

YOUR VENDOR PAYS 80 CENTS PER COPY

ALBERTA Street News

VOLUME 17

ISSUE 11/12

November/December 2021



ALBERTA STREET NEWS

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

Writers:

John Zapantis
Joanne Benger
Allan Sheppard
Sharon Austin
Timothy Wild
Linda Dumont
Darlene Collins
Ky Perram

Photos:

John Zapantis
Maria B.
Linda Dumont
Matthew Johnston

Cover photo:

Pride Corner by Linda
Dumont

Deadline for the January/
February issue is
December 15, 2021

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

Web:
albertastreetnews.org

VENDORS PAY 80 CENTS



International
Network of
Street Papers

“Times they are a changing”

By Linda Dumont

I have lived long enough to see many changes. And there are more to come.

I was having lunch with a friend who goes to a demon chasing church, and she was outraged. “They want to have a special corner.” Then in a loud braying voice, she began to quote scriptures.....

She was talking about the LGBTQ community members and allies gathering on the corner of Whyte Avenue and 104th Street every Friday night to protest what they say are homophobic messages by street preachers. As the street preacher shouts about repenting sins, the protesters dance to loud music and wave rainbow flags and signs. A petition to formally recognize the location of these gatherings as “Pride Corner” has gained traction online, drawing more than 7,000 signatures since it was created. Organizers, are seeking recognition from the City of Edmonton and the Old Strathcona.

I waited for a break in my friend’s diatribe, then said, “I have read the Bible from cover to cover many times, and Jesus gave only two commandments to follow – to love God and to love your neighbour as yourself.”

My friend is a woman with physical challenges, who takes for granted the changes that have come about in the past thirty years in recognition of the needs of persons with mobility issues. As a person with physical challenges, she walks with a walker or uses a wheel chair, and those changes have made the city more barrier free so she can come and go. She can use DATS door to door service to go shopping at Walmart where she can ride around in an electric chair with a shopping cart to shop in aisles made wide enough for wheel chairs. The sidewalks slope at the corners to be wheel chair accessible, and many buildings have ramps and elevators making access possible. She was living in a building that was set up for persons with physical challenges with a big shower that she can wheel into, elevators, and ramps. She can even travel on city buses that kneel down to permit



people to come on with walkers, wheel chairs and baby strollers.

Only thirty years ago it was different. Rick Bertram, in his mouth operated electric wheel chair was one of the people who lobbied the city for wheel chair accessible sidewalks.

Too often those changes are taken for granted.

Now we have another group seeking basic human rights and recognition as human beings – the LGBTQ community, and all I can say is that it is past due. When I was a child, people who were homosexual were sent to prison, and while we don’t have that law anymore, there is still a huge lack of understanding and acceptance. And sadly, too often, it is coming from the fundamentalist Christian church, the very people who should be reaching out with love. Jesus came not to condemn the world but to save the world. In his earthly walk he accepted the ones who were rejected by society in his day - the woman at the well was the wrong race, and a woman, but he spoke to her of spiritual things. He allowed children to come to him at a time when they had no rights.

I watched the reality series I Am Jazz about the life of a young woman who had been born with a boy’s body, and her struggle to express her true identity as a girl. Gender is not a choice, it is the way we are born, and we know deep within our souls who we truly are.

THE VIEWS PRESENTED ARE THOSE OF THE CONTRIBUTORS.

Chill and drear, November is here

By Joanne Bengner

Sir Walter Scott wrote, "November sky is cold and drear, November's leaf is red and sear." Aboriginals called it the hunting month and our early settlers prepared for bathless winters explaining, "We sew up in November and don't unsew until March." Thunder in November means a fertile year to come, and really fat squirrels in November are a sign of a harsh winter ahead.

November is Epilepsy Month and Diabetes Month as well as National Literacy Month. It is also Movember when beards grow longer as days grow shorter and we think of men's health. At present prostate cancer affects one in 29 men, and roughly 95% are alive five years after diagnosis. Movember cash finances research to improve both survival rates and quality of life after treatment.

November 1 is All Saints Day and Plan Your Epitaph Day. November 2 is All Souls Day when Italians place flowers on graves of dead relatives.

November 3 is Sandwich Day. Legend has it the Fourth Earl of Sandwich was playing poker and didn't want to waste time eating so his valet invented a sandwich of roast beef in 1762. His biographer claims he invented it so the Earl could have a portable meal while at sea.

November 4, the first Thursday in November, is National Men Make Dinner Day. November 4 is also National Candy Day. Hamlet said, "Sweets to the sweet."

November 4 is Diwali, a South Asian celebration. It celebrates light over darkness. Put all the lights on in the house for this festival of lights and eat, socialize and celebrate. It is usual to end with fireworks.

November 5 is Guy Fawkes Day with a big bon fire. Before it was Guy Fawkes Day, when the new year started at Halloween, it was the day when the evils of the past year were burnt in preparation for the new year ahead.

November 6, the first Saturday in November, has been Sadie Hawkins Day since 1938. The gals can ask the guys for a date or a dance.

November 7 Daylight Savings Time ends. Reset your clocks and sleep that extra hour.

November 11 is Remembrance Day. Put money in the poppy box, wear a poppy, and have a minute's silence to honour our veterans. November 11 is also St. Martin's Day. "Winter is on its way on St. Martin's Day."

November 13 is World Kindness Day. Spread a little kindness and heap a lot of love.

November 14 is Young Readers Day and November 15 is National Philanthropy Day. Practice love and benevolence toward all mankind and try to make others happy. November 17 is World Peace Day.

November 19 is Full Moon, the Mad Moon or Frost Moon. The Crees called it the Wavy Grouse Moon.

November 20 is Universal Children's Day. Make a child happy. November 20 is World Hello Day. Say hello to ten people.

November 22 is Lebanese Independence Day as well as St. Cecilia's Day. November 23 is World Adoption Day.

November 25 is National Parfait Day as well as St. Catherine's Day when apple cider is served with floating baked apples. A drink of this cider will give you a year of study, learning and elegant language. November 25 is also Thanksgiving Day in the U.S.

November 28 is Red Planet Day. Watch sci-fi.

November 29 is Square Dance Day as well as National Cat Day.

November 29 is the first day of Hanukkah, which will last until December 6. It is the Festival of Lights. Another candle is lit in the Menorah each day, gifts are exchanged and children play with dreidel tops.

November 30 is St. Andrew's Day, celebrated in Scotland with haggis, bagpipes and singing the songs of Robert Burns.



September 30 as a foundation for more action

By Timothy Wild

September 30 marked “Orange Shirt Day” when people were encouraged to sport that colour as witness to, and a reminder of, the crimes, systematic cultural atrocities, social dislocation, and overall damage inflicted by the Indian Residential School system. The continuing discovery of numerous unmarked graves certainly added to the solemnity, importance and relevance of the Day this year. Additionally, in response to Call to Action #80 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the Federal Government declared September 30 as the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. As with Orange Shirt Day, the intent of the new federal holiday is to provide space for individual and collective consideration of the impact of the residential school system, and to provide time for all Canadians to reflect more broadly on what happened, and how that dark history is still an eternal present for many Indigenous People.

Both Orange Shirt Day and the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation are important. Both are instrumental in furthering the foundational idea of the TRC of “reconciliation as relationship”, a process that “requires public truth sharing, apology and commemoration that acknowledges and addresses past harms.” Both can help non-Indigenous Canadians understand the impact of colonialism and the ongoing implications of settler

dominated political, cultural, extractive and economic relations of production. As I was told by an Indigenous colleague, we all need to sit in the discomfort of the truth and not be too quick to rush towards the comfort of simple apologies. September 30 provides the opportunity of time and space for conscious consideration of that imperative. As noted in the specific Call to Action, in addition to honouring those who suffered the impact of residential schools the Day is also to “...ensure that public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital component of the reconciliation process.”

However, the TRC also argues that “Reconciliation requires constructive action on addressing the ongoing legacies of colonialism that have had destructive impacts” and that “Reconciliation must create a more equitable and inclusive society by closing the gaps in social, health, and economic outcomes that exist between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.” Therefore, we need to not only reflect but also act. As it stands, I think consideration of that intentional action is what is missing from the momentum for the statutory holiday.

In addition to providing a day for reflection, I think it is also important for the Federal Government to allocate a certain percentage of the taxes generated on September 30 specifically to support public policy initiatives to deal with the lingering impact of colonialism in general and residential schools in particular. For example, trauma-informed therapy needs to be made more widely available to Indigenous peoples to help deal with the current individual, familial and community impact of intergenerational trauma. Such therapy is essential in helping navigate the ecol-

ogy of oppression. Second, more federal funds should be made available to help with access to and completion of both secondary and post-secondary education. Certainly, programs currently exist, however they could be linked more to the individual needs of the students and decoupled from band-Government fiscal relationships. Third, more attention, predictable and sustainable seed financing, and programmatic support must be given to animate Indigenous Community Economic Development.

There are many other areas of policy direction but, as a start, the three ideas of therapy, education and economic development would honour the agency of Indigenous people, support the journey of healing and demonstrate (and animate) practical expressions of making amends beyond thoughts and words. Obviously, this by no means alters the horrors of the past, but it does give an opportunity to shake up prevailing social and economic relations and provide a chance to change the current systems of oppression; something we would all benefit from.

September 30 is an important day. As a non-Indigenous person, I had the opportunity and responsibility to sit in the truth. Not pleasant but certainly needed. I attended a wonderful community-based event on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and that certainly increased my hope that authentic reconciliation can become a reality. However, I think it is essential that we also add a bit of green to the orange, and recognise that the spectre of colonialism, racism and other forms of structural oppression need to be addressed in a systematic and long-term manner by transformative public policy. No doubt, it will be expensive. However, justice doesn't come for free.

Back Alley crime

By Darlene Collins

Have you ever wondered why there is so much traffic in this back alley and what is really going on behind these walls. And it happens every day of the week. I'm speculating it's a prostitution ring to serve any man who walks by or by word of mouth.

Anyway, living in these walls I hear

and see a lot and I'm frightened for the girls involved. Even my own daughter is involved and I know that Dale and David are involved somehow. Apparently they don't want to reason with me so I am fighting back.

It's amazing how many men are involved. I've lost lots of friends due to this going on and some of the girls try to borrow clothes from me but I don't lend or give any more clothing to them. What's in it for me? Nothing or possibly raped and killed for what, a bunch of sick, old men trying to get it

on and can't. I need to find out more and sort out this criminal activity. Most of the hookers are all First Nations and the men are dirty cops, ex cops, and the staff know and nothing gets done here. I'm reporting this to the city police to try to put a stop to it.

Wait and see how good I really am at shutting things down and I now know I can do it.

Some November thoughts

By Joanne Benger

1. November is the third of four brrr months – September, October, November and December. The thermometer measures temperature is brrr degrees.
2. November is the third R month, and months with R continue until April – September, October, November, December, January, February, March. Many people take vitamin D for four R months.
3. On the plus side many only eat oysters in months that contain r. Enjoy.
4. November is the month of NO. No more wildfires so I can unpack my evacuation bag. No more heat waves so I can dismantle my camp bed in the basement.
5. November is a month of no more dehydration fears. I can eat low salt again and carry a smaller water bottle.
- 6 Relax. It is November. No vim needed. We have no social events. Halloween and Thanksgiving are over. Christmas is yet to come.
7. Everything is on the up and up. The thermostat is up. My heat bills are up. My parka hood is up.
6. What is not up is down. The temperature is down. Daylight hours are down. My parka is full of down.
9. It is Snowvember. Here is my Snow Days To Do list. Get up. Eat breakfast. Open drapes and look at snow. Return to bed.
10. I celebrate Novembrrr. We all need comfort foods on Snow Days. This is no time to trim the fat.
11. Some say November is a dead month, a lead month. I say it is a fed month, a bed month. Eat sleep and hibernate.
12. It is Nospender month. The old saying is With old man winter on his way, pay your bills today.

New 400 bed men's shelter opens

A newly built men's shelter in downtown Edmonton is getting has opened its doors to the city's most vulnerable. Hope Mission has rebuilt the Herb Jamieson Centre after it had to be demolished last year.

This is the largest project the mission has taken on since being founded in 1929. "We're really excited just to see the reaction when they come in," Kelly Row, the community engagement lead for Hope Mission, said.

The updated building will offer several new features including wheelchair access, open concept spaces, expanded sleeping areas a new medical wing and washrooms with enhanced safety features.

The centre's team of nurses will also operate out of this new facility, the release read.

"We try to pride ourselves on first class facilities and that's what we've got here," Row said to media.

"The 400-bed facility cost about \$16 million paid for by the federal government, the province and private donations. "This thing is built specifically with the clients in mind whereas we kind of fit into the old building."

Covid Street news

By Darlene Collins

There was a time when it was so peaceful and quiet to go for a walk all by myself. We would gather in a group and sit under the gazebo, even stay the night. We would pick up our empties and throw the garbage away and the place would always be clean. A female could walk wherever they chose and not have any fear whatsoever, and a male could be alone in the dark and also he would feel safe. That was none of this aspiring to steal, rape or murder anyone. The drugs were basically just weed, weed, weed, but now its pint, crack or heroin. It's crazy.

Nowadays its so unsafe to do anything. The drug of choice now is pint, crystal meth and heroin. Anyone, no one can go anywhere without being jumped. There were never any duty cops around, now there are police cruisers on every corner and you really know who your friends are. It's pathetic. Now with all the effects form drugs, people are stealing from each other and there is a prostitution ring right outside this Seniors drop in centre on 9626-106 Avenue. I could see people out the back door and then go inside the back doors that no one should be able to enter after

6 p.m. Constant human traffic is going in and out mostly men. It's illegal. I thought again did I mention I am moving out or I should say I got evicted.? I hate this place and the building needs to be condemned or health inspectors need to come to sese how the place really is.

Security

By Darlene Collins

I have been accused and hollered at when Daryle drops his down or Jerry takes it out. Yahoo. I think, I don't care. I am actually feeling threatened by Daryle a few times. He goes into action with accusations and his loudness. I even feel sometimes that he is going to hit me, all over the nod he does and loses his things and I expect to be accused. This time I'm fed up. I need to go to a safer house, away from here. Now who played the sick joke that Jerry was shot and killed at the Hope Mission breakfast line up? It all fit in. This place was immaculate, clean and Jerry comes back alive. Oh my God! Why me with this crime? OK Jerry's back. Daryle is sounding like he's ordering me around. Now. I'm going to tell security about this and make a call to the George Spady Centre about my safety

Depression

By Linda Dumont

*Dark thoughts wheeling and circling
Diving, sharp talons piercing
Razor beaks tearing and shredding
The thin fabric of self
Why is it so dark when the sun is shining?
No hope, no light. no joy.....
Heavy dark closing in, crushing
As the dark wings of depression invade the soul.*



The one Way Street

By Marsha Lavallee

*The one way street has bumps and curves
The one way street has cracks and serves
The one way street where you decide to smoke, to do
drugs
Or to drink and drive
The one way street is where I roam
I love I so much I don't want to go home
When my body leaves my soul and goes away
The one way street is where I'll stay*

Some Christmas riddles

By Joanne Benger

- Q. Why did the Christmas shopper go to the zoo? A. He wanted Christmas seals.
- Q. Why did Santa plant three gardens? A. He wanted to hoe, hoe, hoe.
- Q. What does December have that no other month has? A. The letter d.
- Q. Why was Santa short one reindeer on his last trip? A. Comet stayed home to clean the bathroom.
- Q. Why was the elf depressed? A. He had low elf esteem.
- Q. What did the English teacher call Santa's elves? A. Subordinate clauses.
- Q. What do you call a person who is afraid of Santa? A. Claustrophobic.
- Q. How do you spell Christmas using 25 letters? Abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz - Noel (no l).
- Q. What gifts can you give away but still keep? A. A smile, your word and your heart.
- Q. Where do snowmen go for their Christmas party? A. To a snow ball.
- Q. Where does a snowman keep his money? . In a snow bank.
- Q. What do snowmen eat at their barbecue? A. Icebergers.**

I'm confused

By Joanne Benger

1. I think it is safe for you to read this unmasked even if you are closer to the paper than six feet, provided you are fully vaccinated, but rules change fast. To be on the safe side check with social media.
2. We have antivax and antimaskers, but no provax and pro-maskers.
3. Q. Why did the covid19 cross the road? A. To meet up with Delta and Mu.
4. Don't vacillate. Get fully vaccinated . Get a vaccine passport. Do not pass Go. Pass Port.
5. Will the Fourth Wave be followed by a Fifth Wave or a Farewell Wave? That is the question. To wave or not to wave.
6. Shouldn't antivax and antimask protesters be called anti-esters?
7. We have mask mandates but no mask womandates. Who wants to date a mask anyway?
8. I am promask and provax. I am for provid not covid.
9. Codependent-dependent. Coauthor-author, Co-pilot-pilot,,,, covid-vid. What's a vid?
10. Who has read the novel Coronavirus?
11. What do long haulers haul?
12. Is it a sin to have cave syndrome?
13. The British refer to isolating as shielding. Isolating sounds lonely. Shielding sounds safe and protected.
14. They pay you to get vaccinated now. I hear a lady got 20 fake ids and struck it rich. I'm not sure if it's a myth.
15. Our third year of winter pandemic is here. They do say 'Three times a charm'.

Thank You

Thank You from Alberta Street News to Nellie Condict for her generous donation of clothing. And to other anonymous donors.

As the season changes, we need warm winter coats and blankets to give to the homeless on our streets. If you would like to donate, call Linda at 780-975-3903. Donations can also be left at 9533-106A Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta. Just drop off the bags in the backyard.

I Walk Alone

By Darlene Collins

I was sitting alone looking out the back window and I noticed that there were several people walking and one was alone, then she was walking by alone and again she was going by alone, and it dawned on me they prefer to IWA (I walk alone) and not join others who are either abusing alcohol or drugs or both and there are those of us who prefer not to join the group and this is how I prefer to be, no arguments, no trouble, no hassle, no fights. Then again another thought went through my mind. White T shirts, tie dye them, put the logo IWA on the front and the writing on the back.

I'm thinking I'll give it a whirl with maybe five friends - T-shirts - and see how the public reacts with a new trend. We citizens, who prefer to walk alone and be by ourselves; choose to be this way or our human nature tells us not to be in groups or crowds. We are not losers. We/I are a happy lucky person, sometimes shy, or just plain me. I like to be one with God. I get things done and go where I want to go not where everybody else wants to go. I am my own person and I love it. No hassles or everybody to tell me what to do and feel better. At the end of the day I accomplish lots and it was easy to finally finish this project or that. I finally painted my room.

Having and wearing this T-shirt with IWA will explain to others why I am always by myself. I am no better than the next person and never will be. Who knows, maybe others will want to buy a nice Tie dyed T-shirt that will explain things in their own lives. I'll give it a try and have nothing to lose and I'll do the tie dye and choose where people can see, maybe get an address or two from people. It's wonderful. I'm getting excited thinking about it. Thank you and have a nice day.



ART CARDS: Order from a wide variety of paintings by Linda Dumont. Cards sell for \$5 each or a pack of five for \$20.

To view available pictures, contact Linda at dumontlc@hotmail.com or call 780 975 3903

left: Sleeping Fox by Linda Dumont

The world as I see it

By Darlene Collins

What is this world coming to? Our people are dropping like flies and from what? Crystal meth, pint -who made the drug? Now it's laced with crack, fentanyl, cocaine, you name it. This drug use has become a catastrophe.

I just lost my room mate, who used to live here and was my friend, and he's dead from an overdose of crystal meth, heroin and he was also smoking marijuana. And he was allowed to. Here in this +55 seniors centre it's allowed - anything you need just come to this place. And to top it off, a prostitution ring of young females, all for drugs. And it's allowed. And authorities, everybody knows about it.

And where was security when my friend was dying? Downstairs. Why is he on shift from 2 p.m. to 2 a.m. when that's when the party begins? What a joke, a stupid joke. And I stay here. Am I the next victim? You just sit around, just waiting to die. Meanwhile all these homeless people just move in and it's allowed. The place is filthy, full of cockroaches and there is even a young child involved - a mother prostitute brings her kid here and I could hear him or her screaming at the top of his or her lungs like it's getting abused somehow. Why isn't something being done about it? I told the security person, yet it continues and continues.

Rest in peace

By Darlene Collins

As I sit here in this dingy room thinking about things that I've been through this past four years, I can remember the time when I was out walking with my daughter Cher and I spotted this shiny object..It was under bushes, so I went to see what it was. Looking at it, I had no clue what it could be. I felt this energy when I held it. I looked at it, tried to take it apart. It was a very beautiful little item so I kept it near me for a couple of days not sure what to do with it.

I went to the Expo., where the homeless were staying and I spotted this tall native man. As I approached he held his hand out with a warm welcome. I showed him the object. He was shocked and took it from me and told me, "Let's pray." I stood quietly as he prayed with me and I felt this overwhelming feeling of peace.

The gentleman elder told me that the object was an urn. I didn't see him for a week or so, and when I did see him he explained to me how he googled the urn because there were markings on it at the bottom. I'll be darned! The elder found a match on the internet that matched the urn. He made contact with the people who lost it. Apparently, as they were sleeping someone broke into their vehicle and took the urn that contained the ashes of their dead loved one.. They were devastated and lost with it gone.

This family on the south side claimed it and I was able to bring their dad/husband back home where he belonged. The family were elated about this. I was supposed to contact them for a reward but I refused. I was just happy to bring the family together again. I feel that the fellow, who was in the urn guided me as to what to do to bring him home.



By Joanne Benger

Around the world people will be wearing a red poppy this Remembrance Day for it has become the symbol for both world wars and all of the conflicts that have followed. In this country Remembrance Day honours those who have served as well as those who continue to serve Canada in times of war and peace. To date more than one and a half million Canadians have served in the military and 100,000 of these brave men and women have died.

It all began because Col. John McCrae wrote, "In Flanders Field" on impulse at the second battle of Ypres the summer of 1915 as he looked out from his trench. He saw all the make shift crosses among graves covered with red poppies waving in the wind and reached for his dispatch case and pad and wrote what he felt. He was a Canadian veteran of the Boer War, a doctor, who was a much respected medical instructor at Montreal's McGill University, when the war broke out. He

shared his poem with his brother officers, who encouraged him to have it printed, so he had it published anonymously in Britain's Punch Magazine. It was an instant success. In 1918 Col John McCrae died in battle and was buried in Wimereux. His last words were, "Tell them this, if ye break faith with us who die, we shall not sleep."

When she read In Flanders

Field, the famous United States poet, Moina Michael, promised to wear a red poppy for the rest of her life in honour of those who died and she wrote this poem:

*We cherish too, the poppy red
That grows on fields where valour led.
It seems to signal to the skies
That blood of heroes never dies.*

Meanwhile in France Madame Yvonne Guerin was concerned about those left destitute and disabled by the war. Four years of bombing and battle left large areas of charred rubble and ruin, and then there was the Spanish flu. Madame Geurin proposed that the women of France make artificial poppies and sell them throughout the world and millions of francs were raised for the needy.

When we buy our artificial poppy and put money into Poppy Fund Campaign boxes it is used primarily to support Canadian veterans and serving members of the military and the RCMP as well as their families. The poppy money gives

help when there is loss of work because of illness or injury or loss of employment as well as when there are unexpected expenses. Veterans are helped with medical expenses not covered by medical insurance including prescriptions, transportation, medical equipment and necessary home modifications. Poppy money also provides bursaries for secondary education for children, grand children and great grand children of veterans.

The poppy is worn on the left side over the heart and many attend a Remembrance Day service. These vary but most likely we will hear the Kohema Epitaph: "When you go home, tell they of us and say, For your tomorrow we gave our today."

Then, after reveille and two minutes of silence we will have the Act of Remembrance:

"They shall not grow old as we that are left grow old. Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them.

The response to the Act of Remembrance is, "We will remember them."

Hymns often follow and then the Remembrance Day service will end with a reading of In Flanders Field.

There will be Remembrance Day parades as well as for shut ins, good TV coverage. Whatever we do we must take time to remember our honoured veterans and their sacrifice on Remembrance Day.

The love that you are unable to remember but you will be able to feel it, because you exist.

To My Friend Briggette.

By Maria B.

SUCH A FREE AND MYSTIC SPIRIT AND THE YEARNING TO HAVE A CONNECTION.

I have gained the awareness that through the incredible love and kindness that my father had for his horses, and the incredible love that he had for his little girl, there is a strong connection, which unveils and allows me to see with clarity that in reality I was never abandoned by my dad as through every step I gave, he has been there for me.

I embrace the closeness that I feel to my father and the realization of the love that he held in his heart for me, his little girl.

**It was very hard when you had to go to war and I never got to say goodbye. Through my life I held a lantern in my heart and I felt it would guide you back
But unfortunately you were never able to come back.**

I cherish the fact that I can hear the murmur of your spirit and feel your presence in my life.

Welcome to December – the Cold Winter month

By Joanne Benger

The Anglo Saxons called December “The Month Before Yule”. It was also called Winter Month and Cold Month and Christmas day was seen as a day reminding everyone days had begun to get longer and spring would come. In fact it informed people what spring would be like weather wise. “A warm Christmas, a cold Easter. A green Christmas, a cold Easter. Christmas is snow, Easter is wind.”

December 1 is treated as the first day of Advent by some modern people no matter what day it fall upon. Open the first Advent calendar window and light the first of the four weekly candles today.

December 1 is a Red Apple Day. That should give you a lucky December.

December 2 is Fritters Day and if it snows today, it will snow for 40 days. Plan your future indulgences for December 4 is National Cookie Day. December 8 is Brownie Day. December 9 is Pastry Day and December 13 is Cocoa Day.

December 5 is International Volunteer Day and December 6 is the last day of Hanukkah. December 6 is also the National Day for Fighting Violence Against Women.

December 7 is Pearl Harbour Remembrance Day, reminding us of this date in 1941. December 9 is Anti Corruption Day and December 10 is Human Rights Day.

December 10 is the second Friday of December, Ugly Sweater Day, so wear your fanciest Christmas sweater. Many people will wear Christmas theme clothes from now until the holidays are over.

December 12 is Poinsettia Day and December 14 is Monkey Day. The fun of the season has begun.

December 17 is Wright Brothers Day in honour of the world's first airplane flight in 1903. The new invention caught on as clogged Christmas airports prove.

December 17-23 Romans celebrated Saturnalia with feasting, good will and song as rich and poor were equal for that week. December 18 is Full Moon which is often called the Cold Moon or the Hunting Moon. This is a pleasant time to plan outdoor activities like a moonlight sleigh ride.

December 21 is the Winter Solstice when Winter officially begins. This was the Old English yule when there was a battle between the Oak King, lord of summer and his brother the Holly King, lord of winter. The Oak king must win this battle so days can lengthen and summer can come. He will reign until midsummer when there will be another battle and the Holly King will take over and rule until next Yule.

December 21 is National Crossword Puzzle Day because on this date in 1913 the word-cross puzzle was invented. Tackle a crossword puzzle today.

December 24 is Christmas Eve when Canadian children hang up their stockings and Japanese people eat Kentucky Fried chicken.

December 25 is Christmas Day. Hope it's merry, hope it's bright, hope it's festive, hope it's light, hope it's special and joyous, that's my Christmas wish for you.

December 26 is Boxing Day and St. Stephens Day. Since this

saint was stoned, some people thrown nuts at each other on his day.

December 26 the African American harvest festival of Kwanzaa begins and it will be joyfully celebrated until January 1.

December 18 is Childermas Day, the unluckiest day of the year. Start no new projects today. Some children lock their parents in their bedroom on this day and won't let them out until a ransom is paid.

December 29 is Tic Tac Toe Day. December 30 is Bacon Day.

December 31 is New Year's Eve. Yoya no Kare, with 180 peals of bells rung at Hindu and Shinto temples to drive away the evil spirits of 2021 before the New Year begins.

December 31 is Scottish Hogmanay, when all the doors are thrown open and utensils are rattled to make enough noise to drive away the sorrows of 2021. This makes way for new and wonderful things in 2022. And a Happy New Year to you, too.

Some December Thoughts

1. If Santa's workshop is at the north pole why do so many of his toys come stamped with 'made in China'?
2. Why can't I find Garland in my atlas? Where do garlands come from?
3. We use gift wrap to wrap gifts but we don't use saran wrap to wrap saran.
4. If you are not present to give the present, shouldn't it be called an absent?
5. If the wise men were so wise, why did it take them 12 days to find the stable? It goes to show that even then men didn't like asking for directions.
6. Who are they trying to con at concerts?
7. In Scrabble a mixed up Santa becomes Satan.
8. Did you hear about the computer whiz who was unhappy because he asked for an i-pod and got an eye pad instead?
9. Did you hear about the man who came to the Christmas party wearing only one snowboot? The weather man said there was a fifty percent chance of snow.
10. Another man wore only one glove. The forecaster said it might be cold. On the other hand we might have a heat wave.

'I am too cold to think.' Thoughts

1. Tricycles, bicycles, icicles. You can't ride an icicle. What was the question?
2. There are snowmen but no snowwomen.
3. We ski in ski-pants but we don't snow in snow pants.
4. Is the snow plough man a designated driver? He has a designated route.
5. I wonder who put the win in winter. It should be winder the way the North Wind blows.
6. The U.S. folk say the Polar Vortex comes from Canada. We say it comes from Siberia. I wonder where Siberians think it comes from?
7. Come in if your eyes freeze shut.
8. Stop blushing if water pipes burst. Harvest the snow for flushing.
9. I know it's cold when frost paints my hair and scarf white while I am still inside the house.
10. It is so cold gravity is freezing everything in place.
11. If it gets much colder the sun might freeze in place.

Fiction - The Secret of the Fountain

by Sharon Austin

For more than a hundred years the Mermaid Fountain stood proudly in the park at the heart of the town of Stillwater. The fountain was beautifully crafted by the daughter of the famous sea captain Jethro Stillwater. Ester Stillwater had captured the beauty and harmony of the ocean with the huge brass monument that spewed water twenty feet in the air. The fountain depicted a beautiful mermaid sitting on a rock holding a huge conch shell. Behind her three large dolphins rose from the frothing waves and three streams of water bubbled from their open mouths. At the mermaid's feet were starfish, lobsters, crabs and seashells. As if in the distance, a tiny lighthouse was visible on a rocky shoreline. The Mermaid Fountain was a popular tourist attraction and people would come and throw coins into the fountain and take pictures.

Mr. Petrovic nodded to the fountain as he always did as he made the rounds with his trash picker. For twelve years he had done maintenance work at the park making sure that the grounds were clean and mowed and the flower beds were watered. In his home country he had been a professor but here in Canada he was glad to have this maintenance job. Being educated and a Christian as well had put the family in grave danger. They had escaped to a refugee camp with only the clothes on their backs and lived in fear and want until they were chosen as refugees. The children had learned English quickly and embraced their new life of freedom but his wife still clung to the old ways and lived in fear of the soldiers coming in the night. As he walked past the courthouse, Mr. Petrovic noted that even more tents had sprung up in the homeless camp in the back lot. He hoped that the authorities wouldn't come and dismantle the camp as they had in the past. That day he thought he saw tears pouring down the cheeks of the statue of Lady Justice but of course it had only been the rain. Having known hunger and hopelessness, Mr. Petrovic and his wife would make trays of sandwiches and leave them on the sharing table of the camp every Sunday. Back at the fountain, a downcast young woman was throwing three coins and making her wish. Mr.

Petrovic had seen her come every week for the past four years and he wondered what she wished for so fervently.

The next day as Mr. Petrovic neared the park he sensed something was wrong. Where was the soothing sound of the water rushing from the fountain? Coming closer he saw that the three dolphins no longer sprayed water and the fountain bed was dry. Coins lay scattered all around the dry cement and he hurried to gather them for the town coffers. Soon crowds began to gather as people questioned why the fountain had stopped working. Everyone seemed to have their own theory as to why the fountain that had faithfully sprayed for a hundred years now was stilled. First to come was the street preacher carrying his big sign "The end of the world is near." He stood in the dry fountain bed and shouted, "God has spoken! The town of Stillwater must repent before the water will be restored. Repent of your evil ways before it is too late!" He continued to preach long into the afternoon. As the days went by more groups gathered to have their say. The next to come was a group of women who objected to the mermaid on the rock having bare breasts although they were almost totally covered by her long flowing hair and the conch shell. "This statue must be torn down for depicting women this way," they screeched to anyone who would listen. Mr. Petrovic handed the leader of the women, who held a bullhorn, a pamphlet detailing the history of the fountain and what it represented. He tried to tell her that it had been designed by a woman but she grabbed the pamphlet, ripped it up and hurled it to the ground. "Some folks didn't want to know the truth," he thought sadly. A little girl with sparkling blue eyes was standing gazing up at the fountain. "Mommy look at the beautiful mermaid," she cried. Mr. Petrovic smiled to himself as he thought, "To the pure of heart all things are pure. Too bad some folks saw evil everywhere."

Someone had reached out to the Indigenous Peoples and implored them to do a rain dance to restore the fountain's water. A small group obliged and crowds gathered to watch the traditional dance but the fountain water remained strangely still. One morning Mr. Petrovic noticed that some group had left an offering of baskets of oranges and bananas and handwritten notes imploring the fountain to work again. Nothing was ever to be left at the fountain so he gathered the baskets

and walked the two blocks to the homeless camp. Laying the baskets on the sharing table he heard someone cry joyfully "Fresh fruit!" Looking back, he saw some tent flaps open as people surged to the table. A bearded man with one crippled leg raised his hand in salute. Mr. Petrovic smiled as he thought, "These people needed the fruit much more than a lifeless statue made of bronze."

At the fountain, he saw the same young woman who had come to make her wish for so many years. Looking directly at him she questioned, "Do you think that the fountain stopping is a sign that my wish will never come true." She looked sad and downtrodden as usual and Mr. Petrovic did not want to give her false hope.

"If wishes were horses beggars would ride," he said quietly quoting an old Scottish proverb.

"Too true," she said sadly. "You seem like a wise old gentleman. Do you think my fiancé will ever come back to me, it's been such a long time."

"If ever a woman needed to move on, it was this one," Mr. Petrovic thought. Even her clothing was drab and outdated. Looking heavenward he tried to offer good advice. "I see you and your fiancé as two bright autumn leaves caught up together in a little whirlwind. For a short span of time you danced and whirled within the spiral but when the wind died down you were each thrown a different direction. I see your leaf is still young and bright. It is not dry or crackled or covered with snow. The wind will pick up your leaf again and it will be blown many wonderful places if you let it fly."

"Thank-you, she breathed. "I needed to hear that. By the way, what colour do you see my leaf?"

"Gold" he answered, "Pure gold." She walked away with a new light of hope in her eye and a spring in her step. Next to come to the fountain was a group of engineers who discussed the total refit of the pipes and infrastructure that was long overdue. In the news the next day Mr. Petrovic read the total cost of refurbishing the fountain was cited at 1.6 million dollars. As the fountain wasn't working, the city officials thought it a good time for him to clean the statue. Dutifully, he took a tall ladder and began to clean and polish the bronze with mild soap and a soft cloth. From his high perch Mr. Petrovic shone his flashlight down the throat of the middle and highest dolphin. There gleaming

in the bright beam of the flashlight he saw what looked like a loonie lodged perfectly in the main pipe. Dawning his pointed garbage picker, he struck the edge of the coin again and again. Suddenly the coin turned and shot into the air on a spray of water, almost knocking him off the ladder. Hurriedly he scrambled down and collected the errant coin. It was a million to one shot! Somehow the coin had flipped into the dolphin's mouth and against all odds lodged itself in the main pipe quenching

the fountain's flow. Not wanting to draw attention to himself, he decided not to mention the coin to anyone. There were enough groups who would claim to have resolved the problem and no one would believe him anyway.

Many years later Mr. Petrovic's three grown sons began the heartbreaking task of going through their beloved father's belongings. Tucked away in a carved wooden box they found a loonie and a handwritten story entitled The Secret of

the Mermaid Fountain. "This story needs to be told," declared his youngest son who was a journalist.

In time, a bronze plaque was placed at the foot of the fountain with the bright golden coin securely mounted above the story. There were those who doubted the story but whether it was true or not, the fountain once again sent its silver spray cascading over the peaceful ocean scene. Some said only the mermaid knew the secret and she would never tell.

Rudolf and the other reindeer

By Joanne Bengier

The song "Rudolf the Red Nose Reindeer" tells a classic story of bullying and exclusion. Poor Rudolf had the wrong colour nose. That is why "all the other reindeer used to laugh and call him names. They never let poor Rudolf join in any reindeer games." The song then goes on to tell the bullied how to escape from bullying. Success is the best revenge. Become famous and successful and everyone will accept you just as you are whatever our colour, we are told. "Then all the reindeer loved him as they shouted out with glee. Rudolf the red nosed reindeer, you'll go down in history."

Poor Rudolf may have had two other differences that led to his bullying and exclusion. It has been suggested that he may have had gender issues because Rudolf, who was referred to as he, had the antlers of a female reindeer. Both male and female reindeer have antlers, but males shed theirs at the beginning of the fall whereas females shed theirs in the spring. Rudolf is pictured with antlers and only a female would have antlers at Christmas time.

Poor Rudolf was also a newcomer, an outsider and perhaps even a caribou. Until he arrived, eight tiny reindeer had been pulling Santa's sleigh. They had no doubt come to America with Dutch immigrants along with Sinterklass. Professor Clement C Moore named the eight reindeer when he wrote "A Visit From St. Nicholas" published in the Troy Sentinel December 23, 1823. "Now Dasher, now Dancer, now Prancer and Vixen. On Comet, on Cupid, on Duner and Blixen. "The last two reindeer were renamed to Donner and Blitzen in 1944.

Rudolf didn't join Santa's reindeer herd

until 1939 and he did so via Montgomery Ward Department Store in Illinois. The store copywriter, Robert L. May, wrote the story of Rudolf as a free colouring book for children and 2.4 million copies were given away that first year. By 1946, six million children had been introduced to Rudolf. Then Robert May's brother-in-law, songwriter Johnny Marks, composed the music and lyrics for the song of Rudolf in 1949 and two million copies were sold the first year.

Amazingly, both "A Visit From St. Nicholas" and "Rudolf the Red Nosed Reindeer" remain a popular part of our modern Christmas, but most of us know very little about reindeer.

Santa's reindeer are the same species, Rangifer Taradus, as our caribou, but whereas our caribou run wild, reindeer were domesticated in northern Europe about 14,000 years ago and some claim the reindeer was actually the first wild animal to be domesticated. At present there are over three million domesticated reindeer in northern Lapland, Sweden, Norway, Finland and Russia. They are reined or tame deer. The domesticated reindeer became a dual purpose animal filling the role of both our cattle and horse. They provide meat, milk and cheese, hides for clothes and tents as well as transportation. Like horses they are used to pull sleighs and other vehicles, but they are pack animals as well and can carry their own weight. Male reindeer are often neutered so they can carry especially heavy loads.

A neutered male will not lose his antlers

in the fall so it is possible that Santa's reindeer could be neutered males if not females. However one has a decidedly feminine name- Vixen. A vixen can be a female fox or a shrewish woman. It is not a name one would give to a male animal and since all the reindeer match in size, and female reindeer are smaller than males, it is probable they are all females.

The name caribou comes from xalibu, an eastern Canadian Micmac word that means "one who digs". Both reindeer and caribou can survive cold arctic winters by digging down through the snow with their large hooves to get lichen for food. Lichen can make up two thirds of their diet. Lichen does not grow at the north pole, so what Santa's reindeer eat is anybody's guess.

Both male reindeer and caribou are about three and a half feet tall, weigh just over three hundred pounds and can reach speeds of 50 mph. on land and 6 mph in water. So, there you have it. Now all we have to do is let real life mimic song and welcome someone who I different this Christmas, no matter what the difference is.



2021 Fall Fun Golf Classic raises \$92,000 for MMM's Adopt a Family Christmas Campaign

By John Zapantis

When people are notable for doing great supportive work in their respective communities, helping to make that big difference for families less fortunate, those noble contributions are eventually recognized and awarded.

That day finally arrived for two very special ladies, who volunteer for the non-profit organization called Morinville Marvelous Mom's Adopt a Family.

The two ladies were Morinville Marvelous Mom's Adopt a Family Founder Sarah Hall and one of her volunteers, Monique Webb, who were awarded for their contributions at a presentations ceremony that opened for the 2021 Fall Fun Golf Classic, hosted and organized by Andrew Webb Carpentry Services and Quinn Plumbing and Heating on Sunday September 12th at 2 p.m. at the Goose Hummock Golf Resort located a few miles north of Gibbons Alberta.

The fund raising event and golf tournament was in its 4th year. It was established in 2017 by its founder Andrew Webb, who invited novice golfers from around Sturgeon County, Morinville and surrounding areas to have the wonderful opportunity of playing a round of 18 holes of Texas Scramble golf, golfing for prizes as well as the added passion for helping to raise money for the MMM's Adopt a Family Christmas Campaign.

The MMM's Adopt a Family's purpose is to provide underprivileged families with food, clothing and gifts during the Christmas season.

35 teams consisting of four golfers a team for a total of 140 golfers, who each paid a registration fee of \$100 to compete in a fundraising golf tournament, were all scheduled to tee off at 3 p.m., one hour after a presentation ceremony that commenced at centre stage at 2 p.m. that day. The presentation ceremony's MC and Founder of the Fall Fun Golf Classic was Andrew Webb of Andrew Webb Carpentry Services, who introduced three keynote speakers to the stage to give their speeches on various social issues that have both

impacted and benefited members of our communities.

The three speakers included Sturgeon County Mayor Alanna Hnatiw, Morinville RCMP constable and liason Wynette Tailfeathers and Sharice Cardinal, the mother of Arizona Cardinal, who recently passed away from brain cancer.

Sturgeon County Mayor Alanna Hnatiw gave her presentation on Treaty Six, its people and concerns for victims of the residential school system, while expressing her gratitude to the people, who come out to make this event possible for those less fortunate.

Morinville constable and liason Wynette Tailfeathers worked the stage as a co-host and introduced Sharice Cardinal to the stage, allowing this mother to share her story about her daughter's battle with brain cancer, which had tragically taken her life. Cardinal came to the stage and delivered her heartfelt story about her involvement with the good hearted Morinville Marvelous Mom's MMM's Adopt a Family non-profit organization and how they helped her through her daughter's struggle with brain cancer. Cardinal said, "My name is Sharice Cardinal. I'm from the Alexander First Nations. I grew up in the Morinville area and back and forth, between Morinville and Alexander. (Sharice paused for a

few seconds nearly on the verge of breaking down emotionally-then continued to speak). "It's kind of hard. My daughter, Arizona, was diagnosed with brain cancer. All it took for me was a little posting on Facebook to reach out to my friends in Morinville. We wanted to do something special for her on Halloween. So we ended up having a big Halloween party for her.

"I posted on the Morinville Marvelous Mom's Group and they took off - like they reached out and they went above and beyond for my family, not only through Halloween, right through to even now. My daughter passed away in February. I wanted to do something special for the women that in our culture are the backbone of our community. They pull everybody together. The Ribbon Skirt represents a tee-pee, which is our home. I wanted to share that before we do the presentation. I just want to thank everybody in Morinville, everybody for supporting my family and my community. I'm very, very grateful for all of you."

Morinville RCMP constable and liason Wynette Tailfeathers returned to the stage to give her presentation to two volunteer members of the Morinville Marvelous Mom's MMM's Adopt a Family - founder Sarah Hall and one of her volunteers Monique Webb. The two were acknowledged

**Below: The 2021 Fall Fun Golf Classic had ASN Media Relations Coordinator/ Reporter John Zapantis resting between takes and kicking up the fun in the sun, while claiming this golf cart as his own.
Photo by Matthew Johnston**



for their successful contributions in helping families in need during the Christmas season. Tailfeathers said, "So we're here to do a presentation to two Marvelous Moms to personally thank them for their efforts and share and celebrate their accomplishments and powerful impact they have left in our community.

"So the third person we'd like to introduce is Sarah Hall. Sarah is a Town Councillor for the Town of Morinville and an active advocate for our community. Sarah is a strong Indigenous woman, whose efforts and affiliation and Indigenous inclusion and advocacy ensure that everyone she encounters is hers. She is the founder of Morinville Marvelous Mom's, the initiative that began with Sarah herself. Sarah had a vision and she talked her talk and walked her walk and we're here today because of that. Sarah's served our town and county in various capacities. Sarah has shown strong support for public safety with the RCMP and with other public enforcement agencies and other community groups. Sarah has served on other executive boards, for members of public school council and chair of fundraising associations, the United Nations Women's Day Award and the Morinville Annual Women's Day Conference, Morinville Public Schools and Parent's Committee and continues to do the work she does.

"Sarah has many roles and she is constantly giving her time and her energy to help everybody. Sarah's done time with the Jessica Martel Foundation and continues to advocate for women and children in need."

"The next person that we need to recognize is Monique Webb. Monique Webb is a member of the Morinville Marvelous Moms. She has worked so hard on this event to give back to those in need. Sarah has served on other executive boards, for members of public school council and chair of fundraising associations, the United Nations Women's Day Award and the Morinville Annual Women's Day Conference, Morinville Public Schools and Parent's Committee and continues to do the work she does.

"A short list of Monique's accomplishments include that she is also a Marvelous Mom herself to her family, dedicated, demonstrating a strong home fire as a term we use for our families. She has served as an educator for the Sturgeon Division since 2005 for the past few years.

She's served as First Nations and Metis Leader at Morinville Public School and has studied Indigenous studies, while completing her Master's Degree. Monique has assisted in Indigenous inclusion in various communities. She has assisted in raising Treaty 6 flags at schools. She worked with local RCMP, elders and other community members. She participated in introducing the Urban Chicken Raising Program to the community as well. I think she has actually taken home quite a few chickens herself, I gather.

"So there are two ladies who truly demonstrate what it means to be a strong woman role model. It comes with hours of dedication and work and volunteer service that have not gone unnoticed.

"When asked to put these words together by one of their peers, these are the terms that were used to describe her - selfless, amazing, hard working, kind, beautiful, often does too much and role model, to name a few.

"These two ladies have been chosen to be honoured today with First Nations ribbon skirts and a special thanks for what they have done"

"Sharice explained the civilization of skirts for those of you who do not know. In addition to Sharice's comments it symbolizes, resilience, sacredness, and survival. It is considered an honour to receive one. Out of respect and gratitude for these two ladies and everything they stand for. Sharice would like to present them with their skirts today. So thank you ladies for all your hard work."

Sharice presented the two ladies with the ribbon skirts, hugging one lady after another. After the ending of that presentation MC Andrew Webb made an announcement advising all the golfers surrounding the stage to jump into their golf carts and prepare to tee off at 3 p.m. for a Texas Scramble golf game of 18 holes around the greens.

Later in the evening, after the tournament was over, golfers were treated to a dinner, a 50/50 raffle and prizes that were awarded for the winning golfers in their distinctive categories. An award for the last place finisher was another interesting highlight that made everyone come to life in laughter!

ASN interviewed MMM's Adopt a Family Founder Sarah Hall who was more than pleased with the show of support from organizers, local sponsors and the

140 golfers that came out to compete and donate to this important cause,

Hall said, "We would not be able to operate if we did not have the support of local businesses like we do with Tim Quinn of Quinn's Plumbing and Heating and Andrew Webb of Andrew Webb Carpentry Services. We wouldn't be able to operate. We wouldn't be able to impact the families that we do. So it means absolutely everything to us that these events happen."

Carly Quinn, the daughter of Tim Quinn of Quinn's Plumbing and Heating, was out and about participating in the 18 holes of Texas Scramble and took some time out to give ASN her perspective on the event, Quinn said, "I think it's easy to think about what we have, when we have a lot more than what some people have. So it's an opportunity to give back in a fun way. It's a great thing to have."

"Thanks for the generous support and contributions of the golfers, while donating to the cause, including the many local sponsors and of course Andrew Webb Carpentry and Quinn's Plumbing and Heating and of course we can't forget the contributions of those amazing Morinville Marvelous Mom's who encouraged everyone in that day's fundraising event in successfully raising \$92,000 dollars, where those proceeds will be donated to the Morinville Marvelous Mom's Adopt a Family Christmas Campaign, helping to make Christmas more convenient for families who will have the incentives of money, clothing, food and presents under the tree this Christmas!"

Caregiver Burnout

By Linda Dumont

*Wearily pushing past tiredness and pain
One more task, one more task, one more
request...*

Can you... Will you.... I need

The demands are endless

The complaints unceasing

Each small request a single straw,

One small drop in the bucket

Just such a little thing

One inconsequential task

Can you.... Will you.... I need

Wearily rising to meet unceasing demands

Pushing on day after day after day

On call night after night after night

*Rising to the task, ministering to the de-
mand...*

*God said that they that are strong bear the
burdens of the weak,*

But who bears the burdens of the strong?

Historical shaming and renaming are right and necessary



By Allan Sheppard

In early September, Edmonton Public School Board (EPSB) trustees voted unanimously to rename two schools. Trustees found their namesakes' historical activities racist by our contemporary standards. One of those namesakes, Frank Oliver, emigrated from Ontario to Edmonton in 1880. He founded Alberta's first newspaper, the Edmonton Bulletin, and remained its publisher until 1923.

Oliver was the territorial representative to the federal government before Alberta became a province in 1905 and continued as an MP until 1917. He sat in Sir Wilfrid Laurier's Liberal cabinet as minister of the interior and superintendent-general of Indian affairs from 1905 to 1911. Wikipedia says Oliver "was responsible for discriminatory Canadian government policies that targeted First Nations' land rights and black immigration."

Wikipedia's rhetoric is bland; Oliver's policies and actions were brutal. That record, among other factors, prompted Trustee Michael Janz to offer a motion to rename Oliver School.

The second school was named after Dan Knott, mayor of Edmonton from 1931 to 1933. Knott was involved with the KKK, which was then politically active in Alberta under leader J.J. Maloney, who endorsed Knott's candidacy. Among other actions, Knott allowed KKK cross-

burnings on the Northlands exhibition grounds, according to Wikipedia.

I posted a link for Edmonton Journal coverage of the name changes (<https://bit.ly/3ngS266>) to my Facebook news feed with a comment: "While they're at it (and for the same good reason) the EPSB should change the name of Richard Secord School in South Edmonton, I've posted a link to the Edmonton City Museum entry for Secord (<https://bit.ly/30Fq7Fn>) ...for those who do not know the ugly details of Secord's Métis land and scrip dealings, by which he and a teacher colleague made themselves millionaires at a time when being a millionaire still meant something. A friend commented on my post: "I think only about 5% of the colonials acted in the way we 21st century people believe is right and good. Of course some were honorable and many didn't have the power or funds to act dishonorably. When will the renaming be done with? And how much does it do to solve the problem?"

My friend commented in good faith, expressing what many Canadians of professed goodwill believe. I did not reply then because I have learned the hard way that Facebook is not the place for nuanced discussion and debate and because I wanted time to think about a response.

It is time to respond to my friend's questions.

First, I will point out that the EPSB decided on its name changes at a time when similar decisions were taking place in other places and jurisdictions. Earlier in the year, Catholic school boards in Edmonton, St. Albert, and Calgary voted to rename schools named after Vital Grandin, the first Catholic Bishop of St. Albert. The Edmonton Transit System removed Grandin's name and imagery from an LRT station near the former Grandin School. Grandin was an advocate for and the architect of Canada's Indian Residential School policy that Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald enacted aggressively and, as Justice Murray Sinclair's Truth and Reconciliation Commission detailed, tragically.

Indigenous leaders have called on authorities to remove Macdonald's name and statues from public buildings and sites across Canada.

The EPSB's decision regarding Oliver and Dan Knott schools was a small, late example of cancel culture, defined on Wikipedia as, "a modern form of ostracism in which someone is thrust out of social or professional circles – whether it

be online, on social media, or in person."

To label an act, statement, or decision as cancel culture is, for many people, to imply that it is wrong and has no place in public discourse: it inhibits open discussion and debate or, as in the case of Oliver, Knott, Grandin, Macdonald, et al is futile; the perpetrators, however guilty, are no longer able to mend their ways, being long dead. In any case, the argument goes, the actions of historical targets of cancel culture were acting in ways consistent with the values of their times.

And there's the rub.

Calling out past behaviour that is not consistent with current values is not about changing what someone has already said and done: It is about stating and affirming values we believe we must hold now.

It is not about rewriting history, although that can be an inevitable part of it. It is about changing and rewriting our present and future: for the better.

Not to call out past statements and actions that were unacceptable can be—and often is, if we pay close attention to contemporary social and political rhetoric and actions—to condone them for the most specious of reasons: times were different then. It is to imply that actions that were acceptable back when are or can be OK (nyti.ms/3jodKUW) today.

My friend is right when she says that only a small percentage (probably) of early Edmontonians practiced the racism perpetrated by historical figures whom some of us are now cancelling for ethical, moral, and political failings. Whether the identifiably guilty amounted to five per cent or one per cent of the population is not the issue. The issue is the 95 per cent, or the 99 per cent, who tolerated and condoned that behaviour: that racism. Those who stand by and do or say nothing are also guilty; they are enablers, some active, most passive.

So, to my friend's question, "When will the renaming be done with?" I must answer, never.

If, as I hope and trust, our society will evolve for the better, we must commit ourselves to re-evaluating our collective past, present, and future and to calling out, when appropriate, unacceptable past, present, and anticipated future values and actions.

The second question is pragmatic: "And how much does it (calling out past values and behaviour) do to solve the problem?"

My answer is I do not know what, if anything, calling out historical figures and actions does to solve the problem. I only know that doing and saying nothing is the surest way to ensure that nothing will change.

Oliver, Knott, Grandin, Macdonald, and many, many others acted in ways that should have been unacceptable in their times. If we do not speak and act to label

their behaviour unacceptable today, we condone not only what was done in the past but equivalent or similar rhetoric and actions that can, does, and (we know) will occur today.

Contemporary racist and xenophobic leaders and personalities (I will leave who some of them are and why for another day; in your heart you already know) exist and, in too many cases, thrive because we,

the 95 or 99 per cent, allow them to.

We say nothing. We do nothing. When we vote (if we vote) we choose bread and butter over heart and soul. We accept and condone.

We get the governance and leadership we deserve. Unfortunately, it is not always what our indigenous and immigrant compatriots deserve and, more importantly, need.

Manitoba Housing In the West End Of Winnipeg

By Rodney Graham

Went shopping a local store. It's a real privilege for me. That's because a couple of years ago loss prevention in most of the stores I shopped in harassed me so much I had to shop miles away. So that has decreased - probably because I have been very busy trying to find out who is behind the campaign to discredit me and ruin my reputation.

While shopping I saw a guy who lives in the same building. I felt sorry for him, and was quite concerned for him. sitting against a wall, hunched over. I thought he might be in medical distress. But he woke up a few times. I think he was very tired - sleeping. Good chance he was evicted.

But why sleeping in public when he has a home? I've mentioned why a few times. The home care are thugs - sadists. And the volunteers, otherwise known as "favourites" - are tenants who suck up to the thugs and do whatever they want them to - including bullying people they don't happen to like. Usually totally innocent people.

These people spend most of the day watching everyone. It's like a prison. They bully anyone who is vulnerable and alone, or new. They don't leave people alone. There is no privacy whatsoever. It's a completely toxic atmosphere. And, apparently, the supervisors seem to want it that way.

I know one person at least, who was wrongfully evicted. She may have died of exposure because someone told me she used to try and sneak in - in mid winter after she was evicted. Here in Winnipeg it gets -30c regularly. Of course the "favour-

ites" told everyone not to let her in.

She stopped coming around. No one knows what happened to her - and no one seems to care either.

Another committed suicide - I strongly suspect, because she was harassed and bullied constantly. Annoyed and harassed by a couple of guys who were tenants, for no apparent reason. The health care people - not all - enjoy bullying and being mean to vulnerable people as well. The "favourites" seem to have a competition - they like to see how many people they can get evicted. False allegations. And bullying...

After that woman committed suicide those two men disappeared. Probably transferred. Probably not punished in any way at all either. I think someone in administration found out - and then, of course, just covered it up, and transferred them.

An old trick they have always used. Provoke, bully, offend, and then when a target responds, they call the authorities and exaggerate. The one who gets the most people evicted - the one who ruins the most innocent lives is the big winner. They live high on the hog - the best of the food, the best deal, the gravy...

But, it's kind of just the way society is run

in the shadows - the needy, vulnerable, and poor. But most people never see it. I remember when a poor woman moved in - next to me actually. She was in a wheelchair. I soon learned she was a target of bullying. I would hear her cry herself to sleep at night. She would say... 'I don't know what to do,' over and over until she fell asleep. One day she sprayed someone with hair spray. She was evicted.

The poor woman just didn't have the sophistication to know what to do. And I know that if she complained chances were that the thugs would just laugh. They don't care. The corruption is from the top down and they are sadistic louts. This is Winnipeg - the wicked city.

Someone once said: 'Law are like sausages - you don't want to see how they're made.'



Keith Thomson, 44, is seen here in his model 1923 Ford T-Bucket pulling up to the parking lot at a Tim Horton's in Stony Plain Alberta. Keith is from Sturgeon County. He first was interested in hot cars while once a high school student in the auto mechanics program, which also included drag racing that got his passion started for riding around in vintage hot models. This car is more for show

than driving for speed. Photo by John Zapantis

Invalidation of Child Abuse

By Maria B.

I grew up in an environment where the child abuse that I received was completely invalidated by even my siblings trying to manipulate and put a spin on the actions of our parents. This only forms a place where we cease to believe our recollections in order to accept what other people are trying to make us believe. This takes us into a participation of creating shadows, the kind of shadows that fervently follow us and create feelings of incredible fear. We find ourselves lacking trust in our feelings also, so instead we develop shame and guilt feelings, blaming ourselves for everything that happened to us. By doing this we carry incredible burdens because suddenly the abuse has become our fault and suddenly we have become the sources of the abuse not the perpetrators that had the power to abuse us in despicable forms.

People state that in order to heal, we have to forgive. Forgive who? The perpetrator or ourselves for all the abuse we cause to ourselves? This is completely ludicrous.

Before I could forgive my parents, I had to understand where they came from, what kind of upbringing they came from and realize that the abuse that I received, I did not deserve as I was an innocent child learning how to survive in such a cruel world. After being able to forgive them for the incredible pain they caused in my life, I had to forgive myself for believing that I was the source of my pain.

I have been able to honour the memories that come into my head describing what happened but also allow my feelings that were trapped in the darkness of exclusion to come into the light and express themselves. Doing this has been an incredibly liberating experience for myself and I am welcoming every memory and every feeling that comes attached to that experience.

One thing that is incredibly irreconcilable is the fear that I recognize since I was very little, even pictures were able to capture the fear that kept me trapped. For this I can only assume that the treatment that I received from my father, when I was not aware of what was going on, was not deciphered through words but actions against me as an innocent child. I refused to claim my fault for crying too much or something incoherent like that. I appreciate that when I was born I was a gift to the world. It is sad that the feelings I had were of incredible fear instead of feelings of love?

As children, actions leave an imprint in our memories and in our hearts. This does not mean that we wanted to have perfect parents but the reality in my life is that I needed more loving parents. Now I am able to understand that parents that did not have displays of love from their parents, cannot give what they themselves did not have. And yet through all these years, I wish I could remember a kind gesture, a sign of love that my parents could have had for me? And unfortunately my memory stock on love is completely empty.



We can live our life longing for even a loving sign from our parents and maybe my loyal friend "fear" impeded me from seeing those signs. Talking to my sibling and expecting some mention of this would not be credible, as they would be able to confuse the signs of love they were able to see and feel and include me also but is not the same.

I also think in our two younger siblings, who faced the abandonment of my parents when they were so little, about two and four, sadness took over me, encapsulating my feelings of the abandonment that we suffered and realizing how incredibly broken we were and how our childhood was stolen from us through the actions of our parents.

Through all of this we have been able to rise and become incredible human beings.

I AM INCREDIBLY PROUD OF WHO I AM.



LEXICON OF SPIRIT

*These words, dropped from the vastness,
the emptiness, to take root in my mind
and flow from my pen. I honour
them in the transcription. I read them
with a voice filled with awe
for the powers that dictate and inspire,
for the small vessel I am, housing so much,
the lexicon of spirit flowing through us all,
and those who give it form.*

-ky perraun

HEALING WORDS

by Writing for Recovery

The Wellness Network