



# ALBERTA STREET NEWS

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**THE VIEWS PRESENTED  
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## From the editor

By Linda Dumont

As COVID-19 winds down and things open up more vendors are starting to sell Alberta Street News, even though it is difficult to begin again after a prolonged absence. During the pandemic the paper was printed bi-monthly, but that is too long between issues for vendor sales. Beginning September, the paper will be printed monthly again. The summer is always a slow season for paper sales, but I am anticipating a renewed interest in vending in September.

Because of the reduced number of vendors working, the total run for each issue is down, so I am printing papers on an as needed basis at Edmonton Copy and Printing. To keep it cost effective for vendors to purchase papers, each issue is eight pages instead of 16.

I have registered a non-profit society, Alberta Shattered Rainbows Creative Society with the purpose of encouraging people to reach

their potential in creative ways through writing, art, music, dance, poetry, bead work and more. In even the most shattered life, there are still those bits of beauty that can be built upon to heal and to transform. We will be having an art group for painting and a bead work time, a regular writers' meeting for poets and writers and do whatever else people want to participate in, as well as an annual fundraising variety show for our poets, musicians and dancers to perform and the artists and bead workers to sell their creation. If you are interested in participating or in leading a group, contact Linda at 780 975-3903 or dumontlc@hotmail.com. We all have something to share and to give!

Donations of art supplies and a sound system with mikes and an amp are needed as well as materials to do crafts.



## We Need To Do It Now

By Rodney Graham

The residential school problem is still here in Canada - The foster care "industry" is an extension of it. And even more children and youth are dying in various ways than before. In street gangs, in suicides (Canadian Indigenous youth have the highest rate of suicide of ANY other group in North America) - and the ones who are not killed often live a life of existence only - extreme poverty, persecution, experiencing racism, in all its subtle forms.

Here in Manitoba, 90% of kids in foster 'care' are Indigenous. There is a reason for it and it is not the parents' fault either. The Indigenous have a very hard time finding work - or housing. They are forced into subsidized housing which is another part of the industries of misery. They are forced to work for low wages, and are often fired due to persecution and false accusation - actually everywhere they go they face that - in their neighbourhood, from neighbours, when shopping...

Back to the extension of residential schools - Due to extreme poverty kids often end up in the child care racket. It is a racket run by sadists, opportunists, and perverts. One last thing in this little rant - One of the major reasons help is never enough for them - the system is designed to fail. The only ones who benefit are the bureaucrats and the employees in all the many 'programs'. When a youth ages out of the child protection "racket" they are given a garbage bag full of their meagre positions, and a few bucks. The money doesn't go to those it should go to. It goes to wages of uncaring employees, parasites and perverts.

It's the same with the poor. The money goes to phony programs and bureaucrats. It would be better to give more money DIRECTLY to the poor, and the elderly, and to youth. It would be much better to give money DIRECTLY to the poor...

Another problem is within government agencies - they all scratch each other's back. even in the health care, maybe 'especially' in health care. If a health care employee abuses, neglects, or bullies a vulnerable person they simply call the police if the person is brave enough to complain. If they are in low income housing the police will side with the sadist almost every time.

It's the same for foster kids and kids. We need laws. We need laws that will be adhered to -

Right now, the police can't even be trusted to use the law properly.

We need non-governmental oversight committees consisting, not of stuffed shirts, and snotty intellectuals. People who care.

We need to ensure that help reaches , and changes the lives of the less fortunate. We need to entirely change the way things are done - otherwise the poor will never ever be helped. We need to redirect billions of dollars that are wasted in policing and military and in phony agencies that do nothing but live off the backs of the poor.

We need to start doing it NOW.

**Assisted suicide is legal in Canada. You just have to call the police and say you want a wellness check and they will take care of it for you.**

# The Thundering month of July

By Joanne Bengert

And now it is July, the month that was named by Mark Anthony in honour of Julius Caesar. A much better name for this month is the Aboriginal Thunder Month for this is Alberta's wettest month with an average of 101 mm. of rain, often accompanied by thunder. It is lucky to hear thunder to your right but unlucky to hear thunder to your left, and the weather forecasting saying is, "Thunder in the morning, all day storming. Thunder in the night, sailors' delight." Sadly July is also Gopher Suicide Month as gophers all over Alberta are getting hit as they cross the roads in search of romance. Avoid them if you can.

July 1 is Canada Day for we were declared the Dominion of Canada on July 1, 1867 with four founding provinces – Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Proud Canadians wear red and white clothes, a Canada t-shirt, a Canada pin or maple leaf, a Canada hat or a Canadian tuxedo. We eat poutine, Nanaimo squares and butter tarts and in normal years we have parades, outdoor games, barbecues and picnics and fireworks. July 1, 1985 Mayor Drapeau made his first cell phone call in Canada so some call it Cell Phone Day.

July 3 Dog Days begin as Sirius, the Dog Star appears tonight starting the 40 hottest days of summer. The Romans believed that Sirius, rising with the sun, added to the heat so Dog Days had the heat of both. Modern housewives know that meat that is not refrigerated will be fit only for the dogs giving every dog his day.

July 4 is the Glorious Fourth south of the border as the U.S. celebrates the anniversary of its independence July 4, 1776.

July 7 is Global Forgiveness Day. Forgive others rather than seeking forgiveness for as Dryden (1631-1700) wrote, "Forgiveness to the injured does belong. But they never pardon who have done them wrong."

July 9 is Sugar Cookie Day. Share sugar cookies with those you love.

July 11, Orangemen's Eve, the Irish protestants lit huge bon fires. This is a good night for a wiener roast.

July 12 is Orangemen's Day in Ireland and Newfoundland. Wear orange if you wore green on St. Patrick's Day.

July 15 is St. Swithin's Day. "St. Swithin's Day if thou dost rain for 49 days it will remain."

July 17 is National Tattoo Day. Wear your permanent and temporary tattoos with pride and let the children tattoo themselves with stuck on tattoos.

July 18, 1877 Thomas Edison invented the word Hello. See how many people you can greet with the word hello.

July 23 is Black Ribbon Day. Wear your black ribbon to show your support.

July 28 is Pantaleone's Day. He is the patron saint of trousers so wear your pants with pride today.

July 31, 1987 is the day we will never forget - Black Friday, Edmonton's tornado day. Every year we remember those who lost their lives and those they left behind to mourn their passing. Victims relive it every year and the rest of us share their sorrow.



## Canada Day Fun Thoughts

By Joanne Bengert

1. Canada is north of sixty but south of Santa.
2. Canada reaches from sea to sea – oceans, that is, the Atlantic and the Pacific..
3. Canada is famous for its two Poohs – Winnie the Pooh and poutine.
4. Canada is famous for inventing two sweets – Nanaimo bars and butter tarts.
5. Canada exports oil pipe lines and imports covid vaccines.
6. Canada is famous for its bears and beers.
7. Canada is so modern it had corona beer even before corona virus was discovered.
8. Canada furtively hunts seals and raises minks for fur.
9. Canada has democracy, something to do with crazy demons.
10. Canada has a queen but she doesn't live in Canada. It is her job to put her picture on coins.
11. Canada has produced the Candu and Candarm to aid nuclear waste and the space race respectively.
12. Canada has coins and lagoons inhabited by beavers and loons.

## Vacation by car

By Joanne Bengert

1. The paved road's turned to gravel and now it's petering out and we're driving through pure dust.
2. We haven't seen another car for hours.
3. It looks like Bates Motel but it's the first we've seen. Oh, it's closed.
4. The cell phone has sopped working. We're in a tower free area.
5. Why are there no more road signs?
6. The gas is running low and there are no gas stations on this road.
7. There's not enough gas in the tank to

- turn around and get back.
8. You could lose a car in these pot holes.
9. Are those vultures circling?
10. Shouldn't we see fences? This land isn't even fenced.
11. Do you think we took a wrong turn?
12. Is that a white skull in the ditch? No, just a white rock.

# It Happened In Winnipeg.

By Rodney Graham

I walk a minimum of two hours each day here in Winnipeg. It's not a bad city, geographically speaking, but it is a wicked city - often I see unpleasant things.

Tonight I saw a bunch of cop cars in a high school parking lot. There was a blonde white woman - middle aged. She was talking to the police. There was a young girl sitting on a curb, alone. She looked Indigenous.

I took some pics - in case she ended up dead. I went through the child care system as a child and youth myself. It is a heartless meat grinder that chews you up, uses you, and spits you out. The foster parents are often creeps, perverts, weirdos. Lets all pray for that child. She may have had her limit of emotional abuse and lashed out - a common scenario - the creeps provoke then call the cops.

There was a time that would have triggered me and I'd have gone home and quenched my feelings with alcohol. Not today - I'm going to write about it, do something construc-

tive. I'm not going to let the beast destroy me, too, and perhaps I can help others, if I try. Face the beast. Some day it will be defeated.

The next day I was looking at the photos I took and realized something: I think I recognized a policewoman. A short blonde woman. She is a 'trouble chaser' - Seen her at the low-income housing I live in. Some cops chase calls to low-income neighbourhoods so they can abuse people and get away with it... she was the one talking to the girl with the woman who looked like a foster parent. Pray for this girl. These people are sadistic reptiles who derive great pleasure tormenting the poor and helpless.

Of course, the incident I witnessed from a distance is speculation on my part - but, I have about fifty years of experience in regards to experience and as a witness, and as a journalist interviewing the homeless, and that, many young ones. So, my guesses



are probably quite accurate. In any case, my aim is to educate. I encourage people to both pray, and if possible, speak out, help, aid the less fortunate - especially ones deliberately pushed through the cracks. I always advise people to give to panhandlers too - without judgement. It may help save a life.

## Surviving Dog Days

By Joanne Bengier

It is that time of year. "Horses sweat, men perspire and women glow." It is Dog Days plus we have global warming. Whether it is caused by man's activity or by the earth entering another warm period, we are experiencing climate change. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reports that our present CO2 level is now about where it was during the mid Pliocene warm period when the average temperatures was 7 degrees F. warmer, so we can look forward to even more heat than usual this summer.

Officially a heat wave is defined as a temperature of 33 C for more than three days and the temperature not dropping below 20 C at night. This amount of heat can prove deadly to us northerners who are unaccustomed to heat as Montreal proved. In the summer of 2010, 100 heat related deaths were reported in Montreal and on June 4, 2018 Montreal reported having had eleven deaths in three days. All 11 died at home and heat had played a part. Most had mobility and medical issues that kept them trapped in over heated homes without AC. The vague symptoms no doubt crept up - raised body temperature, absence of sweating, fatigue and collapse. The failure or exhaustion of the body's temperature regulating mechanism was commonly seen in the past among people from colder climates that had moved to hotter climates. It was treated by sponging the body with damp cloths and having the victim drink salted water. We now call 911.

Preventing heat build up in the home must be the first line of defence. Keep windows and blinds closed during the day to keep the sun's heat out. Once the temperature goes down in the evening your home is warmer than the outside. Open the windows to flush out the heat and bring cooler air in. If you have no AC, freeze water in milk jugs or large pop bottles and position them so a fan will blow the

coldness into the room.

You can stay cool inside by taking tepid baths showers or sponge baths for water takes the heat away from the body. Keep cooling body sprays in the fridge. To avoid dehydration drink lots of fluids and eat meals high in water content - soups, salads and fresh fruits. Cooking creates heat so either barbecue outside or order take out food if you want a cooked meal. Avoid alcohol for it is a diuretic. Before going to bed sprinkle your sheets with water or prepare cold water bottles. Freeze bottles of water or fill with ice cubes, wrap in towels and place along your body to cool off. Put a cold water bottle under your pillow to cool it, then keep turning your pillow over so it is always cold side up.

If you must go outside avoid the midday sun. Noel Coward wrote, "Mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the mid day sun. The Japanese don't care to the Chinese wouldn't dare to, Hindus and Argentines sleep firmly from twelve to one, but Englishmen detest a siesta." In another poem he wrote, "There is peace from twelve till two." Go outside in the cooler morning and evening hours. Then dress like a desert Arab in light colored loose flowing clothes and be sure your head is covered. Stay off the hot streets and lounge in the shade. Breathe through your nose for your nose will cool air in summer just as it heats air in winter.

In some hotter cities there are cooling centres where vulnerable people can go. Any air conditioned public place can be used as an emergency cooling centre- a mall, a swimming pool, a library or a church. We must be aware of poor, disabled people who are often trapped in small apartments than can heat up like a car in the hot sun. People in larger homes can sleep in the cool basement or a room that faces north, but vulnerable poor people with mobility issues find themselves imprisoned in a tiny area like a hot oven with no means of escape. They must be transported to a cooling centre during a heat wave.

**Novena** - St. Mother Theresa - Say nine Hail Mary's for nine days. Ask for three wishes, first for business, second and third for the impossible. Publish this article on the ninth day. Your wishes will come true even though you may not believe it. An amazing true. JB.

## Trials, troubles and hate crimes

By Darlene Collins

I am a 60 year old First Nations woman and I have been going through the worst hate crime a person can go through. This has been going on for three years now and I can't take it anymore. The worst thing I can ever say is, "I got date raped in my own home due to three people." Here is my true story of what I've been going through and am still going through this horrible crime.

It all started when I was homeless. I met this person, Dale through another friend and Dale made sure he got to know me. Of course, he was a gentleman at first, nice and flirty in a harmless way. I knew he was phony and didn't want to be with him but he was persistent. We didn't even date, for goodness sake, we just saw each other once in a while. Then one day, my housing worker told me I had an interview or I should say viewing of a studio apartment. Two days later I was told by my worker that I got the place. I was elated. I couldn't wait to tell my children and D. He seemed happy for me. Little did I know my worst nightmare had begun.

Two weeks later I moved into an apartment on 82 Street, Apartment 104. I finally had a home, just the right size for me. Then next thing Dale tried to move in without asking me. He assumed it was Ok. I told him, "No."

He had to leave and he got upset with me. Things got worse after that. He even assaulted me on two separate occasions. I tried to lay charges and the police wouldn't let me. I was so humiliated at all of them. They laughed and made fun of me.

Our relationship was over. This is when he turned to my daughter. I couldn't believe she would end up with him. I was disgusted. The both of them got to know my neighbour upstairs in Apartment 205 and things go even worse.

Previous to this I met another man, David B. I never went out with him or

anything. We were just friends who played 10,000 dice game almost every day for two years. Little did I know my daughter already knew him, too. David would come and visit me at my little cute home. Things started happening to me in my home, such as my clothes started to disappear, my dishes, cups, cutlery, kitchen things were just gone; my food was gone, all my knick-knacks were gone. Little did I know it was my daughter, David and Dale who were stealing from me.

They would take my things upstairs to Apartment 205 or right out of the building. Thieves, all of them. They didn't care what they were doing to me. And the worst part was no one would believe me. I couldn't do anything with five people against me. I tried and tried to tell someone but no one listened, not even my support worker or housing worker. No one. These people terrorized me and played so many kid games on me like I was seeing lights or shadows, hearing noises in the room, even pushing little objects through the ceiling where there was a bunch of little holes. It was awful. I kept asking myself, "Why me?" All I could think about was Dale.

Little did I know my daughter was sleeping with both of them and still to this day she denies it. I believe by now she is their sex slave not only to them but others. She is very addicted to pint and crystal meth and both Dale and David are drug dealers so she does anything for the drug. It's as if she is possessed and had even tried to hurt me, even kill me.

Now the couple who lived upstairs in 205, they even started to hate me, and for what? They would drop things on the floor very loud. I knew it was on purpose. One night I was sitting in the dark trying to find reasoning as to why this was happening to me, and I couldn't think of anything I did wrong except the fact I wouldn't let Dale live with me. I truly don't care for him and it was too late. He was already with my child.

I went through six months of being hated, picked on, terrorized and just robbed of all my possessions. I mean everything. I

had only my clothes. I am still traumatized from this ordeal and it's still going on.

So, I was gone from there, good riddance to all those people. I then moved to a basement three bedroom suite, one room for me and one for my daughter, whom I had already forgiven. I was shocked to see Dale in the window of my new place. He was upstairs at my neighbour's place. This time I moved in three months. This place was 11725 97 Street. I was disgusted – the same three people followed me.

Then I was homeless again, which I didn't mind. My housing worker then phoned me at #303A 9526 – 106 Avenue at the Seniors Drop in Centre, where they have 40 rooms available for homeless people. I felt better because now I had people around me. I wasn't alone. They still found me. I realized I was being stalked, raped, robbed and basically just picked on. If this isn't a hate crime then I don't know what is. The same thing is happening to me at the seniors centre as I speak and write this awful true story. All I got was mockery and laughed at. What is a person to do when even the police services won't do anything to help me?

I am at my wits end about this hate crime and these three people – Dale, my daughter and David B. I need help so they will leave me alone even if it means losing my life just so I can have some peace in my life. Oh by the way, at my first apartment on 82 Street I mentioned when I was sitting in the dark and I could see a light coming from the next door neighbour's apartment. This is when I realized that there were cameras and microphones being used on me and I was being gassed from somewhere. I could smell the sour gas, just an awful smell. Next thing I knew it was the next day. I was being knocked out from the different gasses. I still can't believe what I am still going through. If telling the public will help me, then I'll do whatever I have to do to help myself. Even dying. Thank you for reading this true story and I'll understand if this doesn't get anywhere.

*(Names have been changed in this story.)*

## "We are not amused"

By Timothy Wild

The death of Prince Phillip, together with the recent interview of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, has drawn increased attention to the British Royal Family. And while most of this focus falls into the category of melodrama or light entertainment, there has also been some weightier consideration given to the role of hereditary royalty in a modern democratic state. More people are asking the question: Why do we have a constitutional system where the Monarch – through the Governor General – can override the will of the people? Although rarely used, Governor Generals have intervened in the democratic process. The spat between Lord Byng and William Lyon Mackenzie King in the 1920s is legendary and, more recently, the decision of Michaëlle Jean, to support the minority government of Stephen Harper reflected the power of an unelected – and unaccountable force – in the running of our polity. Further afield, the Australian Governor General, John Kerr, played an instrumental role in working with the Liberal – Country Party bloc in ousting Gough Whitlam's Labor government from duly elected office in 1975. As mentioned, although rarely used, the power that remains vested in the monarch can be a brake on the democratic aspirations of the people. Fortunately, it seems that the focus on the Royal Family is increasing the appetite for republicanism.

Viscerally I agree with the republican position. But it is certainly not at the top of my advocacy agenda. Instead, I think we need to devote our attention to an even bigger and more immediate affront to the democratic will of the people, the Canadian Senate. The Senate was created in 1867 to ensure some measure of regional representation at the federal level and to provide a means of "sober second thought" to, once again, act as a brake on the possible

excesses of a quasi-representative democracy. (Code for supporting Capital over Labour). Essentially the Senate was, and still is, a tool to further entrench economic privilege and promote political homogeneity. Yet the two major parties don't seem too concerned by this institutionalized perpetuation of inequity. Despite Prime Minister Trudeau's unilateral and cynical dismantling of the Liberal caucus in the Senate, he is still assured of the partisan support of his happy band of "independents". The Conservatives, quietly dropping their Reform provenance, are also remarkably silent on the subject. This is troubling because as it stands the Senate is neither effective nor representative. In fact, as with the Monarchy, it is an insult to democracy.

However, it does not have to be the case. I believe that reform of the Senate could actually act as a boon to democracy in Canada. A significant first step would be to have an elected Senate and not just the pseudo-elective process adopted for Senators-in-waiting in Alberta or the "Triple E" of the Preston Manning movement. If the Senate was elected by some model of Proportional Representation (PR) on a periodic basis it would provide a forum for the amplification of a greater number of viewpoints and voices in the policy development process. This, in turn, would lead to more inclusive public policy and the implementation of more effective, efficient and equitable government programs. As noted by Ruth Davis, formerly the Political Director of Greenpeace UK, "politics in its truest sense should be nothing more or less than our shared efforts to restore, protect and nurture meaningful relationships." Electoral and legislative diversity is one step towards the implementation and sustaining of these "meaningful" and life-affirming relationships.

Australia can serve as a model of Senate reform using a model of PR. While the Labor and Liberal parties still hold the majority of

seats in the Upper House, greater space is given to smaller parties through the electoral process. The use of PR helps the results more broadly reflect the overall will and diversity of the people, rather than being a stark reminder of the injustice of the old fashioned first-past-the-post method. In a sense, every vote counts. More importantly, every vote is seen to count.

Admittedly, this has led to the representation of the xenophobic One Nation Party, but I would argue that it is better to meet intolerance head on rather than driving it underground. Hatred doesn't do well in the light. Furthermore, the Australian Senate has provided a forum for an articulation of the ideas and values of the Greens, which has significantly changed the content of politics down under. Then there are opportunities for mavericks and independents to be represented, such as the Democratic Labour Party, Katter's Australian Party and the Palmer United Party. But the factional content of the Australian Senate is not really my point. Regardless of who is represented, it provides an opportunity for the electorate to see their views, values, hopes and aspirations more authentically reflected in a governing body and in the ensuing public policy.

If we adopted PR as the foundation for an elected Senate in Canada it would result in enhanced political engagement and an institution that is considerably more reflective of the wonderful political, cultural and social diversity of our country. In turn, this would lead to greater inclusion and participation, surely the foundations of democracy? To be sure, a lot more needs to be done for that to truly happen, and Senate Reform is just one, admittedly small, step. It is, nevertheless, important and can serve as a foundation and model for other electoral and institutional reforms. It is also essential for both social justice and transformative policy. But, for the moment, let's turn our vicarious gaze away from The Crown and really focus on democracy.

## Opinion Trapped in seniors housing first housing

*(The idea of housing first means that people are housed while still practicing their addictions.)*

By Darlene Collins

I am writing regarding how tenants get accepted into this place. I got accepted asap because the manager was flirty and took a liking to me immediately. Little did I know that he knew what was happening to begin

with and behind locked doors. So I made it in..I was given a see though blue twin bed sheet and blanket, a flat pillow, then the door closed behind him and he left my room. The door slammed shut and I got the eerie feeling of a jail cell. I automatically felt depressed and disgusted at the place. I made a mistake when I accepted the offer.

The place is practically littered with cockroaches. All the tenants are allowed to bring in as much alcohol and drugs as they want. They need to change the name of this seniors place to the counterfiet Seniors Trap House. It is exactly that, a trap house and once you are in, its as if your stuck to leave or move to better places. When you enter the building all you see are little trap doors a person can go into and on the other side where no one knows about, a panel full of

buttons, a control post, after all this place was a mental institution and that's exactly how they try to make a person feel trapped and mental. Hey, they even treat us as such. There are two male nurses, three cookery staff and two people working in the offices. What for? They all do nothing but play solitaire. You can feel the yes on you when you come in or go outside. It's pathetic. I did not have any roomies living in with me. I was alone for four months then one day my little place was full. Three guys just came walking in and all went to their rooms. I thought,"What is going on here?" Heroin and the other one is Crystal Meth and they are allowed to do as they please. I am so tired of this place.

# Sweatiest, wettest August is here

By Joanne Benger

"We are sweatiest

Which makes us wettest

And soggiest in August "– Willard R. Espy

We complain of the heat but "Dry August and warm doth harvest no harm."

We begin August with August first when some superstitious folk say we should do nothing important because August first is the day the devil was kicked out of heaven and he is sure to mess up your plans. August 1 is Swiss independence Day. This month we also have Pakistan Independence Day on August 14 and both Korea's Independence Day and Indian Independence Day on August 15 as well as Ukrainian Independence Day on August 24 and Phillipine National Heroes Day on August 28.

August 2 is a Civic Holiday, Heritage Day, the first Monday in August and many celebrate the entire Heritage long weekend holiday. We are now half way through summer and we can make the most of it by enjoying the great outdoors. Go camping and hiking or barbecue

and picnic in your backyard if you are having a staycation.

August 5 is Gordie Howe Day. Wear a hockey jersey and watch old hockey games.

August 7, 1927 the International Peace Bridge was dedicated to commemorate the years of peace between Canada and the United States.

August 10, 1897 the aspirin tablet was invented. At first it was just a treatment for headaches and other aches and pains. Now aspirin is considered a powerful weapon against heart disease, stroke, cataracts, gum disease and a least seven kinds of cancer. On the negative side it can lead to Ryes Syndrome in children. Cats don't tolerate aspirin well.

August 10 is a weather forecasting day. Good weather today means a good autumn.

August 12 is Middle Child Day. Connect with your brothers and sisters.

August 15 Dog Days end. The sweatiest, wettest days are over and we can expect colder weather. We want to see the sun today for "On St. Mary's Day sunshine brings much good wine."

August 17 is National Love Your Feet Day. Get a massage, have a pedicure or buy new shoes. Then remember the rule – right foot first. For luck we must put our shoes on our

socks on our right foot before our left and we must enter a building right foot first.

August 17 is also Thrift Day. "No money ain't funny. Too bad, so sad." Today is the day to detox financially by turning off the tap to non-essentials

August 17, 1786 is Davy Crockett's birthday. He was king of the wild frontier so go hiking the nature trails and cook over a camp fire in his memory. Or walk the block and barbecue the modern way.

August 18 is National Ice Cream Pie Day. This is followed by Berry Picking Day on August 22 and Banana Split Day on August 25. Enjoy.

August 25 is St. Bart's Day when "St.Bartholemew brings the cold dew." It is also Second Hand Wardrobe Day. Donate or consign unwanted clothes and consider replacing them with the gently used as you prepare for colder weather.

August 30 is Plague Sunday when we remember the people of Eyam, England who got the black death in a box of used clothing from London in 1665 and chose to isolate themselves so they wouldn't infect others. Many died but they prevented the spread."

August 31 ends the month. If you want to be lucky in September say, "White rabbit: before

## Summer insecurities of a winter person

By Joanne Benger

1. Is it decent to reveal ones elbows in public?
2. Should short shorts be this short? They don't cover my knees.
3. What are those things hanging out of my bathing suit? Oh, I see.  
That is what legs look like without winter underwear.
4. This baseball cap doesn't hide all of my toque hair. I may have to go to a beauty salon after all.
5. I think I am ill and leaking fluids. My forehead is wet.
6. My running shoes are so light I feel like I could fly. Will I be safe in a strong wind?
7. I am not sure my bare feet look normal. My toe nails have no colour.
8. I have trouble recognizing people. Everybody looks skinny without parka and people have unfamiliar hair where the toque should be.
9. Is it shocking to think there is only one thin layer of fabric between me and the world, and there are only two layers between you and me?
10. I miss the comforting sound of the furnace clicking on at regular intervals.. The house is too quiet.
11. I feel so vulnerable sleeping under just one thin blanket. I miss the reassuring weight of my big thick quilt.
12. I'm worried that cool summer meals and salads aren't as

## Thank you from Alberta Street News

**Thank you from Alberta Street News to Elsie Patterson, Doreen Klause and Joanne Benger for their donations. All donations are given out free of charge to those in need.**

**If you would like to donate clothing, blankets, other bedding or towels, please contact Linda Dumont at 780 975 3903 [dumontlc@hotmail.com](mailto:dumontlc@hotmail.com)**

**Even in the summer season, homeless people still need warm blankets for those colder nights.**

## Some Canadian riddles

By Joanne Benger

- Q. How does a polite Canadian say the H word? A. H, E, Double hockey sticks.
- Q. Why do some Canadians start the alphabet with B? A. Eh isn't a letter.
- Q. Why did the Canadian cross the road? A. He was too polite to say he didn't want to cross.
- Q. What is the biggest lie a Canadian cowboy can tell? A. I won

my belt buckle.

- Q. Why is the Canadian moose valued so highly? A. Canadians use moose on their hair and eat moose for dessert?
- Q. Why did the Canadian roughneck wear a HazMat suit to the beach? A. He expected to see a tar pond and oil sands.
- Q. Why wouldn't the tourist pay his bills? A. He was vacationing in Canada the land of the free.
- Q. How does a Canadian spell Canada? A. C.eh ?n. eh ? d, eh?.
- Q. How many seasons does Canada have? A. Two – Winter and pot hole season.

# FICTION

## Stranger in the Mirror

By Sharon Austin

Morning sunlight filtered softly through the tall curtainless windows gently spilling across the man's quiet face. Slowly he became aware of the warmth of the sunlight, then the faint scent of antiseptic and burned toast and the annoying beep, beep of some kind of machine. With great effort he opened his eyes to mere slits and stared at unfamiliar fluorescent lights on the ceiling high above him.

A figure in white came towards the bed and quietly adjusted some tubing before turning towards him and patting his hand. "I know you'll wake up soon," she soothed. "You have some visitors, dear. I don't know if you can hear me but you'll be ok." She left as quietly as she came.

A movement by the window made him aware there was someone else in the room. A sharp faced woman with blond hair stared at him with such venom he suddenly felt afraid.

"Why couldn't you just die," she hissed. "I sure could use that million- dollar life insurance."

A thin young man stood beside her glaring at him. "He looks terrible mom, don't worry," the man scoffed. "Let's get out of here, I hate hospitals."

"It was just a nightmare," Stone calmed himself. Soon he would wake up in his own bed in the room he shared with his brother River. Closing his eyes he fell back into the comforting mists of sleep. The nightmare continued as Stone became aware of a heavy- set gray-haired man sitting in a chair by the window. There was something familiar about him but he couldn't think what it was.

The same nurse spoke to the man by the window, "We are weaning him off the drugs now so he should be coming back to us soon. Head injuries are unpredictable and it's hard to say what he will remember. The doctor will be in later to assess the extent of the damage."

The man moved to the side of the bed and Stone suddenly realized the man looked like his father but much older. "Stone, it's me, your father, can you hear me?" The man spoke in his father's familiar voice.

Stone nodded realizing that this was no nightmare but a strange altered reality that he had somehow fallen into. A young girl about thirteen with long fair hair and sparkling blue eyes just like River's stood beside the man.

"Daddy, it's me, can you hear me? She hugged him and stared expectantly at his face.

Stone struggled to speak, his voice sounding thick and strange. "Who are you?" he mumbled.

"It's me, Isabeau." Her voice was soft and

sweet. "I love you, daddy."

"That's my mother's name," he murmured. Obviously, the girl thought he was someone else. Turning to the man he asked, "Dad, why do you look like that. It must be my eyes; your hair looks all gray. Where's River? Where's Mom? Were they hurt in the accident too?"

His old father bit back a strangled sob and turned away. Just then a doctor in a white coat entered the room. "I see you awake, that's very good." He gave a thin smile. "You realize that you've been in a serious car accident?"

As Stone nodded, he continued. "You have suffered a serious head injury along with broken ribs, a broken leg, and a broken shoulder. Your bones are healing well, but the concussion caused swelling on the brain. We had to operate to relieve the pressure which sometimes results in memory loss. Sometimes it is temporary and other times the memories are gone forever. I'm going to ask you a series of questions to assess memory loss if there is any. First, what is your name?"

"Stone Waters," he answered quietly.

"What year is it?" the doctor continued.

"1999, and I've just graduated high school." Stone offered.

"I see," the doctor looked concerned. "Tell me in detail your last memories."

His last memories were wonderful. "It's my graduation day and I can see mom and dad and River all looking up at me on the stage. Mom looks lovely in her pink dress and dad looks real proud. River is giving me a thumbs up sign. Later my girlfriend Katie and I go to the prom with River and Sue in River's car. We stay for a while but the loud music is giving River a headache and he's awful tired so we decide to get a pizza and go and sit on the beach. It's a magical night with a sky full of stars and the moon gleaming on the water. We all sit and listen to the waves and River falls right to sleep. He's so tired lately, I think he's working too hard at the lumberyard." Stone looked at the doctor expectantly. "See I remember everything," he said.

"This will come as a shock to you, Stone but the year is 2019 and you are 38 years old. You seem to have lost 20 years of memories but don't despair. Often memory will come back within a few months; at least some memory. Your memories will come back in flashes that you don't understand but that is your brain healing."

"No! No! This can't be true!" Stone cried but his father's older face made sense now. "Where's River and Mom," he asked harshly as dread filled his heart. He knew they would be right here if they could be.

"Hand me that mirror," he half whispered. The face that stared back at him was that of a stranger. His eyes were the same gray and green mix but his face looked wider and more mature and there was the shadow of stubble along his jaw. He let the mirror drop on the bed knowing now it was all true.

"It's too cruel," his father was weeping

openly. "My poor boy has to lose them twice."

"I'll stop in tomorrow to see if there's any change." The doctor said as he hurried away.

Stone's father stared at him with anguished eyes. "I'm sorry son, but River died of cancer 20 years ago. Remember how tired he was and he was losing weight. He was always so happy and positive; he really thought he'd beat it but death takes the best and leaves the rest to mourn."

"River's gone?" tears poured unheeded down his cheeks.

"You were a wonderful brother, Stone. You didn't go off to college, instead you stayed with River right to the end. You two went on a long road trip and River loved it. That last day he wanted to go to the beach one more time and when he couldn't walk you carried him down to the waves. He was laughing and kicking his feet as you held him in the water. We had a picnic and it was just a perfect day. The next day he was gone."

"And Mom?" the pain in his heart made it hard to speak. Sighing, Stone's father continued with the story. "She couldn't get over losing River. Mom walked to that graveyard every day and sat by his grave. She got pneumonia and passed away a year after River. I think she was glad to go and be with her son."

"What have I been doing the last 20 years?" He asked resignedly.

"I don't know, son, we had a falling out and I haven't seen you in 19 years.

"What did I do?" Stone's voice was tired; it was all too much.

"It was my fault, son. I'm not strong like you, I need people around me all the time. You went off to college and I was so lonely." His voice took on a pleading tone, hoping this time Stone would understand. "When you came home for Christmas, Wanda had moved in and you were so angry. You said I'd betrayed Mom's memory because she'd only been gone four months. You didn't even come to our wedding."

"You are here now, Dad. That's all that matters." He closed his eyes exhausted. When he awoke there were two police officers in the room, one with a notepad.

"Good, your awake. We're investigating your accident as attempted murder as your car was tampered with. Do you have any enemies?" There was nothing Stone could tell them; in his mind he was an 18- year- old kid. He was glad when everyone was gone and he could rest. He awoke to two strangers standing by the bed, one a tall black man, the other shorter with red hair and glasses.

"Hi Stone," the red-head said awkwardly. "Your father said you wouldn't know us but we're your friends from college. We all rented a house together and we had a great time."

"Yeah," the black man continued, "It was all great until you met that Noreen at your job at the country club. She was rich, beautiful, and 8-years older than you with a kid named Ramone and you fell for her hard. We tried to warn you but you were so in love you married

her. You were happy at first until she showed her true colours. She made you quit college and work for her father and you were miserable. The only reason you stayed was for your daughter, Isabeau. Now you're going through a nasty divorce."

Stone's head started to ache. "You're talking about my future like it's the past! He protested.

"It is," the man continued. "The last time we saw you, you were pretty spooked. You said you had found out something terrible about your father-in-law's company and you were going to the cops. You just had to hide the evidence somewhere. Next thing we know your in here. Watch out, brother, they may try again."

Late that night two officers came and spirited him away to a safe house until his memory returned. He had a new name; James

Temple, and a whole new identity. He even had a rescue dog and two cats for company in his country cottage.

Sometimes in the night the memory flashes would come; a little girl in a pink dress, and laughing at a party with his friends. One flash had jolted him awake. He saw himself digging beside a grave and the gravestone read "River Waters."

He liked this new life and had no desire to return to the city. There was only one thing that kept haunting him and drawing him back to his past life - the pretty young girl with the warm hugs and her sweet voice saying "I love you, Daddy."

Someday when the time was right he would go back and get to know his daughter, his Isabeau.



**Leonard Stoik age 74, is an antique car collector His passion for collecting was inspired by his grand father who passed away and left him with his old 1959 Volks Wagon Beetle. Since then, in his 40 years of collecting, the car buff has collected over 100 old antique cars to his credit. This 1926 Model T Ford is his latest pride and joy. Leonard and his wife make their home in Barrhead, Alberta. Photo by John Zapantis**

# Plans for \$20 ONE WAY on hold

COVID-19, high operating expenses and a car accident delay my goal to start my flag taxi limo company

By John Zapantis

A series of unfortunate circumstances can inevitably prevent one from continuing on with his dreams in reaching his goals and achieving success. I'm that prime example of how that dream of reaching the top of the success ladder, decided to come crashing down on me, recently in the morning on Thursday March 25th, of this year. That dream was turned into a living nightmare, while I was driving my 2020 Toyota LE-Model Southbound along 127th Street while about to make a left turn towards 130th Avenue in Edmonton's Calder District.

When I made that left turn, I suddenly was hit on the left back passenger door as a heavy impact came with a thundering bang that sent my car swerving to the side of the road. I immediately got out of my car and ran over to the driver that hit my vehicle, demanding an answer for this unexpected rude awakening.

When I asked the driver for answers, he sounded a bit hysterical and called out my name with a sarcastic reply, "John, what happened," He hysterically laughed out loud.

I was frustrated by what sounded like an arrogant man I was speaking to and was dumbfounded by his knowing my name. I then thought, "Could he possibly know me from the Alberta Street News?" I figured then that I'd get down to some serious business by asking him what had happened, but despite my effort in finding out why, his reply was a calm, "Stay away from me."

I moved closer in on him as he quickly jumped back into the driver's seat of his car and he quickly rolled up the driver's window of his car. I watched him calling someone on his cell phone, which I figured was either his back up or dialing for roadside assistance. A car then rolled up towards me, while I was standing on the side of 127th Street looking for someone to flag down for roadside assistance.

The driver inside that car that drove up to me asked me if I was okay and if anyone was hurt?

I replied, "From the looks of it, that guy that ran into my car seems to be doing Okay. He doesn't seem to look hurt."

I then looked over to my left shoulder and heard the other driver in his car getting

ready to leave, revving up his car's engine. I assumed at that moment he was going to bail out on me so I yelled out to him not to move, I warned him I had his license number, while looking over at the man who pulled over to assist me in his vehicle. He was calling the police on his cell phone to assist me and the other driver.

He told me he called the police and that after the police arrived to our accident scene, he'd be leaving so that he wouldn't be late for work. The EPS arrived within five minutes of that call and two police officers asked both of us drivers to exchange our proof of auto insurance policies, so that each consenting party could have damages assessed by our auto insurance company. The two officers then advised us drivers that they were now occupied with other calls and wouldn't have time to fill out our accident reports and suggested that we take the matter up with our own neighbourhood police department where we would have more time to fill out our versions of an accident report.

One of the officers asked me to get into my car to see if it was operable. Being that everything happened so quickly, I then finally had a chance to look over my vehicle, noticing the extensive damage done on my left passenger door that looked caved in. When I got into drive my vehicle, it still drove like a charm so the police officers waved goodbye to me, when I drove on my way to fill out an accident report at one of my neighbouring police departments.

Down at the Claireview Police Station a female police officer named Olivia handed me an accident form to fill out, which was then filled out and completed by me.

I will not name the driver of this accident, while safe guarding and respecting his privacy as an issue since he remained un-cooperative with me, when I questioned him earlier on the particulars of this accident. After weeks of consulting with my auto insurance adjuster over at my insurance company and being cross examined by one of its investigators that later found me 100% at fault, to this day I still stand by my version of what actually happened when I made a left turn from that main street. I noticed this driver was driving to the left of me in the lane he shouldn't have been driving in to begin with, because prior to his running into me I had noticed that this street was a four lane street with two overhanging green arrows lit up ahead of me signifying that this driver that was trying to driver around me, He shouldn't have been driving to my left side, while trying to pass me in a prohibited lane that had an 'X' traffic light indicator to my left as I had indicated to my insurance adjuster while recording my version to him about what actually happened that day when I was consistently maintaining the centre lane, just before making that left turn.

I see it this way, that driver carelessly took

the dangerous risk of passing me in a prohibited lane, when there were no cars driving towards him from that 'X' lane he shouldn't have entered. I know that caused our accident. Thinking about taking legal action on this matter is still pending for now, because of other family matters that I have to tend to. Despite the emotional anguish this accident has caused me, I did have to pay the \$500 deductible prior to receiving the settlement amount of \$23,383.50 cents. My car wasn't repairable, because of its twisted under carriage and was eventually salvaged.

Recently I purchased a new 2021 Toyota Corolla with an identical exterior to what my 2020 Toyota Corolla LE- model once wore proudly. This car retailed for \$26,000. The only difference between my newer model and the previous one is that the interior of the newer model has a number of newer amenities included that weren't added to my older model.

The bad news is that my monthly insurance payments have doubled because of two combined factors - Premier Kenny last summer introduced an increase in insurance premiums and the additional increase because of this accident, where I was held liable. These factors do not encourage me in the least to aspire in pursuing my dream of establishing my own flag taxi limo company.

As you ASN readers may recall in both bi-monthly issues, the Alberta Street News January/February 2021 and the Alberta Street News March/April 2021 issue, I wrote about my plans to establish a one man flag taxi limo service. My one of a kind taxi concept and the policies that I've implemented provide an array of incentives as a convenience for future riders. I've named my flag taxi limo service \$20 ONE WAY. The name was obviously inspired by the thought of charging my riders half the rate of what they would normally pay at \$40 dollars to ride from Edmonton all the way to the Edmonton International Airport (EIA).

The \$20 ONE WAY logo was created and designed by me, but still needs to be modified by a printer that will make my logo more appropriate, when commercially used, as opposed to the original logo I designed. The cab will fly the traditional colours of retro Black and White similar to the common colours of the ONE WAY street signs that you often see on one way streets.

My one of a kind flag taxi limo company will also be the first to have introduced safety measures by having a security ride along on my trips, acting as the eyes and ears while assuring passengers of their safety and defusing tensions between passengers, who might start problems that could possibly jeopardize the safety of both the driver and my passengers.

One more note, to make the rides the more convenient for my riders riding out to the Edmonton International Airport on a one

way trip, if our cab gets caught up in a traffic jam due to a car accident on the Queen Elizabeth QE-2-Hi-Way and my passenger misses their scheduled air plane flight to the airport, all they have to do is sign one of my validation cards, requiring that they fill in a first and last name, home address, phone number and signature and the next time they ride for free, with the exception that they re-book their flight for another date and time. Recently I had plans to write for my class 4 taxi license and was going to do the road test later, but this accident has sent me into a tailspin and will prolong my plans in starting this one of a kind innovative flag taxi limo service.

I was for a while a little apprehensive about continuing on with my plans after hearing from other friends and strangers on their advice in changing the name of my company's name from \$20 ONE WAY to \$40 ONE WAY. One friend voted for at least another \$10 added to my logo and said better call it \$30 ONE WAY, because he added that the issue of gas expenses and the ever increasing gas rates would be the primary reason for a name change on my logo.

Imagine what the increase on my commercial insurance premium would be now since my insurance premiums have doubled alone on my regular car insurance, right now this doesn't keep my hopes up too high. I know my plans for now are stagnant and there's a

lot to look into when it comes to what action I'll be taking. For now I am trying to find a way of getting a better deal on cheaper insurance just to stay on the road for starters! So down the road in some future issue of the ASN I'll be letting our readers know when I'll plan to come back with more progressive news on when I'll be making the official call in getting this one of a kind flag taxi limo service \$20 ONE WAY on the road and off to the airport.

I'd like to thank a particular staff member of my insurance company for all of his kind support during my difficult time, while trying to recover from the mayhem that this accident has caused me in setting me back from my goal. Despite asking the original insurance adjuster if he wanted to be mentioned for this story, he politely declined to my offer for his end of the priority in assessing my accident claim may have caused him some inconvenience because of my moral stand on this sensitive issue. There are two particular member of my auto insurance company that have given me consent in using their names who constantly acted as go betweens in helping to make the processing of my claim more convenient that helped me to purchase my newer vehicle. They are Anthony Giordano and Mary Johnstone.

Secondly I'd like to extend my sincerest gratitude to Sherwood Park Toyota's many hard working employees, Assistant Sales

Manager Joe Cariou who sold me my last two Toyota Corollas, a 2016 and a 2020 model and Sherwood Park Toyota car sales man Tyler Shellnutt, who sold me my newer 2021 Toyota Corolla LE Model. and the rest of the Sherwood Park Toyota Crew who have relayed my telephone calls, arranged for oil changes and have shuttled me around town, while waiting for my past car repairs and oil changes. I also want to thank the following: main switchboard operator Kelly Wilson, Finance Manager Carmen Ye, the ladies that do my invoices for oil change in the garage, Stacy Chenier and Sheila Watters, the gentlemen that have given me shuttle rides around town, when waiting for my car to be serviced, courtesy drivers Ted Dixon and Peter Fleming and we can't forget the good folks at Enterprise Rentals, when I needed a rental car to get around with, while preparing to buy a newer vehicle and thank you to rental agent Randy D. Caron for making my rental an encouraging ride around town when the wheels were really needed at that time!

My editor Linda Dumont also deserves a big thank you in pushing me to not give up to the trappings of the COVID-19 Pandemic fatigue that I was grappling with when I felt like packing it all in. And now because of Linda I once again found the courage to have this piece completed and ready for this issue, where you can now read all about it!



**John Zapantis in his new 2021 Toyota Corolla LE with J, salesman Tyler Shellnutt (left) and assistant sales manager Joe Cariou (right).**

# Alberta Street News mourns a vendor death

By Linda Dumont

Alberta Street News vendor Clifford Mitchell was one of the three men who went into medical distress and died in Kinston Park on Friday, May 21, 2021. Mitchell was on the street for most of the last 20 years and was a street newspaper vendor for nearly 20 years as well selling papers outside the Strathcona Farmers' Market. He lost much of his eye sight in the last two years. On the day of his death, he went to the park, which was a usual hang out for him and his friends, where he spent the day drinking beer. Then the three men fell asleep. Paramedics were unable to resuscitate them. For more on Clifford Mitchell go to page 16.

When I heard that three homeless men had passed away, I was sure that I would know at least one of them. This is not the first time Alberta Street News has lost a vendor. Too often when the news headlines have been about someone who has passed away, he or she is a member of the street newspaper community, a vendor or a relative of one of the vendors, or someone whom we have written a story about. For a while it seemed that anyone featured in a cover photo passed away!



**Clifford Mitchell**



Above: Clifford with some of his family

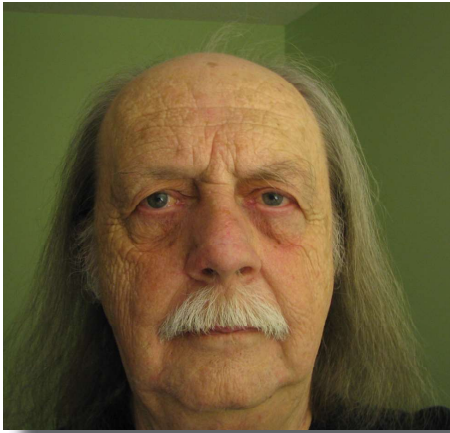
Above right: Clifford with his daughter Catrina

Right and lower right: A carving and other art by Clifford Mitchell

Below Clifford with a piece of his art work.



# Indifference is the root of all evil



By Allan Sheppard

Two hundred fifteen.

The set of numbers is infinite. Most of them are mundane, innocuous, boring. Impersonal. Unemotional.

Some numbers, however, have become locally, sometimes universally, memorable or iconic, by association with an event, a person, or distinguishing characteristic: 0 (the worst); 1 (the best); 2 (not good enough); 86 (rejection, ejection, especially of Indigenous people where alcohol is served); 911 (terrorism, emergency help); 1914 (First World War), 1939 (Second World War), 1945 (Hiroshima, Nagasaki), 1953 (President Kennedy assassinated). There are many such numbers, remembered by association.

But 215? Nothing to remember there. Until now. More precisely until 27 May this year, when Roseanne Casimir, Kupik7 (Chief) of the Tkemlúps te Secwépemc First Nation released news that the remains of 215 children had been found in a field of unmarked burials near the Kamloops Indian Residential School.

215. Children. Some as young as three, according to media reports (though not to Kupik7 Casimir, whose statement does not give ages).

The remains were discovered by a ground-penetrating radar specialist engaged by the Tkemlúps te Secwépemc to investigate stories told by former students of unrecorded deaths and burials at the site, after federal and provincial authorities had failed to look into student allegations. Similar stories, easily dismissed as rumours have been told about other residential schools, so it is reasonable to assume that other similarly unmarked burials will be found in British Columbia and other provinces. The least other First Nations (and we) can ask is for the federal and provincial governments, whose policies created and mandated the residential schools, and the churches that operated many of them (including the Kamloops school,

which was run by the Catholic church) to cover the costs for radar and other investigative and forensic procedures, including archival research and DNA analysis. To expect First Nations to pay for such now-unavoidable work is to add insult to injury.

The injury is great, if we assume (as we must, without evidence otherwise) 215 is the minimum number of unacknowledged deaths and presumably unaccounted burials, with likely hundreds, perhaps thousands more to come. The insult would be unimaginably greater, if the governments and churches involved continue to deflect and deny reports and oral histories that have now been shown to be credible and substantial; if they continue to deflect accountability and avoid responsibility for making the families and communities of the victims of their mismanagement and misguided governance whole again.

Kamloops Indian Residential School was the largest of Canada's many boarding schools mandated and designed to assimilate the children of First Nations colonially co-opted into the population of Canada, initially not as citizens, but formally as wards, informally as indigenous fauna like fish, moose, deer, or beaver, though less valuable because they could not be used for meat and furs.

The essence of wardship is protection: guardianship. That essence, that inherent responsibility was betrayed from the beginning by Canada and the provinces imposed as political and geographical jurisdictions on Indigenous peoples and their lands. It is betrayed still, even today, by governments and leaders at worst hostile, at best indifferent. From some, words have been more honeyed, ways more sunny, but realities on the ground, on reserves and in cities that have attracted refugees from underserved and under-resourced, often remote and inaccessible, reserves. The many who cannot or will not assimilate end up in graves, jail, on the streets, in poverty, or other forms of distress and indignity. When the alternative on offer—the only alternative, if we are honest about it—is assimilation, there is for many Indigenous souls no alternative: no practical alternative; no morally or politically justifiable alternative.

At any given time, the Kamloops school housed—the more appropriate term might be warehoused—500 students who ranged, according to media reports, in age from pre-schoolers to seventeen. They were subject to draconian discipline and control. They lived in crowded conditions, reportedly poorly fed with little attention to general health and wellbeing. In addition to physical challenges, many suffered from homesickness and other mental and emotional challenges. Many died from diseases that were predictable in the circumstances and preventable, even with the limited knowledge and treatments available for the main killers, tuberculosis and measles. Some died from suicide, some in ill-advised but understandable efforts to return home by running away.

That children died in such circumstances is all the more reprehensible because so many of the deaths were predictable and preventable, if prevention, protection—guardianship—were the accepted goal of those who presumed responsibility for their welfare. But that is not the most outrageous thing about the way children died at residential schools in recorded and, we now know with certainty, unrecorded numbers. We need only acknowledge the many thousands of pandemic deaths among residents of senior-citizen's care home across Canada to recognize that inadequate attention to the welfare of certain populations is not always a matter of racism or even overt bias, although both were inarguably factors of treatment of children at residential schools (and of many of their parents, grandparents, and older siblings). The greatest sin (and I use the term unreservedly, with full knowledge that the perpetrators were part of an institution that presumes to recognize and work to overcome sin wherever it finds it) was not to let the children in its care die, terrible though that was, but to have buried so many (though not all; many were treated better) unceremoniously, in secret ground, without graves or markers, without records or acknowledgement, without sending the bodies home or even informing the parents. Many parents today do not know what happened to their children; many have died not knowing. I am not Indigenous, and I do not presume to speak to or for my Indigenous friends and their friends, families, and communities. I speak only for myself. But if I were Indigenous, I cannot imagine how I would forgive or forget the unforgivable and the unforgettable.

Alberta's late Premier Ralph Klein (borrowing his rhetoric from opponents to endangered species legislation in the U.S.) infamously suggested that ranchers whose cattle had symptoms of bovine spongiform encephalitis (BSE) should shoot, shovel, and shut up to hide possible evidence and avoid consequences of having a fatal disease for their animals and humans in their herd. The priests and nuns at Kamloops Indian Residential School did not (although there reports of some instances) shoot or kill the victims of their inadequate care, but they did in too many cases shovel and shut up in order to bury the inconvenient truth of deaths on their watch.

Words fail.

So I will say no more.

*Postscript*

This morning after I sent the text above to our editor Linda Dumont, and she began to lay out the paper for the printer, Saskatchewan's Cowessess First Nation Chief Cadmus Delorme broke the news that 751 unmarked graves had been discovered near the site of a now-demolished residential school at the reserve. We do not have time, space, or enough information to comment on the news beyond noting its existence, but we will follow events to report and comment in the next issue.

**Continued on page 14**

# Shrinking the pie

By Timothy Wild

In a recent edition of Social Policy Trends, Dr. Ron Kneebone posed the question “poverty reduction: policy initiatives or economic growth?” In an ambiguous answer, drawing from a comparison of real per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to Low Income Cut-off (LICO) rates, Kneebone wrote of “the importance of economic growth but (this) does not preclude the influence of policy initiatives such as increased child benefits and minimum wages in reducing poverty.” At first blush, this provides support for the old trickle-down adage of a rising tide lifting all boats. The contention is that ultimately it is the wellbeing of the free market, not comprehensive public policy, that has the most impact on poverty reduction.

However, neoclassical economic theory and ideology aside, I would argue that there are some methodological flaws with Dr. Kneebone’s argument. For example, per capita GDP is a crude figure when it comes to portraying actual individual benefits from economic growth. Averages are subject to the impact of outliers, and the massive and increasing gap in Canada in both wealth and income can certainly skew these data. A better measure of income distribution would be provided by using a figure based on median income. Not ideal, but certainly preferable to per capita GDP when looking at the effectiveness of public policy in combatting poverty.

Secondly, I believe it would have been better to use a more explicit market basket approach, perhaps including a more nuanced core needs income threshold, to determine poverty in Canada. Taken together, both the use of GDP and LICO serve to deflate the poverty rate. Statistics Canada suggests that the overall poverty rate is slightly over 10% as opposed to Dr. Kneebone’s assertion of 6.5%. I suppose that is why there is so much variance when it comes to poverty research, and this then has an impact on both problem definition and solution. Statistics can be arrayed to support a number of, sometimes contradictory,

arguments. This found wonderful expression in Benjamin Disraeli’s comment “The three degrees of falsehood are lies, damned lies and statistics.”

But it wasn’t the use of statistics – or the tautologous argument regarding economics and poverty reduction – that raised my interest in the brief, but Dr. Kneebone’s concluding comment that “...Canadian public policies that fail to promote economic growth may impact those at the low end of the income distribution more keenly.” I take exception to this assertion on a number of fronts. For example, the tide of neoliberalism has clearly not lifted the boats of a significant number of groups. For many the promises of social and economic citizenship are being eroded daily by stagnant wages, profit driven inflation, classism, racism, sexism, the rent taking of elites, the commodification of education and health, public service “efficiencies” and precarious employment. The fruits of the market remain unfairly distributed.

We also need to bear in mind the fact that the planet simply cannot continue along the path of ongoing economic growth. We are rapidly approaching the point of no return in terms of climate change and our survival, and a policy focus left to the vagaries of the market is not only ineffective it is also unsustainable and patently unethical. The Keynesian Welfare State did help working folks in many countries in the industrial North, but this was based on the selfsame economic logic proposed by Dr. Kneebone’s brief. The suggestion was that aggregate demand could be maintained due to the growth of the economy rather than hard political choices; we could, it seemed, have our cake and eat it too. But this expansionist economic policy led to significant environmental problems. It also led to an inane consumerism, and the decline of the common good, as we sedated ourselves with cheap goods and built in obsolescence.

Additionally, the expansionist approach had an impact on people living in the Global South. From both a macro-economic and ecological perspective, there was the rubbing of worried Northern hands that folks living in the South could certainly not expect to enjoy an Industrial Revolution or the achievement of “our” social, cultural and economic standard of living. Those of us in the North could

enjoy our multi-tiered and deliciously frosted cake, but we didn’t want to share it with those in the South. We also required the cheap labour and resources of these countries to provide our much-needed soma, in the form of cheaper and readily accessible consumer goods. Explicit colonialism was no longer an option, but we still had access to multilateral trade agreements and international capital to achieve similar ends.

Not surprisingly, folks in the Global South don’t seem willing to participate in this rotten and unfair dynamic. In large part this is why we are seeing so many migrants from the South; economics and the environment are both contributing to the need – yes “need” – to move to other places for security and basic needs. People don’t leave their homes and communities easily. There is a desperate belief / hope that the grass in the other place will be greener. That’s the general reason for mass migration.

But how can we respond to these complex issues in an effective and humane manner? I am not completely sure, but there are things that could help. For example, we could be more welcoming of newcomers to our country and help in terms of providing support to help people both “bond” with their home communities and also “bridge” into the broader community. Furthermore, it is important that we look beyond the economy to measures that truly affirm the central importance of our connectivity in community. We could also help shrink our economy, by looking at effective and efficient measures to reduce both production and consumption in an equitable manner.

However, for this to happen we need broader participation in creating and expanding the collective standards of social, economic and cultural rights of citizenship. As Adrian Little has argued we must also look at some measure of guaranteed income to compensate for the necessary economic retrenchment. It is counter-cultural and will be a struggle, especially in our province with its risible initiatives and public relations stunts, such as the much anticipated and long delayed Steve Allan shadow puppet show. But we need to act now, because the economy isn’t working for everyone. And, sooner than later, it will not work for even more of us.

## Indifference

Continued from page 13

In the meantime, we have two more previously unremarkable numbers made notable now by the discovery: 751, the number of unmarked burials at Cowessess and 966, the total number of unmarked burials at Kamloops and Cowessess. So far, there are hints that more burials might be found at each site, and there is every reason to believe that other burials will be found at the sites of other schools across the country, making more numbers newly significant by association with what can only

be described as atrocities and hypocrisies of indifference.

The guilty parties certainly include the responsible federal and provincial governments; the Catholic and other churches that ran many of the schools, at the behest of the federal and provincial governments; the “justice” and law enforcement institutions that abetted the process and turned blind eyes and deaf ears to decades of reports from residential school survivors, First Nations leaders, and investigative commissions indicating that such atrocities had been committed.

But, if Canadians remain indifferent, if we

continue to stand by and do nothing to hold ourselves, our governments, and our institutions responsible and accountable we too will be guilty and complicit in unforgettable and unforgivable atrocities and injustice. We must fear that this is just the beginning: the worst is yet to come. The body count will surely grow now that the dam has been breached. The pressure to make suitable amends must grow with it. And a fall election, if one is called, must hold all parties, leaders, and candidates to account on what is becoming this generation’s defining political issue for Canadians.

# Living the restricted life

By Joanne Bengier

1. Roses are red, violets are blue, I'm masked so I can't kiss you.
- 2 The third wave was here. We must stop waving.
3. I don't qualify for any compensation. All I get is condensation when I wear a mask with my glasses.
4. With masks all dates are blind date. One lady told me she sated a man for three months before she realized he had a moustache.
5. Masks confuse people. I talked to a masked neighbor for ten minutes before I realized she was a stranger. She called me Dorothy when we parted.
6. Pfizer reverses aging. When I say I am fully vaccinated, people say, "You don't look 75." Actually I do but politeness demands they say I don't look my age even if they have to cross their fingers.
7. My neighbours and I talk outside six feet apart with masks dangling. Those dangling masks are the new relaxed casual style in this area.
8. I am fully vaccinated but my life is still fully vacanted. I go nowhere, see no one and do nothing.
9. My good clothes are quietly going out of style as I wear new wash and rewear covid outfit at home.

10. I shop locally and I admit I am much healthier because I am embarrassed to be seen buying junk food.
11. The pandemic has had no effect on bills. Bills toope, as I call them, still arrive regularly with regular increases. I blame the carbon tax and um, do have that covid tax yet?
13. It is now illegal to touch a person outside of your household. Hugs are illegal. I think drugs are still OK if you distance. Our street got a marijuana shop.
14. Two terms describe my life. Jomo – the joy of missing out, and Sit and Save. Psst – don't tell the PM I am saving money by staying home. He might cut benefits to balance the budget.
15. Masks and distancing save money. With masks people no longer need make-up, razors or mouth wash. Distancing eliminates the need for deodorant, body wash and perfume.
16. With all those variants and mutants, we might have to have booster shots for the rest of our lives, a medical expert has informed us. We need to get useter boosters.
17. I had an awful thought. If this pandemic never ends, I will be OK. The thought of resuming normal life is scarier. All that activity. All that dressing up.

## I'm fully vaccinated

By Joanne Bengier

I got my first shot at Mayerthorpe on March 2 and became one of the first 5% of Canadians to be vaccinated. I felt so happy and hopeful and free for I would be 89% protected in two weeks. The end was in sight. In March 17 my son and my daughter-in-law came to visit me for the first time since the pandemic began. We had a two day staycation in a motel, them in room 112 and me in room 113. The breakfast room was closed so breakfast came in a paper bag – a croissant juice and yogurt. We followed masking and distancing rules as we visited in public shops, and ate in restaurants. I really enjoyed my first shopping

spree since the pandemic began.

I was amazed to see so many brightly coloured clothes on sale. Then I looked at the people on the street and saw the usual blacks, grays and denims. I assume the bright colours hadn't caught on.

I was equally surprised to see so many beautiful designer fabric masks on sale. Why hadn't they caught on? Then I realize shoppers had had a year to stock up on their mask wardrobe. These were the remainders. I got six for the price of one, two denim, one dark, one light, one black, one plain, one jewelled, and two with clear plastic areas for lip readers, one black, one print.

I shopped for groceries and stocked up on items my local store doesn't carry. I came home feeling wonderful. I stopped watching the news with those steadily climbing numbers and decorated my house for my second and last Easter alone. My life was opening up

at last and the best was yet to come.

Then a neighbour said we shouldn't have wasted time and money going to Mayerthorpe for Pfizer. The local drug store has Moderna now. He also said the vaccine only protects us for six months and with the way variants and case load were increasing we were heading for a new lock down. I started watching the news again. Numbers were up and the third wave was coming. I had enjoyed a two day oasis of hope but the pandemic had not slowed.

I went to Mayerthorpe for my second shot on April 9, the day Alberta's new restrictions came into effect. I was now fully vaccinated but couldn't go to a restaurant to celebrate for all restaurants were closed. It is lonely to be among the first but as more people get vaccinated, herd immunity will take over and in the near future I will once again walk in crowds, unmasked. Until then I mask and distance to keep others safe..

## Housing Woes

By Darlene Collins

Hello. My name is Darlene F. Collins. I just turned 60 years old on May 5, 2021. I am First Nations and I find that there are more non-Aboriginal than there are First Nations where I live. I moved in here from the streets. I arrived here in November, 2019 with only the clothes on my back. I was provided with a room, an ugly looking used blue sheet and a tiny little blanket – you could see my feet the blanket was so small. I felt like I was just thrown into a jail cell.

At first I was OK with everything. Little did I know this place used to be a mental institution back when it was first built. It's creepy. The place is haunted and there are a lot of crystal meth users as well as alcoholics and they are

allowed to use. They have no programs or encouragement to quit using. Nothing. Absolutely nothing.

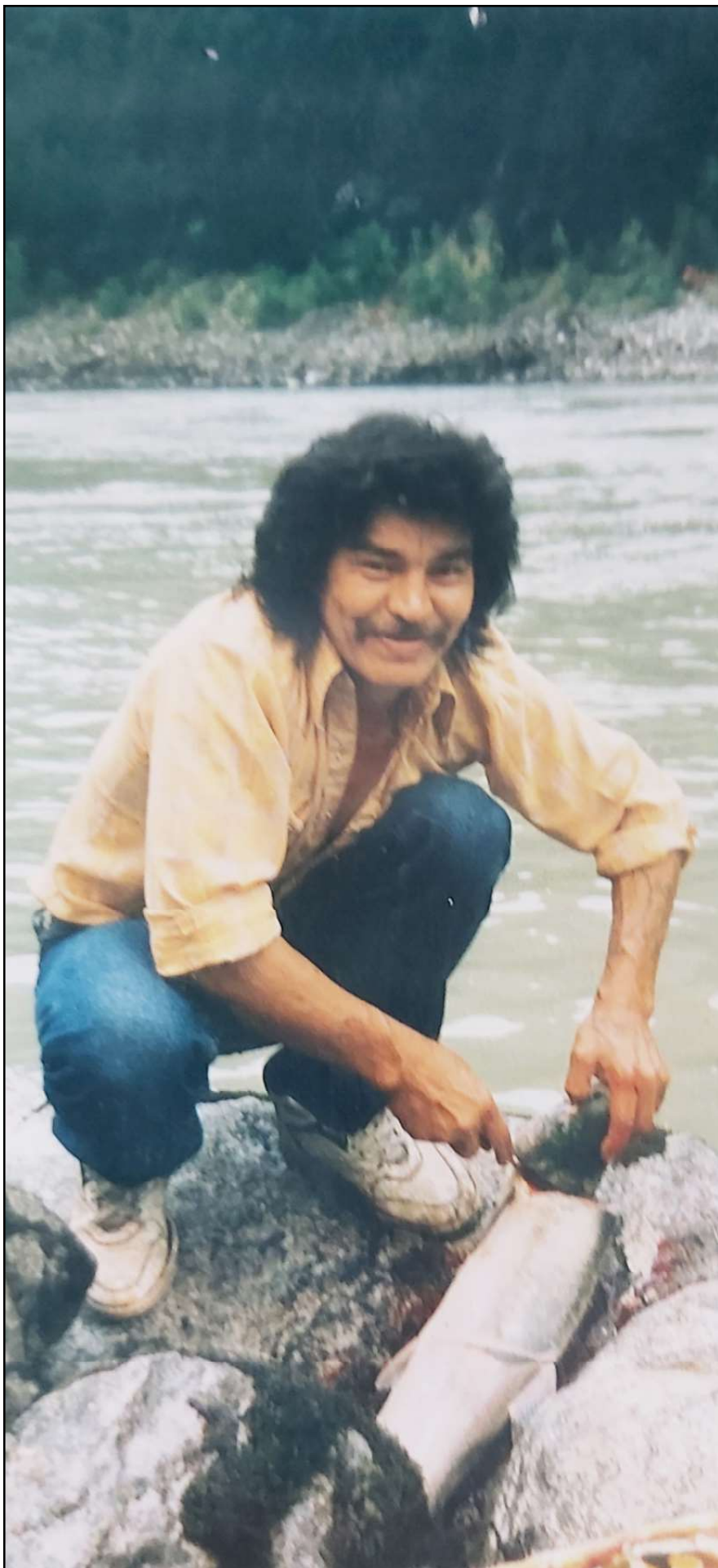
I began to notice small things going missing from my room like my food, clothes, crafts, jewellery, everything was being stolen right in front of me. There are also cameras and microphones in every room after all they used the systems back when it was built.

My legal rights have been so violated. I'm afraid to take a bath or a shower due to cameras put in the shower room and club room. It is so wrong and yet there is nothing I can do – just one small First Nations woman trying to get help yet no one believes me. I have been stalked for three years from these three people, Dale, David and my daughter. They are squatting in this building and have been stealing from everybody not only me.

My daughter came to visit me and she was showing my roomies all her counterfeit money

and she still had the nerve to get drugs and such for me on my birthday May 5, 61. I am 60 years old and I've only been here four months and I'm being victimized. I could even hear a child's screams at the top of his lungs like he was getting beaten or something is going on and people need to know what this place really is.

This place takes more bodies out of here than any other place and it is always said to be an overdose by the manager and his buddies that are guards in this building. The place is a joke, a great big fantasy joke and they are taking lives as well as robbing the old seniors blind of all their money. The manager is the only one who can guard the money and I think he is the one robbing the people (white or brown). I don't care what I have to do to let people know about this place. I am willing to be on the news anything, just so people know about this devil possessed place.



## In Loving Memory of Clifford Murray Mitchell (Mooshum)

December 25 1949 - May 21 2021

On May 21 2021, Our father Cliff passed away along with two of his friends, Jason and Michael, in Kinistinâw park, Edmonton, Alberta. The friends had been having some drinks together and then smoked a marijuana joint. They then fell asleep and never woke up...

Six days passed before Edmonton Police Service contacted Cliff's family, and as of today we still have not been given a cause of death.

Cliff will live on in the hearts and memories of his five children, Naomi, Raven, Catrina, Raymond and Dustin, seven grandchildren Levi and Jade, Helena and Ada, Brooklyne, Zachary and Adian, his surviving brother, Ephren, extended family and friends.

He was a fiercely loving father. He was charismatic, kind and had a sharp sense of humour. He had an easy way about him that drew people to him and was comfortable in any setting. He had a stubborn streak a mile wide and passed this wonderful trait on to all of his children. He could make anyone like him if he wanted to. He always had a kind encouraging word or a warm hug for us. He used to drive my mom crazy by coming home more often than not with a new animal for me.

He worked all his life and had many talents. He took pride in every job he worked, the oil field, security, sausage factory rock quarry to name a few. He taught me how to run a trap line, set snares, skin animals. He was a skilled artist and accomplished carver. He worked on the totem poles that are installed in the park by the library in Chilliwack, B.C.

His death leaves an enormous hole in our lives and our hearts that is only lessened by the fact that he is now at peace with our ancestors, laughing and smiling.

We love you Dad.

We want to say Thank you to everyone who was a part of Dad's life for the last while, many members of his family tried to get him to come home but he dug in his heels and refused. We appreciate those who work to make a positive difference in the lives of the many who end up on the streets, to those community members that take the time to buy the Alberta Street News, coffee, or take the time to stop and have a few words, Boyle Street Community Centre, The Hope Mission and all it's staff (Jackson, Thank you for the story), The Water Warriors, Janis Irwin, Jonny Wakefield and Biggest thanks to Jimmy (Early Bird Cafe) for everything he has done from allowing us to call his cafe to talk to Dad regularly, picking and dropping Dad off, going to the hospital when dad fell, helping with the memorial ceremony and so much more and to Alberta Street news and Garry Point West funeral services..