

# ALBERTA Street News

VOLUME 16

ISSUE 10/11

October/November, 2019

## THE ALTAR

with Pastor Preston  
and Corrine Green

Service Times - 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.  
Sundays  
at The Mission Hall  
10542-96 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta

FIRST SERVICE  
SUNDAY,  
OCTOBER 20

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### Mission Statement

Our goal is to reach the people who have been outcast by society and who have lost hope.

We will do this by introducing them to Jesus Christ, giving them the love and encouragement and teachings from Jesus so that they may become like him so that they may reach their full God given potential in this life.

Mathew 28: 19

Therefore go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy ghost and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

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## ALBERTA STREET NEWS

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Cover photo: paid ad for  
THE ALTER

Deadline for  
December/January issue  
is November 15, 2019

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## It's the eighth month

By Joanne Benger

Photo by John Zapantis

It is now October, the eighth month of the Roman year which began in March. Its name comes from octo, meaning eight as does octopus with eight legs.

October 1 is National Seniors Day.

Honour an octogenarian today.

October 2 is Farm Animal Day. It is a good reason to sing Old MacDonald had a Farm.

October 3 is National Foundation Day of Korea. Enjoy Korean cuisine.

October 4 is World Animal Day. As George Orwell said, "Four legs good, two legs bad."

October 7, 1849 Edgar Allan Poe died.

His last words were, "God help my poor soul." Pray for him today and hope he will help you, too.

October 9 is Yom Kipper, the most important date on the Jewish calendar. It is called the Day of Atonement and ends the ten days of penitence that began with Kosh Hashanah. The ram's horn is blown.

October 9 is also Leif Erickson Day. Leif, son of Erik the Red, discovered America about 1000 AD when he got blown off course on a trip to Greenland and ended up in an area he called Vinland.

October 10 is Mental Health Day. WHO is now into prevention, teaching communication skills to teenagers because poor communication skills lead to extreme emotions which lead to drug and alcohol use. With good communications skills teens can even handle depression, WHO discovered.

October 11 is National Day of the Girl. "Pink is as good as blue."

October 14 is Canadian Thanksgiving Day and American Columbus Day. At the first Thanksgiving dinner in 1621, the Indians brought turkey, cranberries, sweet potatoes, pumpkins and popcorn. 398 years later most of us still follow the same menu.

October 16 is National Feral Cat Day in the US. Homeless cats, who have survived the summer outside, are now in need of warm, secure winter homes.

October 18, 1917 Canadian women were finally recognized as persons and got the vote thanks to the Famous Five.

October 21, 2019 is Canada's election day when both men and women will vote for candidates of both sexes. Thank you Famous Five.

October 22, 1844 is the date William Miller, a farmer who began preaching, predicted the world would end. His many followers lived to see the error of his math.

October 24 is United Nations Day. We all pray for peace and the end of trade wars.

October 27 is Mother-in-Law Day. "If you love me, you will love my mother."

October 31 is National Magic Day, the anniversary of Harry Houdini's death.

October 31 the last Thursday in October is Punky night, when children used to make punkies by hollowing out mangel wurrels (turnips) and carving them with beautiful patterns. They put candles inside and carried them around on strings as they sang the Punkie Song.

October 31 is also Halloween. Childish voices will chant, "Halloween apples, Trick or treat, smell my feet and Ugly old witch, sling her in the ditch." Children in costumes go door to door collecting so much candy Halloween has become the second highest grossing commercial holiday after Christmas. And a Happy Halloween to you, too.



**THE VIEWS PRESENTED ARE THOSE OF THE CONTRIBUTORS.**

# Halloween Survival Guide

By Joanne Benger

The following were collected from a variety of unreliable sources who wish to remain anonymous. Use at your own risk.

1. If you have a pure black dog paint white circles around his eyes to ward off evil on Halloween night.
2. Have someone draw a white chalk circle on your back for protection.
3. Make white chalk patterns on the doorstep joining one door jamb to the other so there is no place for the devil to slip through and enter the house.
4. If you have old fashioned windows with a cross shape wooden frame you're safe from malevolent agents. Otherwise hang a cross in your window and put holly, St. John's wort and red berries on the sill for protection.
5. Mirrors are vortexes or doorways to alternative realities so cover your mirrors Halloween night.
6. Scissors protect against witches. Place them under the door mat opened so the blades make a cross and evil cannot enter.
7. For safety burn sage in every room and put a circle of salt around you house on Halloween night.
8. Don't drink alcohol on Halloween night. Alcoholic spirits attract ghostly spirits and drinkers get ghosts.
9. Vampires in a cemetery reveal themselves with three signs – broken and shifting tombstones, absence of bird song and a faint groaning sound from underground.
10. Garlic, roses, crosses and anything silver will protect you from a vampire. You can assume a vampire killed a man if he is dead, he has unlaced shoes and there is a bite mark on his neck.
11. Feed salt to a zombie and he'll be restored to the person he was before.
12. A pentagram charm worn over the heart will protect you from a werewolf. Call a werewolf by his previous human name three times and he'll be restored to the man he was.
13. According to the Book of Shadows, 'Rowan tree and red thread will tie the witch's feet.
14. Jack-o-lanterns will scare away evil spirits that roam abroad on Halloween night so carry one and whistle if you must go out in the dark.
15. If you think your house is possessed say, "Go away. You can't affect me. There is too much goodness in this house."

## Halloween Fun

By Joanne Benger

1. Wear you clothes inside out and walk backwards and you will see a witch at midnight. But beware, the Polish word for witch is hex.
2. Contact the spirits with a séance on Halloween. Many try to contact Harry Houdini who died Halloween night 1926.
3. If you go to a crossroads at midnight and listen carefully to the wind it will tell you what the coming year has in store for you. Remember, Halloween is the Wiccan New Year.
4. Have a big bon fire on Halloween night. Each member of the party puts a marked pebble in the fire. Let the fire burn down and examine the pebbles the next day. If a pebble has been moved or marked, its owner is doomed to be the first of your group to die, though hopefully not for many year.
5. If you are undecided between several lovers, name a walnut for each and throw them into the fire. The walnut that burns the longest has the name of the one you should marry.
6. A group of unmarried people each twirl an apple on a string over the on fire; the apples will drop off in the order in which they will get married. The owner of the last apple to drop off will remain single.
7. If you want to know if the person you love loves you in return, toss a single apple seed into the fire while chanting, "If you love me bounce and fly, if you hate me lie and die."
8. Cut the letters out of a newspaper and sprinkle them on a bowl of water. Many letters will sink but those remaining afloat should spell out the name of your lover or the answer to your secret question.
9. Squeeze an apple seed between your fingers until it flies out. Note the direction it flies in because that is the direction in which your true love lives.
10. Cut an apple in half and count the seeds. If there are an even number of seeds you will marry soon. If there are an uneven number of seeds you will eventually marry. If a seed was cut you may never marry.
11. Before eating an apple with a stem, twist the apple stem around once for each letter of the alphabet. It will snap off at the initial of your true love's first name. Now take that broken off stem and tap the apple, saying one letter for each tap until the apple is pierced by the stem. That is the initial of your true love's last name.
12. If a single girl stands in front of a mirror and eats an apple while combing her hair, her future husband will be reflected in the mirror over her left shoulder.
13. If a single girl peels an apple in one long piece and throws it out the window, it will land in the shape of her true love's first initial.
14. Amid all this innocent fun, don't forget the fear of Halloween is called Samhainophobia and the people around you may actually be demons and spirits disguised as human.



# Wobbly weak legs Rehabilitation and the road to recovery

Photo and story by John Zapantis

Love should always be spontaneous when responding to the helpless pleas of your spouse. At least that's how I handled a serious situation, when my girlfriend, Theresa Walsh Cooke, cried out to me, when she declared that she wasn't feeling well. Both of her legs started to shake out of control. She begged me to drive her to the Royal Alexandra Hospital Emergency to have this very serious medical condition checked out by a physician.

The incident happened around August 26th and when I drove her to the Alex Emergency, I'd estimate it was around 4 p.m. when we arrived. We waited in the emergency waiting room for assistance until an intern took Theresa into an awaiting room to be examined in section A 5 in emergency.

Six hours later a Resident Doctor named Fraser Will Olsen conducted an oral assessment, asking Theresa a series of questions about her medical history and other questions to determine what was causing her legs to shake so aggressively.

Tia, a registered nurse, took Theresa's blood pressure that had an upper reading of 130, which was considered rather high, but not too serious to constitute any kind of threat to her health. When they took her blood pressure the second time a few hours later, her reading had jumped from 130 to a sky rocketing 180. The nurse was amazed at Theresa's reaction to the announcement and told her, "You're now at 180 over and this increase in blood pressure doesn't seemed to have any effect on you."

Theresa then acknowledged the nurse's comment with a welcoming beaming smile as we both looked over to one another, while laughing it all off in relieved celebration.

At one point during the resident doctor's questioning my girlfriend about her health history, I intrusively brought up an operation Theresa once had called an angioplasty surgery that was surgically performed on her in her late forties after she experienced a mild heart attack as a result of the immense mental pressures, she faced while having the misfortune of having to tolerate the mental abuse of an abusive husband.

Prior to the divorce, Theresa successfully held her ground throughout that 17 years of marriage to this man and encouraged her two children's career interests, suggesting to her son, Jason, that he pursue law at university

while recognizing his gift of the gab and suggesting to her daughter, Katherine, that she pursue a program in human resource work because of her gifted social skills and passion for children.

That wise advice resulted in her son Jason writing for his legal degree and today he's employed as a successful corporate lawyer and her daughter, who also followed up on the advice of her mother, currently holds a position as Director of Human Resources in Regina.

When I finished my backgrounder on Theresa to assure the doctor that all hope would not be lost with Theresa and that there were logical circumstances behind her set back in life, he acknowledged defiantly in a mellow authoritative tone "All right there's no need to explain all this, we're still trying to find out the cause of this all, so just leave the rest to me so that I can do my job."

I started to calm down, realizing now that by going into panic mode that this was only going to make the relationship between me and this resident doctor intolerable, so I clammed up in the best interests of having my girlfriend's condition resolved once and for all.

At this point it was about the ninth hour since she was originally admitted to emergency and it was now 1 o'clock in the morning, so I asked the resident doctor if they'd have Theresa over night for further observation, or quite possibly a bed for her so that other tests could be conducted to determine her overall condition.

The doctor acknowledged that he would be reserving a bed for her at Unit 53 in the Geriatrics and Stroke Department of the Royal Alex Hospital.

He then told me that I could go because that there was no point in sticking around and that I could return the next day to visit her on the new unit they intended to send her to the following day as soon as a bed was available.

I laid a sweet kiss on my girlfriend's lips and left unit A-5 at the emergency of the Royal Alex, relieved that my girlfriend would be safe and looked after by the hospital's finest!

For the next two weeks, Theresa's stay at the hospital would consist of daily visits by a number of registered nurses who would conduct a daily series of blood tests, taking my girlfriend's blood, blood pressure tests and an Echocardiogram to determine if she had any type of heart disease.

Prior to receiving her daily medical supports from Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses, LPN's, the highlight of her stay, besides me visiting her every day and taking her out to the hospital's smoking patio for a smoke or two, was the three healthy meals that she was greeted by - a breakfast at 8 a.m. a lunch at noon and supper in the late afternoon.

Two weeks into Theresa's stay on Unit 53 the happy and cooperative relationship between myself and the medical staff of Unit 53 took

on a horrible nose dive.

It was that day that I had suggested to Theresa that we sneak her out of the unit and drive her to her place to pay her bills by phone, verifying that the call would be made from her place with her name showing on the phones of the hydro company, telephone company and rent owing to Capital Region Housing.

I had it in my head that Theresa wouldn't be allowed to use the hospital phone to make her payments because of the hospital policies not allowing her that privilege since she was on that ward for only a short time.

So, thinking the worst, I went into panic mode, telling Theresa that they probably wouldn't allow her the use of the hospital phone to pay her bills and that she was going to be overdue on her payments, which were a few days away from the deadline dates.

I'd also remembered how worried she'd become, whenever she'd forget to pay a bill and the end result would be a double billing and inevitably lead to her anxiety build ups, worried to hell about falling behind.

So I professionally planned our invisible escape by mentioning to her that I'd get the car and first escort her off the Unit and walk her discreetly over to the waiting room in emergency and have her wait there while I got my car that was parked in the visitors parking lot and pick her up from there and drive her to her place to pay her bills by phone.

The plan was hatched and she paid her rent and hydro bill, but never had the patience to wait for that one hour she was put on hold by her bank while paying her phone bill so I told her I could do that for her later by taking her bill and paying it personally on her behalf, when I would drive later to the phone company.

When we got back to the hospital and entered her dorm at 5304, about no more than a few minutes had elapsed from our arrival, when all of the sudden five female nurses accompanied by a female doctor came storm trooping into our room. One of the nurses demanded out loud in a firm, smooth authoritative tone of voice "Where were you two? You were both gone from the unit for quite some time and weren't anywhere in sight. We had security looking all over the grounds for the both of you."

I immediately went into defence mode and quickly replied, "We went to her place to pay her bills, over her phone, because they were close to their due dates and she never wanted to have them double bill her. She always starts to worry whenever the phone or the power or the rental company ends up double billing her on late payments.

The head doctor then roared out loudly in a demanding tone, "I don't care what you two were feeling, we're responsible for your girlfriend. What if something happened to her? Our hospital would have been held



**Theresa's best friend Joanne Livingston, left, came to visit Theresa, seated in her walker, at the hospital. Nursing Assistant Kimberly looks on in the background.**

responsible for her, if something bad had happened to her. So from now on she's no longer to leave the premises with you, she'll have to be accompanied by a nurse when going out for a smoke break."

It was clear to us now and there was no arguing the point. The doctor wasn't going to listen to our circumstances. All that mattered was that I had influenced my girlfriend in violating hospital policy. I felt that I was being treated like a criminal and all because I did it for love!

A few days later I would be meeting Theresa's appointed Hospital Social Worker named Steve Horsman, who was now acknowledging a request I put in to the head nurse's front desk to have him help us contact Canada Revenue, so that we could have Theresa's 2018 Tax Assessment form sent to her residence, so that I could take it later to Capital Region Housing to prevent her from being evicted.

She kept forgetting to send them that form to show she had no other income to claim, which is verified on line 150 of that form. In order to qualify for low cost subsidized housing, the company policy stipulates that you can't be working a job, when receiving three types of senior pensions.

That day Steve made an appointment for Theresa and me to meet him in her dorm for 1 p.m. the following day.

The following day Steve showed up for our 1 p.m. meeting and suggested that we follow him downstairs to the main floor of the Alex, where he brought us into a non-occupied room by the main floor lobby of the south entrance of the Alex. It was in that room that he gave Theresa some instruction on what he'd be telling the Canada Revenue representatives about her 2018 tax assessment form and that she needed it, to avoid getting evicted by Capital Region Housing, because she simply forgot to send them the assessment, showing line 150, verifying that she wasn't receiving any additional income other than the three senior pensions that she is entitled to.

After Theresa had her turn to answer some important questions asked by Canada Revenue that would determine her identity, within 10 minutes of answering all of the necessary questions, she handed the phone over to her social worker who was told by the CRA rep that Theresa's 2018 Tax Assessment form would arrive by mail to her within at least 10 business days.

Theresa's stay would now be saved by the

bell. All I would have to do now was to go to her mailbox and then hand deliver the completed form to an intake worker at Capital Region Housing and this would prevent her from being evicted as was stipulated in an eviction notice. The notice said that if the 2018 tax assessment wasn't mailed to Capital Region Housing by August 27, she would have to vacate her suite, but if it was mailed to them before that date, she would be reinstated.

As I write her story, the date today is Thursday August 12th and I'd estimate that her assessment will have arrived no later than the 20th of August.

Currently Theresa has made a remarkable comeback thanks to the caring and compassionate medical staff of Unit 53. She's walking around with the sometimes aid of a hospital walker. She sleeps well and is always encouraged to get up on time for her breakfast. She's maintained the same weight since pursuing her three healthy and wholesome meals a day.

As we all still await the news of her prognosis, so far her health has taken on an immense improvement, since first being admitted to the Alex when her legs shook uncontrollably.

We can only anticipate the best outcome in the long term, while waiting for the day when Theresa will be healthy enough to be considered for discharge.

So in the meantime for now, I'd like to extend my sincere appreciation to the medical staff of Unit 53 in the Geriatrics and Strokes Department and the following staff include, Resident Doctor Fraser Wil Olsen, Doctor Judy Peng, Doctor Anu Kumar, Social Worker Steve Horsman, Registered Nurse, Becky, Nurse Plator Nurse Brittany, Health Care Aid/Escort Desiree Tiocao, Recreational Therapy Assistant Courtney Ilkiw LPN Samiya, Nursing Attendant Haile, Registered Nurse Katherine, Nursing Attendant, Jesse, Licensed Practical Nurse Sia and Nurses Assistant Kimberley.

Also, when Theresa was first admitted to the Alex emergency, while transferred over to Unit A-5, Nurses Aid Tia and the staff in that unit did a great job in showing their support while helping in getting Theresa settled in, prior to having her transferred over to Unit 53 the following day.

Theresa and I would like to express our sincere gratitude for the professional care that the medical team of Units 53 and Unit A-5 have successfully provided that has helped to make Theresa's stay a convenient one.



# Playing the victim card Alberta style.

## (Badly)

By Allan Sheppard

Conservatives (Progressive, United, or otherwise) like to accuse opponents of their less-inclusive, ungenerous policies of playing the victim card. Of being “snowflakes.” Of taking offence where none is intended. Of failing to “man up” and accept personal responsibility when times and regimes are tough. Like-minded media, academic, and think-tank pundits often reflect and amplify such views. Media, academic, think-tank, and political victim-blamers seek to deflect attention from their advocacy, support, and enactment of ideologies that produce and justify adversity (a.k.a. austerity) for many.

Call me presumptuous but allow me to label our uber-Conservative premier and his oil-patch supporters/handlers/enablers disingenuous, deceptive, misleading, dishonest, (self-)deluded; or perhaps even worse, naïve. Long before Kenney led the overthrow of Premier Rachel Notley and her accidental New Democrat government to accept his and his freshly lipstickied United Conservatives’ inerrantly preordained role as Alberta’s natural rulers, he belligerently defended Alberta’s oil patch against all comers. The beat goes on.

Kenney bashes a federal government led by a lite, “sunny” version of a Liberal father who had, in his day as prime minister, plumbed new depths of perceived anti-Albertan prejudice; a recalcitrant “socialist” government in British Columbia; sundry First Nations, their leaders and apologists; environmentalists and their nefarious “billionaire” foreign paymasters; every shade of non-Conservative, from small-“I” liberal to partisan Liberals; even ecologically aware conservatives.

All of them presumed out for themselves: Unlike Kenney. Unlike the UCP. Unlike our U.S.-dominated oil patch. Unlike the Koch brothers and other petro-billionaires who hold huge stakes in Alberta and use some of their takings to fund advocates and apologists. Deposed premier Notley had tried in her own way. But she lacked the true-believer’s absolute certainty that motivates and sustains Kenney et al.

She wasn’t tough enough; more politic than political; too reliant on reason; too nice; unsuited to the hardball approach that Kenney argued was the only way to counter the federal government and its enablers. Notley couldn’t or wouldn’t play the victim card, the populist card.

Only the populist road leads to victory, Kenney argued by his behaviour and demeanor, if not always his words.

Kenney won an easy victory in the provincial election. As premier he is still a long way from victory in the bigger battle to restore Alberta’s petroleum industry to profitability for itself, for his UCP government, and for Albertans. He has his war room (which should more honestly be called a spin factory), but he hasn’t won any battles, let alone the war, if there is one to be fought outside his mind.

That could change if the federal Conservatives take power in October. But despite Justin Trudeau’s self-inflicted wounds and failures, that outcome is not a slam dunk. Nor is it likely that British Columbia, determined First Nations, and an environmental movement that is gaining momentum as the threat of climate change becomes ever more apparent and appalling will cave in to Kenney and whoever prevails in Ottawa.

Kenney’s intransigence may in fact undermine his hopes federally as his political soulmate, Premier Doug Ford, seems to be finding in Ontario. A minority Liberal government supported by (if not in coalition with) the federal NDP and the Greens would surely doom any pipeline.

There is an explanation why Notley’s appeal to economic reason didn’t work and would not work for Kenney. It was and is specious: plausible but wrong.

Various players have challenged Alberta’s efforts to exploit its petroleum resources, seemingly at the expense of everything and everyone else. And why not? Where is it laid down, except in the fevered minds of Albertan politicians and oil patch denizens, that whatever Alberta and its industry want they should get? Why do they and their kind insist that critics should give serious (that is, credulous) respect to financial and market assumptions, while dismissing the social, cultural, and ecological concerns that engage those critics as irrelevant to the only task that matters: getting rich, while avoiding taxes?

They blame everyone but themselves. They default to the time-tested strategy of finding (if necessary, creating) external enemies. Calgary-based energy-industry observer and frequent critic, Andrew Nikiforuk, offers an explanation in the Tyee, a Vancouver-based online journal of analysis and opinion (The Coddling of the Alberta Mind, bit.ly/2nHVQ5p):

“Kenney, a belligerent proponent of oil-safetyism, would much rather play the blame game than accept the truth that the rapid development of bitumen mining in Fort McMurray violated two fundamental principles of risk mitigation: go slow and save the money,” or, to recall a decades-old bumper sticker, don’t piss this boom away. But that is what they (and, honestly, we as their citizen enablers) are doing and have done.

“Over many years,” Nikiforuk adds,

“Alberta’s Tories repeatedly gambled that the price of bitumen, a garbage crude that requires upgrading and complex refining, could only go higher, and they bet wrong.”

I’m not economist enough to validate what Nikiforuk and the authorities he cites argue. But I’ve been exposed to Alberta politics long enough to find Nikiforuk’s robust skepticism more persuasive than the myriad varieties of spin emanating from Alberta governments and from industry players and lobbyists.

It has long been obvious that Alberta has bet the farm on the petroleum industry, giving it whatever it wants at what it thinks the industry is willing to pay. Lacking a provincial sales tax that helps smooth economic peaks and valleys in enlightened jurisdictions, Alberta has tied itself to a dying industry that obviously and desperately seeks to suck the last drop of profit from a non-renewable commodity that is slowly destroying our planet and must inevitably be abandoned (along with the orphan wells and tailings lakes that will be left behind for future generations to clean at their, not our or the industry’s cost).

To facilitate that industry gamble, Alberta has undersold its royalties and other oil patch revenues to try to maintain income as prices dropped worldwide. Caught in a virtual death spiral, the province finds itself forced from time to time to reduce its take, making it dependent (along with the industry) on increased production; which lowers prices and renews downward pressure on the spiral until... (Ooops!) we can’t move the increased production to markets because the U.S. has followed the same strategy and the market is glutted. So, what do we do? We blame the lack of pipeline capacity. Instead of capping production, which Notley did to good effect, we go all in on a campaign to increase production with fire-sale pricing and build pipelines to markets that give no credible evidence that they actually want our product or that they can process it; the only refineries capable of doing that in quantity are on the U.S. Gulf Coast.

On evidence from other jurisdictions the solution is not to build pipelines, which will become obsolete under environmental inevitabilities, but to reduce production and invest in the short term in adding value in Alberta as we transition to an economy based on 21st-century energy resources, rather than 20th-century ones.

How would we finance such a mad scheme? With a sales tax, naturally, that we can use to cover everyday overheads and programs, leaving inevitably short-term revenues from the oil patch to pay the costs of transition. Don’t hold your breath. Kenney et al are rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic. Things could get ugly.

# FICTION

## Without You

By Daniel Piller

Our story begins with the sun just beginning to set, there's a cool breeze blowing through the trees. We now move down and we see this small house sitting on the edge of town. As we move in, we can see the house is definitely showing its age, you can see there are some shingles missing from the previous thunder storm. Outside there is an old truck parked half-way in the garage, the back-light shines over the back door. We can see a big yard in the back and we can see a big tree which holds a treehouse. We now hear yelling coming from inside the house and we move inside.

Ryan is in the kitchen and his mom comes in and said "Hey don't walk away from me."

Ryan turns around and said in an angry voice "What do you think I should do since you know everything?"

Mary says in an annoyed voice "I'm trying my best here son ever since your dad passed, I've had to be two people and with me having to pick up a second job I know I haven't been around for you. I've got a call from the school that you have been fighting with some other kids. Also, your grades have fallen to where they say you will have to take summer school if you want to graduate next year."

Ryan smashes a cup on the floor and yells out "I just wish it was you and not dad. I know he could have been there for me!"

Ryan storms off and walks downstairs to his bedroom. Just when Mary hears the tears began to fall, she walks over and gets on her knees and begins to pick up the shards of glass. While she picks them up Mary says "Oh God, I need your help I don't know what more I can do. God, I don't question your ways but do you see what I'm dealing with here? You took the love of my life and now I fear I might lose my son."

Meanwhile Ryan walks into his room

and he slams the door in anger. Ryan walks over to his closet and opens it up, kneels down and moves into the back. He pulls out an old shoebox and then walks over to his bed and sits down. The whole time he's filled with so much pain and he just wants to be at peace for a little bit.

Ryan gets comfortable and he opens the box and there is a small bag of weed, next to that is a small bag with white power in it there are many other drugs. Ryan reaches in and pulls out a needle and a tourniquet that Ryan stole from Mary's job. Ever since his dad passed away Ryan has been trying to take the pain away trying all types of drugs. Ryan then opens the drawer in his night stand beside his bed and pulls out his lighter. Ryan then pulls a spoon and a small bag out of the box; he opens the bag and pours a little bit of the white powder onto the spoon. Then he takes his lighter and he begins to melt it down to a liquid. A few moments later he uses the needle to suck it up, then he ties his arm off with the tourniquet.

Just as Ryan is moving the needle to his arm he blinks. We flash forward one year. Ryan is standing on a balcony and below him are students who are receiving their diplomas. Just then Ryan says in a panicked voice "What where am I, what is happening?"

Just then a man appears next to him and says in a calm voice. "Hey Ryan don't be alarmed you're in a safe place. I'm here to show you a glimpse at what your life could be."

As the man talks Ryan feels this comforting feeling coming from him so he calms down. Just then he hears his name called from the stage in front of them. Ryan watches as he walks on stage and picks up a diploma from the person on stage. As he does, we hear hoots and cheering coming from behind him. Ryan turns and sees his mom, Mary, so happy she is crying. There is someone sitting next to her cheering, too, but Ryan doesn't recognize her.

Just then we move three years further in the future. Ryan and this man are standing in the aisle of a big church. The pews are all full and everyone is dressed up. Ryan says as he looks around "Who's wedding is it?"

The man looks and he points to the front of the church. Just then Ryan notices it is his and that's when he sees that same girl from earlier. Ryan hears crying and he looks to his right to see his mom. She is smiling through her tears while she holds a picture close to her chest. Mary says in a happy voice "I know you're here, Bill; our boy is sure growing up." While she says that Ryan notices the man has his hand on her shoulder.

Just then we move four years further into the future. Ryan stands next to the man and they are in the back yard of his mom house. There are many people there some Ryan recognizes but others he doesn't. Just then a young boy trips and falls in front of the man next to him. The boy looks straight up at him and he smiles. Just then Ryan sees an older him run up and pick the boy up and he says "A - ha I caught you." Just then people begin to sing "Happy Birthday" as that same girl from before carries out a cake.

Just then we move ten years further in the future. Ryan and the man are sitting on the bleachers next to a ball diamond. Just then Ryan sees his older self jump up and yell out loud "Way to go Daniel!" As the boy runs to first base in doing so, he brings home the winning run.

Then the man says: See what a wonderful life you could have. Ryan turns and looks at him. Everything is clear. Ryan says in a happy voice: "Dad - it's you!" Ryan then gave him a big hug just like he did when he was a child.

Bill says: "Hey son. This is a possible future, but without you this will never happen. You have a big decision to make and I hope you make the right one."

Suddenly we are back in Ryan bedroom and he has the needle in his hand. Ryan says in an amazed voice: "Wow! What a dream!"

Ryan puts the needle back in the box. He takes the tourniquet off his arm. He walks upstairs and into the kitchen, carrying the shoebox. Falling to his knees behind his Mom he says: "Mom, I'm so sorry. I need your help." He places the open box on the floor in front of him. Mary turns. She sees tears falling from Ryan eyes. Mary looks at the box. Reaching out, she hugs her son.

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# The Spirit of Terry Fox keeps them coming for the cause

By John Zapantis

It's a phenomenon, of how one man's journey to walk across six Eastern Canadian provinces has raised public awareness about cancer. His walk raised \$24,000,000 dollars for a great cause and has helped immensely in influencing and encouraging millions of runners and walkers worldwide to participate in the Annual Terry Fox Run.

That's what I came to realize, when I ran into runners and walkers, some disabled and others afflicted by cancer, who all had good things to say about Terry Fox. He has touched them all in so many ways, while serving as the consummate role model for hope, leadership and recovery.

I was one of those many, who had the pleasure of attending the 39th Annual Terry Fox Run hosted by Terry Fox Run Organizer, MC and Cancer patient Darrin Park.

The fundraising event took place on Sunday, September 15th, at Kinsmen Park in Edmonton. The event that day included a 9 a.m. free registration, a morning stage presentation and a run or walk, ride or blade

that would consist of a 1 k, 2.5 k, 5 k or a 10 k run or walk that went as far as 149 street and back to Kinsmen Park.

The anticipated goal for this year's run for money donated to cancer research was \$140,000 and 600 participants for the run's cause, registered for free online, not counting the runners and walkers who still hadn't arrived on the grounds prior to the starting of the run.

The stage presentations started at 10:45 a.m. to kick off the event as Terry Fox Run Organizer, MC and cancer patient Darrin Park introduced various keynote speaker to the stage to give their personal views on cancer.

The speakers included Ward 10 City Councillor Michael Walters, Running Room Founder and President John Stanton and cancer survivor Chris Thompson.

Ward 10 City Councillor Michael Walters came on to the stage to give his perspective on cancer and later present a proclamation on behalf of Mayor Don Iveson and members of City Council proclaiming it Terry Fox Day.

Walters said, "I'm really proud to be here this year to bring this proclamation on behalf of mayor and council. So I also love the town crier thing too, it's fun.

"So whereas nearly one in two Canadians is expected to be diagnosed with cancer in their lifetime and one in four is expected to succumb to the disease and whereas on April 12, 1980 Terry Fox set out from St. John's Newfoundland on his Cross Canada Marathon of Hope to raise money and awareness for cancer research and whereas the Terry Fox Run

and the world's largest one day fundraiser for cancer research with over \$750,000,000 dollars has been raised in his name and whereas today he probably joined the more than 9,000 communities across Canada hosting Terry Fox Runs and celebrations of Terry's legacy and to raise money for cancer research.

"Therefore I, Michael Walters, on behalf of Mayor Don Iveson, hereby proclaim, September 15th, 2019 Terry Fox Day in Edmonton."

Running Room Founder and President John Stanton was introduced to speak on stage and had this to say about Terry Fox and how he prepared while struggling to reach that historical milestone that was achieved, in taking on that journey in the 1980 Marathon of Hope. Stanton said, "You know when you think of who the greatest Canadian of all time was, it certainly is Terry Fox, is front and centre.

"I think we also want to remember that Terry Fox is not only a great Canadian, who is known around the world. He was also a huge philanthropist, raised money and was working towards finding a cure for cancer and making a difference in the lives of those families suffering from cancer.

"You know Terry was also known for many other things as a runner and as an athlete, you have to admire what Terry Fox did. Just think of it, 42 kilometres, that's the distance, roughly from here to the airport and running that every day and then the next morning, getting up and running again.

"Terry Fox never did anything easy. If you look at the map, where Terry ran, where he started in St. John's Newfoundland and he went across the country, he didn't go the shortest route. Nothing was done easy with Terry Fox. He made sure it was about the journey. It was about getting the awareness out to as many people as he possibly could. When you look at his trip to Atlantic Canada, it was a busy trip. It was all over the province, trying to cover as much territory as he possibly could. It wasn't point to point, running to St. John's to Victoria. He went all the way along the way, to touch as many people as he could.

"So we want to remember the athlete that Terry Fox was, for some of the young people that are here today. Remember here in Canada, health and fitness is a big concern to us. Use Terry Fox as an example of what a total athlete he was. What an amazing athlete he was! What an amazing runner he was! What an amazing philanthropist Terry Fox was!



**Left: Volunteer Doaa Ismail holds up a sign reminding motorists to honk for Terry.**



"I was talking to Darrell Fox, Terry's brother. I said to Darrell, 'You know I noticed in all the pictures and just think for a moment, I had pictures of Terry Fox, I said, 'He never wore a watch.' He said, 'No, that's kind of observant of you to recognize that, but,' he said, 'Terry's journey was about the journey. It was not about the time. It was about the destination and the destination was about finding a cure for cancer. So no other child would suffer like he did, but I think all of us need to remember that and today while you're here, make sure that you give to Terry Fox. Make sure that if you can afford it, to make that donation, that you can make that difference, to the lives of those suffering from cancer.'

"When you're out there running today, if that calf muscle gets a little tight, think of Terry Fox. Think of that video that played here and the sound of him hopping along. If you haven't had a chance. Have you got his leg here? Darrin's going to bring out the leg later, but you have to take a look at the prosthetic leg that Terry had. It's not like the spring loaded ones today. The reason why Terry had the that kind of hip hop action as he ran, is he had to flip the leg forwards, because there was no mechanical flip on it. So that's why he ran the way he did, but think of the athlete that Terry was. Think of the philanthropist that he was. Think of the great Canadian that he was and thanks for being a great Canadian here and supporting the Terry Fox cause."

Chris Thompson, a cancer survivor and a member of Terry's team, was the final keynote speaker to help end the presentations. He, too, spoke about his rise above adversity while dealing with cancer. Thompson said, "It was an honour this year, when Darrin asked if I'd speak. My story started in 2015. I had a pain in my back, many doctor's visits. They contributed to old injuries, being young and dumb. You have injuries from when you were young, they progressed."

"So finally I got a scan. I was diagnosed with a tumour in my spine. I went through surgery, six weeks of radiation. That took me through 2016. My diagnosis is so rare, there's no such name for it and that's the honest truth. They've classified me in a group of tumours, but my cellular structure isn't the same as anything that has been

documented and this is across the world, not just in Canada.

"So with that being said, at the Cross Cancer Institute, I guess I'm a guinea pig. They are using my tumours and my study to hopefully find a cure and with organizations like the Terry Fox Research Institute, that's breaking new ground with research everyday. Hopefully my care study can help somebody in the future. It can help me now. It can help somebody in the future."

"Carrying forwards as two years stand, life gets back to normal, you're feeling good. I beat cancer in the fall. I had a stand and two tumours. One in my brain, this time and another in my spine. So I've been through two surgeries, radiation coming up this summer. I'm on round two of my chemo. It's a 12 month chemo."

"So they tell me that one of the side effects, I'm going to lose my hair. So I'm not sure how I'm going to think about that. No, I'm just kidding, my family treats me and preps me, that's for a while. So losing my hair, I'm not too concerned."

"Not only cancer effected me personally, my family and I lost my sister-in-law in January to cancer. She didn't win her fight. I'm going to win my fight with all of you here. It's going to make that possible."

"So I guess in closing right there, Darrin said, Next year is the 40th Annual Terry Fox Run. So I saw a picture of Terry Fox and beside it, it said, zero likes, zero shares, zero

posts, millions of followers. I don't know how many people are standing here right now, but I challenge all of you to put this on your face book. your instagram, all your social media. Invite one person that isn't here today. Come next year."

"This crowd will fill this field. There's no reason we shouldn't with every step that you guys take today and every dollar that was raised. We're that much closer to finding a cure. So thanks you guys."

Terry Fox has notably had an incredible impact on people living with cancer, the disabled and the common man, whom he has encouraged to participate in runs like the Terry Fox Run that was originally influenced by his selfless contributions, courage, persistence and his historic journey - the Marathon of Hope.

He will be forever remembered in the minds and hearts of those whom he accompanies in the spirit, encouraging thousands of runners and walkers annually worldwide, to cross the finish line and help to successfully end his journey by one day finding a cure for all cancers!

**Below: Left to right Iva Santos, Ken Thomas in his wheelchair and Hiro Wantanabe participated in the walk.**



# Bringing the working-class back into politics

By Timothy Wild

Recently, the provincial government announced the creation of a panel to look at Alberta's minimum wage, including consideration of whether or not people who serve alcohol should be subject to a lower minimum wage. This is based on the assumption that the potential revenue from tips would more than adequately compensate for a reduction in the minimum wage and, implicitly, that a significant chunk of labour costs (generally regardless of quality of service) could be more explicitly passed on to the consumer rather than the employer. The unveiling of the panel falls hot and heavy on the heels of the UCP's punitive and ill-grounded reduction in the minimum wage for workers under the age of 18, which nosedived from an already low \$15 per hour to \$13 per hour in June 2019.

None of the above is that surprising, and the rookie, yet hopelessly atavistic, UCP government remains ideologically committed to increasing the wealth and income of the already wealthy. For them, the class-war is going quite well. Indeed, most people don't even recognize "class" as the defining social cleavage, having bought into the patently ridiculous and destructive notion that everyone is classless in the sense of being "middle class" – from the unwaged to CEOs. However, this generalized attack on minimum wage needs to be analyzed within the broader context of the ideological war being waged on a daily basis on the working class...and the working class needs to respond accordingly. We need to bring "class" back as a primary unit of consciousness, analysis and action. It speaks to the opportunities and impediments of our material lives within postindustrial capitalism. Within the context of lived experience then, provision of a risible minimum wage will serve as a drag on other wage categories – including halting the ongoing quest for socially and economically adequate just, living and family wages. For example, with the age-based minimum wage differential, businesses (particularly marginal businesses) could hire younger workers in order to save on labour costs. Given the fact that most minimum wage earners are not the ste-

reotypical under 18 year old working simply for pocket money, this could be a significant problem for all low waged workers. If the actual minimum wage is kept so pathetically low, it will also ensure that wages just above the minimum wage will also be kept artificially low. It could also further entrench the feminization of poverty, given the prevalence of women over the age of 25 in this general pay bracket. Jobs could be lost to younger workers. In addition to the inter-generational conflict that this "us" and "them" wage rate could cause, there are also some implications for the ongoing hypersexualization and commodification (i.e. short kilts, tight tops and forced flirtation) of women in the service sector of the economy. For so many reasons, this ideologically motivated attack on workers is wrong, and we need to interrogate the class-based thinking behind these changes.

These attacks on the income of the working-class come at the same time as housing is becoming increasingly cost-prohibitive for many Albertans. I single out housing because it remains one of the most significant expenses for most people. We cannot look at income without reference to expenses. A report from Statistics Canada, for example, noted that the average current mortgage debt of people living in Calgary was \$260,000, in Edmonton \$250,000 and the rest of Alberta was \$200,000. This can be compared to the national average of \$180,000. This could certainly be a problem, particularly if housing prices continue to increase, jobs remain tenuous and interest rates rise.

But for many low-income workers home ownership, with its attendant debt, is largely a dream. However, even within the rental sector of the housing continuum (accounting for one-third of Canadian households), there remain problems with affordability. This situation was studied in a report written by David Macdonald, for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. The document – Unaccommodating: rental housing wage in Canada – explores the impact of a number of factors, including "...the collapse of new-purpose built rental construction", on rental housing costs. Macdonald's research suggests that that a worker in Calgary would need to earn at least \$26.97 per hour to be able to afford rent for an average priced two bedroom unit in the city without spending more than 30% of her income. Edmonton comes in at \$24.67. And when looking at renting a one-bedroom apartment, the hourly rental wage would be \$20.98 for Calgary and \$19.89 for Edmonton. Given the minimum wage specifically, and low-wages in general, one can easily see the monthly,

unremitting shortfall.

Attempts have been made to address the implications of low income on social, economic and psychological belonging.

The New Democrats did try to help those on the margins, by increasing the minimum wage and providing other supports to working-class families. There has been some increased funding provided by the federal government. But to a large extent, too much is left to the vagaries of the capitalist market rather than developing a comprehensive public policy framework that addresses poverty and supports authentic social, economic and cultural inclusion and participation. Elements of this framework should include greater investment in affordable housing, the provision of more quality childcare spaces, ensuring that a minimum wage bears some functional relationship to costs of living, implementation of a more progressive taxation system and support to end the national tragedy of the current housing conditions of many Indigenous people. We need to critically look at income and expenses, and how we can develop just, humane and inclusive social minimums so that all Canadians can be assured a basically good quality of life. For this to happen, we – as the working class – must act in consciousness and solidarity. We need to stand up for ourselves. Otherwise, under the clearly nonsensical guise that "we are all middle class" wealth and income inequality will continue apace, and the idea of classlessness will serve as a significant brake upon the long overdue development of progressive public policy leading to transformative structural change. Certainly, the idea of the working class must evolve beyond the old-fashioned and exclusionary masculinist and industrial notions of workerism. The working class is a more wonderfully complex in composition than before. However, it is clearly in the interest of the working class that we bring the concepts of class and working class activism back into the political game. Elites don't like ideas of class war if they are not openly waging it. They try to write it off as the politics of envy, while making occasional concessions of extended privilege to a select few individuals or groups. However, if we look at social change it has been due to the activism of the organized working class and our allies. We don't want grudging concessions. We want – and need – social and economic rights of citizenship. That being said, we must remember that progressive rights of citizenship only occurred because of the efforts of the organized working class. Let's build upon that foundation.



## OPINION

# The Invasion Of Public Space

By Rodney Graham, Founding Editor,



Winnipeg Street Shee  
Photo by John Zapantis

A cruel blight has hit the streets of North America. Everywhere you go, more and more, you will see people on the streets of our cities drinking expensive drinks and staring smugly at passers by. These people are often scary, rude, and even violent - certainly they are addicts. Addicted to decadence, lust, and power - often addicted to expensive drugs and alcohol. This summer I've seen it all across Canada and the United States - every city, small and large.

The people most adversely affected by these people are the poor. 90% of all violence on the street after midnight is perpetrated by these individuals who are out on the prowl, like predators, like a cancerous, decadent force...Yes, that's right! Studies have shown it is NOT the homeless who are scary, dangerous, and addicted to drugs. Those who are do it because they are tormented 24/7 by security and authorities and have to have a way to escape their never ending trauma causing terrorism...

Every day in North America more public space is given up to these people - the well off. And every day the poor are terrorized more. You will see wooden platforms built out from businesses - out so far there is even little room for pedestrians to pass by. From coast to coast businesses have approached city halls and demanded - and received permission to build these gaudy

and invasive drinking venues. But it's not just the streets that are being taken over by bullies and decadent thugs. Everywhere there is less green space - everything is trimmed so that no poor citizen can hide and get respite from the invaders. Spikes are on underpasses and stairs, and armrests are placed so no one who is desperately tired can lie. In urban and also rural areas, in the suburbs, expensive homes are being built where the poor would traditionally hide from their persecutors. Pathways are being cut through vegetation so that the rich can walk their 900 dollar poodles and fancy mixed breeds...

Of course, most citizens would not see this as a problem - But it is a great problem - A problem for the most vulnerable and poorest of all citizens. In the past, the poor were given space to live - to exist - to be free and at liberty, even as the fortunate citizens were. But we have become a jaded, unthinking society - and the well off and rich have taken full control to the point where persecuting and terrorizing the poor has become something resembling a blood sport. An evil, twisted game.

Many articles have been written about the abuse, criminalization, and even murder of the poor and homeless in recent years. The encroachment and intolerance perpetrated by yuppies and businesses are making life intolerable for the poor. The death of Kelly Thomas was an example of what is happening now.

He was beaten to death by six police officers in Fullerton California a few years ago. Although the poor are not always murdered this way they are abused in many ways. Activist groups have attempted at various times to repeal the many laws criminalizing the poor, they have met with little success.

Kelly Thomas (April 5, 1974 - July 10, 2011) was a homeless man diagnosed with scent, on July 5, 2011. Thomas was taken to St. Jude Medical Center before being transferred to the UC Irvine Medical Center, where he was comatose on arrival and not expected to recover. He never regained consciousness, and died on July 10, 2011.

Medical records show that bones in his face were broken and he choked on his own blood. The coroner concluded that compression of the thorax made it impossible for Thomas to breathe normally and deprived his brain of oxygen. His parents removed him from life support five days later, and he died from his injuries on July 10, 2011. Officer Manuel Ramos was charged with one count of second-degree murder and one count of involuntary manslaughter; Corporal Jay Cicinelli and Officer Joseph

Wolfe were each charged with one count of felony involuntary manslaughter and one count of excessive force. All three pleaded not guilty.

A judge declined to dismiss the charges against the officers in January 2013, finding that "a reasonable person could infer that the use of force was excessive and unreasonable." An appeals court judge also denied a request to overturn the lower court's decision. On January 13, 2014, Ramos and Cicinelli were found not guilty of all charges, while the trial for Wolfe was pending. Following the verdict for the two officers, the district attorney's office announced it would not pursue the case against Wolfe. On January 17, 2014, charges against Wolfe were dropped.' - (Wikipedia)

It was the manager of the Slidebar Rock-N-Roll Kitchen who called police and "falsely" reported that he was trying to break into parked cars in the business' parking lot. This is a continual thing - the homeless are lied about, harassed, terrorized, and condemned everywhere - and it is getting worse.

Although there are dozens of articles and reports regarding the harassment, abuse, and terrorizing of the poor - it continues to increase. The problem is that as the right and privilege of the well off increases, and as they are mollified and pampered more and more the public's sensitivity to injustice wanes - has waned until it is almost now non-existent. As the poor are terrorized, degraded, humiliated, with little or no resistance from those with power and voice - the working, middle, and upper classes, the poor are forgotten. The business community runs our government, our police, our security now - to such an extent that we, as a society don't even know it.

We need to have legislation put in place immediately - encouraged by politicians with the guts to speak against the powerful, the wealthy, the business community and their friends and relatives and contacts. This is what is lacking. Where have all the heroes gone? Perhaps the Green Party will be different... I think it's time to give this party a chance. We are becoming more brutal than all of the Caesars were so long ago.

**Become a yoga instructor.  
Training starts November 30 for  
ten Saturdays. To register for the  
2019-2020 course call Freya at  
780-433-4853 or contact Alberta  
Street News.**

# The Landlord's Lament

By Stella Lewis

One often hears about the plight of tenants forced to live in substandard conditions or unfairly evicted. Landlords are usually portrayed in books and movies as hard, cruel individuals with no empathy for others. In many cases this may be true but as with everything there is another side to the story. My husband, Rod, and I became landlords when we moved from our first small home in the country to a home we built down the hill. We were ill prepared for the job; he was a jack of all trades who was always helping people and I was soft hearted and always tried to see the best in others. What we didn't realize was that while we were raising our children in the quiet countryside the world was changing. Gone were the days when a man was as good as his word and things could be settled with a smile and a handshake. Because our old home was small with no basement and way out in the country the rent was low. We stated pets were welcome because we knew how much we cared about our own cats and dogs and we had heard that it was hard for people with animals to find housing.

Our first renters came with great references. He was an ex-police officer on disability pension with two school aged children who were happy to live out in the country. At first, I was the sweet old grandma bringing fresh baked banana bread and taking the children to Sunday School. Rod helped them in every way; boosting their car, fixing bicycles, and giving them rides to town. The father always seemed to have enough money for alcohol and cigarettes but after a while he started to fall behind on the rent. We felt sorry for them and he promised to pay so we let them stay on. Finally, when they were two months behind on the rent and the power commission had turned off the power for non payment they skipped out in the night for parts unknown.

They left us with a mountain of garbage and a house that needed thousands of dollars in repairs. There was no way the damage deposit could cover the cost. Tears stung my eyes as I walked through our old home now with ripped floor covering, holes in the drywall, a cracked window and a broken door. The soft pink room that had been my daughter's was painted a garish purple and the pale blue room where my sons played "Star Wars" so many years before had one black wall and hideous posters. We worked so hard filling the holes in the walls, repainting and hauling truckloads of old TV's, broken furniture, filthy clothes and rotting garbage to the landfill.

Lesson learned: Don't believe good refer-

ences. Anyone can be giving that reference, a family member, a friend, or another landlord desperate to be rid of them. Well meaning friends suggested that we sue for damages but we knew that would be costly and futile. You can't get blood out of a stone, and the people owned nothing of value. That was our baptism by fire into the wonderful world of the landlord. Much worse was to come!

I once read a saying that in life it is not new problems that hamper you but the same thing over and over again. Next we rented to an older man and his wife who seemed quite sensible and settled. The next thing we knew they had moved in their daughter, her boyfriend and their baby plus an adult son with two children who stayed there off and on. Things were fine for awhile and Rod continued to help them with their vehicles and bring little toys for the kids and baskets of apples from the market for the family. I even babysat the little girl a few times.

Even with the whole group all on social assistance, they couldn't pay the rent or the power bill. After a few months Rod gave them their eviction notice and they were very angry. Landlords have no way to protect their property in this situation. After an eviction notice is given, the renter has a certain amount of time before they must vacate the premises. During this time, they stripped all the electric wiring out of the two story barn on the property and sold it for copper, cut down a giant hundred year old tree and sold the wood, stuffed the electric heaters with dirty diapers and bread, peed on the walls, left rotting food in the fridge and deep freeze, trashed the place, and left a mountain of garbage.

We had just finished all the work when who should drive in the yard but our ex-renters. "We have a problem," the man said, "We can't find anywhere else to live so we're coming back." They were met with an angry roar of "Get off my property!" from my husband who could now be called a nasty landlord.

Friends told us that we should have known better than to rent to people on social assistance but I don't think that was the problem. I don't believe that being poor necessarily makes one dishonest. I was poor growing up as were many in my community who were fine upstanding people. I think the problem was they saw us as friends and thought they could take advantage of the friendship. Lesson learned; Tenants are not friends; keep the landlord/tenant relationship formal.

Over the years there were also good renters who paid the rent, didn't cause trouble, and left the place clean and in good repair but the bad far outweighed the good. One nice young couple we rented to turned out to be dope dealers. We found this out when the man was murdered behind a church in the city 30 km away in a dope deal gone wrong. The girlfriend claimed that the house was haunted by

a ghost who walked through the halls at night. She could hear things moving in the nearby shed which was in reality probably a family of raccoons. One day she told us she was refusing to pay the rent or back rent because the house was haunted by an evil spirit.

By this time, my husband had become the proverbial hardened landlord. "The only evil spirit in this house is you," he told her, "Pack up and leave."

Next came the man and his wife who turned out to be hoarders. They covered all the windows with blankets so no one could see their precious hoard of useless things. She was a huge red-haired woman and he was a small round black man. When they split up and left it came to light in a terrible case of domestic abuse, that she had been beating him up. She was arrested and had to go to anger management courses and do community service. They left with the rent all paid up but no one would take ownership of the hoard. Even the dark powerless barn was filled with the hoard; there were hundreds of Enquirers going all the way back to the OJ Simpson trial and Princess Diana's death. The poor garbage man almost took a heart attack when he saw the mountain of garbage I left for him. There are no limits to the number of bags one can put out and there is a big garbage pickup twice a year in this area. Still, we hauled truckloads of garbage to the landfill ourselves for months.

Then came the young folks who were growing marijuana in the treetops. Somehow they had hoisted a plywood platform thirty feet up onto the branches of a giant pine tree. The platform was hidden from below by the thick green branches but from above it received lots of sunlight. This was 20 years before marijuana was legal and he was probably selling it. The 98 year old lady who lived nearby spent her day sitting by her big window with binoculars. She told us that cars were coming and going to that house all the time and he always seemed to have plenty of money. They didn't stay long but the treetop platform is still up in the pine tree. No one is brave enough to climb up there with a saw and tear it down. It must be pretty sturdy because even hurricane Dorian didn't bring it crashing down.

Finally, we realized we were not making a cent on the property, in fact the constant repairs were costing far more than we made. I was so happy when we boarded up the small house on its four acre wooded lot and turned it over to the animals. Without humans around, lots of wild animals have found a sanctuary there. I have seen deer, bears, rabbits and even a young moose on the property and the trees are just filled with singing birds. Some feral cats live there and I go and feed them every day and give them fresh water.

Continued on page 13



## Letter to the Editor

Dear Linda Dumont

*I'm glad to hear the court recognized that Pedro was suffering from a mental illness and charges were dropped. Any other citizen would have been convicted of which Pedro is well aware. I don't think he qualifies as a pastor. A pastor looks after the needs of a congregation whereas Mr. Schultz has problems looking after himself. He also needs to understand that the police are in our community to PROTECT AND SERVE, They put themselves on the line daily on our behalf. I had a homeless person come behind me and say, "Who is this white bitch with the purse?" Then she made a fist and hit me in the face so my head hit a brick wall. She was obviously drunk and angry. I wouldn't have wanted anyone to interfere had the police been there to arrest her.*

*That was a very lovely picture of Pedro in his shirt and tie but in the future I hope he will wear it when he enters a place of worship. Even some restaurants allow – no shirt, no service. When I am in church, I'm in the presence of my "King of Kings" and find Pedro not wearing a shirt to the sanctuary very disrespectful.*

*Pedro should also realize that it is because of people like me, who contribute to the Salvation Army, Hope Mission and the Food Bank that people like him receive assistance.*

Sincerely,  
Ann Polovsky

## Ageism, Marginalization and Exclusion

By Maria B.

I want to dedicate this article to every senior that has been an incredible contributor in our society.

We live in a society where beauty and a youthful appearance is so highly acclaimed and we gladly adopt. Every store seems to have the kind of products that will make us appear younger. TV shows revolve around the lives of the young and beautiful and rich. The reality is that through our passage of time we hold on to our youth as long as we can in so many different ways. I remember my husband's grandfather at 80 years old; he just told my husband, "In my mind I feel young but my body is showing the frailties of age". And this is such a fact of life.

In the fantasy and the merry go round of life we define ourselves through our looks, through the job we hold, through our title and through the money we have and this becomes the identification of who we are. Like a mirror we reflect this to everyone close to us or anyone that comes into our path of our life.

At the same time on the other side of the same coin we must deal with the competitiveness, the impatience, the prejudices, the vulnerabilities, the fears, the envies and the deceit. The time comes that we must get off the merry go round, take off the blinders and give up the glitter in order to see the truth of who we are and the incredible intrinsic value that we hold as human beings. We must cease to identify

**Continued on page 15**



## Landlord's lament - continued from page 7

They are the best renters I've ever had; they are always so happy to see me and so thankful for the food I bring. They make no trouble and do not damage the property in any way. The property now has a lovely peaceful atmosphere and it is a pleasure to go there unlike when it was rented out.

That should have been the end of this true tale that it is stranger than fiction but remember life hands you the same thing over and over or is it that we somehow make the same wrong choices again and again. Either way, we were now back in the same situation, a little smarter perhaps but no match for what was to come. We had taken care of my husband's mother for many years when she was in her 80's and 90's and her health began to fail. When she passed away she left us her old house in town. We should have known better but rather than but rather than sell my husband wanted to rent it out. The old house was like a snapshot of the 70's with lots of very small rooms all done in dark brown wood panel contrasting the bright blue linoleum floor. The windows were small and the house was very dark and out dated but it was built strong and stood on a three acre lot. The first folks were some of our best renters; they were a quiet older couple who made no trouble. We were sorry to see them go when they left

to take care of a sick relative.

Then came the professional conman. Our next renter claimed to be a carpenter and told us he would do renovations to the house in return for reduced rent. He also claimed to be a mechanic and offered very reasonable rates for fixing vehicles. The couple said they were running a reptile rescue center for unwanted animals and they had cages of snakes, lizards, and turtles. Although it sounded noble, what they were really doing was taking unwanted reptiles and selling them to the highest bidder!! We soon learned that his mechanic work was shoddy and he never gave receipts for the parts he installed. The carpenter work he did was sub-par and he never finished a job leaving windows half installed and roughly patched drywall.

He began demanding money for things like a steel door then claimed we never paid him. Finally Rod realized he was a con man, who had been scamming him for money and not doing the work. When confronted he became enraged knowing his con game was up and he decided to get even. They left mid January without notice and had the power turned off so the pipes would freeze. Luckily a neighbour alerted us the next day and we rushed up with Coleman heaters to try to save the pipes until we could have the power turned back on. Then, he went to the city and laid a formal complaint against the house saying it was unsafe and not up to code.

When the building inspector came he told us he never would have bothered with the house as there are thousands of older homes like it but they have to follow up on formal complaints. Things that were fine thirty years ago like wood panel and small windows no longer meet the building code standards. We were left with a list of twenty things that had to be changed, the most daunting being the whole house had to be redone in drywall!! Lesson learned: Beware of conmen that like to prey on seniors like ourselves, fake people often shine brighter than the real.

In the past 30 years it has been the same story over and over. At 70 years old I should be sitting in a rocking chair writing my memoirs not sanding drywall. We thought that we would have a great way to supplement our senior pension with rental income. Not so! The taxes and constant repairs to the properties take all the rental income and then some. We have lost faith in people in general and the constant stress has taken its toll on our health and well being. If you are thinking of buying a fixer upper rental property to make money, think again. You would do better to take your money, put it in a tin can, and bury it in the back yard. At least the money will all be there when you go to dig it up!

# Poor Seniors

## Aging in Place

By Joanne Bengert

Last Christmas I was talking to a friend and asked, "How are Bill and Sue doing?" (not their real names).

She said, "Housework just got to be too much for Sue so they moved into a seniors' home."

I said, "Didn't she qualify for free housekeeping? They are over 80 so they wouldn't even need a medical note to qualify?"

My friend asked what I was talking about. I explained that low income seniors can get up to \$1,200 a year to pay for housekeeping, mowing and snow removal whether they are owners or renters as long as they aren't renting from family members. Under 80 they need a note from their doctor to qualify.

My friend looked sad. She said, "If Bill and Sue had only known they would still be in their home. They didn't want to go."

It is too late for them to ever go back now. Once a home is broken up there is no place to return to.

Bill and Sue are not alone. There are still many people who are unaware of how well the new concept of Aging in Place is working. Seniors are given as much help as they need so they can remain in their own homes as long as they can and they can put off entering a seniors' home until it becomes absolutely necessary.

Della, (not her real name) is a very satisfied senior ageing in place in the home she shared with her husband. Her son, who works in the oilfields for 14 days at a time and then has three days off, appreciates being able to relax in the family home on his days off. Her daughter, married with children and a full time job, is no longer a stressed out member of the sandwich generation. She used to have to take time off work to care for Della and spent all of her days off cooking and cleaning for her mother. Now she can enjoy visiting Della again.

Three years ago Della was planning on moving into a seniors' home. In fact, she had already applied and was just waiting for a vacancy. She wasn't looking forward to it, but she knew she had become a burden to the children she loves. Then she heard about Family and Community Support Services (FCSS). She contacted them and was evaluated and then everything fell into place like magic. They saw to it that she got the help she needed to remain living independently in her own home.

Della isn't sure how or why it works, but she knows it works and that is all that matters. A well-oiled government machine is seeing to

all her needs. If her needs change in the future, they will adjust her care.

Della has hidden a key outside her door so Health Care Aids can let themselves in. Her first Pill Lady arrives between 10 a.m. and noon to check to see that she has taken her meds and eaten. The second Pill Lady visits between 4 and 5 in the afternoon. She checks to make sure meds have been taken and heats up supper. Twice a week in the afternoon, the Pill Lady gives Della a bath and washes her hair.

There is also a housekeeper. At first she came every two weeks, but now she comes weekly. One week she works for one hour and just washes the dishes, cleans the bathroom and dusts. The next week she works for two hours and scrubs the floors and vacuums as well.

To keep everything organized there is a folder on top of Della's fridge. Health Care Aids initial every time they come and sometimes they make notes.

That is all the help Della needs to Age in Place. For the most part she only leaves her house for medical appointments but she phones relatives and friends and she has visitors. She moves easily from room to room with her walker and her cane and enjoys adult coloring books, TV and word search games.

Della has fallen a few times but she is well looked after. Each fall is reported and a nurse comes immediately to see that all is well and there is no serious injury. Della feels secure.

Della is not alone. Her son can be counted on to do the laundry and yard work on his days off. Her daughter enjoys shopping for Della. That is how they express their love.

Other seniors need help. Rest assured, it will be tailored to fit. Some people, like Della, prefer to get thorough an agency. Those who enjoy filling in forms often opt to do their own research.

The information booklet, Special Needs Assistance for Seniors is available from Alberta Supports Centre at 1-877-644-9992 in Edmonton. It tells what funding is available for poor seniors – single seniors earning under \$27,690 a year and a senior couple earning under \$44,965 a year.

Reading through the booklet one realizes how compassionate and understanding the Alberta Government is when it come to understanding the problems of seniors. If a senior has a hoarding problem, for example, assistance up to \$600 will be given for home clean up. This funding is only available once in a lifetime and the hoarding problem has to be identified by a social worker, a community based worker or an agency.

Up to \$300 will be provided for fumigation should the unlucky senior get a bedbug infestation.

For seniors who have trouble handling money there is help. If utilities have been disconnected or will be disconnected within 48 hours because the senior is hopelessly in arrears, the Alberta government will come to

the rescue and pay these arrears, but only once, every three years.

For seniors with mobility issues, the government Residential Access modification Program will help in modifying the home so the senior resident can move around easily. The is even \$800 available should the senior need a chair lift.

Sometimes remaining independent requires little more than having the right information so the senior can find the right help at the right time.

Ann is a healthy 78 year old living independently, doing her own housekeeping and yard work. She only needs help in one area. She has never driven. When her husband died five years ago, she lost her chauffeur.

He loving but far flung family thought she should move into a seniors' home in the city because none of them lived close enough to drive her about and her home is in a small Alberta town with no bus or taxi service.

Ann refused to move. She did an lot of phoning and found a lot of help. A seniors' bus charges \$20 to take her to town to shop once a week. A typical bus day begins at 9 a.m. when the bus picks her up at the door. If she has any appointments, the driver will drive her directly to them and picks her up when she is done.

If she has no appointments, Ann's typical day on the seniors bus begins with shopping at Wal-Mart until noon. They she and her fellow passengers enjoy a relaxed meal at a nice restaurant. Finally they go to the mini mall where they can shop at IGA, the dollar store and a drug store. If she wants to go any place at all, a medical appointment, the bank, the polling station for voting, or a store with a great sale on, the bus driver delivers her there. In fact, when there is a great sale on all of the passengers may go there. They are a very close knit group who like to do things together. There is no set time for returning home, but Ann is usually home by 4 p.m. The driver carries her heavy groceries to the door and Ann is set for the week.

Anne settled her husband's will while riding on the bus, and her family hasn't worried about her since. They realize she is completely in control of her life and not being able to drive has perhaps even enriched her life.

The seniors' bus makes summer trip to Miette and winter trips to go shopping at West Edmonton Mall.

As Ann explains, "It is not just transportation. It is part of my social life."

Between bus trips Ann is not trapped at home. She has a volunteer driver who only charges a minimal fee to cover the cost of gasoline. Ann loves to travel. She misses the Greyhound bus which discontinued services in the west, but her volunteer driver or a friend will always get her to the airport or Edmonton bus depot.



# Welcome to the month of No

By Joanne Benger

Times have not changed much since Thomas Hood wrote:  
 No warmth, no cheerfulness, no healthful ease.  
 No comfortable feel in any member.  
 No shade, no shine, no butterflies, no bees.  
 No fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no birds – November.

It is now November, which is Diabetes month and Epilepsy Month as well as Literacy Month.  
 November 1 is when we remember the sinners like us who are probably still meandering through Purgatory. It is not for us to judge.  
 November 2 is Sadie Hawkin's Day that goes back to 1937 and A Capp's cartoon strip Lil Abner.  
 November 3 Daylight Saving Time ends. We can sleep an extra hour tonight as we turn the clock back.  
 November 3 is also Sandwich Day so enjoy your favourite hoagie today as you celebrate Daniel Boone's birthday.  
 November 5 is our National Fireworks Day and Britain's Guy Fawkes Day or bonfire night. Light up the night and enjoy.  
 November 9 is Mata Hari Day and we remember the glamorous counterspy who was shot November 1912. She played a man's game and died a man's death.  
 November 11 is Remembrance Day. WW1 Ended on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918. Wear a poppy and have a moment of silence at eleven.  
 November 17 is World Peace Day. Many groups will pray for peace today.  
 November 20 is National Children's Day. Celebrate with a child and keep your inner child alive.  
 November 21 is World Hello Day. Brighten up November a bit by saying Hello to 10 people today.  
 November 23 is National Adoption Day. It is a time to thank your parents if you were adopted as well as a time to adopt an unwanted pet for winter is coming.  
 November 24 is Evolution Day. 160 years ago today, Darwin published The Evolution of the Species and we are still debating it.  
 November 26 is International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Light a candle for the missing women.  
 Thanks to TV and internet and the shrinking world we now get a second helping of Thanksgiving the American way. November 27 is Hob Nobble Gobble Day which is followed by Thanksgiving Day November 28. this is followed by fiber Monday, December 2 when our shopping goes on line.  
 November 29 is National Cat Day. Pamper your pets today.  
 November 30 is St. Andrew's Day in Scotland. Wear your plaid.  
 The last week in November is National Game and Puzzle week. It is a good way to start the coming winter's indoor activities. No more softball, no more tag – November.

## Ageism - continued from page 13

ourselves through our material "things" and embrace and display the fact in the truth of who we are. Our identity should "not" be defined by what others want us to be. It should be defined by our values and be aligned to our actions. Instead of focusing on differences we must find the sameness as human beings and realize that we have the inherent right to be equal and be treated with dignity and respect just like we must treat others.

We notice seniors' services have been kept at the bare minimum and every time there is shortness of wealth, senior's services are the first ones that get spearheaded by our government. Unfortunately every one of us will be using the same seat at some time of our life becoming the moving transparencies and forgotten beings in our society, the easy targets for the loss of services that we rightly deserve.

Ageism only serves to deny value to the lives of the elderly. The denial of value is to deny them their dignity. In order to possess dignity we have to know that we own an inherent value that demands respect. As we are aware, ageism is a form of disrespect that leads to blatant discrimination, which strips seniors from their rightful place in society and only serves to stigmatize them. No wonder people develop a sense of hopelessness, low self confidence in life and low self esteem.

While discrimination involves overtly hostile behavior, it also includes behaviors that may appear quite positive but that ultimately serve to prevent elderly people from attaining their goals like: While the government seems to be providing the needed health services the long waits for these services can aggravate seniors' health problems. Keeping seniors on the fixed income ignores the facts that without regulation, basic services like food, electricity, gas and taxes continue to increase their prices making it very hard to survive on a fix wage. We must not forget housing which seems unattainable, long lists that have turned into years of waiting and exuberant rents make it almost impossible to find appropriate shelter.

It is not only the marginalized financial help but it is also the process of the oppression of the "human essence", the mind and the self. People are being forced to turn inward into isolation and hopelessness, stripping them out of their "humanity" and becoming a thing that is draining tax payers' funds.

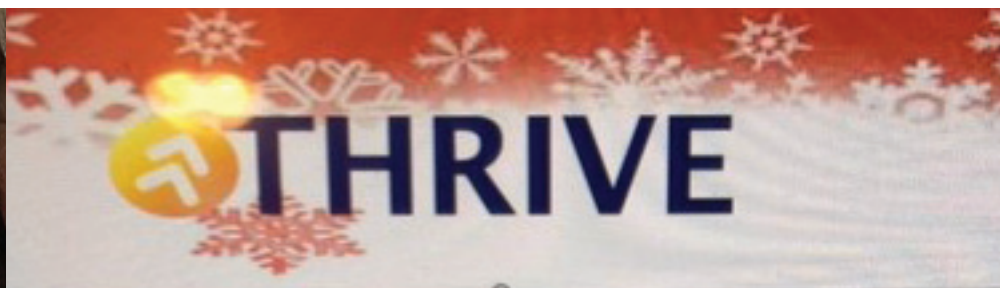
As members of society we either become the followers or the trail blazers for the fundamental changes that must take place in order to become a more inclusive society. The blinders must be discarded and we must realize that how we treat the vulnerable members of society, one day, we will be holding that "vulnerable" place.

We have to go to the roots of the matter and the roots that form our consciousness as human beings, as equality should be our motivating force that will allow seeing everyone as an equal and with the same rights for a quality of life. When we help others to attain their potentials, we are developing our own. Instead of embarking in a transparent and sedentary journey, by giving seniors the respect and dignity that they rightly deserve, their journey becomes evolutionary as the spiritual being that they are meant to be at the end of their journey. We are all connected in the level of "being".

Dignity is about respecting ourselves and others, it is about recognizing that everyone has the right to be and have their presence acknowledged. It is about belonging, it is about honoring who we are.

Seniors are our historians, the source of wisdom, the representation of hard work, and the heroes that have made it possible for us to live in freedom. Through their lives they have been not only been monetary contributors but they have contributed by raising children that have become the current contributors and through them they will generate the future contributors of our society.

They deserve to be recognized and treated as the intricate part of the fabric of our society that honours us with their presence.



**BRINGING CHRISTMAS TO THE COMMUNITY DECEMBER 25**

## **CHRISTMAS DAY DINNER THREE LOCATIONS**

**1. HAZELDEAN COMMUNITY LEAGUE, Southside 4 to 7 p.m.  
9630 - 66 Avenue, Edmonton, Wheelchair access**

**2. BOYLE STREET COOP 4-7 p.m. 10116-105 Avenue,  
Edmonton, Wheelchair access**

**3. WEST END OUTREACH 3-6 p.m. 10105-153 Street, Edmonton**

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME**

### **Greetings:**

The 5th year, Thrive Outreach Foundation is bringing Christmas into our communities! We have Four locations in Edmonton where we are planning to serve over 4300 people.

And we would love for you to be a part of this again this December 25, 2019 Christmas Day Dinner. Currently we have the southside location held for the 2nd year at our very own Hazeldean community league, with still requiring some assistance with finances for this event as we mentioned below. Our focus is to keep this as an annual project in our city to bring awareness that we are here to serve within the community.

The event of each location cost \$7800 and the amount that you decide to support is entirely up to you and which location you may choose as well. Amounts donated last year was well put towards what was necessary for the event. The location that is being held in the communities on Christmas Day

Dec 25th is Boyle Street along with Mission Hall, Hazeldean Community league, and as well Jasper Place Community Hall; we do have enough volunteers (82) to be exact, if you are unable to attend on that day.

Past year we were able to provide a place to celebrate Christmas:

1. A family, who had a child in the Stollery Hospital, needed a place to go with their other children to bring some joy into their life during a very stressful situation.
2. Many families from the Ronald McDonald House along with the Battered Women's Shelter and many seniors were in attendance as well.
3. Broken families, ones who lost love ones being alone or simply can not afford this day.

We are providing a safe place and creating better memories for them. The look on a child's face when you hand a gift to them - no words can express the amount of joy that it brings. Seniors engaging in conversation and listening to the stories and memories

that they share makes this event all worth the while. You could never put a price on this!

There are many agencies that put on a turkey dinner throughout the month of December BUT not on the day of Christmas; hence it is so important to our Foundation that these individuals know that **THEY** matter; **THEY** are valued and loved and it gives them a sense of belonging. We **SERVE**

Any financial donation you could contribute towards these costs is greatly appreciated. Together we are making a difference in someone's life at Christmas. Please make your cheques payable to Thrive Outreach Foundation.

Please note that we recognize that we are not able to do this alone, we need you to help make this possible. Let us make this happen and set the fine example in our community.

Thank you for considering this request.

**Elaine Dyrberg  
780-983-1409**



**Tent City 2019** - In September, tents and shelters, providing homes for homeless people, lined both sides of the street on 105 Avenue west of 96 Street. Police gave the campers a week's notice to move on, but many stayed on.

Photos by Linda Dumont