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Memorilal March - Story on page 2

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12th Annual Memorial March held Valentine's Day

By Linda Dumont

On Valentine's Day, 100s of men, women and children gathered in the basement of Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples for the annual Memorial March of Edmonton for Missing and Murdered Women, in memory of loved ones who were taken by violence. Prior to the march, Linda Boudreau Semaganis, mother of Danielle Boudreau who has organized the Edmonton march for the past 12 years, addressed the gathered marchers.

"This isn't a First Nations issue. This isn't a Métis issue. This isn't a white issue. This is a community issue," Boudreau Semaganis said in her address, "I look at these women from 12-years-old to two grannies It's not all high-risk lifestyle. It's kids, kids we knew growing up."

The march began with many of the participants carrying signs and photos of loved ones taken by violence.

Danielle Boudreau started the Memorial March in Edmonton in 2006 after both her friend and her sister-in-law were murdered.

"We wanted to them to be treated like human beings, as they deserved, rather than defined only by their death and addictions or unfortunate involvement in sex trade work," wrote Boudreau in a post in advance of the 12th annual memorial march.

Now Boudreau has decided not to continue to organize the march. "I've done it all basically by myself," she said. "And my son had passed away three years ago, and I'm just ready to move on to other things now. I want to focus more on our youth and educating our youth."

Boudreau says the march is a cause that will always be close to her heart and she hopes new organizers will bring more attention to this issue.

Another march was held at the University of Alberta on Valentine's Day.

The first women's memorial march was held in 1992 in response to the murder of a Coast Salish woman on Powell Street in Vancouver. Out of this sense of hopelessness and anger came an annual march on Valentine's Day to express compassion, community, and caring for all women in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, unceded Coast Salish Territories.

Twenty seven years later, the women's memorial march continues to honour the lives of missing and murdered women and all women's lives lost in the Downtown Eastside. In addition, over the years, the February 14th Women's Memorial March has expanded to cities across Canada including Edmontons, as well as internationally.

Women, especially Indigenous women, face physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual violence on a daily basis.

THE VIEWS PRESENTED ARE THOSE OF THE CONTRIBUTORS.

Permanent Temporariness and Disposable Workers

By Timothy Wild

Buried deeply in the notes section of his book *Trouble in Paradise*, the Slovenian philosopher-activist Slavoj Žižek writes, “Those who claim that the working class is disappearing are right to some extent – it is disappearing from our sight. There is a new working class emerging all around us, from the United Arab Emirates to South Korea, a nomadic class of invisible migrant workers separated from their homes and families, living in isolated dormitories in the suburbs of prosperous cities, with almost no political or legal rights, no healthcare or retirement arrangements.” A peripheral and bleak existence to be sure; alienated from the comfort and love of family and community, and consigned to the precarious social margins of a foreign economy.

Alberta, of course, has its own hidden working class. Foreign workers come to our province through a number of avenues and perform many of the jobs that local people are unwilling to take. They provide the low-wage work so necessary to profitability in certain sectors of our economy. This dependency, by itself, is not that unusual. After all, Canada’s immigration laws and policies were, for the most part, based on meeting the need for both skilled and “unskilled” labour. Humanitarian concerns were not really a consideration. The country was built by the hard physical labour of people from many countries who performed the unpleasant work in the mines, farms, forests, factories, ports and mills that ultimately served as the economic foundation for Confederation and beyond.

However, as argued by Vincenzo Pietropaolo in *Harvest Pilgrims: Mexican and Caribbean Farm workers in Canada*, one thing that was important was that the workers (and their families) came as immigrants. They may not have been exactly welcomed by the French and Anglo-Saxon establishments, and were often forced to keep

to themselves in cultural enclaves, but they did have the opportunity to live and work here and, eventually, become Canadian citizens. The dirty work was still distributed along class and race based lines, but was (generally) doled out to residents of the country. Although certainly skewed by money and power, there was at least some mutually beneficial relationship. Canada was their home.

This was a different route than that taken by many other countries, such as Germany, which have relied on temporary workers for some time without any plans to grant these workers permanent residency or citizenship. The results are obvious. Canada has seen large-scale immigration for over a century with (relatively) successful integration and peaceful co-existence between cultures. Germany and other European countries have pockets of temporary workers (look at the experience of some Turkish “guest workers”), and their children and grandchildren who have never been fully welcomed or integrated into society.

More recently, however, Canada has sought immigrants for permanent residency who have highly valued skills, and the less desirable labour is being undertaken by temporary, migrant workers – a practice that grew substantially during the years of the Harper regime with the labour market impact assessment of the Temporary Foreign Worker program. These workers, involved in agriculture, healthcare and the service sectors of the economy, work hard and send remittances back to their families. Yet while these workers pay into the state programs such as EI, they enjoy few, if any, of the benefits of these contributory based insurance programs. Their wages are generally lower than Canadians working in the same sector. They also do not qualify for permanent residency in Canada, and can be sent to their home country when their contract ends or their employment is severed. In sum, they are subject to some of the most

precarious working conditions around, and are viewed almost exclusively as units of labour as opposed to people.

In fact, they are disposable. Pietropaolo, for example, argues that, “The ‘temporary’ nature of the migrant farm worker program is in reality a myth, because the benefits of the program to employers can only exist through the preservation of the program in the long term.” He states that the “unique attraction of the program is in the contradictory concept of ‘permanent temporariness’ which can be surmised as the reason why landed immigrant status is not allowed for these workers.” The temporary nature is a core element of the approach to meeting the needs of the labour market. As mentioned, temporary foreign workers help meet an immediate need, and allow us as a country the dubious opportunity to avoid making long-term commitment to workers as immigrants. On a more practical level, this disposable labour also helps keep food costs down. Yet the workers themselves pay the high price for this market fluidity.

There are a number of organizations that are attempting to advocate for and mobilize temporary foreign workers. Migrante Alberta, for example, works with workers (and their family members) from the Philippines to ensure that their (minimum) employment, occupational health and safety, and civil rights are respected. They also advocate on the broader level for changes in the legislation supporting the Temporary Foreign Worker program. Migrante is doing a great job. But more work needs to be done, and it is essential that we act in solidarity based on the common humanity that dwells in all of us. Times are cold and unpredictable; the least we can do is attempt to live in right relationship, and recognise our global commitments to justice, peace and belonging. People must come first. There is so much mistrust, despair and fear going on in the world, and we sorely

Someone Who Cares

By Linda Roan

The afternoon was windy and cold, so any bus that was going in my direction would do. Not paying attention to the number of the next bus that came along, I was about to get in but I hesitated at the door. The aisles and seats were filled with students. It was a "School Special" bus. The bus driver smiled and waved me in despite how full the bus was.

"Noisy, isn't it?" the driver asked.

"Yes", I said, "It is a beautiful sound".

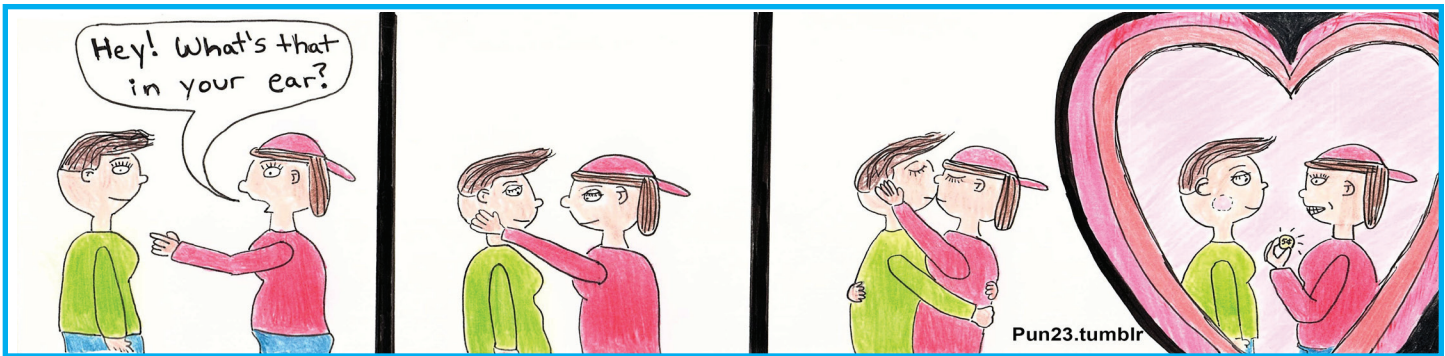
The bus driver smiled and drove on. He began talking to the two boys standing closest to him. "Focus on your

studies. Don't get side-tracked by other students. You don't need to follow the crowd. You will be successful at whatever you want to do in life if you put your focus on your goals."

This conversation carried on until we reached our destination. Before I got off the bus I turned to the bus driver and said "You are a good friend to these boys."

The driver smiled and said, "I only met them yesterday."

How many kids would listen to a stranger giving them advice? What made these boys listen to the driver? I guess it is because he really cares. He cared enough to let me on the "School Special"!



The transgender child

1. Notice whether they make any remarks about their gender. Young children may state their gender as a fact: "Daddy, you know I'm a girl, right?" They may classify themselves as another gender or go to the other side when told "boys line up here."

2. Watch for signs of dissatisfaction with their private parts. They may cry about it, attempt to hide their body parts, et cetera. In some cases, they may express desire to self-mutilate (in which case they should see a doctor immediately so they can be assured that transition can happen in the proper medical manner). If your daughter wants to cut off her penis, tell her that this could kill her, and that a doctor can do it safely when she is eighteen (if she still wants to then). Trans girls may insist on peeing sitting down, while trans

boys might want to pee standing up, potentially leading to a mess.

3. Watch their clothing and grooming choices. Cisgender children (the same sex as they are identified as at birth) will naturally experiment a little with gender presentation, depending on their personality and tastes. Transgender children may prefer to dress in ways that are not typically associated with their assigned sex. Here are some ways this may manifest:: Only wanting clothes from the pink section or the blue section, dressing up with objects (e.g. making a skirt out of blankets), wearing, or wanting to wear, their hair differently than is typical of their assigned sex, appearing so masculine/feminine that strangers think they are another gender.

4. Watch how they play. Transgender children may pretend to be the different gender while playing, or play in a way that is gendered differently than

their assigned sex.

5. Notice who their playmates are. Transgender children may feel more comfortable around children of their actual gender. A "girl" who plays with only boys may actually be a boy, and vice versa.

6. Consider their mood. Transgender children may appear sad, withdrawn, or closed off from the world. They may be diagnosed with depression. This may quickly reverse once they are given clothes and a name that matches their real gender.

7. Recognize that a transgender child may not exhibit all these signs. Every child is different—they experience gender differently, and their comfort level may be different. Take into account your child's personality and background. When in doubt, start educating.

Mother fights for transgender child's right to use the girls' washroom

By Linda Dumont

(Names have been changed to protect privacy.)

An Edmonton mother had to fight for her child's right to use the girls' bathroom at school. The child was born a boy but identifies herself as a girl.

"From the time she could talk, she would indicate that she was a girl and gravitate towards girls' toys and stuff. When she started Grade One, she said "I have a girl's brain and a girl's heart but a boy's body," her mother, Laura said.

The child transitioned during the first year in school, starting the school year with a boy's name and dressed as a boy.

Laura googled to learn whatever she could about what transgender meant. She contacted the Pride Centre and reached out to other parents and spoke with professionals world wide. Dr. Patrick, here in Edmonton, is one of three gender dysphoria doctors in Alberta.

"We got in with him quite soon after we learned how my daughter felt," Laura said. "After that first appointment there was no denying it, so we collectively decided it would be best if she transitioned during the summer break, however she was so unhappy that she transitioned during spring break. She left as a boy and came back as a girl. My husband is 110% in agreement and very supportive."

Laura met with the school board and there was a lot of discussion about pronouns and the name change, but the bathroom issue was not discussed. They had meetings in January, and in February they said they had a perfect solution – an everybody bathroom.

"At first I was ecstatic," Laura said, "But my daughter felt she should be

able to use the female one as well. She had to use only the everybody bathroom and have an escort to take her there as well."

She approached the school principal, the district principal, the superintendent, even the minister of education, arguing her child should be able to use the girls' washroom. But it remained off limits, with the child instead escorted by another student to a gender-neutral washroom each time the need arose.

Laura appealed to the school trustees of the Catholic School board, and that prompted attention to the issue. The story went out to the media, and finally the school allowed the child to use the female washroom, but only after Laura filed a human rights complaint. She credits school trustee Patricia Grell, who publicly criticized the board's decision contrary to board policy.

"She is my daughter and I wouldn't change her for anything."

"No parent wants to have the conversation with their child about encouraging them wanting to live, and encouraging them that they are not a disgrace to God," she said. "So you go and you pray in your own sanctuary and here comes Patricia Grell. The answer to my prayers," Laura said.

Catholic school trustee Patricia Grell disagreed with the decision to make the transgender girl use a separate washroom. "I'm very worried about that child's mental health and well-being," she said.

The board said it would create a new policy for washroom use in consultation with the Archdiocese of Edmonton, medical specialists, par-

ents and educational experts. For now though every case will be decided on a case-by-case basis, it said.

"In keeping with Catholic theology and philosophy, the board considers that this individual circumstance is best addressed on an interim basis at the school level," the board said in a news release.

"It's been good for her," Laura said. "She can use the female bathroom. She is living her authentic self now."

However as a mother she is ambivalent with the decision. "Is this a today solution and then next year it's a different solution? I'm very torn."

The child is involved in a variety of sports. She plays on the girls' team, uses girls' change rooms, and the girls' bathroom. There have been no issues with her team mates or their families. She is even invited to sleepovers.

There is a transgender clinic at the Stollery Children's Hospital, and when she reaches puberty, she can take hormone blockers.

"She is not there yet," said Laura, "Not until six months after puberty."

In Alberta, a transgendered child cannot have sexual reassignment surgery until they reach the age of 18.

"In the meantime," Laura said, "She is my daughter and I wouldn't change her for anything. Her brother is very protective of her and very supportive. Our family model is - It is not for us to understand but for us to respect."

There are other transgender students in the school system.

"It's in Edmonton," Laura said. "It's in the school system. I'm not asking anybody to understand or agree with our decisions to allow our daughter to transition. I'm asking them to respect it."

MacDonald Lofts hit with 377 health orders

This is the way the world ends: Not with a bomb but a health order
You can't make an omelette without breaking some eggs.

By Allan Sheppard

That trenchant proverb has been around for centuries. It probably began among freebooting empire builders justifying their pursuit of land, resources, and wealth as an expression of raw power, divine right, or Manifest Destiny (full-strength, as in the United States; lite, as in Canada). It has served the interests of self-righteously self-interested tyrants of many ideological colours. Lately it has been appropriated by wagers of war by other means: the creative destroyers of capitalism.

Enter the art of development (or redevelopment)—and the entrepreneurs, politicians, functionaries, and bureaucrats who engage in and facilitate (or enable) the practice.

Enter Daryl Katz, with a posse of architects, consultants, and functionaries looking for ways to leverage the profit potential of his newly acquired National Hockey League team, the Edmonton Oilers, and inclining toward a new arena as a means of maximizing that potential.

Enter also then-mayor Stephen Mandel, with a posse of councillors, bureaucrats, and consultants, looking for a way to revitalize a downtown core that had been gutted in the aftermath of the late Premier Ralph Klein's ascent to power. That ascent had led quickly to downsizing of provincial government operations centred substantially in Edmonton's downtown and shifting of a significant part of the remainder to the premier's bailiwick, Calgary. Edmonton's downtown languished. When Mandel graduated from one-term councillor to mayor in 2004, the doldrums had lasted for almost a quarter-century.

Former developer Mandel took office with a mission that he did not apologize

for: to revitalize Edmonton's core as a personal and community legacy. When Katz who as bona fide multi-billionaire could (and might have been expected to) live anywhere, purchased the Oilers in 2008 and declared his loyalty and ongoing commitment to living in and pursuing the growth and betterment of his home town, he set the stage for a marriage of true minds that was hastily consummated as a plan to build a downtown arena that would give Katz significant profit potential and bragging rights and Mandel the legacy-project he wanted.

There were impediments to the marriage. Some councillors and community leaders argued that Katz wanted too much in direct and indirect subsidies. Some objected to anticipated impacts on communities in the area. Others questioned whether the benefits promised by Katz and Mandel would ever be realized and if they would be worth the cost and disruption.

Time has proven the skeptics wrong. What was sold as a win-win proposition for the city, the Oilers, and Katz now seems to have been worth the price. So far.

The arena has been built and opened. It is an aesthetic gem in a city not noted for architectural excellence and a welcome diversion from Edmonton's glut of shopping malls. The Oilers continue to sell out as they have for years, and the entertainment venue, whether hosting Cirque du Soleil as a grand opener or country superstar Garth Brooks for an impressive nine-performance run, shows promise of bringing bigger and better attractions to appreciative audiences. And the amount of construction in the Ice District development area around the arena has been so huge as, I suspect, to surprise and please even the most enthusiastic advocates of the

edifice as an economic generator.

So why the negative talk and imagery around omelettes and broken eggs?

It's not about the arena and the construction it has generated. Most of that has occurred on properties that were vacant or, like the Greyhound terminal and Baccarat Casino, had outlived their usefulness. With the continuing expansion of MacEwan University, the near completion of the Royal Alberta Museum, and the hoped-for development of a signature building on the Baccarat site, the brownfield remnant of the rail rights of way that used to separate the downtown from natural and logical northward expansion has made that movement both desirable and inevitable. Extending the downtown northward, perhaps as far as 111 Avenue, is logical: a no-brainer.

And yet...

Attractive as downtown development and northward extension may seem, there is a dark side: gentrification. My Concise Canadian Oxford Dictionary defines to gentrify as to "convert (a working-class or inner city neighbourhood...) into an area of middle-class residence." The online Urban Dictionary is not so mealy-mouthed: It describes gentrification as a process of "urban renewal" of lower class neighbourhoods with condos (that) attracts yuppie tenants, driving up rents and driving out long time, lower income residents... changing the social character of the neighbourhood."

The Urban Dictionary notes that the lower-income residents driven out by gentrification are "often ethnic/racial minorities." Lower-income residents, many of them from ethnic/racial minorities, is an accurate description of the people who live in the area that is likely

to be gentrified by Ice-District developments, with Katz a direct or indirect beneficiary.

And that, dear friends, is the omelette.

The eggs that will and must inevitably be broken to make the omelette will be the lower-income, lower-class residents, many of them Aboriginals or recent immigrants, some with addictions and mental health issues, who live and work in the area.

The tool of choice for corporate and civic omelette-makers is strategic enforcement of health orders, as occupants of MacDonald Lofts, a low-income housing building less than a block away from the arena, are discovering. Martyshuk Housing, the former owners and current managers of the building (now owned by Katz's Ice District), has been hit with 377 health orders citing breaches under the Public Health Act. Infractions include predictable insect infestations and health and safety-related maintenance concerns. It's the same tool that was used to shut down the Locke Apartments during gentrification of the Norwood area a decade or so ago.

The strategy is simple: hit the owners of buildings that stand in the way of gentrification-as-progress with so many citations that their only rational choice is to accept the inevitable and sell, displacing residents. Those at Locke Apartments were promised help to find new accommodation; what they got, according to ASN editor Linda Dumont, whose late husband was a resident, was photocopies of classified ads from newspapers.

The same strategy was used in the 1990s to redevelop the Boyle Street area, east of downtown, into acres of parking lots that are only now lurching back to life as The Quarters district.

The beauty of the strategy, if one is a developer or a politician with ambitions, is that it demonizes the victim and sanctifies the victimizer: anyone who lives among vermin, out of choice or necessity, and who is coincidentally poor and otherwise marginalized can be treated as

one or two small steps away from being vermin themselves, and treated accordingly. Anyone who forces residents out of such deplorable conditions is doing them and the community a favour.

It's an ugly metaphor, and I won't pursue it. But there is nothing nice about the process of gentrification. Or the way those leading the charge seem oblivious to its effects.

As soon as the agreement to build the arena and its location were announced, anyone who bothered to think about the consequences would have realized that gentrification and displacement of the low-income residents were inevitable. Not to have anticipated that outcome would have been incompetent; not to have prepared for an exodus of refugees from gentrification would have been irresponsible.

Yet that is what happened.

Had it been otherwise, the city and the Ice District would have been prepared for inevitable displacement of low-income residents. Yet the current dilemma facing the about-to-be-former residents of MacDonald Lofts suggests nothing was done. And it doesn't take much skepticism to assume that the city and the Ice District have done nothing to anticipate and prepare for inevitable, irresistible pressure to displace Boyle Street Co-op, the Spady Centre, Hope Mission and others offering non-profit and for-profit services to poor and indigent citizens located nearby.

It's late, but surely not too late, for the city and the Katz Group (which has so far washed its hands of a problem it created, aided and abetted by the city, and which it surely expects to profit from, handsomely) to do the right thing. We see little evidence that is happening.

I'll close with another metaphor that



readers may find ugly. Last year Canadians and Edmontonians responded with urgency and generosity to the plight of Syrians who had been had been bombed and driven from their homes and homeland, welcoming thousands of them as refugees and helping them find accommodations. It was the right thing to do. Edmontonians are justifiably proud of what they and other Canadians did and are still doing.

Why can't we do as much for displaced persons from our own community?

When I was a child, after the Second World War, we called survivors of conflict who made their way to Canada DPs; now we use a slightly less pejorative word: refugees. The root causes here may be different—the supposedly blind and impartial workings of the market, instead of bombs and bullets—but the result is the same: people dispossessed for reasons not of their own doing by forces beyond their control.

Roadkill, one might say, on the way to a future none of them ordered.

Or, as Stephen Sondheim wrote in his Broadway musical, Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street, "The history of the world; my sweet Is who gets eaten, and who gets to eat Bon appetit!" (Mind the eggshells.)

(Full disclosure: Martyshuk Housing was recently, for a time, owner and operator of Alberta Street News. Control has reverted to Linda Dumont since July 2015, but Martyshuk supports ASN, by making MacDonald Lofts available to distribute papers to vendors.)



Held Hostage

By Sharon Spencer

Spring was slowly creeping into the Maritimes once more. This night was no different than any other night. It was late, and I couldn't sleep. The constant pain in my leg didn't allow me much rest. I needed a knee replacement and the only thing that took the pain away was 600mg ibuprofen but it would only do for a short while.

My son, who was ten, was sound asleep in the bedroom. I was just thinking of trying to sleep once more.

The quiet was broken by someone pounding frantically at my front door. My mind said, who can that be at this hour of the night? Without even thinking of consequences I opened the door. A young man I did not know was standing there at two-thirty in the morning. He was very upset. He pleaded with me to allow him to call his friend, his car was broke down, he needed help.

I lived in a quiet, small community where people didn't lock their doors and they helped and trusted one another. So, I allowed him in to use the phone. After a frantic call that was going nowhere, he turned to me,

he became very agitated. He said, "I will tell you the truth. I am just out of jail, the cops are looking for me and I am not going back!"

He immediately began ripping the wires out of the phone to use to tie me up.

However two days earlier I had been surprised while listening to a gospel program on the TV. They were speaking about using the blood of Jesus as protection. They spoke of an old lady who spoke the words to a bank robber. She was the only person who got out of the situation alive.

So in a shaky, barely audible voice I spoke those words. God was immediately beside me. I was told to show no fear. Not to cry. And that this kid was no different from any other who came through my door.

I refused to allow him to tie me up. I said "no" sharply. He said, "I am the son of Satan." "Don't be so foolish." I said to him. A every turn God was there telling me how to act. He held a small file to my neck making me repeat my pin number forwards and backwards. Yet I showed no fear. I was not alone

This went on for four to five hours. Finally he said to me, "I guess I'll let you live to night." Relief flooded over me. I waited until I was sure he was gone and woke my son

Out the door I went holding on to my son, Sean, as I wobbled down the road with the biggest dull knife in my hand. Although the knife wouldn't cut butter on a hot day it

gave me a false sense of security. Finally I found some lights on.

The police caught the man almost immediately. They took me to a woman's shelter for the night.

The next day was April 20th 1999, the date that shock all North America - the Columbine High School massacre, where two armed students took hostages and gunned down 13 innocent people. The horror of these two events somehow blended together to haunt me. But one thing I knew - God was with me and the bible says he will never leave me or forsake me. It was true. Later a trial would be held and the man was found guilty.

Over time I was able to look back and see that this was a life lesson that taught me a few things about being a born again Christian and my relationship with Christ. First, God knew in advance what was going to happen. He prepared me in advance with learning about the protection for the believer in the blood of Jesus.

He didn't make it go away, however, he walked me through it just like in the poem, "Footsteps", and taught me things about his character. He never left me nor forsook me. How many things have you gone through in which God has shown you his character?

And lastly, I was meant to share it. *For they overcame him with the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.* Rev 12:11. How many hard things has God brought you through and revealed his character to you in them?

JAM - JUST JESUS AND ME
Christian Twelve Step Group Using the Bible
7 p.m. Mondays
Salvation Army Church -117 Ave. - 95 St.

Pedro approached a lady who was watching her dog. He asked her if the dog would bite him if he bit the dog first. She answered, "Oh no, but I will."

HEALING WORDS



BY THE CMHA
WRITING FOR RECOVERY GROUP

The Horses of Clever Rabbit

by Emily Ro

Horses of light blue, dark blue, purple, and reddish brown

Huddled together in a small surround

Sad and worried, tired and weary, one with a look of concern

The forest in the background ablaze with color as if set to burn

Surrounding the horses in a fiery hell

With no direction to turn

HAIKUS

By ky perraun

Branches dressed in frost
Sky the colour of pale doves
Traffic moving wind.

Inside of the book
A plane ticket marks the page
Where the reader paused.



SOMETIMES A RIVER

By Ky Perrau

I.

Winter sky – ash and feathers:
lonely branches, sugar-coated, reaching
in surrender to the cold.

II.

Some travel long distances
to sit at the feet of a guru
when this huge tree would do,
its trunk thicker than arms' breadth,
wider than an embrace, its upper-
most branches taller than any cathedral.
I think I'll worship here a moment,
where the roots grab hold of eternity.

My breath steams upward
to blend with the fog while my feet
audibly connect with the snow,
lying like seafoam on the infinite shore
of prairie. Sometimes a forest is enough.
Sometimes a river is too much.

Get Real

By Angelique Branston

What makes a real person?
What is a real person?
I thought that simply being alive made someone real.
For some, one is only real when they have held a job with a paycheque.
But then what of those who were born different through no fault of their own? Are they not real?
Whether we are penniless or have much held up in savings is not, I think, how one should be measured.
How well that person can function in society
Should not equal to that person's right to be alive, or to exist as a real person
Are we not all born naked and defenseless?
We all leave this world in the same manner.
We can take nothing with us, naught but our memories
So I think to be real is simply to be alive.
But there is a difference between living and being alive
For if I live only for myself I am merely surviving.
But if I try to live each day with others in mind,
learning to walk in love, then I am truly alive..



Below: Homeless men sleep on the street. Photo by Peter Schultz



Sanctuary cities across Canada deal with refugees

Toronto became the first Canadian sanctuary city in February of 2013, followed by Hamilton in February of 2014. Vancouver was the third Canadian sanctuary city, and now Montreal has voted to become a sanctuary city. The Canadian sanctuary city movement was modelled after a similar movement in the United States that includes cities of all sizes. The designation means undocumented refugees will have full access to local services regardless of their status, but migrant rights' groups called the measure a largely symbolic gesture.

Just Marching Through March

By Joanne Benger

1. Greetings to all the smart and beautiful people who are reading this page. March 1st is World Compliment Day and you deserve every compliment you get.
2. March 1st is also Ash Wednesday and the first day of Lent. Some folk wear no new clothes during Lent, others give up some pleasure – like chocolate.
3. March 2nd is Cat in the Hat Day for Dr. Sues was born March 2, 1904. Put hats on your cats.
4. March is National Kidney Month, Red Cross Month, and Fraud Awareness Month.
5. The illness of the month is Mar-itch, which will be followed by Spring Fever.
6. March 6th the Oreo cookie is 105 years old. Happy Birthday to you, Oreo, you don't look a day over 100.
7. If March comes in like a lamb it goes out like a lion. If it comes in like a lion, it goes out like a lamb.
8. March 8th is International Women's Day. Celebrate with Oreos.
9. Is it still March if no one marches?
10. If we have a storm in mid March, old timers say the lion has eaten the lamb.
11. Why is the March Hare mad and why do they call it a hare when it has fur not hair?
12. Daylight saving time begins March 12th. Morning now comes in the middle of the night.
13. March 14th is Pi Day (3:14). I'll gorge on cherry pie and pretend calories don't count.
14. March 17th is St. Patrick's Day. It is time for green beer, Irish coffee and potatoes. Drink your Irish whiskey, dance a jig and wear green.
15. March 20th is the first day of spring. Yes, warm weather is coming.
16. March 21st is International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.
17. March 25th is Greek Independence Day. I'll celebrate with Greek yogurt.
18. It is very unlucky to borrow money the last three days of March.
19. We all know the lamb is eaten for Easter but what happens to the lion?
20. March 31st is the eve of April Fool's Day. Plan your pranks.



Irish Greeting – The top of the morning to you.

Reply – And the rest of the day to yourself.

Irish Toast - To a dry roof, a warm hearth and food on the table.

Irish Saying – May your troubles be like grannies' teeth – few and far between.

Old verse recited by Irish friends about to part

May the road rise up to meet you.
 May the wind be always at your back.
 May the sunshine warm your face.
 May the rain fall soft on your fields.
 And until at last we meet again
 May God hold you in the palm of his hand



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Children and Alcohol and Drug Abuse

By Maria B.

While every one of us can claim victimhood, the innocent children are the true victims. The reason that they are the true victims is because they never asked to be born and put into a situation beyond their control, having parents that are too busy finding a way to score some money in order to purchase their alcohol and/or drugs, leaving children in terrible situations where they have to fend for themselves in order to survive.

For some of these parents the children serve as a free ticket to be supported by the government and then you get the guys that leach on these women and the only thing that they do together is get high or drunk, not caring how their behavior will affect their children. Children are being neglected in horrible ways, sometimes no one will bother to feed them and they are living in survival mode. It means they see nothing and they hear nothing as they try to survive in the shadows of the parents inadequacies and negligence.

A person must think about how their children survive. I asked myself the same thing as a child of a social drinking alcoholic father. My survival consisted of trying to be invisible because for some reason there was something about who I am that my father despised. I was just an innocent little child trying to survive. In the midst of his drunken stupor lay a person that in front of people could be handsome, charming and the most helpful person you could ever imagine but behind our closed doors, I saw so much emotional and physical abuse that I still feel the affects rummaging through my being. There are the times that I feel an incredible fear that my whole body feels. And I still ask, how can a parent inflict that kind of pain on an innocent little child, in the hypocritical name of fatherhood?

I did not ask to be conceived, I did not

ask to be born; I got the gift of life but I never got the gift of love from my parents and throughout life I live with that empty space and that incredible wonder that asks why.

I was born as a beautiful gift to the world but as soon as I was held in the arms of my parents, the true fear started to be felt, from the tone of their words, by the feeling of neglect and most importantly by the feeling of rejection. I started to act and react to life as a victim. I was completely unaware about taking responsibility for myself as unconsciously I was choosing to live as a victim. This inevitably created feelings of anger, fear, guilt or inadequacy and left me feeling betrayed or taken advantage of by others. Not only that, but without knowing it I was opening myself to be victimized again and again, because in my distorted thoughts I felt I deserved what I received. My parents clearly told us that we were bad and that we deserved to be beaten and abused. How do you argue this when you are a child? How can you make some sense of it? You can't - the only thing you do is to accept it. I've sometimes referred to the victim triangle as a "shame generator" because through it we unconsciously re-enact painful life themes that create shame. This has the effect of reinforcing old, painful beliefs that keep us stuck in our limited version of reality. I believe that every dysfunctional interaction, in relationships with others or self, takes place on the victim triangle. Until we become conscious of these dynamics, we cannot transform them. And unless we transform them, we cannot move forward on our journey towards reclaiming emotional, mental and spiritual well-being.

To me this triangle made so much sense of what was I doing and the roles I was taking and why I was doing the things that I was doing. Indeed, my family role was as a victim and I am not saying that they were not other victims but I am just speaking for myself. In a household where there is alcohol abuse,



it ravages the whole family and every person is victimized in a different way; we can not speak of their perceptions but everyone is a victim. I did not know that even the person that "thinks" she was not victimized, indeed was. Some people also live in a denial that does not allow them to consider themselves as victims.

And the abuser is not going to take the responsibility for his abuse. In a sense he is also being a victim of some kind and using alcohol to give him the power and the strength that he badly needs. Usually a person does not see themselves as a victim therefore we go on in life trying to rescue others, forgetting ourselves in the process. Helping others make us feel good, make us feel worthy and less judgmental to ourselves. When victims take the role as persecutors, we are in a defensive mode, blaming and manipulating - this makes it easier for us to avoid personal responsibility. Blaming others for everything that happens to us becomes a necessity for our self protection and self worth. The Rescuer role and the Persecutor Role are two opposite sides of victimhood. It does not matter in what role we take, we will end up as victims over and over again.

In the victim role we nurture feelings of victimhood, we feel we are being looked down upon, we continue to feel worthless, we avoid others because we tend to live in a defensive state and suddenly we find the caretaker, the persecutors and the victim all together making us completely miserable. But we do not take the blame. We blame always someone else.

We all have unconscious core beliefs acquired in childhood. We become the



Rob's Corner in Calgary

By Robert Champion

Being evicted

Not following the rules. Loud noise. Fighting. Letting the wrong people into your apartment. Not knowing where you are moving to. Scared of the unknown. Can be very stressful. Can make you feel very depressed and give you a sick feeling. Can make you feel helpless.

What's on my mind – Being a Senior

Being a senior can be very rewarding. You get to sleep in. You get to travel. You get a steady income. You can meet up with your friends pretty much anytime. Enjoy a few pints whenever you wish. It can also be a very lonely time. No one to keep you company. The evenings can be very hard to deal with. Continue making new friends even if you think you are too old.

Bob Ferguson was a good friend

I will miss him. We were good friends for nine years. I met him in front of the Plaza Theatre back around 2008. He got permission to sell his paintings in front of the Plaza Theatre in Kensington. We became good friends. We hung together at some of the local pubs. We both liked the Calgary Flames and the Calgary

Stampeders. I'll miss our text messages and our phone conversations. He was a good artist. He was well known in the art world. He'll be missed for sure. I'll surely miss him.

Question of the day

What to do with their old unused items such as furniture - beds, couches, chairs etc? There are so many needy people out there. And there are little or very little resources for people who need help. I believe a lot of good stuff lands up in the dump. What a shame. What a waste.

Say of the day

Don't take life for granted. It's very short. Don't do stupid stuff like heavy drugs or overindulge with alcohol or anything that will do harm to you and others. Drink in moderation. Stay away from people involved in the drug world. Be careful of the people you choose to be your friend.

eyes and interpretation of our parents about us. We have been acting like this for so long that we identify so well with the victim. But we fail to realize that by being the victim, we are completely giving away our power.

Knowledge is awareness and as soon as you are aware and you are completely honest with yourself, then and only then you can free yourself. I tell you when you stop being a victim and take control of yourself; you take your power back and become free for the first time in your life.

Next time I will talk about how to free ourselves. But I want you to take this with you: Rise above of everything that happened to you, you are not what happened to you, you are not responsible and you should not be ashamed. Rise above my friend.

Shattered Dreams

By Lindsey Whitson

Amazing what once I possessed,
With what once was my chance at success,
An array of disappointing paths,
No opportunity would last,
Lived in darkness because of the past,
Alas, my troubled mind has felt confidence
In the fragility of my own competence

The Weary Hour

by Lindsey Whitson

The sun sleeps beyond the clouds
Not a whisper is uttered within us
Mother is in bed
She naps soundly
Father reads onwards into the night
I reflect on the passing day
Journalling and writing
About such an hour so wearisome
Because of my frustrations falling asleep
Matthew 11:28

In this job you kind of feel like Santa Claus 365 days of the year-Part 3

By John Zapantis

I've come to realize that in my occupation as the Alberta Street News Media Relations Co-ordinator there is success and then there are failures in the many projects I've established for our paper whether it be mailing invitations to the media, getting resources for our paper or expanding our reach into other regions of the province.

In the February issue of Alberta Street News I emphasized some of the successful projects I went on to create, after mentioning that I was assigned onto the new position as the Alberta Street News Media Relations Co-ordinator back in January of 2012.

Projects included writing and sending letters out to the various media while influencing them to come down to our various media events that ranged from the Alberta Street News Name Launch to the International Street Paper Vendor's Week where many of our vendors along with our Founder and Editor Linda Dumont had the wonderful opportunity of being interviewed by various Edmonton major television networks and various newsprint publications.

Though my position also included other interesting challenges where I'd obtained resources for our paper such as the roll-up sign for hiring ASN vendors and an Alberta Street News banner which I've used for one of our previous Alberta Street News Sale-A-Thon where local Edmonton celebrities were invited to team up with vendors, who would mentor these well known participants in the art of vending while giving celebrities a little taste of their everyday reality in the day of an ASN vendor.

Despite my consistent track record in reaching the goals that I set out for myself in this demanding position, I've experienced my share of failures as

well, like the time I got my permit to sell Alberta Street News in the Town of Morinville on September 18th, 2012 and landed 10 customers a day while selling at Westmor Landing, averaging \$30 to \$50 dollars a day. This encouraged me to get two vendor boxes donated by the Edmonton Journal, who donated them for free, because I mentioned to their paper that if they donated the boxes, I'd do a write up, commending them, which I did in a following issue of ASN back in May of 2013.

Despite having that golden opportunity to serve my clients more efficiently, the two donated boxes that had a run from September 2013, while placed in front of two eateries in Morinville, both froze up from a snow storm in the middle of February 2014, forcing our paper to close down it's operations in that town, because of those unpreventable circumstances.

This loss in vending territory was followed by another unfortunate experience that took place on September 18th, 2013, when I decided to host an Alberta Street News Vendor Recruitment Day at the Baracah Day Shelter in Red Deer at 1 p.m. The lady that ran the homeless shelter insisted that I not mention her name in the story that I eventually wrote about hosting the recruitment day.

Again my creative juices were flowing when I came up with the idea to get a donated roll-up sign from then owner and operator of Signify Signs, Keith Ponton, whose business and its diverse advertising signs caught my attention on the internet, when I was looking for a sign for a future vendor recruitment day that I had planned for the City of Red Deer.

Prior to talking to him by phone, I sent Keith an unexpected email elaborating in detail about my deter-

mination to use the sign to recruit future ASN vendors and that he'd be in a future write-up mentioning his support in making this all possible for our paper.

After calling him, he confirmed that he received my letter and immediately agreed to donate a free roll-up sign for our upcoming ASN Vendor Recruitment Day in Red Deer.

A few weeks later the sign was ready. I, at this point had written a story about his support for my project and he later received a complimentary copy of that story that I had written, elaborating on his kind support in making this all possible for our ASN Vendor Recruitment Day.

We ended up using the roll-up sign on September 18th, 2013 at 1 p.m. inside the Baracah Day Shelter, where editor Linda Dumont and myself, successfully recruited seven vendors to sell on the various street corners in downtown Red Deer.

After signing the seven up, I took photos of them all standing in front of the recruitment sign, as their photos would later appear in a story I wrote about them all in a following issue of the Alberta Street News.

Despite taking the vendors out to various street corners in downtown Red Deer and showing them the fine art of the fundamentals of street paper selling, all of these vendors, who later went on to successfully sell papers, during their opening rookie vending day, never sent any money orders back to Edmonton, to re-order more papers and the paper sales eventually folded in Red Deer.

That event that I organized entirely on my own was the inevitable disaster waiting to happen and we never heard from those seven new recruits again.

While informing Red Deer's public about our recruiting vendors to sell the ASN, I managed to arrange two interviews for Linda in the Red Deer Advocate and CBC radio, where in the Advocate's published version of the article, she appears standing next to me in a photo of us, proudly holding a copy of the Alberta Street News, attired in our Alberta Street News jackets.

Linda was later interviewed by CBC radio that was aired on September 25, 2013.

One particular time, I sent a letter to CBC television and mentioned to them that our paper was going to be celebrating International Street Paper Vending Week.

Linda booked the Stanley Milner Library's Centennial Room for that event that would be hosted on February 11, 2013.

CBC reporter Travis McEwan came down to the event and interviewed both ASN vendor Harvey Laderoute and myself.

Harvey was the star that day and the story by McEwan centered around how Harvey had aspirations to one day write a book. The interview was obviously a focal point for Harvey at the time and he was encouraged later to write a series of short stories for ASN that revolved around his humorous adventures in life, while rising above life's adversities.

I even got a crack at media exposure while hitting hard on one quote in particular. While quoting the interviewer, I said, "This event isn't about the writers, but more about the vendors, because without the vendors, we wouldn't have a paper and that's why we're celebrating."

Other interesting projects that I've had the good fortune of involving myself in were trying to get Alberta Street News jackets for our vendors.

At one point I managed to discover a policy established by the Rotary Club of Edmonton that stipulates in their funding application that if you need funding of any kind for your

organization, they ask what you could do for them, if they give you some funding for your project.

Here's my answer, well that's not a hard one to answer! I can obviously do a story on the Rotary Club, if they fund the required 27 jackets needed by our writers and vendors.

Recently the paper has had to focus our essential energies on getting funding for our paper after Martyshuk Housing, who had taken on publishing for a ten month period, then paid for printing for another six months, withdrew from further involvement with Alberta Street News.

A number of people came forward to help with funding. One woman donated monthly cheques for a one year period. Edmonton City Councillors Michael Walters and Ben Henderson came forward and purchased advertising and are working on a plan for continuity. They deserve a giant thank you for allowing all us writers and vendors to continue to do what we love best, continue to bring Alberta Street News to our many readers in Calgary and Edmonton.

My biggest achievement so far has been the new Alberta Street News logo that I designed and funded, for our new work caps that were embroidered. These 30 work caps were recently handed out to writers and vendors for their contributions to our

paper during our Alberta Street News 13th Anniversary Celebration that was held at St. Faith's Church on November 16th, 2016.

Right after that event ended I re-ordered and funded another 12 ASN work caps from Elite Sportswear and Awards and three of those 12 caps were later handed out to three of our Calgary ASN vendors.

I mentioned in the December 2016 ASN issue that I'd be persisting in finding a donor who'd be more than willing to step up to the plate to fund our Alberta Street News jackets. One thing assured, if no one steps up to the plate soon, I'll eventually have to fund the jackets myself, just as I had done when I funded those 42 Alberta Street News work caps that cost me altogether \$814.15.

Despite winning and losing at this task of trying to make it all come together for our paper, when you feel like Santa Claus 365 days of the year, you've got to be doing something right and I'll claim that one as my present!

**Below: Vendor Appreciation Day
Harvey Laderoute, Angelique
Branston and Dale Ferris with John
Zapantis.**

Photo by Linda Dumont



Tzeng dances in “A Meditation on the End”

By Raven, Photos by Marc. J. Chalifoux

Friday Feb 10th I had the pleasure of seeing “A Meditation on the End” by Jo-Lee, with choreography by Pamela Tzeng as part of the Expanse Festival in Edmonton. Pamela explores many aspects of death, loss and dying in a dark, playful exploration of mortality. Her only partner was a skeleton and I must admit when I saw it I was a little bit skeptical about it. I have witnessed some very tacky stuff with such props. But she was able to integrate the skeleton into the dance and make it a nice focal point, with the skill of a master. She mourned it and cared for it; at times it felt like she was disembodied from it. Pamela has such an expressive body and face you could feel the emotion dripping off her and seeping into the watching audience, leaving us to contemplate what death is. There was a section in the dance where she moved as she did not have bones - her movement was full of such beauty and grace that I did not want it to end. But like life, all things end....

Pamela Tzeng is trained in contemporary dance. As a solo performer at the Expanse at the Arts Barn, her work is a theatrical performance. She also works as a choreographer for dance theatre companies.

This was her second performance at the Expanse Festival.

Pamela has been dancing since she was a child, doing ballet. She went on to study science at the university but during her last year she quit to pursue a career in dance.

She said, “In my final year I saw a contemporary dance performance and have had a wild seven years of traveling, training and working in different places since then.”

She is now rooted in Calgary and has been coming to Edmonton to work with Mile Zero Dance and choreographer Gerru Mortia, and has performed in Archival BAM



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Dance Crush Series

- Amelia Ehrhardt (Toronto), March 2-4 at 8pm
- Nancy Sandercock (Edmonton), March

30-April 1 at 8pm

Mainstage Shows

- Trance Sessions (MZD mainstage co pro with New Music Edmonton), March 17-18 at 9pm
- Anything Goes: G.W.G. Dance in 17 Parts, May 26-27
- SubArctic Improv & Experimental Arts Mar 23