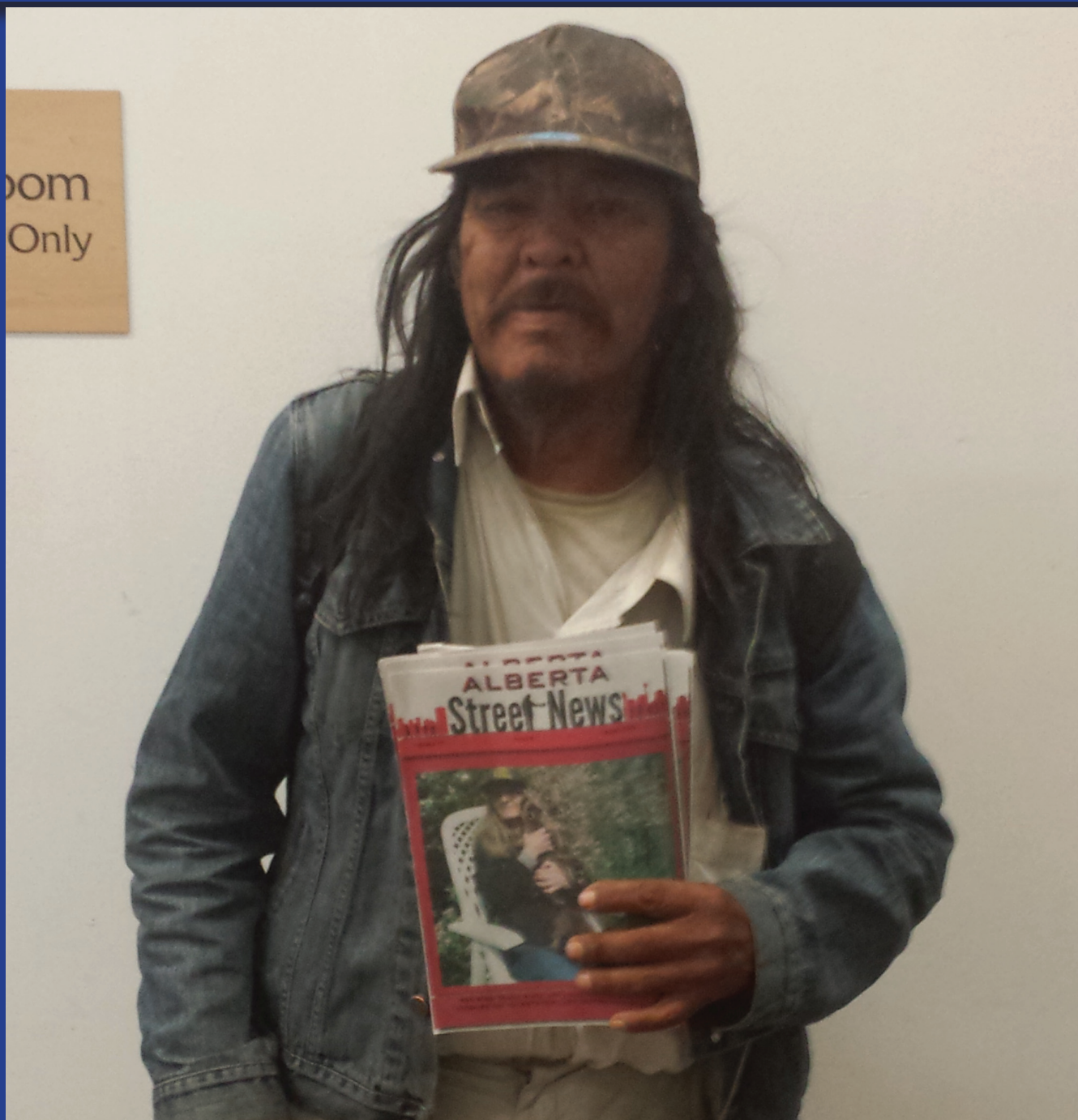


ALBERTA Street News

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Alberta Street News vendor Clifford Mitchell - more on page 2
VENDORS PAY 75 CENTS PER COPY. PAPER SOLD BY DONATION

ALBERTA STREET NEWS

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THE VIEWS
PRESENTED ARE THOSE
OF THE CONTRIBUTORS.

Please support our vendors!
**Vendors pay 75 cents per paper. Papers are
sold by donation**

Vendor Clifford Mitchell cover photo

Clifford sells papers in the Whyte Avenue area of Edmonton. He has been vending for the past 14 years with Alberta Street News.

Clifford was homeless periodically, and this fall moved into housing after an extended period of homelessness.

He is legally blind and walks with a white cane. Clifford said, "I am blind in this eye (indicating his right eye) and I get injections into my other eye every week so I can see."

Street Newspaper Conference held in Scotland

By Linda Dumont

From August 20 to 24, 2018, 90 people representing 34 street newspapers worldwide attended the annual conference of the International Network of Street Paper (INSP) in Glasgow, Scotland. Writer Joanne Benger and Editor Linda Dumont attended to represent Alberta Street News.

One of the sessions was about having a network of just the North American papers because we have a very different model than the European newspapers. In Europe, many of the papers receive government funding and the vendors work for the paper as employees. The Amsterdam paper even requires a physical examination to see if the vendor is healthy enough to work. Their earnings from paper sales are taxable.

Most North American papers are published by not-for-profit groups or by individuals who have a concern for the poor. The vendors are entrepreneurs, who purchase as many papers as they need, then sell where and when they are able to. Many of our vendors are not employable for any other work due to physical or mental disabilities or addictions, so would not pass a physical exam.

More on the conference in the October issue.

According to the data collected by the INSP, worldwide there are more than 100 street papers in 34 countries published in 24 different languages.

9,300 vendors sell street papers at any one time. 21,000 vendors earn an income by selling street papers each year.

There are other street papers that are not included in these numbers that have not joined the INSP.



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September

By Joanne Bengner

It's September which is Arthritis Awareness month as well as International Square Dancing Month., we'll be hearing that famous square dance call "Alternate left and Alternate Right". I just found out that allemande means German woman in French. The allemande became a popular dance in France in the 17th century but no one seems to know who the German lady was.

September 1st is Random Acts of Kindness Day in New Zealand so do good deed by stealth.

September 3 is Labour Day which we now tend to call the September Long Weekend. Summer's end is the theme as the traditional put away their white trousers and white shoes, not to be worn again until Victoria Day. Campers spend one last weekend at the campsite and ATV owners take one last ride before putting it to bed for the winter. Back to school items are being bought and everything summer is being packed away.

Those of us who are multicultural have three days to celebrate September 11. is U.S. Patriots Day. September 15 is Mexico's Independence Day and September 21 is Armenian Independence Day.

September 13 is Grandparents Day. Honour your grandmother and grandfather if still with us. Visit their monument with flowers if they have passed.

September 19 is U.S. National Talk Like a Pirate Day. Ahoy, yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum and a dead man's chest. Host the black flag, the jolly roger with its skull and cross bones and sail the high seas with the buccaneers. Shiver my timbers and walk the plank. Avast.

September 20 is the anniversary of the 1940 Battle of Britain.

September 21 is the International Day of Peace. Make peace with yourself and then make peace with others.

September 22 is the Equinox, our first official day of fall. It was the pagan holiday, Mabon, which marked the end of the harvest that began on August 2nd, Lammas. Most of us try to have our garden in by now.

September 29 is Michealmas Day or St. Martin's Day. The

English considered it the first day of winter and celebrated with a feast of roast goose. Our geese are flying south now. The earlier in the fall that they fly south the harsher the coming winter will be. As they fly overhead they give a weather forecast for the next few days. The higher they fly the better the weather will be. Low flying geese indicate a storm coming soon. Fly high, Canada geese, fly high.



Finding Peace

By Joanne Bengner

An anonymous person gave me the formula for finding peace of mind.

Make a list of all the things you regret or feel ashamed of or feel guilty about And of course you end up with a list of all the people you have hurt.

It may take months or even years, but go through the list one person at a time and make amends as best you can. You have to clear up the past and declutter to make room for the future. You are not doing this for them, you are doing it for you. Apologize to those you have hurt and take some action to right your wrong doings. Find a way to make amends and find peace.

Thinking of her formula for peace, I

went back to my files for one of the best examples ever that proves its never too late to make amends. In Kansas in 1975 there was a man who was so broke he couldn't afford a Christmas tree for his family. He went down to the golf course and chopped down one of their trees. Then he stole their garden hose to boot. 20 years later he finally told his wife what he had done. She said, "Go and make restitution." So he went to the golf club, confessed his crime and asked what he owed. He paid \$40 for the tree and hose and left without giving his name. He made the international news and hopefully found peace.

One elderly widow told me she got a money order in the mail from a stranger with a note explaining that the money was owed to her late husband. A retired teacher

told me several students have come to confess they cheated on exams. This is very difficult when the wrong doer has prospered and lives a respectable life but thinks, "If I hadn't cheated, someone else would have won that scholarship."

It is natural to hate those to whom we have been unjust and to convince ourselves they deserved it. It is even worse if the wronged one has prospered. "Success is the best revenge." But we are not off the hook. Even if the wronged one doesn't appear to need it, we must give him his due to find peace of mind.

If the ones we have wronged are dead and heirs can not be located, there are charities that accept anonymous donations and we can always do of random acts of kindness. Pay it forward.

Warm clothing and blankets are needed

With the coming of colder weather, people living outside need warm clothing and blankets. If you have gently used jackets, hoodies, sweaters, jeans and sweats, underwear, shoes and snow boots, you can donate them to Alberta Street News for distribution to those in need. Donations can be left at the newspaper office at 9533-106A Avenue. Call 780-428-0805 to arrange a time, or just leave your donation on the front step with a note.

You can also leave your donation with Linda or Angelique at the back entrance of the Strathcona Farmers' Market on Saturday between 7 and 10 a.m.

Proposed Annual ASN Print Cost Fund Run and Walk

By John Zaantis

The Alberta Street News needs a regular contributing sponsor to cover the print cost of our paper every month. Our ASN Founder and Editor Linda Dumont has managed to keep the paper financially sustainable during its 15 years in existence, while providing more than 135 vendors with the opportunity to sell the paper to supplement their marginalized incomes from Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH), welfare, pension, or art time employment.

The paper in previous years has been dependent on many generous supporters, who've managed to add to the longevity of the paper's success through placing ads in the ASN and breathing life into the paper to keep it in publication. Some of those major supporters, who've added to the thrust of that long-term funding include Edmonton City Councillors Michael Walters and Ben Henderson, former MP Peter Goldring, Premier Dave Martynshuk manager of Martynshuk Housing and many other supporters, who have all made it possible for ASN to have come this far in its journey to successfully and productively serve Alberta's many civic and rural communities.

The paper's decline in sales and circulation is due in part to the sad reality that a lot of our ASN vendors have passed away from either tragic circumstances attributing to alcohol or drug abuse or to illness, others have just gone on to secure employment in other fields and many retired from paper sales when the AISH rates were increased. This has made me realize that an annual ASN Print Cost Fund Run and Walk would be an ideal way of keeping our paper financially sustainable. We need to raise about \$8,000 a year to come coming up with an innovative way of raising funds for the print cost of our paper so about a year ago while having a coffee with ASN Editor Linda Dumont, I proposed this idea to her after hearing about her concerns and the fact that our funding from ad sales had been dropped. So with that suggestion in mind, Linda popped the question to me, "Would you be willing to go through with the responsibility of taking charge? It's a lot of work."

I without any hesitation, replied, "I know I could organize it, but I'll give it some thought."

The discussion ended after that. Linda found other ways of keeping the paper sustainable through increasing the cost of papers to vendors from 50 cents to 75 cents a

copy, and adding a little of her revenues into the mix in keeping the Alberta Street News alive.

In my 23 years as a local free lance journalist while representing various Edmonton community newspapers, I've covered an array of social issues and especially many fund raising walks and runs. While covering those events, I've obtained enough insight to create a concept of how these fund raising events are put together and with the way I think, when it comes to going beyond my reach, I know I'm very capable of organizing my own version of a walk and run that could serve as an immense benefit to a worthy cause.

So with that source of inspiration in mind, I was encouraged to create my own version of a fundraising walk and run that could quite possibly supplement the print cost of our paper in the months to come. The name that I've created for the run and walk coinciding with its purpose is the 1st annual Alberta Street News Print Cost Fund Run and Walk that I've chosen to host and organize in Edmonton's Churchill Square.

The program schedule that I've planned for this event will include, a \$40.00 run and walk registration that will start at 8:00 a.m. ASN volunteer writer contributors and ASN vendors can volunteer their time to help register the run and walk participants. At 9:45 a.m. our event will then commence with two event MC's: myself ASN Media Relations Coordinator John Zapantis and ASN Editor Linda Dumont who will give her historical report of the ASN paper's humble beginnings and what influenced Linda to print the Alberta Street News and its purpose as a provincial street newspaper. I will then take to the stage to give my presentation on how the idea of putting this event together was first influenced and why its essential to the paper's existence. In addition, one or two vendors will speak about how selling the papers has helped them.

The run and walk will commence at 10 a.m.. The site for the walk will take place in Edmonton's Churchill Square. The direction of the route walk hasn't been decided yet. I will keep our readers informed about where I intend to have the route walk established in a future issue of the Alberta Street News.

I used some common sense when it came to obtaining future space for our event at Churchill Square and happened to discover the City of Edmonton's civic event's office that gave me some details of who to contact when it comes to organizing this event.

So now that I have access to those helpful amenities, I'll be contacting representatives of that department to find out what future date would be convenient for them to give us some space at Churchill Square to host our future event. I'm hoping we can host this event in the spring of 2019. The fall of 2018 would be a little too premature to start an event, because that wouldn't give our paper enough time for getting the necessary resources together for our event. It would be much more convenient to have the event a lot later in the next coming season, so I can take my time finding various sponsors to supply our run and walk participants with coffee and food for the event.

I'm also willing to acknowledge the kind and generous efforts of our various sponsors by doing a written report on this event, mentioning the names of our various sponsors when that all comes into play.

I'm also seriously contemplating in reaching out to various Edmonton high schools and getting written consent from their principals to allow ASN the opportunity of giving those schools a stage presentation on the history of Alberta Street News, where I could also have my editor Linda Dumont give her informative presentation on how Alberta Street News has helped to serve as the eyes and ears of the community, while also helping to supplement the marginalized incomes of many of its vendors, who sell that rag for donation on the various street corners of both Calgary and Edmonton.

I will also step out on that stage, elaborating openly to those high school audiences the need for run and walk participants, who are desperately needed in helping to raise pledges for our upcoming Alberta Street News Print Cost Fund Run and Walk as an essential resource to supplement the print cost for our paper throughout the year.

I will also suggest to high school students that if they bring a friend or two along to register for the run and walk. Their \$40.00 registration fee will then be reduced to half the cost down to \$20.00. In order to qualify for that discount, students will be required to present a students identification card verifying the school they attend. This special offer could possibly encourage students to come out and participate for the cause.

I will also be contacting major media for their donated support **by providing our paper possible free air time to advertise the upcoming 1st Annual Alberta Street News Print Cost Fund Run and Walk. Typically, as I have been known to do in the past while getting donated resources for our paper, I've always acknowledged donors mentioning their names when**

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Iceland

By Jono Austin

I had never been to Iceland before, nor any European country for that matter until this summer. After checking out some pictures, and reading up on what Iceland had to offer I wished to see it firsthand. A group of friends and I chose to try some place different this year and different it was. Iceland is a place unlike any other. The island is covered with volcanic rock; they have harnessed the power of geothermal energy for 25 percent of the country's power needs and rarely did we see any trees. Upon arriving at the International Airport we were kindly greeted by English fluent staff, who were happy to help us find our way. We stayed in the most popular city of Reykjavik, where we rented a two bedroom apartment, which turned out to be a perfect place to have as a home base for our travels. One thing to note, which we were not informed of, was the smell of the tap water. Upon turning on the tap you are welcomed to a heavy sulfur smel, when using the hot water. It is simply because the water has geothermal origins and is some the purest and most refreshing water on the planet. Nice to note you don't smell at all upon leaving a shower or washing your clothes.

Some of the sights in Iceland are worth the trip alone, such as the famed Blue Lagoon, where you wade in water that is a stunning shade of light blue while sipping away on your favorite beverage. The water is said to have healing properties due to being rich in silica and sulfur, and being 98-102 degrees Fahrenheit its perfect for soaking in. It may be the most romantic place to be in all of Iceland on a nice cloudless day or night. Some of the other notable places to visit include the Golden Circle route, which includes a visit to Keria where you will find the red rock volcanic crater lake. For a small fee of 400Kr (about 5 dollars CA) you can walk around it or down into it taking pictures all the way. Afterwards most head to the Haukadalur Valley to see the Strokkur geyser that erupts every 5 to 10 minutes and shoots 80-100 degree Fahrenheit water 15 to 20 meters high, but can reach 40 meters some times. If you climb the nearby routes to the top you get a breathtaking view of the valley. The last stop on the list, but far from the least is the mighty Gullfoss Waterfall that is located in the south part of Iceland on the Hvita

(white) river. It is ranked among the top 10 waterfalls in the world and it is easy to see why as the crashing raw power of the falls is breathtaking to behold. It has a walkway for all to come and see it for free.

Another place you may find yourself is the world famous Black Sand Beach in Reynisfjara, on the South Coast of Iceland.

It was even featured in an episode of Game of Thrones Season 7, and it's easy to see why as the sand is pure black as the name entails and the rock faces are carved like stairs in the mountain. Many people climb to get a good picture, and take in the breathtaking view of the ocean. Along your 2.5 hour trip to the black sands beach from Reykjaviks city centre you will come across Seljalandfoss Falls, where you can park and take in a beautiful waterfall and even walk in behind it if you so choose. There is a little stand as well where they sell coffee, donuts and the traditional soups, and pastries of Iceland. As with anything in Iceland, it is quite expensive. A donut alone may cost around seven dollars Canadian, and a coffee is the same.

Nearing the Black Sands Beach you will find the glacier Solheimajokull. It takes only about 20 minutes or so to walk out to it and touch the once large glacier that has receded a lot in recent years. They have glacier tours if you prefer, that will take you up and across the glacier with a guide to



help you along the way.

It is worth noting that for on my trip to all of these wonders there was quite a substantial cost. For instance, gas works out to around \$2.60 Canadian per litre, a small burger with fries out at the famed "chuck Norris Grill" will be around \$32, and cherries were on sale for around \$9.26 a pound. It generally works out to be two to three times the price of where I am from in Vancouver, Canada, but it was worth it all the same. Where else can you visit the home of the Vikings, dress like one and even walk on a Viking ship? The ship called "the Iclander" has been created to be an exact replica of a Viking ship and even was used to cross the Atlantic Ocean. It is now shown off in the Viking World display in Njardvik.

These were but a few of the remarkable, and truly memorable places I visited while on the once unknown island of Iceland. I look forward to returning, and taking in more of the sights, sounds and history of this truly stunning place.

Want to be spared from spare change? There's a tech-fix for that.

By Allan Sheppard

Technology is wonderful. More wonderful still are the marvels that are birthed when bankers and their enablers use technology to satisfy the acquisitive and miserly expectations of their shareholders—by catering to the acquisitiveness and miserliness of customers. On recent visits to Southgate Mall, I encountered a message on a video advertising panel that caught my attention, not in a good way. The message was sponsored by Interac, the virtual monopoly maintained jointly by Canadian financial institutions to provide debit card and e-transfer services. It said, “Use Interac Flash not cash and spare everyone from spare change.”

The advertising message seems clear: coins are a burden, a nuisance, a problem in need of a solution; they are bulky and hard to manage; they cause or find holes in pockets through which they disappear. They just don't behave themselves the way folding money does. Many of us demonstrate the inconvenience of coins by hoarding them in jars, to be exchanged periodically for the folding stuff. The main reason to carry change—to feed parking meters and pay phones—has been made redundant by ubiquitous conversion to plastic cards and mobile phones. So, the notion that using coins has become a nuisance makes sense. It also makes sense for Interac to promote the idea of using debit cards instead of coins because, in the early days of debit cards, merchants discouraged the use of debit cards for small purchases—which led to making small payments with folding money, which led to a need to have substantial amounts of coins on hand, which led to more coins in pockets, which led to... You get the point.

Far from being a solution in search of a problem, use of debit cards instead of coins might be a reasonable solution to a real problem. And yet...

I find a disturbing metamessage behind the advertising message. The use of the term “spare change” seems to me a dog whistle signal suggesting, to anyone alert to such messages, that relying on plastic as the medium of exchange in today's economy and social environment creates a hard wall of defence against panhandlers.

“Spare change, please?”

“Sorry. I only use Interac.”

Am I the only one who hears that message? Look, I don't want to seem holier-than-thou about panhandling. Far more often than not, I say no to street begging. I am neither destitute

nor desperate enough to beg, but I deal with significant and often urgent demands on limited income and seldom have any money to spare.

I do not make judgements about those who resort to begging, for whatever reason. Nor do I make judgements, including assumptions about motives, about anyone lucky enough to have spare change and generous enough to share it when asked.

Sharing spare change with panhandlers will not end, or even begin to solve, poverty, homelessness, and addictions. Nor will it moderate the consequences of untreated or unmanaged mental illness, racism, sexual assault, gender injustices, and domestic violence that are often root causes of street begging. But at least the gesture acknowledges the impact of those and other social ills on a personal level in ways that technological fixes, technological magical thinking, and legislation do not and cannot.

A handout is not a hand up. But it can be a friendly gesture among many cold shoulders. I would respect Interac if, instead of whistling signals to the big dogs of society about the purported evils of panhandling (euphemistically labeled “spare change”) and plastic-wall solutions to it, they would spare a bit of attention and some cash to advocate and contribute to solutions to the causes of social ills such as panhandling.

Sadly, we can bet all the spare change we can muster that something like that—a corporate commitment that motivates a social and political commitment to solve social ills by tackling root causes, rather than the symptoms we see around us every day—probably won't happen.

Prevention is fine, but hard to measure. It doesn't appeal to the big dogs the way law-enforcement and punishment, sweetened with a dollop of tough love, can.

A few straws in the wind:

CBC online recently reported (‘Herds of rats’ were invading Harlem, so the city took garbage bins away. 25 August 2018) that when residents of New York's Harlem district complained about overflowing street garbage bins attracting rats, the sanitation department removed 220 of them, leaving residents to deposit litter and garbage on sidewalks, which inevitably attracted more rats. The city justified its move by saying that the bins were always full because residents used them for household garbage, rather than the litter for which they were intended. The solution, removing the bins and fining residents and

businesses with garbage on the streets near their properties, seems so far to have achieved nothing productive: there is loose garbage on the streets, there are more rats than before, and people who may not be causing the problem are left to face costs and fines. The fact that Harlem is home primarily to African-Americans has not gone unnoticed.

A Huffpost blog by Leilani Farha, UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing and Executive Director of Canada without Poverty (We Can't Turn A Blind Eye To Investment Firms Preying On Low-Income Homes, 5 July 2018) shares the plight of residents in the Ottawa neighbourhood of Heron Gate, where landlord Timbercreek Communities recently issued eviction notices to 104 households to clear the way for demolition of existing low-income housing so it can replace it with upscale, high-revenue alternatives: basic gentrification on an unusually massive scale. The residents of Heron Gate, according to Farha, are ninety-per cent from visible minorities. They have few options and little support from city officials.

Farha does not say it, but I will: the city seems to feel its hands are tied by deference to the divine right of capital whenever it conflicts with human rights to housing and not to be evicted into homelessness asserted by the UN.

Ottawa officials and the developer do not go so far as to blame the potential victims for whatever might happen to them, but Toronto councillor Giorgio Mammoliti goes there, as he has done many times before: boldly. In a 17 August column (“Does Mammoliti care about the significance of the word ‘cockroaches’ he applied to Jane and Finch constituents?”) Toronto Star's Shree Paradkar quotes city councillor Giorgio Mammoliti on his solution to what he and others, including Toronto mayor John Tory, see as an infestation of criminals (“antisocial sewer rats”) and criminal behaviour in the city's (predominantly Black) Jane-Finch neighbourhood: eviction of the “killers’ and ‘drug dealers’” he says live there. How the miscreants might be identified without due process seems not to be a concern to Mammoliti: “I see it like spraying down a building full of cockroaches,” he said on Rebel Media. “The cockroaches are just going to scatter, right? So start evicting them. Let them scatter.”

Excellent observer and analyst that she is, Paradkar recalls what many citizens probably did not: that in the runup to the Rwandan genocide, the Tutsi people, who became the victims of mass slaughter, were labelled publicly as “cockroaches” by Hutu leaders. Paradkar also reminds us of three of the eight “stages of genocide” cited by Genocide Watch:

Continued on page 8

The myth of the middle class

By Timothy Wild

The press release announcing the allocation of \$6 million in Federal funding for the YWCA of Calgary's new "community hub" noted that the "Government of Canada recognizes the critical role supporting women plays in building a strong economy that works for everyone. Equal opportunity puts more people in the workforce, drives economic growth and helps more families join the middle class." The funding will undoubtedly be put to good use, and will support a wide range of additional choices for "women and children fleeing abuse or living in poverty".

The YWCA does stellar work in this regard, and has been at the forefront of combating family violence, working with male perpetrators, highlighting the practical and psychological impact of poverty and other forms of violence on girls and women, providing affordable housing, and applying a gendered lens to a wide range of social, cultural and political issues to support advocacy both in Calgary and nationally. It is money well spent.

But I do have some concern with the Liberal Government locating financial support primarily within the context of "economic growth" rather than it simply being the right thing to do. Justice comes at a cost, but the overall impact of programmatic investments should not always be monetized. Doing so leads to our value and dignity, both as individuals and as part of the collective, being predetermined and constrained by our subjective economic worth in light of the fickle and inhumane requirements of the postindustrial capitalist market.

Additionally, I am concerned by the link of this funding to the expansion of the putative "middle class". Largely, this is because the middle class doesn't really exist as an objective grouping, and it is more the product of an antiquated and damaging notion of a classless, ostensibly equal society. Canadians have always prided themselves on the Pollyanna construct that we are "all middle class" – from minimum wage workers to the well-heeled executive teams of oil companies and other multinational corporations. This

is obviously nonsense. The term is largely meaningless, and is used by many politicians to develop policies and programs that seem inclusive and quasi-universal, yet actually increase inequity, injustice and inequality. A look at current wage levels illustrates the point that we are not middle-class.

According to ATB Financial, the average weekly earnings in Alberta is about \$1 150 per week, making for an annual salary of approximately \$59 800. The average weekly wage is an aggregation of wages from a variety of economic sectors, including the more highly paid (and male dominated) resource extraction sector and the lower paid (and female dominated) service sector of the economy. Nevertheless, it seems a pretty decent wage...until the costs of living, such as food, shelter, clothing, utilities, insurance, childcare, and transportation, are factored into the equation. Families, in particular, living on the average wage are not rolling in clover. They are unable to authentically meet the financial requirements that being middle class seems to require. So one can easily imagine the experience of those struggling on incomes well below the statistical average wage.

Minimum wage is currently set at \$13.60 per hour. Taking the hypothetical example of a person – usually a woman – working full-time at minimum wage, this would result in an annual wage of about \$26 520. However, the example of a person working full-time at one minimum wage job is, once again, largely mythical. Corporations strive to keep their workers below the minimum threshold of hours required to qualify as "full-time", so they don't have to pay benefits. Secondly, most people working for minimum wage have more than one job, particularly if she has children and other dependents. And, even if a worker is paid a so-called "living wage" (the end game of many poverty reduction initiatives), currently calculated in Calgary as \$18.15 per hour, this would result in an annual income of only \$35 392.50. Anyway, the point is that these incomes will allow neither individuals nor families to join the middle class – despite the braying of centre and right-wing

politicians. Even the average wage will not afford people that aspirational "opportunity". The bottom line is that entry into the middle class is largely pie in the sky.

Yet the myth remains powerful, and this is dangerous. Hegemonic talk about being "middle class" can put a brake on the ability of the working class to organize and work on its own behalf for substantial and transformative political change. The contention that we are all middle class takes away from the realization of a more realistic sense of a working class identity, and the subsequent opportunity for the development of the attendant collective disposition to act on that class consciousness. We are not all middle class, and the working class needs to embrace that basic truth and act accordingly. Political, economic and social gains were not due to the benevolence of the upper classes. Most of the advances in public policy and quality of life have come from the dedication and advocacy of the conscious and organized working class, and through the work of our political representatives at all levels of government. Some examples of the results of this collective action include public pensions, occupational health and safety, public libraries, healthcare insurance and state funded education.

But many of these advances are under attack, and resort to the instruments of the market is gaining popularity (RRSPs, TFSA's, private health clinics etc.). Therefore, it is time to re-engage with Canadian and Alberta politics through a class lens. If public policy and social programs are to be of value – particularly in terms of poverty reduction – it is essential that they demonstrate a preferential and equitable option for those on the margins, including the working class. And it is necessary that the working class be at the vanguard of this project. The working class has to organize itself, and demand and agitate for full rights of social, political, cultural and economic citizenship. It is both desirable and possible – but it will not be easy. However, as the old saying goes, "nothing is too good for the working class". Nothing indeed.

ASN Run and Walk - continued when acknowledging my appreciation to them, while writing pieces on their initiatives in making it all possible for our paper. I will continue to do so, when that free airtime is provided and am looking forwards that exciting challenge when that time comes.

I feel that nine months in the planning of this event would be more than substantial and will give me more than enough time to pull together the essential resources that are needed in making this event successful.

Regardless of how much money is raised to facilitate the print cost of our paper, every bit will count, for I'm willing to take

that gigantic leap in making this commitment in going all out to reach Edmonton's many prominent goodwill organizations, who I feel can make this a big possibility in helping our paper's financial stability in helping our paper race to the finish line, when starting our run and walk in the spring of 2019!

Let our voices be heard

By Maria B.

EVERY INDIVIDUAL IS EQUAL BEFORE AND UNDER THE LAW AND HAS THE RIGHT TO EQUAL PROTECTION AND EQUAL BENEFIT OF THE LAW WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION AND, IN PARTICULAR, WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION BASED ON RACE, NATIONAL OR ETHNIC ORIGIN, COLOR, RELIGION, SEX, AGE OR MENTAL OR PHYSICAL DISABILITY.

OUR LIMITATIONS DO NOT STEM FROM "OUR DISABILITY", BUT RATHER FROM THE STEREOTYPING THAT LEADS TO STIGMATIZATION AND DISCRIMINATION IN OUR COMMUNITY.

IT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR US TO INFLUENCE ANY LONG TERM CHANGES IN STIGMATIZING BEHAVIOR UNLESS "WE" HAVE THE AWARENESS AND THE COURAGE TO CHALLENGE PEOPLE'S BELIEFS. WHENEVER WE ACCEPT THE DESIGNATION THAT SHATTERS WHO WE ARE IN THE EYES OF OUR CREATOR, WE ARE ADOPTING THE TITLE THAT ONLY SERVES TO KEEP US IN A STIGMATIZED AND SHAMEFUL STATE.

OUR STRENGTH COMES FROM WITHIN, FROM KNOWING THAT WE ARE WORTHY INDIVIDUALS AND WE MUST HOLD ON TO THE BELIEF THAT EVEN IF WE ARE DIFFERENT, WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO SEEK AND LIVE A TRULY FULFILLING LIFE.

WE MUST EMBRACE OUR DIFFERENCES.

WE MUST BECOME THE VOICE OF AWARENESS OF THE STRUGGLE THAT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES GO THROUGH. CHANGE STARTS WITH EACH ONE OF US.

WE ARE NOT OUR DISABILITY, WE HAVE UNLIMITED SKILLS AND ARE QUITE ABLE TO THRIVE IN A COMMUNITY BUT WE NEED ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, SUPPORT AND MOST OF ALL "EQUALITY".

OF ALL HUMAN WEAKNESSES, NONE ARE MORE DESTRUCTIVE TO THE DIGNITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL THAN STIGMA, STEREOTYPES, PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION.



Want to be spared from spare change?

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Excellent observer and analyst that she is, Paradkar recalls what many citizens probably did not: that in the runup to the Rwandan genocide, the Tutsi people, who became the victims of mass slaughter, were labelled publicly as "cockroaches" by Hutu leaders.

Paradkar also reminds us of three of the eight "stages of genocide" cited by Genocide Watch: "dehumanization" (indiscriminate labeling: cockroaches, killers, drug dealers); "polarization" (us and them rhetoric); and "preparation" (separating a victim group from its community: eviction).

Is there a connection between such inflammatory rhetoric and an offer from a reputable Canadian corporate entity to spare us from the obsolete nuisance of spare change? I suggest there is. It's obscure and tenuous, but it's real and dangerous. There are leaders among us who see certain kinds and classes of our fellow human beings as inconvenient nuisances: as spare people from whom, like spare change, we need to be spared.

Resist!

