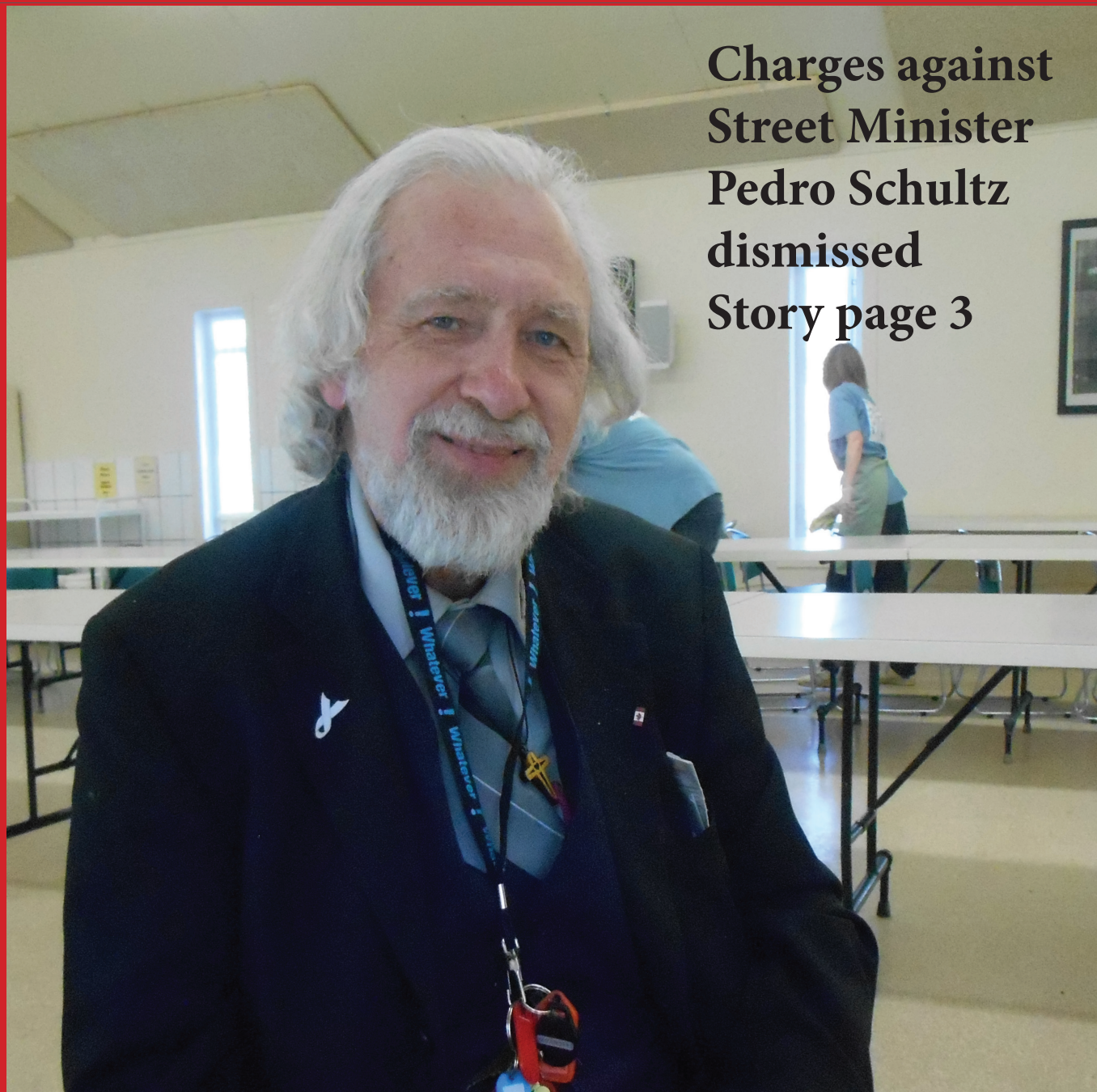


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**Charges against
Street Minister
Pedro Schultz
dismissed
Story page 3**

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I Love Fall

By Joanne Benger

Spring, summer, winter, fall.

I love fall most of all!

Fall is upon us and begins with September, International Square Dancing Month as well as National Sewing Month as we end our summer activities. The year is getting older and with only three months to go, we have both Arthritis Awareness Month and World Alzheimer's Awareness Month.

We begin with September 1, which is Random Acts of Kindness Day in New Zealand. In a world that seems to grow harsher each day, we really need delightful, surprising acts of kindness from strangers even if we don't deserve it. Be kind to all strangers today just because.

September 2, the first Monday in September, is Labour Day in both Canada and the US. It is a day of rest for all labourers so do no work today.

September 11 is US Patriot Day, and what's more American than apple pie?

This month Friday the 13th and Full Moon occur on the same day so beware. Friday is an unlucky day to begin a journey or visit a doctor. Full Moon is an unlucky time to have surgery and you'll become a lunatic if you sleep in the light of the Full Moon. 13 is a symbol for death in Tarot cards and if 13 people sit down to dine together, one will die within a year.

Grandparents Day is celebrated on September 13th. Celebrate with caution this year.

September 16 is Mexico Independence Day. Enjoy tacos and tortillas and all things Mexican.

National Aging Awareness Day follows on September 18th. We'll all get old if we don't die young, so honour those who have achieved longevity as we hope to one day.

September 19 is Talk Like a Pirate Day. The great Blackbeard said, "Diamonds ain't no good when you're dead." And "Only the devil knows where I buried my treasure."

September 19 is National Day of Peace. The Canadian government hopes to grow our population by 340,000 by 2020 and many of those new Canadians will come seeking peace. Welcome to Canada. Welcome to peace.

September 21 is Armenian Independence Day. Cotton and grapes are among their main exports so wear cotton and drink wine today.

September 13 is officially the first day of fall.

September 29 is Argentina's Inventors Day to honour Laszlo Biro, who invented the Bic pen. 14 million Bic Cristal pens are sold worldwide.

September 29 is Jewish New Year's Eve. Apples dipped in honey are eaten to symbolize a happy year ahead.

September 30 is Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, which is welcomed with the blowing of a ram's horn. Celebrations will last ten days.

The last Monday in September, September 30, is National Coffee Day. Worried about caffeine? The darker the roast, the lower the caffeine count and a cup of instant coffee contains half the caffeine of a cup of filtered coffee so enjoy a guilt free cup as new research indicates drinking coffee may delay the onset of both diabetes and Alzheimer's.

Police escort street pastor to hospital

By Pedro Schultz

Street Pastor Pedro Schultz was escorted to the Grey Nuns Hospital by the police following the incident at The Royal Alexandra hospital on July 15. He was told that he was not allowed to go to any health care facility in Alberta unless he was accompanied by the police. When he was admitted at the Grey Nuns Hospital he was placed in the executive suite so he had his own private bathroom. A police officer was stationed outside to make sure he 'didn't shoot anyone'. Schultz is still in hospital but has been moved onto the ward, and finds it very lonely as he has had very few visitors.

THE VIEWS PRESENTED ARE THOSE OF THE CONTRIBUTORS.

Charges against street minister dropped

By Linda Dumont

At Edmonton Provincial Court on Tuesday, August 6, charges against Street Pastor Pedro Schultz following an incident on July 15, were dismissed. On the pink slip Schultz had been issued by the police, the charges read – “On or about the 15 day of July, 2019 at or near Edmonton, Alberta, did unlawfully and wilfully obstruct Kayla Tiffany Wyntjes, a Peace Officer, in the execution of her duty contrary to second 129 (A) of the criminal code of Canada.”

On the day in question, Schultz was troubled by an incident he witnessed at the Royal Alexandra Hospital that he saw as use of unnecessary force by police officers in the execution of their duty. Schultz said, “I was charged with obstruction of justice. On July 15 I was up at 5 a.m. and walked to the Royal Alexandra Hospital seeking medical help. In the waiting room of emergency, I started writing down my problem. I saw a uniformed officer talking to a young man about 20 years old. I then saw four uniformed officers beating him up. He was resisting and squealing like a stuck pig for about 20 minutes. I don’t remember exactly what I did, but I objected. One officer said, ‘You’re just like him. He exposed himself and you’re defending him.’ Another officer said, ‘I was in the army and they taught us it’s always three on one so you don’t get hurt.’

“The police told me to roll on my stomach and they handcuffed my hands behind my back. They took me and the young man in the back seat of the police car. The young man sitting beside me said he was

Jesus Christ so I knew he was mentally deficient. After they put me in the back of the peace officer’s car I complained that the handcuffs were too tight and asked them to loosen them. They refused. They drove me to Sparling Lodge (where Pedro lives) and dropped me off so I didn’t get any medical treatment.”

At the court house, Schultz presented a letter from Covenant Health to duty counsel, as well as letters of reference from the pastor of his church and from the Mission Hall where he volunteers.

The letter from covenant health stated: *Pastor Schultz is currently an in-patient at the Grey Nuns hospital for a manic episode. He has a 30 year history of Bipolar Disorder and I have treated him for many of these years. He has prolonged depression and severe manias which are relatively treatment resistant.*

On July 15 the day he was charged, he went to the Royal Alexandra Hospital on two occasions, at 5 a.m. and then 10 a.m. on the same day. He was seeking help in a manic state.

During the 5 a.m. visit he had witnessed Security officers ‘taking down’ a disruptive patient and being in a manic state and of religious demeanour, (he has been a street pastor in the Inner City for 30 years) he went to rescue the patient from security. This led to his charge of interference of a peace officer. The officer failed to realize he was in a manic state. He was actually driven back to his Sparling Lodge in the inner city before any physician could see him in the ER.

The staff were very concerned about his

mental state and called his brother, Harvey, to take him back to the Royal Alex ER.

At 10 a.m. he did see a physician in the RAH ER and they contacted me for advice. Although he was later discharged home on July 22nd, 2019, he was returned to the ER at the Grey Nuns hospital by Police under a Form 10 and was admitted about this charge. Had he not been in a Manic state he would have had the judgement not to interfere with the security staff.

I hope by laying out these facts that the court will have a better understanding of why this occurred and treat Mr. Schultz with compassion. Yours sincerely, Jan Banasch, B.S, B.M. B. Med. Sci. FRCP (CO Consulting /physician.

Schultz is well known on the streets of the inner city where he has many street friends. He also has helped many whom he calls his street family.

This is not the first time that Schultz has run into problems involving a peace officer, while attempting to help a person in need. In 2008, he was charged with using his car as a weapon. He was very concerned about the homeless people camping on the empty lot behind the Bissell Centre, and when he heard the police had come to remove them, drove onto the lot to help. When he braked, his car skidded on the wet grass and hit a peace officer, throwing him up onto the hood. Although he did not have to serve time for the incident, his drivers’ license was revoked and he was told, ‘You will never drive again.’

Schultz continues to do what he can to help others. Over the past 30 years he has taken more than 2000 photos of homeless people. He sits in a local drop in, and people come to him to get photos of themselves. He also carries literature and Bibles to give away, as well as fruit and water for those on the street.

The scriptures says, “My strength in made perfect in weakness.” And Schultz is a great example of just what one person, himself facing severe challenges due to his illness, is able to accomplish.

Left: A photo of homeless people taken by Pedro Schultz



God turned off the bathroom light

By John Zapantis

Photo by Theresa Walsh Cooke

People who've claimed to have experienced the paranormal are often cast aside as crazy, (out of their minds) and sadly a disclaimer is the call made by those, who doubt their strange experiences. I, at one time, will honestly admit was in that category of disbelievers, but when I finally experienced my first paranormal experience that way of doubtful thinking soon was changed. In fact, I've experienced at least a dozen strange encounters with the unknown, some that I've written about in previous issues of the Alberta Street News.

This one in particular, happened in May of this year, some time at around 6:30 p.m. when I happened to be entering my girlfriend's apartment suite, checking up on her, and volunteering to clean up her pad and wash her dishes.

She wasn't in her suite when I arrived, and thinking that she had stepped out of her place to go out on the town for a fun night of drinking told me that I'd better turn on the kitchen light as well as her bathroom light that was situated adjacent to her bedroom. I immediately went over to her bathroom to turn on the light and then went over to her kitchen stove to turn on that light, creating a lit up balance that would highlight the essential details of the whole interior of her living space.

When my girlfriend drinks one to many, at times she's been known to take some pretty hard falls, whether it was getting out of bed in the middle of the night without any lights on to guide her safely to the bathroom, or even coming into her apartment and stumbling over an object in her living room, when the lights weren't turned on right away.

Happy and content at the thought of safeguarding her from the danger of an accident, I went over to her kitchen sink to start tackling her pyramid of dishes that stood so obvious in her kitchen sink. While starting to wash them, I was hoping I could surprise her by completing the task prior to her arriving to her suite.

No more then one minute had gone by, when I suddenly felt the presence of something that I felt was observing me, while I was trying to wash that heaping pile of dirty dishes. The first thing that came to mind was the strange thought of John Walker's ghost making a visitation to antagonize me from continuing on to finish those dishes for Theresa. I remember her sharing numerous stories about his overdosing one night on a mix of pills and alcohol while he had slept with her one evening some nine years ago. She attempted to revive him from sleep, but he had passed away. That devastated her mentally and emotionally.

She'd often describe John as a young at heart man with a boyish charm and striking good looks and a passion he had for her like no other! This would have me questioning my credibility with Theresa as she'd often assure me that I loved her like no other and I needn't worry about losing her love over her previous spouse, whom she was now completely over.

Then I theorized at that moment, while reflecting on all the things that I've done with Theresa and the most obvious of intimate moments with her in that suite that just maybe this restless spirit of John Walker was trying to drive me away by scaring me away from Theresa's suite. Maybe he wanted to win her love over again by being present in the spirit, and having his presence nurtured whenever Theresa was to bring up John Walker's memory to others whenever guests would come over in the future.

That thought soon left me, when I suddenly heard the living room door handle moving back and forth. I realized that Theresa was now coming through the entrance. I then acknowledged her by telling her that I had opened up her bathroom light and stove light to help guide her around in her suite to prevent her from having any falls, thinking that she was probably on the town for the night of partying and drinking, but to no avail. She was as sober as a rock and told me she had just stepped outside briefly to do some shopping at the nearby local grocery store in her neighbourhood.

I then decided on turning off the stove light and just when I was on my way to the bathroom to turn off the bathroom light, I noticed, to my amazement, that the bathroom light was no longer on. Just for assurance and knowing that I had actually turned that light on and I wasn't imagining this having happened, I looked to see if the light switch was in a down position. I was sure then that the paranormal had taken over the light switch, for the light switch was in the down position as opposed to when I had turned it on in the up position earlier, just before heading off to the kitchen to do Theresa's dishes.

I immediately yelled out to Theresa in an excited tone, always thrilled by the presence of the paranormal, as I sounded off to Theresa saying loudly, "Theresa I turned on your bathroom light earlier and when I just returned later to turn it off your light was off and the switch was in the down position."

Shocked, she replied loudly "You're kidding?"

I had two theories for her, speculating maybe the Ghost of John Walker was trying to scare me away from her by turning off the light switch, in defiance of our loving relationship. She just broke out in a wild laughter and said, "No need to worry. It wasn't John. He's been dead for nine years now. I'll always love you, cause you always do so much for me to show your love for me."

Then one evening about a week later, my girlfriend was going to be leaving her suite to do some drinking, so I decided to do the same thing, switching on the stove light along with the bedroom light as a way of lighting up the interior of her suite to



Continued on page 7

Plastic, plastic everywhere...

By Timothy Wild

Over the spring and summer considerable media attention was paid to single-use plastics. Some of the coverage was related to the “dumping” of these items on the shores of countries, such as the Philippines and Malaysia. Other stories were focussed on the inability of domestic operators to recycle much of this low-grade plastic. Nevertheless, domestic or internationally, both themes point to the complete and utter absurdity of our increasing, yet environmentally damaging, reliance on plastics as a single use and disposable commodity.

I will admit to feeling guilt when it comes to the single use of plastic items. In fact, much of the food I purchase and consume involves at least some use of plastic in the container and / or the wrapping of the product. I do try to use cloth shopping bags to partially reduce my use of plastic, but I don't really have much of a choice when it comes to the actual packaging and containment of items. And, ironically, I will not have much of choice when I continue to be given the “choice” to recycle.

For a while, to salve my conscience, I paid homage to the quasi-sacred triangular recycling symbol, accompanied by a number, embossed upon a variety of plastic items, together with other products, such as Styrofoam. I made a daily visit to the blue box shrine. I did believe that because this symbol was displayed on the items that they could and would be recycled. While certainly not ideal, I did have faith that recycling was an important element in the 4R credo of reduce, reuse, recycle and reforest. Sure, there would be the additional input of energy and production in cleaning the items and repurposing them into other objects. But I was doing my small part to promote an element of sustainability, right relationship, and environmental and inter-generational stewardship. I actually felt that I was doing the right thing. But I was wrong.

In many ways the act of recycling, and our unquestioning worship of – and comfort in – the recycling symbol provides an undeniable sop to our conscience. It may help pass the costs of environmental

degradation from post-industrial capitalist countries to proto-capitalist countries (such as the Philippines and Malaysia) but, ultimately, it does not help preserve our collective existence in our collective home. According to the CBC, for example, Canadians only recycle 11% of the plastics we use. Additionally, again from the CBC, the plastics shipped beyond our borders were “far too contaminated and of insufficient value of legitimate recyclers in Malaysia to take in.” And we all know that recycling facilities in Calgary, for example, will not accept Styrofoam products. Despite this, we still believe (hope?) that we can recycle our way to sustainability.

Canadians only recycle 11% of the plastics we use.

This is not surprising. All our opinions come from somewhere. Marx and Engels wrote that “the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas.” The ideas of the upper-classes and other powerful interests serve to create a framework of “common sense” that guides social, political and economic life. It provides a subjective set of rules that maintain and expand the economic interests of the dominant classes. I think that this is particularly true when it comes to environmentalism and green politics. Short-term profits trump social justice, human rights and environmental integrity. Even so called “green politicians” are increasingly positioning themselves as “economically conservative and fiscally liberal”... just like everyone else. The prevailing interests suggest that green market driven initiatives – such as recycling and the out-sourcing of domestic dross – are the solution and not the problem. This is insane. Yet recycling is viewed as “common sense”, even young folk prioritize the need to recycle as opposed to actively reduce both production and consumption. The hegemonic notions inherent in individual acts of recycling help maintain entrenched privilege and maintenance of profit...at any cost.

Now I am not suggesting that I should not attempt to recycle more. I also believe that I should make informed and ethical choices as a consumer. I have my individual part to play. But I can only do so much as one person. We sorely need a collective response and what is re-

ally needed is transformative policy and legislation, not simply good will, choice and individualism. We also need to make significant changes quickly and not just tinker around the edges.

There has been some attention paid to plastic items, particularly plastic bags. I have noticed some companies charging for bags – perhaps for environmental reasons or, perhaps, to pass on the costs of the bags themselves onto the consumer (similar to the so-called convenience of self-checkouts). Also, with the expected October election, both the New Democrats and Justin Trudeau's vanity project (sometimes known as the Liberal Party of Canada) have indicated that they will ban plastic bags, straws and the like by 2022 and 2021 respectively.

This is a start, and is a reflection of growing policy interest, but it is not enough. We need to get beyond the notion that we can “recycle” our way to sustainability and right relationship, globally, locally, inter-generationally with Mother Earth. But in order to do this, we must adopt some measure of equity and redistributive justice. We need to challenge neo-colonialism and the power of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. We cannot expect countries in the proto-capitalist world simply to hold off economic growth in order to pay the price for our unsustainable economies and attendant lifestyle. Some form of global compensation must be a factor. Therefore, we need a fundamental reordering of our social and economic relations of production.

In order for this to happen there has to be more attention paid to globalism, post-colonialism and the extension of social and economic rights of citizenship. There also needs to be greater enforcement of the existing environmental protocols. Basically, however, what is needed is for us to act in solidarity as global community as opposed to the individual acts of capitalist consumer. We cannot recycle our way out of this eco-economic crisis. We need collective action and we need it now.

Below - plastic in the ocean



Something rotten in Ottawa

By Allan Sheppard



I would have to point out in the strongest terms the autocracy of the Liberal structure and the cowardice of its members. I have never seen in all my examination of politics so degrading a spectacle as that of all these Liberals turning their coats in unison with their Chief, when they saw the chance to take power."

I offer those words as a fair assessment of the current federal Liberal government and its "Chief" Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, amid the lingering SNC-Lavalin scandal and the fallout of the recently delivered report by the federal ethics commissioner. Literalists might substitute "hold onto power" for "take power," but why quibble? The gist is the same.

According to the commissioner, Trudeau violated Canada's Conflict of Interest Act by "knowingly (seeking) to influence (Jody Wilson-Raybould (then Minister of Justice and Attorney General) both directly and through the actions of his agents," to have her director of public prosecutions reverse a decision not to grant SNC-Lavalin a deferred prosecution agreement (DPA) that would have withdrawn criminal charges of bribery and corruption against the Montreal-based engineering firm. If convicted, the firm would have been barred from federal contracts for ten years; under a DPA, it would have faced potentially substantial fines instead.

The ethics commissioner does not have the final word on the matter. His report has been embraced and championed by political opponents of the government and its leader and by significant members of our national commentariat. Some have argued that Trudeau's behaviour amounts to obstruction of justice, a criminal offence, and that

he should be so charged. Whether to pursue that option or not is now under consideration by the RCMP, which may refer its findings to the director of public prosecutions and the current attorney general. Given the pending federal election at the end of October that decision will ultimately be made by whoever takes power afterward.

Not everyone outside the Trudeau Liberal orbit agrees. Some, arguing without the passion of Trudeau's opponents, advise caution and further analysis. Errol Mendes, a professor of constitutional and international law and president of the International Commission of Jurists, Canada, suggests in the *Toronto Star* (16 August 2019) the commissioner's report may be flawed in that it goes beyond the mandate of the office and fails to consider adequately the public interest as a mitigating factor in the prime minister's favour.

The Conflict of Interest Act deals with and sanctions self-interested actions aiming at personal gain; it does not deal with or sanction actions undertaken in the public interest. Elected politicians and serving ministers inevitably act as lobbyists and advocates for constituents and stakeholders with cases to make to government; that is arguably their main (though far from only) job. Providing such service to constituents and citizens can be seen as self-interested, presuming that the politician wants to be re-elected; if properly performed, the public interest in such service clearly outweighs any personal interest that might be involved as well.

Politicians always claim to be acting in the public interest, even when the stench of inappropriate self-interest permeates their words. Ultimately, it is up to voters to assert an acceptable balance between actions that may be in the public interest and those that are not. That will certainly be the case for us, as the pending election will come and go before any inquiry or legal process could be begun, let alone completed.

And that is not a reassuring option. The current leader of our neighbour to the south has built his career and now his presidency on the unabashed, blatant pursuit of self-interest. The public interest enters into the discourse only to the extent that Mr. Trump assumes that his self-interest and the public interest are the same. If there is any ambiguity in that, his supporters seem not to see it. None of our parties has managed so far to clone the Trumpian persona as leader, but Trumpian rhetoric, tactics, and tropes subvert our political discourse. Politics has become less about governance than power; less about ideas and ideals than agendas; less about reasoning together in the public inter-

est for the common good and more about building walls, literally and figuratively and damn the consequences, or those who disagree.

And that is the sticking point for me. I cannot buy Justin Trudeau's public-interest argument as he has made it: that his sole purpose is to protect the 9,000 Canadians who could lose their jobs if SNC-Lavalin chooses to move or were forced into bankruptcy by a criminal conviction that would deny the company new work in Canada. He has never explained convincingly how that would happen. The work would still have to be done by others, if SNC-Lavalin were no longer in the running; workers might lose their jobs, but others would likely be available with other firms. Surely there are other Canadian firms capable of doing the work, without resorting to serial bribery and corruption to accomplish it or requiring our governments and us to condone them. Trudeau also talks of protecting pensions, which could be a concern, if SNC-Lavalin fails. But surely there are ways other than propping up a morally and ethically bankrupt corporation to achieve that goal. Trudeau talks about protecting Canadian shareholders. They, in particular, get no sympathy from me. Investing is inherently risky; investing in a corporation that has a history of corruption around the world is indefensible.

Mr. Trudeau says protecting Canadian jobs is his job.

Humbug.

The prime minister and his party are facing a challenge to their—and our—integrity far more urgently than to the continued existence of jobs that will be done by someone, somewhere anyway. They argue, in effect, that SNC-Lavalin is too big or too important to fail. At best, they are prepared to hold their noses and do the pragmatic thing, if not the right thing. At worst, they ask us to do the same, for the good of the country, if not for our self-respect.

I cannot do that.

I hold no hope for the likely successors to negative fallout from this affair on the Trudeau government: Conservative leader Elliott Trudeau, Justin's father and predecessor as prime minister, in 1963, when he was a member of the New Democratic Party. In 1965, he turned his own coat and joined the Liberals of Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson, as a gesture of pragmatic realpolitik, and embarked on an illustrious career that produced a mixed bag of achievements and failures.

One has to ask: Like father, like son?

I don't have an answer yet. But I'm thinking on it.

The Devastating Effects of Verbal Abuse

By Maria B.

I truly believe that when we expose the truth of our history of abuse and validate the pain that we have gone through we are able to recognize the strength within us. We have faced incredible trials and tribulations, we have gone through incredible emotional storms that have knocked us to our knees and we have surfaced not only as survivors but divine warriors that deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.

One abuse that is not given the recognition that it deserves is "Verbal Abuse". The detrimental effects that this abuse has on people attacks the very core of a person, it denigrates the person. Allowing someone to devalue us through the words they utter or affixing labels on us, is not only disrespectful but it is up to us to stand strong, stop the abuse and demand that we are treated with respect.

Growing up in a home where uttering insults to innocent children is a way of parenting it is truly dehumanizing. The imprints made will stay with them for the rest of their lives. For "some" caregivers, their children become their source of income, their targets for their anger, targets for unreachable and inhuman expectations, targets to denigrate by calling them

horrible names, hurting them and terrorizing them in any way or form in order to gain complete control over them.

Picture the strength of the blow from an adult against an innocent child; picture the impact of every demeaning name coming from the caregivers which are equally as damaging. Every blow, every word is a true representation of cowardice and malice that it took to be able to promulgate those acts. The fact is that a single occurrence is enough to cause tremendous physical or/and emotional damage.

Parenting is a privilege not a "right". And children deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.

As far as I know there are two kinds of verbal abuse: Direct Insulting: Being called insulting names, yelling, constant criticism, put downs, etc. These serve to humiliate, to invalidate and to denigrate. And glossed as "teasing/joking"; where humiliating, denigrating names and put downs are made as jokes choosing a target. Obviously, people are going to react and then they are accused of being too "sensitive" or not being able to "take a joke" For a child growing up this kind of environment is crazy making and for caregivers to use such an insidious form of entertainment lacks any kind of respect for the feelings of an innocent child.

The fact is that every distorted view

of the abusive parent along with every denigrating word that was put as a label on the child serves as a mirror and innocent children grow up viewing themselves as flawed, worthless, inadequate, with a very poor image of themselves and carrying with them the feelings of shame, guilt and blame. Many diseases are known to be stress related including depression and heart disease. As for myself, I became the transparency of my parents striving not to repeat the same mistakes but unfortunately and unknowingly I held on to the disconnection, the fear, the belief that I was flawed, the anger, guilt and shame, not realizing that the impact of my past incubated me in a broken, wounded and very vulnerable state just like the child I was once upon a time.

We grow up hollow inside, our neediness becomes overwhelming and even if it doesn't hinder every aspect of our life, it does restrict our capacity to give and to love. It is hard to give something that you never received. Our caregivers failed to nurture us, to give us a sense of belonging, to give us a sense of connectedness, they failed to protect us and most importantly they failed to treat us as worthy human beings and provide us with unconditional love and acceptance.

Parenting is a privilege not a "right". And children deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. Children are our future and we are doing so little to protect them. We must stand and stop the abuse of children.

God turned off the light

Continued from page 4

prevent her from having any falls when entering the suite later after a night of drinking at the bar. Just as she was about to go out that door, I suggested that I'd drive her to the bar, but first had to use her bathroom before we left her suite.

When I returned to the bathroom, thinking that her bathroom light was still on, I again noticed that strange occurrence again. The bathroom light was shut off. The paranormal had returned, for the second time in two weeks.

Then it dawned on me and I finally started to see the light as to why this had happened and especially for the second

time in two weeks. Well, I hadn't been praying for health and happiness for the last six months. My girlfriend during that period had been experiencing some severe health issues, previous falls from drinking and a few hospital stays because of those wild tumbles. The confusion in having to monitor my girlfriend's deteriorating health would often distract me from constantly asking for God's guidance and praying for his support I was inevitably distracted by this six month series of bad events.

I then told Theresa that the culprit behind the lights going off in the bathroom was the artful work of the higher power, who was reminding me to get back into prayer and to start praising him for his guidance for in the bible it often empha-

sizes that God is a jealous God and needs praise for his spiritual guidance and support for he'll never forsake us when we do.

He was reminding me that the lights will never be turned off and that he'll continue to bring us the light when we know he's with us every step of the way and to never forget him and that the light will always stay on for as long as we love him in our hearts.

So there's no mystery as to why the light switch was turned down and being that this was God's will, we the believers out there realize that God works in mysterious ways and it was just another way for the higher power to bring some light to the subject!

Honouring 41 years of marriage



By Maria B.

One word encases what this marriage it has meant for me: My commitment to you allows me to see your sole presence as an **INCREDIBLE HUMAN BEING**

Not because I am living a delusion and thinking that you are perfect, because no

one is perfect but what it means is that the picture of you I have in my heart, it is a reception right from your unique and divine being. It has been 41 years that we have been together and during that time, when we have crossed difficult times, it has helped to be reminded of what kind of foundation we have been able to set in this relationship that has been able to withstand the storms of life.

Firstly, I have chosen to honour our marriage and our relationship in every way.

I have chosen to make the kind of commitment to this marriage, where bolting out is out of the question, no threats of leaving, no threats of giving up.

My commitment to you and this marriage is forever and forever has no end.

I have chosen to trust you and in times of doubts, I have chosen to express my doubts to give you the opportunity to either confirm or explain if my doubts are wrong.

I have chosen to respect you in every way in your presence and in your absence.

My respect includes the chosen of words that convey my respect for you as a husband.

I have chosen the tone of my words to confirm my respect for you as a husband.

How I have treated you, admired you. And love you.

With no doubt, I deserve the same from you.

We must rise in togetherness and build the bridges that keep us connected and strong.

The Double Edged Sword by Angelique Branston

Sticks and stones may break my bones
But words will never hurt me
Or so the saying goes,
But it is the sting of malice that scars the soul
The lashings of words meant to tear you down and belittle you
Cut far deeper than anything a stone can do.
The pain of a beating fades with the bruises and wounds
But words flung through the air that beat upon your heart can stay and fester for a life time.
You must learn to be still in the storm
To let it pass through you, and over you bending like a reed in the wind
And when it has passed
And you have turned and watched the storm howl itself out
The words and their barbs fall useless around you.
You do not have to take into yourself that poison bred through another's tortured soul
The wake of destruction all around.
Unscathed
You can return hatred with love
(For nothing good comes from fighting fire with fire, the evil that you can spew from your mouth to harm the other splatters upon you and oozes into your being. Contaminating
The very essence of who you are.)

You can return hatred with love
For like an animal that bites at the hand that dares to move and set the injured limb
So, too, does the soul that has been hurt
Bite and rip at you
The words of compassion sting just as much as salt rubbed into a wound.
But they lift up the one out of the mire
Out of the pain and anguish
And perhaps in time they can let the poison fade away, (like dripping white paint into black paint, it takes much more white paint to conquer the black and there are many shades of grey in between) so too do words meant to edify wash away the words of death and destruction.
Slowly and with much patience.
For there are many times a baby attempts to stand alone,
before they have accomplished their task.
Many times of falling down before standing proud and triumphant for their first time
grin spread from ear to ear.
So sticks and stones may break my bones
And words can only hurt you if you devour them.
Words are the double edged sword
They can decimate you, or bring you peace.

Raising awareness to conserve salt marsh

Story and photos by Sharon Austin

On July 13, 2019, ASN Editor Linda Dumont her grandson Khayman Giroux participated in the Musquash Paddle, a 10 km canoe trip down the beautiful Musquash Estuary in New Brunswick. Sharon Austin, ASN staff writer and Donald Austin also enjoyed the paddle. Donald Austin is the head of "The Friends of Musquash" made up of a group of local folk who were instrumental in helping to have the Musquash Estuary declared a Marine Protected Area in 2006. The Musquash Paddle

is an event held every year for canoe and kayak paddlers to bring awareness to the importance of protecting the salt water marsh. The Musquash Estuary is unique along the

Fundy Coast as a pristine salt water marsh that supports a wide variety of plants and wildlife. It is a zone where freshwater river ecosystems and saltwater maritime ecosystems meet and mix. Estuaries such as this provide refuge for many types of water fowl and are very important as a nursery habitat for young fish.

This year, more than 50 canoes and kayaks joined us as we meandered down the winding river towards the ocean. The tide was with us and helped to pull us along as we paddled. We saw the vast salt water marsh filled with tall marsh grass that is home to hundreds of mallard ducks.

Farther down the river we glided past the huge rusted hull of a world war two troop carrier. Nearby the shipwreck of an ancient rum runner vessel used during Prohibition could be seen. At the 6km point at Five Fathom Hole we definitely saw a change in the river. The air was colder and smelled of the salt sea and the river was rougher and moving faster. Anyone who didn't want to complete the whole 10km trip pulled out at the Five Fathom Hole Wharf as we did. Those who were more adventurous travelled the 4km farther across the open ocean to Black Beach where a barbeque was held hosted by the New Brunswick Conservation Council. Black Beach is aptly named for its black sand derived from graphite deposits. Black Beach also has a 3.8km forested walking trail for those who enjoy hiking.



Left: People with canoes and kayaks waiting to start the canoe paddle

Right: Khayman Giroux and his grandmother editor Linda Dumont paddle down the estuary



Hitler's solution to homelessness

By Joanne Benger

As part of the International Network of Street Papers annual summit July 18 to 20, in Hanover Town Hall there was an exhibition entitled 'Homelessness Under 'national socialism' that commemorated the estimated 10,000 homeless people who died in German concentration camps. The exhibition was in German but translated into English by Nastassja Thomas.

Before I report on it I must share some German history. Adolf Hitler formed the National Socialist German Workers' Party (shortened to Nazi) of 1920. It grew slowly until the Great Depression brought that party mass support. In 1933 Adolf Hitler became Chancellor of Germany and the Reichstag gave him dictatorial powers. With the help of Himmler, Goebels, Goering and other Nazi leaders, he was able to crush all opposition and take control of all facets of German life. Adolf Hitler understood hate, power and mass psychology and he had mastered the deceitful strategy of the 'big lie'. His frenzied magnetic speeches led and controlled mass thinking of German people. This exhibition showed how Adolf Hitler manipulated the thinking of the average German with his Big Lie until the unacceptable seemed acceptable and even logical.

Traditionally local councils looked after the homeless, even those who weren't native to the area. Night shelters and hostels allowed itinerant workers and vagrants a few days of accommodation. Then the homeless person would have to move on to the next shelter. The homeless were referred to as beggars, vagrants, vagabonds, the itinerant poor, wanderers and people of no fixed abode. Begging and vagrancy were considered crimes and in the 19th century begging offences were the most common form of arrest. At the turn of the century the economy was good and the number of homeless people declined.

Then came the Great Depression. There were so many homeless people the government faced a financial crisis; this was solved by the Propagandry Ministry

under Joseph Goebbels in 1933 by making homeless people a target of Nazi prosecution. There was a large scale crackdown against beggars and vagabonds, who were now portrayed as sophisticated fraudsters living off the welfare system.

These sophisticated fraudsters were arrested and given short prison sentences. There weren't enough prisons so detention centres had to be temporarily opened. The public was kept informed with daily newspaper reports telling all about the centres. To start with they had titles like 'Bring an end to the Plague of Beggars', then the newspaper headlines escalated from 'Fighting the Work Shy Beggars' to 'The Liquidation of Vagabonds' and then 'investigation on the Worthiness of Welfare Claimants and Their Offspring. The first Concentration Camp for Beggars was opened near Meseritz on October 2, 1933.

Eugenics (rassian hygiene), the science of hereditary biology, now entered the picture. Eugenics defined social problems like homelessness as hereditary. The work shy antisocial element were an inferior class with inferior genes and must be irradiated because inferior and burdensome people and their sick offspring were a burden to the state.

The goal now was eliminate all inferior people once and for all to protect superior, healthy families. The argument was that whereas healthy German families had an average of two children, criminal marriages of the sub-humans produced an average of 4.4 children. If this were to continue the valued classes would be outnumbered by the feeble minded genetically inferior people in three generations. The result would be the extinction of superior families.

July 14, 1933 the 'Law of Prevention of Offspring with Hereditary Defects' was passed to eliminate sick and antisocial offspring of the inferior class. It was considered a 'charitable deed' and 'truly social act'.

Since the time of the German Empire, the Vagrancy Welfare Authority had given vagrants books where overnight stays and job applications were registered. Under

the Nazis, the books became compulsory identifications for the homeless, who were now being forced to live in particular 'Vagrant Streets'. If they were seen outside these areas, they would be sentenced to workhouses or given protective custody in a concentration camp.

In 1936 the SA Obersturmbann Fuhrer Aldrich Seilder began the 'National Association of Vagrancy Service' in Bavaria with a holding centre for men near Schongau and one for women in Birchofsried. Thousands of homeless people were admitted, sifted, classified and given work placements. Those who didn't cooperate were threatened with Dachau and 19 actually did go to Dachau. Soon the police used mass arrests to bring all remaining homeless people into concentration camps.

In concentration camps the work shy were identified with a black triangle and for a time the homeless were the biggest group of inmates in concentration camps.

An estimated 10,000 homeless died in concentration camps. A few of the homeless survived the concentration camps and were liberated by the allies. Then came the final indignity. Neither the East nor the West made reparation to the 'anti-socials'.

Typical Anti-Socials who ended up in concentration camps

Included in the exhibition were archival case histories of typical antisocials who were arrested and put in to the protective custody of concentration camps.

Antisocial men, who were arrested, were mainly beggars, vagrants and destitute alcoholics as well as a few men who had fallen behind in their child maintenance payments and some gypsies. Antisocial women tended to be of questionable virtue, have too many children or run disorderly houses. A typical antisocial woman was described in the 1939 book "Comparative Genetic Studies of Three Antisocial Families" written by Dr. (Phil and MD) Wolfgang Korr.

Widow A, whom I shall humanize with the name Annie, had applied for the German Mother's Cross of honour, which a social worker in Detmold declined to award, although Annie had lost a son to

the war. The social worker wrote 'the application made by widow A for the decoration of German Mother's Cross of Honour cannot be supported as it concerns the mother of a large antisocial family. ' Then she listed the reasons: 1. Annie's husband, Hans, is a trained miller but works as an umbrella maker and casual labourer. 2. Hans is a drinker and has had 19 convictions. 3. The family has moved around a lot as seen by the birthplaces of the children. They moved to Detmold recently. 4. Annie has a criminal record and she has had eight children. 5. The first three of Annie's children were born out of wedlock, which proves she had bad morals conduct 6. Of the five born within the marriage three are in reform school or other public accommodation which proves she has a disorderly household. 7. One married daughter already has two children and she and her husband conduct themselves in an antisocial manner. 8 Another daughter is married and has a large antisocial family. 9. A third daughter runs an orderly household but has had numerous convictions. 10. Her son is work shy and has a criminal record.

For these reasons antisocial Annie cannot receive the German Mother's Cross of Honour though her son was obviously good enough to die for Germany.

A second vagrant was described in the Vagrancy Welfare Authority search in Hanover in October 1933. Wilhelm Austin, 49, frequented hospitals because of asthma, chronic bronchitis and suspected TB. He had no vagrancy registration book and he refused to cooperate with Hanover officials. when seeking medical help in Hanover he concealed the fact that he got a monthly sickness benefit from the city of Lubeck and he wouldn't discuss where and when he had previous medical treatment. Wilhelm was charged with being an antisocial for attempted or actual fraud and vagrancy and sent to protective custody.

The Duisberg CIUD reported on Philip, a 62 year old casual labourer who had worked at gardening and snow shovelling, while sleeping mostly outdoors for three years. In February 1943, Phillip was arrested in the early hours of he morning at the Duisberg train station. He was regarded as a 'thoroughly work shy person' who 'preferred the life of idleness' and sent to Dachau April, 1943. His fate is unknown.

According the Dusseldorf State Archive,

a 52 year old gardener, Wilhelm P. was taken into custody at Duisberg, April, 1938, declared a 'work adverse vagabond and a typical vagrant' and released. He came before the court in Hagen in November, 1942 and was sentenced to six weeks in custody. In January 1943 the CID imposed protective custody on Wilhelm and on February 24 he was sent to Sachsenhausen concentration camp where he died ten days later.

The Duisburg Health Authority reported in September, 1941 that Karoline, a 19 year old girl, was taken into protective custody because she kept running away from home and living on the street for weeks on end. 'She sought male acquaintances' and 'found shelter with soldiers'. Karoline was given a warning. Two months later she was again taken into protective custody as an antisocial and deported to Auschwitz by way of Ravensbrück. Commandant Rudolf Hess reported her death in November, 1942.

Another antisocial lady who went the Ravensbrück- Auschwitz route was Gertrud, 37, of Düsseldorf, mother of four children. She had a breakdown in 1942 and neglected her children. They were put into a reform school temporarily. Gertrud had attended a special needs school and had no vocation so she became temporarily homeless. According to Düsseldorf Central State Archive, Gertrud got a protective custodial sentence in August 1941 and died in Auschwitz in July, 1942.

While viewing the exhibit, I thought of how fitting it is that memories of those marginalized people, who might have lived and died unknown, will live on forever in the archives, while their oppressors are forgotten.

Could it happen here?

As I studied the exhibition of 'German Homelessness under National Socialism'

I continually found myself asking the question, "Could it happen here?"

My conclusion was that we must not be complacent. Canada has a bad

history when it comes to human rights. The residential school, the internment of the Japanese and the Chinese head tax are among the atrocities that went unquestioned by the general population. Now we are very aware of fake news and fake science and many of us even question global warming and the safety of vaccinations. I like to think we would be smart enough to question any fake science that proved an identifiable group of people were so inferior they must be destroyed.

On the other hand we regularly hear of successful educated people who have been taken by cults and scams of charismatic leaders. March 15, 2019 we were told there are 200 far right radical groups that have been identified in Canada. None seem threatening at the moment but we had a few isolated incidents during our provincial election that one hopes were just the actions of lone, troubled individuals.

Even more troubling is the fact that in Edmonton between January and June of 2019 there were 1,900 homeless complaints. That is twice as many homeless complaints as were received in the same period a year ago from January to June 2018. Does this show that we Canadians have become less tolerant of homelessness? Have we already taken the first step?

Watch for trends. Study the news. May – Edmonton has 2000 plus homeless, 500 of them sleep outside – Boyle Street Reported. May – 10 homeless were removed from Dawson Park's tent city and placed in hotels while applying for housing. Mid July – seven of them had permanent housing. July – Conversion therapy was banned in St. Albert. July – a lady reports four policemen harassing a homeless man she bought lunch for. She went viral. July 10 – Spruce Grove Library had their first Drag King Story Hour with Earl Grey (born Simon Cox).

Below: Krakow, Auschwitz



Homeless on the streets of Edmonton

By Linda Dumont

Homelessness in Edmonton reached a peak in 2008. That was the year when Edmonton had a tent city spring up on the vacant lot behind the Bissell Centre. At first it was just a disorganized gathering of tents and makeshift shelters, but as it became apparent that the people were there to stay for a while, Johnny on the spots and a wash area was provided to meet their needs. The tent city was dispersed by police at the end of the summer and a high chain link fence erected around the lot to prevent campers from returning.

Prior to May, 2008, the Hope Mission Shelter closed the first of May and did not open again until fall, but the end of April, 2008, Alberta Street News writer Pedro Schultz and editor Linda Dumont held a protest, inviting others to join them sleeping on the lawn of City Hall. The protest lasted a week. After two days, Schultz went to the office of Mayor Mandel and brokered a deal that the city would keep the shelter open until the end of May. By the end of May, enough others were concerned so the shelter has remained open year round ever since.

The city had to address the problem of homelessness. It's now ten years since the City of Edmonton launched their ten year plan to end homelessness, and it is



obvious that the plan has not succeeded. Homelessness had been steadily increasing in Edmonton between 1999 and 2008 when it reached an all time high with the semi annual homeless count reporting more than 3000 Edmontonians without a home. Homeward Trust was started to address homelessness, including housing first, which simply means providing housing first before addressing addiction and other issues, and the semi annual Homeless Connect. Outreach workers work with homeless individuals in drop ins and agencies and organizations that provide supports and services to the homeless. More than half of the total budget of Homeward Trust goes into paying wages. Unfortunately, there is a lack of affordable housing, so the outreach workers may take weeks or months to house a homeless individual or may not be successful in securing housing at all.

Although the number of homeless Edmontonians dropped to a low of 1,712 in 2016 it has been increasing again with more than 2000 reported homeless in 2018. A look at the streets gives mute evidence that the ten year plan has not succeeded. There are homeless encampments throughout the inner city with tents and makeshift shelters from tarps draped over shopping carts on grassy areas and in vacant lots, and many more homeless living in the river valley and the ravines as well as scattered throughout the rest of the city. In addition to the visible homeless, there are many more couch

surfing or living in vehicles or in abandoned buildings, sheds, garages, and other hidden places. Statistics collected during the homeless count indicated that 61% of the homeless people were Indigenous, 44% were women and 14% identified as youth. Edmonton has the highest Indigenous population of any city in Canada, taking the lead over Winnipeg.

The semi annual Homeless Connect is a community inspired initiative providing free services to people experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless. It is held at Edmonton Shaw Conference Centre, with the next one taking place on Sunday October 6, 2019. Volunteers provide free dental care, eye examinations and glasses, haircuts and other services like getting your tax forms filled out. People can get free clothing, library books, and information on different supports and services that are available. They leave with a care package including shampoo, soap, tooth paste, razors, body lotion, socks and band aides.

As temperatures drop in Edmonton, service providers, agencies and community organizations across the city coordinate efforts to ensure the most vulnerable people are supported. Transportation, outreach, drop ins and basic needs services are coordinated and/or expanded to ensure everyone has a warm place to stay from November 1 to April 30. and the Boyle Street Community Services has a warming van that drives around and picks up people so they can get warmed up. When temperatures drop to below 20 degrees Celsius, the LRT station remains open overnight so people can sleep inside. There is also transportation provided to reach a warm safe place. If you see a person in need, you call 211 to have them picked up.



A dentist at work at Homeless Connect

Living outside

In July, there was an encampment of tents and make shift shelters and shopping carts dotting the grassy EPCOR lot at 95 Street and 106 Avenue.

The campers were packing up their belongings to move to another spot because they were given notice by the police to move on by 8 a.m. the next morning. In Edmonton it is illegal to sleep anywhere if you are homeless. You are constantly being harassed by peace officers to move on.

Laverne Mathaller

Laverne Mathaller had his shopping cart all loaded up. He had been on the EPCOR lot for about a week.

Mathaller lives on \$530 a month from Workman's Compensation.

He said, "They say there is help but there's not. I've been homeless for three years. Alberta Works (social services) has overlooked me. I'm not looking for hand-outs. I was badly hurt- broke both legs and both eyes- it took about seven years. They saved my legs but I had to train my legs to walk again.

I'm a pretty good guy. I did 90 days in the Remand Centre and got released and there was no help. I live outside, and sometimes stay at the Herb Jamieson Shelter. It's hard when you're broke. Now we've been told we can't stay here.

I have two meals a day. I was told I would be helped . the John Howard Society - they did me no good. They gave me so much information but every time I talk to someone it goes nowhere. Without a starting point you have nothing. All I need is a start. I hit one wall after another. I was told, 'You're not Indigenous so you can't get help' You lose everything - I tried to get a phone and clothes - these are the same clothes as when I got out of jail.

Mathaller was raised in Barrhead. He was very proud of his mother. He said, "My mom was a pretty famous lady. She worked to get the blinking lights at cross walks."



Ray Nairn

Ray Nairn said, "I've been camping on the EPCOR lot for a few days now. We're moving over behind the bottle depot. The peace officer said we had until 6, then three or four peace officers came and said as long as we move in by the trees we could stay. Now we have to leave by 8 a.m. I've been homeless on and off for about two months. I've been in and out of jail for the last few years. I shared a house with a buddy but he didn't pay the rent. He was spending his money on dope.

I'm from Nova Scotia, then lived in Calgary. I've been in the pen a few times, then out in the oil fields; that crashed and then back into jail. I had a car and everything for ten years. I dropped out of schooling in Grade 8 but in my first pen bit I got my GED. In my equivalency test my reading

level was past university. I like reading. I always have.

We were down by the river and the homeless count workers came so I'm on the list for Homeward Trust.

I get medical welfare. I don't like the shelters. It's gross. It stinks. You can't take anything with you. I had to stay at the Herb shelter for a while in winter. Last year I lived behind the Legion with my girl friend and her son. I go to The Mustard Seed and the Hope for bag lunches and to The Mission Hall, and the Breakfast Club for meals. I can also eat at the Boyle McCauley Health Centre on 95 street and 107 Avenue, but you have to have HIV or Hep C to eat there. I have Hep C. It's a good meal program. They serve from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.



Above right: Ray Nairn

Right: Laverne Mathaller

Photos by Linda Dumont

Invisible homeless Seniors

By Joanne Benger

Photo by John Zapantis



Alice (not her real name) is an attractive, outgoing lady of 66. Her clothes are carefully co-ordinated and her hair has a good professional cut. She casually mentions that she is staying with her divorced daughter, helping her out. The daughter has a full time job and lives in a large house surrounded by lovely gardens and she has several dogs that need walking so it makes sense that she needs summer help.

One imagines that somewhere Alice has a large, comfortable apartment or house to which she'll return when she is no longer needed.

Alice has a mild smokers' cough and remarks that she can no longer afford her two-pack a day smoking habit. She has been visiting the doctor and tried the nicotine patch but had allergic reactions. She is thinking to taking hypnosis next. Aside from her mild lung problems, Alice is healthy and she enjoys taking the dogs for long walks. She fits in well with the local

seniors group.

Then it all came tumbling down. Her daughter is short of cash and takes in a new lodger, a troubled young woman. Alice doesn't get along with her. Someone has to go. It's Alice.

The question is, where will Alice go? Suddenly the happy, successful mask slips and her new friends see the real Alice. She is a homeless senior who sofa surfs among relatives and friends. Her daughter never needed Alice. Alice needed her daughter's roof over her head.

Alice is between a rock and a hard place because she made a few bad choices. She has a valid drivers' license but no car. Her furniture and winter clothes are in a storage locker, placed there by a landlord when she wasn't able to pay the rent after her latest bad choice moved out and took everything of value, including the car. All he left were bad memories and bills which she is struggling to pay. She manages to pay the storage locker fees and still dreams of having her own home.

Meanwhile she is packing up all her belongings. She says she will go to live with her brother. She will be leaving the end of the month. Alice doesn't seem all that keen. She remarked to one new friend, "He is still working so I will be alone a lot. We should get along." She looks vulnerable and unsure.

The seniors' group plans a farewell party for Alice at the end of the month, but she simply vanishes two weeks before the planned party without contacting anyone. Things must have gotten intolerable. She had overstayed her welcome.

I imagine Alice will arrive at her brother's apartment and friends and neighbours will assume she has come to look after him. They will imagine she has a large comfortable apartment or house to which she will return when the visit is over. No one will guess she is a homeless sofa surfer. She is one of the invisible homeless seniors.

No one even discussed finances with Alice, but if she gets the mini-

mum pension of \$18,000 a year, she won't even have enough to pay for government subsidized housing after she pays for her cigarettes, her storage locker, and covers as many bills as she can. Sadly, she is not alone. Many Canadians retire owing money and if they only get the basic pensions, this can be disastrous.

Not all invisible homeless seniors are in dire straights. For some it is a life style choice.

Bill (not his real name) is a very sophisticated, elderly gentleman. He is well spoken and up to date with the internet. He discusses politics with gusto.

Bill looks dignified and his red Dodge minivan is always well detailed. You look at him and imagine he lives in a beautiful old house with old-growth trees.

Wrong!. His house is his minivan. He sleeps on a foam mattress in the back. His home is wherever he parks it. Often he stays with friends and relatives and gets electricity with an extension cord. He travels a lot and stays at campgrounds, but he also sleeps for free at truck stops, in parking lots and on abandoned property. He enjoys the freedom of the road all summer and is able to extend the season by going to B.C. winters. He will book into cheap motels for the coldest months if he must.

Bills lives under the radar. He has a permanent address – that of a relative, for pension purposes so his pension is direct deposited into the bank. Using his computer, he has no problems managing his finances. He had both debit and credit cards and an excellent credit rating.

Bill has always managed money well but he was self employed as a farmer and never had to pay into CPP. He has no private pension plan either as he ploughed all profits back into the farm. When he reached 65 he rolled the farm to his son because "A good man leaves an inheritance for his children's children." It wasn't until he started receiving his basic pension that Bill realized it wasn't enough to cover

all his wants.

He didn't have enough to pay rent, run a car, have internet and travel; he had to give up one. He gave up rent and has no regrets. He willingly became one of the invisible homeless seniors.

Not all homeless seniors who live in cars are as upstanding and honourable as Bill. This is Sylvia's story (not her real name) as told to me by her friend. Sylvia's husband died after a long illness and left her emotionally and financially bankrupt. She was living in a trailer that was not yet fully paid for and paying rent on the trailer lot. She could barely make trailer payments and cover lot rent and utilities. There wasn't much money for food and she was still trying to cover all expenses left by her husband's death and funeral. She was still healthy and applied for many jobs but no one was hiring older women. She did a bit of cleaning and yard work for neighbours.

She stopped driving and parked her car because she couldn't afford the insurance. She walked to the corner store for groceries daily.

She managed to survive the summer but winter was coming and the trailer was expensive to heat. She figured she could make it if she got a paying lodger. She put ads in the stores and a well spoken elderly gent moved in. He suggested that instead of paying a fixed rent he would cover the utility bills. She warned him that heating bills were high in the winter but he was fine with that.

Sylvia was delighted with the set up. She handed him the unopened utility bills each month and he assured her he was paying them. She was eating better and planned to put her car back on the road as soon as the funeral bills were paid. In a few years her trailer would be paid off and she would be comfortable.

Then her electricity went off. She called to report the power outage and was told the no bills had been paid and they had repeatedly sent warm-

ings and a final notice. She phoned up cable TV, gas and phone companies to get the same news. No payments had been made. She was arrears for all her utilities.

Sylvia confronted the lodger. He said it was a mistake and he would go to the bank and make it good the next day. That night he did a midnight flit.

No doubt Sylvia's ex-lodger, who appears to be a homeless senior, has an interesting story to tell but he arrived and he left without divulging it.

Now, hopelessly indebt, Sylvia moved in with her son and put the trailer up for sale. She had become one of the invisible homeless seniors, who are sofa surfing.

Homeless seniors are like all homeless people. A quarter of Edmonton's homeless people choose to sleep outdoors rather than enter shelters and they have their reasons. Similarly not all seniors, who are homeless, are willing and able to enter socialized housing for seniors. For some there are just too many rules. For others it is the cost. Even a subsidized rent of 30% of their pension income is too much. There are as many reasons as there are invisible homeless seniors.

Homeless Seniors who don't get government old age security

You do not automatically get old age pension when you reach 65. You have to apply and it is recommended that you do so six months before you reach 65. Those who aren't computer smart can manage with a phone and snail mail. You phone Alberta Supports contact Centre at 780 644-9992 in Edmonton or toll free at 1 877-644-9992 and request a copy of their booklet on financial assistance for seniors. It is titled 'Seniors Financial Assistance Programs' and includes an application form that you mail in.

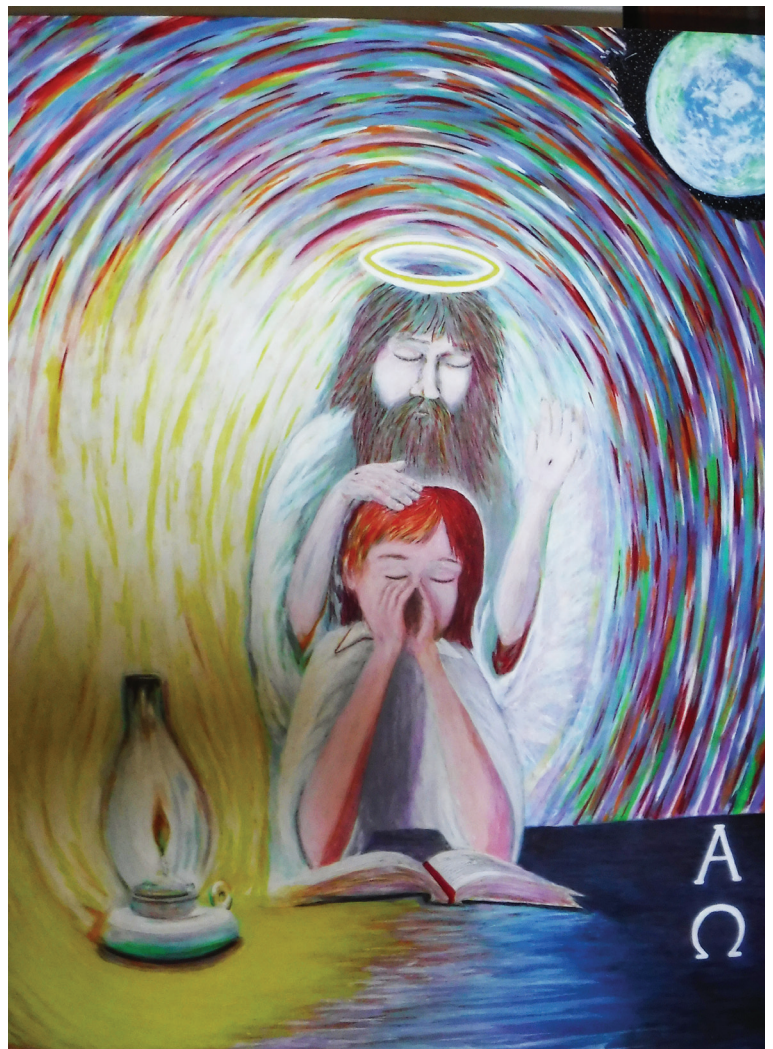
For the average Albertan filing the application is simple. You give your personal health number and social insurance number. you include your birth certificate and a blank cheque

with your name, address and account number printed on it by the bank so you can get your money by direct deposit. You give your phone number and home address.. Most of page two asks for details about your residence. They want to know if you are owner, renter, status Indian on a reserve, or living rent free with family members. Homeless is not an option. Now you give the Canada Revenue Agency permission to tell them what your last year's income was for this is what your benefit will be based on.

For the homeless person is it a series of impossible hurdles. Personal ID has been lost for years. Living hand to mouth doesn't involve a bank account and there is no home address or phone number. There has never been any income to report to the CRA so no income tax returns have ever been filed. A helpful volunteer can step in and help get the necessary documents. If there is no birth certificate for example, a baptismal certificate, an Indian Status card, a Canadian entry document, a permanent residence card, a Canadian Citizenship card or a passport will be accepted. Income tax returns can be filed for missed years. Permission to use someone's house address and phone number can be obtained and then a bank account can be opened with this information.

If the homeless person does manage to fill in the application and qualify for pension, it is important that an income tax return is filed every year before April 30 to keep the pension coming. Volunteers will prepare tax returns free if the pensioner provides T4A slips. If no income tax return is filed, the pension will stop. Then the pensioner must fill in a renewal form. Then if pension is re-instated there will be back pay for up to a year.

Some homeless people are unable to get organized enough to apply for and get old age security. For them it is easier to live as they always have without the benefit of the pension they are entitled to.



Mission Hall Art Project

Local inner city artists painted pictures that will be put up at the Mission Hall at 10542-96 Street.

Top Left: Safe Harbour by Sharon Spencer Bugle.

Top right: The Mind of a Child by an anonymous artist

Lower right: The Lion shall lie down with the Lamb by Linda Dumont

