

The results are in!

And The Winners Are...



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Leslie Benson
Licensed Associate
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Erin Willman
Team Lead
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Brian Cyr
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The wisdom of the St. Albert crowd

The year 2025 is the year of the ballot in St. Albert. We went to the federal polls to help choose a new prime minister in April, and we'll be selecting a new mayor and council this October.

And, of course, there are your votes for the best local businesses in St. Albert, the winners of which you're about to read in these pages.

There certainly doesn't seem to be voter fatigue in town – we saw more than 49,000 votes cast for more than 1,400 local businesses and individuals this year in more than 110 different categories. That's more than double last year's votes!

That makes these awards even more relevant. In a world dominated by social media recommendations and online reviews that all seem to contradict each other, it's hard to know who's really the best.

Consider this your guide to the most trusted and most admired businesses in your community – crowdsourced by literally thousands of your fellow citizens.

The book *The Wisdom of Crowds* by James Surowiecki talks about this concept: put enough independent individuals together and the answers they come up with tend to be better than any one individual – even an expert – can do on their own.

That's why we've been doing Readers' Choice for more than 15 years in St. Albert. It's a service to the community to aggregate your wisdom and present it to you in one simple package. And it's available year-round, right on the top of our website.

There's another important function that Readers' Choice performs: it's an opportunity to celebrate and to support the dedicated, community-minded local businesses who have won the support of you, our readers.

Some of these winners are multi-year winners of long standing, some are celebrating their first win – or a return to the top of the podium.

What they share is a dedication to quality, to customer service and to community service.



That's why you chose them.

The next part of the equation: make sure you support them all year round. It's easier than ever to shop not just out of town, but out of country, right from your couch.

But remember before you click that "Buy Now" button: Amazon doesn't support your local sports team. Facebook doesn't employ local people. Your local small businesses – the ones in these pages – are the ones doing that.

The other thing those local businesses do is support the continued survival of local media – of the Gazette. Your patronage, and their advertising support, provide the critical revenue that makes it possible for us to tell St. Albert's stories, to hold its elected officials accountable, and to celebrate our collective success.

It all starts with you – when you shop local.

CONGRATULATIONS to all the local businesses listed here, and thanks for your continued support of your customers and your community. Display your winner's certificates with pride in your business, and know that it was a mighty wise crowd that gave it to you.

Tim Shoults
Publisher, St. Albert Gazette



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Gazette readers honour Mike Anhorn as top volunteer

Retired electrician says helping others is part of his DNA

TRISTAN ORAM

toram@greatwest.ca

For St. Albert resident Mike Anhorn, who was just voted best local volunteer in the St. Albert Gazette Readers' Choice Awards, helping other people is something he simply sees as "part of [his] DNA," going way back to when he was younger and learning from his mother.

"I think it is who I am," Anhorn said. "My mom taught me to help people, to be courteous, to be kind. It's just something that mom instilled in me years and years ago. You're not just there for yourself. You're there for everyone else too."

The 83-year-old retired electrician was born in Coronation, a small town in southern Alberta, before moving to Leduc, then Edmonton. He finally settled in St. Albert, where he has lived for approximately 30 years. His volunteering journey started

with Pedal Pushers, an after-school program to help kids learn basic bike and traffic safety skills. He said he worked with three different schools.

"Kids would come down there mostly with their parents and their bikes and you would teach them how to properly get on and off, how to stop and look before crossing the street," Anhorn said. "We had a little track kind of set up that showed, 'This is a stop sign, this is where you get off, this is where you walk across, route safety.'"

Eventually he took that and applied it to the Canada Safety Council, teaching people how to ride motorcycles.

He was also a volunteer in the neonatal unit at Royal Alexandra Hospital, where he said he'd go and help hold and talk to babies that had just been born in the cardiac area.

"Nurses say they want to hear a male voice also, because a lot of the moms are from out of town," he said. "So they used me as a stronger voice I guess, I don't know. And I've got a deep voice so I can hold the babies close to me and hum and it would vibrate enough that it would settle some of them down. That was kind of challenging. Scared the heck out of me to start."

Page est 1935
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TRISTAN ORAM/St. Albert Gazette

Mike Anhorn often does volunteer work with the Jessica Martel Memorial Foundation and the St. Albert United Church.

His work with the Jessica Martel Memorial Foundation and Jessie's House started when he found out a family member was being abused. He said he and his wife help buy groceries for those staying at the shelter, notably jars of pickles. They also helped provide gifts for a program the foundation runs.

"If a doctor feels there's someone that has been abused, Jessie's House has a person that will go and talk with them," he

said. "We did up gift bags and my wife and I sponsored that. So it'd be a chocolate bar in there or a can of some kind of beverage or juice. Some little things to break the ice when you go in and talk to the person."

He said that he and his wife Joyce also plant flowers for Jessie's House. They wish there wasn't such a demand for a place like Jessie's House, but added they "feel very strongly and we will support them with everything we have." ■

intemperance hair studio

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St. Albert Sturgeon Hospice Association voted best non-profit/ service club

JESSICA CAMPBELL
jcampell@greatwest.ca

The St. Albert Sturgeon Hospice Association (SASHA) has been voted the best non-profit/service club in the *St. Albert Gazette* Readers' Choice Awards.

Second place went to the Fraternal Order of Eagles #2102, and third place went to the Rotary Club of St. Albert.

Heidi Evans, the executive director for SASHA, said she is ecstatic the hospice organization was voted the best non-profit/service club, despite not having been around for very long.

"To be chosen as the number one non-profit by the people of St. Albert, it's incredibly meaningful to us," she said. "I mean, it tells us that we're making a real impact and that we're doing things right."

Evans said SASHA is still a relatively young and small organization. Currently, it has around 45 volunteers in total, with 22 volunteering in the Compassionate Care Volunteer Program, which provides respite for caregivers and support for individuals facing illnesses.

The association supports individuals who are facing life-limiting illnesses and their families, with programs designed to ease the emotional and social isolation that often comes with a palliative diagnosis. They also offer resources, such as advance care planning tool kits and guides to help families have conversations about end-of-life wishes.

Evans said they also help families navigate the often overwhelming health care system after a palliative diagnosis.

"We fill a pretty unique and often overlooked gap in both the community and the health care system," said Evans. "The importance of our support, it truly cannot be overstated, that something as simple as weekly respite for a caregiver or a regular visit to someone who's living alone and always with the same volunteer, this builds trust at a time when people need it the most."

One of SASHA's most well-known events is the winter Lighting the Way event, where the trees surrounding Foyer Lacombe on top of Mission Hill are lit up for people to enjoy.

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FILE/St. Albert Gazette

Cheryl Dalmer, certified therapeutic harp practitioner who provides "harp therapy" at Foyer La-combe Hospice.

"It was our way of bringing warmth and light during a difficult time, not just to the residents, but to the families and the staff as well," said Evans.

Other community events include weekly grief walks organized by volunteers from SASHA, the Big Lake Environment Support Society and the St. Albert Bereavement Fellowship.

"They [the walks] have been incredibly beneficial for people who have a loss in their life," said Evans. "And our volunteers, they share special content at each walk [which is] really beautiful too."

Evans said they could not do all the work they do without the volunteers.

"They [volunteers] are the absolute heart of everything that we do," she said.

"Many of them have walked this caregiving journey themselves, and they deeply understand how lonely and overwhelming it can be, so they bring that empathy and lived experience into every visit and every program that they volunteer for."

Evans said one thing they want people to know is that they are not alone on this journey. Currently, SASHA is working to raise awareness for the programs in Sturgeon County.

"We want to make sure that our volunteer programs and resources are just as available in rural areas as they are in the city," said Evans. "We want people to know that they're not alone, and the more people know that we as an organization exist, the more people we can help." ■



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And the Winners are . . . as voted by you our readers

BODY AND MIND

Best Barber Shop

- 1st Place Barbershop Boyz
2nd Place Dynamite Barbershop - St. Albert
3rd Place Tommy Gun's Original Barbershop

Best Dance Studio

- 1st Place DanceCo Ltd
2nd Place Overdrive Dance Force
3rd Place Zero Gravity Dance Inc

Best Fitness / Gym

- 1st Place Iron Fit Personal Training
2nd Place Club Pilates - St. Albert
3rd Place CrossFit Seven

Best Golf Course

- 1st Place Sturgeon Valley Golf & Country Club
2nd Place Sandpiper Golf & Country Club
3rd Place Terrae Pines Golf & Country Club

Best Hair Salon

- 1st Place Prickly Pear Hair Co.
2nd Place Invidia Hair Co
3rd Place Intemperance Hair & Body Studio

Best Holistic Health Care

- 1st Place We Care Massage and Wellness
2nd Place Maloney Elkassem Wellness
3rd Place Ewyn Weight Loss Studios - St. Albert

Best Nail Salon

- 1st Place Heaven Essence Day Spa
2nd Place The Grove Health & Beauty
3rd Place Riverside Nails

Best Spa / Esthetic Clinic

- 1st Place Heaven Essence Day Spa
2nd Place Barbie Beauty
3rd Place Radiant Belle Med Spa - St. Albert

Best Tanning Salon

- 1st Place Viva Tan Beauty Boutique
2nd Place Fabutan Sun Tan Studios
3rd Place Planet Fitness - St. Albert

Best Tattoo / Piercing Studio

- 1st Place Max Colour Ink
2nd Place Don't Cry Tattoo Co.
3rd Place Bee a Queen Beauty

Best Yoga Studio

- 1st Place Lahari Yoga
2nd Place Oxygen Yoga & Fitness - Jensen Lakes
3rd Place Sturgeon Valley Athletic Club

BUSINESS AND SERVICES

Best Auto / RV Detailer

- 1st Place Sargent Shine Auto Detailing
2nd Place Heritage Auto Detailing
3rd Place Owner's Pride - St. Albert

Best Auto Dealer

- 1st Place Ron Hodgson Chevrolet Buick GMC
2nd Place St. Albert Honda
3rd Place St Albert Dodge Chrysler Ltd

Best Automotive Repair

- 1st Place St Albert Tune-up & Brake Auto Centre
2nd Place Big Kev's Tire & Auto
2nd Place Gate Avenue Service

WINNERS CONTINUED ON PAGE 55

Thank you
to everyone who
voted for me
as your Favourite
Local Politician



Marie Renaud MLA

*Representing the people
of St. Albert has been the
honour of my life.*

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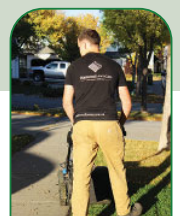


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And the Winners are . . . as voted by you our readers



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 54

Best Blinds & Window Coverings

- 1st Place Gotcha Covered - St Albert
2nd Place Gayles Decorating Ltd
3rd Place Budget Blinds - St. Albert

Best Car Wash

- 1st Place ClearWater CarWash
2nd Place Alpine Auto Wash
3rd Place Sparkle Car Wash

Best Childcare / Dayhome

- 1st Place Little Caterpillars Academy
2nd Place SIGIS Child Care Society
3rd Place Tot Spot Academy

Best Cleaning Service

- 1st Place Lathered Cleaning Company Inc. - St Albert & Edmonton
2nd Place Pixi's Cleaning Services Inc.
3rd Place You Have It Maid Cleaning Services Ltd

Best Computer / Cell Phone Sales / Repair

- 1st Place One Bite Technology
2nd Place Telus Store
3rd Place Costco Wholesale - St. Albert

Best Customer Service Experience

- 1st Place Cyr Willman Real Estate Group
2nd Place One Bite Technology
3rd Place St. Albert Dental Centre

Best Dentist Office

- 1st Place St. Albert Dental Centre
2nd Place Green Grove Dental - St. Albert Dentist
3rd Place Bright Dental

Best Denturist Office

- 1st Place St. City Denture
2nd Place St. Albert Denture & Implant Clinic
3rd Place Functional Denture Clinic

Best Dry Cleaner

- 1st Place Page The Cleaner
2nd Place City Dry Cleaners
3rd Place Sturgeon Professional Dry Cleaners

Best Electrician

- 1st Place MMi Electrical Services Inc
2nd Place Proline Electric
3rd Place Revolution Electrical Solutions

Best Financial Institution

- 1st Place Kerry-Lynn Sparrowe | Insurance Agent | Investment Representative
2nd Place Mortgage Architects: Tara Borle
3rd Place RBC Royal Bank - St. Albert

Best Flooring Store

- 1st Place Home Depot - St. Albert
2nd Place Shaw Flooring Services Ltd
3rd Place Lion's Group - Kim Rodriguez

Best Garden Centre

- 1st Place Salisbury at Enjoy
2nd Place Canadian Tire - St. Albert
3rd Place The Home Depot - St. Albert

Best Gas Station / Convenience Store

- 1st Place Costco Gas Station
2nd Place Co-op Gas Bar (Riverside)
3rd Place Campbell Park Chevron

Best Heating & Cooling

- 1st Place Garry's Heating Services
2nd Place Todd The Plumber And Co.
3rd Place A-1 Heating and One Hour Plumbing

WINNERS CONTINUED ON PAGE 58

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Man, I wish we had a...

Experts discuss how to bring business to St. Albert

KEVIN MA

kma@greatwest.ca

David Harrison and his crew announced earlier this year that they were bringing their popular H & W Produce store to St. Albert.

Their timing couldn't be better — St. Albertans want new grocery stores, the 2025 Readers' Choice Awards suggest, with H & W taking second place in the Business You Wish Was in St. Albert category. (The Freson Bros. grocery chain took first, but did not respond to a request for an interview.)

Harrison, who owns the H & W chain, said he and his parents grew up in St. Albert and have always wanted to open a store there. Up until recently, though, the city didn't have the population to support one of their stores, or a lot with the right size, price, and road access for it. It was only last January that he and his staff found a site that met their needs.

"St. Albert is ready for a store like us now," he said, adding that their new outlet on McKenney Ave. should be open by Sept. 1.

"We believe St. Albert will be the ideal fit for what we do."

How to attract business

St. Albert & District Chamber of Commerce chair Angie Hampshire said she was a bit surprised to see two grocery stores beat out last year's winner (IKEA, which placed third this year) in this category, but said it speaks volumes about economic development.

"Economic development isn't just about big industry. It's also about listening to residents and supporting the kinds of businesses they want and need in everyday life."

Mike Erickson, director of economic development for the City of St. Albert, said his department does consumer spending surveys to track what businesses St. Albert residents want. Grocers and restaurants were currently on their to-get list, as was a bigger hotel to host large public events; expect a hotel demand study on this subject in the near future, he added.

Once they know what a community wants, economic development officers work the phones and the convention floors to find those businesses and promote their homes as places to invest, Erickson continued.

"St. Albert's very fortunate in that we do have a very high household income," Erickson said, which can be a selling point for some businesses.

St. Albert's high standards of living and occasional presence on best-places-to-live lists both make it an attractive place to set up shop, Hampshire said.

THANK YOU ST. ALBERT!



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KEVIN MA/St. Albert Gazette

H&W Produce took second in the Business You Wish Was in St. Albert category of the 2025 Readers' Choice Awards. The store is expected to open its McKenney Ave. outlet this fall.

City council has also worked to streamline its business recommendations and open up more land for development, particularly in the form of the Lakeview Business District.

Erickson said St. Albert's has become something of a logistics hub lately, which could help during today's push to diversify Canada away from trade with the United States. It also has a well-educated population that could staff the plastics, software, and robotics companies the city currently hopes to attract. St. Albert's business community was also very supportive of newcomers, and his department often connects prospective investors with local businessowners to chat about life in the city.

More generally, Erickson said St. Albert can make itself attractive to businesses by having predictable rules for zoning, hassle-free permit processes, competi-

tive tax rates, and targeted incentives. Economic development departments can also help companies find demographic data or potential sites.

But as was the case with H & W, Erickson said many companies simply won't move to a community unless they can find a suitable site there. Such investment decisions can take months or even decades of negotiations to make.

"These are really important decisions for these businesses, so they want to make sure they get the decision right."

Business attraction is a team effort, Hampshire said. Businesses, city officials, and residents all have to get out there and tell others why St. Albert is a great place to live and work if we want to draw more companies here.

"We all have to be advocates for it with a common message that we are open for business," she said. ■



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And the Winners are . . . as voted by you our readers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 55

Best Home Builder

- 1st Place Tri Terra Home Builders
- 2nd Place San Rufo Homes
- 3rd Place C2 Homes

Best Home Improvement

- 1st Place Bella Interiors
- 2nd Place The Deck Depot
- 3rd Place Do It All Contracting Ltd

Best Home Renovator

- 1st Place Caruana Interiors and Contracting
- 2nd Place HomeTown Renovations
- 3rd Place Do It All Contracting Ltd

Best Home Services Professional

- 1st Place KDM Management Inc.
- 2nd Place Emerald Property Inspections
- 3rd Place A Buyer's Choice Home Inspections - St. Albert

Best Home-Based Business

- 1st Place Iron Fit Personal Training
- 2nd Place Five Hearts Consulting
- 3rd Place Upbeat Music Studio

Best Lawn & Garden Centre

- 1st Place Diamond Lawn Care and Snow Service Ltd
- 2nd Place Eagle Maintenance & Landscaping Ltd
- 3rd Place Wild Bear Snow + Lawn

Best New Business (since June 1, 2024)

- 1st Place The Joint Physiotherapy - St. Albert
- 2nd Place ARGOS Bar | Bistro - St. Albert
- 3rd Place Tutti Frutti Breakfast & Lunch - St. Albert

Best Non-Profit/Service Club

- 1st Place St. Albert Sturgeon Hospice Association
- 2nd Place Fraternal Order Of Eagles
- 3rd Place Rotary Club of St Albert

Best Oil Change Shop

- 1st Place Jiffy Lube - St. Albert
- 2nd Place St. Albert Tune Up & Brake
- 3rd Place Mr. Lube - St Albert

Best Pet Groomers

- 1st Place Barkers Pet Motel & Grooming Inc
- 2nd Place Dazzling Dogs Grooming
- 3rd Place Twisted Whiskers Pet Spa

Best Plumbing

- 1st Place Chambers Plumbing & Heating - St. Albert
- 2nd Place Todd The Plumber And Co.
- 3rd Place Hydro-Tech Plumbing

Best Residential / Commercial Painting

- 1st Place Bossio Painting & Decorating Ltd
- 2nd Place Bell Painting Co.
- 3rd Place Kennedy Coatings Inc.

Best Roofing / Siding Company

- 1st Place Cosy Insulation & Roofing
- 2nd Place Roof Dog Ltd.
- 3rd Place Reid's Roofing & Insulation

Best Storage Facility

- 1st Place Place For Your Stuff
- 2nd Place Elite Self Storage St. Albert (formerly Riel Park RV & Self Storage)
- 3rd Place U Store It Erin Ridge

WINNERS CONTINUED ON PAGE 60

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A heartfelt thank you to everyone who voted for me! Your confidence in my services inspires me to continue helping business owner's and elders achieve their financial goals.

Jaylyn L'Arrivee CFP, EPC
Certified Financial Planner

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The Readers' Choice Hall of Fame, 2025 edition

TIM SHOULTS

tshoult@greatwest.ca

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit."

That quote by Aristotle seems appropriate when looking at the many local businesses that have made a habit of winning Readers' Choice awards in several categories per year, or for several years in a row.

The most award-winning business in the 2025 Readers' Choice Awards is once again Central Social Hall, with four first-place nods in the categories of Beer Selection (Restaurant/Bar), Chicken Wings, Patio Dining and Best Place to Watch the Game. Add in honourable mentions for Pub/Lounge, Best Burger Place and Best Wine List (Restaurant/Bar) and you'll see their name seven times in this year's awards!

Three other businesses were hot on Central's heels with three first-place awards each. Foodies Kitchen won for Best Catering, Best Dining on a Budget and Best Lunch Spot, Heaven Essence Day Spa won first for Best Massage Therapy Studio, Best Nail Salon and Best Spa/Esthetic Clinic, and Maloney Elkassem won first place for Best Chiropractic Clinic, Best Counsellor/Life



Coach and Best Physiotherapy Clinic.

Twelve more businesses won two first-place awards this year, including:

- Canadian Tire (Best Sporting Goods and Best Weekly Deals)
- Costco (Best Gas Station/Convenience Store and Best Grocery/Market)
- Crown & Tower Neighbourhood Pub (Best Chicken Wings and Best Pub/Lounge)
- Cyr Willman Real Estate Group (Best Customer Service Experience and Best Professional Service Experience)
- Dairy Queen Grill & Chill (Best Drive-Thru and Best Ice Cream/Treat)
- Iron Fit Personal Training (Best Fitness/Gym and Best Home-Based Business)

- One Bite Technology (Best Computer/Cell Phone Sales/Repair and Best Electronics Shop)
- Riverbank Bistro (Best Fine Dining and Best Steak House)
- Tandoori Fuzion (Best Asian Cuisine and Best Vegan Cuisine)
- Team Liquor Ltd. (Best Beer Selection and Best Liquor Store)
- The Cajun House (Best Ethnic Restaurant and Best Gluten-Free)
- The Canadian Brewhouse (Best Patio Dining and Best Food Truck)

Long-Time Leaders

Looking back over the past seven years, more than 265 local businesses have been recognized by the readers of the Gazette – but a few stand out for multiple wins.

Topping the list is Costco St. Albert, who have been named top business 16 different times in five different categories.

Now second on the list is Central Social Hall with 13 wins in seven different food and beverage categories.

Tied for third on the all-time list are The Cajun House and Jack's Burger Shack, with 12 wins apiece, while Heaven Essence and AMA round out the top five with 10 wins each in the past seven years.

Category Kings

There are eight businesses in all of St. Albert that have run the table for the past seven straight years in a Readers' Choice category. They are:

- Bossio Painting & Decorating (Best Commercial/Residential Painter)
- Costco St. Albert (Best Gas Station)
- DanceCo Ltd. (Best Dance Studio)
- Grandin Bakery (Best Bakery)
- Jack's Burger Shack (Best Burger Joint)
- Maloney Elkassem Chiropractic (Best Chiropractic Clinic)
- Ron Hodgson Chevrolet Buick GMC (Best Auto Dealer)
- Toast Breakfast and Lunch (Best Breakfast)

Five-Timers Club

Seven more businesses have five-year streaks going in their categories as of this year, including:

- Weary & Co (Best Law Firm)
- Grandin Medical Clinic (Best Medical Clinic)
- Garry's Heating Services (Best Heating and Cooling)
- Page the Cleaner (Best Dry Cleaning)
- Jiffy Lube (Best Oil Change)
- D'Arcy's Meat Market (Best Meat/Seafood)
- Lahari Yoga (Best Yoga Studio) ■

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And the Winners are . . . as voted by you our readers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 58

Best Tire Shop

- 1st Place Kal Tire - St. Albert
- 2nd Place Fountain Tire - St. Albert
- 3rd Place Costco Wholesale - St. Albert

Best Travel Agency

- 1st Place Terry The Travel Guy
- 2nd Place AMA - Alberta Motor Association - St. Albert
- 3rd Place Jody's Travel Deals

Best Windshield Repair

- 1st Place Speedy Glass
- 2nd Place Crystal Glass Canada Ltd
- 3rd Place Crackmasters

FOOD AND DRINK

Best Asian Cuisine

- 1st Place Tandoori Fuzion
- 2nd Place Foodies Kitchen
- 3rd Place Sushi Park

Best Bakery

- 1st Place Grandin Bakery (1976) Ltd - St. Albert
- 2nd Place Italian Bakery's Mercato - St. Albert
- 3rd Place Confections Cake Co. - St. Albert

Best Beer Selection (Liquor Store)

- 1st Place Team Liquor Ltd. - St. Albert
- 2nd Place Wine and Beyond - St. Albert
- 3rd Place Campbell Liquor Store - St. Albert

Best Beer Selection (Restaurant / Bar)

- 1st Place Central Social Hall - St. Albert
- 2nd Place Crown & Tower Neighbourhood Pub - St. Albert
- 3rd Place The Canadian Brewhouse (South) - St. Albert

Best Breakfast Spot

- 1st Place Toast Breakfast & Lunch
- 2nd Place Socrates Restaurant - St. Albert
- 3rd Place Confections Cake Co. - St. Albert

Best Brewing / Distillery / Winemaker

- 1st Place Endeavour Brewing - St. Albert
- 2nd Place Gypsy Moon Winery - St. Albert
- 3rd Place Black Diamond Distillery - St. Albert

Best Burger Place

- 1st Place Jack's Burger Shack - St. Albert
- 2nd Place The Jade Village Restaurant & Lounge - St. Albert
- 3rd Place Central Social Hall - St. Albert

Best Candy Shop

- 1st Place Candy Bouquet
- 2nd Place Dynamite Candy Shop, Downtown - St. Albert
- 3rd Place Compass Chocolates - St. Albert

Best Catering

- 1st Place Foodies Kitchen
- 2nd Place The Jade Village Restaurant & Lounge - St. Albert
- 3rd Place Taste Of Ukraine Restaurant

WINNERS CONTINUED ON PAGE 62

VOTED ST. ALBERT'S BEST LOCAL VOLUNTEER!

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Mike Anhorn



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#1 Best New Business
#2 Best Social Media
#3 Best Physiotherapy Clinic



Christine Christianson

Bobby McGugan

Karen Duffy

St. Albert MLA voted best local politician

JESSICA CAMPBELL
jcampell@greatwest.ca

St. Albert NDP MLA Marie Renaud has been voted the community's best local politician in the St. Albert Gazette Readers' Choice Awards for the third year in a row, an honour she says is meaningful because it comes directly from the people she serves.

"It's really, really meaningful. I mean, it's super meaningful when you win elections and things, but because readers and the *Gazette* are so close to home that it just feels really, really good," said Renaud.

Renaud, who has represented St. Albert in the Alberta Legislature since 2015, said her connection to the *Gazette* goes back to when she first moved to the community.

"I've got really great ties and memories to the *Gazette*, like when I first came to St. Albert to work in 2001 I really didn't know the community well, and that was actually one of the ways I got to know St. Albert really well," said Renaud. "I got to know, like, which ringette teams were really great, or which fastball teams are doing well, or, you know what, what was going on at the different high schools."

Renaud said she still reads the *Gazette*, especially the letters to the editor, as a way to stay informed about the residents' concerns.

"It really helps explain how people are feeling, and it often matches what I hear when I go door knocking," she said.

Renaud said that staying connected to the community is a critical aspect of her job.

"I'm nothing without them, and so I take very seriously the fact that I represent about 50,000 people," said Renaud. "You know, that's a lot of it's a lot of work to try to be sure that it's not just my voice that I'm representing or my beliefs in something, but that I do represent, you know, the majority of the people that I am making decisions for."

Being chosen by readers as the best local politician, she added, is a sign that she is on the right path.

"It lets me know I am doing the right work and that is really helpful," she said.

With the provincial legislature not in session over the summer, Renaud said her team will be focused on community outreach, attending events like the upcoming Canada Day celebrations, and door-knocking in St. Albert to hear directly from residents.

"Our big focus will be connecting with people and just finding out what's important to them," said Renaud.

Renaud said being recognized by residents through the Readers' Choice Awards feels rewarding because she is being recognized by the people she directly works for.

"When I go through that list myself, you know, whether it's what's your favourite painter or which traffic stop is the worst?" said Renaud. "All these things make me think about the community, and then I think about all of those people voting for me when they're going through that list, and, I'm just incredibly grateful." ■



St. Albert MLA Marie Renaud.

FILE PHOTO/St. Albert Gazette



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And the Winners are . . . as voted by you our readers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 60

Best Chicken Wings

- 1st Place Crown & Tower
Neighbourhood Pub -
St. Albert
- 1st Place Central Social Hall -
St. Albert
- 2nd Place The Jade Village Restaurant
& Lounge - St. Albert

Best Coffee Shop

- 1st Place Confections Cake Co. -
St. Albert
- 2nd Place La Crema Caffe
- 3rd Place Italian Bakery's Mercato -
St. Albert

Best Dining on a Budget

- 1st Place Foodies Kitchen
- 2nd Place Tealicious Blend
- 3rd Place The Cajun House - St. Albert

Best Donair / Shawarma

- 1st Place Simply Donairs Ltd. -
St. Albert
- 2nd Place Roma Pizza & Donair
- 3rd Place Master Pita - St. Albert

Best Drive-Thru

- 1st Place Dairy Queen Grill & Chill -
St. Albert Trail
- 2nd Place McDonald's Restaurants
- 3rd Place Arby's - St. Albert

Best Ethnic Restaurant

- 1st Place The Cajun House - St. Albert
- 2nd Place Taste Of Ukraine Restaurant
- 3rd Place The Jade Village Restaurant
& Lounge - St. Albert

Best Fine Dining

- 1st Place Riverbank Bistro - St. Albert
- 2nd Place The Cajun House - St. Albert
- 3rd Place XIX Nineteen - St. Albert

Best Food Truck

- 1st Place The Canadian Brewhouse
(South) - St. Albert
- 2nd Place Dedo's Food Truck and
Catering
- 3rd Place Scoop N Roll

Best Gluten-Free

- 1st Place The Cajun House - St. Albert
- 2nd Place Nello's Authentic Italian
Restaurant - St. Albert
- 3rd Place Wildroots Bistro

Best Ice Cream / Treat

- 1st Place Dairy Queen Grill & Chill -
St. Albert Trail
- 2nd Place Confections Cake Co. -
St. Albert
- 3rd Place Italian Bakery's Mercato -
St. Albert

Best Italian Cuisine

- 1st Place Luisa Ristorante - St. Albert
- 1st Place Nello's Authentic Italian
Restaurant - St. Albert
- 2nd Place Sorrentino's Bistro-Bar -
St. Albert

Best Liquor Store

- 1st Place Team Liquor Ltd. - St. Albert
- 2nd Place Wine and Beyond -
St. Albert
- 3rd Place Costco Liquor - St. Albert

Best Lunch Spot

- 1st Place Foodies Kitchen
- 2nd Place Confections Cake Co. -
St. Albert
- 3rd Place The Cajun House - St. Albert

WINNERS CONTINUED ON PAGE 64



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St. Albert Farmers' Market wins Readers' Choice award

GARRET KRYZANOWSKI
Special to the Gazette

The St. Albert Farmers' market, which is the largest outdoor market in Western Canada, won the 2025 Readers' Choice award for best St. Albert event.

First-year manager Jane Ilott isn't surprised by the local support.

"Our vendors are absolutely fantastic," said Ilott. "Buying locally is always important, and there's always something different at the market every week."

In her first year, Ilott has been amazed by how committed the community is to the farmers market.

"Even when it's pouring rain the people of St. Albert are coming out, and enjoying themselves," said Ilott.

"Rain doesn't deter the people of St. Albert from visiting the market."

Even with all the support from St. Albertans, Ilott was honoured the market won a Readers' Choice award.

"It was fantastic to find out we won," said Ilott. "People in St. Albert love their farmers market, and they're proud of it. Being awarded for the best event means a lot to everyone, especially the vendors."

The St. Albert Farmers' Market consists of 275 vendors, 10 food trucks, and 10 buskers providing a vibrant, unique



JOHN LUCAS/St. Albert Gazette

A good size crowd turned out for the farmers market in St. Albert on Saturday June 21.

experience every weekend.

"The diversity of the market is incredible," said Ilott.

"Hopefully, we have something for everyone. The creativity of the vendors is amazing. Our motto is make it, create it,

or grow it, and we really try to follow that mantra."

They also have lots of fun for children.

"We also have something called Market Buds," said Ilott. "They come up with the most creative things to do with the kids,

it's a great time."

In its 43rd year, the St. Albert Farmers' Market runs every Saturday from June 7 to Oct. 11.

You can find out more about the St. Albert Farmers' Market at their website. ■

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Carmelle Sevigny-Black
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And the Winners are . . . as voted by you our readers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 62

Best Meat / Seafood Store

- 1st Place D'Arcy's Meat Market Ltd - St. Albert
2nd Place Effing Seafood - St. Albert
3rd Place Gaudet's Seafood - St. Albert

Best Mexican Food

- 1st Place Cerdo Tacos + Tequila - St. Albert
2nd Place barBURRITO, Village Landing - St. Albert
3rd Place Mariachi Love

Best Patio Dining

- 1st Place Central Social Hall - St. Albert
1st Place The Canadian Brewhouse (North) - St. Albert
2nd Place The Canadian Brewhouse (South) - St. Albert

Best Pizza

- 1st Place Bucu Pizzeria & Vino Bar - St. Albert
2nd Place Pizza Garage
3rd Place Nitza's Pizza

Best Place To Watch The Game

- 1st Place Central Social Hall - St. Albert
2nd Place The Canadian Brewhouse (South) - St. Albert
3rd Place The Jade Village Restaurant & Lounge - St. Albert

Best Pub / Lounge

- 1st Place Crown & Tower Neighbourhood Pub - St. Albert
2nd Place Central Social Hall - St. Albert
3rd Place The Jade Village Restaurant & Lounge - St. Albert

Best Sandwich / Sub Shop

- 1st Place Tealicious Blend
2nd Place Italian Bakery's Mercato - St. Albert
3rd Place Press'd the Sandwich Co

Best Steak House

- 1st Place Riverbank Bistro - St. Albert
2nd Place XIX Nineteen - St. Albert
3rd Place The Cajun House - St. Albert

Best Vegan Cuisine

- 1st Place Tandoori Fuzion
2nd Place kb&co - St. Albert
3rd Place The Chopped Leaf - St. Albert

Best Wine List (Restaurant / Bar)

- 1st Place Sorrentino's Bistro-Bar - St. Albert
2nd Place Riverbank Bistro - St. Albert
3rd Place Central Social Hall - St. Albert

Best Wine Selection (Liquor Store)

- 1st Place Wine and Beyond - St. Albert
2nd Place Team Liquor Ltd. - St. Albert
3rd Place Campbell Liquor Store - St. Albert

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Best Day Trip Destination

- 1st Place Lois Hole Centennial Provincial Park
2nd Place Elk Island National Park
3rd Place Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village

WINNERS CONTINUED ON PAGE 68

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Favourite St. Albert Personality says she has learned to balance work and family

LUCY HAINES
Special to the Gazette

Shawna Randolph isn't sure about the word "personality" to describe her category in the *St. Albert Gazette's* annual Readers' Choice Awards, hers being "Favourite St. Albert Personality." And though she took top spot (acknowledging it's an honour to be voted number one), the longtime St. Albertan says modestly that she's just a normal wife and mom, a family-focused cheerleader at her kids' sporting events, who's glad to have raised her family in this city. Singling the media maven out for more is "kind of awkward," she says.

Perhaps her humility is one reason St. Albert voters picked Randolph as their favourite well-known resident. And when it's pointed out that being someone with a higher profile (she's had decades in the media as a broadcaster and communications professional) gives her the opportunity to champion the city, Randolph admits she's fine with that.

"We're appreciative to the community. I'm humbled; it's an honour to be involved in an initiative that showcases the businesses of our city," Randolph said, and she should know. Among the hats she wears, Randolph is currently first vice-chair with the St. Albert and District Chamber of Commerce.

The upbeat Randolph is likely familiar to city residents thanks to years behind the anchor desk at CFRN (now CTV Edmonton) and then later with the nightly news magazine program *Alberta Primetime*. And somehow amidst the news gigs, Randolph started the company she still runs to this day, Shawna Randolph Communications. It's another way she's able to give back, the busy entrepreneur admits, and though she considers herself "semi-retired," she knows it's not the easiest of goals.

"I stayed in the media/news industry for a decade. I knew I didn't want to work full-time anymore, with the deadlines and chasing stories. I wanted to be available to the kids (son Aidan and daughter Brooklyn) to be active in their

lives; to go to soccer games," Randolph remembers, acknowledging that though the kids are both university students now, they're still heavily involved in sports, wrestling and soccer, and they still need their mom, but maybe just in different ways.

"We're a sports family, really," she said. "My husband (Warren Gresik, a senior fire captain and paramedic with the City of St. Albert) coached and I'm still a supporter; a cheering mom."

Having the insight to know she wanted a better work-life balance has served Randolph well, whether it's being available to her family (including an aging parent and making that a priority, too), or how many and which clients to take on with her media training/consulting business, (key clients have included the City of Edmonton and Edmonton Humane Society). With these and other organizations and individuals, Randolph says she has become a contractor, able to do media training (workshops, seminars etc) on a part-time basis.

And she knows when to combine the things she's good at; what she has a passion for. Morphing her expertise for storytelling with a media-savvy eye, Randolph is presently extolling the offerings of the Arts and Heritage Foundation of St. Albert. A few days a week, the focus is on just that; telling the stories of the Little White School, Historic River Lots and Grain Elevators, Musee Heritage Museum and Art Gallery of St. Albert.

"I sneak in consulting, or holding media training seminars with municipalities and businesses too," she said. "But I love the challenge of getting people in St. Albert to know more about the city, like when they say, 'Oh, I didn't even know we had an art gallery here.'"

These days, Randolph says she gets some of her greatest satisfaction from coaching those who interact with the media; guiding them to be honest, open, accountable and confident. "It's even more rewarding than when I was still in the media, seeing the benefit of a mutually respectful relationship between



BRENDA LAKEMAN/Photo

St. Albert's Shawna Randolph is no stranger to being recognized for all she brings to the table. The businesswoman and former news broadcaster has now got another feather in her cap; the title of favorite St. Albert Personality, as voted by readers of the *St. Albert Gazette* in the annual Reader's Choice Awards.

business and media."

Randolph may not even realize she's encouraging her clients to take a page out of her own book; an impressive career of mutually beneficial interactions between a media personality showing integrity and forthrightness, and the other side; organizations that have a message they want to get across. She understands both.

Colleague and fellow media personality Sean Burke, (a popular radio host) who has worked with and known Randolph for some 30 years, sees it, too. The pair teamed up during the pandemic, hosting a podcast called Talk Time with Sean and Shawna, a pop culture chat fest that included looks at

everything from politics and crime to entertainment.

"We both saw that people needed an escape, some positivity and kindness. I'm proud to call her a friend," said Burke. "She loves her community and you can tell. Congrats on winning St. Albert's fave personality, Shawna. Very well-deserved. You're buying lunch next time."

Randolph will surely find time for that lunch. She says being available for her family, her three cats, golf with girlfriends and yes, those occasional lunches with pals, is what she's about.

"I love the idea of gearing down," she said. "We're in that sandwich generation, between our parents and our kids. I love having time for it all!" ■



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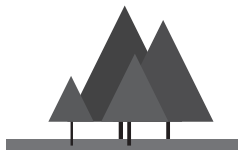
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Lacombe Park, Best Neighbourhood

ANNA BOROWIECKI
aborowiecki@greatwest.ca

St. Albert Gazette announced the annual 2025 Readers' Choice Awards and Lacombe Park was nominated Best Community in the city.

What makes a community special? Good schools? A variety of shops? Entertainment venues? Low crime? Distance from high-traffic areas? Lots of greenery? It's all those things and more.

The Gazette decided to ask Lacombe Park residents and people who frequent the area to share what appeals to them.

But first, in a quick drive through the community, I counted six parks with fields surrounded by tall leafy trees swaying in the wind. Block upon block of tidy houses showcase bright flowers and lush manicured lawns. There's an obvious pride in the community.

It's a quiet jewel. Surrounded by nature, it projects a certain degree of serenity and calm, a good place to relax after a hectic day at school or work.

Annika Harris, 13, was waiting for a bus outside William D. Cuts School when I asked for her opinion.

"It's a safe neighbourhood. There aren't many creepy people. And it's fun because you can go to all the parks,"

said Annika.

My next chat was with Linda Cauder, a nurse at Sturgeon Hospital. She was walking Quinn, her blonde Labrador cross, at Lacombe Park Lake. Although Cauder lives in North Edmonton, she and Quinn regularly visit the lake three or four times a week.

"We just love the dog park. It's fenced. Every dog park has its own atmosphere and culture. The people and the dogs that come here are very nice," Cauder said.

Although her family has contemplated moving to Lacombe Park, their current home is paid for and taxes are lower in Edmonton.

Nichole Parker, who was catching the rays with a friend, recently moved from Lacombe Park to Deer Ridge.

"We liked all the green spaces in Lacombe Park and the kids used to crayfish in the lake when they were in elementary. But we outgrew our home and moved," said Parker.

As a walker, she loves to explore the area's network of trails leading from Lacombe Park to Deer Ridge and Mission, a recreational outlet enjoyed by many residents and their four-legged furry friends.

Instead, Rick Steward is a retiree who has lived in Lacombe Park with his



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ANNA BOROWIECKI/Photo
Linda Cauder, a nurse at Sturgeon Hospital, takes Quinn, her Labrador cross to Lacombe Park Lake several times a week. Readers' Choice nominated Lacombe Park as the 2025 Best Neighbourhood in St. Albert.

wife, Sherry, for 31 years. He, too, is a regular Lacombe Park Lake visitor who enjoys throwing sticks in the water for his dogs, Griffen and Phoenix.

"I like this neighbourhood because it's quiet and peaceful. I go a few blocks and it's a modern urban nightmare," Steward said.

The couple moved into the area prior to the development of Deer Ridge and Lacombe Park Estates.

"It's a great place to raise kids. Schools are close, and everyone plays

sports," he said. "Over the years we've had a few thefts of crimes of opportunity, but it's been minimal."

For anyone desiring to connect with nature without leaving the city, Lacombe Park Lake is the place to be. It's a stunning mix of a man-made lake, old-growth trees, spring grasses and wildflower scents surrounding strategically placed benches.

And that's why *Gazette* readers selected it as Best Neighbourhood for 2025. ■



Thank you for Voting Nello's #1 in the category of BEST ITALIAN CUISINE.

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And the Winners are . . . as voted by you our readers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 64

Best Local Politician

- 1st Place Marie Renaud, MLA
- 2nd Place Michael Cooper, MP
- 3rd Place Dale Nally, MLA

Best Local Social Media Feed

- 1st Place St. Albert Chamber of Commerce
- 2nd Place The Joint Physiotherapy - St. Albert
- 2nd Place Maloney Elkassem Wellness

Best Local Volunteer

- 1st Place Mike Anhorn
- 2nd Place Rosanna Fischer
- 3rd Place Scott Olivieri

Best Musician / Performer

- 1st Place Grace Forestier
- 2nd Place So Noted Singers
- 3rd Place St Albert Singers Guild

Best Neighbourhood

- 1st Place Lacombe Park
- 2nd Place Grandin
- 3rd Place Erin Ridge

Best St. Albert Event

- 1st Place St. Albert Farmers' Market
- 2nd Place Rock'n August
- 3rd Place RunWild

Best St. Albert Personality

- 1st Place Shawna Randolph
- 2nd Place Tyler Yaremchuk - Oilersnation Radio
- 3rd Place Josh Classen - Meteorologist CTV News

Best Visual Artist

- 1st Place Memory Roth
- 2nd Place Katie Wood
- 3rd Place Lewis Lavoie

Longest Red Light in St. Albert

- 1st Place McKenny Avenue & St. Albert Trail
- 2nd Place St. Albert Trail & Villeneuve Road (Walmart)
- 3rd Place Campbell Road & Boudreau Road

PROFESSIONALS

Best Accountant / Accounting Firm

- 1st Place Numble Accounting Services
- 2nd Place Graham & Associates
- 3rd Place Michael Chorley - MNP

Best Chiropractic Clinic

- 1st Place Maloney Elkassem Wellness
- 2nd Place Brodeur Wellness
- 3rd Place Grenier Place Chiropractic & Massage Wellness Centre

Best Counsellor (Practice) / Life Coach

- 1st Place Maloney Elkassem Wellness
- 2nd Place Rivers Edge Counselling Centre Inc.
- 3rd Place Ridgeline Therapy

Best Financial Planner

- 1st Place IG Wealth Management - Jaylyn L'Arrivee
- 2nd Place IG Wealth Management
- 3rd Place Roy Financial Services Inc

Best Hearing Clinic

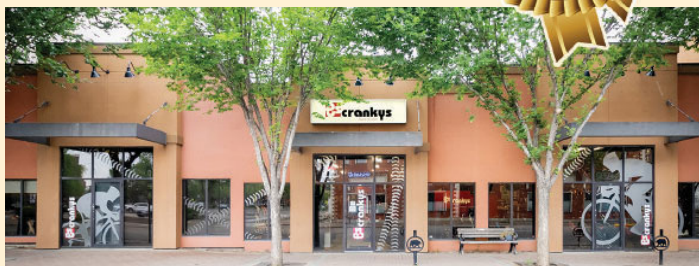
- 1st Place Discover Hearing
- 2nd Place St. Albert Hearing
- 3rd Place HearingLife - St. Albert

WINNERS CONTINUED ON PAGE 69

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And the Winners are . . . as voted by you our readers



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 68

Best Insurance

- 1st Place AMA
- 2nd Place Drayden Insurance Ltd
- 3rd Place Grandin Agencies

Best Law Firm

- 1st Place Weary & Company Law Office
- 2nd Place Lift Legal
- 3rd Place Ritzen Warshawski LLP

Best Massage Therapy Studio

- 1st Place Heaven Essence Day Spa
- 2nd Place We Care Massage and Wellness
- 3rd Place Maloney Elkassem Wellness

Best Medical Clinic

- 1st Place Grandin Medical Clinic
- 2nd Place St. Albert Medical Clinic
- 3rd Place Solace Medical Clinic

Best Optical

- 1st Place Sturgeon Vision Centre
- 2nd Place Eyeland Optometry
- 3rd Place FYidoctors, St. Albert Centre

Best Pharmacy

- 1st Place Midtown Apothecary
- 2nd Place Shoppers Drug Mart, Village Landing (South) - St. Albert
- 3rd Place Grandin Prescription Centre Inc

Best Physiotherapy Clinic

- 1st Place Maloney Elkassem Wellness
- 2nd Place Summit Physiotherapy & Massage Therapy
- 3rd Place The Joint Physiotherapy - St. Albert

Best Professional Service Experience

- 1st Place Cyr Willman Real Estate Group
- 2nd Place Connelly McKinley Funeral Homes
- 3rd Place KDM Management Inc.

Best Veterinary Clinic

- 1st Place St. Albert Animal Clinic
- 2nd Place Red Willow Veterinary Hospital
- 3rd Place Tudor Glen Veterinary Hospital

SHOPPING

Best Bicycle / E-Bike Shop

- 1st Place Cranky's Bike Shop Ltd. - St. Albert
- 2nd Place Bootnscooter E-Cycles - St. Albert
- 3rd Place Gateway Power Sports - St. Albert

Best Cannabis Store

- 1st Place Plantlife Cannabis - St. Albert
- 2nd Place Canna Cabana - St. Albert
- 3rd Place Fire & Flower, Bellrose - St. Albert

Best Clothing Store

- 1st Place Winners - St. Albert
- 2nd Place Reitmans - St. Albert
- 3rd Place Sweet Boutique

Best Electronics Shop

- 1st Place One Bite Technology
- 2nd Place London Drugs Limited
- 3rd Place Visions Electronics

WINNERS CONTINUED ON PAGE 72

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Surprising features of shopping local

A movement to “shop local” gained steam as more communities faced few options outside of big box stores. The shop local approach encourages consumers to patronize local businesses, and even those fully devoted to the cause might not realize how beneficial it can be. The following is a look at how communities and residents win when shopping local.

- **Shopping local increases employment opportunities.** Small businesses employ more workers in the United States than their larger counterparts, creating two out of every three new jobs, according to the Small Business Administration. In fact, small businesses account for 99.7 percent of all employer firms in the United States. Buying locally means employment levels are either going to be stable or there will be more opportunities for local residents to work in the community.

- **Shopping local does not cost more money.** Many people are under the assumption that buying locally is always more expensive. But this isn't always the case. Local shops may offer a range of products from a particular region, which will reduce shipping costs, and that savings can be passed on to the consumer. Plus, small businesses may offer special discounts and promo-

tions more readily than nationwide chains, so consumers can get more value for their money.

- **Shopping local helps to keep money in the community.** Patronizing local stores creates a recirculation of money in the community. Dollars spent in town raise the overall level of economic activity, which helps pay salaries, and builds up the local tax base, says Michigan State University Center for Community and Economic Development.

- **Shopping local can help the planet.** Environmentalists were among the first people to promote local consumption, as buying local can cut down on transportation-related pollution.

- **Shopping local stretches beyond seasonal events.** Certainly there are a host of local merchants that do much of their business during key times of the year or specialize in seasonal produce. However, many local businesses also offer products year-round, and these local merchants include artisans, designers, musicians, and clothing retailers.

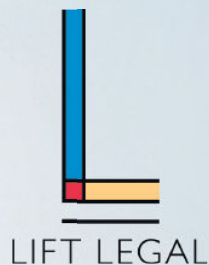
There are many reasons to increase reliance on local shops and vendors, who benefit communities and residents in myriad ways. ■

Metro Creative Connection



METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION/Photo

A look at how communities and residents win when shopping local.



Thank You

For voting us one of your favorite law firms in Saint Albert!



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Some hidden benefits to shopping local

The economic impact of shopping within one's community is significant. Though estimates vary and are always open to fluctuation, a recent survey from American Express and the National Federation of Independent Business indicated roughly 67 cents out of every dollar spent at a small business remains in the community.

The economic impact of shopping local is plain to see, as many local business owners and employees live in the communities where their companies operate. But there are additional and perhaps less obvious benefits to buying close to home as well.

• **Walkability:** Community residents who aspire to keep their dollars within their own towns may not need to drive to do so. For example, residents may live within walking distance of local restaurants. A casual stroll to dinner out on the town can make for a more relaxing evening. But that's not the only way walkability pays dividends. A 2023 survey from the National Association of Realtors® found that 78 percent of potential home buyers indicate they'd pay more for a home in a walkable community than one that required driving to access amenities like shops and restaurants. By shopping local and supporting businesses within walking distance of their homes, homeowners can help to maintain their local economies and even drive up the value of local real estate.



METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION/
Photo

There are less obvious benefits to buying close to home as well.

• **Time:** Another notable but easily overlooked benefit to shopping local is the time savings. Businesses located within one's community are likely a short walk or drive away from home, whereas getting to large chains may require significant travel. Residents can use the time they save by shopping local however they see fit, and that's a particularly notable benefit in a modern world where balancing personal and professional responsibilities is as difficult as ever.

• **Health:** Shopping local also can have a positive impact on consumers' overall health. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports there are many notable benefits to social connection, including increased feelings of belonging and being loved and even greater resistance to serious illness and disease. When shopping at locally owned small businesses, residents typically interact with owners and staff in ways that are far less common than when shopping at chain stores. Those

interactions help foster relationships between business owners, employees and customers, and that can benefit shoppers in many of the ways noted by the CDC. Patronizing locally owned small businesses has a well-documented positive impact on local economies. A closer look at shopping local reveals there are many lesser known but no less significant advantages to supporting small businesses in one's community. ■

Metro Creative Connection

We are truly honored to be voted St. Albert's #1 Best Home Service Professionals and proud to have placed 3rd for Best Professional Service Experience.



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We are deeply honored and thrilled to have been voted **Best Financial Institution** in the St. Albert Gazette's Readers Choice Awards! This recognition means the world to us, and we couldn't have achieved it without your trust and support.



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And the Winners are . . . as voted by you our readers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 69

Best Farmers' Market Vendor

- 1st Place Taste Of Ukraine Restaurant
2nd Place Steve and Dan's Fresh BC Fruit
3rd Place Mike + Jenn Craft Soap

Best Florist

- 1st Place Charmed Floral Design Inc.
2nd Place Bloom Stones Floral and Gifts Ltd.
3rd Place Funky Petals Flower Shop - St. Albert

Best Grocery / Market

- 1st Place Costco Wholesale - St. Albert
2nd Place Real Canadian Superstore - St. Albert
3rd Place Italian Bakery's Mercato - St. Albert

Best Jewelry Store

- 1st Place So Pretty Cara Cotter
2nd Place Watch & Jewelry Factory Outlet
3rd Place Modern Eyes Gallery and Gift

Best Pet Foods / Supplies

- 1st Place Pet Valu - St. Albert
2nd Place Mr. Pets
3rd Place Bone & Biscuit Co.

Best Sporting Goods

- 1st Place Canadian Tire - St. Albert
2nd Place St Albert Source For Sports
3rd Place Sport Chek / Atmosphere

Best Vape Store

- 1st Place Dynamite Vape and Smoke, Downtown - St. Albert
2nd Place St. Albert Vape Shop - Saint City Vapes, Downtown - St. Albert
3rd Place Vape Stop Ltd. - St. Albert

Best Weekly Deals

- 1st Place Canadian Tire - St. Albert
2nd Place Pearson's Your Independent Grocer - St. Albert
3rd Place Freshco, Gateway Village - St. Albert

Business You Wish Was In St. Albert

- 1st Place Freson Bros
2nd Place H&W Produce
3rd Place IKEA



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