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ALBERTA

Street News



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Resources needed in outlying areas



By Linda Dumont

In the past I used to print a resource list of places that offer free meals. That ended after an irate call from a woman who had gone to one of the places listed only to discover that they were no longer offering food at that time.

There are constant changes in the resources available, some seasonal, some due to other factors, so it is difficult to keep current. Now

when people want to know about free meals, I refer them to 211. They update their lists on a yearly basis and also have a listing of free Christmas meals, but even then things could change, such as when the House of Refuge burned down unexpectedly.

The same woman phoned again to unload her problems, and they are real concerns not only for her but, I am sure, for many other people living in poverty in outlying areas of the city. Downtown there are many places to go to get a free meal or to get clothing, but this woman lives in the west end of Edmonton. She told about how she has walked 60 blocks to the inner city to attend a barbecue put on by Hope Mission, then waited so long in the line up that she finally gave up fearful of being caught in the dark on the long walk back to the west end. She related how she can go to the Jasper Place Health and Wellness Centre sometimes, but they don't have daily meals, and the Christian Care Centre is open in

the mornings only. I listened to her long list of complaints about the difficulties of trying to survive outside the inner city and concluded that transportation to resources is one key factor in her difficulties.

Low income seniors can get a yearly bus pass at minimal cost but those surviving on welfare, and even on AISH, who are just as much or more in need than the seniors. can't get a subsidized yearly bus pass so they can get to much needed resources. This is especially needed by those who are considered employable so they will be able to attend required job interviews. There is a Donate-a-Ride program, where people donate money to Edmonton Transit to pay for bus tickets that are distributed through agencies, but if you live far away from an agency where you can get a free bus ticket, you are out of luck.

Another solution could be a free bus pass issued monthly along with the financial statement just as the health care cards are.

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THE VIEWS PRESENTED ARE THOSE OF THE CONTRIBUTORS.

Projects to end poverty

By Allan Sheppard

Projects to end poverty, sadaly,
always to be with us

Here we go again. (Again)

(And again.)

(And again.)

(And again.)

Almost (it seems in retrospect) every year since Stephen Mandel's first (2004-05) as mayor, Edmonton and/or one or more of its agencies has produced a plan/initiative/strategy to end homelessness/poverty in our city.

The 2016 iteration surfaced (sort of) on May 19, with an announcement from a task force dubbed, in the way of such things in the internet era, EndPovertyEdmonton; add .ca to the name and hey-presto! you have the URL to EPE's web site. (The technology is well under control, if not yet the challenges it presumably was created to help tackle; not necessarily a bad thing, though worrisome.)

EPE (let's keep it simple) was launched publicly in March 2014 with Mayor Don Iveson and Anglican Bishop Jane Alexander as co-chairs symbolizing, we can assume, a joint commitment among the city and key non-governmental community organizations to EPE and its goals.

Those goals are summarized on EPE's web site. Vision: "To eliminate poverty in Edmonton within a generation"; Mandate: "To develop a concrete, long term plan to end poverty in Edmonton within a generation." Nicely done: Tight. Focused. Clear. We aim to end poverty in Edmonton.

But...

How long is a generation? According to the Concise Canadian Oxford Dictionary, it's "the average time in which children are ready to take the place of their parents." According to the CCOD, it's usually "reckoned at about 30 years."

Hmmm...

That's hardly good enough. In that long run most of us, including those

whom EPE wants to serve, will be dead.

I've found cases lately, probably reflecting the hyperactivity (and precociousness) of our wirelessly internetted world (not, sadly, the same thing as an intricately interconnected world), where a generation is reckoned at as few as ten years. That may make sense: ten years is these days longer than the average (planned-obsolescence) shelf life of much of the technology the overwhelms most of us. Constantly. And ten years seems to be the average shelf life of current federal, provincial and municipal administrations. It's also the life expectancy of a provincial/municipal ten-year plan to end homelessness, now seven years into its allotted timeline and budget.

We might expect, seven years into the initiative, significant progress toward the plan's goal.

But Homeward Trust, on its last (2014) homeless count, found that Edmonton still had around 2,300 homeless people (compared to around 2,500 when the plan was launched). We've housed several thousand adults and children under the plan—but made barely more than a statistical-error difference in the actual number of homeless.

So...

If the goal was not achieved, the project must be judged a failure, no matter how much obvious good is done. (And obvious good was done. But that's not the point.) The goal was to end homelessness, not simply to prevent a doubling (or more) of the homeless population that might have occurred had the province and the city done nothing. We should be thankful for what has been done.

But we should not fool ourselves or let the province and the city fool us (or themselves) that they have done as much as they could have, or should have. Nor should we, or the province,

or the city forget that the original 10-year plan still has 3 years to run and must not be abandoned. Given the state of our petro-province's economy in an over-supplied world market, and given the likelihood that getting our costly products to markets will never more be easy, continuing to hold the line may be the best we can hope for—and the least we should expect. But it's still not what we set out to do. The EPE initiative announced May 20 includes housing and homelessness components, but they are not given the central focus they have in the ten-year plan. Nor do they have the same funding: the EPE initiative currently comprises 35 projects with a budget of \$27.2 million over the first five years, which breaks down to roughly \$5.5 million, or a bit more than \$155,000 per project, per year.

There is no way of knowing how the funds will be distributed to or used by individual project proponents, but a simple thought experiment yields the following possible result:

One of EPE's objectives is persuade first the city, then private enterprises working for and supplying to the city, then the broader business community to set a minimum wage of \$17.36 per hour (generally described by anti-poverty advocates as a minimum "living wage" for employees without benefits). At 35 hours per week for 52 weeks, that living wage amounts to \$31,595 annually; almost enough for 5 employees per project.

Deduct allowances for overhead, materials and third-party expenses and it's unlikely that the budget available would pay for more than two minimum-living wage workers, one slightly better-paid supervisor/manager, plus rudimentary office space, furnishings, and equipment.

To put it another way: if all of the \$5.5 million EPE has budgeted for

Continued on page 5

Universal Basic Income

By Sam Goertz

Universal Basic Income (UBI), is also commonly known as Citizen's Allowance, the Universal Demogrant, Unconditional Basic Income and other ideations. All are slight variations of the same idea; an income afforded to all people of all ages with the only requirement being that you are a citizen of that nation.

The idea of UBI, though seemingly radical to some has been in the public sphere since 1797 when Thomas Paine proposed something similar. The idea has gained serious traction across Europe, in fact in Switzerland they are holding a second referendum on it's institution. In our own backyard the idea is being taken for a test drive; Ontario is running a pilot programme in Fall 2016.

UBI is revolutionary in that it is a non-partisan idea, one lauded by both left and right wing economists. The idea has been tried with significant success on a small scale across the world, but the important questions still remain for many; what exactly is UBI? Who would get it, and how much? How would we pay for it and what would it actually do for us? Let's explore together.

UBI is an idea that can take many forms and variances, so for the sake of simplicity I have chosen a specific version of it.

UBI is an unconditional income that is given to all people within a nation state or other political state. It does not require means testing and mostly replaces the somewhat inefficient welfare programs and certain forms of social assistance. It would be payed in monthly amounts, and usage of those dollars would be entirely unrestricted (for adults). UBI would not be taxed directly but rather supplemented in new progressive taxes.

UBI could be granted to all adult citizens in full, and in partial amounts to children and seniors with pensions. All

groups would get UBI aside from those imprisoned, although they would immediately get it again once released. Only citizens of a particular state (Canada, for our purposes) would be eligible for it.

UBI wouldn't necessarily be the same for all age groups however, as certain groups would not need it as much. Let's say that UBI for adults is \$8,000, that means that about 65% of the population would make the full unregulated \$8,000 to use on whatever they wished. Seniors would make a bit less (depending on pensions) say \$4,000 per year, so roughly 15% of Canadians would make that. Children, as they do not have the same financial needs would make the least of these groups and have to be regulated to a degree. To discourage parents from simply having children to glean UBI off of them (though this is not a proven outcome) children would have less earnings and need to be monitored to make sure they are the ones actually getting the money. Children (20% of the population roughly) would make \$2,000 per year and that money could be reserved for a trust when they turn 18 or for a mixture of academic savings/actual spending. Children are where the money gets trickiest, but even then, quite solvable.

Now comes the hard part: the how. UBI would be payed for with a combination of different approaches. Part of the funding would come from cutting social programs made redundant by it's existence such as various welfare programs and many other specific social initiatives aimed at poverty reduction. Cutting many of those initiatives would free up ample government funds as well as streamlining the oh-so cluttered government bureaucracy. UBI actually costs less in terms of social infrastructure as well, for example: the pilot programmes have shown that healthcare usage actually falls by about 8%.

UBI could also be paid for with a variety of taxes, an increased progressive income tax (that still incentivizes work), luxury/vice taxes, carbon taxes, bit taxes, etc.

One of the of the most intriguing methods of paying for UBI also sounds the most controversial at first: a slight GST raise. GST although maligned by many, is simply pragmatic good sense. It was brought in by Mulroney in the 90's and remains a staple of government revenue today. It's been determined that one point of GST makes the government about \$7 billion in tax revenue per year, and that's before the increased consumption that will very likely happen with UBI. In many ways UBI pays for itself and then some.

With UBI comes the temptation to privatize everything as the government isn't relied upon as much but I would preach caution to those thinkers. The government should retain responsibility for all those institutions where privatization (i.e. services/products rendered for profit) could be deemed unethical, such as healthcare.

It's been proven that UBI does not actually lessen the individuals desire to work (aside from teen boys who then stay in school more), but instead allows them to use their time more effectively, and allows for the best possible lever for folks to get out of poverty. UBI causes, in many cases, for people to work harder and/or smarter and invest in their futures as much as their present, if not more so. It helps defeat the "unemployment trap" where getting a job can have less benefit than unemployment have less benefit than unemployment insurance (for some at least). It would spur the economy by creating more consumers and in turn raise demand for workers (a positive feedback cycle). It would allow for individuals whose jobs are being replaced by automation to still retain financial stability as well as to invest

Projects to end poverty continued from page 3

has budgeted for each year were paid out in wages, it would underwrite the earnings of 175 workers. It would certainly be a blessing to the lucky hypothetical beneficiaries, but it would hardly create a ripple in the 100,000-plus pool of Edmontonians said by the Edmonton Social Planning Council to be living below the poverty line (two-thirds of them working, often at more than one job, by the way) in our city. I realize my back-of-the-envelope calculations oversimplify a complex situation. Instead of fully funding the wages of a small number of workers, the \$5.5 million might be used to top up to living-wage levels the incomes of many more people. But the number of beneficiaries would still be insignificant against the (likely to grow) number of poor and working poor. I assume the (substantially volunteer) movers and shakers behind EPE (and the scores of volunteers who helped in varied ways with their planning) realize the money they have to work with is a pittance compared to the amount realistically needed to eliminate poverty in Edmonton within a generation, be that a 10-, 20-, or 30-year time frame.

I also assume that all of them hope (and perhaps some of them pray, as well) that the beneficiaries of the projects they advocate will be able to leverage the community's investment enough to generate money needed to achieve—or, more realistically, to make real progress toward achieving—the elimination of poverty in Edmonton in whatever humane and realistic time frame it might actually take. What are the odds for success? Not very good, I believe, certainly not without major changes—paradigm shifts, in fact, in the way communities

and governments think about and deal with poverty and homelessness—and health, education, culture and the environment, which must factor into the bigger-picture mix.

Economic considerations are also factors, but they always have advocates who never let them be forgotten. The rich and powerful will always be with us, with privileged access to government, the media, and public opinion. I could go on. But if I haven't persuaded anyone to look more deeply at the issue by now, another thousand words is unlikely to change minds.

I will conclude with this: My comments to this point have reflected my first instinctive journalistic and political reaction: skepticism. But there is more to me, and there certainly is—must be—more to the many challenges of poverty in Edmonton and EndPovertyEdmonton's commitment and current and future plans to eliminate that humanitarian scourge. We all need a little (sometimes a lot of) skepticism. It's easiest and surest defence we have against partisans, ideologues, and charlatans. But responsible citizenship—like responsible humanity—means more than that; It means engagement—as an individual and as a member of a community or communities. That requires curiosity and, most important of all, an open mind. It demands a willingness to go beyond one's initial, instinctive skepticism to consider and explore (enthusiastically or soberly, as the cases may require) second, third, or fourth thoughts.

Skepticism generally leads, at least as a first reaction, to saying no. We have all heard, too many times, politicians and media pontificators who insist that the hard choice in difficult situations is to say no. They are wrong.

The hardest thing, especially when questions of spending (taxpayers')

money are involved, is to say yes. Bureaucrats are seldom fired and politicians seldom defeated for saying no to the spending of money. Saying yes can have serious consequences. But saying yes may still be the best response in difficult times.

So...

While there are many things that trouble me about EPE as it has so far been presented and explained, and while I have assertively raised questions and objections—and will continue to do so—I support EPE and encourage every Edmontonian of good will to do the same.

The question is not really economic; it's political. We can afford what needs to be done, if we want to—and if we want it enough to persuade and demand that our political leaders (and would-be leaders) give us what we want.

And what every citizen—especially every child—living in poverty need. And deserves.

I don't believe the city and EPE's principals have come up with a minging plan because that is what they want or think would be best for the city. I believe they have come up with a plan they think, given what their political instincts tell them, Edmontonians will accept.

It's up to us to ask for more. And show that and how we will support them in giving more.

As one of the wiser politicians I once worked for sometimes said: Don't come to me with problems; come to me with solutions to problems. Then I can help.

Note (My deadline for this commentary passed before city council's June 24 deliberations on the EPE initiative had been reported. I will consider them and more broadly based alternatives in future editions of ASN.)

UBI - Continued from page 3

n financial stability as well as to invest in education for higher level jobs not subject to automation. UBI would

remove any of the shame that some people feel in regards to using welfare programs and allow ALL of us in society to live in prosperity and dignity.

Acting on child poverty

By Timothy Wild

Actions speak louder than words. Unfortunately, however, when it comes to dealing with poverty, and other forms of inequality and marginalization, the opposite seems to be the case. Many people seem to like to talk about how we need to do something about these decidedly preventable issues but, frequently, the follow-up is lacking. This is the historical pattern of the bourgeois cool.

For example, way back in 1989 the House of Commons unanimously passed a resolution calling for an end to child poverty by 2000. And during the 2012 provincial election, the then PC premier stated that her government would develop a plan to eliminate child poverty in Alberta by 2017. However, despite these words and quite probably good intentions, child poverty continues to be a major social problem both provincially and nationally.

The implications and facts of ongoing child poverty in Alberta (which is obviously caused by the income of parents) are captured in a report released recently by the Edmonton Social Planning Council (ESPC) in cooperation with the Alberta College of Social Workers and Public Interest Alberta. The report, *The Path Forward: Opportunities to End Child Poverty in Alberta*, indicates that in 2013 144 850 children in our province were living in poverty. The majority of these children (54.2%) lived in low-income single parent families, with the remainder living in two parent families. Additionally, the report demonstrates the central role played by employment (as opposed

to government assistance) for low-income families, and notes that in the case of single parent families “75.2% of their total income came from paid employment or net self-employment”. This percentage is staggering and certainly points to the overall problem of low wages in general, and the specifically gendered dimension reflected in the heavier presence of women in lower paid sectors of the economy. Using after tax low-income measures, what this means is that low income families are on average about \$13 000 below the poverty line. To me, the depth of poverty is astounding.

But there are ways to reduce child poverty, indeed overall poverty. As the ESPC report notes, these responses include the provision of living wages, provincial and national child benefits and the building of more affordable housing. The new Alberta Child Benefit, for example, will be available to all of our province’s children living in poverty, and some 90 000 children living just above the poverty line. The Alberta Family Employment Tax Credit will also help low-income families. Poverty isn’t only about income but it is always about income. And these programs will undoubtedly help.

To these could also be added a number of other policy initiatives, including the creation of a quality and affordable childcare system, an expansion of progressive taxation (the report states that if we were taxed at the same level as BC, Alberta would have an additional \$8.5 billion in public revenues) and publically funded dental insurance. If applied in a collective and

comprehensive manner, we could significantly reduce, if not actually end, all forms of economic poverty.

And that brings me to the Budget. Justice doesn’t come for free, and in good times and in bad it is essential that government work to stabilize the overall economy, and ensure that there are greater opportunities for individuals and families surviving on the social and economic margins. Budgets are a concrete way to extend justice, inclusion and participation to more Albertans. Taxes are simply a mechanism to pay for the type of society we want.

Much has been written about the perceived fiscal inappropriateness of the recent provincial budget, particularly in these tough economic times. The bonding agencies and the mass media are having a field day over Minister Joe Ceci’s visionary document. But it is precisely the type of Budget we need for these times. Keynes had it right. The Government’s fiscal direction will ensure that low income Albertans do not pay the price for the vagaries of postindustrial capitalism and poor fiscal planning, as they have done so often in the past.

The Budget will also guarantee that low income Albertans will see some level of increase in their standard of living and quality of life. Not bad, I say.

Fighting poverty is certainly not easy. It demands vision, solidarity, sustainable financing and planning. However, as *The Path Forward* shows, it can and should be done.

All we need to do is act!

God confirmed his presence in a song

By John Zapantis

It's always amazing how the power of prayer can bring people and their beliefs together!

That's exactly what happened when I decided to have the presence of God confirmed in prayer to me in church through a song sung by the church congregation at an Easter mass held by the St. Joseph's Basilica in Edmonton on Sunday April 3rd at 12 noon.

My girlfriend Theresa Walsh Cooke happens to be of the Catholic faith, so for a change we decided to attend her church for an afternoon of worship and prayer. When we arrived at her church at around 12 that afternoon, we slowly followed a crowd of churchgoers filing slowly through the main entrance of this magnificent spiritual shrine.

Theresa suggested that we sit at the very last back pew to our left as we entered inside this place of worship, being that she has walking issues, and that made things more convenient for her. There, when about to sit in our chosen spots, I immediately noticed an elderly woman in the pew in front of me staring over at me rather sternly.

She then asked me, "Are you and the lady next to you a couple?"

"Yes we are. That's my girl friend Theresa Walsh Cooke and my name is John Zapantis"

Soon my girlfriend and I exchanged hand shakes with this elderly woman, whose name I happened to forget, so for my story I'll refer to her as Faith.

While the church's Priest started to make his spiritual delivery on various subject matter concerning Christ's resurrection, every now and then Faith, in front of us,

would cut into a discussion with Theresa and myself.

Again giving me a rather uncomfortable stern stare down, she asked me what faith I was.

I was feeling rather uncomfortable with her investigative search in asking me for validation, so I quickly and firmly replied, "Greek Orthodox."

Now feeling that the lady was sort of judging me, I made my attempt to set a moral example with her and said, "When it comes to Christ's teachings there are no divisions among various religious denominations, God belongs to everyone!"

She then shot a disappointing look over at me, giving me some indication that I was right about my first instincts about her, so I put her to the test to reinforce my instincts about her once again. I said, "Did you know that the Apostles who were Greek wrote the New Testament?"

She then shot back in an arrogant tone of voice, "I'll have to check and see if you're right about that one."

Well my instincts about her proved right without judgement against her as she obviously was putting my spiritual beliefs to the big test.

Soon the Priest of this church announced that it was time to get down on our knees in holy prayer. Everyone in the church now followed through on his instruction, kneeling to pray and show honour to the Holy Father. Right then, while in silent prayer, I asked Jesus to confirm his presence inside this church through either the Priest's delivery through a sermon or even having

his presence confirmed through a song sung by the church's congregation.

My confirmation finally revealed its self, when suddenly, while hearing the lyrical line sung by the church choir, just when this line in the song could be heard, as I quote, "and Jesus walked by his side and splashed Holy water on the right side of his temple." I then felt a drop of water touching the right-side of my temple.

It was truly a miracle. God had answered my prayer as I noticed a Priest now walking down the right side of me, splashing everyone including myself with Holy water, which was that drop of water that hit the right side of my temple, confirmed by God, who had finally revealed his presence in the church.

I soon shared this miraculous holy confirmation with the lady, who had her doubts about me, and in a matter of a minute I had her inspired strongly by my spiritual confirmation.

She broke into a contented smile shaking my hand in approval and loudly said "Praise the Lord!"

Now that testimony of mine had such a strong impact on this believer, she then started singing loudly from her heart, as we all now joined in along with the hundreds of churchgoers in a loud and honourable song praising Christ for bringing everyone together. This very special moment of worship had me believing more in my faith for those who need assurance, sometimes needing even a spiritual confirmation from our Lord Jesus Christ!

Spring is in the Air

By Dani Zyp

Enjoying sun's deep rays
After days and days of quixotic
scent of heavenly lilacs and frothy
mayday blossoms
Priming myself for linden trees and
honeysuckle
Delicate tulips stand at attention
on stiff stems
Spring is in the air
Floating in elm seeds
Swirling on the ground and nest-
ing in nooks and crannies

You and Me

By Renza Lagarita

Our coasts meet,
In the strait of sparkling imagination,
While our thoughts are intertwined,
The secrets of our life.
The new light affects the vessels of my hopes,
While you pray for me now
I am leaving time of darkness,
I leave the chains of overweight loads
In the aura of your hug I imagine myself,
On the horizon of the new mission I am waiting
for you.

Then and now Modern Mommy.

Sincerely Lanky
Number one son.

It was a common phrase back in those
days.
I hate you, I hate you, I hate you I would
say.
As I headed to my room as instructed.
Until my bad behaviour relented.
You don't know how many beatings you
saved me.
By you sending me to my room to punch
the cardboard closet box.
You chose not to tell on me anymore, like,
"Hank you have to do something about that
boy."
You didn't like what he did to me so you
stopped telling.

That meant that you cared, looking back
now.
And that you did the best you could at the
time.
Thanks for dealing with me yourself.
Thanks for saving me many welts.

Thanks for being my mom.
No one helps me like you.
Painful, yes, sometimes I know.
Not turning out the way you hoped.

One thing you should know.
If you feel bad about anything.
Realize I know that you did the best you
could.
With me the problem child.

Lotsa Love, Love, Love.
Your son Lanky
"Happy Mothers day."

HEALING WORDS



BY THE CMHA
WRITING FOR RECOVERY GROUP

The Beauty in You

By Michelle Black

There is beauty in you
There is strength to face most anything
There may be change, and there may be fear,
But you can persevere!

Sing, sing till your heart's content
Breathe, breathe and peace will come
Love is always within you
Look deep and you will see

Just like a river, life will take you where it will
Embrace it, enjoy it, take time to be still



That's How I Know

**Sincerely Lanky
Number one son**

I walk down the street.
And this globe is sailing.
I don't feel it but it's true.
I see a baby wailing.
His mommy gives him a treat.
And this globe is spinning.
Once a day they say for a year.
I don't feel it but it's true.
Our sun following it's branch.
On the Milky Way but I don't feel it.
Us following, where shall I go today?
Revolving, rewinding, resolving.
Spinning in control we are some not.
Bumping into things, all this flying, orbiting.

**Spinning daily and yearly
should make me dizzy.
But I don't feel a thing. Sail-
ing through the galaxy.**

**Someone had to find out
before me.
That's how I know.
Raven Unseen.
Raven, raven in the sky.
Thank you now for just fly-
ing by.
I heard you speak as you
passed.
May your song ever last.**

**On this bright and sunny
morn.
I see no cloud, and no
storm.
Thank you now for just fly-
ing by.
When you spoke I looked up
through glass.**

**And saw the sun and the
breeze.
May your throaty song ever
last.
You caught my attention
from the grind.
Caused me to look up and
and take some time.**

**Raven, raven in the sky
Thank you now for just fly-
ing by.
Though I did not see you.
I saw the sun and the breeze**

**And the wind in the spring
bloomed leaves.
Thank you young raven, that
I did not see.
You caused me to look out
and with glee.
The lovely day you
brought to me.
Lanky**

My Thoughts on the Fire in Fort McMurray



By Sharon Spencer

What new can be said about Fort McMurray? We are overcome with shock and grief for the evacuees, compounded by horror. One of the special things about being an imported Albertan having lived here for twelve years, it makes me proud to see the outpouring of humanairtism flooding in from all directions. Nothing will make up for the loses that people are feeling, however there has been an awful lot of love and sharing going around.

The fire has not stopped it's still going on and we stand at 18 days as I'm writing this. We desperately need rain. It's the only thing that will help, and as we know it's been a very dry last couple of years

Rain is a God thing that realies on the grace of God. With all our technical knowledge only God can create a rain cloud. In Bible day's the lack of rain created famine and still does today in other countries. We have nowhere to turn but to God and as a country cry out to him. I have been trying to pray my way through this and this is what I have come to understand.

Some of us have felt that for this season of the last day's and the approaching of Christ, this verse is the key to everything that is happening in the news today.

2 Chronicles 7:14 New International Version (NIV)

14 if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

I had been aware of this for quite a while, then when the fire came about I was lead to examine the verse above it. I was astounded by what I found out.

2 Chronicles 7:13New International Version (NIV)

"When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people, "

People I was shocked by the reference to lack of rain. Brought on by sin and people turning away from God and ignoring him. The bible say's he's a jealous God, he is our creator and he made us especially for him. If we put other things before him he call's them idols. We can make an idol out of anything TV. cars relationships anything that takes priority over him.

Anything that we love more than him. He will only take it for so long until finally he would start to warn the Israelites through prophets over and over again. If they still ignored him then disaster would come to them in the form of famine or locusts or being taken into captivity. Then when people had suffered enough with situations they could not change they would cry out to him, perhaps from a foreign land where they were slaves. Devastation was upon them because they had other idols before them. And the God of the old testament is the

God of the new testament. Nothing has changed. He still works in the same ways. Modern day prophets have been crying out for a spirit of repentance warning people of up coming disaster. That's where the verse in chronicles 7:14 comes in.

Firstly I think that God is speaking to Christians (born again) because he calls them my people. He's giving them a recipe for healing there land. He is calling us to serious repentance and recognition of sin and entering into relationship that can only be established through the blood of Christ. Humbling ourselves and admitting we are sinners. Invite Christ into our life and it will happen.

So the hammer has dropped. You can choose to be angry about this message or you can choose to be honest before God. That's what he respects. Beg his forgiveness and if enough of us do this God will see our change in attitude and heal our land. God knows that this land of ours needs a touch of healing. How can you doubt this? We don't want to be like nations that were not established under our motto that say's so much - and he shall have dominion from sea to sea. He longs once more to get our attention and he shall have dominion. But people it starts with each indivual giving him his rightful dominion over our hearts.

Matthew 5:45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. LCD

Love that Fathers' Day Barbecue

conversations overheard

By Joanne Bengler

1. You mean no one checked to see if there is a fire ban before he lit the bon fire?
2. That isn't soup you're eating – it's dishwater.
3. Someone sat on the buns and flattened them
4. I've never met anyone who liked raw onion in a salad but I have never met a cook who leaves raw onion out of salad.
5. This beverage started out as a jellied salad.
6. Everything is under cooked if it isn't over cooked.
7. The folding chair folded up just as I tried to sit on it.
8. I say charred fat is still fat meat even if they call it steak.
9. I wonder who threw what on the bon fire to make all that heavy black smoke.
10. Who invited those firemen to the barbecue?
11. Are those drowned flies or raisins in the carrot salad?
12. It is nice to see the young ones even if they are talking to their cell phones and ignoring us.
13. I'm not sure the barbecue should flare up like that.
14. Don't use the butter knife to get dog poo off your shoe.
15. Her expensive white pants are covered in mustard and ketchup stains.
16. When I bring out my casserole, who does everyone claim to be on a diet or have an allergy?
17. Did I actually see him put cooked meat on the raw meat platter?
18. I don't trust the secret in that secret recipe for barbecue sauce.
19. Smoke gets in your eyes and in your clothes and in your lungs.
20. I'm not sure if this food is spoiled or if that is how foreign food is supposed to taste.
21. The weather warning did say we'd have gusts of wind up to 90 km per hour and they got it right for once.
22. It's a typical sing-along. Everyone has different words and different tunes and the worst singers sing the loudest.



Novena

To St. Joseph

O glorious St. Joseph, faithful follower of Jesus Christ, to thee do we raise our hearts and hands to implore thy powerful intercession in obtaining from the benign heart of Jesus all the helps and graces necessary for our spiritual and temporal welfare, particularly the grace of a happy death and the favour we now implore (state favour wanted).

Say the following seven times – O glorious St. Joseph, through the love thou barest to Jesus Christ and for the glory of his Name, hear our prayers and obtain our petitions. Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

R. S.

On Fathers' Day - Remembering a Great Man

By Sharon Austin

Many years ago in English class I memorized the poem "If" by Rudyard Kipling because it reminded me of my father. My father had a great inner strength and could keep calm and face any situation. He never compromised his strong belief in truth, honesty, fairness, and respect for all mankind. Dad treated everyone the same, whether it was the Pastor come for Sunday dinner or a transient passing by.

I remember my Mom saying to him, "If the Queen of England was riding by I bet you'd invite her in for coffee."

Dad just laughed in his good-natured, way and said, "Why not, she's just a person like the rest of us."

My father was able to face all the storms of life without flinching whether it was hail destroying the crops or losing our garage to fire. He was always optimistic, and one of his favourite sayings was "Where there's life there's hope."

Dad lived in the present and I don't remember him being bitter or angry or hating anyone. He had a great sense of humour and never complained even when he was old and sick and in a great deal of pain.

I will never forget Dad's 64th and last birthday. I was nineteen and I had baked him a white layer cake with strawberry jam in the middle and butter icing, which was his favourite.

"You have to make a wish, Dad," I said.

He stared at the lengthening flames a long moment as the firelight made his kind blue eyes glow like jewels. "I have everything I could wish for," he said at last.

To others that may have seemed strange as we were very poor, dad drove an old beat-up truck, and worked the farm with worn-out machinery, but I knew just what he meant. He was at peace with God, and man, and with himself, and was content with what he had. What more could anyone wish for!

Funny the things we never forget; I can still recite this poem word for word after all these years.

IF

**If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,**

**Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:**

**If you can dream—and not make dreams your mas-
ter;**

**If you can think—and not make thoughts your
aim;**

If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster

And treat those two impostors just the same;

If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken

Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,

Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,

And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings

And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,

And lose, and start again at your beginnings

And never breathe a word about your loss;

If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew

To serve your turn long after they are gone,

And so hold on when there is nothing in you

Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on!"

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,

Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch,

If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,

If all men count with you, but none too much;

If you can fill the unforgetting minute

With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,

Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,

And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son.

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Chewy

By Vivian Risby

I got Chewy when she was two years old. My sister was just going to leave her. They already had a cat and Missy. Chewy's mom. I never had a dog in my life. Before that I had other pets - a turkey, Spurni skunk.

Trial and error- first day I took chewy out I had gotten six stitches and she tripped me, then broke my arm, then broke my leg. What next? I hope nothing.

Lazy Chewy and I go and pick bottles and she knows where to go. When she gets tired she will not move. She will lie down anywhere even in the middle of the street. Now she and I will never be apart. Pets are best friends to us. Some are better than husbands. Dogs will welcome you home at any time even if you come home angry. They will come running to you happy to see you.

Chewy went to go and get a hair cut. I was so lonely and was crying for Chewy. I was so happy to see her come home. Chewy and I are always together. I was offered \$1,200 for her. I needed the money but no amount of money can afford my best friend. I love her so much. Selling papers does help a lot of people. I am very happy that we are going to keep going. Linda Dumont helps people a lot and some take advantage of her. Thank you to all our friends that help us.

To a true friend

By Ryan V. Robertson

As time rolls on and on it becomes increasingly evident that the friendship we share will be eternal.. there have been times that the friendship between us has seemed to be seriously tested but we always find solace in the fact that our honesty comes to the forefront can wipe away all negativity.

Looking back there obviously has been more good than bad. Like so many a chance meeting we have carried on to trust each other , to be confidants and to help each other when the world seems unfair.

Support we have found when others' search a lifetime and aren't so fortunate. One thing we have established is that there is nothing wrong in being friends. In order to do that we have realized that space must be given to allow each other to live our individual lives.

Sometimes decisions made on our own have been difficult for the other person but experience moves us into what we are and is a valuable lesson. So let the rest of world can carry on in turmoil and discontent. We have found answers that make our lives liveable. I hope for you and I'm glad to have you for a friend.

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2. Get a subscription to ASN - for \$45 a year the paper will be mailed out.

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Damage done through shame



By Maria B.

To understand the damage brought by shame, we need to look deeper than the goal of “good” behavior. If we think that verbal punishment has “worked” because we stopped what the child was doing, then we have dangerously limited our view of the child to the behaviors that we can see. It is all too easy to overlook the inner world of children: the emotions that underlie their behavior and the suffering caused by shame. It is also easy to miss what the child suffers inside.

Even well-meaning adults can sometimes underestimate children’s sensitivity to shaming language. There is mounting evidence that some of the words used to scold children - household words previously thought “harmless” - have the power to puncture children’s self-esteem for years to come. A child’s self-identity is shaped around the things they hear about themselves. A ten-year-old girl, for example, was overcome with anxiety after spilling a drink. She exclaimed over and over: “I’m so stupid! I’m so stupid!”. These were the exact words her mother had used against her. Unfortunately children take on punishing themselves where the parent left off. She lived in fear of

her parents’ judgment, and learned to shame herself in the same way that she had been shamed.

If children’s emotional needs are dismissed and if their experiences are trivialized, they grow up feeling unimportant. If they are told that they are “bad” and “naughty”, they absorb this message and take this belief into adulthood.

Shame makes people feel diminished. It is a fear of being exposed, and leads to withdrawal from relationships. Shaming creates a feeling of powerlessness to act, and to express oneself. We want to dance, but we’re stopped by memories of being told us “You will never be able to learn.” If we are having fun suddenly we hear “Stop it, you are making too much noise!” We strive to excel, or to speak out, but we’re held back by what we learned about ourselves that we are not good enough. Shame takes the shape of the inner voices and images that mimic those who told us “Don’t be stupid,” or “Don’t be silly!” “You will never amount to nothing.” “You are so ugly”

Shame restrains a child’s self-expression. Having felt the sting of an adult’s constant negative judgment, the shamed child censors herself in order to escape being branded as “#&@%” or “bad”. Shame crushes children’s natural exuberance, their curiosity, and their desire to do things by themselves. Shame denies us the expression of our emotions - with the occasional exception of anger. People who feel shamed tend toward two sides of expression: emotional muteness\ paralysis, or bouts of hostility and rage and fear.

Some swing from crying and

then you are reprimanded because as they say “what is wrong with you? You are crying for nothing”, and shouting for anger and feeling so frustrated, most emotions have a physical expression which allows them to dissipate. Shame doesn’t. This is why the effects of shame could last a life time.

We were never told what feelings were and therefore we never learned to recognize them. It makes us live on the sidelines of life; it makes us want to be invisible and therefore it makes us withdraw from relationships and become isolated. Shame make us see ourselves with the same lenses with which our parent formed their toxic opinion about us.

Shame tends to makes us feel humiliated and disapproved of by others, which can lead to hostility, even fury. Numerous studies link shame with a desire to punish others. When angry, shamed individuals are more likely to be malevolent, indirectly aggressive or self-destructive. People become excellent actors in order to cover up their shame or compensate for deep feelings of shame with attitudes of contempt, superiority, domineering or bullying, self-deprecation, or obsessive perfectionism.

While shaming has the power to control behavior, it does not have the power to teach empathy. When we repeatedly label a child “naughty” or otherwise, we condition them to focus inwardly, and they become pre-occupied with themselves and their failure to please. Thus children learn to label themselves, but learn nothing about relating, or about

Rob's Corner in Calgary



By Robert Champion

Friendship – the Power of Positivity – Letting Go

Let go of toxic people. Let go or regretting past mistakes. Let go of the need to be right. Let go of feeling sorry for yourself. Let go of negative talk. Let go of the need to impress others. Let go of limiting - "I can't". Let go of gossip and complaining. Let go of worry about the future.

Damage done through shame - continued

considering and comprehending the feelings of others. For empathy to develop, children need to be shown how others feel. In calling children "naughty", for example, we have told the child nothing about how we feel in response to their behavior. Children cannot learn about caring for others' feelings, nor about how their behavior impacts on others, while they are thinking: "There is something wrong with me."

Children have a natural desire to develop a social conscience. When treated with the same respect as adults, and exposed to adults who respect each other; children will naturally develop a capacity for empathic, caring and respectful behavior.

CHILDREN ARE A GIFT TO THE WORLD AND THEY SHOULD BE TREATED AS SUCH.

Be Aware

Life is short. The end is not that far off or is coming soon enough. Remember the good times. Put the bad times behind you. Don't take your life or your friends for granted. Treat people with respect. Treat people with compassion and understanding. Be there for them in their time of need or when they are hurting. Keep an open mind. Don't judge. Life is too short. Don't argue.

Sometimes

Sometimes we blame ourselves for our misfortunes, for example, losing a loved one, getting fired or laid off from our jobs, losing our home, being homeless, not having enough money to live on, taking our friends and family members for granted and not having enough food.

What Makes Me Happy

- A. Being able to ride a bike.
- B. Having good friends in my life.

- C. Being around good people.
- D. Having a nice place to live.
- E. Having my health.
- F. Looking and feeling young for my age.
- G. Classic Rock, 50's, 60's, 70's and 80's.
- H. Classic movies, romance, action adventure and mystery
- I. Dancing, slow dancing
- J. Making new friends.
- K. Helping and giving directions.
- L. Hanging out at Calgary Association of Self Help.
- M. Finding a good friend.
- N. Cycling along the Bow River.
- O. Being considerate of other peoples' feelings.
- P. Being a good listener.
- Q. The smell of fresh flowers and cut grass.
- R. The smell of a barbecue.
- S. The sound of an engine from a lawn mower.
- T. Having good people in my life.
- U. Writing a column for Alberta Street News.
- V. Remembering those who are no longer with us.
- W. Being outside on a warm sunny afternoon.
- X. Remembering the good times and times I spent with Lorna.
- Y. Remembering the first time I fell in love.
- Z. Hanging out with friends.

The last word

Be honest. Be kind. Be aware. Be humble. Be true to yourself. Be yourself. Be a good listener. Be a good friend. Be healthy. Be happy. Be sad – it's ok.

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Father Jim and Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples



By Peter Schultz

Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples was what Archbishop Joseph McNeil officially named the Roman Catholic First Peoples Church at 10821 - 96 St in 1993. 73 year old Father Jim Holland has been the priest here since then. He recently had a street named after him: Fr. Jim Holland Way, 108A Ave. : 95 - 96 St. It had 32,000 hits on the computer.

Father Jim does approximately 10 Weddings, 25 funerals and 30 baptisms, and 10 - 15 Confirmations per month. Over 300 First Nations people attend the 11:30 Sunday services. When there was an attempt to move Father Jim a few years ago, 6,000 signatures against it prevented the move. About 200 Eritreans attend church there Sundays at 4 p.m.

The Missionary Oblates of Mary the Immaculate built all the Roman Catholic Churches in Western Canada, including this one. Father Jim enjoys his work very much and doesn't intend on retiring soon. Although many famous people have some bad experiences in life, I have never heard any negative experiences about Father Jim.

Father Jim's family was originally Baptist. He didn't convert to Roman Catholic until age 24, in the Atlantic Sacred Heart Church. Blacks were discriminated against in his childhood which helped motivate him to take on a Native church. He backed the St. Vincent de Paul organization, which to this day helps many poor, for many years. Father Jim has 23 nephews and over 50 great nephews so his blood line will continue.

Above: The sign for Father Jim Holland Way.

Below left: Father Jim Holland at the pulpit of Sacred Heart Church. Below right: mural at Sacred Heart. Photos by Linda Dumont

