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PER PAPER

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THE PUSH FOR CHANGE

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

Writers:
Maria B.,
Robert Champion
Timothy Wild
John Zapantis
Joanne Benger
Linda Dumont
Angelique Branston
Allan Sheppard
Sharon Spencer
Gilly Ro
Rodney Graham
Sharon Austin
Gerald David Kearney
Remza Lagarija

Photos:
Maria B.,
Linda Dumont
Robert Boyd

Cartoon: Joanne Benger
Cover photo: The Push for
Change website

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Alberta Street News
9533-106A Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta,
T5H 0S9
780-428-0805
dumontlc@hotmail.com
Web:
albertastreetnews.org

THE VIEWS PRESENTED ARE
THOSE OF THE
CONTRIBUTORS.

Womens Shelter still closed



By Linda Dumont

The Women's Emergency Accommodation Shelter on the corner of Jasper Avenue and 96 Street, was damaged by a fire that broke out at 3 a.m. Tuesday, April 26. The fire was quickly put out and the building evacuated. The Facility has 66 beds and at the time of the fire 63 beds were occupied.

A resident of the shelter is alleged to have started the blaze. The 33-year-old woman has been charged with arson..

The facility, operated by E4C, provides temporary shelter to homeless and transient women in

the Edmonton area who have little or no income. Clients might have mental health or substance abuse problems, are trying to leave prostitution or abusive relationships or they just might be alone with no money and nowhere else to go.

Women who were staying at the shelter have been housed at Elizabeth House and Hope Mission.

The shelter is closed indefinitely until repairs can be completed.



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Framing Democracy

By Timothy Wild, Calgary

The recent “Brexit” referendum vote clearly illustrates the dangers of using a simple yes / no question to determine the outcome of complex social, economic and cultural matters. In the previous year’s General Election, the British Prime Minister David Cameron, then in a tight race with the opposition Labour Party, made the promise to hold a referendum on Britain’s continued membership in the European Union in order to secure some of the support of English voters leaning towards the secessionist United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP). That cynical attempt, based in crass short-term political thinking, obviously helped Cameron win the election. Ultimately, however, the subsequent referendum ended not only his political career but also sent the global economy into a nosedive. Cameron’s folly will also have disastrous consequences for the viability of the European project, particularly if secessionist sentiment grows in other countries, especially in northern Europe.

Referendums may sound appealing on a basic level. Why not “let the people decide”? There is an easy logic to that. Yet a number of problems arise when politicians take that easy way out. Most problematic to me is the fact that referendums do not protect minority rights (look for example at the vote in Newfoundland on denominational education). Would we have the advances in minority rights if it were simply left to the will of the majority? Democracy should be about an evolving balance of the individual and collective, the minority and the majority. Additionally, referendums rarely provide time and space for robust public policy discussion. Referendums, despite their populist cache and allure, are frequently very destructive political instruments.

However, there was also another recent electoral example that reflected

the wonderful potential of representative democracy. Australia held a general election for both the Senate and the House of Representatives. The early “double dissolution” election was called by the Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, to counter an increase in support for the Labor Party. Despite a poor campaign, Turnbull’s coalition narrowly won the election. Yet what I continue to find interesting about elections in Australia is the use of voting methods to help ensure that the results more accurately reflect the views of the electorate. This mirrored representation then allows the much needed voice and space to discuss complex social, cultural and economic matters in a more thoughtful, open and nuanced way.

Yes the system of preferential voting is complicated, but it also ensures the amplification of a more diverse range of voices in our elected bodies. The Senate, for example, continues to have much needed representation from the Greens (the political future), together with small parties clumped faithfully around the diverse agendas of individual leaders together with, sadly, a reemergence of the One Nation party. Taken together, though, such representation ensures that more voices are heard, and more ideas are presented and considered. Diversity in political assemblies will result in more effective and transformative public policy. And that is what we sorely need if we want to authentically broaden the circle of participation.

I think both of the above examples are interesting. But where is all of this coming from? What does it mean to Alberta in 2016? Well, Dr. Barry Cooper, a political science professor at the University of Calgary, recently wrote an op-ed piece in The Calgary Herald arguing that any Liberal proposal on electoral reform should be subject to approval by referendum. While I agree that most proposals made by the Liberals, given their

record in office, need to be held up to extensive public scrutiny, I also do not think that referendums are the way to go.

Anyway, I wrote a letter to The Herald to that effect, and this was met by another letter that argued the will of the people should trump the voice of bureaucrats. True. I agree, but also don’t think it is as quite as simple as that. Democracy is not simply an electoral exercise and we need to ensure that we have a broader understanding of both the notion and practice of democracy. To be sure, an important step is to undertake significant electoral reform. An elected Senate, based on regional elements of proportional representation would be a good start. We could also adopt some form of PR in Alberta, involving both single members seats, but also regional seats allocated on the basis of some method of proportional representation. Scotland provides a great example of this model.

However, it is also important to recognize that, ultimately, democracy is what happens between elections. It is about providing a wide and attainable range of options. And that democracy should not only happen in our elected assemblies, but should be vitally apparent in our public life and the spaces of our work places, faith groups and communities. We all have a voice. We also have the right and responsibility to use our voices, both individually and collectively. Electoral reform is a good, and necessary first step. But it is only the first step. It isn’t about binary options or forced choices pried from a grey, middling blob. Democracy requires time, space and ideas. Complicated, certainly...but effective and just too.



There had to be a better way

By Allan Sheppard

Did I diss Canada and Alberta in my August column by writing this?: “Yet freelance columnist Gwynne Dyer (gwynnedyer.com, Universal Basic Income, 06 June 2016) suggests the ethics of generosity is having a revival in Europe, if not yet in North America, or, sadly, in Canada and Alberta. It’s being advocated by some (so far) outliers in our part of the world, but mostly we are still in the talking and dreaming stages, clinging to austerity as the best—in fact only—answer.” Perhaps: I may have overstated things a bit. The happy reality is that Canadian governments generally walk a better social benefits game than they talk.

I was remembering, as I wrote those words, the notion of a guaranteed annual income (in the form of a negative income tax) outlined in a 1970 White Paper that was introduced for discussion by the government of the first Prime Minister Trudeau. A half-decade of mostly (as I recall) half-hearted discussion led the National Council of Welfare to advocate a formal a formal program in 1976. Nothing much came of it.

The concept was opposed by the usual suspects (the Fraser Institute, which had been formed in 1974, sharpened its teeth on the proposal—again as I recall—and it was not alone among austerity-minded critics) for the usual reasons (giving Canadians money they did not have to earn would destroy their incentives to

work, according to the usual suspects and others). But in reality the Trudeau I government was never enthusiastic. It’s White Paper seemed more a trial balloon than a serious proposal. It was never promoted or advocated with enthusiasm.

The timing was bad: the Trudeau I government had more urgent challenges on its agenda. Canada’s national inflation rate peaked at 13 per cent in 1973 and again in 1981, with only a brief dip below 6 per cent in 1976. Interest rates escalated with inflation, reaching more the 21 per cent in 1983.

Understandably (though it may, in retrospect, have overreacted) the Trudeau I government was more concerned with cooling an overheated economy than eliminating or reducing poverty. At least in some theories, putting money in the hands of poor Canadians would have added fuel to inflationary flames. The government responded with the Anti-Inflation Act of 1975, which imposed wage-and-price controls to rein in consumer demand and corporate greed. Starve the economy of inflationary oxygen and the flames would subside: Such was the theory, in reality it took ten years for austerity to wrestle inflation rates to more tolerable levels of around four per cent; long enough for talk of guaranteed annual incomes to fade away. (Though not too long for austerity hawks to take credit for what surely must seem a dubious achievement.) And so it remained until the second Prime Minister Trudeau found himself—or we happened upon him—in power in Ottawa.

Attitudes may be changing, perhaps because the Trudeau II government is (or seems) more receptive, perhaps because the time has come (again) for us to talk about minimum-income support for Canadians.

A search for “guaranteed annual income” on the internet generates a

surprising number of hits. Interestingly, the term and its variants are seldom used by governments, federal or provincial; they are used by media and other observers interpreting and commenting on government policy and actions.

Guaranteed annual income, or universal basic income in generic international terminology, still seems toxic language for politicians. They avoid it, perhaps wisely. But media, academics, and the denizens of think tanks seem willing to use the term and to consider it seriously. If public discussion continues without generating knee-jerk condemnation and rejection, politicians may be encouraged to join in openly.

So yes, I probably dissed Canada and Alberta with my comment last month by focusing my thoughts (and memory) more on negative rhetoric in the 1970s than on the more positive rhetoric today—and on the stealthy actions that have been taken by federal and provincial governments since the end of the Second World War. While we do not have a formal universal basic income program anywhere in Canada, we enjoy many elements of an informal program, in many ways and jurisdictions.

Most obviously, we have—and have had since 1945—federal and provincial income supports that amount to a form of guaranteed annual income for families with children under 18.

Originally a Family Allowance (mocked by some opponents as a “baby bonus,” introduced by a Liberal government to pander to Quebec voters with large families), the program evolved through refundable and non-refundable tax regimes. A Child Tax Benefit was introduced by Progressive Conservatives under Brian Mulroney following, “a minimum of public discussion” (according the Canadian Encyclopedia on line), presumably

Continued from page 4

presumably meaning a minimum of public resistance.

Maintained and, in fact, increased under the Stephen Harper Conservatives, the Child Tax Benefit has just received a generous boost to something like \$500 a month more or less (or \$6,000 a year) to families with children under 18, who meet a modest means test; less for those that don't.

Low-income Albertans (less than \$41,220 per year) get an Alberta Child Benefit and the Alberta Family Employment Tax Credit providing roughly \$150 a month

for a first child, somewhat less for each successive child to a maximum of four.

Child support benefit programs are not universal. I do not benefit from them (at least not directly*); nor does any other Canadian who does not have children. But I and they enjoy direct access to other programs that supplement our incomes in sometimes substantial ways.

Take health care. We have had hospital insurance programs in Alberta since 1950 (after Saskatchewan in 1947). A federal plan was introduced by in 1957 and adopted by all provinces in 1961. Health

care was added to hospital care to create Medicare, in 1984. The Canada Health Act has evolved since, with variations over time and between provinces in services covered, deductibles, and premiums charged (or not); currently most procedures and services are covered most of the time, for all Canadians. There are gaps in coverage of prescriptions and dental and optical care, but seniors are generally covered to some degree.

Health care coverage is not an income support: it is paid on our behalf when we need it; the money involved

Blame - part one

By Linda Roan

Have you ever been blamed for something that you didn't do? Have you ever been blamed for something that you did do and blamed it on someone else? As children we have all experienced either being blamed, or blaming others. Blaming others for something we did is instinctive, so as not to get caught and be punished for our own wrongdoing.

Instead of maturing and taking responsibility for our own wrongdoings, sometimes we, as adults, continue to blame others for our mistakes, blame others for the circumstances that we find ourselves in. Since we think that our problems are caused by other people, we hope that they'll be solved by other people. We wait for a rescuer in the form of a parent, a lottery ticket, a perfect lover, or someone who will pull us out of our circumstances and place us in a position where we can get what we "deserve". It is a sad state of affairs that this thinking gets passed down to our children.

No, there isn't a parent anywhere, who has raised their children with-

out making mistakes. Children can look at us and find plenty to "blame" us for.

One thing that we as parents should be blamed for is raising children, who know that despite the mistakes that they make can experience being loved and forgiven. When we let our children know that we understand that they have faults (we have faults too), and love them anyway, they can feel more confident that they'll keep our love even if they make a mistake. They will be better equipped to face responsibility throughout life.

On becoming mature men and women, Rudyard Kipling wrote a poem titled "If".

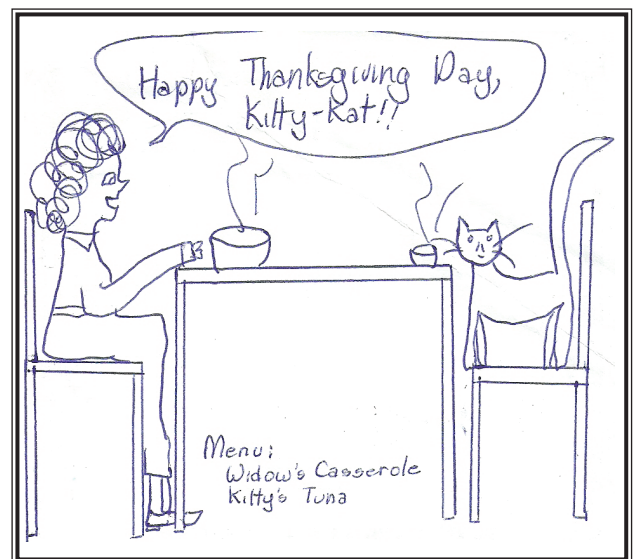
Here is the first verse:

If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs, and blaming it on you;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
but make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and

not be tired by waiting,
Or, being lied about, don't deal in lies
Or, being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise.

Just a thought: Blaming others won't change who we are today, until we take responsibility to make our own change.

Parts of this article are taken from: Mental Health Guide, Jerry Waxler, MS





God knew us

By Sharon Spencer

Before the beginning of time God knew us. He knew everything about us, just as He said in Jeremiah 1:5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you. Before you were born I set you apart. I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."

The Lord is explaining to Jeremiah that he had been set apart to do a special work before he was even growing in the womb. God had a destiny for Jeremiah from the foundation of the world. He knew what He wanted to use him for.

God is no respecter of persons. No one is more valuable in His eyes than another. He knows our talents and abilities. Our capabilities are often unknown by us, however with God's infinite wisdom He is able to perceive our highest callings.

"For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not harm you. Plans to give you hope and a future." Jer. 29:11

God is specifically saying to each and every one of us, "I want to use you, I have created you a certain way and I know what your job is. You have a destiny to fulfill!" Unfortunately the enemy of our calling, Satan, counterfeits everything that is of God. He

has a plan too –a plan to corrupt the things of God in your life. The Bible says his only plan is to kill, steal and destroy as many souls as he can and drag them to hell with him.

That is why so many people are victims of childhood abuse, rejection and abandonment making them crippled and broken, without any idea of the great destiny that is set aside for them. We are the walking wounded. I know I was one of them. I struggled with rejection so deep I tried to die all the time and should have but Jesus never let me die. However my dysfunction spilled over into the lives of my children and family. I could not cope with life. I needed healing. Someday I will give my testimony.

And like many people I looked for things of the world to find temporary comforts in any form that could help dull my personal pain and disappointments. Any overindulgence can become obsession. Obsessions can become habits and can take over, destroying our lives. In these situations our lives become unmanageable and families, friends and jobs can all disappear. We are helpless to change these things on our own.

That is why Jesus was sent by the Father to suffer and die to pay the price for our sins and to purchase our destinies back from the enemy. We are freed from bondage and desperation through hope in Christ. He is the only bondage breaker, the only one that

suffered and died for you. No other religious person, modern or past, such as Mohammad or Buddha died to save you! Only Christ did that.

God and Jesus wait patiently for you to turn to them with all your spots and wrinkles just as you are. After all, God is all seeing and all knowing and loves us anyway. We all are born with a sin nature inherited from the first man Adam. The second Adam, Jesus, lives forever. Through one man, Adam, came death sin and separation from God because he has no sin and can't be around it. The only thing that would satisfy God was the perfect blood of Jesus so upon him he laid all the sin of the world. Jesus took our punishment upon the cross. Now it's up to us. Jesus is a gentleman and will never force himself on anyone. The choice is yours. Heaven or reject his free gift and pay for your own sins in hell. Yes, hell is a reality; somewhere I never want to go or see anyone else I encounter go to. That is why I proclaim the Gospel in the hope someone will listen.

What must I do to be born again Recognize I am a sinner, repent, be sorry for my sin and accept God's gift at Christ's cost. My favourite verse, John 3:16, says it all, "For God so loved the world he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have eternal life."



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The joys of that 1-800 free phone call

By Joanne Bengier

1. Press 1 for English, 2 for French or 3 for other.
2. Press 4 if you wish to speak to a person with a strong accent that is hard to understand.
3. Press 5 if you wish to speak to an incompetent care provider.
4. Press 6 if you wish to be put on hold for two hours.
5. Press 7 if you wish to listen to loud, annoying music that hurts your ears.
6. Press 8 if your call is urgent.
7. Press 9 if you wish to be accidentally disconnected.
8. Press 10 if you wish to have your identity stolen.
9. Press 11 if you wish you hadn't called.
10. Press 12 if you have forgotten why you called.
11. Press 13 if you want information about our new valued customer loyalty plan.
12. Press 14 if you wish to make a payment.
13. Press 15 if you wish to take part in our lengthy questionnaire.
14. Press 16 if you wish to nominate one of our care providers as Employee of the month.
15. Press 17 if you want to hear this menu again.
16. Press 18 if you no longer wish to talk to a live care provider. Ring. Ring. Sorry this number is not longer in service. Click.



Pete's sure –fire Quit Smoking Method

On the first day throw away one cigarette and smoke the rest of the pack.

On the second day throw away two cigarettes and smoke the rest of the pack.

On the third day throw away three cigarettes and smoke the rest of the pack.....

Continue until on the last day you throw away all of the cigarettes and smoke none. Congratulations! You are a non-smoker!

To celebrate your victory, retrieve all the thrown away cigarettes and smoke them victoriously.

Pete's wisdom – the more often you quit smoking, the easier it is to start up again.

Pete's Emergency Exit Drink

Dump a small bag of salted peanuts into a bottle of cola. Drink the salty pop. Then eat the peanuts.

Warning – this is not a health drink.

Pete's Free Bed for the Night

Make friends with the local cops. If you are too drunk to walk home, they will let you sleep in an empty cell with the door open. When you wake up, just walk out and go home.

Post script: After a wonderful night of partying, Pete was found unable to wake up in the morning in the police drunk tank. The family found his friends very helpful.

Cultural Genocide - A tale of injustice

By Gerald David Kearney.

My uncle lived in a trailer, in a woods alongside a gravel highway in Northern Alberta. He didn't have much education, but he did have a certificate in meat cutting from a community college. He had a small shed at the edge of the highway, where he sold home made sausages every Saturday.

You don't make a lot of money selling sausages on the side of a gravel highway in Northern Alberta, but he did all right. He kept his wife and daughter fed and clothed and they lived comfortably. Their only complaint was the sulfur in the drinking well water.

In the washroom of the trailer, above the toilet, my uncle had a 30/30 carbine with a flashlight duct taped to the barrel. Outside the window behind the toilet, my uncle kept a salt block. Every night that salt block would attract a small herd of deer. My uncle wasn't a great shot, so he had the salt block ten meters from the window.

My uncle would buy hogs and would butcher them along with the deer and grind them together with salt and some spice and make his sausages. He told me got his recipe from his professor at the meat cutting course, a

German. My uncle believed the German sausage to be the highest expression of sausageness in the world. Lots of people loved my uncle's sausages, they were extremely popular.

Then one night my uncle and his daughter were in their shed filling links when suddenly the doors exploded in and men with guns ran in. They were fish and game wardens. Unlike the police, they don't need a warrant to come into your home.

My uncle was a real off the grid kinda of guy. I don't even think he knew that you couldn't just harvest deer and make sausages out of them. There are plenty of deer in Northern Alberta, often there are so many that they starve in the winter.

At any rate, the judge didn't much buy the defense of ignorance of the law. He gave my uncle two years less a day. While in jail, his wife left him for another man and his 14 year old daughter became pregnant by a young man facing ten years for attempted theft of a supermarket safe - they dragged the safe behind their pickup truck hoping that bouncing it on road at 3 a.m. - right past the RCMP station - would bust it open. Instead it busted the chain and rolled into the ditch.

The next morning the cops interviewed the usual suspects and by noon they had the soon to be daddy in handcuffs. They found him in his barn trying to grind the words from a cast bronze church bell he had stolen. All time worst father ever.

My uncle became really depressed in jail. He put on weight really fast. I couldn't even recognize him when he came out. He went in thin and fit and happy and he came out obese and depressed. He developed diabetes soon after his release. He always avoided alcohol but when he got out of jail all he would do is drink. He ended his days in one of the rooms at an old Klondike era hotel in the 96 Street Native ghetto in Edmonton.

All across this country, Native people are not allowed to benefit financially by harvesting natural resources, such as fish, timber and food. Instead of allowing Natives to earn a living, the government grants licenses to non Natives permitting them to earn a living harvesting natural resources on Native lands. How is this discrimination fair?

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Drops of Life

by Remza Lagarija

While I embrace your words from a distance,

from the deck of challenges,

I am sending my wishes on the ocean of wonders.

I embodied hope in all aspects of our destiny.

I say the mantra of life, words of love, everywhere.

While feelings of grace and illumination become the elixir of your heart,

feelings of miracles and revival dwell in my heart.

Warm whisper of trade winds heats hope, while drops of life Creator's mightiest approve.

I left all forests of doubts and misconceptions.

I measure the pleasures of life with the speed of light everywhere.

I set the boundary around my mind against negativity.

I accept the halo of happiness; I am part of this life!

On the Edge

By Gily Ro

On the edge looking in

Feeling separate and alone

They tell me they want me to live

But don't want to spend the time

They tell me you get back what you put in

So obviously I have nothing left to give

I had the option to give in and let it all go

But I chose to stay and live again

But still have nowhere to go

I feel disgraced by the contempt of others

The stigma cast upon me, the degradation of my esteem

Disheartened and deluded by the insidious trickery that stole my faith and honor

My word misrepresented as untrustworthy

I sit on the edge looking in

Feeling separate and alone

Margin

By Gily Ro

Placed in the margin

Not part of the main page

Just an afterthought released from its cage

Standing in the background

Shining a spotlight on the stage

Making sure to set the exact right gauge

Knowledge, wisdom and sound judgment

Releasing a perceived sage

Dancing in the shadows

Will not earn you any wage

Rent increase for MacDonald Lofts rescinded



By Linda Dumont

A note delivered to tenants of MacDonald Lofts Friday, August 19 said the management company has “been instructed to rescind the rent-increase notice.” The building is owned by MacLofts Capital Corp. and Paragon Properties, a Calgary-based capital corporation headed by Abby and Norman Steinberg and managed by Martyshuk Housing.

When contacted by Alberta Street News, Dave Martyshuk said he doesn’t know why the order was issued. “I was ordered to increase the rent and then the order to rescind was issued. I just manage the building. I don’t care what they do as long as they can fund the fumigation costs,” he said.

On Aug. 1 the residents of the building’s 91 units found notices taped to their doors, telling them of an upcoming rent increase beginning Nov. 1. Rent was to increase from \$582 a month to \$825 a month. The 102 year old, four storey heritage building is located next to the Boyle Street Community Co-operative and just east of Rogers Place.

When contacted about the rent increase, Dave Martyshuk said, “I

have been mulling this over for over a year. It was either increase rents or shut down. The building is not making money. Shutting down is not an option. They have nowhere to go. We have been operating at a loss and we need to do some work on the building.”

Rent at MacDonald Lofts was increased by only \$100 a month in the last 15 years. The CMHC rental cap comes off November 1st so the rental increase was for that date.

“They were given notification with a notice on the wall in July, but it was torn down and they left a nasty note saying F you in its place,” Martyshuk said.

The increase was legal. The province merely mandates a three-month warning for increases to periodic tenancy agreements. Most of the people who live in the MacDonald building are collecting some kind of social assistance. Some are on welfare while others collect Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped payments or medical assistance cheques, while some are pensioners.

A week after the notice of the rent increase, building managers Marty-

shuk Housing circulated a letter saying the company would work with some tenants to arrange additional provincial funding to cover the rent increase. No one would end up homeless, management company owner Dave Martyshuk said.

“People on AISH are fine,” he said, “Those on income supports of \$803 can’t pay but there is a rental supplement. With that they will get a \$300 increase on their benefits. Pensioners can get a supplement through Capital Regional Housing.”

Some of the tenants were outraged at the large increase in rent and spoke with the local media. “The people in this building will end up on the street again. That’s not fair,” said Pat Lloyd, 68, a resident of the MacDonald Lofts.

Gregory Kotowich has been a tenant at MacDonald Lofts for three years. He survives on a private union pension of \$1000 a month. When asked about the rental increase, he said he is waiting to find out about what sort of subsidies are available for him. He does not want to move out, but will be moving from his third floor suite to one on the first floor that used to be

Prone to Wander

By Rodney Graham
Founding Editor. Street Sheet
Winnipeg,

My close friends think I'm a bit weird because I'm religious. Those ones are the ones who are not religious at all. Yet, some of my friends are actually Christian, and they think I'm weird because I'm so critical of the church, and because I am apparently so 'opinionated,' as someone once told me...

Of course, they are naive. That's why I always encourage young people to get as much learning, and experience, life experience, as possible. And when you get learning and experience, get more, and add patient endurance to it. There is no price on knowledge - It's a priceless commodity.

Having said that I'd like to present an interesting observation - A story. Many people who love music, especially rock music, probably heard of Robbie Robertson, a Canadian musician from Toronto, who was in a band called - the Band.

There was another man with a simi-

lar name to Robbie Robertson, a man of certain fame in his time - Robert Robinson. He lived in 18th century England. He wrote a song called Prone to Wander:

*Come, Thou Fount of every blessing,
 Tune my heart to sing Thy grace
 Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
 Call for songs of loudest praise.
 Teach me some melodious sonnet,
 Sung by flaming tongues above.
 Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it,
 Mount of Thy redeeming love.*

This was printed the next year. At first people thought that Selina Hastings, the Countess of Huntingdon, a strong Methodist, had written this. Eventually it was learned that Robert was the writer.

In the last stanza, Robert had written:

*Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
 Prone to leave the God I love
 Take my heart, O take and seal it
 Seal it for thy courts above.*

Prone to wander Robert was. He left the Methodists and became a Baptist. Later on, having become a close friend of Joseph Priestly, he was accused of becoming a Unitarian. Priestly and other Unitarians denied

the full divinity of Christ. However, in a sermon he preached after he supposedly became a Unitarian, Robinson clearly declared that Jesus was God, and added, "Christ in Himself is a person infinitely lovely as both God and man."

Had he left the God he loved? A widely-told, but unverifiable, story says that one day as he was riding in a stagecoach a lady asked him what he thought of the hymn she was humming. He responded, "Madam, I am the poor unhappy man who wrote that hymn many years ago, and I would give a thousand worlds, if I had them, to enjoy the feelings I had then."

Are you prone to wander? Don't feel guilty about it. We all have it - some more than others. They say, 'life is a journey,' and we all are on a path, our own path. But there are, what some call 'absolutes,' in the philosophical and religious community I don't want to use the word 'fundamental,' since I detest that word and what it's come to stand for today. There are absolutes - but let those be between you and God. And let he who is without sin cast the first stone...

God has given us a wonderful message. Seek it out, and if you've strayed away - don't feel alone. Many of us have.

Come home.

MacDonald Lofts continued

the doctor's office.

A bedbug walked across a paper on his table. "They are attracted to paper," He said, then went on to speak about his major concern - the bedbug infestation.

"Extermination is a problem because of lack of participation - less than 30% of the tenants comply to get their suites prepared. The board of health hast to force people to comply or have them evicted. The lady across the hall just puts a note on her door saying the chemicals are harmful will kill her," Kotowich said.

Rebecca Johnson from Alberta

Health Services inspected the building on August 11, and six of the suites were condemned. All of the units will be sprayed for bedbugs within the next six weeks as well as treated with bait for cockroaches.

Martyshuk said more supports are needed for the tenants of MacDonald Lofts.

"If our tenants were provided support workers and or life skills coaching, I am confident that this would not be an issue," he said.

For the time being, the building is the priority for AHS, a priority it says has to be a joint effort.

"Alberta Health Services always

attempts to work collaboratively with building owners and landlords to proactively address issues before escalating to closure or other enforcement measures," Williamson said. "In this case, building owners have not adequately addressed health concerns and have not maintained an adequate premises for tenants."

The result, he said, is the units forced to close will remain that way until AHS says they are fit to house people.

Could this be the beginning of the end for MacDonald Lofts as a provider of housing for the hard-to-house? Where will they go?

How a witness made a difference



Photo by Robert Boyd courtesy of Text-A-tow

The car to the left, a green Honda Accord, was making a wrong turn, when John in his 2016 Toyota Corolla CE. I was in the right of way heading northbound along 109 street and Kingsway Avenue when that car collided with my vehicle.

By John Zapanis

A witness is a powerful source of validation that can help to determine the outcome of where a person's rights come in after being involved in a car accident. I was involved in an accident for the 3rd time in two months.

In the Alberta Street News August 2016 issue I had written about my unfortunate brush with two car accidents involving driver distraction issues that took place on both February 21st and the 22nd.

The story to my headline read, "Three car accidents in two months is a wake-up call!"

After having the damages assessed for those two accidents. I mentioned in this story that my auto insurance

company paid me out for my old 2012 Toyota Corolla CE. The payout was for a total of \$7,765.

I then without any hesitation went out of my way to see a car salesman named Jo Cariou, who works at Sherwood Park Toyota in Sherwood Park Alberta.

That friendly salesman sold me a new 2016 Toyota Corolla CE 4 door sedan for a total \$21,246 on a four year plan.

After having survived two previous accidents with my old 2012 Toyota Corolla CE, I thought that my streak of bad luck had finally come to an end.

So for around a two week period my girlfriend and I were driving around with a brand new 2016 Toyota Corolla CE, which had us thinking that the storm before that calm had all finally come to an end.

At least that's what we thought at the time, until one day while driving away from Theresa's place, right after dropping off a cheese burger that I had brought to her from McDonald's.

I was on my way home, driving

north bound towards Kingsway Avenue along 109 Street. It was April 26, 5:15 p.m. at the time.

I was maintaining a speed of 50 km while driving in the far right lane of a four lane street.

When my car was just about to cross over Kingsway Avenue with the green light in my favour, a green compact car jumped out from my left side and continued to drive in front of my Toyota Corolla as I quickly slammed on my brakes, skidding ten feet to avoid ramming right into this vehicle but unfortunately I still hit the car.

I rushed out of my vehicle in a rage as the young women of the violating vehicle came out to meet me half way.

"What the hell are you doing? I had the right of way," I raged.

She wouldn't answer, remaining silent with a shocked look on her face. I then turned around facing southbound and noticed a stalled vehicle occupied by a young lady inside, who seemed like she could qualify as a witness to the accident.

The lady came out of her vehicle to greet me. I then asked her if she'd seen what had happened. She acknowledged my plea and said she'd do all she could to help out in witnessing my claim to the police, when they were to arrive at the scene of the accident.

Feeling a little remorseful about how I treated the woman occupant of the vehicle that collided into mine, I immediately went over to her to apologize for that scene that I had caused, while chewing her out about having the right of way.

She was complacent and cool about things and acknowledged that she could understand why I was feeling so enraged about what had just gone down.

Within minutes we had both exchanged licence, insurance and registration I.D. to help the process of getting our accident claims processed, by the police when they were to arrive

at the scene.

I noticed a gridlock of traffic right at the doors of both the lady's vehicle and mine, as you'd notice both our vehicles stalled kissing in the middle of the intersection at 109 street and Kingsway Avenue.

I decided to make it my citizen's duty to direct the traffic until the police and the fire department arrived at the scene of the accident, so for around 20 minutes I stood in the middle of the intersection playing the honorary role of traffic cop, directing traffic in between traffic light changes, consistently helping the co-dependent traffic in passing by us safely each and ever direction.

Finally the Edmonton Fire Department fire truck arrived followed by its fire captain.

From directing traffic, I immediately went back to filling out some important information that I was given by the female occupant of the vehicle, who'd lent me her vehicle registration and insurance policy that I had to complete for my files when it came to getting this proper information down for my auto insurance company for processing my auto accident insurance claim.

While I was in the process of finalizing this piece of information, I could

hear a loud, authoritative and aggressive tone of voice hovering over my shoulder, "Hey why don't you just go over to that parking lot in Kingsway Mall and fill out that paper work instead of doing this in the middle of the intersection."

While looking over my right shoulder, I noticed it was the fire department captain of that parked fire truck, who was behind this disruptive call.

So in defiance of his intrusive attitude I shot back at him arrogantly, "I'm not moving until I complete all this vital information that was given to me by the lady of this vehicle. Why don't you direct the traffic? I was doing your job for 20 minutes directing traffic until you finally arrived and that seemed like for ever. Besides you're a little late if you ask me!"

The fire captain knew exactly what I meant by that declaration, and without any hesitation went on to direct traffic, while trying to calm down the endless confusion of horn blowers struggling to get through the gridlock of it all, as our vehicles continued to block the right of way of the traffic.

Finally the police arrived and a man and a lady officer came out of their vehicle to greet both the female occupant of her car and me.

They suggested that we try to drive

our vehicles over to the Kingsway Garden Mall parking lot, adjacent from where our vehicles were positioned.

So both of us made a successful effort and managed to get our car parked safely in the parking lot.

Within half an hour all our information was processed by the police and my witness and her information helped make a difference in later determining the outcome of my payout for a total of \$22,329. that allowed me to buy another similar model 2016 Toyota Corolla CE, which a month later was sold to me by Sherwood Park Toyota's salesman Jo Cariou for a total of \$21,246.

I'm grateful to this day that a lovely lady named Samantha Gilhespy wasn't like some of those uncaring motorists who have the nerve to leave the scene of an accident. She stood by me throughout that time selflessly as a reliable witness and helped determine where I'd land with the outcome of my final settlement that now has me driving forwards into the future in my new 2016 Toyota Corolla CE 4 door sedan.

Novena

O, Holy St. Anthony, gentlest of Saints, your love for God and charity for his creatures made you worthy even on earth to possess miraculous powers. Miracles waited on your word, which you were ever ready to speak for those in trouble or anxiety. Encouraged by this thought, I implore you to obtain for me my request, (Here mention your request).

The answer to my prayer may require a miracle; even so, you are the Saint of miracles. O gentle and loving St. Anthony, whose heart is ever full of human sympathy, whisper my petition into the ears of the sweet infant Jesus, who loved to be enfolded in your arms, and the gratitude of my heart will be ever your. Repeat nine times daily for nine days and publish. R.S.

On All Saints Day (Nov. 2) say five Hail Mary's and five Our Fathers so one soul in Purgatory can fly up into heaven. The fireworks of Halloween symbolize the poor soul flying up to Heaven.

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Longing for “A Mother”



By Maria B.

A mother - the sole title reflects all the divine inner gifts that come into manifestation the instant that we find out we have been blessed with being pregnant and as soon as that baby is born we are aware that being a “mother” is a given honor and a life long commitment.

Those inner gifts are: 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 and develops such an incredible bond that will be forever. This will serve as bedrock for the child in its formative years.

And yet the cruel realization is that there are thousands of wounded adults walking in 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 abandoned us” but the reality is that she was a broken mother and emotionally absent. I also remember the sheer brutality that she went through at the hands of my father. Seeing my mother treated in such a cowardly and vicious manner has left me with anger and

feelings of guilt and shame because I could not help her. My memories of my mother are of a very sad person with a stern look and completely unplugged as a mother. I remember how much I needed her but she was emotionally unavailable and eventually, when I was 6 year old, she left us with my paternal grandmother.

Because of misplaced loyalty for my father, my mother was truly shunned because she left us and our caregivers instead of allowing us to hold on to some hope that my mother would come back some day. The depreciation of my mother served to hide my feelings for her. Instead, like always, we tended to absorb all the guilt. I felt so rejected, isolated and such an sadness for my mother’s physical absence. How I needed her.

When I became a mother I felt my daughter was a gift of life, a reason for me to live, she was so beautiful, defenseless and at the same time with 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 things as now I recognize that “I was not completely plugged in as a mother should be”. I was dealing with so many childhood issues that kept me in a bound state.

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 how incredible was my love for them and this was able to compensate for what I lacked.

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, co-dependant, controlled by paralyzing fear, shame and guilt and this affected my children also.

To this date the biggest missing piece in my soul is a mother - not my mother but a mother and while 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. We had beautiful looking people as caregivers but unfortunately they were unable to fill such an important role as parents. And because of this now I understand why it was so incredibly easy for them to blame us for the chaos that they caused in our lives and for abandoning us and going in different paths making “a new life for themselves” having more children and forgetting about the ones they left behind and commit-



By Robert Champion What's on My Mind

How well the Calgary Stampeders

Rob's Corner in Calgary

have been playing on home turf. That it hasn't been much of a summer here in Calgary. Looking forward to taking a break for a few days. Maybe head out to Kelowna. Take the Greyhound.

My, My how summer passes by Quickly

Already in August. September not that far off. Not much of summer for Calgary and for most parts of the prairies. Seems like we've had tons of rain here in Calgary especially in August. Calgary Stampede was a washout. I've been in this city for almost 37 years. I can't recall anything that we've had weather wise since I've been in Calgary. Usually if you can recall correctly, we get most of our rain in around May and June.

Rob's Say for the Day

The simple things in life. Meeting up with good friends for a coffee at your favourite coffee shop/café. Going out for a pizza and a movie with your gal or guy. Going for a bike ride with your friends or by yourself. Sitting in a park enjoying nature, chilling out! Meeting up with friends at a local pub.

Rob's Last Word

Life is short on this planet. We should try and make the best of it. Enjoy every minute of it. Stay healthy, keep fit and who knows, we may live to be 100 years old.

Too much of anything is too much. Be happy, be healthy, be safe and take care. Enjoy life to its fullest.

ting 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 to nurture all the distorted beliefs they have made up about me. This is a heavy burden for a child to carry through life.

ABSENT MOTHER OF MINE

Mother of mine the biggest piece missing in my soul is the true essence of your presence in my life

Mother of mine, how I wish even once I could have a slight memory of how it feels to have your tender touch caress my face like a soft wind

Mother of mine how I wish I would have received a loving look from your beautiful eyes that would have been like a soft touch of a sun ray.

Mother of mine how I wish even once I would have heard the murmur of your soft voice uttering the words, "I love you". Your words would have served as the mantle of protection and would have given me the feeling of belonging and self worth that I badly needed.

Mother of mine how I wish you have been present when I accomplished something great And your face would have lightened up with pride

Mother of mine you are the biggest piece missing in my life and a part of me will always long for your love. I have needed you all my life.

We must rise above and become the kind of mothers that children badly need. They need our strength, compassion, guidance and most of all our unconditional love and commitment. We also have to recognize that when women have been going through childhood trauma even if they want to, they are unable to be

the kind of mothers that they need to be in order to have emotionally healthy children. We must break the cycle and bring into awareness how physical, verbal and emotional abuse affect women and children in every spectrum of their lives. We are doing so little to stop and change this toxic and vicious family system. Reading the words "Stop the violence" is just lip service; we need committed actions in order to see results.

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IN THE NEWS - Former homeless youth pushes shopping cart across Canada



Joe Roberts is walking across Canada pushing a shopping cart to make Canadians aware of the impact they can have on youth homelessness in their communities. He is involved in "The Push For Change Movement" which hopes to affect things on the ground level in cities across Canada. He feels that the awareness of youth homelessness, and the dollars invested will help to prevent the problem from happening. Roberts said. "Today we walk across Canada but once we're done it gives us a platform in which to advocate for the next 30 to 40 years." Roberts declared that youth homelessness can happen anywhere for various reasons.

"There's a number of key things but it's a system breakdown. It's not an individual thing, That's a

stigma that it's a judged thing," Roberts said. "Not all children come from equal backgrounds and families. Sixty-seven per cent of young people end up street involved because of family conflict. That's one piece. Another is employment."

Roberts chose to walk his journey pushing a shopping cart. "The shopping cart is a symbol of chronic homelessness. If you go to a major urban centre like Toronto, Montreal, and Halifax you'll see homeless people pushing a shopping cart." Roberts said. "In 1989 I was pushing a shopping cart as a homeless young person."

Roberts began his walk for "The Push For Change" in Cape Spear, Nfld in May of this year. He has already walked 1700 kilometres of the 9000-kilometre journey which

will take him 517 days. He arrived in Saint John, New Brunswick on August 3rd and was greeted by a Chalk Walk hosted by the Saint John Human Development Council. Children from various community centers wrote inspirational messages and drew pictures in chalk on the sidewalk for Roberts to read as he walked around the square. He then gave an inspirational speech telling the story of his journey from homeless youth to successful business man. With the help of community support and the RCMP, Roberts was able to overcome his addictions and problems and transform his life.

The head of the human Development Council, Greg Bishop, said that the council is working on a plan to end youth homelessness. "It focuses on three goals. Looking at prevention as a key component, housing and support as another, and then the co-ordinating role," Bishop said.

As Roberts walks province to province he brings a message of change and the hope of ending the problem of youth homelessness through awareness. When he arrives in Edmonton be sure to come out and support "The Push For Change."

He plans to be in Alberta in June and in Edmonton on June 29, 2017.

You can follow his journey on The Push for Change website