

ALBERTA Street News

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Writer Maria B. More on Alberta Street News writers on page 3
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ALBERTA STREET NEWS

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ASN Writers receive jackets from John Zapantis

Right: ASN Staff Writer and former board member Jim Gurnett received an ASN jacket from ASN Media Relations Coordinator John Zapantis, who created the ASN logo design for jackets that were funded by him.

Photos by John Zapantis



Left: ASN staff writer Michelle Black received her ASN jackets from ASN Media Relations Coordinator John Zapantis, who created the ASN logo design for jackets that were funded by him.



Right: ASN staff writer Gilli Ro received an ASN jacket from ASN Media Relations Coordinator John Zapantis who created the ASN logo design for jackets that were funded by him.



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June is bustin' out all over

By Joanne Benger

June is Grads and Dads month. It is also Seniors' Month, and yes, one of the most popular months for weddings. As the saying goes, "Another moon, another June, another honeymoon."

1. June is National Hunger Awareness Day. Donate to the food bank or buy a meal for a panhandler today.
2. June 17 is Fathers' Day, the third Sunday in June. It has been Father's Day since 1909 when Sonora Smart Dodd of Spokane, Washington, listened to a church Mother's Day ceremony and thought fathers should be honoured, too. After her mother passed away, her father had been both mother and father to his six children for 21 years. A state-wide celebration was held in 1910. Today we celebrate all fathers whether married or single. I saw a plaque that said, "Anyone can be a father but it takes someone special to be a Dad." Don't forget, "We're all daddy's children."
3. June 14 is the Official Birthday of Queen Elizabeth II. Yes, I know we celebrated her actual birthday on April 21, but reigning monarchs have an official birthday in June so outdoor activities can be held. Happy Birthday again, your Majesty.
4. June 21 is the first day of summer. We have 92 days of summer so get your summer on and decide how you will spend summer.
5. June 24 is Flying Saucer Day. It was on this date in 1947 that Kenneth Arnold, a search and rescue pilot, saw nine disc shaped objects while flying near Mount Rainier, Washington. He said they moved "like a saucer would if you skipped it across the water." A newspaper reporter called the objects "flying saucers" and the name stuck.
6. June 27 is Happy Birthday Day. On this date in 1859 Mildred J. Mill wrote the song, "Happy birthday to You."
7. June 27 is Canadian Multicultural Day which falls on the seventh full moon of 2018 this year. That makes it the ancient Black Forest night of the Seventh Moon, the one night of the year when Loki, the god of mischief and spirit of evil, was allowed to come out into the world. Young men wore doublets, hose and capes but topped them with the mask and horns that we associate with Viking raiders. They sang and danced and played tricks and no one knew for sure which masked man represented Loki enjoying his night on the earth and which represented Odin, the all wise, or even if one of them was Loki enjoying his yearly night on earth. The celebration lasted until dawn. If the night was cloudy and the moon could not be seen it was said that Loki was sulking and refused to come out and play. I don't wear the traditional dress of white blouse, red skirt and tasselled yellow apron nor do I go out dancing. I just eat Black Forest Cake. I tell myself that on this one night of the year surely the calories won't count.
8. June 28 is Paul Bunyan Day. He was a bigger than life lumberjack with a blue ox named Babe. Among other things, Paul Bunyan created the Grand Canyon by dragging his pick behind him.
9. June 29 is the last Friday of the month so it is the happiest day of the year. Be happy and laugh. Enjoy the day.
10. June 30 is Meteor Day. Over the ages they have been called rocks from heaven, flying ball or falling stars. Some have been reported as flying saucers. No matter what you call it, be sure to make a wish if you see a falling star. If you don't make a wish you'll have an unlucky year ahead. The wish must be completed before the meteor vanishes. If you are short of cash, repeat "Money".



Volunteers write for Alberta Street News

By Linda Dumont

The publication of Alberta Street News is made possible through the volunteer efforts of our team of dedicated writers. Some, including Maria B., Allan Sheppard, and John Zapantis, have been contributing regularly for more than 12 years. Others, including the Healing Words

poets, Joanne Benger, Sharon Austin and Sharon Spencer, joined more recently. We also have vendor/writers like Angelique Branton, Vivian Risby, Dale Ferris, and for a time Andie W.L. There are free lance contributors and those who write occasionally like Rodney Graham.

If you have a story to tell, or an event that you think should be covered, contact

the editor, Linda Dumont, at 780-428-0805 or send your contribution by email to dumontlc@hotmail.com. If you want the story written for you, we can do that instead. The stories are the opinions of the writers, but the editor reserves the right to exclude any story that is not suitable for publication in Alberta Street News.

COMMENTARY

The House that Gretzky Built and why it should stay that way!



Story and photo by John Zapantis

Now that the City of Edmonton wants to demolish North Lands Coliseum, where's the thank you for all the years that the hard working tax paying citizens put into keeping this iconic and historical facility alive, with all the great games that were played by Wayne Gretzky and the five time Stanley Cup Champions, the Edmonton Oilers.

It's hopefully always going to be remembered as The House that Gretzky Built. This facility is deserving of an existence that should be preserved for historical significance.

I say turn this hockey arena into an old-time hockey museum and still maintain it as an active hockey arena and call it, The House that Gretzky Built. The facility could host annual fundraising NHL old timer's fundraising weekly hockey games throughout the winter season and charge \$10.00 admission, where the proceeds generated from those games could go to support Edmonton minor hockey leagues, when buying new equipment and newer uniforms for its aspiring players ages six to 16.

Once a week on Wednesdays, the facility could host NHL historical footage, where a documentary film presentation could be shown, featuring the

many notable winning games of the Edmonton Oilers, including their historical playoff runs and five Stanley Cup victories.

An old Oiler's alumni could be flown in each week during the winter season to give his presentation on his connections with some of the more significant games he's played as an Edmonton Oilers while playing along side of the Great One-Wayne Gretzky.

Oiler's jerseys could be sold at ice level in between intermissions and proceeds from those sales could go for the maintenance of this old historical iconic structure while continually upgrading its current state.

Various sporting goods stores in our city could fill in as sponsors, taking turns every week, donating Oiler's jerseys to this wonderful cause, while giving something back to the facilities maintenance cost.

It would be a sad day for Oiler's historical buffs and minor hockey players to miss out on preserving the great memories that evolved around those prolific winning games that the Oilers of the pre-80's era along with the Great One, continually won, while amazing their fans endlessly and packing that arena to a full house, game in and game out.

Turn the clock back on that one, and its history is traced all the way to the

humble inceptions of the World Hockey League (WHA) Alberta Oilers, when a young 17 year old named Wayne Gretzky once rivalled those Alberta Oilers, while attired in an Indianapolis Racer's uniform, just before becoming a newly discovered phenomenon as a newer (NHL) Edmonton Oiler

On nights when the building isn't being utilized for that primary purpose the Edmonton Oil Kings would be more than welcomed to seek residence in this building anytime in hosting their yearly seasonal hockey schedule.

Then to top things off, while encouraging Rogers Place and North Lands in networking on sharing concert revenues, they could work out a viable solution in compensating for one another's concert booking overflow so that if one facility can't book a concert date for a solo artist or a rock group for that specific date, the other facility would be notified by their rival market and would consider an open date for that booking in their facility, creating a stabilized free flow partnership between the two competing facilities.

So when one facility booking agent calls the other, who excepts that venue for that date, the giving end in filling that void would be automatically entitled to a referral fee for bringing in that act on an emergency booking basis. The cash flow under those unique circumstances would inevitably create some type of working partnership between the two competing facilities.

The City of Edmonton is seriously thinking of taking the wrecking ball to The House that Gretzky Built. The cost estimation of demolition is in the whereabouts of \$3 to \$5 million dollars of wasted tax payers money. It would be a travesty of justice to see an old iconic structure seeing its demise in front of a political wrecking ball, but then again, if preserved in its right, the inevitable blessing in disguise, we would see its history preserved, while encouraging

Continued on page 5



Dreamy Day Along the Lachine

It Was a Hot Summer Day.

do it no justice -
You have to see it
yourself.

I was in the wrong
place and didn't
know it. It was in-
deed in the wrong.
The walk along
the canal was nice
though. Walked into
a hole under the
freeway and thought
that some people

beans, like whoa, rustic row houses - the
ones with the iron spiral staircases. To this
day I don't know how they knew I was in
those bushes. They must have spotted me
from their abode. Having slept quite well
- you lose a lot of sleep traveling rough
- thinking I would probably have to hitch-
hike out of Montreal - anyway I decided
to crawl out of my hiding place and head
into the downtown area.

I don't remember if I took the subway
or not, but I must have. It was during the
Just For Laughs Festival. Yes it was, I kid
you not my friends. I took a lot of pic-
tures. One I remember well, and I use it in
articles sometimes. It was two guy dressed
as explorers with ski poles, goggles on
their heads and long grey beards, covered
in imitation snow, and pulling a sled. They
must have been sweating, by gar! Imag-
ine that, eh.. dressed as arctic expedition
explorer in an uphill march in the middle
of Montreal in the middle of summer on
a hot day.

I ended up in St John's NF. The heat and
mosquitoes and the fatigue, coupled with
being lost most of the time in Montreal
almost put the kybosh on my expedition
b'yes! But I made it. And I will always
remember walking up Canal de Lachine
in the afternoon sun - and enjoying a free
bag of pretzels and drinking nice cool
water...

By Rodney Graham
Founding Editor. Street Sheet (Canada)
<http://www.streetnewsservice.org/>

It was a hot summer day. I must say
that a fellow from Winnipeg, Manitoba
was amazed at Montreal - So big! I had not
been for many years, although I lived there
for six months and went to McGill U.

I jumped off a freight train somewhere
along the line south of St Charles and
walked with my backpack up the freeway
and then along the mystical canal. Actu-
ally, I was writing a series about how the
marginalized travel. It was a hot summer
day. I walked into some kind of outreach
place and took a free bag of pretzels. I also
got some water. I needed it I can tell you.
Describing the canal with words would

must have stopped there since there
were water bottles and a couple of empty
bottles of La Fin Du Mond. I sat for a mo-
ment pondering the name on the bottles
and the gorgeous art on them.

Heading northbound - towards star-
board I suppose one would say in nautical
terms, I went into St Charles area. I slept
in the bushes behind a big supermarket
there for three day. I was in the wrong
place. I didn't know it. However, it was
nice to get a few days rest.

On the second day a young couple
stopped by and gave me something and
left. They startled me, since I was in the
bush and quite hidden. I noticed it was
actually their Chinese food leftovers and
a can of Pepsi. They must have seen me
going in and out of there... I think they
lived across the street in one of those cool

The House that Gretzky Built

continued from page 4

young Edmonton minor league hockey
players to come down to future Edmonton
Oiler's History Hockey Nights and getting
their education and inspiration from the
greatest NHL sporting team of its era.
This would obviously serve as a source of
inspiration, certainly keeping hockey alive
and well in our city.

I say keep the old iconic structure alive

and breathing, so that businesses in the
old area along 118 Avenue can thrive
economically once again. Preserving the
building would be more of a gain than a
financial loss, reopening the doors to its
sporting history, where Wayne Gretzky
is still notable for having scored the most
goals in one season along with an impres-
sive 61 NHL records, an achievement that
no other player in the NHL has ever come

close to achieving. This inevitably put
the old Edmonton Oilers on the hockey
map as the most fascinating NHL hockey
dynasty of its era and adds to the excite-
ment of why those doors should stay open
inside of that old historical icon and why
North Lands would be better off convert-
ing its name to The House that Gretzky
Built!

Honour thy father and thy mother. Seriously!!

By Allan Sheppard

If we assume, as I do, that the Ten Commandments are ranked in Exodus 20 according to their relative importance in the eyes of God, who created them, and Judaic and Christian believers who follow them, the commandment to honour one's parents carries tremendous weight and responsibility.

It is ranked fifth in most listings, after four responsibilities to God and before a list of five responsibilities to one's neighbours and, by reasonable extension in contemporary times, one's community, one's nation, and the world.

It ranks ahead of prohibitions on murder, adultery, theft, false testimony, and covetousness.

Perhaps my focus on the Ten Commandments as a hierarchy oversimplifies a complex theological matter. Perhaps one is supposed to respect and follow all ten with equal diligence and commitment. But it seems to me noteworthy that the fifth commandment, like the first four, designates one's sacred duties to specific entities or individuals, whereas the last five assign them generally and, by my interpretation, equally to everyone in one's community.

Clearly, we are expected to take the fifth commandment seriously. But why?

Because God says so? Because the ancients decided, and we still accept, that it is socially useful and necessary? Because it is self-evident?

All the above? Or none? Why not honour thyself, as I believe mature, spiritually and emotionally healthy people do? Why not honour thy children and grand-children? Why not honour each other mutually; within families as parents and children; more broadly within extended families and beyond to the various communities that we are part of? What about the environment? What about life, in all its manifestations?

These questions and related musings were inspired by a mini-media storm that blew up late last month around Christina and Mark Rotondo, residents of upstate New York, who earned 15 minutes of fame for themselves and 15 minutes of infamy for their 30-year-old son Michael by suing to have him evicted from their home—after giving him five written and likely many ver-

bal notices to leave.

Labelled in some media as a “millennial” and in many mainstream and social media as a “deadbeat,” Michael does not present as a poster child for mature adult behaviour. He lived unwelcome in his parents' home for eight years after dropping out as an engineering student. Briefly married, divorced and now in arrears on child support, Michael is unemployed, having been fired from a job for refusing to work on Saturdays, in order to maintain visiting rights with his child. Michael paid no rent and did not help around the house, according to his parents.

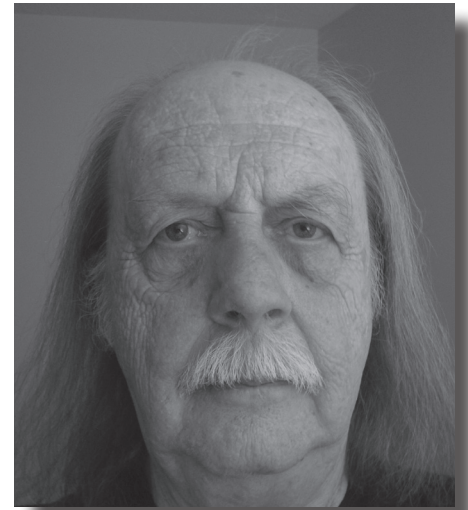
According to Michael, his parents never asked him for rent or to do chores; something a mature, healthy adult might be expected to do without being asked. When the judge sided with his parents and ordered him to leave, Michael refused, claiming he needed notice and that his parents had never told him why they wanted him to leave; demanding, in effect, that they justify themselves to him. He also claimed he could not afford to leave, which was probably true. The judge called Michael's demands “outrageous.”

After weeks of quarrelsome quibbling, including a suit filed against his parents, Michael finally left, thanks to a donation from Alex Jones, who hosts a radio show named after himself and Infowars.com, described by Wikipedia as “a conspiracy theories and fake news website.” (I'm sure there is some interesting background there, but it's another story.)

Michael seems not to be a son that any of us would like to have or even, perhaps, to acknowledge. Surely he got off with less than he deserved, and his parents are well rid of him. This seemed to have been the universal opinion on mainstream and social media, which enjoyed a field day pointing scornful fingers at him and shaming him in many predictable and some creative ways.

And yet...

I must ask (because I believe self-evidences must be challenged on principle from time to time and because I can't help sympathizing with an underdog, especially one who stands alone against multitudes): Does, and should, all the blame belong to



Michael?

Consider first a point I touched on last month: No child chooses to be born. No child is born unless conceived; intentionally, by natural or artificial means by parents who want a child; or unintentionally by parents who conceive in ignorance, intoxication, indifference, or desperation; by accident or carelessness; even in violence, such as incest or rape.

With rare exceptions, children born to the first group of parents are welcomed gratefully and cared for diligently. To perhaps a surprising extent, children born to parents in the second group are also welcomed and cared for, though with more exceptions for many reasons.

Newborns and infants cannot survive without competent care and parental love. Most parents know and accept the implied responsibilities, however burdensome, however unwelcome conception might have been. But that must surely be right and reasonable.

I have reservations about the notion of free will in a contingent world, but surely even the most dedicated adherent would not argue that a child is in any way responsible for its own birth; it is the parents alone who are responsible, though sometimes under coercion from their community. Logic also suggests that children, born totally dependent, cannot be held responsible from their beginning for a necessary and inevitable transition from dependence to self-sufficiency; that responsibility too is on the parents, generally with the guidance and support of a community.

The transition from raw nature through nurture to maturity necessarily requires children as they age to assume more and more responsibility for their own growth and survival, their aspirations and

intentions, and parents to let go gracefully and supportively. That's the ideal; it doesn't always work out that way, as the Rotondos illustrate.

Having and raising a child is not just a way to develop and release into the world a mature individual; it is just as importantly a way to develop a mature family, a family that integrates children and parents into an entity that is greater than its parts and which can integrate into its communities for similar mutual benefit.

Growing up healthy and productive involves transitions from dependence, where input is almost totally from parent to child; to codependence, where the child feeds back needed psychic and emotional rewards to the parents who respond in kind while still attending to physical needs; to independence, a sometimes trying transition, when children learn to assert themselves and parents must learn to let go; finally to interdependence, where children and parents who are capable of functioning on their own can choose, without being needy or feeling forced, to support each other's strengths and accept each other's weak-

nesses.

Somehow the Rotondos missed the memo. Michael seems stuck somewhere on the scale between dependence and codependence, which in his case involves unmet, unrealistic expectations and denial. His parents seem stuck between codependence and independence, which in their case results in equally unmet and unrealistic, though different, expectations, alienation, and their own kind of denial.

There's plenty of blame to go around here, and it's not all on Michael. Or even on his parents.

Michael may not have chosen to be born; he may not have chosen the parents to whom he was born and who were substantially responsible for his socialization and acculturation. But, having presumably chosen to stay, his independence, understood as self-sufficiency, is his responsibility. His parents may have drawn a loser in the genetic lottery, but they made a free choice. And, on ample evidence, they fell short in their responsibility to raise their son as a functioning member of the society into which they bore him. Responsibilities do not flow one

way only, from child to parents, no matter what the Ten Commandments say.

Honour thy father and mother. But honour equally thy children. And together honour each other and the children and parents of thy community. Or risk ending up like the Rotondos.

In his 1940 novel, *Darkness at Noon*, Arthur Koestler critiqued the Soviet Communist concept of the individual as a negation of the central democratic concepts of "I" and "me": "The definition of the individual was: A multitude of one million divided by one million": independence as isolation, with no possibility of interdependence and its synergies.

Koestler seems to have been right about Soviet Communists. Ironically, he seems also to have been prescient about the current state of so-called democracy in what was, at the time of his writing, thought of as the "free world."

To illustrate, I offer the Rotondos.

Over to you.

What is Your Nature Profile?

By Sharon Austin

June is the most beautiful month with the new leaves and apple blossoms, the songs of the birds and the frogs singing from the creek in the evenings. Every morning I walk along the river bank and through the forest and wish that I could somehow keep June from sliding into July just a little longer. I know where the fragrant mayflowers hide and where the delicate pink lady slipper blooms in a shaded glade. I know where the huge turtles lay their eggs on the gravel bank and that the pair of wild geese that return every year have eight goslings this year. I love to hear the far off cry of the loon and I delight in the chickadee's song. Perhaps they know that I am harmless as I quietly walk through their domain leaving only my tracks in the soft moist earth. But, there are others who come who do not share my reverence for all of God's creation. A few years ago a group of rowdy teenagers descended to hold big parties on the secluded river bank. They came with their loud raucous music, their bonfires and booze, their fireworks and fistfights, and they partied long into the night. Saturday mornings would find me with my garbage bag picking up their booze bottles and

cans, cigarette packs and fireworks tubes. The worst was picking up their smashed whiskey bottles and homemade dope pipes made out of two litre pop bottles. Thankfully after about a month, this group moved on.

Last summer was the summer the fisherman came almost every afternoon. Although I never saw him, I knew so much about the man from what he left behind him. From the size and depth of his tracks, I knew that he was a big heavy man. A smaller set of sneaker tracks beside his told me that he came with a boy about ten years old. The fisherman liked to drink large double-double coffee from Tim's and Moosehead beer. He was a heavy smoker but he was trying to quit, hence the Nickorette gum package. The boy liked to drink slushies and eat fruit roll-ups and they snacked on family-size bags of chips and Mister Big chocolate bars. The father was not an environmentalist as he threw spent fishing line, broken bobbers and hooks on the ground. They were bothered by the black flies and mosquitoes so they used spray cans of repellant. Sometimes the father tired of standing as there was an old canvas camp stool hidden in the alders.

One day my daughter came with me,

and together we picked up all the litter left behind. "What kind of person would do this?" she questioned as she added a broken bobber to the bag. I told her all that I knew about him and she laughed and said, "Mom, you like one of those profilers on the crime shows on TV."

The next day, to our surprise, there he was! There stood the fisherman, a big man about six feet tall and very overweight and beside him was a young boy. We exchanged polite "Good-mornings" and he turned back to his fishing, coffee in hand. The boy was watching us keenly as we continued to pick up the litter from the ground. Soon he was scampering about picking up litter and he brought it to our bag. "Every little bit helps," I said and he smiled a gap-toothed smile. He watched with interest as I wound spent fishing line around a small stick, tied it, and dropped it in the bag. "This can be dangerous for a bird or animal if they get tangled in the line," I told him.

Behind me I heard the father cursing the flies and spraying himself. I doubted that there was any hope that the father would change his ways, but there was certainly hope for the child. It is always best to teach by example. What is your nature profile?

The Disowned parts of Ourselves

By Maria B.

Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit or the law without discrimination and in particular without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origins, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

Our limitations do not stem from our disability but rather from the stereotyping that leads to stigmatization and discrimination in our community.

It is not possible for us to influence any long term changes in stigmatizing behaviour unless we have the awareness and the courage to challenge peoples' beliefs. Whenever we accept the designation that shatters who we are in the eyes of our creator we are adopting the title that only serves to keep us in a stigmatized and shameful state.

Our strength comes from within, from knowing that we are worthy individuals and we must hold on to the belief that even if we are different, we have the right to seek and live a truly fulfilling life.

We must embrace our differences. We must become the voice of awareness of the struggle. Our strength comes from within, from knowing that people with disabilities go through changes that start with each of us. We are not our disability. We have unlimited skills and are quite able to thrive in a community but we need acknowledgment, support and most of all equality.

Of all human weaknesses, none are more destructive to the dignity of the individual than stigma, stereotyping prejudice and discrimination.



I have suffered with the problem of Dystonia of the vocal chords for 31 years and I have been scarred, I have been embarrassed, I have met prejudice and blatant discrimination but at the same time I will say that I have met people that have treated me with the respect that I truly deserve.

Dystonia is not something that you can see on a person but as soon as I speak you would know there is something wrong. I have blessed my accent as a lot of times people just think it is my heavy accent.

My dystonia started after my youngest daughter was sexually molested. She went through hell and at first it was very hard for me to know what she was going through as I did not know the effects of sexual abuse.

The first thing that I did was that I went to the library and took out about six books on the subject and while I was learning about the subject, I was opening many memories of my childhood that contained sexual abuse. I was able to reach my older sister and ask her about a person, and before I even told her about myself, she told me that this person had sexually molested her. It is not easy to unclog these feelings as you are not aware

of what to do with them; the anxiety, the helplessness that I felt was horrible. Suddenly I was not only helping my daughter but I was going through what happened to her.

Yes, through the process I lost the ability to speak properly but in the process my daughter regained her voice and she has been an incredible advocate for victims on the subject. We can not change what happens to us but what we can do is realize that sexual assault is not our fault; it is the perpetrator's fault, Society has taught us that we have to take responsibility for what happens to us but I can tell you that sexual assault is not our responsibility, especially between an adult and a child.

Being sexually assaulted changes your life completely. You carry what happened to you for the rest of your life. It changes who you are meant to be but I tell you I feel good been able to speak about it. I carried my secret for such a long time and I ensured that the person that sexually molested my child paid for what he did. Unfortunately what we have as a justice system does not mean justice for the victims. The perpetrators get away with so much, but at the same time I see how strong my daughter is. She is an incred-

ibly compassionate person and I am glad that after what happened to her, she has ceased to carry it as a burden.

Sometimes some of the most horrid things teach us very hard lessons. When the assault happened I believed my daughter and I did everything I needed to do to help her. Many parents decided not to want to believe their child and I will say that it is incredibly important for parents to believe their children and do whatever they have to do to deal with the issue appropriately. Children need their parents to help them deal with the situation. It is something that children should not keep silent about and carry for the rest of their lives. It is something that affects every aspect of your life, changes how you deal with other people and how you feel about yourself. It can destroy you.

For children their harbor is their parents. Make sure that the light you emanate is welcoming for your children in every way. As parents we are the best models for our children. It is not what we tell them but how they see us act. My legacy to my children will be the fact that every one of them is aware of the incredible love that I have for them.