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Coldest Night Of the Year Walkathon 25Feb23



Our team:
"No More Mister Ice Guy!"
earned over
\$2,600 this year

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ALBERTA STREET NEWS

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

Writers:

**John Zapantis
Joanne Benger
Sharon Austin
Timothy Wild
Linda Dumont
Angelique Branston
LaVern Charan
Shyanne Austin LeBlanc
Ken Forgach**

Photos:

**John Zapantis
Jordan Macdonald
Varun Vij
Ken Forgach**

Cover Photos:

Ken Forgach

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

**Web:
albertastreetnews.org**



Handicapped senior swarmed and stomped by teen aged girls

By Linda Dumont

An elderly woman with multiple handicaps was swarmed and stomped by a group of teen aged girls outside Walmart at Kingsway Garden Mall on the evening of January 12. Sharon Spencer Bugle, 73, had just finished shopping at Walmart, and drove her motorized cart out to the loading zone. She got out of the cart to go to the front to unload her groceries. Her husband, Darryl, was with her, and their friend Bill drove up to pick them up.

“As I got out of the cart, I saw the girls – one was on the ground. A little one was curled up like a turtle and the others were taking turns kicking her. Something in me snapped,” Sharon said “I yelled ‘OK! Knock it off’ and took a few steps towards them. Then the big girl, who was the ring leader, said ‘Is she talking to us?’ She turned and ran towards me. She pushed me down to the ground. The others ran over and they all started kicking me in the face and head. even the girl they had been kicking.”

Darryl tried to get them to stop them, slapping and pulling at them, but they kept on. The kicking continued until two men fixing a light saw what was happening and pushed the girls away. They said “This is ridiculous.”

Once they got the girls off Sharon they tried to help her to stand up. “You have to get up,” one of the men said. While they lifted her onto her feet the girls smashed all of Sharon’s groceries, breaking the eggs, spilling things and throwing cans and bottles at Bill’s car leaving dents in the car and broken glass on the ground. That done they left.

Sharon said they called the police but when the police had not come after a half hour they drove home.

“I was a mess,” Sharon said “By the next day my eyes had turned black.”

The police came to the house. They told Sharon they caught the five girls involved. The eldest was 18 years old and had been consuming alcohol. After beating Sharon the girls went around the corner and started another fight. They were all apprehended and charged.

“When the police came, they said I was being stomped because the girls used their feet” Sharon said. “The girls were well dress with nice make up They were all indigentous.”

Sharon, who is a former writer for Alberta Street News, worked for years in street ministry. She said, “I did yell at them but what would you do?”

In an unrelated case in Toronto on December 18, 2022 a homeless man was swarmed and beaten to death by a group of eight teen aged girls. Ken Lee, 59, was outside the homeless shelter when the girls tried to take a bottle of liquor from a homeless woman. When he stepped in to defend the woman the girls attacked him. He was beaten and stabbed to death. The girls ranged in age from 13 to 17 years of age. All eight were charged.

Sharon Spencer Bugle was swarmed and stomped by five teen aged girls outside Walmart at Kingsway Garden Mall.

Photo by Jordan Macdonald



Beware the scams of March

By Joanne Bengner

March, as the first month of the Roman Calendar, is named for Mars the God of War and our two main wars are with the weather and with fraudsters. "March hock ham comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb." Or it comes in like a lamb and goes out like a lion. Mid month's bad weather is said to occur when the lion eats the lamb. March is traditionally a windy month so the kites come out and the last three days of March often have very nasty weather as winter gives one last gasp before giving up the battle and letting summer take over.

March is Fraud Prevention Month and at present the ACCPA and RCMP are concerned with cryptocurrency scams, romance scams, identity thefts and on line and phone scams. Don't send money and be suspicious if anyone asks for personal information. Notify the police if you think you have become a victim of fraud. March is also Women's History Month and National Kidney Month, Irish Heritage Month, Red Cross Month, Epilepsy Awareness Month and National Kidney Month. The second week of March is World Glaucoma Week. Have your eyes checked.

March 1 is St. David's Day and World Compliment Day. Eat leeks and tell people how wonderful you think they are.

March 2 1904 Dr. Seuss was born so today is Cat in the Hat Day as we think of the Grinch and all his wonderful characters. Reread your favourite Dr. Seuss book.

March 2 the Nineteen Day fast begins for the Bahai.

March 6 1912 Oreos were sold for the first time. Enjoy your Oreos today. Dunk them or eat the icing first. March 6 is also the day we remember the seven Canadians who died on Hill 532 on this date during the Korean war. They were members of the Princess Patricia's Light Brigade, the first Canadian boots on the ground in Korea.

March 6 is Buddhist Magna Puja and the Jewish Purim begins at sundown. March 7 the Islamic Lailat al Bara'ah begins at sundown. March 8 is the Sikh Hol Mohalla and the Hindu Holi begins at sundown.

March 7 is the Nones of March and Full Moon, the Crow or Snow Blindness Moon. Be sure to wear your sun glasses. March 7 is also National Cereal Day and some eat cereal for all three meals.

March 8 is International Women's Day and the week surrounding it, March 5 to 11, is Women's week. Women are encouraged to take leadership roles by seeking office or getting involved in the community.

March 11 is National Day of observance for those who have lost their lives to covid for it was on March 11, 2020 that WHO declared a global pandemic and lock down. March 11 is also National Funeral Directors Recognition Day. They are the last person to care for our loved ones and throughout the pandemic they were there to assist and support mourners 24 hours a day when needed as they struggled to provide dignified and caring service amid ever changing safety rules.

March 12, 2022 Cannabis could finally be sold on line legally. It is World Kidney day and Fair Trade Fortnight ends as Daylight Saving Time begins. Remember to reset your clocks and watches. The rule is Fall back, Spring forward.

March 14 is Pie (pi) Day as well as National Potato Chip Day and March 17 is St. Patrick's Day when we eat more potatoes this time with green beer. March 18 is Word Quilting Day.

March 20 is the Spring Equinox when day and night are equal and all is in balance. It is celebrated by cultures throughout the world including our Aboriginals. It is officially the first day of spring. Spring is sprung the grass is riz I wonder where the boidies is.

March 21 is International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and March 22 is World Water Day.

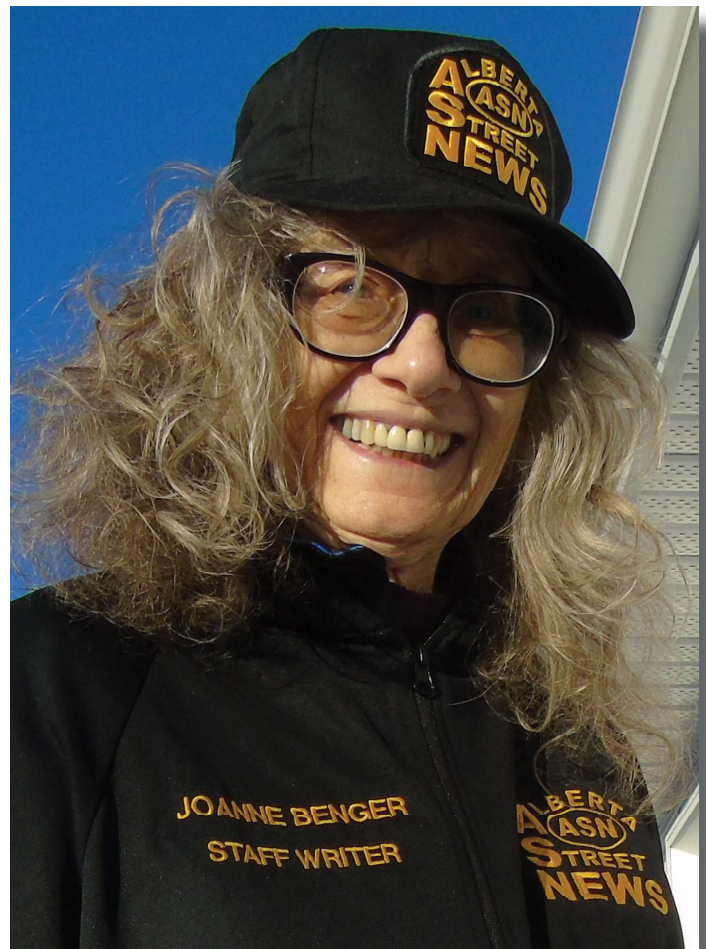
March 22 Ramadan begins at sundown. Ramadan means 'the hot month' in Arabic and it is the ninth month of the Mohamedan year when strict fasting is practiced.

March 23 was the old New Year's Day once celebrated with a week of festivities that ended on April Fool's Day. That is because March 25 was believed to be the date on which God created the earth.. Happy Birthday earth.

March 30 is the Hindu celebration of Ram Nauami.

March 30 is Doctor's Day and March 31 is Crayola Crayon Day.

And now a word to the wise – whether March goes out like a lion or a lamb it is very unlucky to seek a loan during the last three days of March.



Increase on insurance forces me to sell my car

By John Zapantis

When your car insurance premium starts to immensely increase, after a number of car accidents and you can no longer afford to pay higher car insurance monthly payments, that's when its time to stop paying for auto insurance.

That's the important decision I made, after a total of seven car accidents, over a period of nine years.

That important decision finally arrived, when my monthly auto insurance payments increased with a giant leap, from \$600 monthly payments to \$1,200 monthly. I was agitated by this astronomical increase the day I noticed my annual insurance policy renewal was mailed to me, which is reactivated every July in the summer.

I remember specifically, which past major accident had the impact on this most recent insurance increase. That accident, causing that outrageous increase, happened when I had been driving one morning, while living back in Edmonton in the summer of 2021.

I happened to be driving Southbound along 127 Street, in the middle lane, where I noticed the traffic light intersection ahead, whose top wiring held an upright brightly lit up green arrow that

told me I was driving in the proper lane.

To my right shoulder was another lane with an upright brightly lit up arrow, indicating that outside right lane was also reserved for southbound traffic.

When I made a left shoulder check to my left side of the street, while about to turn into 130th Avenue, this car from behind me, sneaks quickly into the X lane, to my left, which the letter X on the light standard indicates that driver going southbound are prohibited from entering towards oncoming traffic, driving Northbound.

I then suddenly heard and felt my car being hit on the left backside of the back seat area and realized that the guy trying to pass my vehicle had collided into my car.

My vehicle was pushed to the side of the road. I quickly got out to confront this driver, whose car was now at a standstill to my right side. Running towards him, I said in a serious tone, "I'd like to talk to you."

He then laughed like the Joker in Batman, and said, "John, What happened?" Then he ran back into his car, saying without any emotion, "Stay away from me." Once inside his car, he started to roll up his driver's side window, just to keep his distance from me.

It then dawned on me that this guy intentionally ran into my car. His vehicle looked to be around 20 years old. - an old compact piece of junk!

It was now obvious to me that he knew who I was and it seemed that he had obviously been following me to write off his vehicle at my expense.

While I waited outside, a car with a friendly driver inside drove to the side of

the road in front of me. The driver told me he noticed our vehicles in a collision up a head so he decided to call the police to assist us two drivers. Sure enough, about no more than five minutes later a police car arrived

with two officers inside.

The two officers got out of their vehicle and this male motorist, who hit me, got out of his vehicle to talk to the two officers.

The one officer asked me what happened. I told him I was driving southbound in the middle lane about to negotiate a left turn with my left signal light, when this car trying to pass me to my left, collided into my vehicle, ramming into the back left door of my car.

I told the officer that when I got out of my car, I asked the driver if I could speak to him. I explained further that the driver started to laugh briefly, first calling out my name and then saying out loud, "What happened." The man then proceeded to run back into his vehicle as he said, "Stay away from me." He then rolled up his driver side window.

The officer looked over at the onlooking man, who had crashed his car into mine, as this man said to one of the officers, "I don't want to be in his drama.

That's when it occurred to me that this crazy acting man obviously must have known more about me than I realized, because evidently he must have been reading previous stories I must have written chronicling my many car accidents in recent issues of the Alberta Street News.

That's when reality started to kick in for me. I then realized this accident was no accident, but intentional, by this scam artist!

Who, by the way I never fought in auto insurance court court, because my insurance company told me that they'd investigate this matter further, but failed me, distracting me from taking this matter to court.

Then as a part of that distraction, weeks later I received a letter from my auto insurance company emphasizing in a brief letter that I was found 100 percent at fault for this accident.

So after receiving that outrageous statement and increase on my insurance premium, I then made the important

Sherwood Park Toyota's Floor Manager Joe Cariou, left, locking hands on a deal that ASN Media Relations Coordinator/Reporter John Zapantis, right, made in selling back his 2021 Toyota Corolla LE over at Sherwood Park Toyota in Sherwood Park, Alberta

Photo by Varun Vij



decision to cancel my insurance payments and applied for parking insurance, where I agreed to park my car for the time being and not drive it, until I decided what would be done next, in the car's best interests.

It has been over a year now since the car was parked on my mother's driveway in Edmonton. Recently I decided to sell my 2021 Toyota Corolla LE at the car dealership where my old car salesman, Joe Cariou, had sold two previous cars to me that I paid off. He then decided to do a buy back, for this last car he sold me from Sherwood Park Toyota. He offered me \$20,000 dollars, close to the full value of what I bought this car for at \$25,000 dollars.

COVID-19 served as a game changer, while impacting a supply chain breakdown, where car dealerships have been having a difficult time having cars imported to their car lots as dealers and are desperately buying up cars from private owners, hoping to get newer inventory for their near empty car lots.

So recently, while living at the Red Deer Mustard SEED's homeless shelter, I phoned my car salesman Joe Cariou at Sherwood Park Toyota in Sherwood Park Alberta. I asked him if he wanted to buy the vehicle he last sold me for \$20,000. I continued on by telling him the reason I wanted to sell the car was because of the outrageous monthly increase in car insurance I received to a \$1200 monthly payment plan.

Without any hesitation, he agreed to a substantial offer and told me to bring the car down to his dealership.

After looking over my car, he decided to offer me \$20,000. but told me he'd be knocking off money down to \$19000, because of the scratches he noticed on my car's left corner back bumper. Those scratches were the result of my backing off my mother's driveway, in the fall of 2021, and, while going backwards off the driveway, a friend of our next door neighbour's who was visiting him, pulled up to my mom's driveway without any warning, as I slowly went backwards into his vehicle.

That minor run in caused very minimal damage so I decided to not have the scratches on that bumper repaired, because of the

already higher premiums I was paying on my car.

When the amount was finally confirmed, these were the deductions from the total amount offered by Sherwood Park Floor Manager and Salesman Joe Cariou.

Even though Joe offered me the substantial amount of \$20,000 to buy my car. He deducted \$1,000 for the scratches on the left back corner bumper of my car, breaking the vehicles worth down to \$19,000. Then \$370 was also taken off for towing charges, after my car had been towed from my mother's place in Edmonton, all the way to Sherwood Park Toyota in Sherwood Park Alberta where I had originally bought this car.

But while reading this article you're probably wondering why such a higher towing charge. The car was winched out of deep snow prior to being towed to the dealership and was dug out of deep snow with a few other charges added on for winching and digging the car out of deep snow.

Also, when the tow truck arrived to Sherwood Park with my vehicle in tow, no one was there on the receiving end because it was closing time, so the towing company brought it back the following day, that next morning travelling about the same distance as the day before. (That should explain everything!)

So when the towing charges were added on, and deducted off that total, the remaining balance on my car was paid off with that \$19,000 given to me for the car. I was finally given a Cheque by Joe Cariou for a total of \$4,062.18 cents.

Joe Cariou is not only a great salesman, who helped me get off the hook in helping me to pay off the balance of what I owed on my 2021 Toyota LE. He left me with the remainder of that total that he promised me, so that I can get off to a faster start in buying a used car from him and saving me the worry of being locked in by a higher insurance premium. He also gave me the last option of applying for at least half the price of a cheaper insurance policy, when finally on the road with even a used Toyota!

The choice

By Angelique Branston

It's nice to think that fate exists

That there are certain circumstances

Certain events that are inevitable

That we are some how puppets in our own lives

Like some kind of marionette pulled this way and that, without thought

A mere puppet

For then it absolved us of any and all blame.

But it is just not so

For every slight,

Every hurt inflicted,

It is our cross to bear

The knowledge that we could have done better,

It is our choice

To become mired in hate

Or numbed so emotions are severed.

It is our choice

To stand and look into the wind

And not bow, not break

To not be pulled to and fro

To not lash out in pain

When we are battered by the howling storms of life.

To be calm, to care.

It is our choice

Do we simply survive

Or do we live?

We can choose to be the dust devil

And join the wind causing as much damage as we get

Or we can choose to be the veil,

The place of safety and peace where one can find shelter from the storm.

For whatever we choose is with our own free will.

Interest, inflation and recession

By Timothy Wild

One of my favourite movies is *Reds*. The 1981 epic was co-written, directed and produced by Warren Beatty, who also starred in the film. The plot traces the life of the American journalist and radical John Reed and chronicles his journey across the contours of love, revolutionary politics and the brief rise and gradual fall of socialism in the United States (Bernie Sanders' self-identification as a socialist notwithstanding).

I've been thinking a lot about the film lately. In particular, one scene where Reed, as a journalist, has just returned from reporting on World War One (prior to American involvement) and is at a formal dinner organized by the Portland Liberal Club. A speaker at the event is talking about the war and asks Reed to comment on his analysis of the conflict, and what the war is about. Reed gets up, smooths his tuxedo and says simply "profits", and sits down again. The audience is bewildered by his response. However, Reed had obviously put a lot of thought into that answer. It grew out of his engagement with progressive politics in the USA and marked the increasingly radical turn those politics were taking.

All this to say, Reed's single word response continues to have significant political and economic relevance today. Since the victory of neoliberalism in the 1980s, the single-minded pursuit of profit has again, similar to America before the Depression, become the engine of the economy as opposed to increases in wages and productivity. As a result of this economic choice, there is increased (and increasing) income and wealth inequality. Given the structure of the economy, the upper classes share of the wealth continues to rise. And this increase, through profit taking and financialization of assets, is at the expense of workers, primarily through wage stagnation and losses. This is particularly relevant to today's high rates of inflation. Many of us have suffered from our incomes being frozen over the last few years, and the current level of inflation is undoubtedly eating into our

standard of living, especially in the areas of food, utilities and housing. And the already inadequate incomes of people relying on low-paid jobs or government income support or replacement programs is exacerbated by inflation. Inflation hurts the working class, especially in the era of limited reinvestment in the form of wages.

It is difficult to pinpoint the cause of the current situation. Certainly, supply chain issues, Putin's aggression in the Ukraine and the hunger of state capitalists in China are all factors that contribute to inflation. However, so is profit taking. As noted by David Macdonald, of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA), 41% percent of the increased costs associated with inflation (or \$30 billion) ended up as profits. These profits were particularly large in three sectors: oil, gas and mining extraction; manufacturing; and finance / insurance. Macdonald writes that "\$29 billion ended up as profits" in these three areas of the economy. Overall, Macdonald argues "At almost every quarter, corporate profits during the pandemic recession and recovery were contributing more to inflation than in any other recession". Profits are not the sole factor, but they are a significant, yet largely unremarked, factor. In response to the high rates of inflation, the Bank of Canada embarked upon a train of interest rate increases intended to cool the economy. Tiff Macklen, the Governor of the Bank, has indicated that he will hold off further increases. However, Jerome Powell, the head of the Federal Reserve in the United States, doesn't share Macklen's guarded optimism that inflation is being reined in and is prepared for even greater increases in the interest rate. I guess neoclassical economists are still waiting for the animation of their flawed dream of market equilibrium. Don't hold your breath.

I am very sure that increasing interest rates is not the right approach. First it will have an impact on people who lived on debt to compensate for lower growth in wages. The current model of capitalism used access to easy credit as a way to both buy the compliance of workers and, ironically, bundle that debt into marketable commodities to increase the wealth of the already wealthy. More broadly, these interest rate hikes could very easily lead us into recession, and probably will – and we all know who pays the highest price in times of recession and the political choice for austerity: those already on the social,

cultural and economic margins!

As mentioned, inflation hurts the working class. But we must remember that fighting inflation is a political choice. And while the "ideal" rate of inflation is around 2%, that ideal must be considered within the overall realm of income. After all, historically, the decision to fight inflation is generally at the expense of a decision to pursue policies of full employment. I know this is a bit of an economic loop, but if incomes do not rise by 2%, the constant value of wages decreases. But these predictable increases could, of course, lead to further inflation. Benjamin Tel, the Deputy Chief Economist at CIBC argues that wage inflation needs to be addressed as "the cost of bringing inflation down". However, wage inflation is a smaller (and more responsive) part of the problem. Therefore, we need to look again at profits. Public policy measures, including fiscal mechanisms, could help level the uneven role that profits play in the creation of inflation. These could include windfall taxes, royalty reviews, and a more progressive system of personal income tax. Other, labour market-based responses, could help including, at the provincial level, increasing minimum wage to at least the level of the Living Wage (which is currently \$7.40 per hour higher).

The market has proven time and time again, that it fails. The market is neither scientific nor neutral. Yet this naïve faith in a self-correcting market leads to very real problems for ordinary people, who resort to debt and predatory loans to help meet the costs of these ongoing market failures. To me, this is unacceptable. We need to play closer attention to the role of profits in this cycle of inflation. Otherwise, the experience of the upcoming recession will be unduly harsh for the working class. But it doesn't need to be that way. There are other (better) choices. Government needs to play a more active fiscal role in the economy. And government has to be nudged in that direction by the advocacy of socialist and labour groups. There are pro-worker and just alternatives based on a commitment to maintaining aggregate demand. Let's choose that alternative.

Aging in place – Ambulance Education

By Joanne Bengler

I don't know if it is urban myth or reality but I keep hearing about the elderly man, who died of a heart attack because he didn't call the ambulance. In one story he was on the phone the night before and man didn't call and ambulance and was found dead in the morning. Stories vary but everyone agrees on why the ambulance wasn't called. The ambulance is only free one way – to E.I., one person explained. The man probably didn't have money for the ride home. Another person further explained to me that once you get in the ambulance you have no control over where it takes you. You may end up in Edmonton or worse. A trip home from Edmonton E.I. cost one man over \$200 and that was before the pandemic inflation set in I was told.

I read information from Alberta Supports Contact Centre and Blue Cross. Blue Cross clearly states ambulance service

charges to the maximum rate established by Alberta Health for transportation to or from a health facility in the event of illness or injury are covered." It concluded that if the story about the man was true, he didn't understand his coverage but if so why did so many others misunderstand.

Then fate stepped in. October 12 I woke up with badly swollen face. I was having a bad allergic reaction. I found my late husband's travel bag and took an expired Reactine. Then I called 211 who said call 811 who said call 911 for an ambulance. I had never ridden in an ambulance before but it was a good experience. I got Benadryl as soon as I entered the ambulance and I got expert care in Emergency. Soon I was ready to go home. I needed a ride so I called a for-profit and we picked up my Benadryl and steroids at the drug store on our way home. I paid her, confident I would be reimbursed.

Then I called Alberta Supports Centre to see how to get my money back. An enthusiastic young man said, yes, I was covered and they would send me forms to fill out and in 10 to 12 weeks I'd get my money back. Then he quoted the wrong line, the one about coverage for medical trips, which only applies if your local doctor refers you to a specialist in Edmonton

or wherever. I asked him to check with his supervisor. He put me on hold and after a long time he came back to apologize and say I was not covered for the trip home from the hospital. He told me to phone my MLA or Health Minister if I wished to discuss the matter.

Until Christmas I was busy looking for help. Every government office is the same whether local, provincial or federal They all listen well, then say unfortunately they cannot help and if you are not told to wait for a call back they give either two phone numbers or a transfer to someone who might be able to help in the process. I was transferred back to Alberta Supports Contact Centre three times, and yes, each time I was told I qualified and I just had to fill in the forms and wait 10 to 12 weeks. I would say "Would you please check with your supervisor" and I would get an apology and told I just did not qualify.

Soon I felt like I was in the movie Groundhog Day. I have reached the conclusion that we are covered for ambulance to and from a health facility but somehow this coverage abruptly ends while we are in Emergency and no one knows why. Still, regardless of reasons we have to find our own way home.

Happy Birthday Spring

By Joanne Bengler

Happy birthday Spring and welcome back. I am so glad the winter interruption is over and you're bringing us warm weather again. We'll wear bright spring colours and celebrate with pretty flowers and chocolate rabbits.

2. And good bye and good riddance to Winter. Sure you are very democratic and we all became equal with every yard looking alike under three feet of snow and all people looking the same in big down coats and toques regardless of age sex or income. Ye I admit it may be a bit difficult for us to adjust to Spring's honesty at first but we have done it before and we can do it again.

3. Snow melts revealing awful truths. We now know which neighbour picked up after his dog all winter long and which one didn't as unraked leaves and unmowed grass snitch on those of us who were a bit lazy last fall. Snow drifts shrink and reveal

the oddest things. Is that a dead animal? No, just a bedraggled teddy bear.

4. Stray mittens and lost ice cleats litter the gutter between sidewalk and street. There is a bravely red Remembrance Day poppy next to a wilted Christmas bow amid Halloween candy wrappers. Damp newspapers and torn bits of plastic compete for space with fast food containers, cans and bottles as they remind us that ours is still a throw-away society. What did you expect? Wads of lost money precious, jewels and rare treasures? Me, too, but let's face it the only thing Winter is generous with is bad weather.

5. And then there's us. Our big down coats come off and we can see who ate too many Christmas goodies and forgot to diet and exercise as last spring's clothes cruelly outline bulges and muffin tops. Then the toque comes off to reveal we haven't seen a hair stylist since last fall. Briefly we wonder if perhaps spring is to honest.

6. Then the miracle happens. As we rake our yards and pick up garbage that has blown in from who know where we see a few brave green blades of grass. We get inspired to dig in the garden and buy seeds

and potted plants as the returning geese fly overhead.

7. Sidewalk chalk comes out and soon children are skipping, riding bicycles and playing hopscotch.

8. We learn how to hide figure faults with spring's flattering new lines and are delighted to find we still wear the same size thanks to the miracle of modern vanity sizing. The hairdresser removes our split ends and we paint our toenails as sandals replace boots. Rain replaces snow and we stroll around with colourful umbrellas which make us look like walking flowers. Once again we feel pretty and hopeful as we dress up for Spring's birthday party. The trees bud out, the flowers bloom and the birds sing as they join us in welcoming Spring. Happy spring to you and you and you. Happy spring to everyone.



Ram's horn toe nail repaired by specialist

By John Zapantis

If you've ever had a ram's horn nail and you've had to endure its long term excruciating pain, while walking long distances, then you know how it feels and the obstacles it is capable of creating when making your day an inconvenience.

This eye sore of a problem first made its origins with me back in 1973, when I was 17 years old, while helping my father and mother structure our garden in her newly purchased house in Edmonton's North Mount Community.

It was there in the garden's earliest developmental stages, that I was in the process of digging up a 30 pound boulder. I started to lift up and was just ready to heave it to the side of our garden, when suddenly the heavy boulder slipped out of my hands and fell crashing down onto my foot. I immediately raced to take off my right shoe to intently examine my second right toe on my right foot that was now in serious pain.

That careless mistake would live with me for the next 49 years, where the inevitable long term ram's horn nail would develop on my right foot's second toe. That act of carelessness caused me the ongoing inconvenience of having to carefully monitor its runaway

and awkward growth, requiring some special attention, where I'd have to occasionally have my ingrown toe nail cut with nail clippers in a certain way, when the nail got a little too long for comfort.

Filing under that deformed toe nail required a lot of patience, while picking at the thickness of that injured nail that would keep deforming over the next 43 years, until I could no longer control that runaway awkward growth. It finally required the assistance of a medical professional, who would eventually remove my ingrown toe nail, with the added help of a method to freeze my toe and a set of pliers that were used to yank that nail, without pain involved.

When I figured I had this long term problem finally beat, more problems seemed to be coming at me from around the bend.

While running up the basement stairs to answer a ringing phone in my living room at least two or three times, I happened to bang my injured second toenail on those stairs and weeks later I was back to experiencing the same problems I was having prior to that operation that helped in removing that ram's horn nail that would prevent me at times from walking properly, whenever I was reminded by its recurring pains in my injured toe.

Well, recently I made arrangements to have my re-injured ram's horn nail filed down by a medical assistant named Erin Bareham, whom I visited over at the Calgary Mustard SEED Wellness Centre located at 1010 Centre Street South East.

The medical appointment commenced on December 6th, 2022 at 6:30 p.m., when I was

previously residing in Calgary having lived there since March 6th as a homeless resident of that city.

Erin was very professional in her approach in assessing my ingrown toe nail's condition and within minutes got around to performing her skills by massaging my feet to get me to relax prior to filing down my ingrown toe nail.

After managing to relax me, she then applied some alcohol to my toe nail to soften it up, and help to kill the fungus that collected underneath the troubled toe nail.

Next, she used what they call a ripper, their version of a medical plier, to essentially cut over the over grown toe nail and used that to trim all of the other nails on my toes on both of my feet.

She then used a file to trim around uneven surfaces, regarding all the other toe nails, including my newly cured ram's horn toe nail.

To finish the job of totally curing my previously injured toe nail, including the remainder of the other nine toe nails, a moisturizer was applied to all of my toes, giving me a foot comforting that relaxed my feet, relieving it of any tensions that my feet and toes were feeling from all that walking earlier in the day.

I'd like to extend my appreciation to this floor angel, my favourite foot specialist, The Mustard SEED's Erin Bareham, for a job well done in helping to repair my injured ram's horn nail, back to its normal shape that will encourage me to slow down and never be in a hurry to walk up those stairs, when in a hurry to answer a phone ringing continually!

Celebrating April Fool's Day

By Joanne Bengier

April Fool's Day is very easy to celebrate. There is nothing to buy, no colours to wear, no decorations to hang up and no special foods to cook. All we have to do is try to fool someone and how we do it is up to us.

Some still like to send people on old fashioned fools errands as the did in earlier times. The unsuspecting person is sent to a store or business to get such impossibilities as a sky hook, a door stretcher, a unicorn horn, a pot hole eliminator, a glass hammer or a rain stopper.

Others just use words saying something rather alarming and when the person reacts worriedly laughing and saying April Fools. Simple believable statements work best. What did you sit on? Who let the dog out? The cat's been sick on your bed. XYZ (Examine your zipper). How did you rip your pants? Your socks don't match. Who hit your car? Some call the zoo and ask to speak to Mr. Lion or Mrs. Giraffe. When April Foods is said both parties laugh.

Some go a step further and do practical jokes. They put salt in the sugar bowl and food colouring in milk and eggs or the eggs in the egg carton are replaced with hard boiled eggs. The toilet set is covered with saran wrap or an Out of Order sign appears on the bathroom door. For Sale signs are placed on cars and coins are glued to the floor.

Sometimes the media gives out fake news. The best ones were the

spaghetti tree which could be grown by rooting a piece of spaghetti in spaghetti sauce and the left handed whopper hamburger for left handed people. In early days of electronics many believed the April 1st news that e-mails would soon be sent through the microwaves.

With the pandemic people made fear mongering statements. The best one in my opinion was the new stricter lock downs were coming and we would soon have to wear ear covers as well as face covers.

The weather and politics are fair game. I hear they are predicting a foot of snow for tonight. They have been having baseball-sized hail stones in B.C. and it's coming this way. Have you paid your elevator tax yet? I hear that two Canadian banks have collapsed. They have found plutonium in our tap water and say four glasses a day can kill us. In May the prime minister is giving us each a thousand dollars to fight inflation. We have to get our garbage license by the end of the month.

There are no rules. The idea is simply to fool someone in some way and then shout April Fools. But be quick. At noon the pranks should stop and after that "April Fool's in past and you're the greatest fool at last" if you are still trying to fool people.

Some people spend the afternoon celebrating Tailpike Day. You make a tail out of paper or anything that is handy and pin it on the unsuspecting person. The funnier the tail the more stylish the wearer is and the better the prank is.

This is a holiday without traditions but I have heard some have Backward Parties. Guests wear their clothes back to front and the meal is served backwards with dessert first.

However you celebrate it Happy April Fools Day!

It's April and we all think go

By Joanne Bengner

"April prepares her green traffic lights and the whole world thinks go." Christopher Morley wrote in "John Mistletoe" so open your arms and embrace spring. The origin of April's name has been lost to time but many believe it comes from *aspirio*, to open up, as we celebrate the emerging signs of spring. April is earth month, U.S. National Decorating Month National Bedtime Story Month, Dental Health Month, Parkinson's Awareness Month and Cancer Awareness Month with its Daffodil Days. Weather wise everything goes by opposites. "If the first three days of April be foggy, rain in June will make the roads boggy." And "Rain in April will bring a good May; a wet April means a dry June." Not only do April showers bring May flowers they also foretell a nice dry summer.

This joyful month begins with April Fools Day and the first week, April 2 to 8, is Clown Week so put on your happy face. Just about every culture celebrates in April. Coloured eggs were seen as a symbol of rebirth in Rome, Gaul, China, Peru and Egypt before they came to us from Germany.

April 2 is Christian Palm Sunday as well as World Autism Day. April 4 is Refugee Rights Day, April 6 is Full Moon aptly called the Green Grass Moon or Egg Moon by Canadian aboriginals. April 7 is World Health Day as well as Good Friday followed by Easter Sunday April 9, which is also Orthodox Palm Sunday followed by Good Friday on April 14 and Pasha (Orthodox Easter Sunday) on April 16. Happy Easter to all.

April 6 is the Buddhist New Year Theravad. Happy New Year. April 6 to 13 is the Jewish passover, the Feast of the Unleavened Bread. April 14 is the Sikh New Year celebration of Vaisahi (Baisahi) which also celebrates the Punjabi spring harvest. Happy New Year. April 17 is the Muslim Layzmaut. April 20 the Islamic month of Ramada ends and it is followed by the Islamic celebration of Eid al Fitr on April 21.

April 10 is the birthday of Jack Miner, the founder of Canada's conservation movement, who was born in 1865. The week surrounding his birthday April 9 to 15, is National Wildlife Week.. Celebrate nature and do something nice for the birds he loved so much. April 10 is also National Safety Pin Day. The first safety pin was a joke, when one man dared another to make something useful out of a short piece of wire. See if you can make an even better invention.

April 9 is the Battle of Vimy Ridge Anniversary. April 12 1980, Terry fox began his Marathon of Hope. It is also Grilled Cheese Day.

April 16 is St. Padarns Day which is traditionally the time when people start weeding and cleaning up gardens and yards for spring. April 15 to 22 is National Volunteer Week. Help some worthy group.

April 17, the third Monday in April, is Librarian Day. As the saying goes a room without books is like a body without a soul. Books and movies can transport us to far places and give us experiences beyond our imagination. Read a good book today. April 20 is National Film Day. Watch a good Canadian Movie today.

April 22 is Earth Day. Think of climate change and how we

can change the world, which is now being challenged by garbage, as we were once concerned with spray cans damaging the ozone layer. We can celebrate the fact that humanity has cleaned up and healed the ozone layer.

April 23 is William Shakespeare's birthday. His words are still a part of modern life as we say "there's a rub" "the unkindest cut" "sound and fury" "gild the lily" and "a lean and hungry look". April 22 to 29 is World Immunization Day. Roll up your sleeve.

April 24 is St. George's Day in Newfoundland. Enjoy the old custom of wearing a rose in your buttonhole today. April 24, 1985 is the day Sunday shopping became legal in Canada as the Lords Day Act was found to violate freedoms. Plan a shopping spree for April 30. If you are a single girl remember St. Mark's Eve is April 24. Bake a cake containing an eggshell full of salt, wheat meal and barley meal. They open your front door and your future lover will come in and turn the cake.

April 28 is Workers Mourning Day when we mourn workers who have been killed or injured on the job.

April 29 is Make a Wish Day as well as Zipper Day for the zipper was invented April 2, 1913.

April 30 Grant McEwan University will be 51 years old. Happy Birthday Grant McEwan and congratulations to the over 80,000 people who have graduated so far. I hope you all have rewarding careers. Celebrate with an oatmeal cookie for today is oatmeal cookie day.

Mary explains Easter Traditions

By Joanne Bengner

Mary – I always fast on Good Friday.

Betty – What is good about a day you have to fast on?

Mary – If we get up early on Easter morning and watch the sun rise we will see the sun jump for joy.

Betty – That isn't fair. It is a holiday and we should get to sleep in on holidays.

Mary – I can't wear my new dress until Easter Sunday because it is lent.

Betty – Who is it lent to?

Mary – After wearing no new clothes in Lent we should wear at least one new item on Easter Sunday for luck.

Betty – What if we are too unlucky to have anything new?

Mary – We'll eat boiled eggs and ham for Easter breakfast.

Betty – Is that green eggs and ham?

Mary – Sometimes the eggs are green but red is the more traditional colour when eggs are dyed.

Betty – What did the eggs die of?

Mary – We also get a basket with candy and chocolate Easter eggs that the Easter bunny has laid.

Betty – Bunnies are mammals and mammals don't lay eggs.

Mary – The Easter bunny does.

Betty – No, the Easter bunny is like Santa Claus. He is your father.

Mary – My father and Santa Claus are humans and humans don't lay eggs.

Betty – If the Easter bunny and Santa Claus and Dad don't lay eggs where do they come from.

Mary – Walmart and you may find chocolate Easter bunnies in your basket along with the candy.

Betty – What should I do with the chocolate bunnies.

Mary – Eat them.

Kensington Court - A Lions Club

Development

~An excerpt taken from the book. "A million dollars and beyond" ~~~~~
By LaVern Charan

Readers who have not had the privilege of serving their fellow in such a way may be able to see the great satisfaction available from banding together in any group dedicated to service and perhaps go on to enjoy such rewards themselves. ~Bonar S. Bain

The 1950s and 60s were said to be a pivotal decade in Edmonton as it began to shift and expand into the modern age. During that time, the city was coming out of the polio epidemic and starting to take risks with its expansion. Some of the familiar structures today were being built during that time and thus began to define the Edmontons skyline and communities. Downtown was the centre of business, shopping, and entertainment with its corporate, municipal, and provincial government offices. There were many movie and dinner theatres, dance clubs, and major department stores with hundreds of small shops and restaurants. The Germans built businesses and homes on the south side or near Whyte Avenue. On the north side, surrounding 95th Street, the Italian community formed near the Portuguese and Ukrainian centres. The Dutch concentrated in the northeast. The French established their community in Oliver, south of Jasper Avenue. Chinatown was centered around 97 Street and Jasper Avenue and still home to much of the Chinese community today. Indigenous peoples in the city were almost invisible; they mainly lived on the outskirts of Edmonton. With the fever of expansion, Edmonton was buzzing with modernism and change; no one was left behind. The Edmonton Host Lions Club saw a need to develop low-cost housing for seniors, and they are a fierce advocate for their fellow man. The Edmonton Host Lions Club (EHLCL) was one of Edmontons first non-profit organizations, guided by the five pillars of Lionism, their mission is to serve the people and help by bringing comfort to those suffering from: poor Vision, Hunger, Diabetes, Cancer, and to maintain a healthy Environment.

The EHLCL has been working and developing Edmonton since 1929, doing its work quietly in the background as it helped the needy and less fortunate. Being a prominent



fixture in Edmonton, the EHLCL derived their funds from hosting mammoth bingo events and successful street carnivals, which provided them with considerable reserves. The reserve funds were then written by Lavern Charan. Freelance copywriter & content writer donated to various charities in and around Edmonton. The Club's aim was always "to do something, something kind."

The EHLCL built the first Seniors housing complex called the "Sunset Cottages" and later the Duplexes built in the Lauderdale area; they saw that the senior's housing were underserved, thus, taking on another project. This time, the Edmonton Host Lions Club embarked on its most ambitious project for that time. The project was launched in 1957 after completing the Duplexes in Lauderdale. It was called The Kensington Court, it came with excellent planning.

The city bylaws state that no non-profit organization can own or operate any property, and no funds will be provided to them by the city. Meaning; that all the funds used to build Kensington Court would be derived through fundraising or donations. This project took a lot of ingenuity and solidarity to complete. The Club established the North Saskatchewan Valley Foundation (NSVF), a holding company whose sole shareholder is the Lions Club. The site selected on which to build Kensington Court was partially occupied, the Club had to wait for the current occupants to leave at their own will. The site had to be surveyed, and soil testing was needed to support the proposed structure.

There were lengthy discussions on whether the units ought to be designed primarily for single persons or married couples. In the end, it was decided, and couples were given priority as tenants. The decision to form the North Saskatchewan Valley Foundations was contentious, which took several meetings with the then president of the EHLCL, Lion R.T. Williams and Mayor Hawrelak each with their own committees. In the end, a motion was made; it reads: Be it resolved: The Lions Club of Edmonton adopted the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, and assume full responsibility for the low-rental housing project that was approved in principle by the Club on July 15,

1957, and that the Advisory Committee, and consisting of members of the Club form a holding company shall have full authority to planning, construction, financing, supervision, maintenance, or otherwise in a way whatsoever in connection with the project, including the authority to pay the deposit required by the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), amounting to approximately two thousand dollars, to be charged against the Activities Account of this club. ~ taken from the book "A million Dollars and Beyond"

The construction of the Kensington Court went on as scheduled. It was completed in 1959 and cost of approximately \$350,000. A very expensive construction for a non-profit organization. The Kensington Court is in Northwest Edmonton, is situated on 2-3 city blocks; it has 15 buildings with four suites in each building. It provides for 48 couples and eight singles. To this day, all occupants are seniors and will remain as such. The bylaw states that board members of the Kensington Court must be members of the Edmonton Host Lions Club. Kensington Court in 2023 Today the property is managed by Ayre and Oxford company of Edmonton. It is governed by a 10-member board of directors, all members of the EHLCL. Gerry Haythorne is the chair of the board, and she is proud to share that the Kensington Courts board members are closely involved in the lives of its tenants. Gerry said, "there is a long waitlist to get into Kensington Court. The rent is inexpensive, with laundry facilities, courtyard, the grounds are landscaped, deiced, snow removed, with surface parking and regularly maintained for the safety of its occupants."

The suites of the Kensington Court have been renovated over the years. They have all been updated and cleaned after each tenant moves out. The residents are a tight-knit community holding monthly meetings to plan special outings and provide support for one another. Tenant relations are involved in scheduling activities and events at the neighbouring hall. There are exciting events planned through community contacts. Residents love being a part of such a special community. They are pampered with events

Surviving Life Support: My Harrowing Ordeal

by **Shyanne Austin-LeBlanc**

For a split second there is darkness, then my room is flooded with light and my eyes snap into focus. I see two figures standing at the end of my bed. They are wearing yellow gowns, what looks like blue shower caps and dark blue latex gloves. Their faces are covered entirely with masks except for their eyes. One of the figures is wearing glasses and over all this attire they have complete visors over their faces. I cannot help but think that they look like the cartoon characters "The Minions." I surmise that these minions are evil and have kidnapped me for I soon realize that my hands are tied to the bed with white Velcro straps and a very long thick tube has been inserted down my throat. I am not able to scream or even utter a word. Later I learn that the straps are so that I don't tear the tube out.

Quickly what looks like a minion comes over and takes my hand. Instead of the big round google eyes of the minion I look into my mother's eyes and she asks, "Shyanne do you know who I am?" I nod my head "yes" because I can utter no sound. I see that what I thought was the second minion was actually my husband. He looks at me with concerned eyes and asks if I recognize him. I nod "yes."

I knew that I had been suffering from an upper respiratory flu for four days. I had a fever and was feeling short of breath. The last thing I remembered was going to bed early because I felt terrible. Little did

I know how sick I really was.

My mother came to the side of the bed and related what had happened to me. Knowing I was sick, she came over in the morning and found me unconscious. She could see that I was burning up with fever and she put a cold cloth on my head. Hearing that my breathing was shallow and I was panting like a dog, she called the ambulance. The ambulance sped away with its siren wailing.

After getting to the hospital, I was put in the intensive care unit on life support as I was suffering from double pneumonia and influenza [not covid]. Mom asked the doctor what chance I had of recovery and he said it was too early to tell. He said the first 24 to 48 hours would tell the story, if I was responding to the medicine.

A healthy person is supposed to have a 96% lung capacity but mine was down to only 5% in each lung. I had been unconscious for four days as they had placed me in an induced coma to give my body time to heal. On the fourth day they told my mom and husband the news that they would be bringing me out of the induced coma and I would be able to talk as soon as the ventilator tube was removed. I remember that the tube was very long and when it was removed I could only whisper as my throat was sore. Looking around the room I saw many machines humming, droning on, and beeping. There was a machine monitoring my heart, blood pressure, and oxygen levels and medicines were being given intravenously. I also had a catheter. When the breathing tube was removed, I was put on a huge oxygen mask which was incredibly loud as it was doing most of my breathing for me. It was forcing oxygen into my lungs and without this machine I could not live. The doctors cut a half inch slit in my throat for a port to have access to large amounts of my blood. The blood vials were three

times the normal size. There was also a port put in my thigh. They needed large amounts of blood to see if the medicines were working. I was given an anti-viral, antibiotics, tami flu, saline, and nutrition that looked like a thick milkshake.

During my stay in the hospital, the nurses in ICU were wonderful. I had a very special nurse named Brittany, who was extremely encouraging and kind. While I was unconscious, she had braided my long hair into two French braids to keep it away from all the tubing.

After two weeks in the ICU, I was sent down to the critical care outbreak unit. It was very different in that unit. If I pressed my call button a nurse would come in about 45 minutes to an hour if at all. All total I was in the hospital for 23 days. My husband and mother were the only ones allowed to visit as they were called designated care givers. They had to take a short on-line course all about masking and gowning and all the protocols for visiting an outbreak unit. They came to visit every day and my husband took three weeks off from work to help take care of me in the hospital as I couldn't get up by myself.

One thing I want people to take away from this ordeal is that pneumonia can be deadly and needs to be taken seriously. Like me, you may not even know you have it. If you are experiencing fever and have trouble breathing with the flu, it is time to seek medical help. I know two people of middle age who thought they were all right and succumbed to this disease. They had no idea their lives were in peril.

When you almost die, your eyes are opened to who really cares about you. When I got out of the hospital. I was surprised that only a few people called to see how I was doing. I now realize who my friends really are.

Kensington Court



such as: manicures, pedicures, massages, and a hairdresser Comes in to provide haircuts and styling.

Why wouldn't anyone want to be a part of such a supportive environment? The Edmonton Host Lions Club has been involved in countless endeavors in Edmonton. The Lions Club International has donated millions of dollars to organizations around the world, and they have worked tirelessly to enrich the lives of the less fortunate. Lionism is to perform an act of service for someone else. To do something that matters. Today the North Saskatchewan Valley Foundation operates as a charity, it continues to provide the less fortunate with some relief of poverty. Please help us continue our act of Lionism to impact as many lives as possible. The dream began in Edmonton In 1929 and it continues today through its philanthropic endeavors to make life better

The Coldest Night Of the Year Walkathon

By Ken Forgach

The Coldest Night of the Year (CNOY) Walkathon was held this past weekend, on Saturday, February 25th, and as always, we were thrilled to be involved! This year our team, “No More Mr Ice Guy” did the 5km walk, and for our efforts, we earned over \$2,600 for the good folks over at the Bissell Centre. In total, \$189,000 was collected, - monies which will be channelled into a wide array of programs and services for vulnerable Edmontonians. Our output this year wasn't our best ever, but still, we're happy with the result and we're grateful that we managed to garner even this amount in these tough times. This was our tenth consecutive year “walkathon-ing” in the CNOY, and cumulatively our little group of family and friends has earned well over \$32,000 for the cause! We're happy about that too!

For us, the CNOY Walkathon is special. We know there are many other great causes to support but this one, for us anyway, pulls it all together. It allows us, even in a small way, to deal with some of society's bigger problems, ... homelessness, unemployment, food insecurity, alcoholism/addiction, and all the problems that accompany them. We can't do much about any of these massive, complex issues on our own, of course, as we're a small group with small wallets, but the Walkathon gives us the opportunity to step in and at least work toward a solution.

If we step in, and others step in, and bigger organizations step in, our hope is that, at some point, step by step with all those steps added up, we can eliminate these problems that face some of our vulnerable friends and neighbours out there. As a group, as small as we are, we also try to help out in other ways too. Every Saturday afternoon, for example, and most Sundays too, you'll find us somewhere in the “red zone” hosting something we affectionately call “Street Kitchen.” We simply set up a few tables and dole out soup/sandwiches, clothes, shoes, blankets, and other useful items, to anyone who happens to come by.

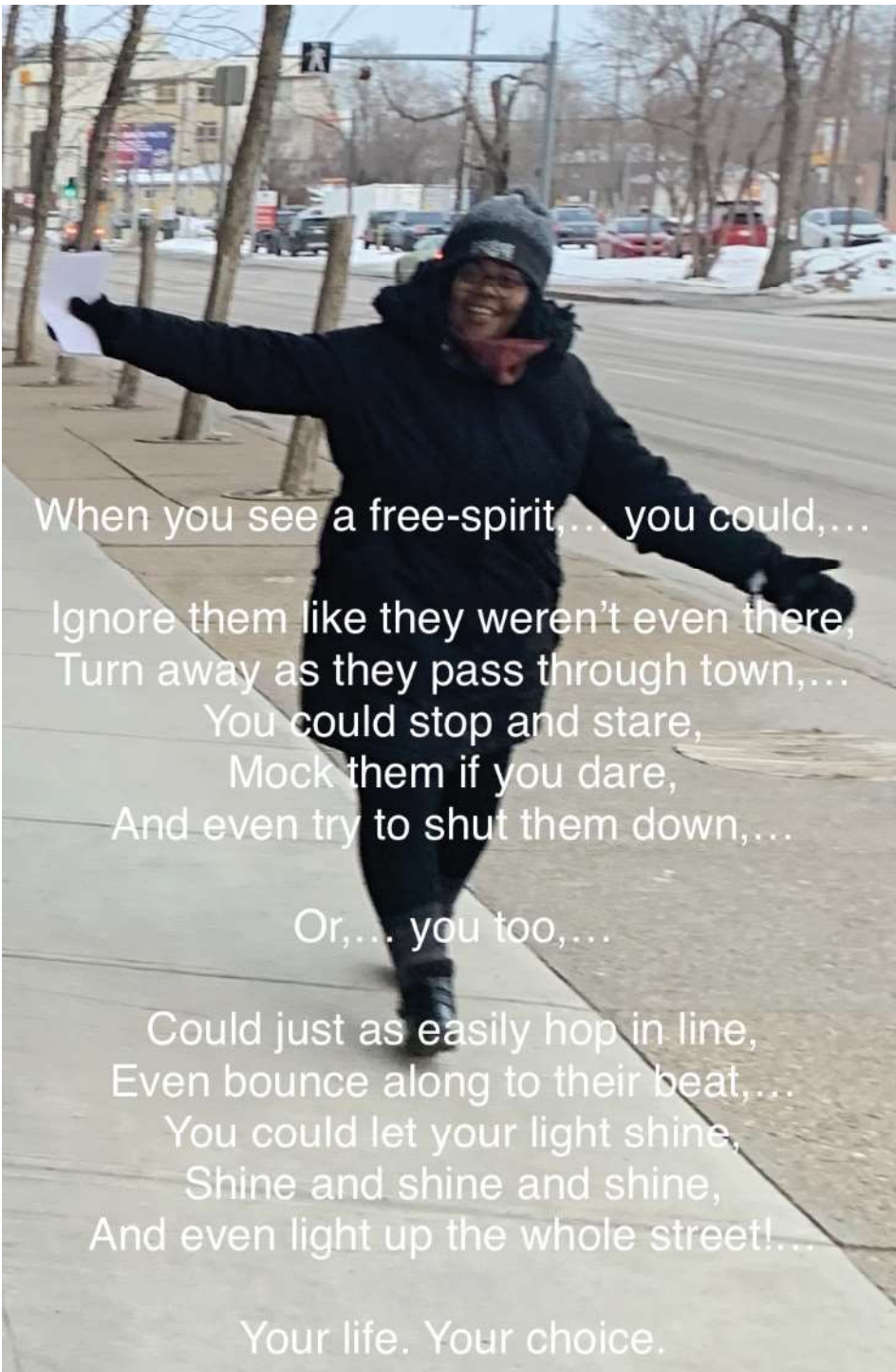
Food security is a big problem that many of our friends have to deal with every day, and we're not going to solve it with a few sandwiches, but at least it's something, - at least we're trying.

One last note, if I may, ... my kids, ... I can't praise them enough. Wow! They could sleep in if they wanted to, they could play games all day, they could hang out with friends, they could be doing anything else, but they don't, ... they come out and serve the community, week after week, all year round, and even in the absolute worst of weather conditions. And even on those days when I'm just not up to it, they'll pick me up and get me going too. Exceptional kids! God bless 'em, and God bless all those they serve!

It's not the words you preach,
It's the way you live, ...
It's not the love you teach,
It's the love you give, ...

No it's not what you declare,
And it's not what you say, ...
What counts is the love you share,
The love you give away!





Above: Left to right- Sparky, Ramona, Cindy and at the back Fred.



Right: A hymn sing at Capital Care, Dickensfield

The Tapestry

Fiction by Sharon Austin

Morning sunlight flooded through the tall arched windows of the auditorium sparkling to life the tapestry that ran the full length of the stage. Suddenly the beautifully woven mountains, river and forest it depicted seemed to come alive. Peaceful deer grazed in sunlit meadows and jungle cats rested in the trees. Every inch of the over one-hundred-foot tapestry was a work of art crafted by hundreds of skilled weavers. At the top the procession of the years was woven into the fabric as the tapestry was always a work in progress. On closer inspection, one can see that during the years before 2025 the tapestry was filled with ugly black spaces that marred its beauty. After 2025 the glowing colours of the tapestry shone forth in perfect harmony and some considered it the eighth wonder of the world.

At the far left of the stage a lone figure stood; his dark head bowed and one hand reaching up toward the dark spaces marring the fabric under span of 2024. The auditorium door opened and a lovely woman of Asian descent entered, sunlight shimmering on her long dark hair. "Rafael," she said softly. "I knew I would find you here. I've come to remind you that today is our 40th birthday celebration. We are all to meet in the conference room at one o'clock."

Rafael raised tortured eyes to hers. "He would have been my brother," his solemn words echoed hollowly in the empty chamber.

She placed a gentle hand on his shoulder. "We had ninety-nine brothers and sisters and I'm always here for you. It's time we put the past behind us. We have all been given everything and so much has changed for the better in the world. The present always shines a light on the evils of the past."

He sighed heavily dreading the large social gathering with media presence. "I will be there Alessandra, with my speech prepared and my accomplishments ready for the time capsule. I just need a little time to be alone here and to think about the past."

Knowing his solitary nature, Alessandra turned to walk away. Rafael watched her go and the anger that smouldered within him rekindled. "Maybe he could forgive them for killing his brother and for wanting him dead, but how could he come to terms with them wanting to terminate someone as kind and beautiful

and perfect as Alessandra. In the stillness of the auditorium his thoughts drifted back to the beginning. It was a very dark time in the history of the country and life had become so very cheap. Child Termination Stations or CTS's as they were called had sprung up on every corner of the city. One could terminate a tiny life as easily as go for a haircut. At this time, the most dangerous place for a child to be was in the womb and one in five were never allowed to draw breath. Everywhere people were demanding rights of every kind but no one seemed to consider the rights of the unborn.

Things would have continued in this vein had it not been for one man who changed the course of history. In every generation there is someone who rises up to bring light and understanding to the dulled collective mind of the nation. Such a man was Humphry P. Templeton; a brilliant scientist as well as a renowned theologian. As a scientist Templeton knew that all life on earth was interconnected and ending lives that had a purpose caused a tiny tear in the fabric of humanity. As a theologian he believed in the sanctity of all human life and as a devout Christian he longed to protect the rights of the voiceless children in society.

Being a multi-millionaire Templeton had the resources to have the huge tapestry woven to show the dark spaces as the missing children of the nation. Politicians were quick to jump on this new band wagon as politics had grown so boring that no one cared anymore. Soon laws were changed and the Child Termination Stations were shut down everywhere but not without heavy opposition. At first it was just the usual marches with women demanding rights over their own bodies and angry mobs of Templeton supporters destroying termination stations. Then a new group rose up who called themselves the Anti-Mothers headed by a very vocal woman, Mavis Breen. They would ride around in flaming trucks screaming obscenities and flying huge white flags with a black silhouette of a woman with a huge red X across the torso. The Anti-Mothers were gaining ground until Mavis caused a huge media frenzy. Somehow Mavis convinced one hundred of her supporters who had been forced to bear their child due to the closure of the stations, to leave their infants on the courthouse steps. Mavis herself had a one-month-old baby boy, whom she had sought to terminate to no avail, and she left him clad only in a diaper with the rest of the babies.

The sight of one hundred screaming infants lying helplessly on the cold cement was too terrible and public sentiment turned against her. The one-hundred mothers were all jailed for the reckless abandonment of their children and the babies were taken away. At this point, Templeton stepped in to claim the one-hundred infants and intended to raise them on his vast estates. He wanted to show the nation that these one hundred children whom society had sought to kill were extremely valuable. Templeton gave them all lofty beautiful names and all had the last name Templeton. He declared that their collective birthday would be March the tenth, the day he found them on the courthouse steps. They were all given the finest of educations and like the children of celebrities the smallest spark of talent was fanned into flame. Among the one-hundred were scientists, doctors, lawyers, artists, musicians, dancers, actors, models, businessmen, adventurers, football and baseball players, armed-forces personnel and humanitarian workers.

Of course with any slice of humanity there were some children who were academically, mentally, or physically challenged. These too were given every opportunity to reach their full potential and become successful. At first the media was relentless filming the children night and day but over time the public interest began to wane. Once a year on their collective birthday The One-Hundred as they were called got together for a huge celebration and to show the world all their accomplishments. It always began the same with the video of the one-hundred crying babies lying on the courthouse steps and the hated face of Mavis Breen with her mouth wide open yelling to her supporters.

When the children were eighteen they were given the choice of knowing who their real parents were. Most of the children were not interested; they were just glad to be Templeton's. Rafael deeply regretted finding out that his mother was non other than the despised Mavis Breen. In one interview she had disclosed that his father was a surgeon working for the Red Cross in a third world country. He was killed there serving humanity and never knew that Mavis Breen had terminated his first child. Rafael was sure that he would have been proud to know his son was working in medical research.

That thought brought him back to the present. He had a big decision to make regarding what he and his research team

All you never wanted to know about Judas Iscariot

By Joanne Bengler

If it were not for Judas Iscariot we would not be celebrating Easter. Judas was one of the twelve apostles and he betrayed his master, Jesus. The chief priests gave him thirty pieces of silver and all he had to do was lead the soldiers to Gethsemane and identify Jesus to them by kissing him. In Henry VI Shakespeare wrote "So Judas kissed his master and cried all hail when he meant all harm.

Then, after he realized what he had done, Judas felt remorse and repented. He flung the thirty pieces of silver upon the ground and according to Matthew 27 he hanged himself upon a fig tree. Different areas give the tree different names. To the Greeks it was an elder tree and the American Judas tree is the redbud. In Vision of

had discovered. The team had been working on treatments and medications that would restore memories to patients with Alzheimer's disease. The results of the first trials had been very encouraging but the research team did not know that he had secretly arranged for testing on test cases considered hopeless. Of those, the results were amazing with memory completely restored in all three patients. The problem was one of ethics. The segment of the population who would benefit from his discovery were the very ones who had sought to have them all destroyed. Without Humphry P. Templeton he would not be alive and this medication would not exist. Therefore, if he put his research into the time capsule to be opened in twenty years, he would not be doing anything wrong. By that time, most of those who wanted them all dead would have passed on and a new generation could benefit from the research. He thought about his father working long hours in terrible conditions trying to save lives in that war torn country.

Rafael knew what his father would do; he would put the suffering soldiers

Piers Plowman Passus 1 we read "Judas he japed. With Jewen silver and Sitten on an elder hanged himself"

The chief priests took the thirty pieces of silver, often referred to as blood money, and bought the Potters Field that lies just outside of Jerusalem. The Bible doesn't specify but it is believed that it gets its name because it is where potters went to get their clay. It exists to this day as Acladama (Field of Blood) where strangers and the friendless poor are buried but it is not the only potters field. Throughout the world "Potters Field" has become the name of burial grounds for the friendless and unidentified.

That is one version. Judas repented and killed himself. The priests used his money to buy the Potters Field. The Bible has a second account in Acts:18. The repentant and remorseful Judas took the thirty pieces of silver and bought the potters field with it. Then he fell over, his bowels burst opened and he died there. In paintings he is shown in hell suffering terrible torments as he is condemned to be eternally chewed by the devil.

In art Judas has been represented as the treasurer for Jesus and the apostles. He is

ahead of his own safety or hopes and dreams. Could he be the altruistic man his father had been or was there too much anger inside him like Mavis Breen? Rafael held the research papers ready for the time capsule in his hands as he pondered what to do. He wished Father Templeton was still with him to give him counsel. He could hear him say: "You must all strive to be the very best you can be to show the world what a treasure would have been lost without you. You must show kindness and acceptance to everyone and always try to do what is right." Rafael stared up at the glowing tapestry that had figured so largely throughout his whole life. Somehow he must set aside all the hurt and anger of the past and do what was right for humanity. Once he had been that helpless child crying on the courthouse steps; now he had the power to help other helpless individuals reclaim their lives. A weight seemed to lift from his heart as he whispered, "Yes Father Templeton, one can always do what is right." With eager steps Rafael headed for the conference room to join in the celebration with The One Hundred.

shown carrying a bag or chest that carried their money and the legend is that he was greedy and stole money from the chest. In fact many claimed that he was the apostle who protested when Mary Magdalene anointed Jesus with ointment that could have been sold for thirty pence because he wanted the money for himself not for the common purse.

Medieval artists depicted Judas as a small man with red hair and a red beard and he was usually dressed in yellow. That is because in medieval symbolism red haired people were seen as unreliable, quick tempered and deceitful. Yellow indicated jealousy, inconstancy, adultery, perfidy and cowardice. In some countries at the time all Jews were forced to wear yellow because they had betrayed Jesus.

In ancient tapestries both Judas and Cain, who slew his brother Abel, are shown with yellow or sandy red beards - symbolic of treason. In the second century AD the two were linked by the Cainites, a short lived heretical sect. The Cainites replaced the New Testament with the Gospel of Judas which justified the crucifixion. It also said the way to salvation was to give in to every lust.

My Heart Searches

By Linda Dumont

I stumble and I hesitate at the little things
- You're not there

My heart searches for you everywhere
Labours through dreams in troubled sleep
And throat tightening tortuous vigils that
I keep....

I saw our place - its just the same
Its all still there they told me.

I drove by the other day
Somehow I can't bear to stay away.
Part of my heart remains there still,
Searching and seeking you everywhere,
Through night corridors and troubled sleep

Where dreams tremble at the edge of
reason

Trying to explain the unexplainable,
Trying to fill the ragged chasm of ruinous
loss.

My heart still searches everywhere
Not understanding why you're not there.
My heart searches.

Various circumstances force people into homelessness

By John Zapantis

We can all end up living in a homeless shelter at no fault of our own. The valid reasons for ending up there are endless.

The range of circumstances could vary from somebody experiencing a job layoff, from a company that they were formerly employed at, after refusing to be immunized for COVID-19.

Some people living at the Red Deer Mustard SEED have lost out on their marital relationships due to a long-term battle with alcoholism, or drug substance abuse that also could have made them lose their jobs resulting in a divorce to show for failing their families and inevitably one pay cheque away from ending up living homeless at the Red Deer Mustard SEED homeless shelter.

The scenarios are endless as to why people choose to end up staying at a homeless shelter. I should know. I can now say that I can speak from my own personal shoes, after ending up in a heated conflict with a female relative, whom I worked along with in helping my ailing parents in their pre-nineties with cognitive decline. I was later forced to leave my duties and told to leave my parent's home after a heated debate with my female relative, then ending up living homeless since March 5th, of 2022.

This serious conflict forced me to first live in three Calgary homeless shelters that included the Calgary Drop-In Centre, the Salvation Army and the Mustard SEED.

Recently, during the last week of November of 2022, I moved to Red Deer Alberta and checked into the Red Deer Mustard SEED, where the services I've received has been the most convenient stay, I've experienced from a very supportive and caring Mustard SEED staff.

The SEED's staff consistently practices what they preach. They'll personally take time out to hear a resident's personal story about making an effort to tolerate negativity, or successfully hear about someone's rise above life's many adversities. The common reply from staff usually ends with 'Everyone has a story.'

There's always a supportive staff

member ready to support your personal needs. Three meals a day are provided that includes, breakfast in the morning, where the shelter's homeless can help themselves to a variety of breakfast dishes, including, milk, tea, coffee and toast, to a variety of warm porridges, or cereals, to lunch time consisting of various servings of soups, sandwiches and pastries and in the dining room upstairs on the second floor, main course dishes that vary every day throughout the week.

Showering facilities are available in the Mustard SEED's basement for male and female residents, who have access to sink basins and toilets and a bathroom supplies room, operated by the staff in the basement's office, where free toiletries are given out that includes, free towels, soap, shampoo and other showering accessories.

A wake-up call to get people up on time in helping to get their day off in the right direction can always be requested by people living at the SEED.

Just before bedtime, I always request an early wake-up call, to be greeted by a staff member's sensitive and friendly tone of voice, where I'll often hear, "John, it's 6 a.m., time to wake-up." Most of our residents don't have an alarm clock. So it's always nice to have the convenience of a human one!

People living at the SEED, should keep in mind that the SEED's not a place where you intend on making your stay into some kind of a party lifestyle, but a shelter essentially needed so that you can make plans to find a permanent place that you can finally call home.

When living under these conditions, that for the time being offers the essentials of life, in helping to improve your living conditions, if you're in your early twenties, you may want to consider going back to school, or try your best to find employment, cause it's not like you have an essential deadline to meet, when trying to find a place of immediate employment, but the SEED will always understand that each individual requires a certain amount of time to get their life together.

On the other hand, alcohol and drug consumption inside or on the premises of the Mustard SEED is prohibited. Other residents, who do not drink or do drugs,



The Red Deer Mustard SEED shelter is located at 6002 - 54 Avenue. Photo by John Zapantis

don't need to be bothered by alcohol and drug substance abusers, who may try to subject them into this wreck-less lifestyle.

No one should be there to party, but to get back on their feet! For those staying at the SEED, respect everyone's personal space, while given the opportunity of staying at the Mustard SEED.

I'd like to personally thank the following SEED staff members, who have been kind and considerate in making my stay a convenience and helping to advance my cause.

They include, Shelter Supervisor Dwayne and SEED Crew Members, Tyrone, Simone, Honar, Kayley, Celeste, Shanda, Sylvia, Neil, Tyland, Dani, Bruce, Crystal, Penny, Sarah and that 'Humble Man who loves his dog-and we all know who that is!

In total so far, I've lived temporarily in four homeless shelters and out of the four, this one, in particular, goes unmatched, when it comes to the consistency of services that are offered to its residents here at the Red Deer Mustard SEED.

The Red Deer Mustard SEED is also the smallest homeless facility of the four that I've resided in that makes its operations easier to manage and that may be the primary reason why its operations seem to run more smoothly, than the previous shelters that I once resided in Calgary.