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PER PAPER

ALBERTA Street News

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Caring Clowns at the Walk of Hope
Story on pages 12 - 13

ALBERTA STREET NEWS

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Letter - Re: MacDonald Lofts

Alberta Health Services' concern for conditions in the MacDonald Lofts was demonstrated last month with an inspection that resulted in condemnation of six of the Lofts' units, units that won't be re-opened until AHS say they can be. Of course, any residents of those units – some of Edmonton's most vulnerable and hard-to-house – could find themselves living on the street. However, "the building is the priority for AHS". (Edmonton Journal, August 17, 2016 <http://edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/health-orders-issued-for-edmontons-macdonald-loft-units-not-safe-for-human-habitation>)

As we understand it, AHS responded to complaints from some Lofts residents themselves, as those residents cast about for a way – any way – to fight a rent increase that had been proposed by their landlord. Although we understand and sympathize with the motivation, we think the tactic might have unintended consequences.

In our experience AHS inspections can signal the beginning of a sad, familiar pattern
Some examples:

In 2003 a group of property owners objected to the presence of the Locke Apartments (which, like the Lofts, provided living spaces for the hard-to-house) in their Norwood neighbourhood. 67 AHS inspections in one year did the trick – the Apartments were condemned, then demolished. Two year later many of its former residents were still living on the street.

A decade or so previous to that, City Planners' decision to "elevate" the character of the East Downtown (Boyle Street) was supported by AHS to the tune of vast numbers of inspections resulting in the displacement of probably thousands of Edmonton's impoverished elderly, mentally ill, physically handicapped, addicted, and disadvantaged-by-virtue-of-being-aboriginal, as the rooming houses in which they had found shelter were systematically condemned and torn down, to make

room for...parking lots, as it turned out. Edmonton has had a homelessness problem ever since.

How does the Lofts' location, "in the shadow of the new [Rogers Place] ice arena" (Edmonton Journal, August 21, 2016 <http://edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/rent-hike-reversed-for-tenants-in-low-income-macdonald-lofts>) factor into this? Was the timing of the proposed rent increase – in the month before Rogers Place was to open – coincidental? We think not.

Although this particular attempt at a rent hike was forestalled, we fear that the future of the Lofts to be able to serve its current clientele is far from assured. We think it prudent to consider, who stands to gain from the Lofts' closure, or possibly its conversion into something more upscale? And how powerful are they?

According to our mayor, since the Edmonton arena was built on vacant lots, "There was no housing displaced here." (Edmonton Journal, August 30th, 2016 <http://edmontonjournal.com/news/politics/david-staples-inner-city-activists-should-petition-premier-notley-for-social-housing-not-daryl-katz>) What counts as "here"? The statement was made at a meeting regarding claimed shortfalls in the community benefits related to Rogers Place.

Rick Daviss, the city's project manager, was more cavalier in his declaration that, "Rogers Place is not coming in and rescuing the world from world poverty."

However, when it comes to the Lofts, the issue is not whether the arena development will save any of the City's poor and vulnerable, but whether its ramifications will make things a whole lot worse for them.

Manon Aubry, Donna Koziak



International
Network of
Street Papers

Affordable Housing and Market Failure

By Timothy Wild

In early September, The University of Calgary's School of Public Policy released "The Very Poor and the Affordability of Housing". The paper, written by Ron Kneebone and Margarita Wilkins, looks at the cost of housing in nine Canadian cities (including Calgary and Edmonton) between 1990 and 2014, and considers these costs in relation to low-income people "at risk of the most serious form of housing crisis, namely, the threat of homelessness."

Despite its lack of analysis on the underlying structural causes of the crisis (a point the authors readily admit to), the document provides food for thought. It illustrates the fact that increases in rents between 1990 and 2014 far out-paced nominal raises to social assistance rates over the same period. For example, a single parent with one child living in a one-bedroom apartment in Calgary experienced average annual rent increases of 3.9%, while social assistance support grew by 2%. In Edmonton, the average rental increase was 3.8% with the same 2% social assistance increase. Obviously, the cumulative impact of this over a twenty-four period is substantial. Indeed, referring to the situation in Calgary in an interview with the Herald, Kneebone pronounced the situation a "disaster".

However, the document is limited in scope. Given the ideological position of the School, it is not surprising that it did not look at the broader social problem of housing affordability and income for those who were not actually "very" poor. The report did not consider the lot of the working classes, particularly those hundreds of thousands Albertans working for less than a "living wage". It did not consider the most vulnerable, but not quite "very poor"; single women, for example, raising their children in market housing whilst working for low wages. Turning to income, in July, the Caledon Institute published "Minimum wage, maximum wage in Alberta" regarding the government's plan to increase the minimum wage to \$12.20 an hour this month and to \$15 an hour by fall 2018.

To support their argument they suggested "Most minimum wage earners are not teenagers employed in temporary summer jobs. They are heads of households raising families. Minimum wages barely keep pace with basic expenses – especially in places like Alberta where the cost of living is higher than other parts of the country." The commentary noted that approximately 59,000 people in Alberta currently work for the minimum wage, 61% are female and 43% work full-time. Public Interest Alberta, in partnership with the Alberta College of Social Workers, also issued a press release adding to the analysis of wages by illustrating that 18.6% of workers in Alberta (354,700 people) earned less than \$15 an hour. Once again reflecting the grim reality of the feminization of poverty, it is important to remember that 60% of low-wage workers are women. Income is certainly an important factor in the affordability issue.

But so is cost. The Government of Alberta uses Core Need Income Thresholds (CNIT) to consider the affordability of housing, and to determine eligibility for subsidized rental housing. The CNIT is based on the specific, local costs of housing, from bachelor units to 5+ bedroom units in municipalities from Acme to Worsley. In Calgary, for a person to qualify for support for a one bedroom apartment they would require an income of under \$46,000, and the figure is \$42,000 for Edmonton. Obviously, neither minimum-, low- nor living wages even approach that threshold for a single wage earner, and her children. The point is that the cost of housing is difficult to meet for many low- and lower-income Albertans. Despite the ideological faith former Premier Jim Prentice had in the role of the market in providing affordable housing options, this is clearly an example of ongoing market-failure. And the current stock of social housing is simply not adequate to meet the demands of the people who qualify based on income.

So, what is the answer? As part of a comprehensive anti-poverty approach, it is essential that more attention be given

to both housing costs and income.

Ultimately, as history has proven, the response cannot be left to the self-same market that contributed significantly to the problem. What is needed is for the government to act in a variety of public policy areas. The provincial NDP government is doing an excellent job of supporting the increased participation of Albertans through minimum wage increases, increased support to Family & Community Support Services, and the introduction of some measure of progressive taxation to replace the anti-worker and anti-woman flat tax. The federal government has also stepped up by announcing an 18-year agreement to provide annual funding to support social housing in Alberta. These will all contribute to a reduction in poverty, and to an increase in attainable and affordable housing.

I guess the bottom line is that justice comes at a cost. Our economy is in trouble, particularly given our destructive over-reliance on the extraction of natural resources. And the fact that we are facing a \$10.9 budget deficit is cause for some concern. But we've seen this before. There are people calling for the government to reduce its spending. There are also those pining for a return to the bad old days of the Klein-Dinning regime. Fortunately, our current government has correctly resisted these calls for attacks on those who are already on the social and economic margins. Since their election in May 2015, the NDP has made significant strides to make Alberta a more just, humane and inclusive place.

Be it in the areas of social, economic or cultural advances, there is a price to pay for the transformation of society. True advances in rights (human, social and economic) must be animated by the provision of substantial economic supports. This is obviously the case when it comes to affordable housing. I think our provincial government understands this well. Let's give them a chance; after all, the alternative will be far worse.

Daughters Day awards

By Linda Dumont

Daughters Day began with a celebration on September 1, 2012, in Edmonton's Churchill Square to honour the importance of daughters in our lives. It aims to end gender discrimination, share messages to respect human rights of girls and women, and to abhor violence against them. Supported by survivors, activists, academics and many more campaigners – Daughters Day is a popular grassroots community building effort for women in Alberta.

This year on Daughters Day, August 26 at City Hall, six women were presented with the Daughters of the Year award.

This years recipients included: **Michelle Plouffe** is Vice President, General Counsel and Compliance Officer at MacEwan University. **Shawna Grimes** has been with the

Edmonton Police Service (EPS) for 23 years and is currently a Staff Sergeant in the Homicide Section.

Shawna Grimes is Edmonton's first female head of homicide.

Linar Dahir recently shared her story of living and going to school in the multicultural 107th Ave. community when she first came to Canada with Heroes of 107th – a community-based heritage project. She also interpreted for her mother, who shared stories.

Teresa Spinelli is known in Edmonton as the woman that makes everyone smile. Owner and operator of several Italian Centres in Alberta, Ms. Spinelli, took a leadership role in ensuring that the Italian Culture flourished in Western Canada.

Dama Diriye is a settlement practitioner at Edmonton Immigrant Services Association (EISA) working with Immigrant and refugee Children, Youth and their

families since August 2012.

Yazmin Juarez came to Canada in 1992 as a refugee, following an ongoing civil war in her home country Guatemala. Not forgetting the circumstances in which her family had to flee their country, she is an active member of Memoria Viva Society of Edmonton. artistic, and organizational hub for the Latin American community in Edmonton.

Daughters Day Organizing Committee, Edmonton, 2011 states. "Women of all ages are among the most vulnerable members of humanity. In every country, including Canada, they face many forms of abuse, neglect, poverty and violence. We condemn such injustices against women, every one of whom is someone's daughter. We seek a better life for them and for everyone, beginning in our own community."



From left: Charan Khehra (one of the Daughters Day Founders); 2016 Daughters of the Year Dama Diriye, Yazmin Juarez, Teresa Spinelli, Michelle Plouffe; Shawna Grimes, and Linar Dahir; Presenters, Ratna Basappa (Indo-Canadian Women's Association, Mita Das (President, Canadians for a Civil Society), and Susan Slade (Alberta Union of Provincial Employees); Daughters Day Chair Dr. Vivian Abboud. Photo by Paula Kirman

Skid Row - Los Angeles California

Adam Sennott, editor, Spare Change News. California

1890 was a good year for California oil baron Lyman Stewart. His company had merged with Sespe Oil and the Mission Transfer Company to form Union Oil, Paul Rood, adjunct professor of political science and history at Biola University, said. At the time it was the largest oil company in California, responsible for one third of the state's oil production.

As co-founder, and later president, of the newly formed company, Stewart was well on his way to becoming known as "The Dean of the Western Oilmen," Rood said. But Stewart began noticing a troubling trend.

Many of the men who were coming to California looking for work were winding up jobless and hungry on the streets of Los Angeles. The area had been largely agricultural land until the 1870s when railroads started lining the Los Angeles River, according to the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce. Migrant workers started to flow in from throughout the country looking for work, and the area began to industrialize as cheap hotels, bars and whorehouses began popping up to serve its newfound transient population.

By the late 1880s the U.S. economy was in turmoil, Rood said. People were losing their jobs, Los Angeles had a growing homeless population and the term "homeless vagabond" was becoming part of the American lexicon.

"The hobo terminology first came in at that time," Rood said.

A devout Evangelical Christian, Stewart founded the Pacific Gospel Union in 1891 and began sending "gospel wagons" offering food, encouragement and salvation to the poor and homeless around the city.

The Pacific Gospel Union would later become the Union Rescue Mission, now one of the largest private shelters in the United States.

"They would get on the wagon, so to speak, and turn their life around," Reverend Andy J. Bales, CEO of Union

Rescue Mission, said. "Some would slip and fall again, and they would fall off the wagon and return to struggling on the streets. But that's how we got started was the wagon on the streets."

The organization was based on Main Street, which "was the Skid Row of its time," Rood said. "Just a few blocks away from the Skid Row of today."

Stewart also set up a large tent at the corner of Los Angeles Street and First Avenue, which was known as "Hobo Corner," Rood said. Every afternoon and evening there would be gospel preaching "to be a source of help, for those who were willing to accept help." Though Stewart later left the Pacific Gospel Union and founded the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, now known as Biola University, his early efforts to help the city's poor took root and grew rapidly.

Within two years, the organization was serving 500 people and offering nightly revival sessions, according to the Union Rescue Mission's website. In 1907 they opened their first shelter at 145 North Main St., and by 1934, "Mission On Main Street" was offering 42 percent of all free meals provided by private charities in Los Angeles.

But despite those efforts, the problem slowly metastasized.

Today, Skid Row takes up 50 square blocks near Downtown Los Angeles and, according to the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority's 2016 homeless count, is home to 3,691 men, women and, despite the best efforts of advocates in the area, sometimes children. According to the count, 1,035 individuals on Skid Row live in transitional shelters, 879 in emergency shelters, 803 on the streets, 645 in tents, 272 in makeshift shelters, 42 in cars and 13 in vans.

Skid Row is a place where drug deals and violence are rampant and out in the open, and its residents often defecate and urinate in the streets.

"There is nothing like Skid Row anywhere else in the country," Bales said. "It's the biggest man made disaster

in the U.S."

It's in the heart of Skid Row, San Pedro Street, where Stewart's work continues, Bales said. URM provides shelter services to up to 1,100 people along with three meals a day, mental health counseling, a legal clinic, learning center, medical clinic, dental care and a year-long addiction recovery program.

Unlike some shelters in the United States, URM is open 24-hours a day, 365 days a year, Bales said.

"People don't just come in at night and then leave in the morning," Bales said. "They're with us all day long."

This year, for the first time in the organization's 125-year history, the majority of those seeking services are women and children "by just a few," Bales said. Though there are children living at the URM, Bales said there are few on the streets of Skid Row.

"For a long time, me and the county made sure that no children were on the streets of Skid Row," Bales said. "But they slip in now."

Bales said one such exception was a mother with a two year old who initially refused to come in to the shelter.

"It took us weeks to get her off the streets," Bales said.

While hope is a hard thing to find on Skid Row, Bales said the organization has seen its share of success stories. About 18 percent of URM's staff are either former guests at the shelter or went through URM's programs, Bales said.

Among those success stories is a former guest named Alex, who came to the URM about 11 years ago to sign up for the shelter's one-year recovery program in order to escape a jail sentence, Bales said. After graduating from the program, Alex reunited with his family, got married and now serves as one of URM's major donor representatives.

"We have many stories like Alex," Bales said. "I get to see walking talking miracles."

URM's YouTube page features 79 videos of testimonials from people such as Alex as part of their series, "stories from Skid Row." **Continued on page 6**

Skid row - Los Angeles California continued from page 5

While the URM is one of the largest shelters in the country, it isn't the only faith-based mission on Skid Row. The Midnight Mission has also been offering services to those living on Skid Row for more than 100 years, Joey Weinert, community events coordinator of the Midnight Mission said.

Midnight Mission offers three meals a day, Monday through Saturday, and breakfast and dinner on Sunday, Weinert said.

One of the goals of the organization is to create a sense of community that will enable the homeless to "look at the Midnight Mission as somewhere they can call home," Weinert said. Residents of Skid Row are allowed to list the Midnight Mission as their address so they can receive letters through the shelter's mailing center, Weinert said. "That's very important for people that don't have an address that are possibly trying to take advantage of any social services or maybe even try to get a job, or even just to let your family know where you are," Weinert said.

The Midnight Mission also offers a courtyard and a day room "where people are allowed to come in and just kind of hang out throughout the day," Weinert said.

The day room has several flat-screen TVs that were donated to the Midnight Mission, Weinert said. It gives the people a place to pass the time.

"They'll sit there and watch TV and hang out, whether they're waiting on housing or waiting on their next check, wherever that may be coming from," Weinert said. "Some people are waiting on their next hustle, some people are just probably just sitting there waiting for... they don't know what's next." At night, the chairs in the day room are replaced with 32 cots, Weinert said. Those seeking a cot must sign up for one in the morning, and be in the day room by 8 p.m.

"We call that safe sleep," Weinert said.

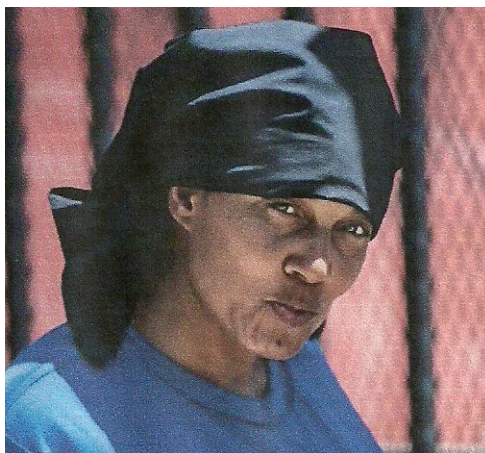
The shelter is limited to only 32

cots in the day room "because of the possible spreading of tuberculosis," Weinert said. "The one requirement of safe sleep is they have to have their TB card from one of the county facilities in the area."

About 150 people also sleep in the Midnight Mission's courtyard every night in sleeping bags, on blankets, on cardboard or just on the ground, Weinert said. They must arrive before the security guard locks the gate at 9 p.m., but once they arrive, they have a safe place to sleep.

"Once they're in, they're in," Weinert said.

The Midnight Mission also offers a recovery program for men battling addiction, Weinert said. The program is so intense that its newest participants are only allowed to leave the shelter to attend pre-scheduled meetings at night.



Tracy Mac (photo: Zengzheng Wang)

"The first couple of months you're here, that's the only way you're leaving here is by going to a meeting," Weinert said. "Once you've been here for 60 or 90 days, I believe, you're able to start taking passes so you can go check in on your family, maybe handle some legal issues or whatever the case may be, and focus on your treatment plan." Everyone that enters the program gets a "work therapy" job designed to teach them to be accountable, Weinert said. There are a wide range of jobs avail-

able throughout the shelter, including kitchen work, security, building maintenance and administration work. Participants also have access to the organization's education department, which helps with G.E.D. training and computer literacy, Weinert said.

After a year, if graduates have not found a place to live, they are allowed to stay a little longer in two-man dorm-style apartments on the shelter's third floor, Weinert said.

"We have 14 of those, and they cost \$250 a month," Weinert said. "Which is an awesome price for any guys that's working towards maybe getting something better."

About 26 percent of the men who complete the program have a job, have reconnected with their children and families and are back to being productive members of society a year after they graduate, Weinert said.

"If you look into any rehab or healthy living program or anything like that, [26 percent] is a substantial amount," Weinert said.

Despite the valiant efforts of both missions, the sidewalks outside and along nearby streets are lined and dotted with tents and makeshift homes for people who were unable or unwilling to sleep inside.

One such resident is Tracy Mac, who said she has been living on Skid Row for about five years, but she mostly keeps to herself.

"I don't talk to anybody," Mac said. "I kind of just stay to myself; I don't want to talk to nobody."

Mac said that she was living on her spot on East Third Street because "over here I don't smell so much raw sewage."

One of the reasons why Skid Row smells of raw sewage, Mac said, is because at night there aren't any bathrooms for people to use.

"During the daytime, there's a public [restroom], and then at night time we pretty much do it out here," Mac said. "That's what goes on at Skid Row."

Happy Turkey Days

By Joanne Benger

October 10th is our Thanksgiving Day and the American Columbus Day, which was pretty much the same thing food-wise. When Columbus returned from the 1492 voyage he brought corn, peppers, pineapples, pumpkins and sweet potatoes. In 1621, at America's first Thanksgiving meal, a breakfast, the 92 Indian guests brought pumpkins, sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, popcorn and turkey. The pilgrims served stuffed cod, lobster, pigeon and boiled eel, which was their way of expressing thanks. I am very thankful that those Indians introduced the turkey. It is hard to imagine celebrating Thanksgiving with a couple of boiled eels.

From start to finish the turkey just never stops adding to the celebration. Once it is carved, the turkey can be used to forecast the coming winter weather. If the breastbone is light in color, there will be lots of snow and if it is dark, expect a winter with very little snow.

Once the turkey is eaten, every person at the table gets to make a wish. It will come true within the year if it is told to no one.

Then there is the wishbone, once called the merry thought because it carries so many merry wishes. It is the bird's collar bone found between neck and breast, and it must be set aside to be completely dry before it is pulled. Those of us who will celebrate American Thanksgiving on November 24th can let it dry until then.

For the wishbone's merry wish to come true, neither puller must laugh or say anything while pulling the wishbone, and the wish must remain a secret until it has been granted. The one who gets the longer piece has had a lucky break and will get his wish.

If both people are single and hopeful, the one getting the longer bit is sure to be the first to get married.

Wishbones are lucky. Many superstitious people carry a gold or silver wishbone for luck. Its shape resembles that of a lucky horseshoe, which might explain why a wishbone is so lucky.

This Thanksgiving Day finds me thankful that Columbus discovered America and the Indians brought all my favourite foods to that first Thanksgiving. I am even more thankful that the Americans have seen to it that we have not one, but two Thanksgiving Days every year. I love turkey and turkey days. So Happy Turkey Days to you and I.



Halloween Jack-O-Lantern

By Joanne Benger

An evil man named Jack died. He was so evil they wouldn't let him into Heaven so poor Jack had to go to Hell. Unfortunately the Devil wouldn't let Jack enter Hell either because Jack was even too evil for Hell. That meant that Jack was doomed to spend all eternity wandering the nether worlds between Heaven and Hell. He was homeless with only a lantern in his hands.

Once a year on Halloween night the walls between this world and the next open and Jack-of-the-Lantern gets to

walk once again on earth for that one night.

We have all seen Jack-O-Lantern wandering among costumed people, enjoying life on earth and eating Halloween treats.

We have been sent a photo of Jack O. Lantern, Esquire. (provided by his Interwoo).

We apologize to our readers. Due to an unfortunate systems malfunction the photograph has been lost in cyberspace and cannot be retrieved.

Joanne Benger, who failed art in primary school and has never been officially introduced to Lantern, has kindly provided us with a rendition of how she visualizes the Right Honourable Distinguished Gentleman Sir Jack O.Lantern, Esquire, now deceased.



Relationship Versus Religion

By Sharon Spencer

When Jesus came to this earth there was a whole lot of religion going on. He didn't come to bring another form of religion; there was plenty of that. He came that he might bring people back into relationship with God. The Father had created man to have fellowship and affiliation with him. This was all lost in the Garden of Eden. The relationship between God and man had been fractured by sin. God the Father longed to repair the bond that was broken. For a long period of time the way to appease God was done through laws that were given to the Jew and blood sacrifice. It was a very complicated way to live.

However, God in the fullness of time sent forth his son. Jesus, equipped with the only blood that would satisfy the blood sacrifice for sin. So Jesus, divine in nature, took the form of man once and for all to abolish the need for sacrifices. Life could become simpler by accepting God's plan of salvation. Now people could be sure of Heaven.

I think the simplicity of the Gospel ended when man began to form denominations. Then man's pride got in the way of God's plan and he wanted to complicate the gospel.

If by chance you're bold enough to bring up the question of someone's faith, you will most likely hear, "Oh I'm Baptist" or "I'm Catholic." Then they will proceed to tell you where their church is and how long they have been going there and ask if you would like to come. A lot of people put a whole lot of stock in their church falsely believing this will get them into Heaven. It doesn't matter if your grandmother or your great, great grandmother went there. Some churches

are more like social clubs where you go to meet your friends and have good food and fun. Where the Gospel used to be a more common thing it is now replaced by entertaining people. Because we are so used to being entertained we might take that Sunday morning away from the church to see a football game and omit our dollars from the collection plate.

John 3 King James Version (KJV) reads:

3 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye

must be born again.

Now look at this passage. Nicodemus, a Jewish spiritual leader, comes to Jesus by night. Why by night? To speak to him secretly. Why? Because it was dangerous to know Jesus in those days. He was claiming to be the son of God and calling people to a new way of life. There were those who had their own denomination and were very full of pride, who went around making life difficult for everyone.

They were hypocrites and made life impossible. Now Jesus tells him his denomination is not good enough, he must be born again in a spiritual birth. No organization you belong to is going to satisfy the Father. It's a personal thing only you can decide, so if your whole plan is tied up in your church saving you, scrap that plan. You don't want to arrive in Heaven one minute after you're dead and hear, "Go away. I don't know you." The only thing that will get you into Heaven is the new Covenant through Christ.

If you have never accepted Christ why wait? Repent. Accept that God has provided the sacrifice so you will never need to know hell. Humble yourself. Ask him in open the door to your heart. Ask him to change your life. It will be done. Simple.

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or visit www.al-anon.ab.ca

Shopping

I am going to shop.
 I am getting several props.
 Clothing, shoes, shirts and socks.
 I am going to shop.
 And burn my coin.
 I am getting several props.
 Including some pork loin chops.
 I've got my list ready to go.
 Up and down the aisles to and fro.
 "Shop till you drop." they say.
 Love shopping.
 Hate to pay.

Lanky

Peaceful Summer Day

by Gily Ro

Walking through the soft grassy loam a variegated red and yellow
 Apple falls almost inaudibly from the tree

A peaceful wind gently blows my hair across my face
 I take a deep breath of cool air

Red daylilies, bluebells and fuchsia bachelor buttons
 Surround the white lily crown amongst a group of daisies

Dandelion fluff deep in the grass looks like a sleeping mouse
 A large tree appears to be split into eight smaller trees close to the base

A small pond that formed in the corner of the parking lot reflects the
 blue sky, green trees, tall grass and foxtails

An iridescent dragonfly flies across my path to complete the peaceful
 Experience.

HEALING WORDS



BY THE CMHA
 WRITING FOR RECOVERY GROUP

Ode to Darkness By Michelle Black

The dark shadows of the night are upon us.
 The sun has set - the birds have all become quiet.
 Not a sound to be heard.
 I see the stars shining all around - I make a wish!
 I lay on the grassy field and look up into the sky
 To see the northern lights, float softly by.
 The moon is as bright as bright can be,
 I see a face ... it's smiling back at me!
 An Ode to Darkness – for it shall lead to the light,
 Night after night, after night!



Blame

Undone Part Two

By Linda Roan

"When we blame, we give away our power" Greg Anderson

Blame can be defined as holding others responsible for our misfortunes. While it is true that life holds many difficulties, and undeniably the pain and suffering they often cause, to blame others as the reason for one's unhappiness is to cast oneself in the role of the victim.

There are illusory advantages to victim hood, as finger-pointing provides convenient justification

for life's unsatisfactory conditions, and sheds the work necessary to take complete charge of one's own life and well-being.

Letting go of blame in no way whitewashes unfair circumstances, or excuses difficult people, or invalidates life's many hardships. But this is not about them, this is about you.

It may seem easy and convenient to blame others for our unhappiness, but in the long run we lose out, as indulging in blame costs us the authority to be in charge. We miss the profound potential which can be unleashed once we take total responsibility for our life experience and preside proactively over the purposeful direction of our lives. Enjoy a life of freedom from blame!

"All blame is a waste of time. No matter how much fault you find with another, and regardless of how much you blame him, it will not change you. The only thing blame does is to keep the focus off you, when you are looking for external reasons to explain your unhappiness or frustration. You may succeed in making another feel guilty about something by blaming him, but you won't succeed in changing whatever it is about you that is making you unhappy"

Wayne Dyer

This is an excerpt from the book, "How to let go of negative thoughts and emotions- a practical guide

Untouched

by Debbie Gozz

Take from me that which you will
Those things that I possess
Strip from me the trinkets
That speak of my success
Look at me with jaundiced eye
With disdain on your face
Treat me as a subordinate
Keep me in my place
Speak to me with vitriol
Mock my point of view
Contradict my every word
Their meaning misconstrue
I can overlook these things
As you strive to denigrate
Because the measure of a man
Is forgiving those who hate.

It's lonely at the top and sometimes feeling like a flop

By John Zapantis

I've climbed many mountains.
I've stumbled and rolled down them
and have even taken the
greatest of falls.
I've learned just from my efforts
that when it comes to putting your
heart into the matter, you can
overcome the most horrible
disasters.
I've climbed some of the biggest
mountains around and when I got
to the very top, I found out that
hidden at the summit is an
award that commends you for being
the best at what you do, with all that
sweat and hard earned effort that it
takes to get to the top.
When your on top of the world looking down
don't kid yourself, you pay a price for
being the best in your field, only to be
greeted by that popular saying when you
think you have it all, "it's lonely at the top",



No Bats for Halloween

between the logs in the summer of 2012. Since then, the evening sky is quiet and still without a bat in sight and the mosquitos are

and surfaced in Canada in 2010. It is believed by scientists that the disease was accidentally introduced to North America by a European visitor. The disease has existed in Europe for some time, and bats there have developed a resistance to it. White nose syndrome does not harm humans or other animal species and at this time there is no cure for the disease. The disease is spreading steadily westward and expands at the rate of 200 to 250 kilometres a year. Strangely, the disease has also been documented on the Pacific coast. Sadly, it is predicted that the entire Canadian population of bats will be affected within twelve to eighteen years.

It is sad to think that the little brown bat and long eared bat may be the newest animals heading down the slippery slope to extinction. This time, it is not because of some man-made threat or loss of habitat but by an act of nature itself. I hope someday I will be able to see my little, furry, nocturnal friends swooping across the evening sky once again.

By Sharon Austin

Long ago in elementary school I remember reading spooky Halloween stories about witches and bats flying across the dark night sky. The halloween pictures I drew often had a bat silouetted against a golden full moon. As an adult, I enjoyed going to our camp deep in the woods and watching the bats swoop across the darkening sky as they fed on insects. An old wood shed made of logs chinked with moss was home to a colony of bats that lived in the eaves and attic. We never bothered the bats knowing how beneficial they were to the environment. Once in a while if I looked into the attic, I would see one of the bats sleeping upside down. I remember seeing a bat's cute little face peeking at me from

unbearable.

The plight of the little brown bat and the long-eared bat in the Maritime provinces resembles a movie plot. While the bats hibernated, a fungus called white-nose syndrome grew across their faces and killed roughly 99 per cent of the population. Like in the movies, a small remnant of the bats have a natural resistance to the disease, and they are the only hope for the survival of the species. In caves that once housed 7000 bats, only 20 bats were found alive. There is a critical number from which the bat population cannot recover and zoologists do not know if that point has been reached in New Brunswick.

White nose syndrome was first documented in New York in 2006

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Ovarian Cancer Canada Walk of Hope raises over \$73,000 for ovarian cancer clients



Story and Photo by John Zapantis

Ovarian Cancer survivor and volunteer Joyce Clark 83, was surrounded by Edmonton's Caring Clowns who were in attendance to help make a difference at the Ovarian Cancer's Walk of Hope.

Photo by John Zapantis

By John Zapantis

Mothers are often notable in playing an integral role in supporting and helping their children to develop into healthy, happy and productive citizens, who contribute to society's growth and prosperity.

That payback for showing support over the years as a traditional mother, was finally returned to Rosa Sepulveda, where her three children were by her side along with her husband in supporting Rosa, who recently battled with ovarian cancer and inevitably had it removed through surgery.

The Sepulveda family along with husband and mother, Luis age 58, Rosa age 53, their two daughters Jessica age 35, Nicole age 32 and only son Migul age 30, were all down at Edmonton's Sir Wilfrid Laurier Park, on Sunday

September 11th at 9 a.m. that morning preparing to walk on their 5 km route in the Ovarian Cancer Canada Walk of Hope that was hosted and organized by the Ovarian Cancer Canada Edmonton Chapter.

The national fundraising event began at 9:00 a.m. and included registration, a morning stage ceremony, and a run and walk consisting of a 1, 2.5 and 5 kilometre track that allowed runners and walkers to go the journey around Sir Wilfred Laurier Park to help in raising public awareness and pledges for Ovarian Cancer.

In a recent ASN interview with Ovarian Cancer Canada Chairperson Laura Johnston, she confirmed that Ovarian Cancer is cancer of the ovaries. It happens within the women's reproductive systems. It is not easily diagnosed because the symptoms of ovarian cancer mimic those of a woman's monthly cycles.

Other facts about ovarian cancer are confirmed through the Ovarian Cancer Canada website. There are various types of ovarian cancer including epithelial-ovarian cancer. This cancer is considered the most common of ovarian cancers - approximately 90% of ovarian cancers.

Other types of ovarian cancer include, serous tumours, clear cell carcinoma, endometrioid tumours, mucinous tumors, undifferentiated or unclassified, borderline ovarian tumours, germ cell ovarian cancer and sex cord stromal cell cancer.

Before 2016 ends, 2,800 women in Canada will have been diagnosed with ovarian cancer. Five each day will die from this disease.

Some symptoms of ovarian cancer include, bloating, indigestion, differences in weight gain or loss of appetite and changes in digestion.

Rosa Sepulveda is an ovarian cancer survivor. Prior to being diagnosed for stage two ovarian cancer, she started experiencing excruciating pain in her stomach area back in 2015. Her stomach pain caused constipation and difficulty with her bowel movements.

After raising serious concerns to her various family members and friends, she decided to consult with her family physician to have her problem looked after.

Her doctor then referred her to have a series of medical tests conducted to determine what was causing the pain in her stomach and the difficulties she was having with constipation.

The first of many tests included an ultrasound, which verified fibroids in her stomach area, which were the cause of her sudden stomach pain and constipation.

A second test was conducted called a CA -125 that would determine if there was a tumour within the stomach area, or if ovarian cancer was the whole cause of her stomach pain and constipation.

After the CA-125 blood test was conducted, it confirmed that Rosa was way over the average reading of 35. Her at was 760. She was then diagnosed for stage two ovarian cancer. Her diagnoses was confirmed in February of 2016.

After her diagnoses was confirmed, in order to stabilize her cancer, she was sent for a series of chemotherapy treatments consisting of six rounds of treat-

ments, over a six month period. As of August, she was switched over to radiation.

Despite her diagnoses for the disease, she baffled by how it originated because she was maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

In an interview with ASN Rosa elaborated on the healthy diet and lifestyle she's maintained prior to her diagnoses, Sepulveda said, "I think what brought it on, would have been genetic. It is hereditary. One member of my family had ovarian cancer, but I had a healthy lifestyle. I exercised just about every day. I was doing my samba dance classes, eating properly. I'm not overweight. I don't think I fit the actual profile of someone, who'd get ovarian cancer, because I have my three children. I had my tubes tied. I exercise and I eat right."

When her series of treatments successfully eliminated the cancer from her ovaries, she was referred to an Ovarian Cancer Canada support group, where to this day, she receives the group support from people like herself.

Despite her near death brush with cancer, she continues to maintain the same lifestyle, stays active at her samba dance classes and continues to receive the emotional support from her family, close friends and Ovarian Cancer Canada support group.

Now that she's a survivor of this dreadful disease, she's very grateful for the second chance she's been given. Sepulveda said, "At first when diagnosed, I thought it was a death sentence. Health is everything. If you don't have health, you have nothing."

Joyce Clark is another ovarian cancer survivor. She was working as a volunteer at one of the Ovarian Cancer Canada's information booths, handing out brochures in helping to raise awareness about ovarian cancer.

She was once diagnosed for ovarian cancer. Prior to being diagnosed, she led a healthy lifestyle and worked as a nurse. She also held the post of Regional Supervisor in the Public Health Department with the City of Edmonton.

Clark came to Edmonton from her native Scotland in 1978.

Prior to being diagnosed for cancer at age 49, she noticed some symptoms that were identical to those for ovar-

ian cancer. The symptoms that showed were her stomach bloated to match the appearance a pregnant woman. That pregnant look made her start to seriously question her awkward new appearance, so she went to seek the advice of her family doctor. He then referred her to an oncologist, who then conducted an ultrasound to determine what was causing her stomach to bloat.

The ultrasound showed a cancerous tumour had grown inside her stomach.

In an interview with ASN, Clark elaborated on what occurred after the doctor sent her to the oncologist for her ultrasound. Clark said, "The doctor just said I probably had a cyst and sent me to a surgeon. Then a few weeks later, I went for surgery and the tumour was removed, as well as everything else, which is what they do for ovarian cancer.

"The surgeon after the surgery, in fact, told me that it was ovarian cancer."

After her surgery, the surgeon suggested that she return for follow up treatment. She returned four weeks later and had the surgeon conduct a seven week course of abdominal radiation. This treatment has managed to prevent her tumour from re-occurring.

When her radiation treatments were completed, she started to feel the treatment's painful impact.

In an interview with ASN Clark elaborated further on her struggle to adapt to the radiation treatments, Clark said, "Since the surgery, I had side effects. I was very thin, because I wouldn't eat very well, because of my digestive system. You know, radiation destroys cancer cells, as well."

Soon she was on her way to recovering. Clark said, "So after a few weeks, I started to feel well. I started to eat again. Since then, once I got over that, I've had well over 34 years of good health."

But her brush with cancer wasn't quite over yet. Four years ago she was diagnosed for breast cancer, but survived through surgery, having a lump successfully removed from her breast.

Once she recovered from surgery, it was back to normal living again for Clark.

Clark said, "I didn't like the thought. I was upset when I was told I had a cancerous lump that had to be removed,

but once the surgery was over and it was pronounced successful, I said, "Here I go again. I'm all right again."

Some of her immediate family and relatives have also experienced breast cancer and other forms of cancers.

This senior, who has beaten the odds, loves to give back to the cancer community through her volunteer efforts with both the Ovarian Cancer Canada Walk of Hope and supports groups that Ovarian Cancer Canada offers to its clients.

Prior to the starting of the walk and run the event hosted a morning stage ceremony in the middle of Sir Wilfrid Laurier Park.

Global Television personality Nicola Crosbie acted as the event's MC, while introducing three keynote speakers to the stage, who gave their views on a variety of topics relating to ovarian cancer.

The keynote speakers included Ovarian Cancer Canada co-chair Laura Johnston, nurse practitioner Elisha Andrews and U of A post doctor fellow Olena Bilyk. This was followed by a moment of silence commemorating the 15th year anniversary of 911 conducted by Nicola Crosbie who had heartfelt wishes for its victims and close family members.

After the morning ceremonies ended, the walk commenced at 10:30 a.m. when 500 runners and walkers enthusiastically left the starter's gate to begin their 1, 2.5 and 5 kilometre route around Sir Wilfrid Laurier Park to help in raising awareness about ovarian cancer.

The national walk was held in other cities across Canada. Edmonton's walk raised over \$73,000 and (still counting) for the Ovarian Cancer Canada Edmonton Chapter's programs, services and research, confirmed by the organization's National Director of Communication Janice Chan.

Thanks to the event's many volunteers, local sponsors and pledge raising walkers and runners, the cure to defeating cancer is getting closer and closer by the day.



By Maria B.

Some people go through life casting their own projections unto people. As long as the pillars of their ego remain intact they will live life believing that they do not make mistakes and that the only people that make mistakes are the flawed ones. Unfortunately, these people are completely oblivious that what he sees in others is a projection of their own vulnerabilities and because of this the judging of other is harsh.

Many people live through their "ego" rather than living in an authentic state of who they are and as long as they are living in this state they will fail to realize that living like this is living in disconnection of their own essence. A person that grows up disconnected from their own essence is unable to recognize the essence of other people. Therefore you have to ask yourself: Do you want to live on your false pedestal of authority or step down and recognize the incredible essence of who you truly are?

When we live in authenticity of who we are, the relationships that we form with people have no room for falsehood. When we see ourselves as

The Casting of a person as a shadow

better than others, our value is so high that we tend to undervalue others. Therefore you learn to be in a defence state, anything that people says is a criticism, you blame everyone else for everything that happens to you, except yourself. The anger that develops is very toxic because after a while it becomes unconscious. Payback and vengeance becomes the way to deal with others.

Because you are not dealing with this anger in a proper way, the only thing that you want to do is to punish the other person. You tend to make them responsible even if what happened it is your own fault. Suddenly you see yourself as a victim and as long as you see yourself as a victim, you will never recognize the things that you might be responsible for.

These people tend to see their partners as inferior to the point that even offering an explanation or taking their opinion into consideration becomes something that they try to avoid so they do not look "weak" When they feel victimized, they feel they must strike back even if it is by giving the silent treatment as punishment. They feel they do not owe an explanation or even an opportunity to clarify the situation. They also tend to blow things out of proportion. It does not matter how small the issue is. They feel that their partners do not deserve to know what they are thinking or to know the

decisions they are making even if their decisions affect their partner. They guard their feelings from their partner to the point that become completely disconnected.

This person is unable to realize that any time that you take responsibility for your actions, you are learning from your mistakes and this does not make you a weak person but demonstrates inner strength. Unfortunately, the person that is uncomfortable with their own imperfections and resists exposing their flaws is living in a "false self" of their own creation trying to compensate and lie for their own imperfections.

THE IDEAL OF PERFECTION CREATES THE IDEAL OF A FOOL

A person living in authenticity of who they are will embrace their flaws and will not allow a fool to cast him or her as a shadow. Sometimes power, intimidation and fear seem to take over and tend to define who we are. By allowing ourselves to be cast as a shadow, we are allowing someone else TO GIVE US THEIR OWN DEFINITION OF WHO WE ARE. A projection from an ego centered person will cast us with their own distorted thinking of who they would like to think that we are.

THE FACT IS THAT WE SHOULD NOT ALLOW THE DEFINITION OF OTHERS TO TAKE OVER OUR LIVES AND MAKE US LIVE AS SHADOWS IN THE FALSEHOOD OF WHO THEY ARE.

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By Robert Champion

Someday – First Say of the Day

Someday could be a long long way away. Someday may never come. Someday you may find happiness. Someday you may find sadness or sorrow. Someday you may find a new gal or guy. Someday you may be going through a bad time losing a loved one or a good friend or trying to free yourself of an addiction such as alcohol or drugs or gambling. Who knows what lies ahead, what lies ahead someday.

What Summer

Didn't do a heck of a lot. Went on my

Rob's Corner in Calgary

bottle and can runs along with my bike. Sold some Alberta Street News papers. Met up with friends at one or two of my favourite pubs for some pints of beer. Went out a couple of times for a bike ride to meet up with a friend for coffee at Starbucks in Inglewood. About a 25 minute bike ride. Went out for a stampede breakfast and I'm not a breakfast type.

A Letter to a dear Friend

I sincerely care about you. Really have no idea where this friendship of ours is going. You don't say anything. No matter what happens I just want to keep on being friends with you. Longtime and want you to be happy. I do worry about you and think about you all the time. You have been good company for me. And enjoyed having you around. Hopefully sooner than later you can start a new life or get you old one back. You are so gorgwous, beautiful and smart. You deserve to be happy and to have a good life. Sincerely, Your Friend, Rob.

We are only here for a short time

It's useless and wasted time to fight and argue over anything no matter how big or small. It's much better to

disagree and talk things out. Jealousy is a waste of energy, like fighting and arguing. If you don't trust one another maybe it's time to part ways and move on. And start a new life with someone else. We should make the best of it.

What's on my mind

Being kind to others. Being myself. Being a good frind. Having a roof over my head, a safe warm and clean place to live. Being thankful for my health. Being thankful I'm still able to ride a bicycle. Being thankful I had 35 years with Lorna. Glad I'm still alive at 65, 66 coming in January, 2017.

Rob's last say for the day

Wishing everyone a happy Thanksgiving. And thanks for your continued support for Alberta Street News.

It can be a rough , tough world out there

So unpredictable and so unreal at times. So many people out there with so many problems. So dangerous at times. Not knowing if you have a job to go to the next day or if you'll have a roof over your head. So many addictive drugs out there. So many bad people who live off people's need or sickness for more drugs for profit.

And it is so dangerous and so unpredictable. People dying from bad drug deals and bad drugs. So many things out there that can turn a peron to durgs - joblessness, a break up,

Thanksgiving thoughts

By Angelique Branston

As we move into October with the leaves turned their bright crimsons and golds, after enjoying the crunching of the leaves and breathing in the crisp fall air with its promise of snow to come, I am reminded that this is a time of reflection with Thanksgiving almost here. Life has gotten harder this last year. Economics are making everyone's wallets thinner with less than we had before this depression. More than ever in these times I think it is important to forcefully remember the good things in our lives, and to put away the negative thoughts that only lead to more negative thoughts and bad behaviours. For this year I am thankful that I am alive, and my family is alive. All the

daily struggles that can seem so overwhelming and discouraging seem to fall away, when remembering that each day on this earth is a gift not to be taken lightly. I have a friend who is battling cancer. Listening to him contemplating his very existence, it is not the new shoes he never got, or the fancy job, but his relations with his family and friends that stand out to him. I think this is because the only thing that really matters in this world is how we treat each other. We can take nothing with us when we leave. The only thing of ours that is left behind is the memory of us in the other people. Let love be the standard that we all try to follow, not just for Thanksgiving but all the days to come.

Happy Thanksgiving

As Councillors we hold the conviction that safe, sufficient, and affordable housing is necessary for the well-being of Edmontonians and the City at large.

In 2015 the City saw strong developments for affordable housing. We completed the ambitious **City of Edmonton Affordable Housing Strategy**, developed the **Social Housing Regeneration** report, and contributed to the **Big City Charter** to explore creative ways to fund future affordable housing projects.

2016 holds even more action for affordable housing and ending homelessness. We're providing grants for secondary suites and renovations as part of the **HOPE** program, we're starting the **Affordable Housing Investment Plan** to give grants to the financially vulnerable, we're backing the redevelopment of affordable housing centres in Lendrum and Londonderry, and finally, we'll be updating **Edmonton's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness**.

The City is devoted to ending homelessness and affording all of Edmonton the right and honour of having their own homes. *We're well on our way!*



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The logo for the City of Edmonton, featuring the word "Edmonton" in a white, stylized font on a blue rectangular background.