

ALBERTA Street News

Volume 16

Issue 6

June, 2019

Dr. PatchUp, Stollery's mascot, poses with Tanya O' Donnell and her son, Chase, at the 3rd Annual Teddy Bear Fun Run.
Photo by John Zapantis
Story on page 4-5



VENDORS PAY 75 CENTS PER COPY. PAPERS SOLD BY DONATION

ALBERTA STREET NEWS

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**Deadline for next issue is
June 15**

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Opinion Not the Democracy

By Rodney Graham, Winnipeg

I think it's time to face the truth - we are not the democracy we claim to be. "Might makes right" is the true spirit of our democracy. People who have no power at all are treated like second class citizens. We see it in health care - there are terrible abuses going on. If the well off were so abused something would be done immediately. With the homeless, well, that's even a worse situation for them.

They have virtually no support so they are left to the brutality of bureaucrats and security/police, who can be terribly brutal and heartless. What we see happening to them - the abuse and persecution, is a direct result of complaints by well off citizens in the community who consider anyone scruffy looking as worth nothing, not fit to live at all. If you think that is exaggeration consider how they are treated....

They are arbitrarily thrown out of public space with no defense, no recourse. I witnessed the ill treatment of the homeless at a Tim Hortons in my neighborhood and saw how badly they were treated - they did not even allow them a bit of time to rest - they were doing nothing illegal, nothing at all. Their only crime is that they were merely poor looking, obviously poor, as the very 'observant' employees noticed.

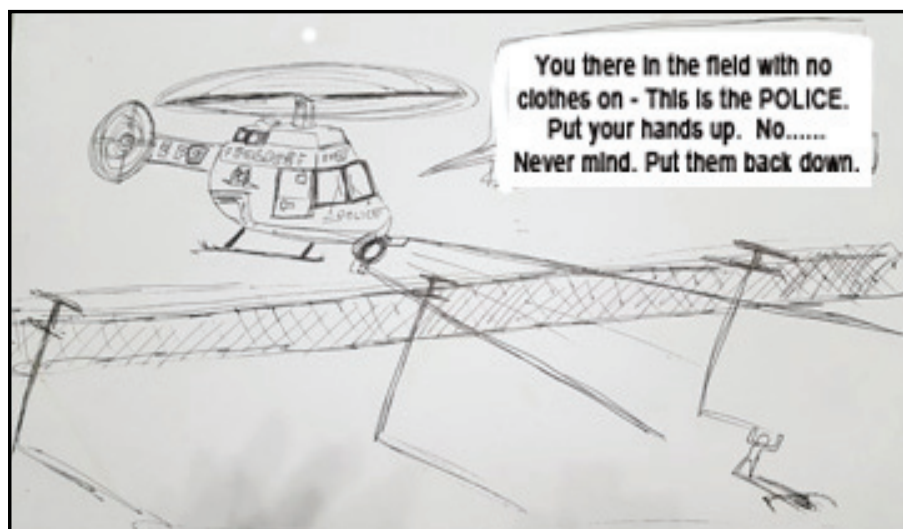
We live in a country where everyone is valued based on their financial worth. We ought to judge people by the content of their heart. If we did so, these cruel employees and citizens, who observe other citizens and condemn them, should be put on trial for crimes against humanity.

The Expenses of June

By Joanne Benger

- When brides prepare their registry they should include items for poor relatives like "a matching pair of deluxe wash cloths".
- There are walkabouts, ridathons, runathons. No one moves anymore without a pledge sheet and I don't move fast enough to escape it.
- Going to the pool gets expensive as you get older. You need a warm swim cap to protect hair color, aqua shoes to hide foot flaws, a wrap to cover exposed skin out of water, and yes, a swim suit to make it legal.
- How many graduations can one child celebrate? Kindergarten, junior high, senior high, college, grad school, and special courses. How many graduation presents can one person afford?
- I have no AC so I go to cafes to cool off and you can't sit there without ordering something. And they wonder why the poor get so fat.

Thought for the day: "Anyone can run someone down, but it takes a hero to hold someone up." Sharon Austin



Another month, Another June

By Joanne Benger, Photo by John Zapantis

It is June, which is Seniors' month, the month of Grads and Dads and Pride Month. It is also the most popular month for weddings. "Another moon, another June, another long honeymoon." The luckiest dates for that June wedding are said to be 1, 3, 22, 19 and 21. Best wishes to all this year's June brides and happy anniversary to all former June brides.

1. Travellers beware – hurricane season begins south of the border on June first.
2. June 2 is National Cancer Survivors Day. Thanks to modern research this is one part of our population that keeps growing.
3. June 4 Ramadan ends. You may now stop fasting during daylight hours.
4. June 4 is Random Acts of Kindness Day. Donate to the food bank and be grateful this is Canada. In Haiti when they are short of flour, they use fine dirt for some of the flour so there will be enough bread for everyone.
5. June 6 is D. Day when we remember the final allied campaign of World War II, the Battle of Normandy on June , 1944.
6. June 14 is Queen Elizabeth's official birthday. Happy Birthday Your Majesty.
7. June 15 is World Awareness of Elder Abuse Day. Elder abuse is defined by any action or inaction that jeopardizes the health or well being of an older adult.
8. June 15 is also the third Saturday in June so it is Wear Plaid for Dad Day. Think of the Big C that can challenge even the biggest and bravest of Dads.
9. June 1 is the third Sunday is June which has been Fathers' Day since 1909. It can be as early as June 15 or as late as June 21. Throw your arms around your father and tell him how much you love him.
10. June 19 is Juneteenth in Texas. Lincoln had freed the slaves in 1863 but news travelled slow in those days so Texans didn't know they were liberated until June 19, 1965, when returning soldiers told them the war was over. Be grateful for modern communications today.
11. June 21 is National Indigenous People's Day also known as National Aboriginal Day. We are reminded that Canada's first citizens must be treated as partners and stewards of the land.
12. June 21 is also the first day of summer, the solstice. It is the pagan holiday of Litha that celebrated the triumph of light over darkness on this, our longest day of the year.
13. June 23 is Midsummer Night. Single girls who place seven different wildflowers under their pillow will dream of their future husband tonight.
14. June 24 is Flying Saucer Day. Half of all Canadians believe in UFOs and one in ten admit to seeing one. Watch "Indians and Aliens" on TV.
15. June 27 is Happy Birthday Day. The catchy song has been with us for 160 years today so let's sing Happy Birthday to the song "Happy Birthday to You."
16. June 28 is Paul Bunyan Day. Before oil was discovered at Leduc, many young men worked at lumber camps. Their hero was Paul Bunyan with his big blue ox, Babe.
17. June 30 is Meteor Day. We call them shooting stars and when you see one you must make a wish and complete it before the star hits the ground. If you just want to get richer repeat the word money over and over from the time you see the shooting star until it vanishes from



Switchover Time

By Joanne Benger

1. I'm not sure but I think it is Switchover time. Our two months of summer are here so I must put away winter gear and unearth my summer wardrobe, meagre as it is. If it's too soon, I'll have to unpack or freeze. If it's too late, I'll be wearing woollens to the beach.
2. I'm going to try to pack away the down coats that have doubled in size over the winter and no longer fit in their storage trunk. And there is no room for them with my toques, boots and woollens in the other two boxes.
3. I've dug out the grocery bag full of my summer clothes and find they have all shrunk and faded over the winter.
4. I can't find the two summery t-shirts I got at that summer's end sale. I wonder if I accidentally put them in that bag of clothes I donated to the homeless.
5. My hall closet looks like I've had a robbery. A skinny raincoat, a skimpy jacket and a chore coat have replaced all my bulky winter wear.

6. I can no longer hide my toque hair under a toque. I'll have to make my yearly trip to the hair stylist.
7. In the winter you wonder why anyone ever buys a razor when all you see is the eyes through that space in a balaclava or peeking out between toque and scarf. Now we see faces.
8. I feel so skinny without my thermals and it seems almost indecent to walk around with only one layer of clothing between me and the world. After a winter of layering I feel like a nudist.
9. I've replaced my felt pack boots with runners and my feet are so light I could fly.
10. For the first time in over eight months I am revealing limy elbows to the world. I feel so daring I hope I don't get arrested for indecent exposure.
11. My sandals still fit and I guess it's time to cut my toe nails. Who cares if they look like skis all winter long?
12. Once more I am painfully aware of figure faults. We all look the same in coats that look like sleeping bags with sleeves.

13. I find it hard to recognize the neighbours without their familiar winter outfits and they don't seem to know me either.

Mary's Plaid Day concerns

By Joanne Benger

1. Will plaid leggings make my bum look big?
2. Is it legal to wear the tartan of a Scottish Highlander if I am not related?
3. Is it OK to wear two or more contrasting plaids on this day?
4. Is a checked design considered a plaid?
5. Does this have something to do with Paul Bunyan's plaid shirt? Was he a Dad?
6. Dalmatians have dots and tigers have stripes. Why do no animals have plaid?
7. Can I wear plaid if I don't have a dad?

3rd Annual Teddy Bear Fun Run raises over \$255,000 for the Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation

Story and photo by John Zapanis

Struggling to get through the obstacle course of raising a sick child has been made a lot easier for parents who can depend on the support of the Stollery Children's Hospital. That's what I found out when I went on assignment to cover the story of the 3rd Annual Teddy Bear Fun Run, at Rundle Park in Edmonton, hosted and organized by the Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation.

Michelle Miller, a single mother, and her five year old son Cameron, were among over 1600 run and walk participants, who either ran or walked a 5 kilometre route around Rundle Park while raising pledges for this great cause.

The annual fundraising event's primary purpose was to raise public awareness about the struggles sick children face, while depending on the support and medical assistance provided at the Stollery Children's Hospital in Edmonton.

The event started with an 8:30 a.m. registration, followed by a 9:33 a.m. stage presentation ceremony, where four keynote speakers, gave their personal views on sick children, who are receiving support and medical assistance at the Stollery Children's Hospital.

This year's MC for the event was Global

television Chief Meteorologist Jesse Beyer, who introduced three other keynote speakers to the stage. Those speakers included Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Mike House, Homes by AVI presenting sponsor and representative Donna Bruce and Stollery parent Michelle Miller.

The central focus of our story is Michelle Miller and her five year old son Cameron, who has risen above adverse conditions thanks to the Stollery Children's Hospital and other partnering hospitals that provided medical assistance to her son. He was born 14 weeks premature and spent 254 days in hospital care. That premature birth has left Cameron living with Cerebral Palsy, and dependent on the aid of a walker. His mother feels he may never walk unaided.

In her very emotional keynote speech, Miller said, "Good morning everyone. My name is Michelle Miller. I'm a Stollery mom. This little guy next to me is Cameron and don't let that cherubic little face and those dimples fool you. He's trouble with a capital 'T' right from day one, when he decided to show up three months premature at a mere 23 weeks gestation. Over the next seven weeks we had a number of ups and downs including surgeries and really close calls with his lungs that almost ended our journey. We made it back to the Royal Alex, where the plan was to look and grow and get big and strong. We were on that path and things seemed to be going in the right direction until Cameron got a cold. Now you and I would be lying on our couch with a blanket and some medicine and some bad days, but unfortunately for Cameron, they thought it would be the end of the road. His lungs could no longer sustain life. Lucky for us, this is the Stollery and they don't give up easily. Thankfully neither did he. The doctors over at the University, even though he was technically too small at 2.6 Kilos, decided to put him on ECMO, which is like a heart lung machine that would take all the blood out of his body, re-oxygenate it and put it back in.

He was too sick and unstable to get across the river to the university. So we had to send at least a dozen people including a surgeon, a pick up a doctor, a respite child therapist, an ECMO specialist, a transport nurse and so many others, to the Royal Alex and they cleaned out an operating room that they were using as a storage space to do the operation.

When they were done, they had to keep him completely still, to get him to the U of A Hospital and in the next terrifying weeks, Cameron only had a 50/50 chance of survival, but survive is what he did. His lungs were covered in that time. He was able to breath on his own, but that was not the end of our journey. Two more surgeries to fix his bowels, a break through treatment to treat paralyzed vocal cords and numerous other

tests and procedures kept us in the hospital for 254 days. If you're doing the math, that's eight months, but on November 17th, 2014, quite fittingly on World Prematurity Day, Cameron made his last trip across the river, home.

There's barely been a month in all that time, that we haven't been back for an appointment, or a test, or in a couple of cases an emergency blood transfusion, but for us, it's getting a little further between each appointment.

What so many people don't realize is that the Stollery is not just one place, it is an interconnected network of care for us. The Stollery was at the Royal Alex, at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and the Stollery was at the University at the ICU and the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) and the ward floors as well. The Stollery care is expanding into Grande Prairie and St. Albert with the Stollery and ICU opening in the Sturgeon Hospital later this year.

Since Cameron's ECMO experience, we were referred to a clinic at the Glenrose that helped us get home care and other supports that Cameron needed, which also led us to Cameron's school, the Elves Special Needs Society. This network is just full of amazing people on all sides.

Cameron was just two years old the first time the doctor said, the words Cerebral Palsy to me. I guess I didn't react the way they thought I should, because they called me at home the next day to see if I was OK. They were just more worried that I had to learn the meaning of the word, and after everything that we'd been through, I didn't want to give them too much power, but at the same time, I knew that the support that had been there since day one, would still have been there from the early days and would continue to get us through the next stage.

I don't know what the future holds for Cameron, but I know without a doubt that he would not be here to have a future if the Stollery were not here and a lucky break for us. It's right in our backyard, just a trip across the river.

I'm a single mom and Cameron has an older brother named Brady, who was only three years old at the time. Being strong for him was what got me through this journey. I have no idea what we would have done had the Stollery not been in our back yard. I know not every story has the same outcome as us and I am forever grateful for the Sturgeon Community Colleges paediatricians, nurses, nurse practitioners, respiratory therapists, anaesthetists, dieticians, pharmacists and everyone else that had a part in making our story a Story of Hope.

There's also not enough thank you in the world for the Stollery Children's Hospital and all the work they do to support the work of these world class facilities and the world



Cameron Miller, seated in his walker, is surrounded, from left, by his grandmother Jackie, Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation President/CEO Mike House and Cameron's mother Michelle Miller.

The commodification of charity

By Timothy Wild, Cagary

Aneurin Bevan, the Welsh Labour MP and Godfather of the United Kingdom's National Health Service, famously remarked that "private charity can never be a substitute for organized justice." His vision of "organized justice" was based on an extensive social welfare state, paid for by public revenues and grounded in transformative and inclusive public policy that provided wide ranging supports for all people from cradle to grave.

This comprehensive social-democratic state ensured that one's class status would not have a significant impact on one's life chances. Educational opportunities were opened up to all based on ability, and access to healthcare was centered on the need of the patient not the income of the family or the market of private medical provision. Everyone was provided with at least modest housing. Milk was provided to school-aged children. This broad support was given not as a conditional reward for demonstrating certain types of pro-social behaviour, or for being of a certain identity, but offered as a basic social right of citizenship to all people. The Keynesian Welfare State was an example of organized justice in action.

And although the Canadian welfare state was nowhere near as extensive, inclusive or progressive as those of modern western European democracies, it did provide a measure of predictable support. Family allowances, state pensions and healthcare insurance, for example, did promote an increase in both equality and equity. However, due to the impact of predictable global economic factors, support for such an inclusive and progressive type of model gave way, over time, to a more market-influenced and evaluated approach.

The Keynesian Welfare State, to be fair, was also based on a masculinist construct of workforce participation, and assumptions of the inevitability (and desirability) of ongoing economic growth. These assumptions proved unsustainable for a host of reasons, good and bad. That said, the belief that the welfare state was fiscally unsustainable and the corresponding argument that wealth when unshackled by regulation and taxation would result in the greater supply of crumbs for the rest of us was a blatant lie, and a cause of the destruction of

the welfare state. After decades demonstrating the ongoing failure of trickle-down economics, however, we still have significant and stubborn pockets of poverty and exclusion, based on the intersection of a variety of variables, including class, race, ability and gender. Trickle down simply doesn't work. But it still holds a considerable portion of the electorate in its thrall; hence, the mainstream mantra of "fiscally conservative and socially liberal".

However, rather than confronting this hyper-destructive fallacy and choosing to deal with these social, economic and cultural problems in an organized manner, ongoing resort is made to charity. Now, I am certainly not opposed to charity and give my share to charities. For me, and my soul, giving to charity is important. But it is also essential to remember that the wellbeing of my soul, is also related to the overall common good. I am a small part of the collective, and my faith foundations in Catholic Social Teaching, for example, are based on the blend of both charity and justice. My theological assumptions of charity and my soul should not stop people from having basic access to food, shelter and clothing. Charity, therefore, to go back to Bevan, can never be a substitute for organized justice. Charity must be applied in concert with social justice for transformative change. Charity can sometimes help meet the emergency needs of people for basic needs; but it remains a quick fix, and still creates a landscape of dependency and judgement rather than inclusion and agency.

Yet rather than develop an approach that truly and mutually links charity with social justice, we have left the field largely open to charitable provision as some sort of post-industrial silver bullet. In fact, to our enduring shame, we have adopted a business approach to charity, and have created a system wherein charity has become a commodity. And rather than using taxes and public policy to address complex social and economic issues, we rely on a market driven approach grounded in the vagaries of tentative provision. We have created what to all extent and purposes are corporations to help in this approach. We give our funds to the charitable arm of the bourgeoisie, and they dispense the funds based on their assessment of need and / or major donor appetite. These institutions also have significant say in the scope and type of advocacy that is allowed in this sector, thereby controlling the much-needed voice of informed dissent advo-

cating for social change. These institutions do help somewhat; but they also act as a significant brake on social change.

As mentioned, I think that this is due to the commodification of charity. Business corporations can use these entities to help them in the gaining of social capital and good will. As with the wax fruits of Corporate Social Responsibility, this public face can actually serve as a buffer to change. Corporations can donate large-ish sums of money to these professional charity outfits, get tax write-offs, buy a good measure of positive public relations, and allow them to make the case for lower taxes as they argue they are already paying their share in other ways, such as charitable giving and the expectation of employee support of these charity factories. But this is fleeting. It is also tenuous and judgemental. And we can see the impact of this lack of predictability when, during rougher economic times, the donations of these corporations to the professional charitable entity go down. Resulting in cuts. Resulting in fewer services. Resulting in greater hardship for people on the margins. And injustice continues amidst plenty, while big business and the bourgeois cool sleep undisturbed.

Basically, the commodification of charity and the promotion of Corporate Social Responsibility reflect the fact that the private sector has too much control over social, cultural and economic wellbeing. This is unacceptable and unnecessary. What we need is for the blunt instrument of charity to be sharpened by social justice, including the application of public policy. Poverty will not be solved by charity. That might help in the short-term but it is in no way adequate to replace the role of justice. Returning, once again, to Catholic Social Teaching, it is essential that the "preferential option for the poor" be demonstrated and furthered through both charity and justice. This is not an easy balance. And in some ways, it can be easier for me to give someone a few dollars so it disappears – at least for a short time – from my sight. But this is not just. If we are to be just, we need to step up our game on the justice side, and de-commodify the charitable sector.

One way to do this is to reanimate the role that taxation can play in the creation and sustainment of a just, humane and inclusive society. "Private charity can never be a substitute for organized justice". Bevan's words still ring true today.

class people that work in these facilities. The donations that are received during their fund raising events, such as this, play a huge role in helping kids like Cameron get the chance to go home and experience all that life has to offer. Thanks for being here today and for supporting these tiny humans."

Prior to the run, a warm-up for runners and walkers was conducted by Full Force Fitness members, Shandra DeBoer and Akshay

Soochit.

The run and walk commenced at 10 a.m. as runners led and walkers followed, on their journey along a 5 kilometre route around Rundle Park.

This year's run and walk raised over \$255,000. Money raised in pledges and sold items will go to support the Stollery Children's Hospital's initiatives supporting the mental and physical needs of sick children,

music therapy, peer support and the Awasisak Indigenous Health programs.

Thanks to the selfless and compassionate runners and walkers, volunteers, pledge donors and local sponsors and especially the Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation, sick children entering the Stollery will one day be successfully discharged, rising above adversity with at least smiles on their faces.

The significant link between eviction and suicide

By Amanda Waldroupe, Street News Service

The number of people dying by suicide in Washington County began climbing dramatically in 2009. That year, 55 people died by suicide. The numbers continued to climb until they hit a peak of 96 people dying by their own hand in 2012 – or approximately 18 per 100,000 people. That is well above the national average of 13 per 100,000.

“That’s not just kind of bad,” Kimberley Repp says. “That’s just...astronomically bad.”

Starting in 2014, Repp began accompanying the county’s death investigators to death scenes to see what clues or evidence were present in the room where a person was last living. She visited more than 200 scenes in a two-year period.

From these visits, she developed a list of 46 risk factors that contributed to a person’s risk of death by suicide. Since 2015, those risk factors have helped county officials expand the types of people and places that Washington County and partner organizations target for suicide training, prevention and intervention efforts. As a result, the county’s suicide rate has fallen by 40 per cent in three years.

“That data has given us the information we need to make tangible interventions in our community,” Repp says.

Among the list of risk factors are those that one might expect: depression, social isolation, and problems with drug addiction or family or money. But one leaped out to Repp—and others. It was a quiet social problem that has started to drastically affect increasing numbers of poor people in recent years: eviction.

Repp found that eviction was a prevalent risk factor in 104 suicides in Washington County between 2014 and 2018. That included people who had experienced an eviction in the last two weeks of their lives or in the years shortly before. “I was really, really surprised by how prevalent eviction, as a crisis, and ongoing housing issues were [...] directly impacting our suicide rates in Washington County,” Repp admits.

Repp worked with the Washington County Sheriff’s Office, which delivers court-ordered evictions, to have the phone number for a crisis line printed at the top of all eviction paperwork that a renter is given.

Members of the Washington County Mental Health Response Team, which intervenes when people are experiencing mental health crises, will now go along with a sheriff’s deputy who is serving an eviction if they know that the person is likely to be extremely upset. Since the intervention was implemented, the number of those who die by suicide in Washington County with eviction as a risk factor has fallen by 25 per cent each year.

Oregon has one of the highest suicide rates in the nation, ranking 14 out of 50. The rate of

suicide among Oregonians has increased by 35 per cent between 2000 and 2017. In 2017, 825 Oregon residents died by suicide, according to the Oregon Health Authority. For all ages, suicide is the eighth-leading cause of death among Oregonians. For Oregonians aged 10 to 34, it is the second-leading cause of death. Approximately 1 per cent of suicides – roughly five to 10 cases a year – are associated with eviction or the loss of a home.

Evictions are stressful, especially for low-income people who do not necessarily have money saved to pay for moving costs, a security deposit and their first and last month’s rent. If someone is forcibly removed from their home as the result of an eviction, which happens to about 1 per cent of the Oregon population each year, it caps off, at times, months of worry and stress about the loss of one’s home.

People are most often evicted due to non-payment of rent, for illegal acts carried out on the rental property, or for continuous or recurring problems, such as with a pet or loud noises. But Oregon also allows no-cause evictions, which means that a landlord can give a renter notice to move without providing any reason. In Portland, due to reforms passed in 2015, renters who are given eviction notices must now be given 90 days’ notice to move. In the vast majority of cases, a landlord can simply send the renter an eviction notice and the renter has to move. In cases of non-payment or compliance issues, the landlord and the renter make arrangements to solve the problem.

But in cases where that does not happen, a landlord can file the eviction in court and pursue a court order to legally require the renter to move. A renter can challenge the eviction in court to have the eviction revoked or to have the move-out date changed.

If the court sides with the lawyer, the renter can then be removed from the property. A notice is then attached to the front door of the rental, stating the move-out date.

From that point, the process only becomes more stressful and harried for renters. Renters have four days to move. If they do not, sheriff’s deputies can go onto the property and forcibly remove the person, giving them only a few minutes to collect some belongings. It is typical, from that point, for the renter to be locked out of the home and to be allowed to retrieve their belongings only with a sheriff’s deputy present.

Lavar Edmonds is a sociologist and researcher at the Eviction Lab, which is based at Princeton University and maintains the first national database of evictions, with records of evictions dating back to 2000. He argues against a “dangerous assumption” that once someone is evicted, they will simply find another place to live.

“That’s not necessarily how it works,” he says, noting that an eviction is on a person’s court record and will show up on any background check that a future landlord makes. Oftentimes, he tells me, people who are evicted move into more substandard housing or become homeless.

“Homelessness is not much of a leap in mind,” he explains, since many renters are forcibly evicted because of not paying the rent.

The Eviction Lab and the work of its founder, Matthew Desmond, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning book *Evicted*, has raised awareness over the last few years about eviction as a dire social problem. Desmond’s research has shown clear links between eviction and increased rates of stress, depression, anxiety and other mental illnesses that last for up to two years after an individual is evicted.

The first comprehensive study analyzing eviction as a risk factor for suicide was published in a 2015 study in the *American Journal of Public Health*. The study used data collected by the National Violent Death Reporting System, a surveillance system that tracks data related to violent deaths, including suicide, to examine suicides that took place between 2005 and 2010, during the Great Recession and during the years when there were record numbers of foreclosures and evictions.

The researchers identified 929 suicides that had eviction and foreclosure as the precipitating event leading to the death. The researchers also found that the number of suicides with eviction or foreclosure as a risk factor doubled between 2005 and 2010.

Nearly 80 per cent of the suicides took place before the person actually lost their housing, and 37 per cent of people had experienced eviction or foreclosure within two weeks of their deaths. One of the main conclusions of the study is that during times of economic crisis, suicide prevention measures need to be increased.

The findings are mirrored by a Swedish study, published in 2016 in the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, which examined whether people who faced eviction were more likely to die by suicide than those who did not. The study compared the rates of suicide among 22,000 Swedish households that were evicted between 2009 and 2012, compared to a random sample of 10 per cent of the Swedish population. The researchers also controlled for numerous socio-economic and demographic factors often considered as risk factors for suicide, including mental illness and drug abuse. The study found that people who were evicted were four times more likely to die by suicide than people who were not. “Our results reinforce the importance of ongoing attempts to remove the issue of evictions from its status as a hidden and neglected social problem,” the researchers wrote.

Deborah Zwetchkenbaum is the assistant director of the crisis line that is operated by Lines for Life, a Portland nonprofit that works to prevent suicide. The crisis line fields more than 25,000 calls each year from people who have thoughts of suicide, are depressed, or are having problems that lead to thoughts of suicide.

Zwetchkenbaum said she has “done a lot of work on the phone” and estimates that approximately one out of 10 people call the crisis line due to eviction or the threat of eviction, homelessness or housing instability.

Evictions and suicide - continued

In 2018, more than 2 per cent of calls – 1,335 out of 41,145 – came from people who explicitly stated that homelessness was the primary stressor in their lives. Those numbers do not include people experiencing housing instability; that is, people who fear they will lose their home or who are about to. It also does not include people who say they are couch surfing. Lines for Life does not collect and isolate that data.

Zwetchkenbaum says the people who call the crisis line are a self-selecting group of people, meaning that the numbers of people who are actually homeless and having thoughts of suicide is, in all likelihood, much higher.

“Of course there is a connection between eviction and suicide,” says Margot Black, an organizer with Portland Tenants United, a tenants activist organization. Black says that she regularly talks with renters who experience “sleepless nights, crushing anxiety and deep

depression” due to the fear of being evicted. Eviction can be especially stressful for people who have lived in their home a long time, she explains, or those who are attached to their home. If a renter is already experiencing problems with personal finances, mental or physical health, family, or other issues, an eviction can cause “a perfect storm to increase all the stressors that would make someone vulnerable to a mental health crisis,” Black says.

In the Portland area, the link between eviction and suicide has become more and more apparent in recent years.

Marissa Madrigal, Multnomah County’s chief operating officer, told a story about her friend Paul.

Paul lived in a small, dark basement apartment with his cat. It was not much, Madrigal explained, but “he had carved out a safe home after many, many different struggles.” He had lived there, near Southeast Hawthorne Boulevard, for 10 years. The apartment had problems with mold, so he told his landlord

and asked that repairs be made. The landlord gave Paul a no-cause eviction.

Madrigal helped him get a lawyer. The apartment’s air was tested. She and other friends helped him as much as they could. They made a plan for Paul to stay at another friend’s in case he had to move. As long as someone checked on him, Madrigal said, “there was an outlet” for him to manage the stress and feel that things would be okay in time.

Their efforts were unsuccessful. The day before he had to move out, Madrigal said, the landlord posted another eviction notice on the door.

Paul died by suicide the next day.

When Repp accompanies Lovato on death scene investigations, she says that she can “feel the suffering” in the rooms where people ended their lives. People often leave eviction papers on their dining room or coffee tables – out in the open, where anyone can see them, as if the person had just set them down there.

A Show of Resilience

By Sharon Austin

There is a tree in the forest where I walk that I call the tree of resilience. It is not tall and straight and it does not stand in the golden glow of direct sunlight; in fact it is quite the opposite. This tree has known its share of adversity and yet it has survived and become more useful and stronger because of it.

I wish I could go back through the mists of time and see what happened when the tree was just a sapling. Perhaps it was damaged by harsh winters or raging storms or even an animal. Whatever the reason the tree of resilience grew two strong healthy crowns instead of one making a great home for the squirrels and the birds who nest there. I think people are a lot like my tree. It is in going through hard times facing suffering or failure that we learn our most valuable lessons and become stronger more empathetic people because of them. Psychology Today defines resilience as “...that ineffable quality that allows some people to be knocked down by life and come back stronger than ever. Rather than letting failure overcome them and drain their resolve they find a way to rise from the ashes.”

As Father’s Day approaches I am reminded of one young father named Gary whose picture could be right there beside the definition of resilience. Gary became a father at the tender age of sixteen and although the child was not planned, every child is a blessing and he did his best to be a good father. At seventeen tragedy struck and Gary was

in a catastrophic motorcycle accident that nearly cost him his life. His leg had been torn off and he was put into an induced coma in critical condition. After months in the hospital and countless reconstructive surgeries and rehabilitation he was finally allowed to go home on his crutches. A prosthetic leg was not an option for him as the injury was far too grievous. I remember him saying that it was his little son that kept him from falling into despair and giving up. He had to be there for his child who had no idea he was disabled. To the boy he was just “Daddy” and he never remembered him any other way.

Although the relationship with the boy’s mother only lasted a few years, the father/son bond is forever. Despite his disability, Gary found a way to live an active life, taking his son swimming and fishing and even driving an ATV. He joined a wheelchair basketball team and became such a good player that his team participated in the Canada Games. Later, he became a successful stone artist, cutting, carving and drilling natural stone into his own creations.

What a fine example of strength and resilience he has given his child. If you are facing your own trials today whether physical suffering, failure, heartbreak, or depression you are stronger and more resilient than you know and you will make it.

I close with a quote from Joel Osteen: “Make up your mind that no matter what comes your way, no matter how difficult, no matter how unfair, you will do more than simply survive. You will thrive in spite of it.”

The Subtle Art of Escalation and Violence.

By Rodney Graham, Winnipeg

Security and police thugs are very clever at getting away with assault. They have experience. They know how to bully, provoke, assault, and not be responsible for it. To psychotic personalities it is a form of entertainment - fun.

They know, for one thing, that young people just do not have the knowledge/sophistication available in stressful situations, situations where there is danger of extreme conflict. So, they use this little formula. It is used the world over:

They first confront in a rude and demanding way - something no child or youth likes, especially from a stranger. Then they become more demanding as the youth resists verbally - escalation, provocation. The youth naturally resists such injustice...This gives the thug more excuse.

When the youth comes up against a wall, and with peers witnessing - which is very embarrassing, and they don’t want to lose face...

Then the thug gives the ultimatum - There is no alternative you see. ‘Either you put your hands behind your back’ (In front of your peers) OR I will forcefully arrest you. This leaves no exit. The question leaves only one response - I will have to give in to a THUG who is bullying me, who is rude and nasty and smelly... and feel humiliated, or I can do the honorable thing (Which no one can blame a person for of course). This is how the creeps bully vulnerable, young, old, unsophisticated people and get away with it.

Confront rudely. Demand a response immediately. Escalate. Then use violence. This is how the crudest of authorities bully people and get away with it. Police who have character, class, and depth do not do this. There should be laws about this. And this is the thing - Young people are not experienced enough to know that cops can get away with just about anything - with a mere slap on the wrist.

HOW ACCEPTING PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY CAN TRANSFORM OUR LIVES

By Maria B.

In the case of alcoholism, or drug addiction, all of the major forces that become our addictions, we must agree that the first step in effectively overcoming these life altering situations is the willingness of the patient to recognize and admit that a problem exists. The second step is accepting responsibility for the creation of the existing situation, so that it can be properly treated, dealt with, and eventually overcome.

IT IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO ADMIT THAT OUR PERSONAL CHOICES CREATED THIS SITUATION.

Without that initial recognition, or awareness the mind WILL NOT ACCEPT personal responsibility. It is impossible for anyone to accept personal responsibility as long as they believe that someone or some circumstance outside of their control caused them to fall into the addiction. As long as this belief remains, and they deny personal responsibility, it is impossible to effectively treat the condition and likely that the same addiction will resurface at some point in their life over and over.

In the case of addiction, unlike some situations, it is essential for a person to accept the fact that they are experiencing the outcome based on choices that they freely made, and that they have the individual power within them to "recognize" and realize that it is within their own capabilities to make the choice to stop the addiction. Until that awareness is completely understood and established as belief, nothing can be done, long term, to change the consequences that these situations create.

Just as it is true to effectively treat addictions, becoming aware of and accepting responsibility for the events, conditions, and circumstances in each and every area of YOUR life, and where you find yourself right now, is the first step in learning to create, achieve and experience a life of Abundance and Happiness in your future.

If you are personally experiencing and "appear" stuck in ANY area of your life, it is because YOU are either consciously or unconsciously creating the situation and will remain in that situation until you begin accepting responsibility. Nothing will change until we accept personal responsibility for our choices and actions.

To effectively grasp the fact that you are

responsible for WHATEVER outcomes that you are currently experiencing in life, it is necessary to look beyond the physical outcomes that "appear" as reality, and develop an awareness of how it is that these physical outcomes are derived.

Just as it is necessary for people that are involved in drug abuse or alcoholism to recognize that they are at cause, it is necessary for you to develop the AWARENESS NECESSARY that YOU are at cause for remaining stuck in these conditions you're experiencing if you are to ever discover the true power that you possess to change them.

Until you discover, absorb, and accept this undeniable fact, until you develop the willingness and ability to be completely and brutally honest with yourself, replacing the creature of circumstance mentality and eliminating the self-pity and self-deception, or blaming others for your condition that will you will begin to recognize, own, initiate and escalate your "true" personal power.

We have grown up thinking that certain aspects of life are beyond our control. In order to change those restrictive beliefs it is necessary to expand our current level of awareness and develop the awareness that other possibilities exist in order that a new belief can be established.

By developing a basic understanding of the incredible personal power that we have within us then we will begin to understand how it is that we are the true architects of our destiny and will enable us to take a giant step forward in understanding that accepting responsibility is an essential first step in the process of transforming your current and future outcomes.

By expanding and developing your awareness in these areas we will have made tremendous progress in developing a much deeper and extremely self empowering understanding of your LIMITLESS capability, which will open additional doors enabling and empowering you to begin taking the steps necessary to begin changing the undesirable outcomes that you are currently experiencing in ANY area of your life. Through this newfound awareness it will become very clear to you the necessity of accepting responsibility for where you currently find yourself, getting rid of the victim mentality and learning to instead begin to consciously create the results you desire to experience. the areas that you currently feel powerless and "perceive" as impossible to change. By developing this new awareness it will be much easier for you to begin the process of developing the beliefs that are required to change them, and begin to attract and create a life of limitless abundance and happiness.

Once you realized how your thoughts, beliefs and emotions are determining the outcomes that you experience in your day to day life, you can begin to take a conscious



approach to discarding the beliefs that are creating that which you consciously claim that you don't want, and begin developing new thoughts and beliefs that will better serve you in fulfilling your desires.

By familiarizing yourself with these truths you can then begin to see how accepting responsibility for what your life is currently producing, will allow and empower you to begin correcting the undesirable events, conditions, and circumstances that have previously left you feeling like a victim of circumstance, and allow, empower and enable you to begin to take correct and effective steps OF ACTION that will allow you to begin to experience the life that you are capable of achieving and were created to enjoy. By consistently applying this newfound awareness in your day to day life, you will begin to experience a sense of freedom, absent fear, anxiety, and worry that you never before even realized existed.

By taking the first step of accepting responsibility for your outcomes, and becoming aware of your true unlimited potential, you will begin to know and experience the incredible life changing power provided to you by the Source of all that is. A power which allows you to become a conscious creator of circumstance rather than an unconscious victim of circumstance.

ACCEPTING RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR CIRCUMSTANCES WE ARE UNLEASHING THE INCREDIBLE POWER THAT IS WITHIN US

By becoming aware of and recognizing and wowning our personal power we will be able to take control of the outcomes of our life. You will begin the creation process and experiencing a life of unconditional love and acceptance of yourself, joy, fulfillment, Inner Peace and the incredible knowledge of how to enrich your life.

Regardless of what you may currently believe with respect to your outcomes in life, YOU are responsible. Ignoring and remaining unaware of this fact won't change the fact that it's true. Your perception of truth will continue to provide you with outcomes based on "Whatever you believe." Accepting responsibility and expanding that truth, and discovering your limitless capabilities will prove to be the most freeing and self empowering decision you could ever make.

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF, YOU HAVE