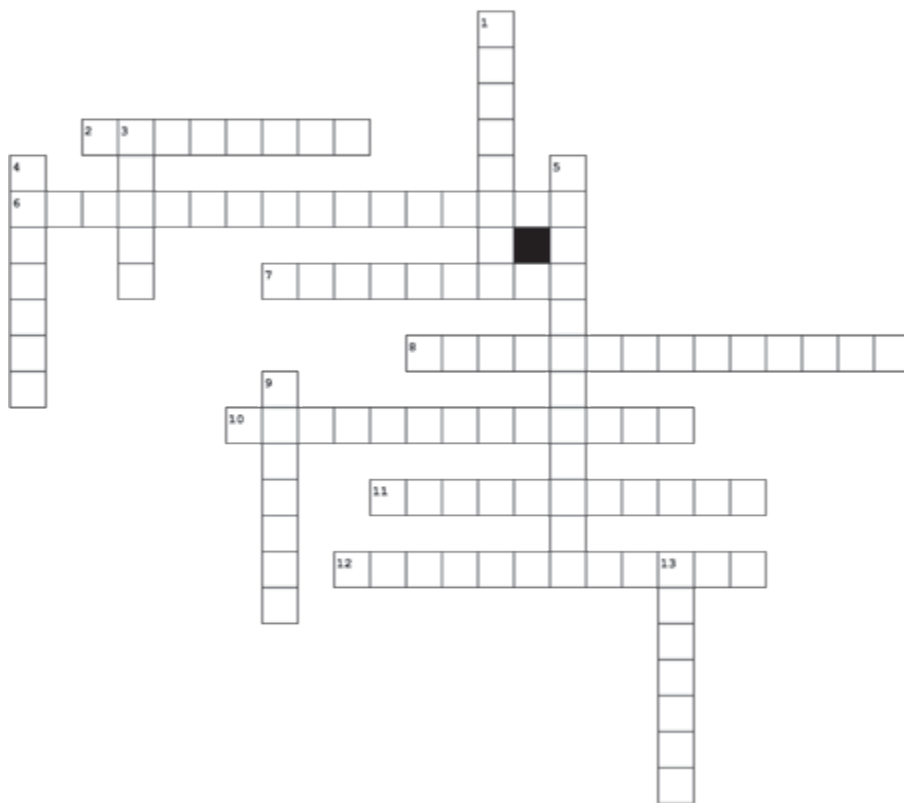


The Ice Caves



I Need Some Cover

September Crossword



Across

2. Used for carrying textbooks and other school supplies, this item is a back-to-school essential.
6. This American band is known for their classic songs, "Let's Groove" and "September."
7. These bears are the smallest variety found in Canada.
8. First airing in 2013, this fun kid's cartoon follows a young boy with his gem companions across the galaxy.
10. Make a stop here in September and you will find a variety of apples, pears, and figs for sale.
11. *The Long Walk*, a film starring Copper Hoffman, is an adaptation of the novel by this famous author.
12. *The Rise and Fall of a Midwest Princess*. The album released September 22, 2023 was written by this up-and-coming pop singer.

Down

1. This vibrant blue stone representing loyalty and the divine is also the birthstone for September.
3. This bright purple flower is considered September's primary birth flower.
4. Born September 4, 1981, in Houston Texas; this famous singer got her start in the girl group Destiny's Child.
5. This English author wrote *Animal Farm* and *1984*. These novels are typically assigned reading in schools even 80 years after their release.
9. In the world of theatre, speaking the name of this Shakespearean play is considered bad luck. Instead, they refer to it as, "The Scottish Play."
13. This mythical beast is sometimes called, "Canadian Nessie."

Fall Migration is Underway: How to Help Southern Alberta's Travelling Birds

by the Calgary Wildlife Rehabilitation Society



As summer starts to cool with the dawn of fall, one of nature's most remarkable journeys is underway across Southern Alberta. Countless birds begin migrating south, travelling hundreds or even thousands of kilometres to reach warmer wintering grounds. For many species, September marks the peak of this seasonal movement, making it one of the best times to observe birds, and one of the most important times to help mitigate human-related risks.

During migration, birds rely on favourable weather and places where they can rest and refuel. They navigate using natural cues such as the sun and stars, known landmarks, and the Earth's magnetic field to complete their journeys. Along the way, they stop in wetlands, grasslands, parks, and urban green spaces throughout Alberta before continuing south.

While migration is a natural process, urban areas can present unexpected hazards. One of the greatest human-related threats is window collisions. Birds do not recognise glass as a solid barrier. Instead, they often see reflections of trees or open sky, or they mistake transparent glass for open space. During migration, when many birds move through unfamiliar urban areas, such collisions become much more common. Research estimates tens of millions of birds die each year in Canada after striking windows, with most collisions occurring at homes and low-rise buildings rather than skyscrapers.



Fortunately, small changes at home can make a significant difference.

One of the most effective ways to reduce collisions is to make windows more visible to birds. Applying patterns, decals, tape, or specialised films to the outside of glass helps birds recognise it as a barrier. For the greatest effectiveness, the markings should cover the entire window, with gaps no larger than 5 centimetres. While they cover a large area, these covers are unobtrusive and don't block the view from a window.

Reducing unnecessary outdoor lighting at night can also help migrating birds. Many songbirds migrate after dark and use the moon and stars for navigation. Bright artificial lighting can disorient them, drawing birds into urban areas where the risk of collisions with buildings and windows increases. Turning off unnecessary exterior lights or closing blinds after dark during migration season can help reduce this risk.

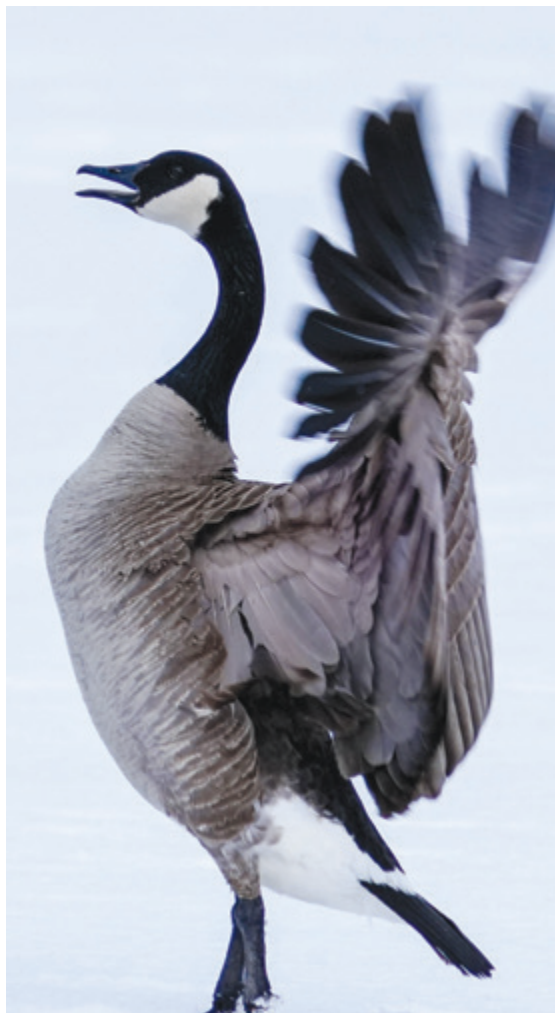
Although food is important during migration, Calgary Wildlife does not recommend putting out bird feeders.

Feeders bring many birds together around shared food and surfaces, where contaminated seed, water, saliva, and droppings can increase the spread of disease. This is especially concerning during migration, when local birds mix with visitors travelling long distances, and infections may be carried between populations.

A bird bath can provide water without concentrating birds around a food source, but it still requires careful maintenance. Replace the water daily or every other day, scrub the basin regularly and place it away from untreated reflective windows. Planting native flowers, shrubs, and trees is an even better way to support migrating birds by providing natural food, shelter, and resting places without drawing large numbers of birds to a single feeder.

Position any bird baths either within one metre of windows or away to help reduce the likelihood of high-speed collisions. Research has also shown that landscaping and vegetation placed directly in front of reflective windows can unintentionally increase the risk of collisions. Rather than removing valuable habitat, take special care of nearby glass and try to make the glass visible to birds using effective collision-prevention treatment.

Fall migration offers a chance to witness an extraordinary natural event happening right above our communities. Whether you notice flocks of geese overhead, hear the calls of migrating songbirds, or spot unfamiliar visitors in your neighbourhood, these travellers are making an incredible journey that depends on safe places to rest along the way. Small choices at home can make a meaningful difference for birds travelling hundreds or even thousands of kilometres.



Paws for Celebration!

September is Happy Cat Month! Did you know about 75% of dogs visit the vet annually for checkups and preventative care, while only about 40-50% of cats do? That's why the month of September is dedicated to celebrating and promoting the health and happiness of our feline friends!



Apple Crisp

by S. Law



If you have had the chance to stop by your local Farmers' Market, I'm sure you've seen an abundance of apples. What better way to deal with such an overhaul then by making something delicious. Personally, my favourite way of using fresh apples is making apple crisp. It's easy, requires almost no tools, and is always a hit. If you've got some apples to spare, why not give it a try!

Ingredients

Filling:

- 2 cups of apples, sliced or chopped
- ½ cup of white sugar
- 2 tablespoons of cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon of nutmeg

Base/Topping:

- 1½ cups of rolled oats
- 1 cup of flour
- ¼ cup of brown sugar
- ½ cup of butter or margarine
- 1 teaspoon of salt

Directions

1. Preheat your oven to 425°F degrees and prepare a 9 x 9-inch baking pan.
2. Begin by washing and cutting your apples into thin slices or small chunks. There is no need to peel them

unless desired. Place all the apples in a bowl with your white sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Massage everything together until your apples are well coated. If the mixture seems too dry you can add a teaspoon of lemon juice to add a bit more liquid.

3. In another bowl, combine your oats, flour, and salt.
4. Take your butter or margarine and tear it into chunks overtop of the mixture. Begin crumbling the butter between your fingers, turning the dry ingredients into a slightly wet mixture.
5. Press around 1/3 of the oat mixture into the bottom of your pan. Press very firmly to create a solid base.
6. Pour the apples into the pan and spread evenly.
7. Taking the remainder of your oat mixture, add the brown sugar and mix gently, do not fully combine, the lines of brown sugar are what caramelize on top of your crisp.
8. Add the rest of the oat mixture to the top of your crisp, it doesn't need to be pressed, just evenly distributed across the top.
9. Bake in the oven for 30 to 45 minutes until golden and bubbling. Remove it from the oven and let it rest for at least 20 minutes. Serve with vanilla ice cream, whipped cream, or anything else of your choosing!

September's Reflection

by Michelle Macdonald, Letter Writing and Mail Club Enthusiast.

Write about a relatively new social trend that you appreciate.

Dear reader,

Social trends are ever-changing, and many are for the better. One shift in particular is near and dear to my heart: the increasing value our society places on pets.

From the moment I could speak, I began asking for a pet dog. Every single Christmas I placed "dog" at the top of my wish list. The significant pressure I put on both Santa and my parents was to no avail; my parents were not "dog people".

Over three decades later, that yearning for a four-legged, furry friend had never faded. In early 2020, my family began fostering dogs from a local shelter as a "test run" to see if we could handle the responsibility. We quickly realized we could. Each time a foster dog went to their forever home, I grieved their absence. The extra work felt worth it. We were ready.

When the world slowed down in the spring of 2020, a combination of isolation and extra time made the decision to officially adopt our own dog quite easy. We weren't alone; statistics showed that an unprecedented number of Canadians brought a pet into their homes during that time. It drastically accelerated a shift towards celebrating the creatures that provide us with companionship and unconditional love.

Today, society is becoming a friendlier place for pet owners. I've noticed the City of Calgary has become exceptionally welcoming to dogs. New communities are intentionally designed with dog parks, and many outdoor patios welcome our furry friends. We even have a cat café downtown and puppy yoga throughout the city.

Our pandemic puppy, Luna, is six years old this year. She was the piece our family didn't know we were missing until she arrived and made us feel complete. She was worth the wait.

Happy writing,

Michelle

Write It Forward



Now it's your turn to write it forward. Write a friend, neighbour, or family member about our monthly reflection.



Curbside Treasure Hunt: One Weekend, Countless Finds.

by *The City of Calgary*

On September 12 and 13, join the city-wide Curbside Treasure Hunt! Set out gently used items on your curb and label them with a sign saying “free” for neighbours to take and/or explore your neighbourhood for free finds as well. It’s a fun and easy way to give your things a second life and keep usable items out of the landfill.

How It Works:

1. Clear the Clutter.

Look around your home for items you no longer need, but someone else might love.

2. Label It “FREE”.

Clearly mark each item with a “FREE” sign so people know it’s part of the Treasure Hunt. Download a template at calgary.ca/treasurehunt.

3. Set It Out.

Place your items neatly at the curb Saturday morning.

4. Remove items that are NOT part of the hunt.

Make sure anything on your lawn or on the curb that you plan to keep is removed, put away, or secured so it’s clear what’s free to take and what’s not.

5. Treasure Hunt!

Explore your neighbourhood and discover free finds all weekend long (only take items clearly labelled as “free”).

6. Wrap It Up.

By Sunday, September 13 at 5:00 pm, remove any untaken items from your curb and consider donating them to a local charity.

For safety reasons, **please don’t put out** items that could be hazardous or not safe to reuse, such as:

- Mattresses
- Toilets
- Unsafe or recalled items
- Baby gear or safety equipment that may not meet current standards

Do you live in a condo or apartment? You can participate as well! Coordinate with your property manager to establish a shared drop-off location.

Let’s keep good things out of the landfill. Happy treasure hunting!

Discover, Experience and Celebrate Arts and Culture This September

by *The City of Calgary*



Calgary Culture Days is back this month—and the city is ready to celebrate. From September 1 to 30, Calgary comes alive with creativity, connection, and the vibrant arts and culture experiences that make our city so special.

Think film screenings, art exhibitions, live performances, festivals, and hands-on experiences—all happening in neighbourhoods across the city. Whether you’re bringing the kids, planning a date night, or meeting up with friends, there’s always something to discover. Even better, many events are free and family-friendly, making it easy to jump in and explore.

Calgary Culture Days celebrates the artists, organizations, and communities that shape our city’s thriving arts and culture scene. It’s a chance to connect with local talent, experience different cultures, and see Calgary from a fresh perspective. Behind every event are community members bringing ideas to life—helping make Calgary a more creative, connected, and vibrant place to live.

Start exploring events happening across the city this September at calgary.ca/culturedays.

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Support Victoria Fortuna and Her Family After a Tragic Highway Accident



In the early evening of February 8, 2026, the Fortuna family's life was forever altered by a devastating and senseless accident.

Victoria (21) and her father, Paul (53), were the innocent victims of a tragic vehicle accident that occurred in Edmonton. Sadly, her father succumbed to his injuries at the scene, and Victoria has been left with life-threatening and life-altering injuries. She is currently fighting for her life and receiving critical medical care at the University Hospital in Edmonton.

Donate to this GoFundMe by scanning the QR code to help ease the inconceivable financial hardship the Fortuna family is facing.

Scan to donate or visit
gofund.me/31fdeef6f

Any help is appreciated ♥



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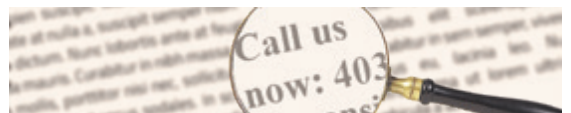
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