

# Edmonton Street News



Volume 5  
Issue 12  
2007

Vendors pay 50 cents per paper

## City Agencies That Provide Meals

### 1. Bissell Centre

10527-96 Street - 423-2285  
Monday to Friday - 10:30 a.m.  
- sandwiches

### 2. Inner City Pastoral Ministry

at The Bissell Centre - 424-7652  
Snacks after Sunday Service  
- 12:00 to 1:00

### 3. Christ Church

12116-102 Avenue - 488-1118  
Every 3rd Saturday - 5:00 p.m. meal

### 4. Herb Jamieson Centre

10014 -105A Avenue - 429-3470  
For men not on assistance  
Monday to Friday 7:00 to 7:45 a.m. breakfast  
12:00 - 12:45 p.m. - lunch  
5:00 to 5:45 p.m. - supper  
Weekends 11:00 - 11:45 a.m. - breakfast  
4:00 - 4:45 p.m. - supper

### 5. Hope Mission - 422-2018

Daily 7:00 to 7:45 - breakfast  
Noon - lunch  
5:00 to 5:45 - supper

### 6. House of Refuge Mission

10339-95 Street  
Daily - 8 p.m. - meal

### 7. Marian Centre

10536-98 Street - 424-3544  
Daily except Wednesdays  
12:00 to 12:45 p.m. meal  
Closed from the 27th of each month to the 1st

### 8. The Mustard Seed

10635-96 Street - 426-5600  
Monday to Friday - 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. supper  
Saturday - 5 p.m. - supper  
Zero tolerance of alcohol

### 9. Operation Friendship

9526-106 Avenue - 429-2626  
Monday to Friday - 9:00 a.m. - breakfast  
Monday to Sunday - 12 noon - lunch  
5:00 p.m. - supper

For seniors over 55 only

### 10. Red Road Healing Centre - 471-3220

Friday - 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. - soup and bannock

### 11. Salvation Army

9620-101 Avenue - 429-4222  
Fridays - 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. - breakfast

### 14. St Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church

9606-110 Avenue - 426-1122  
Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 7:00  
a.Breakfast

### 13. St. Faith's Anglican Church -

parish hall

11725-93 Street - 477-5931

Thursday - 12:00 noon - soup  
Saturday - 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. -breakfast  
3rd Friday of the month - 7:00 p.m. - supper

### 14. Emmaus Church

5015- 144 Avenue - 275-1647  
Monday - 4:45 to 6:00 p.m. - meal

### 15. Women's Emergency Accommodation Centre

9611-101A Avenue - 423-5302  
Meals for women staying at the shelter.  
If not, bag lunch is given

### 16. Edmonton Orthodox Reformed Church

1161- 95 A Street - 479-1860  
Thursdays, 6:25 p.m. soup

### 17. Robertson Wesley United Church

10209-123 Street 482-1587  
Second Saturday of each month  
January to November, 5:00 p.m. meal

### 18. Jasper Place Health and Wellness Centre

15210 - Stoney Plain Road - 481-4001  
Mondays - 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. - meal

### 19. One Accord Bible Fellowship Church

10802 - 93 Street - 425-6310  
Saturdays, 10:00 to 1:00 p.m. meals

### 20. All Saints Cathedral 10035-103 Street

Fridays - 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. - Breakfast

**Have you witnessed an act of violence against a homeless person, or been homeless, and a victim of violence?**

If so, please fill out the form below and return to Edmonton Street News, 9533-106A Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5H 0S9

Name of person or persons involved (if known) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ Where did the incident occur \_\_\_\_\_

What happened \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Edmonton Street News

Issue 5 volume 12



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Cover Photo: Madonna and Child

The views expressed in this publication are those of the writers.

The deadline for the January issue is December 20.

## Code of ethics for Edmonton Street News

Edmonton Street News reserves the right to refuse publication of any article and or ad at the discretion of the board of Edmonton Street News Society.

We will not trivialize poverty in any way.

We practice sound journalism with respect to FOIP legislation and respect for the privacy of the persons portrayed in stories and photographs.

The views presented in this publication are those of the writers.

## Edmonton Street News celebrates five years on the Street



Five years ago I sat in La Dolce Vita Café with Natasha Laurence, former editor of Our Voice, and Rod Graham, editor of Winnipeg Street Sheet, to discuss the inception of a new street newspaper. When it comes to getting things done, I just do it, then figure out details later, and there were a lot of details that had to be considered over the first few months, such as money to cover printing costs, the forming of a non profit society, editing, design, and distribution.

The first issue, published November 16, 2003, was black and white, with a circulation of 1,000 papers, and only about 700 copies were sold. Now, after five years, we publish 2,5000 papers each month, and have added spot color, changing the color with each issue so the paper is easily recognizable from across the street. May 2004, the Edmonton Street Newspaper Society was formed and ESN became a member paper of the North American Street Newspaper Association (NASNA). In keeping with other member papers, ESN is published by a non profit society and is sold on the street by newspaper vendors.

For the vendors, ESN provides employment as vendors purchase their papers for 50 cents per copy, then sell them for the price of a donation. Many of the vendors are homeless; others have income from AISH, pensions, and social assistance or part time employment. All are in need of money.

It is those vendors that have brought ESN to the street. The paper is put together by a group of dedicated volunteers, and money for printing comes from paper sales, ad sales and donations. Credit is often extended to vendors who are unable to pay for papers, so there have been months when the money in the ESN account fell short of the printing costs. Those months, I had to make a choice between paying my utility bills and rent on time or topping up the bank account. Each time, the publica-

tion took priority, because I know just how much our vendors rely on the money they earn, and I am too stubborn to quit. I am thankful for the support we have received over the past five years. Devin McCauley and his very successful fundraising event, and Vello deserve special mention for their support of Edmonton Street News. I would also like to thank all of the customers who have enriched the lives of our vendors through buying papers and in showing support.

### History of street papers in Edmonton

I saw my first street newspaper when someone brought a copy to the Christ Love Ministry soup kitchen I was running back in 1993. That was when the City Centre Church corporation brought the Vancouver spare change to Edmonton, and it was distributed through the Bissell Centre casual labour office.

I signed on as one of the original vendors, but when they decided we needed tags, I was slow to get into the office, so I became vendor number 35.

Selling papers gave me security since I was on welfare at the time, and there were those weeks without money before the cheques came out. That year there were also drastic welfare cuts, but with papers to sell, I could go out and earn the money needed for milk or laundry soap. and dance lessons for my daughter.

A year later, the Edmonton Spare Change (later renamed Our Voice) was launched, and I started writing for them. I was in almost every issue between 1994 and 2003.

By 1996, I secured employment with the six month work program for people on assistance. When the job ended, rather than go back on assistance, I enrolled in college, and graduated from the Journalism program at Grant McEwan College in 1999. By then, I was editor of the Boyle McCauley News.

By 2003, I had acquired all the skills needed to publish a newspaper. At that time, there were also a number of people who felt a voice from the street was needed.

It is not our failure that holds us back, but rather the fear of just how great we could be.

.By Linda Dumont

### Private Ecclesiastical Notice

All concerned men and women take notice that a private agreement has been reached between minister

**Leon Papadopoulos and Ken Haluschak** regarding indisputable facts and religious freedoms. The full text of this agreement

may be seen at  
allcreatorsgifts.org or  
phone (780) 266-1122



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# Ten year plan to end homelessness still in talking stage

For people who are facing homelessness now at the onset of winter, a ten year plan that may help them to secure housing next year, or in five years, or at some future date whenever the plan has been implemented, is just so much rhetoric. Donald, who is currently living in his truck, said, "I'm going to try to build a camper on the back of the truck, but I don't know how I will survive this winter."

For those sleeping outside, it may well be too late. Donald Woolridge, a homeless senior, dreads the thought of another winter outside, or at the "Hopeless Mission". He said, "Some of us won't make it. We're running out of time." He knows because every year there are a number of homeless people found frozen to death, many he knew personally, as well as those who succumb to double pneumonia, from which he is just recovering.

Linda Hughes, chair of the Edmonton Committee to End Homelessness, which was established January 31, 2008, said they consulted more than 800 people from 75 organizations as well as people experiencing homelessness.

The ten-year plan has five goals. The first is to provide permanent housing options for people currently living on the street and in public places. This will be done through working with the client to find rental units, and reducing the red tape involved to provide housing and services to homeless with the most challenging and complex needs.

The second goal is to ensure an adequate supply of permanent affordable housing with appropriate supports for people who are homeless. People should have a choice of where they want to live.

Included in the plan is the development of 1000 units of permanent supportive housing including 150 units for people with severe



**Homeless couple**  
Photo by Pedro Schultz

08.09.2008 09:38

addictions, 350 units for those who are mentally ill or who can't live independently, 50 respite units for people released from the hospitals who cannot live on their own, 250 beds for people waiting to be admitted to addiction treatment programs, 100 units of transitional housing for youth, and 100 units of housing for families. 1,600 modestly sized bachelor units are also in the plan.

Goal Three is to ensure that emergency accommodation is available when needed but to transition people quickly into permanent housing. No one should be living for months or years in a shelter.

Goal Four is to prevent people from

becoming homeless through linking those in crisis with safe, suitable housing, working with institutions so no one is discharged to the street, to encourage the province to enhance the Homeless and Eviction Prevention fund, and to ensure that homeless persons receive eligible supports from AISH or Alberta Works, CPP, or OAS.

The fifth goal is to establish a governance structure and implementation process for the plan. Money for the plan is to come from the Alberta government.

By Linda Dumont

## Third national Housing Day breakfast celebrates success

The Third National Housing Day Breakfast, co-hosted by Homeward Trust Edmonton and CMHC was held November 21 at the Westin Edmonton. The event focused on celebrating innovation in affordable housing and achievements towards ending homelessness in the capital region.

"National Housing Day emphasizes that not everyone in our province has a place to call home. We believe that by working with Alberta's communities, not-for-profits and industry, we can end homelessness as we know it today, and fulfill our vision of a province where all Albertans have access to

safe, affordable housing", said Yvonne Fritz, Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of Alberta.

Councillor Karen Leibovici said "City Council has set a target to create over 2,600 new affordable housing units by 2010. To date, the Cornerstones program has committed more than \$80 million in capital funding from the three orders of government towards the creation of 1,670 affordable housing units in Edmonton. This success makes National Housing Day an important celebration for all Edmontonians."



11.09.2008 08:21  
Photo by Pedro Schultz

## John Howard Society opens the Loft for young men in transition

John Howard Society opened a new residence where young men who are at risk of homelessness can find stability and a chance to learn following periods of incarceration.

The Loft, short for life opportunities for transition, is a residence located in the west end of the city, and can house six residents, each with a separate bedroom. The residents come voluntarily, and must be willing to work or attend school. They pay a monthly rent of \$400 to \$500, which they will get back when they move into their own place. They also buy their own food and bus tickets while residing at the Loft.

The house accepts young men aged 16 to 24, and the hope is that each resident will be able to move out into stable housing after four to six months.

The Loft officially opened November 21.

By Linda Dumont



### Homeless Count up 17%

The numbers are in, and the latest homeless count in October, 2008 found 3,079 homeless.

Photo by Pedro Schultz

# Mama's Chickens

## CHAPTER 6

### The Boy Child

By Sharon Spencer

Finally, after a few disappointing girls, a little blue bundle arrived to grace the home of the Fryer family - Mama's one and only long awaited son, heir apparent, at least to Mama, who felt he graced our home with his very presence. Our mother was overcome with delight at her great achievement. We three sisters, were also thrilled at the great birth that had brought so much joy to our mother. Now devoting almost her every moment to the care and coddling of the male child. None of us felt slighted by the sharing of her attentions and we were overjoyed by the new edition.

We girls were caught up in Mama's wonder at the tremendous exploit of giving birth to a son. After all, this small person was very different from us, just how we couldn't comprehend. But we certainly felt privileged to be his sisters. Mark was deemed so special indeed, that he got the prized breast. This entailed a very secret ceremony enshrouded in mystery, to which we were not permitted entrance to view. If we even dared to enter the inner sanctum of her darkened boudoir we were hastily shooed away. This ritual was not for our tender eyes. And so the baby grew just like us other girl babies with just one small noticeable difference, which, when we caught a glance of, we would collectively giggle in

delight with our hands cupped over our mouths smothering the laughter at the sight of the difference.

With Father away at sea most of the time one uneventful day rolled into gracefully into another until disaster knocked upon our door and threw itself upon our home without invitation or notice.

Mark was about eight months old and out of nowhere he developed double pneumonia, which threw Mama into frenzy. She and only she could save her beloved Mark with her life-giving milk. There was only one problem. We lived in an enormous Navy barracks and she didn't know anyone to mind us girls while she took the trip uptown twice daily for the feedings.

The care of my two small sisters and myself fell to me at the ripe old age of six. Mama believed that age was never a deciding factor in whether one could do something or not. One was expected to rise to the occasion with grit and courage casting all acknowledgment of fear aside. To save face, I smiled, trying not to look dismayed or bewildered while my imagination ran wild, all the while trying not to acknowledge the raging fears in my stomach or that I was overwhelmed out of my small wits. The fear was intensified because Mama had never left our side that we could remember. However, if Mama thought I could do it, she must be right, because we all knew

Mama was always right.

All the little chickens concentrated in one corner of the huge concrete building outside. I stood guard over them, and there we waited speechlessly, our big eyes watching buses come and go until our dear mother got off the bus, elated at the progress our brother was making. This scene was repeated twice a day for a month, thank God without incident.

It was a great relief when Mark recovered and was home with us again. Sad to say the sickness only intensified Mama's fear that Mark was sickly and should be watched over carefully. My father, on the other hand, soon tired of the attention Mark claimed so easily, but it would take years before jealousy was openly displayed for his only son.

To compensate for this lack of my father's love, Mama spoiled, pampered, and made every exception for the chosen child. We girls were told to fight his battles and never allow harm to come to him when Mama was not with him. We became his protectors and he became our treasure.

Open war was declared upon our small home. Choices had to be made about loyalties; choices small children should never have to make, and so the tree of dark shadows and choking vines grew with vigor and strength.

## All For the Love of God

### The adventures of a street pastor

#### Chapter 5

By Pedro Schultz

In the last issue I talked about an experience of extortion. I've heard of some terrible rumors that this woman has been spreading, after I had followed the police's advice to have no further contact with her. I did give her another two months chance and she was better for a short while but then tried to extort money from me again, breaking my glasses when I wouldn't give in. I still love her and would at least like to have an amiable separation, to talk with her once in a while. It is hard to avoid someone with whom you've had a long father - daughter type of relationship. I still have a photo of her, her boyfriend and child on my fridge as a reminder to pray for them and have been visiting a sick relative of hers quite often.

Another thing I talked about in the last issue were my little "missionary type" trips. I had been taking along tea, blankets, clothes and Bibles. I have met between 10 and 20 people each time I took the route between the Boyle Street Community Center, Men's Hostel, Hope Mission and the Marian Center despite the cold. Since then people have been barred from sleeping near these facilities. The homeless had some kind of security when sleeping close to these places because sometimes staff would check to see that they were all right. Since there has been more violence most staff are now too fearful to do this. Would it not be wiser to have a security guard check on these vulnerable homeless?

Fortunately a B.C. court decision has decided that a bylaw in Victoria depriving the

homeless of the life, liberty and security guaranteed by Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms could not be upheld.

Mayor Mandel has expressed concern that this could set a dangerous precedent across Canada. I pray that it does, for the benefit of those without shelter, and that there will be adequate shelter for everyone this winter, with a wiser investment of money, in helping many of them to get decent housing, not just shelter space.

Providing adequate staff for this would be a wise, much less costly than the over \$5 billion homelessness has been costing Canada with our present approach.

Taxpayers have been wasting thousands of dollars for years heating buildings not used by anyone. I pray that more of these get used more efficiently, especially for the benefit of the needy. There is still a disgusting lack of adequate facilities for people with mental and emotional problems.

Many of those who are judgmental of the homeless don't realize that probably over half of the homeless have mental, emotional, or physical handicaps and that when addicts want help there are not usually enough facilities or staff available to help them. It costs the taxpayer much more money as they take up much needed hospital beds, to the detriment of the addicts and the sick, and increases the rate of crime.

I realize I got diverted to a concern of mine not directly related to my life's story but believe this was more important. Please pray with me that God guides those who can do something about these problems to do so, starting with all of us who claim to live by

Jesus' most important command to love our neighbour as much as we love ourselves. Those around us in need are our neighbours, as Jesus illustrated through the example of the Good Samaritan.

### BC Supreme Court rules on right to camp in public parks

The **BC Supreme Court** decided on a landmark case last week, allowing homeless citizens to legally camp in the province's city parks. The ruling strikes down a Victoria city bylaw banning the use of "temporary abodes" such as tents in parks and other public places, indicating that it violates citizens' rights. The litigation between the **City of Victoria** and the defendants arose due to an altercation three years ago, where residents of a tent city erected in a local Victoria park were evicted and some arrested. Lawyer **Catherine Boils Parker**, who represented the defendants in the case, indicated that the lack of sufficient safe houses and beds for the homeless was a key factor in the decision.

By Pedro Schultz

**Calendar Project** - if you want your photo to be used in a calendar phone Pedro at 780-710-3214  
Your photo will be placed along with the month for your birthday.  
Proceeds from the sale of the calendars will go to the Edmonton Street Newspaper Society.

# Man of Christ Abased

## Chapter Four - Lies and Deceit

By Lauren Petersen

We were married only 48 hours, and it was as though a mask had been removed and I was seeing the real Gay (pronounce with a J) for the first time. He didn't even look the same. He was less handsome, his eyes appeared smaller, his chin weaker, his mouth petulant. His manner had completely changed, too. We were sitting on the swings in a park, when I looked at him and I asked myself, "Who is this man?" He appeared to be a stranger.

Gay had lied to me about almost everything except his last name. His first name wasn't Gay at all, but Gerald, and he had a tattoo on his arm that said "Silky" with a heart on the tail of the y, the pet name he called himself.

The trips he had boasted about, his trip to Spain and his trip to Mexico that he recounted in such detail were just made up stories. He was so jealous that I had traveled across Canada before our marriage that he erupted into a rage when I spoke about the past.

"I don't want to hear about it," he said. "Don't ever speak about what you did before you met me."

The family he boasted about was made up as well – he didn't even know his birth family since he had been raised in foster care. One of his foster mothers was English, his foster father Irish. He also called Martha Hagledge, one of the elders from the church, mom, because he spent a lot of time at her home and went to church with her family.

I discovered that his faith in God was just an act to impress me and others. He had never had TB to be healed of and I began to doubt that he was really born again because he was never able to testify as to when that happened. After the wedding, he no longer showed any interest in Christianity except to justify his actions. He never read the bible with me, seldom prayed unless he was in church, and we attended services only at the Church of Christ Victorious. There, he still acted the part of the model Christian, singing hymns, praying, and testifying.

Gay had no conscience about the lies he told. He said, "You wouldn't have married me if I told you the truth." I didn't answer, but I thought, "You're right. I wouldn't have." In

fact I believe we would never have married if we had waited until June 22<sup>nd</sup>, the original date we picked for the wedding.

When I got my first paycheck, Gay went with me to the bank, and I dutifully handed over the money, yielding to him same way I had when he took over driving the car. He said, "It's a man's responsibility to handle the finances." We bought a small blue teardrop trailer that was light enough for the old Dodge to pull, and parked it in the farm yard, running extension cords to the house for power.

We also shopped for clothing, with Gay making all of the selections. He picked out a straight-cut, red silk dress with a jungle print for me, nothing like the clothes I usually wore, which had more fitted waists, as well as a pair of black patent heels a size too large, saying a wife should dress to please her husband.

He said he needed the car to look for work, so he drove me to school and picked me up after classes every day until the holidays. One day he forgot to pick me up until late in the evening. I sat there at my desk working on lesson plans until after 10 p.m. while the janitor cleaned the classroom, then left, giving me instructions on locking up. I was worried sick that something had happened to Gay, that he had an accident, or that the car had broken down. Before our wedding, he was right beside me eagerly putting tracts on the liquor stores, but that day when he finally arrived he smelled of alcohol.

"Jesus made wine at the wedding feast," he said. I learned to resent that particular miracle of Jesus.

When Gay came by to pick me up the next day, when I got in the car beside him, he unzipped himself to show me what he was wearing under his jeans – a pair of my panties and pantihose.

"I like the feel of the silk and satin against my skin," he said. "It started when I was just a child. I'd steal my mother's slip out of the laundry and sneak it into my

bed so I could rub the soft silky material against my body."

I felt sick inside. I read in Anne Landers about transvestites, but had never encountered anything like this. I found it repulsive, disgusting and unnatural. I wanted my husband to be a man, to wear his blue jeans and shirts, to be masculine.... Instead, while I was in school, he lay in bed in the trailer, wearing my underwear and the red silk dress he had bought, supposedly for me, rubbing his manhood through the layers of material, masturbating, and leaving my dress stiff with dried semen stains. The material at the front of the skirt started to look faded from all of that rubbing.

Gay said he wanted his own dress, and I sewed it for him hoping that would keep him out of my clothing – "A long-sleeved, full length, black, satin nightgown trimmed with black, marabou feathers at the neck."

The sight of my husband lying on the bed, dressed in the black dress, his manhood an obscene mound at the front of the feminine garment, his skirts hiked up high on his thighs to reveal his long, shaven legs clad in panty-hose, terminating in my black patent pumps, was repulsive. No wonder he wanted me to buy those shoes a size too large. He lay there fondling himself through the layers of cloth, then insisted I lie beside him, and take over. I cringed inwardly when my fingers touched the taught layers of satin. I had to choke down my natural instincts, to wall up my feelings of disgust for the caricature of a man beside me, to try to convince myself that clothes didn't make the man, but the feeling



## Homeless not invited to Dialogues on Homelessness



Tuesday, December 18, members of the community were invited to gather at the Agricom for dialogues on the city's Ten Year Plan to end homelessness.

.....Aleda and her husband came with her street pastor, Pedro Schultz. The couple are currently homeless. She told Pedro she was angry that homeless people had not been invited to the dialogue.

Her husband has always been working so they weren't able to get government assistance to get a suite. When they approached a landlord, even though they could pay the rent, they were turned down because they have no recent rental history.

Aleda said the landlord automatically assumed that because they were homeless, they were addicted to drugs and/or alcohol.

## Street Scenes

More happenings and observations of a sort you might miss if you are one of the four-out-of-five (more or less) Edmontonians who commute to work, play, and shop in a four-wheeled cocoon

Allan Sheppard

### EMS: doing the right thing (Central LRT station)

Waiting for a train, I catch a sudden movement in the corner of my eye and turn to see that a man has fallen to the floor. He is old, near my age and, from the look of his clothing, beard, and hair a street person. Lying on his side, almost in a fetal position, he is motionless. My first thought is that he is dead. Having no idea what to do, I call 911 on my cell phone.

My call is answered quickly. The operator tells me to turn the man onto his back and wait for an ambulance, which was on the way. He shows some signs of life, when I move him. My main concern now is to make sure he does not get up suddenly and fall to the tracks, only a few feet away. He seems drunk or high on something. As a diabetic, I know he could be suffering from low blood sugar, too.

The 911 operator stays on the line, offering instructions and assurance. In about five minutes, a three-person EMS team arrives. They take control of the scene competently and effectively. When my train arrives a few minutes later, I leave, confident that the paramedics know what to do.

I share the details of this incident because it reminded me of a story in the Edmonton Sun ("Unpaid EMS tab hits \$2M", Edmonton Sun, September 3, 2008). It seems the city is owed at least \$2 million for unpaid ambulance services in the current fiscal year. Some of that debt comes from responding "to a disproportionate number of calls from homeless people," the Sun reported commented. According to Emergency Medical Services

Chief, Joe Acker, as quoted by the Sun, "the taxpayers...are ultimately responsible for" the shortfall: "It's part of our budget."

And so it should be. I could try to make a case here that ambulance fees for everyone should be part of health care services paid for by the province. But let's leave that issue for another time. I will say though, that, if the city has to charge for ambulance services, then it must be prepared to eat the costs of serving the poor and homeless, even when (especially when) they are (or seem to be) intoxicated. EMS cannot, must not, and (we should be thankful) does not turn its back because it knows someone in distress can't pay for its services.

The man may have been a \_\_\_(insert any label you choose)\_\_\_, but he was also a human being-one of us-who deserved respectful care, which he got. Thank you, EMS.

### I, pervert (97th Street and 102 Avenue)

Standing on the southeast corner of the intersection facing Canada Place and waiting for a green light, I see an Aboriginal woman approaching from the north. Her appearance is bizarre: small, thin, middle-aged, she wears knee-length pants (what we used to call pedal pushers, when I was a kid) and a top that exposes her wrinkled midriff and does nothing to protect her from chill winds. As she turns in front of me, I see a large bandage on the back of her left ankle. I try not to stare, but she is impossible to ignore. The light is slow to change, and my mind wanders, as it often does when I am waiting through Edmonton's interminable traffic-light cycles.

Then the woman starts yelling. At me. "What are you standing there for! Can't you see the light has changed?" She warms up to a diatribe. (Is she drunk? Stoned? Or did she forget to take her meds?) She accuses me of ogling her from behind and, worse than that, of being a judgmental white man who enjoys looking down on people like her. I want to answer back, to defend myself. Instead, I walk ahead, quickly. She calls out behind me: "Pervert! Pervert! Pervert!" She continues until I get far enough away not to hear her.

At first, I'm tempted to laugh the episode off: just a delusional rant from another drunk-

en Indian. But...

Deep down, I know that the woman had probably been humiliated on the street and elsewhere by the words and actions of people like me. That is to say, white like me, and male like me. It could have happened many times to her: the labeling, the judgement, the contempt, the condescension. It rarely happens to me (I can remember one time, on a Harlem side street in New York, many years ago). My dignity, my self-respect are still intact, have never been threatened. But for her and others like her, labels and judgements are facts of everyday life, now so ingrained that they are seen or felt even where they do not exist, making the urge to strike back irresistible.

I could argue that her tirade said more about her than about me. That would be true, but...

The streets of our city are filled with pain that many of us do not see, often because we do not care to look beyond our defenses and our defensiveness. Or our self-righteousness. I do not know how to fix the people who suffer on our streets or heal their pain. Not alone. Not by myself.

But I can try to understand what I see. And I can testify to what I learn.

### Who's on the bottom? (Downtown, on the LRT)

Three young men get on the train. They sit near me. They ooze testosterone-driven (and substance-enhanced?) bluster. A stop or two goes by and then one of them proclaims, "I hate Chinese people. I don't know why, I just hate Oriental." His friends laugh, but otherwise do not comment. A few more minutes, a few more racist mutterings; we reach Grandin Station, and they get off.

I see that the one who was doing most of the talking is carrying a green garbage bag full of clothing. It seems he is going to stay with his friends somewhere nearby. Couch surfing?

On the coach, there is an awkward silence. There are several Chinese nearby (probably UofA students); what can they say or do? As for me and the others who are not Chinese, there is only embarrassment. Could we have done or said something? Should we have done or said something? I have spoken up in similar situations before. Why not now? People have been knifed in Edmonton for refusing to give a cigarette to someone on the street. Or for going to the aid of someone under attack. Would saying something have helped?

Were we cowards, merely prudent, or both. The economic world is falling apart around us. But I fear more for dying away of our community-and the sense of community that holds us together, even as it respects us as individuals.

### Fire with fire? (On the No. 5 bus)

The advertising placard across from me shows three or four youths, male and female, holding their palms high, facing forward. Stenciled on their palms are the words *Fight Violence*. I've seen this before. The Edmonton Police Service (I think) and some community partners have been running a campaign for a few months now encouraging young people to do something about violence among their peers. There is a reference to a web site for more information ([www.fightviolence.net](http://www.fightviolence.net)).

Continued on Page 7



## Hugh MacDonald, MLA

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## Free university-level course at the Boyle St. Learning Centre

Have you ever wondered what students learn in their first year at university? This fall, participants in the Humanities 101 program have been finding out first hand - for free!

Each week a different instructor from the University of Alberta has been leading fascinating discussions with a diverse group of students at the Boyle St. Learning Centre.

Topics have included how people learn, the history of social protest, the everyday uses of philosophy and issues of censorship in society. The class has also toured the downtown library and learned about resources available at the library. Students are provided with all the materials they need and a healthy snack each class. Students who commit to regular attendance and fulfill the course requirements receive a certificate from the university.

Humanities 101 offers a unique opportunity for people in the downtown core to have access to university-level education in a familiar and comfortable environment. Emphasis is placed on improving students' reading and writing skills, as well as addressing topics of interest to people in the inner city. Participants are asked to think critically about the social issues that affect them.

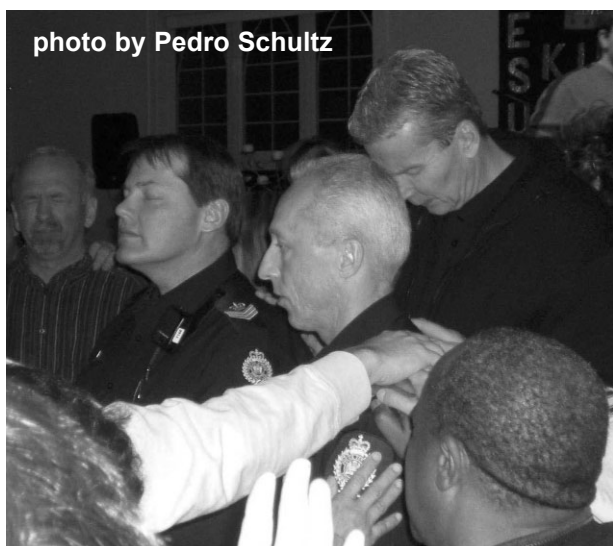
The philosophy behind Humanities 101, which currently has programs in cities across North America and elsewhere in the world, is to offer humanities-based education to people that have been marginalized by poverty, lack of adequate housing, and other social and eco-

nomonic factors. The belief is that exposure to topics like philosophy, history and literature can help these students to be empowered against the forces that maintain cycles of poverty.

Each three-hour class consists of a specific topic taught by an expert from the University of Alberta. Students participate in a lively discussion, facilitated by the instructor and teaching assistants from the university. Time is allotted for hands-on activities, such as collage and writing anything from poetry to personal reflection pieces. Organizers hope to add an additional tutorial or writing session each week for students who would like to improve their writing further or would like to learn research skills.

The fall course wraps up on December 4 with a celebration and presentation of certificates to those who have completed the program. Humanities 101 organizers are currently looking for students for the upcoming winter term beginning in January at the Learning Centre (10116 105 Ave., inside Boyle Street Community Services). If you are interested in being involved as a student or in another capacity, or would like more information about this exciting initiative, please contact Humanities 101 coordinator Joanne Muzak at the Community Service-Learning program, University of Alberta. She may be reached by phone at 780-492-2420, or e-mail [jmuzak@ualberta.ca](mailto:jmuzak@ualberta.ca).

## Uniting to push back crime



“Uniting to combat crime” was the topic at a meeting on Nov. 21 at the Family Worship Centre. The model used in Griffith, Georgia was used as an example of the effectiveness of a united effort to combat crime. After an average of 16 to 18 homicides a month this strategy reduced the homicide rate to 0 in a 22-month period in that city.

Constables Gerard Ressler and Merle Doherty represented the police at this meeting and shared their experiences in fighting crime and in preventing it.

Constable Ressler is the School Resource Officer for J. Percy Page High School. He stated that he believed that family breakdown, drugs, and gangs were the major cause of the problems he has dealt with.

Staff Sergeant Doherty stated that his goal is to support police Chief Boyd's goals of a seven minute response time to 911 calls, 40 %

two person police cars and prevention of crime and its sources

Edmonton is presently leading in the number of homicides per capita in Canada. Doherty sees mentoring young people as one of the activities that could help prevent crimes and hopes that Christians will help in this.

The local Fellowship of Christian Police Officers has recently been resurrected after being inactive for a while. Both officers hope that the Christian police officers will help improve the credibility and image of police.

It was quite dramatic when both constables had numerous people lay their hands on them for prayer. The constables were asked, as representatives of the police, to forgive us for not praying for them, respecting and appreciating them enough for so often putting their lives on the line for us.

It was suggested that as a sign of respect we get into the habit of putting our right hands over our hearts and with the left hand and with a bow shows our respect and appreciation of police officers when we see them.

Crimes were divided into eight categories: assaults, robberies, homicides, sex offenses, sexual assaults, theft of cars and from cars, and thefts of over \$5000. Addictions were mentioned as one of the major causes of criminal offenses. The police expressed the desire to work with Edmonton Evangelical Ministerial, all Christians, and other community groups or members to push back crime in Edmonton.

It reminds me of the penchant among our American friends (and sometimes within our own Canadian family) for going to war against everything.

By Allan Sheppard

**Continued from page 6 -** This campaign has good intentions; the best.

There is too much violence in our lives, certainly among our youth. But I see a mixed message here. Is violence the best way to respond to violence?



## Sixth Annual Homefest concert draws attention to homelessness

For the sixth year, local musicians performed at the Homefest Concert to draw attention to the desperate need for more affordable housing and to eradicate homelessness.

The concert was hosted by the Edmonton Coalition on Housing and Homelessness on November 2 at the Transalta Art Barns.

Money raised through concert tickets and the sale of CD's will be donated to selected groups working with homeless people.

If you are interested in purchasing a CD of this year's Homefest concert, get in touch with Jim Gurnett at the Mennonite Centre for Newcomers.



### HELPING CANADA'S FORESTRY AND RENTAL HOUSING INDUSTRY

The downturn in the American housing market has cut demand for Canadian lumber, which means job losses in our forestry industry - from loggers to mill employees to the truckers who deliver the lumber. Helping the forestry industry might provide opportunity to address another national problem: homelessness.

About 50% of shelter users have an income, but are unable to find affordable accommodations. Builders have been concentrating on high end housing/condominium construction for the past couple of decades, creating a shortage of private sector entry-level singles or single room housing. Many people in cities like Edmonton and Calgary have resorted to government supported shelters, which are bursting at the seams.

We need a proper national affordable housing strategy aimed at jump-starting entry-level private sector rental housing construction. The non-profit social services sector has been largely ineffective in dealing with the crisis and is not the appropriate way to deal with people whose only need is shelter. The private sector rental development and management industry (in the singles and family multi-unit rental housing sector) has been dormant for years. Incentives would convince the industry to once again become involved in entry-level housing.

Perhaps the government could purchase lumber that is not being sold to the US, and offer it to builders as a grant for building affordable rental housing. Coupled with other funding available, this would have a three-fold benefit: It would preserve forestry industry jobs, provide rental accommodation for those in need of affordable housing and reduce pressure on the overflowing homeless shelters.

Private sector companies have the skills and expertise required to deal with the national housing affordability crisis. I think it is more fiscally responsible to invest in a private sector "solution" that has been proven not to work. What do you think?

Please join us for our Christmas Open House  
9111-118 Ave. Monday, Dec. 22nd 3-7pm

780-495-3261 [www.petergoldring.ca](http://www.petergoldring.ca)

# Christmas Meals 2008

Saturday, December 6 12:00p.m. to 3:00 p.m.	The Mustard Seed 10635-96 Street	780-426-5600	Children's Christmas Dinner and pageant
Saturday, December 6 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.	Robertson Wesley United Church, 10209-123 St.	780 482-1587	Christmas dinner Everyone Welcome
Monday, December 8 6:00 p.m.	St. Peter's Lutheran Church The Rock - 9606-110 Ave.	780-426-1122	Children's Meal
Mondays, December 8, 15, 22 and 29 4:30 to 8:00 p.m.	Herb Jamieson/Hope Mission 9908-106 Ave.	780 422-2018	Christmas Meals - Everyone welcome
Thursday, December 11 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.	St. Peter's Lutheran Church The Rock - 9606 - 110 Ave.	780 426-1122	Christmas Breakfast for inner city people in need
Friday, December 12 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.	Canadian active Friendship Centre - 11205-101 Street	780 479-1999	Christmas Dinner, Open to everyone
Saturday, December 13 Noon	Boyle Street dinner at Sacred Heart -10821-96 St.	780 42203052	Children's Christmas Party Call to register children
Sunday, December 14 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.	Canadian Native Friendship Centre 11205-101 Street	780 479-1999	Kids Christmas party for CNFC members
Tuesday, December 16 Noon	Operation Friendship Centre 9526-106 Ave.	Julie 780 408 2958	Lunch for seniors over 55
Wednesday, December 17 4:00 to 7:00 p.m.	Boyle Street 10821-96 Street	780-424-4106	Youth drop-in Christmas - all youth welcome
Wednesday, December 17 5:00 p.m.	Operation Friendship 9526-106 Avenue	Julie 780 408-2958	Christmas Supper for inner city seniors over 55
Thursday, December 18 Noon	Operation Friendship 9626- 106 Avenue	Julie 780 408-2958	Christmas Lunch for inner city seniors over 55
Saturday, December 20 5:00 to 6:00 p.m.	The Mustard Seed 10635- 96 Street	780 42605600	Christmas dinner for inner city residents
Monday, December 22 Noon	Operation Friendship 9526-106 Avenue	Julie 780 408-2958	Christmas Lunch for inner city seniors over 55
Monday, December 22 Noon to 6 p.m.	B's Diner 10015-82 Avenue	Brenda 780 414-6040	Dinner and music, every- one welcome
Monday, December 22 5:00 p.m.	Charisma Pentecostal at Eastwood Community League	Pedro 780 477-1235	Homeless Christmas Banquet, all welcome
Tuesday, December 23 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.	Bent Arrow at Prince Rupert School, 115-1113 Avenue	Betty or Sherry 780 481-3451	Christmas dinner, must
Wednesday, December 24 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.	Dickensfield Amity House 9213 - 146 Avenue	780 478-5022	Christmas Breakfast
Wednesday, December 24 Noon	Operation Friendship 9526-106 Avenue	Julie 780 408-2958	Christmas Lunch for inner city seniors over 55
Thursday, December 25 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.	Boyle Street co-op at Sacred Heart -10821-96 St.	780 422-3052	Christmas Dinner, Everyone welcome
Thursday, December 25 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.	Victory Christian Centre at Shaw Conference Centre	Pam 780 988-5433 call for transportation	Christmas Dinner, Everyone welcome
Monday, December 29 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.	Hope Mission 9908-106 Avenue	780 422-2018	Christmas Meal, Everyone Welcome
Thursday, January 1 12:00 to 3:00 p.m.	Bissell Centre 9515-104 Avenue	780 423-2285	New Year's Day Meal, everyone welcome



photo by Pedro Schultz

## Donations Needed

Warm clothing, mitts, socks and blankets, sleeping bags, tarps, and duffel bags wanted to be given to homeless people in need.

Donations can be dropped off at the House of Refuge Mission at the corner of 103A Avenue and 95 Street, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. any evening, or at the Edmonton Street News office at 9533-106A Avenue (back door) call 975-3903 to arrange for a time, or see Linda at the Strathcona Farmer's Market Saturday mornings at the back entrance between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.