



Innovation in the community

The Age
Friendly
Innovation Fund
helped bring
new life to a
neighbourhood.



Community Sunshine Garden

Last summer, in the long mid-evenings, the magic-hour light would fill the front yard of St. Augustine's Anglican Church, and the people of Fulton Place would gather where none had gathered before.

What was once a lonely lawn was now the Sunshine Garden, 38 raised wooden garden boxes radiating smartly out from the church's signature steeple.

The Fulton Place Community League and seniors Doreen and Eldon Wyman envisioned the new garden as a showcase: for native plants, for the promise of urban agriculture and locally grown food, for the ornamental handiwork of helpful Scouts and daycare cuties and Hardisty Junior High students.

What the Wymans perhaps didn't anticipate was how water, soil and seed would energize a neighbourhood's

corner and invite all who lived in Fulton Place: seniors, families, new Canadians, and, remarkably, young children drawn from their smartphones and gaming systems by the mysteries of growing things.

"We would see young children wander over, no parents, and start asking questions. 'What's this plant over here? Can you eat that over there?' It was a safe place, a fun place," says Doreen.

"It was a place for everybody. You didn't have to be a member of the church. You didn't have to be enrolled in sports. It didn't matter what nationality you were."

The \$5,000 funding provided through the Age Friendly Edmonton Innovation Fund, meant higher garden boxes could be built, which allowed Hardisty's thriving senior population easier, safer gardening.

Lyla Klinger used to live on an acreage but couldn't satisfy her yen for gardening in her nearby apartment. She can now, tending to a box easily reachable from her multipurpose walker.

"We're doing it to see the pleasure of seeing things grow. But also for that feeling of togetherness you have when 20 people are out here on a lovely evening."

Lyla says she imagines the Sunshine Garden will be a community magnet for years. "We're getting them young! We have time to sit and talk, which is maybe not something kids get in their busy lives, a listener.

"And we learn from their enthusiasm. It's not just an education for them. It's for us."



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MORE

Cloverdale Community League started an urban poling walking group with the funding they received from the AFE Innovation Fund. They meet to walk, socialize and enjoy Edmonton's beautiful green spaces all while getting a full body workout.

So far, 11 creative projects have been funded via the AFE Innovation Fund including: university students teaching piano to seniors with dementia, and multicultural cooking demonstrations by seniors.

Age Friendly Supported Resources



AFE Transportation Information Hubs

Twelve kiosks located around the city provide seniors with transit maps, printed information about driving services, driver safety and cessation.



Inclusiveness Toolkit

Created by the Pride Seniors Group, this toolkit will help ensure seniors activity centres and housing communities are inclusive and welcoming to LGBTQ2S seniors.



Navigator Courses

Caregivers Alberta offers Navigator Workshops to train professionals to identify, assess and support individuals who are providing unpaid care for someone living with illness, disability or age related challenges.



Tips for Developing Programs for Immigrant and Refugee Seniors

Valuable information to help guide organizations, community groups, and funders in creating effective programs to help immigrant and refugee seniors face their unique challenges.



Healthy Aging Information Sessions and Phone Chats

AFE speakers present free interactive educational sessions on over 40 healthy aging topics. Or Healthy Aging Phone Chats allow seniors to enjoy a small group conversation from the comfort of their own home.



Seniors Information Phone Line - Dial 211

Get information about programs, services and resources for seniors in Edmonton. For more in-depth information or assistance, 211 will connect you with a senior outreach worker.



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