

# ALBERTA Street News

VOLUME 17

ISSUE 5/6

May/June 2021



YOUR VENDOR PAYS 75 CENTS PER COPY

PAPER SOLD BY DONATION

# ALBERTA STREET NEWS

**Founder/Publisher/  
Editor, Design and layout:  
Linda Dumont**

## Writers:

**John Zapantis  
Joanne Benger  
Allan Sheppard  
Sharon Austin  
Timothy Wild  
Linda Dumont  
Jlm Gurnett  
Darlene Collins  
Maria B.  
Angelique Branston**

## Photos:

**John Zapantis  
Angelique Branston**

## Cover photo:

**Linda Dumont**

**Deadline for the  
July/August issue is June  
15, 2021**

**Alberta Street News  
9533-106A Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5H 0S9  
780-975 -3903  
dumontlc@hotmail.com**

**Web:  
albertastreetnews.org**

**VENDORS PAY 75 cents  
CENTS PER COPY**



## Editors note

**By Linda Dumont**

As of this year Alberta Street News has reached the goal of being the longest running street newspaper in Alberta. Other street newspapers started, flourished and faded out. Our Voice was published for 17 years, and Calgary Street Talk for about ten years. Our 17th anniversary was November 16, 2020.

Due to the pandemic, however, we

now have a very low profile, mostly on line, but I am hopeful that can be turned around by 2022!

Thank you to all of the writers who have faithfully continued to submit articles.

We will rise again! And until then, we will continue.



## Getting my COVID-19 Vaccination

**By Joanne Benger**

I was among the first 5% of Canadians to get vaccinated although I am a none driver, not on the internet and have been living as an isolated recluse since the pandemic began. I got vaccinated at Mayorthorpe Diamond Centre on March 2. It was the same day Dolly Parton, 75, got vaccinated and sang "Vaccine" to the tune of "Jolene". She reportedly said, "I am old enough and smart enough to get vaccinated." I feel the same way.

I treated my vaccination day as a special day of celebration. Even before I was booked in I planned my rides. I called both FCSS and the health unit for information on the location. Both informed me vaccine locations had not yet been announced, but because it required a freezer, it wouldn't be any of the local spots where we get regular flu shots. I would need a ride.

We have more than our share of fear mongers in this area and I thought it might be traumatic if I asked sister, friend or neighbour to drive me and I had one of those dreadful reactions they keep warning about. We have no local taxi or Uber so I called Christine at Unity Home Care, I knew she drove clients to medical appointments and she charges \$25 an hour plus 54 cents a kilometre. I told her I would like to book two rides although I didn't know where or when yet.

February 24 bookings began at 8. 811

was constantly busy. 211 was down. I expected to be dialing and re-dialing for days before I'd get through. Then a delightful lady used her computer to book me in. She phoned me when she got through, I gave her my information over the phone and she posted it. Then she sent me a print out and I gave Christine my dates - March 2 and April 9 and place - Mayerthorpe.

March 2 I felt like I was going to a party. I got all dressed up in my new jeans and wore the black covid mask that makes me feel like a superhero. Still, mindful of fear mongers, I packed a bag just in case I had a reaction and ended up in the hospital.

I had never met Christine before but we were soon chatting away and I enjoyed riding safely and in style in her freshly sanitized vehicle. Mayerthorpe Diamond Centre was large, airy and well spaced out. There were no line ups. The Pfizer-BioNTech shot was painless. I asked if I could skip the 15 minute wait since my driver was medically trained and they were agreeable as long as I stayed in town. Christine and I spent 15 minutes in a health food store. We parted as friends and I am looking forward to my April 9 trip.

I am now 80% protected but shall continue to mask and distance to protect others like my neighbours who can't get vaccinated for health reason. It won't be safe until 75% of us are vaccinated.

I don't see getting my vaccine as a selfish act I feel like a warrior fighting covid. The more I help myself the more I can help others, and I am very grateful to all the wonderful people who made my vaccine possible.

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

# The Merry Month of May

By Joanne Benger

Celebrate. Winter is finally over and the magical month of May has arrived. Get up early on May 1st and watch the sun rise and you'll have good luck for the next 12 months. People used to start gathering wild flowers at sunrise. A bouquet anonymously placed on the doorstep of someone you like will bring them luck as well. And, being human, you don't like everyone. Place a bouquet of nettles or thistles on the doorstep of someone you dislike as the Victorians did, just to let them know they could do with a little improvement.

On May 1st to celebrate May Day. People traditionally ate green foods including parsley bread and rice or potatoes cooked with mint. Dessert was jack-in-the-green, a gingerbread man with a fancy May wreath of green icing on his head.

May 2 is Chocolate Day, Derby Day and Derby Hat Day so wear a fancy hat, eat chocolate, and watch horse racing on TV. Not into horses? May 2 is also Ukrainian Easter Sunday. Make pysanky and krashanky, fancy decorated Easter eggs and eat boiled eggs, ham, ham sausage (kobassa) or buckwheat sausage (kyshka). Dessert is fancy raisin bread (babka).

May 2 1670 the Hudson Bay Co. was established and chartered, and now you can even celebrate their birthday by shopping on line.

May 4 is Star Wars Day. "May the force be with you." Celebrate by letting your imagination travel to the stars. Dress like Darth Vader or watch the Empire Strikes Back.

May 4 to 10 is Mental Health Week. We have all fought to stay mentally healthy amid lockdowns and restrictions this past year so be kind to yourself and others. This will end and the best is yet to come.

May 3 is Cinco de Mayo when Mexicans still celebrate their victory over the French May 5, 1862. Celebrate all things Mexican. Eat tortillas and nachos and wear a poncho.

May 9 is Mothers Day and has been celebrated on the second Sunday of May since 1907 when Anna M. Karvis arranged her special church service. Wear a colored carnation and treat your mother like Queen for a Day, having her favourite foods delivered along with something nice that says, "I love you." Then eat the same menu as you visit by phone or screen.

May 11 and 13 plan to hunker down as you await the cold weather or sudden frost brought by the three ice saints, St. Mamers, St. Pancras and St. Gervais. Two out of three Mays we get snow in this area.

May 13 is Ascension Day, a weather forecasting day. If it is sunny the summer will be long and hot. If it rains crops will do badly and animals, especially cattle will suffer from disease. It is unlucky to do any work on Ascension Day. Instead give gifts to the blind or lame today and you will be rewarded with great wealth within 12 months.

May 14 is Dance Like a Chicken Day. Pull the drapes or leave open if so inclined and do the chicken dance.

May 20 is World Bee Day. Enjoy eating honey today and give thanks to the bees. Consider planting bee friendly flowers this year.

May 22 Prince Charles is 73. For those of us who live alone that's reason to indulge in rich, delicious birthday cake.

May 23 - 29 is Aboriginal Awareness week as well as poetry week. As the Navajo song tells us, "Walk on a rainbow trail, walk on a trail of song, and all about you will be beauty." Collect beautifully written aboriginal wisdom and let it enrich your life.

May 24 is Victoria Day when children chant, "The 24th of May, the Queen's birthday. If you don't give us a holiday, We'll run away." It is the traditional weekend for planting gardens.

May 26 is Full Moon. And the Hutterites don't plant their gardens until after the May full moon. The Cheyenne called the May full moon "The moon when the leaves are dark green" and other tribes called it "The planting of flowers moon".

May 29 is Wear Your Bear Day. Wear a T-shirt with bears on it, a bear print blouse or a bear brooch. Then celebrate by sharing digestive biscuits with your teddy bear for May 29, 1892 the Digestive Biscuit was invented by Alexander Grantin. It got its name because it was advertised as aiding digestion. The Americans said this was not scientific fact so it had to be sold on this side of the pond as the lowly graham wafer. In 1925 the chocolate digestive was launched. Enjoy.

May 30 is Joan of Arc Day. The Maid of Orleans began hearing heavenly voices at 13 and clad in white armour, she had many victories and saw the Dauphin crowned as king before she was burned at the stake May 30, 1431. The suffragettes wore white and even this year both our governor general and the U.S. president wear white pant suits at important political functions.

May 31 ends the magical month of May and house work, too, for the old Quebec saying is "For good luck finish your spring cleaning before the end of May".



# Happy 50th “Poverty in Canada”

By Timothy Wild

Fifty years ago, in 1971, the Canadian Senate released the seminal report “Poverty in Canada”. The Special Senate Committee, popularly known as the Croll Report, was struck to “investigate and report upon all aspects of poverty in Canada...” and the Committee’s final report was based on an extensive consultation and research process that ran from 1968 until 1971.

The document provided an ugly snapshot of poverty in our country and noted the particular impact of economic inequality on the wellbeing and participation of a number of groups, including Indigenous peoples, racialized Canadians and the working poor (sound familiar?). The authors suggested that “No nation can achieve true greatness if it lacks the courage and determination to undertake the surgery necessary to remove the cancer of poverty from its body politic.”

To help with the surgery, the Report suggested that legislation be developed to provide “a guaranteed minimum income for all Canadians with insufficient income.”

However, five decades later, this simple prescription for addressing poverty in Canada remains unfilled. Instead we have continued to write alternative scripts for the perennially tragic anti-poverty play. Sadly, we can’t quite land the final scene and stage the appropriate happy ending that many abstractly long for and some actually work for. We have tried to tie anti-poverty work to the coattails of celebrities, particularly around the time limited inclusivity of Christmas and food hampers. We have passed empty all-party Parliamentary resolutions pledging to end child poverty by the year 2000. We have hoped against experience that the cameo appearances of the country’s business elites in aspirational plans to end poverty and homelessness might work – despite considerable evidence to the contrary. We have consulted folks living in poverty to near death, asking them what their daily struggle feels like and if they had a magic wand what would their world look like.

We have even promoted the supreme Dadaist irony of having Jim Dinning – whose policies as Finance Minister contributed more to poverty in Alberta than any recent regime – lead an anti-poverty initiative in Calgary. But these bourgeois cool palliatives have not worked. And we haven’t had the courage, and financial fortitude, to try something that might actually work – a Universal Basic Income (UBI).

“No nation can achieve true greatness if it lacks the courage and determination to undertake the surgery necessary to remove the cancer of poverty from its body politic.”

Unfortunately, though, even the social democratic parties of the centre are expressing concern with UBI. Short sighted Conservative fiscal orthodoxy is seemingly trumping common sense. In January, for example, the British Columbia NDP government released a report indicating there are problems with the approach. Rachel Notley, hopefully our premier in waiting, recently tweeted her general support of the BC report, and wrote “that there are more effective ways than a UBI to create a more just society.”

This is troubling because there are Canadian examples where a system of guaranteed basic income works. For example, through the use of Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement, Canada’s older adults are assured of a monthly income regardless of savings or out of the home, pre-retirement workforce participation. This policy response has been particularly effective in reducing the poverty rates of older, single women.

Secondly, during COVID-19, the federal government introduced the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) which served as an income replacement program, and helped numerous individuals and families survive the economic impact of the pandemic. Sure, these approaches are financially costly. But social justice isn’t cheap.

For those preoccupied with the cost, however, it is essential to remember that basic income programs are based on need and can be taxed back for people over a certain income. This is the case,

for example, for retired people who have access to CPP, workplace pensions or self-provision through RRSPs. It could also be funded, as suggested by the Senate Committee in 1971, through some process of negative income tax. Additionally, if we have the political will, we can look more closely at the redistributive function of income tax. There are ways to fund models of basic income in an effective, efficient, transparent and sustainable manner.

Overall, though, financial costs aside, the tremendous social cost of the ad hoc, if not indifferent approach to poverty in Canada over the last fifty years is inexcusable. There is so much unnecessary misery, daily suffering and long-term waste of potential. To mitigate this, recognizing that no one stand-alone policy initiative is adequate, we need to develop a comprehensive anti-poverty strategy. This comprehensive approach was suggested in the Senate’s Report fifty years ago. And, obviously, it is still needed today. UBI is certainly an element of this broad approach, but so are Pharmacare, Dentacare, affordable and developmentally appropriate childcare, living wage legislation, affordable housing, occupational health and safety expansion, eco-justice, Indigenous economics, mental health supports and gender equity policies, together with opportunities for job retraining and authentic income replacement programs.

Regardless of specific content, however, we need the political will and sense of community to craft something more comprehensive and effective than boringly futile issue specific aspirational plans. The 1971 Senate report concludes “The poor are asking only for social justice, a fair share.” Groups on the economic margins are still asking for that today. Surely, they will not have to wait another fifty years?

## Sleepless

By Linda Dumont

Myriad mysteries whisper  
In the solemn hours of darkness  
When thoughts enlarge to fill the  
room

No sleep in this stillness  
For sleep had fled  
Lying awake, staring into blackness  
Persistent thoughts invade my  
head.....

Waiting the release of dawn.



# Budget message on housing— Tough luck!

By Jim Gurnett

Albertans struggling to have the benefits of safe, secure, affordable housing have been ignored by the 2021-22 provincial budget.

As thousands of people depend on emergency shelters to survive winter and thousands more live with the dangers of hidden homelessness, the budget offers a 22 percent cut in homeless and outreach support services (from \$248 million to \$193 million).

"If the reduction in funding for homeless supports was because of substantial progress building low-income affordable housing that might be acceptable," notes Laura Murphy, president of Edmonton Coalition on Housing and Homelessness (ECOH). "But funding for both housing services such as rent supplements and the Alberta Social Housing Corporation are also being cut at a time where need has been further heightened by the ongoing impacts of COVID-19."

Murphy notes it is impossible to reduce the number of people who are homeless if housing is not being provided. "There is no incentive for the for-profit sector to build housing for people with low incomes, the current supply of non-

market housing is far less than the need and is aging rapidly. Only 23 percent of the provincial portfolio of affordable housing is in good condition. Budgeting for only 1400 new and renovated units over the next three years in the whole province is shameful and unacceptable given that sheltering-in-place remains the most effective response to COVID-19 at present."

The budget documents themselves identify more than 11.4 percent of Alberta families live in core housing need, requiring assistance to make housing possible for them.

Thousands of people  
depend on emergency  
shelters to survive winter and  
thousands more live with the  
dangers of hidden  
homelessness, "

With funding for rent supplements going down and tougher enforcement of shelter aspects of income support programs, as well as cuts to income support after the current year, it can be predicted more people will fall into homelessness. We know there are wide and deep long-term human and economic costs when that happens," Murphy says.

Municipalities and social organizations in Alberta have identified the need for more affordable housing, with supportive

and special needs housing in especially critical demand.

"This budget ignores the human right of all Albertans to housing, and condemns tens of thousands of people to continued stress and suffering from expensive, unsafe, inappropriate housing and bare-bones services when homeless," Murphy concludes.

For comment: Laura Murphy (587-357-6285 or lauramurphy001@gmail.com)

Background (from ministerial business plans)

- Alberta Social Housing Corporation expense was \$237.8 million in 2019/20, forecast as \$298.6 million for 2020/21 and budgeted for \$276.8 million in 2021/22, \$262.6 million in 2022/23 and \$238 million in 2023/24

- Housing expenses were \$12.3 million in 2019/20 and forecast to be \$11.1 million in 2020/21. Budget is for \$10.4 million in 2021/22, \$10.3 million in 2022/23 and the same in 2023/24

- Employment & income support (including housing allowance) was \$1 billion in 2019/20, forecast to be \$809 million in 2020/21, and budget is for \$856.6 million in 2021/22, \$840.8 million in 2022/23 and \$781.6 million in 2023/24

- Homeless support services were \$227.2 million in 2019/20, forecast to be \$248.3 million in 2020/21, and budgeted for \$193 million in 2021/22, and staying the same for each of the next two years

## Plans foiled by covid

By Darlene Collins

I met this nice man about ten years ago and through the years we remained friends. His name is Melvin and he is a very decent person. By decent I mean he dresses nice, is always clean and very respectful of any person he speaks to. Melvin and I remained friends, exchanged phone numbers and would talk to each other. Then an opportunity arose where, if I wanted to, I could go back home with him as his guide or chauffeur to and from his CNIB Brail classes that were going to start in Nova Scotia. I could be clean and be happy.

I was all for it, to help him, maybe get a part time job, get to know different people

and a chance to be his care giver. After all, he is my friend and I've always had a lot of respect for Melvin. Plus, I'd be getting away from this 55 Plus Operation Friendship.

We were continuing to plan the trip back to Nova Scotia where he bought a house and resides there. I'd love it already. Then one day I heard I was being called a mail order bride. His brother, who is an alcoholic and an addict, advised me in a mean way that he didn't want me to go with his brother Melvin back home. I asked him why. His response was that I would ruin his life and break his heart and leave him broke.

Like, how dare he start calling me bitch amongst other names. I told him he was just jealous and to kiss of. Long story short, covid arrived and I couldn't go with Melvin. I didn't tell him anything about his

brother's jealousy and what he said to me.

I just didn't go. That was in August 1, 2020 and now its April and he'll be back in the fall when covid ends. I finally told him why I didn't go and he just kept quiet, when I told him about his brother. It will certainly be nice to see Melvin again. If anything things are going to be different this time.

The heck with everybody else. Right! Right !



# FICTION

## The white Stallion

By Sharon Austin

The white stallion reared, nostrils flaring as he caught the scent of evil on the breeze. Wheeling, he charged back to the waiting herd, his powerful muscles rippling beneath his gleaming pale coat. The stallions silvery mane and tail seemed to glow like liquid gold as he circled the wild horses drawing them together and leading them quickly to the thick stand of trees in the box canyon.

"I'll hold them off as long as I can," the cowboy cried as he charged forward on his black mare. The evil riders of The Hoard were coming to capture the wild horses that had only known the joy of being free. The cowboy galloped toward the narrow pass which was the only way into the canyon. The Hoard slowed, then stopped as the sunlight glinted off his silver rifle barrel. The heavy work horses of The Hoard were draped in black blankets and the riders with their ugly half-human faces cringed in fear. Knowing the power of the silver rifle they backed away and slunk back into the dark mist from which they had emerged. The stallion silently stole from the shelter of the trees and bending his forelegs he bowed his thanks to the cowboy. The wild horses were safe for another day.....

"Colton, supper," the voice catapulted the boy from his fantasy world. The high rocky cliffs of the canyon faded to the grassy meadow where he played and the cowboy's black mare became again the weathered black stick horse he had been riding.

"Come on, Chester, time to go home," the boy called to the big brown dog rolling in the grass. He would come back tomorrow and ride again through the canyon. How real were his fantasies. The boy's grandma had made a potato soup with bits of chicken and bacon floating in the broth to go with thick slabs of homemade bread. She filled the bowls for her six cats with cat food so they wouldn't jump on the table and they joined hands to say a quiet grace.

"How was school today, Colton?" grandma questioned, concern showing on her wrinkled face. "Fine," Colton

answered as he always did, then he quickly changed the subject. In truth, he hated school with the bullies, the foolish games they had to play, and the boring work. He always rushed through his schoolwork so he could read while the others caught up.

The books were his escape taking him on adventures in faraway lands far from the dusty confines of the small town school. He was way ahead of his classmates having been home-schooled by his parents who were renown biologists. By the time he was eight he had travelled to many countries as his parents went on expeditions searching for rare plants with medicinal properties. Then, a fateful trip and a small plane crash in the rain forest had left him an orphan. Now Colton lived with his 75 year old grandmother in a small house on the edge of town. Granny, as he called her, was always good to him and he loved being with the big dog and cats who would all try to sleep on his single bed at night.

At school the next day, Colton took up his usual spot under the pine tree at the edge of the schoolyard to read his book. At first the bullies had been relentless calling him names and trying to make him fight but he refused to engage them instead fixing them with a cold green stare and unnerving quiet. Finally they left him alone and he became as invisible as the wind that blew through the schoolyard and for that he was glad.

The teacher, Mrs. Firestone, stood by her desk with a new student whom she introduced as Horst Feldman. He stood there embarrassed as his cheeks stained with colour. He was a stout boy with a shock of unruly light blonde hair and round blue eyes that eyed the class fearfully.

Colton felt sorry for the boy; the bullies would make short work of him. His parents had given Colton a good education but the three years with his grandma had taught him the most important lessons of all; to have compassion for all living things, and to always be kind. Cluelessly, the teacher chose one of the worst bullies to show Horst around the school. At recess, Horst dutifully followed the bully in a wide circle around the outside of the school as a large group of students followed snickering.

"That Horst will follow me anywhere," the bully sneered. "Now get lost, Bozo." Horst stood there alone in the yard as tears threatened to spill down his plump

cheeks.

"Come read with me," Colton offered as the boy struggled to hide his tears. Gratefully, Horst followed him to the pine and flipped through a book.

"I'm not much of a reader," he offered but I'm real good at building things, like forts and stuff." Colton put down his book; he hadn't been looking for a friend but Horst obviously needed one and it might be nice to have someone to share his dreams.

Before long Horst was coming over every weekend and together they would ride their fantasy horses through the rocky canyons always able to save the wild horses from The Hoard at the last moment. It was always Colton who dreamed up the scenarios and thought up the plans to evade The Hoard but Horst was glad to follow along as his sidekick. Grandma was very pleased that Colton had found a "real" friend. All would have gone well if it wasn't for the radio that Horst received for his birthday. It was a real fancy radio that Horst called a boom box and it would even play cassettes. Proudly, Horst took his radio to school and everyone wanted to be his friend. The popular crowd would take Horst's radio and play loud music and dance as Horst sat there beaming and revelling in his new popularity. Colton and the wild horses were forgotten and Horst even joined in making fun of him.

"That Colton spends all his time riding fantasy horses," he crowed. "Isn't that crazy?" Colton could hear everyone laughing at him as he quietly walked away. Horst had betrayed him and he knew what he had to do. One last time the cowboy rode his black mare into the path of The Hoard but this time the silver rifle was ripped from his hands by an invisible force. Turning he saw his faithful sidekick now snarling at him with the face of a Hoard creature. It was too late, the wild horses were doomed to a terrible fate at the hands of the Hoard creatures. Suddenly the white stallion appeared to save him and leaping on his back Colton knew that he had found the secret door to the silver pasture where they would always be safe. At the secret door the white stallion bowed low and stared at him with sad eyes for no human could ever enter here. One last time, the cowboy lay a gentle hand on the silvery mane and then the stallion was gone forever. Colton lay on the grass and tears slid slowly from his eyes. The



fantasy was over and the field had never looked so flat and bare. Walking home his mind felt as dull as the gray dirt beneath his feet.

After a few weeks one of the bullies got his own radio and Horst was dropped like a hot potato. He sat alone on the school steps with his big radio by his side but he didn't even bother to play it. Often Colton felt him staring at him under the pine but he never came over to talk. Colton had tried to live without his fantasies

for weeks but today his imagination seemed to be stirring again. On the way home he saw a small pond in the ditch that was drying up. Looking closer he saw the gelatinous lumps of frog eggs and he knew there would never be enough water to support the tadpoles. "No," he thought, "These are the eggs of the last dragons on earth and I am the knight that must save them." Carefully he scooped the dragon eggs into his lunch pail and began the treacherous journey to the forbidden swamp where they would be safe. At

the marsh, the dashing knight knelt and poured the precious dragon eggs into the water. Now it would be his duty to protect them from the warring forces of the evil that sought to destroy them. Sensing that he was not alone, Colton looked up to see Horst standing at the edge of the marsh watching him with sad eyes. "Can I play?" he questioned. "I want to save the horses."

"The horses are all gone to the silver pasture. No human can go there," Colton answered.

"I'm sorry," Horst said with tears glistening in his eyes. The sting of betrayal warred against compassion and forgiveness as Colton stared at him. Compassion won as he said, "The horses are gone forever but see these dragon eggs; we must protect them from the evil forces or dragons will be gone from the earth."

Horst grinned a wide grin. "Perhaps I can build a raft," he said, "And we can cross this forbidden swamp."

"Geeat idea," Colton said, "But we must beware of the phantom that roams the swamps at night." His keen mind was once again dreaming up the fantasies and he was happy to share them with a friend.

## It's mosquito season

By Joanne Benger

There is an old joke that Canada has only two seasons – winter and mosquito season. There are also those who say our mosquitoes are so big and active they should be declared Alberta's provincial bird. Actually mosquitoes aren't unique to us. There are over 2,500 species of mosquitoes worldwide and they have been known to have spread over 100 potentially fatal diseases including malaria yellow fever, zika, encephalitis, dengue fever and West Nile.

The males are vegans who live upon plant juices but the females need mammal blood to nourish their eggs which are laid on standing water. The eggs hatch into larvae we call wrigglers and these become pupae we call tumblers, which are also active and swim about.

Our first line of defence against mosquitoes is eliminating all standing water on our property. Even a small pond or bucket of rain water is enough. On a larger scale sprays are used to discourage growth of larvae in standing water. Once there are enough mosquitoes in the area we can keep them away from our private spots by spraying lemon scented Lysol, burning a citronella candle or lighting a smudge fire.

Mosquitoes tend to come out from dusk to dawn so if you are sitting out in the evening, wear light coloured clothes that cover your arms and legs and wear shoes and socks to protect your ankles. Don't wear dark colours or perfume as they will attract mosquitoes. Mosquitoes are also attracted to body heat and movement, sweat, and carbon dioxide so don't be too active. If you need extra protection spray skin and clothes with an insect

repellant that contains DEET or icaridin. Some people cover their skin with apple cider vinegar, citronella or Avon Skin So Soft to repel mosquitoes. Some outdoor men make a mosquito repellant by crushing buttercups, stems and all and rubbing it on all exposed areas. What you eat is a factor, too. Some people claim eating garlic or Marmite, taking Vitamin B1 and zinc pills or drinking beer will make you less likely to be bitten. Bananas should not be eaten as the smell makes you more attractive to mosquitoes.

If you just have to make a quick dash from the house to the car through a cloud of mosquitoes, do what children do. Hold your breath and tightly clasp your fists as you run. I am told wasps and bees won't sting you either if you do this.

Of course we all know mosquitoes are wily creatures. No matter what we do we will end up with those awful red, itchy bumps. Kitchen remedies include applying onion or garlic butter or cooking oil, vinegar or lemon peel. Some dab on witch hazel, calamine or peroxide using a cotton ball. The most nurturing relieve itching by washing the bites with soapy water then dissolving a teaspoon of baking soda in a cup of water and dabbing it on the bites with a clean cloth. Outdoor men often crush basil or plantain and apply it to the bite. Parents kiss the booboo better.

Still mosquitoes aren't all bad. We can use them to forecast the weather or save a life. If mosquitoes fly low it will rain and if they fly high it will be sunny. This forecast also explains why we get stung more before a rain with all those low flyers about. Old timers used mosquitoes to save the lives of dying patients. A mosquito was allowed into the sickroom to suck the dying patient. Once the mosquito had a good meal, she was allowed to leave the sickroom and fly off taking Death with her. The patient would recover if no one killed the mosquito.

# Some Fathers Day riddles

By Joanne Bengier

- Q. Why did the father cross the road? A. His child was on the other side.  
 Q. What is fatherhood? A. The top of a father wearing a parka or hoodie.  
 Q. What do a father's enemies call him? A. A Foe-pa (faux pas).  
 Q. How many fathers does it take to change a light bulb? A. just one. The world revolves around him so he just has to hold the bulb in the socket and it screws itself.  
 Q. If one father is a pa (paw) and two fathers are pas (pause) what do we call four fathers? A. Ancestors.  
 Q. What is an English Canadian father's favourite fruit? A. A pap - eh- ya? He likes papaya.  
 Q. What is a French Canadian father's favourite fruit? A. pere likes pears.  
 Q. Why does Mothers Day come before Fathers Day? A. Ladies first.  
 Q. What does Coca Cola have in common with a father? A. They are both pops.  
 Q. If a father and mother don't own their own home, what do we call them? A. The pair rents (parents).  
 Q. If a father who has three children is a bus driver and he stops to pick up two children, how many children does he have? A. Three, the others are passengers.

## Getting ready for bathing suit season

By Joanne Bengier

### Anne's exercise schedule

Annie says she has no time for a regular exercise program at the gym because she is too busy walking the line, skipping over details, jumping the gun, jogging her memory, circling issues, balancing the cheque book, climbing the ladder of success, leaping to conclusions, piling up bills, bouncing cheques, pushing people away, dodging the issues, sliding downhill, climbing the walls, running people down, sidestepping responsibilities, putting her foot in her mouth, dragging her heels, pushing her luck, going downhill fast, fishing for compliments, stretching the truth, digging herself in, running herself ragged, carrying life's baggage, and stacking the odds.

### Mary's new Diet

1. We should follow a plant based diet. I do. Vegetables come from garden plants and meat comes from processing plants.
2. We should eat wild food. I eat wild rice, wild salmon and wild boar bacon that is double smoked in the wilds plus I eat wildly coloured candies.
3. We should eat brown foods no white foods. I do. I no longer eat white bread, white rice, white chocolate or white cake. Instead I eat brown rice, brown bread, brown gravy, toffee, chocolate milk chocolate and chocolate cake.
4. We must drink lots of liquids in the summer to stay cool and hydrated. I do. I drink wine coolers.



## Pain

By Linda Dumont

Pain became a living word  
 Its strident voice so clearly heard  
 Each movement brought a rising  
 trill  
 Dying down when all was still.....

## Loss

By Angelique Branstion

Still the hand from moving  
 Blind the eye that sees  
 Silence the lip's from speaking  
 And kill the new born hope.

Spew forth oh words of hate.  
 Truth has died this day  
 And death reigns to concur all!



# Knee Deep in June

By Joanne Bengner

Soon we will be knee deep in June as 'June is busting out all over' to quote James Whitcomb Riley. June is Pride Month, Dads and Grads Month and Seniors Month.

June 1 was Marilyn Monroe's birthday and Milk Day so toast her memory with milk.

June 4, 470 was Socrates birthday. Socrates equated virtue with the knowledge of ones true self.

June 5 is National Hamburger Day when many give to the Food Bank.

June 6, 1944 was D-Day when our Prime Minister MacKenzie King said, "Let the hearts of all in Canada be filled with silent prayer for the success of our allied forces." June 6 is also Devil's Food Cake Day.

June 7 is National Doughnut Day, June 8 is Lemonade Day and June 10 is Green Onion Cake Day. Enjoy but watch the sky. "If on the eight of June it rain, it foretells a wet harvest men sain."

June 13 is St. Anthony's Day. If you lose something pray, "Dear St. Anthony, come around . something is lost and must be

found." June 13 is Children's Day when children traditionally carried armfuls of flowers to church.

June 14 is St. Vitus Day. "If St. Vitus Day be rainy weather, it will rain for 30 days together."

June 19 is Ice Cream Day and June 23 is National Hot Dog Day.

June 20, the third Sunday of the month, is Father's Day and has been since 1909 when Mrs. Dodd honoured her widowed father who spent 21 years raising his children alone. Fathers Day came into general use in 1934. At first a white lilac or green leaf was worn but now we wear a red rose for a living father and a white one if he has passed.

June 20 is also the Summer Solstice, the first day of summer, which will last for 92 days. There is nine and a half hour difference between the longest day of the year, June solstice, and the shortest day of the year and, December solstice.

June 20 is also National Aboriginal Day or National Indigenous Peoples' Day when we consider Canada's national shame. 3000 children died in residential schools and we have almost 1200 indigenous women known to be missing in Canada at the present time One death is too many and each death creates a family gap that time cannot fill.

June 23 is the eve of Midsummer Day, celebrated with bonfires. The bonfires

are lit to drive away devils and hobgoblins which would otherwise harm crops. Those of us who are isolating inside can follow another tradition. Many simply quietly keep watch in their homes in the hopes of seeing fairies flying about tonight.

June 24 was the birthday of John the Baptist, the prophet who lived in the desert, wore a camel hair coat and ate honey and locusts. Rain on June 24 means a wet harvest.

June 24 is also Flying Saucer Day. Every eight seconds a UFO sighting is reported somewhere in the world and the U.S. Air Force now calls UFOs Unexplained Aerial Phenomenon.

June 25, the last Friday in June, is Feel Good Friday for it is the happiest day of the year. Be happy as a June bug.

June 27 is Happy Birthday Day for the song has now been sung since 1859 when Mildred J. Mill first wrote it and it still sounds modern. June 27 is also Multicultural Day so enjoy ethnic food as you sing Happy Birthday.

June 30 is Meteor Day. Throughout the ages meteors have been called rocks from heaven, flying ball or falling stars. There are an estimated 130 million pieces of junk in the earth's orbit and from time to time some of it fall to the earth with a flash of light. Make a wish if you see a falling star.

## A pot-pourri of Fathers Day thoughts

By Joanne Bengner

1. A father is the head of the household even if his wife wears the pants in the family.
2. A father is the breadwinner who brings home the bacon even if he is a vegan and a celiac to boot.
3. A father is a man who gives his name and values to the family. Even John Doe would say "Never forget we are the Does. Be a Doe. Be Doe proud. A Doe doesn't do that."
4. A father is a person of dignity. That's why there are lots of mother -in-law jokes but no father-in-law jokes.
5. A father is a role model. "Like father, like son." and "Every good man has a good father." Think of Wayne Gretsky and his dad.
6. Two old sayings are, "A father is a banker provided by nature." And "Happy is the child whose father dies rich." And poor fathers try to keep up this image. That's why debt was invented.
7. A father is honest and hard working but he can also be happy, playful and a lot of fun.
8. Like knights of old a father respects women and protects children. He is always in control but never controlling.
9. A father is doomed to wear sensible drab clothes while providing his wife and daughters with silks, satins, laces and ribbons, beads, feathers and fur. He says that is the way its supposed to be.
10. No one gives a father flowers or chocolates for Father's Day, He gets tools and neck ties and says that's how he likes it.
11. Fathers love to spray. When they aren't using a water hose or a power washer they are spraying weed killers and insecticides.
12. Every child knows his father is Superman. That's why fathers love their children so much.
13. "The child is father of the man." And every young man who is dating is actually shopping for the future mother of his children.
14. When a young man becomes a father he pulls up his pants, turn his baseball cap around and puts a child seat in his pick-up. The dog moves to the truck box.
15. Even if they aren't computer smart, fathers use computer words. Hard drive - getting to work, Mega hertz - feeling after a work out. Modem - what he did to the lawn.
16. Some fathers smoke cigarettes. Others are addicted to internal combustion engines and barbecues. Fathers and smoke so together like macaroni and cheese.

# Higher Grounds turns strangers into friends

By John Zapantis

When you first come through the doors at Higher Grounds as a stranger you'll end up going out its doors as a friend. Most restaurants are notable for not tolerating customers who walk over to other customers at adjacent dining tables and disrupting the company of others because they fear that the privacy of their customers will be jeopardized. When it comes to Christian restaurants that policy doesn't exist.

Over at Higher Grounds Espresso Bar, a notable Christian restaurant located in the City of Morinville in Alberta, their policies are primarily non-biased and welcoming to all ethnic origins, religions, creeds, genders, disabilities and sexual orientations

During the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic I started to feel isolated, because of the previous lockdowns that were being enforced by Premier Kenny and his UCP Party. So from time to time I'd seek out to find people at various eateries to start conversations with them as a way of fighting the anxiety buildup that would force me out to these places looking for some interesting social interaction with even total strangers if company was willing.

After writing and having a story of mine published in the Alberta Street News April 2018 issue headlined 'Breaking ground with a Christian flavour at Higher Grounds, I went back to visit this non-profit Christian eatery, where talking openly to their many regular clients is allowed. Their volunteer staff of servers and food prep cooks are on hand to show their unconditional love and spiritual support to its many customers, who are known to come into this unique establishment for moral and spiritual support, great food and great service that's never denied.

It was back in 2018 though, a few years before the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic, that I wanted to re-visit the Higher Grounds Espresso Bar and pop into that Christian restaurant to visit their then manager, Elisabeth Melvin, whom I had interviewed for my story and I ordered a small coffee retailing for a \$1.60.

She greeted me when I approached the restaurant's front counter and gave me a welcoming smile, telling me that she'd give me a 25 cent discount off my ordered small \$1.60 coffee. I couldn't believe what I had just heard, 'A 25 cent discount?' I thought to myself, baffled by the over the top amount taken off the regular priced item, and thinking that sounds like her restaurant policies are a living contradiction of what she actually told me in our previous interview with Alberta Street News when she mentioned that if someone ever came walking through her doors asking for a free meal and she realized that they were going hungry and they couldn't afford to pay for a meal, her restaurant's policy as a God given right was never to refuse anyone the right to a free meal with no questions asked.

Reflecting strongly on my previous interview with Elisabeth Melvin, all I could do now was challenge her again by asking her, "Are you serious, just a 25 cent discount off of a small \$1.60 coffee?" She again beamed me a quick lightening smile, "Yes I'm serious, it's just a 25 cent discount."

Well I was still a little annoyed by what I thought was a ludicrous offer, dumb-founded by her returning smile as she stared out at me, sucking it all up, feeling she was being nasty about this-and wondering if there was another side to this Christian lady!

Well a few years later, right after we were experiencing a year and a half of the world re-known deadly COVID-19 Pandemic, the isolation of it all was starting to take its inevitable effect on me. I also realized later, after returning to Higher Grounds Christian restaurant in 2021, how wrong I was about Elisabeth Melvin and my perception of my experience in wrongly labelling her as nasty for only giving me that 25 cent discount on a small coffee that commonly retailed for only \$1.60.

This time it was no longer Elisabeth Melvin working as the manager, but her husband Rick Melvin who also happens to be an ordained pastor.

I also realized about what kind of a 'closet Jack Ass' I had become, realizing the big mistake I made as far as my perception of Elisabeth was, when I found out that Elisabeth wasn't joking about that 25 cent discount after-all and that she was serious about her restaurant helping people with a free meal, when someone

like myself would come filing through its doors claiming that they were hungry and couldn't afford to pay for one that day, but would pay them back later if they could just once charge up a free meal.

That I can now attest to as a reality. When I asked Elisabeth's husband Rick Melvin, who was now the new manager of this notable Christian restaurant, about charging up a meal, without any hesitation Rick with his big heart and know how, offered me a free meal and a side dish of his self baked chocolate cake all on the house at no charge.

Well I can say this now after realizing what kind of a big mistake I made with Elisabeth Melvin thinking that she was contradicting who she was at that time, I can now openly say, I feel like a 'Jack Ass' and am finally glad that this 'Jack Ass' is no longer in that closet! I'm sure Elisabeth will have a good laugh over this one, after she reads this!

Higher Grounds Espresso Bar is a non-profit Christian restaurant, whose operations are funded by the Father's House Church in Morinville Alberta. This restaurant has been nothing but compassionate and caring towards me, especially helpful towards me during the COVID-19 pandemic. Recently, I had the privilege of personally meeting Higher Grounds manager and pastor, Rick Melvin, who currently manages the Higher Grounds Espresso Bar Restaurant.

The popular and reputable restaurant serves as a supportive network that consistently lives up to its policies in helping people, when they can't afford to pay for a professionally prepared main course meal, served by Rick and his friendly and productive hard working crew of volunteers.

That team of volunteers have been both friendly and accommodating whenever I've been on the short end of that 'Financial Stick.' That's especially, whenever I've had to desperately seek a free line of credit from these 'Culinary Angels.'

This as of lately has been a recurring option at the end of every month, when having very little left over financially after paying down my car payments, auto insurance payments and three credit card payments that I'm committed to paying at the end of every month.

Lately, during the last three months, I've asked Rick if I could run a credit line of credit, first charging up a perogy soup at \$6.00. That first purchased item scored high on my list as I now rated it a 10 out of

10 Christian Crosses, as the perogy soup came with a thick rich flavoured broth that would have you dreaming about it in your sleep, like you were sent to Perogy Soup Heaven!

The compassionate and supportive manager of Higher Grounds, without any hesitation, would not only acknowledge my request for help, but also insisted on allowing me the incentive to a free meal, because he could understand my valid story about being knee deep in financial debt. When I realized what this deal would entail, I knew that I was also given an option from this restaurant's kindness and consideration.

So I seriously reflected on what I was taught by my Greek immigrant parents, Mario and Emmy Zapantis, in my earlier years as a young boy, to always work, to have integrity and to always give back in any way possible. I'm happy to say, I've lived up to those values and ethics in helping people while donating my own clothes to Goodwill stores, or every now and then buying coffee or giving money donations to Edmonton's many homeless, or even a few friends down on their luck.

I'd told Rick that I was honoured by his supportive and friendly gesture to assist me and despite his extended hands of support, the soup he offered me was on the house.

Feeling a little guilty by his friendly offer to accommodate my needs, I told him I'd rather pay him back at the end of the month, when more money was willing from my end. So I kept to my word and paid him back at the end of that month. From that day, I've felt right at home, with his friendly staff of volunteers, who have been more than servers rushing to my needs at the lunch table.

I've had the wonderful opportunity of meeting some wonderful souls, who aren't just considered, waiters, waitresses, cooks and dishwashers, but 'human beings with heart and soul' making them in my books that 'Kitchen Crew' who have gone beyond their professional arms reach to show me that they are truly my friends, whom I can always depend on for moral and spiritual support.

This winning team of 'Kitchen Angels' and a very hard working volunteer staff are: Manager Rick Melvin, waitresses: Joyce, Wendy, Bonnie, Greg, Shana, Ivy, Ethan, Angel, Jocelyn Emma, Jon and the rest of the Higher Grounds Crew of gracious and heart warming volunteers.



**Higher Grounds Espresso Bar volunteer staff left to right: Ethan, Shana and Angel and Manager Rick proudly looking down at the chocolate cake he baked for his customers. Photo by John Zapantis**

At one point during the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020 onwards, I asked pastor and manager, Rick Melvin, if he could toss in a helpful prayer for my girlfriend Theresa Walsh Cooke who was then hospitalized at the Royal Alexandra Hospital. Without any hesitation he prayed in front of me for my girlfriend's recovery. I knew there and then that a friendship between Rick and myself would become a reality in time. His prayers worked its miraculous healing powers through the Good Grace of God and around the 1st week of April Theresa was finally discharged from the Royal Alexandra Hospital after a long one year and seven months of residing there during her recovery. AMEN I thank GOD for bringing Pastor Rick into the picture in helping to heal my Sweet Heart!

I knew then I'd be coming back through those restaurant doors once again, for more support and great food, whenever there evolved a hunger for great service and food.

I also later learned along the way, just by keenly observing the staff and how they professionally interacted with the customers on a one on one humanly and supportive way, that this restaurant was distinctive from any other restaurants that I had ever set foot in. The volunteers who are genuinely human to their customers while serving their food, act more like they've

known them all their lives.

These volunteer waiters and waitresses tend to share a friendly social interactive while listening to their stories, or even showing their moral and emotional support for customers feeling isolated, like myself at times and just needing someone like a volunteer to listen to their struggles, while trying to cope with life's many unexpected adversaries, during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

I'm amazed to say that by the time a customer has walked out of those 'Heavenly Eatery Doors' it never ceases to amaze me they always seem to walk out with smiles on their faces.

You can truly come to this place and just be your true self, without feeling like you have to watch how you behave, because of some strict behavioural policy. There's no strict dress code and no one is ever judged by how they dress, regardless of race, creed, disability, religion, gender or sexual orientation. Everyone is always treated equally.

I've had the wonderful experience of watching Pastor Rick perform his gifted talent in the art of cake baking, while being offered the odd free chocolate cake slice he's baked and served for free as a sampler to his many customers, including myself.

**Continued on page 12**

## Higher Grounds

Continued from page 11

. His delicious cakes have in my books earned him the notable name, 'Cake Master' after inspiring that thought while receiving two delicious free slices on two separate occasions. His cakes have a lot of flavoured substance and have always filled me to the brim while keeping my taste buds content all day.

Anytime I asked him to charge up a meal, he'd reply in return, "Instead of charging you for the meal, I won't charge you this time, but I'll pay it on your behalf and pay it forward towards our Re-Leaf program that will pay it forwards to someone who could benefit from a free meal next time around."

It's no wonder this guy has got a wonderful wife and son, they obviously take after this 'Man of the Cloth and Apron!'

You're probably asking, 'What makes this Christian restaurant so unique?' that seems to make every customer want to continue to support its operations.

This eatery is a non-profit, operated by the Father's House Church, where sales from the food served, are donated to the Father's House Church's social functions that could include a free community supper and other helpful supportive programs for people in need.

Volunteers who work at the restaurant as food servers, cooks and dishwashers, learn culinary skills, while volunteering their selfless free time and effort in helping to make that difference. Some culinary volunteers are evaluated for their skill set and may be given the option of being referred by restaurant management to work for other food related industries in the Morinville area.

The customers, who support this on hands initiative know their well spent dollars on great food and service that can't be denied is going to other helpful causes that the eatery promotes and supports such as the various paintings for sale that hang on the premises three walls.

Artisans have a place to call home. Their proud works are promoted by Higher Grounds and they find their accomplished pieces rewarding, after customers purchase these works of art. Artisans earn 80% of the price paid by customers for their various art hangings as the restaurant that acts as their promoter takes a 20% commission for every piece sold.

Money from the 20% taken by the restaurant goes to support the Father's House Church who in turn donate those proceeds to various community programs in Morinville.

## The Legend of Shamuco/Paco

### A dog that brought love and union among the people

By Maria B.

Shamuco/Paco was a street dog and no one knows where he came from. He just appeared in the neighbourhood, when he was not even two years old. He chose the corner of my sister house and made his house right under her car.

. There were so many people in the neighbourhood that got to know this dog; he was well known for his gentleness, his protective nature and his incredible loyalty.

People would come from different houses to bring him a blanket, a collar, food, just to pet him and even paid for his rabies shots twice. They bought him a dog coat and a dog house. The fact is that he was not only well known, but he was truly loved by everyone.

When he followed people to the store, without them even telling him, he always waited outside.

Some people tried to adopt him to take care of him but he refused to do that. He wanted to be part of the neighbourhood, and the people. This dog enriched

relationships between the neighbours. The neighbourhood had something in common, the love for this dog.

When my daughter and I were visiting my sister, we got to meet Shamuco/Paco and he stole our hearts. We looked forward to seeing him in the morning.

About 15 months later my nephew was on the bus and he actually saw Shamuco/Paco getting hit by a car. When he got off the bus, Shamuco/Paco was crying in pain and he died in my nephew's arms. When he arrived to my sister place, my nephew was crying like a baby and told them what happened.

They picked up Shamuco/

Paco's body and the people decided to bury him in the park right across my sister house.

Shamuco/Paco is gone but his memory and soul remains with the people in the neighbourhood.





# *Ethical Policing: 1)*

## **Policing the police**

**By Allan Sheppard**

Darnella Frazier: A name to remember. To admire. And respect.

Frazier is the then seventeen-year-old Black woman who videoed the killing (more accurately the lynching) of George Floyd, a Black man, by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin on 25 May 2020. On 20 April 2021, a jury found Chauvin guilty of second-degree murder and two other charges following Floyd's death in his custody. Chauvin now faces up to forty years in jail, following his almost unprecedented conviction, as a police officer.

Floyd was alleged to have passed a counterfeit twenty-dollar bill to pay for cigarettes at a convenience store. That charge was never proven. But even if Floyd were guilty, such small-scale counterfeiting is not typically a crime subject to harsh punishment, let alone summary execution; worth some jail time at most.

Chauvin and three other Minneapolis police arrested Floyd and, after a brief struggle, cuffed his hands behind his back and successfully subdued him, as Frazier's video shows. That should have been the end of it. Instead, while his colleagues held Floyd in a prone position on pavement, Chauvin placed his knee and his body weight on Floyd's neck. It took nine-and-one-half excruciating minutes for Floyd to die, pleading for mercy and calling out to his dead mother while he still had enough breath.

Darnella Frazier had the presence of mind—and the courage—to video the scene with her cell phone: all of it. Presence of mind? Most of us now carry smartphones with cameras everywhere. But how many of us think quickly enough to video unexpected incidents on the streets? I don't. I might use the phone to call 911, but not the camera. (Perhaps young Black people, for whom the unexpected is all too predictable, have become more alert and reactive to the kind of encounter Frazier had with Chauvin and his crew; how sad, if true.)

Courage? Every day, it seems, we read and hear of incidents where young, old; male, female; LGBTQ+ Black citizens who

attract the attention of police experience every degree of retaliation, even death. At the very least, they risk having their devices confiscated or trashed. Frazier stood her ground and let Chauvin see she was recording the evidence that undoubtedly led to his conviction.

Chauvin helped, of course. He could have stopped kneeling on Floyd's neck, knowing he was being videoed. He could have had one of his colleagues seize Frazier's phone. Instead, he persisted. He showed an attitude of impunity that suggested he believed—no, that he knew—he could get away with whatever might happen, because police in America always get away with whatever they do.

Chauvin's cynical smirk, his nonchalant body language, demonstrated brazen intent, not obviously to kill Floyd (which was why a first-degree murder charge would not have held) but to show Frazier and anyone who might watch her video, that he, “the man,” was in charge and would always be in charge. He would always call the shots, literally and figuratively. He would get away with it. Because he could.

It didn't work out that way. Chauvin pushed the culture of police impunity to the breaking point. He counted on what must have seemed to him a sure thing. Thanks to Darnella Frazier, he lost his bet. Who can doubt that, had Frazier not made her video, Chauvin would have walked, with his unrepentant head held high? Without that video, none of us would have seen and many of us would not have believed that someone, anyone, even a rotten-apple police officer, could be so casually indifferent to the life or death of another human being; could think of a man as not fully human: as mere vermin, a piece of property, not a person.

Frazier's act demonstrated true citizenship, though I concede Chauvin and his defenders will not see it that way. It recalls a profound insight into policing that I encountered recently: “the police are the public and...the public are the police, the police being only members of the public paid to give full-time attention to duties required of every citizen.”

That observation comprises the seventh of nine principles of ethical policing that British Home Secretary Sir Robert Peel developed for London's Metropolitan Police, established in 1829. (Though developed by Peel, it is likely the principles were

formally recorded by others.)

I will return to the Peelian Principles in future columns. They are the foundation of policing by consent, an approach followed, as much in the breach as the observance, in Canada. In contrast, the United States follows a public order policing model, also called law-enforcement or law-and-order policing.

Saying that the public are the police, and the police are the public could seem misguided. It might suggest nosey neighbours, tattletales, and anonymous snitch lines. It might even seem to condone vigilantism: people taking “justice” into their own hands, when they decide police and the courts cannot or will not do what the community expects of them. That is a valid concern. We could interpret the principle and put it into practice that way. But...

There is another interpretation that I believe is the correct one, and the one that would prevail in a healthy, well-policed community: to say that the public are the police, and the police are the public is to assert the principle the public and the police are not separate and distinct from each other: they are equal. To say that we are equal does not mean that we are or should be all the same; it means that our differences are complementary: they do not divide and separate us; they unite us; they are mutually beneficial.

It means we grant the police specific authority and certain privileges so the rest of us can be free to do other important things, providing other equally (or even more) essential services for their and our benefit, just as ethical police provide essential services that we (and they) need for healthy lives in healthy communities. Those privileges are not discretionary rights exclusively assigned to the police by themselves or political authorities, both of whom are not accountable to anyone but themselves.

The public are the police, and the police are the public means, among many things that I will explore in future columns, that the public has the right—more than that, the duty as citizens—to police the police, every bit as diligently as the police are expected to police the public. Ethical policing is not a one-way transaction. We do not and should not concede to the police any ethical principle or privilege that the police do not concede to us.

**Continued on page 14**



George Floyd



Darnella Frazier

## Policing the police

Continued from page 13

That is what is so right and admirable about how Darnella Frazier responded to the lynching that took place in plain sight before her in a Minneapolis parking lot. She held Derek Chauvin to account, at considerable risk to herself, in the only way she realistically could, by bearing witness. To have done otherwise would have been to condone what Derek Chauvin was doing, with such assumed impunity: committing murder in the name of the law.

*(This is the first of an open-ended series of columns on ethical policing inspired by the Defund the Police and the Black Lives Matter movements, informed by Sir Robert Peel's nine principles of policing, and mindful of the fact that Indigenous and other marginalized and mainstream lives also matter, though some demonstrably matter less than others.)*

## I'm confused

By Joanne Bengier

1. Have you heard of herd immunity.
2. What has the vaccine seen?
3. Shouldn't they rename personal care homes as personal uncaring homes?
4. Why is it a vaccine roll out not a vaccine roll in? We hear of outbreaks but never inbreaks and take out food is actually take in food as we eat in following the rule, "inside good, outside bad".
5. I hear the use of zoom has zoomed as numbers of cases zoomed up. If we disconnect zoom will numbers zoom down?
6. What do V screens, door screens and sun screens have in common with virus screening?
7. I just realized super-spreaders are not butter and margarine.
8. I hear a lot of people are home-sick, sick of staying home. Once home-sick people wanted to come home.
9. We hunker down but we don't hunker up. We mask up but we don't mask down.
10. Eye-so-late. We never iso-early or iso-ontime.
11. If there are six doses in a five dose vial why don't they call it a six dose vial?
12. If we have hands free curb side pickup, what handless creature put it there?
13. We are always short of vaccine but never long of vaccine?
14. Pfiser. The p is silent, the i is long. Why isn't the f silent and the i short? Oops, pardon me.
15. Variant 1351 was found in South Africa. Where were the other 1350 variants found?
16. Rapid testing has no speed limit. Fast good, Slow bad.
17. When we can visit them, do neighbours become naybours?
18. Sorry, you can't study for a covid test.
19. Russia now has the Sputnik 5 vaccine. What was wrong with the first four vaccines?
20. Why is it called a pandemic not a potdemic?

## Bonjoir, Hello, Tansi

By Darlene Collins

I am a 59 year old First Nations elderly lady. I have been going through a hate incident which turned into a hate crime. For three years now I have been through so much, I'm traumatized as to what happened to me. I believe a hate crime is when people/society picks on you, then all of a sudden everybody hates you. It's terrible. I have been homeless myself for 16 years total. I know how the streets are, and it's sure changed from even ten years ago.

I had this man approach me in a very angry mood; his fists were ready to hit me. Our noses were touching and he was hollering at me saying, "I'm going to kill you." Thank God, the police spotted us and rescued me. They didn't arrest him or anything because even the police hate me. It seems I'm a nuisance at this Club 55 (Operation Friendship drop in center). No one talks to me. I'm an outcast and I feel I have to leave here in order to feel safe. If I have to, I'll go back to the streets only because I'm being picked on and I hurt. To top it off, my health is failing and I truly believe I have cancer in my left foot.

Thank you for reading my experience of being a victim of hate.

Right: Linda Dumont with her poetry on the sidewalk on 96 Street - 105A Avenue. in 2019. Since then the poetry has been defaced by vandalism. Photo by Angelique Branston



# Attention Alberta Street News Writers

## By Linda Dumont

Eric Rice, a former writer and board member for Alberta Street News, contacted ASN with the following information:

Eric Rice wrote, "I saw an article about the U of A and how they are able to digitize back copies of print newspapers for archival use. It's pretty cool. They can put them all in a database and have it searchable by year, issue, and number. The text is also searchable so if Allan wanted to search for all the articles he's ever written he could just type in his name and they'll pop up.

I'd be happy to help organize that for the back copies of ESN and ASN. You can

also download copies once they're digitized for your own purposes."

Back issues are now on our web page at [albertastreetnews.org](http://albertastreetnews.org), but this will make finding information or picking up your own stories much easier.

Rice has requested that writers fill out the form below giving permission for our writing to be digitized. You can either mail the form to me at

**Linda Dumont, Alberta Street News  
9533-106A Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta  
T5H 0S9**

Or you can fill out the form on line. Simply contact Eric Rice at [eric.rice@shaw.ca](mailto:eric.rice@shaw.ca)

As Rice goes through all of the back issues of the paper, he may find that there are some missing. In this event, he may have to contact writers who have copies of those back issues to borrow them. They would be returned after they were digitized.

I have already given him a box contain-

ing copies of years of back issues that I have, but I have omitted quite a few.

Some of us have been writing for street papers for more than 20 years and were featured in back issues of Spare Change and Our Voice. These editions will also be digitized.

You can cut out the form below and mail it in, or make a copy of it or if you prefer. I will also have printed copies to mail out or to hand out to you on request.

I see this as a wonderful opportunity. On occasion writers request copies of their stories from back issues and I am digging through years of back issues on my computer to find them. The job will be so much easier with the digitized copies.

There is no cost for the service and once the papers have been digitized you will be informed as to how to access these back issues.

## Permission Form

In reference to the following title(s):

*[Author]. [Title]. [Publication Place] : [Publisher], [Publication Date].*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, as copyright holder or licensee with the authority to grant copyright permissions for the aforementioned title(s).

I/We give irrevocable permission to digitize and make publicly and permanently available the materials created by the party named above in order that the digital copies be preserved and made available to individuals via the internet and other non-commercial means as may be required for preservation and long-term access.

The University of Alberta Library encourages copyright holders to assign a [Creative Commons license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/) to their work as well. These licenses make it clear that you support others sharing the works listed above, so long as attribution and other conditions (linked below) are respected. Please select one of the licenses below, or email us at [digitization@ualberta.ca](mailto:digitization@ualberta.ca) if you have questions about using one of these licenses.

I/We choose to make the title available under the following Creative Commons Licence (choose one):

- ☐ Attribution ([CC BY](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/))
- ☐ Attribution ShareAlike ([CC BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/))
- ☐ Attribution-NoDerivs ([CC BY-ND](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/4.0/))
- ☐ Attribution-NonCommercial ([CC BY-NC](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/))
- ☐ Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike ([CC BY-NC-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/))
- ☐ Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs ([CC BY-NC-ND](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/))

The most strict one is:

CC BY-NC-ND: This license allows reusers to copy and distribute the material in any medium or format in unadapted form only, for noncommercial purposes only, and only so long as attribution is given to the creator.

CC BY-NC-ND includes the following elements:

BY – Credit must be given to the creator

NC – Only noncommercial uses of the work are permitted

ND – No derivatives or adaptations of the work are permitted

# The Longing for a Mother

By Maria B.

A mother, the sole title reflects all the inner gifts that should overflow naturally from every mother as soon as they become entrusted with the honour of being a "mother".

Those inner gifts being: enduring patience, incredible inner strength, love without limits, unselfishness, total commitment of servitude to care, protect, guide, encourage, praise and love with the kind of love that is truly divine, the kind of love that transcends with time and forms the capsule of divine memories that we cherish forever of our mothers. All those cherished memories serve as a bedrock for a child in their formative years.

And yet the cruel realization is that there are thousands of wounded adults walking through life, seeking insatiably for the love of a mother, feeling so empty and flawed and living in different depths of depression and despair.

In my childhood memories I still feel the empty space that my mother left, when she left us. Many times I have been told that "she did not abandon us" but the reality is that she left, I always remember that she was emotionally absent, I also remember the sheer brutality of my father towards her, consequently I have lived with the feeling of guilt because I did not know how to help her. My memories of my mother are of a very sad person with a stern look, who was completely unplugged as a mother. I remember how much I needed her but she was emotionally unavailable and eventually she left us when we needed her the most. She left us with my paternal grandmother.

It hurts that my youngest sister was four and my youngest brother about two years old and unfortunately they do not even have memories of her.

Because of misplaced loyalty to my father, my mother was truly shunned because she left us and our caregiver-

ers, instead of allowing us to hold on to some hope that my mother would come back some day, deprecated my mother, which caused me to hide my feelings for her. Instead we tended to absorb all the guilt and felt an incredible sadness for her physical absence.

When I became a mother, I felt my daughter was a gift of life, a reason for me to live. She was so beautiful, defenceless and at the same time had such an incredible inner strength. As a mom, I did what came naturally and I also did what my mother did. I kept my children clean, fed and protected but I also maintained a distance and a stern image. I was never able to sing to my children lullabies because no one ever sang to me so my children missed out on that and in so many other things. Now I recognize I was not completely plugged in as a mother should be.

One clear memory that opened my eyes was one time when I went for a walk with a friend and her children, I heard my friend telling her child "I love you" and I just burst into tears. She was surprised but I told her I never knew you have to tell your children that you love them because no one ever said that to me. Since then I always make sure my children hear the words that I love them.

It makes me so sad that my daughter at her tender age was not able to have a mother that could have said those words; I truly hope that my actions were able to demonstrate the love I felt for them and compensate for what I did lack.

The truth is that we are unable to give what we never had and this has brought a realization that has softened my heart about everything that I lacked from my parents, I realize that the legacy they left behind is because they themselves were so terribly wounded and maybe no one ever conveyed love to them.

Their own childhood wounds made them unable to give us the nurturing, the unconditional acceptance and those deep feelings that you feel when you belong; I never had that with my parents. Now I



can understand this but I am not going to live denying and glossing over the fact that through their abuse and neglect, they stripped from me everything that I needed to become a confident human being. Instead they created a wounded person, codependent, controlled by paralyzing fear, shame and guilt.

To this date the biggest missing piece in my soul is a mother, not my mother, but a mother indeed. My father was incredibly good looking with dark hair, very handsome and distinguished, My mother was beautiful. She had a face like an angel, blonde with incredible, light blue eyes. We all wanted to have been born with blue eyes like my mother. Indeed, we had beautiful looking people as caregivers but unfortunately they could not fill the role as parents. And because of this now I understand why it was so easy for them to abandon us and go in different paths and make a different life for themselves, having more children and committing the same errors again and again.

What I learned from them was not to trust, to despise myself, to expect the worst of everything, to live in incredible terrifying fear, to be ashamed of who I am and to feel responsible and nurture all the distorted beliefs they have made up about me. I hated myself just like they hated me., This is an incredibly heavy burden for a child to carry through their life. Maybe what happened to me was meant to happen as I learned to ensure that my children have a mother forever.

Mother By Linda Dumont  
Mother please love me you cried

Knowing even then love had died  
Hatred had come and swept cleanly bare  
A heart that was twisted and too spent to care.