

This month:

Sobering experience

Experiencing an unprecedented heat wave in Canada was a sobering experience, says Crisanta Sampang.

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Journey's End

What should be done with us at the end of our life, asks Ron Kuban.

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More trouble in Iran?

The election of Iran's new president bodes ill for Iran and could lead to more political instability in the Middle East.

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Important deadline

An important deadline looms for certain out-of-status foreign nationals in Canada.

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Tips for Newcomers

What immigrants and other newcomers need to know about income tax, GST, and property taxes.

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Poet Laureate



Titilope Sonuga is a poet whose work grasps moments of tenderness at the intersection of blackness and womanhood.

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Historic appointment

Canada's new Governor General is a former broadcaster, civil servant, and diplomat. Mary Simon, who will be the first Indigenous Governor General in the history of Canada, will be formally installed on July 26. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called her appointment "historic."

For more information, see page 7 of this issue. Photo: Mary Simon during Prime Minister Trudeau's announcement on July 6.

Photo: Sgt. Johanne Maheu, Rideau Hall © OSGG, 2021

Edmonton Police making changes based on community input

Since the launch of the Commitment to Action initiative, the Edmonton Police Service (EPS) has been listening to a diverse range of voices from the community and is now making changes to the organization based on this input.

"The feedback we have received through our community engagement has been valuable and insightful in terms of the gaps we have as an organization and the changes we need to make," says Chelsea Hawrelak, Program Manager with the EPS Community Relations Section.

"We are very grateful for the relationships that we have formed with community members, and the opportunity to work collectively on solutions that will improve community safety and well-being."

Chief Dale McFee launched the EPS Commitment to Action on Sept. 21, 2020, following worldwide calls for changes to policing and approaches to public safety.

Since then, EPS employees have connected with members of Black, Indigenous, racialized and underserved communities, and listened to both their positive and negative experiences with police as well as their ideas for change.

Citizens shared their comments at EPS and community-hosted listening sessions, at a variety of partner and educational presentations, and online at epsinput.ca. EPS also engaged through community podcasts, Facebook Live events, and other social media channels.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic and the need to shift from in-person listening sessions to virtual engagement, a total of 35 public engagement sessions were held with over 400 individuals providing meaningful feedback.

Throughout the sessions, some common themes emerged that highlighted an overall need for greater understanding, focused training, and alternative approaches to improve the police service and its relationships with underserved communities.

Community members shared that:

- Police need to be more positively engaged with communities whose voices are not often heard, including the unhoused and people with disabilities.
- Historic trauma and negative experiences within various systems contributed to hesitancy calling police.
- Some had interactions with police officers who appeared biased, lacked compassion, or were unprofessional.
- Citizens were interested in learning more about the roles and responsibilities of police officers, and the police complaint and disciplinary process.
- Additional support is necessary for individuals to better understand police processes, navigate systems, and access resources.
- There are opportunities for police to partner with community agencies to find alternative approaches to crisis situations.
- They recognized the impact of stress and trauma and were concerned for the well-being of police officers.

Based on this feedback, EPS is making the following changes:

- The launch of the Know Your Rights campaign to help individuals understand their rights and responsibilities when interacting with police.
- Expansion of bias awareness, de-escalation and trauma-informed training across the police service.

- Experiential training for police recruits with social agencies to learn how to better understand and assist vulnerable communities.

- Creation of the Nisohkamâkewin Council to implement policing recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and other national reports.

- A new Chief's Community Council that will advise police on implementing changes to policy and procedures.

- Formation of a leadership committee to identify ways to diversify the ranks of the police service.

- New partnerships with community groups to listen to concerns, share information and co-create solutions.

EPS has been sharing project updates with the public over the course of the consultations through social media and other platforms, and will be compiling all the findings and recommendations in a full report to the Edmonton Police Commission in September.

Hawrelak adds, "While all of the information collected will help us create a roadmap to guide the police service in the future, some of these recommendations can be implemented immediately. This report is not meant to be placed on a shelf, but to inform the community, rebuild relationships and trust, and ultimately hold us accountable to our commitment to take action."

Moving forward, EPS will continue to utilize community listening sessions as a standard practice to provide opportunities for citizens to share their concerns and collaborate on solutions.

www.edmontonpolice.ca



Letters to the editor welcome

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E-mail your letter to: The Editor of the Mill Woods Mosaic, mwmosaic@telus.net.

Emergency protection for communities targeted by hate

Emergency grant applications for the Alberta Security Infrastructure Program are now open to reduce the risk of hate and bias-motivated crimes targeting facilities used by groups of vulnerable Albertans.

In light of recent multiple acts of vandalism at places of worship and the suspected arson that burned a church to the ground, emergency funding will be immediately available to facilities at risk of hate or bias-related crimes. The funding is for cases where an immediate threat is identified and there is evidence to support that threat.

"We must all condemn hate-motivated acts of violence and vandalism," said Premier Jason Kenney. "All Albertans must be able to exercise their religious freedom in peace and security. That's why we introduced the Security Infrastructure Program, why we've doubled the available funding, and why we are making help available

immediately for those at risk of hate-motivated crimes."

"Albertans from all backgrounds deserve the freedom and protection they need to worship as they please with their families, free from threats of violence and destruction," said Kaycee Madu, Minister of Justice and Solicitor General. "While we work towards the ultimate goal of eliminating hate crimes in Alberta and bringing those guilty to justice, this fast-tracked grant program will help protect those most at risk."

The Alberta Security Infrastructure Program was announced in June to help vulnerable groups implement security improvements to increase protection from potential vandalism and violence. While the regular grant call will accept applications later this year, funding is now available for not-for-profit organizations and groups associated with facilities facing an immedi-

ate threat.

Eligible expenses include those necessary to help protect both individuals and property from vandalism and other criminal acts, such as upgrades to facility infrastructure including security and monitoring systems, and other security enhancements.

The province also recently announced the creation of a new community liaison on hate crimes to connect directly with ethnic and religious groups and sexual minority communities most targeted by hate-motivated crimes. As well, a provincial Hate Crimes Coordination Unit will be set up to work with law enforcement to improve and harmonize hate crime mitigation efforts across Alberta.

Quick facts

- Up to \$12,000 per applicant is immediately available for not-for-profit

A special family reunion

After writing about fathers and step-fathers last month, I want to talk about another family event today.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, our immediate family used to have regular gatherings. We got together to celebrate our birthdays, Mothers's Day, Father's Day, and Christmas, but since the pandemic started 16 months ago, we were not able to do that. Our daughter, who lives only a short distance from us, came to visit us several times last year with her husband and their son, who is our only grandson, but they were not able to enter our home, and we could not hug them, because we had to follow the COVID-19 restrictions for family gatherings.

It was nice to see them once in a while, but it was hard not to be able to embrace our loved ones.

But now, after all public health measures have been lifted and Alberta has been declared "Open for Summer" by the provincial government, our family was able to get together for the first time since Christmas 2019. When our son, who lives and works in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, visited us for Canada Day, we had a little barbecue party at our daughter's place. It was nothing fancy, just sharing some food and drinks, and a lot of

talking, but it felt so good to be together again and enjoy each other's company after so many months of separation. It was priceless!

Over the years, we have attended quite a few reunions with family and friends, but this one was very special.

I think this is one of the most important lessons which this pandemic has taught us: We should not take anything in life for granted, because we don't know what will happen tomorrow, and we should always value the relatives and friends we have.

Some people believe that a temporary separation can make a relationship stronger, and maybe there is some truth to that. Missing our loved ones shows that we really love them, because if we wouldn't love them and care for them, we wouldn't miss them when they are gone or we are temporary separated from them.

So, let's not forget this important COVID-19 lesson, and let's not take our loved ones for granted. Let's always be kind and focus on what we have in common.



Anisim Joop

**Discrimination and racism
have no place in our hearts,
our homes and our world.**

ity agencies serving individuals at risk of hate or bias-motivated crimes.

- Eligible organizations include not-for-profit associations serving people who, by virtue of their colour, race, ethnic and/or national origins, sexual orientation, religious affiliation or some other attribute, are at risk of being the victims of hate, bias or prejudice-motivated crimes.

- Emergency one-time funding for facility security needs related to specific, immediate crime threats to a facility and/or the individuals who use the facility will be considered.

- This emergency funding may provide a bridge between immediate needs and the regular Alberta Security Infrastructure Program grants, which will focus on longer term, structural facility enhancements.

Application information is available on Alberta's crime prevention page: www.alberta.ca/crime-prevention.aspx

City's new equity toolkit is first of its kind in Canada

The City of Edmonton developed a GBA+ and Equity Toolkit as part of the Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative to ensure planners consider equity and diversity when drafting zoning rules for the city.

"This is the first time a Canadian municipality has developed a formal practice to check if regulations may have unintended impacts on underrepresented groups," said Stephanie McCabe, Deputy City Manager for Urban Planning & Economy. "From The City Plan to our new GBA+ and Equity Toolkit, Edmonton is considered a true leader in advancing land-use planning and regulatory best practices."

As part of the GBA+ and Equity Toolkit, the City partnered with the University of Alberta to explore the intersections of equity, human rights and land-use regulation. Dr. Sandeep Agrawal, Professor and Director of the University of Alberta's School of Urban and Regional Planning, led the research. His team conducted a thorough review of academic literature, best practices, stakeholder interviews and relevant case law to gain insight into how equity can be embedded into municipal regulations, including the Zoning Bylaw.

"During the course of our research, we discovered long-standing equity issues embedded in Edmonton's land-use regulations," said Dr. Agrawal. "We have recommended a multidimensional, holistic equity approach to guide the City of Edmonton so that it can best apply equity and human rights considerations into its new Zoning Bylaw."

Engagement with Edmontonians from underrepresented communities also helped give insight into how land-use regulations create inequities. Participants' stories and experiences resulted in a number of recommendations for the toolkit and the Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative, including:

- Enabling mixed-use, mixed-income development
- Reducing the number of residential zones and permitting diverse housing typologies
- Reducing zoning complexity and improving public awareness and understanding
- Removing values around what defines family

"In developing the GBA+ and Equity Toolkit, community members identified how zoning can perpetuate communication barriers and creates challenges to affordable and diverse housing, accessibility, inclusion, public participation, safety, and connection transit, amenities and services," said Livia Balone, Director of the Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative. "The GBA+ and Equity Toolkit provides the City with a tangible opportunity to make improvements to the Zoning Bylaw through an equity lens, to identify and address inequities in our regulations and to ultimately offset disproportionate impacts felt by certain segments of

the population."

Other jurisdictions and professions from across Canada have reached out to the Zoning Bylaw team about the GBA+ and Equity Toolkit. The Cities of Ottawa, Victoria, Lethbridge, Saskatoon, St. Albert, Vancouver, Victoria and Winnipeg, in addition to the Government of Canada - Public Services and Procurement, are actively using the GBA+ and Equity Toolkit for their own work. The Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC) and Canadian Institute of Planners are sharing this resource to their members. This national exchange provides an opportunity for shared

learning and understanding around zoning, equity and human rights, with Edmonton and the Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative taking a front seat in the conversation.

The Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative is a multi-year comprehensive overhaul of the city's current Zoning Bylaw that includes a complete rethink on how, what, and why the City regulates in terms of zoning and land development. It will result in a strategic, simplified and streamlined Zoning Bylaw to enable people, places and businesses to thrive and prosper.

For more information:
edmonton.ca/zoningbylawrenewal

THERE'S
THE WAY
IT'S ALWAYS
BEEN DONE.

THEN
THERE'S
THE WAY
FORWARD.



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Our Opinion

It's time to slow down

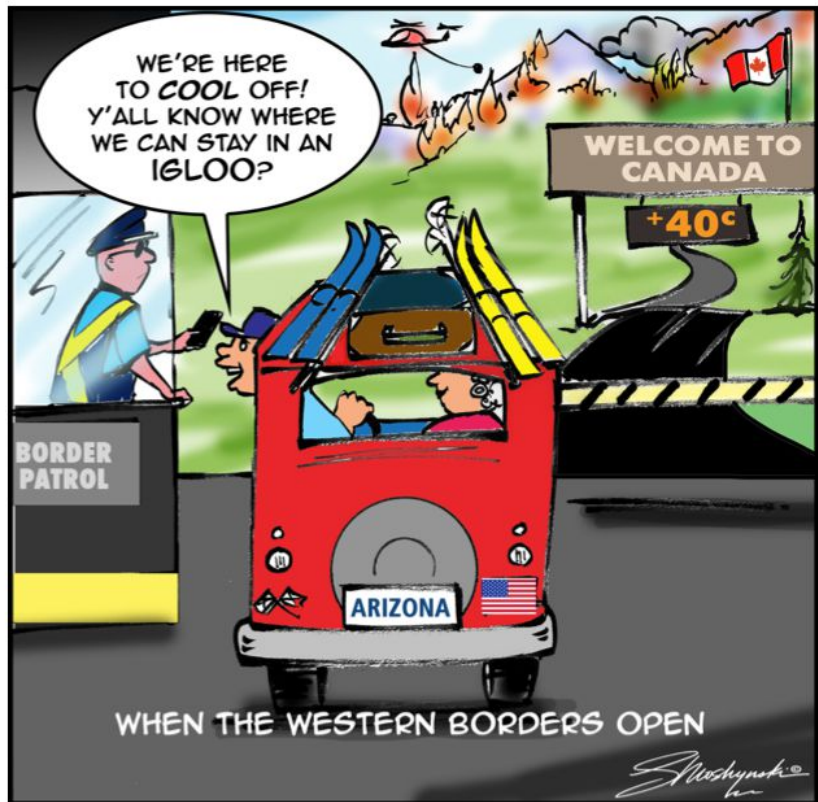
On August 6, the speed limit will change to 40 km/h on most residential and downtown streets of Edmonton. City Council has voted in favour of dropping the speed limit as a way to make streets safer for all users.

An extensive public education campaign has started to help Edmontonians become aware of the change and adjust their behaviours. Edmontonians are encouraged to be part of the change using the Safe Speeds Toolkit, a resource that includes community signage and shareable graphics to show support of the change to a safer speed limit in our communities.

But will the lower speed limit really make our streets safer?

Most pedestrians are injured on busy collector roads with speeds of 60-70 km/h that won't be affected by the change. What is more important than reducing the speed limit is changing the attitude and behaviour of drivers. There are too many drivers in Edmonton who think that they own the roads and can ignore the rules. They think that it is okay to barrel through a school zone or a playground zone, no matter what the speed limit is, but it is NOT okay.

So, take it easy, and be a responsible citizen. Slow down, and do your part to make our streets safer.



The weather in Alberta has been rather hot recently, but some people from other countries still think that it is always cold in Canada.

Cartoon by Susan Moshynski (www.bythebay.squarespace.com)

Experiencing a heat wave was a sobering experience

For three days straight in the last week of June, a record-breaking heat wave hit Lytton, British Columbia. Vancouver wasn't as hot as Lytton, but it wasn't too far behind. I stayed indoors and sat close to my electric fan the whole time, trying to keep cool. All our big windows and our doors were open but there was almost no relief.

I woke up every morning dripping with perspiration during that period. Sweating that much was something I've never experienced before in my thirty years in Canada. Not when I was hiking, working out or riding my bike. It just wasn't hot enough. Air conditioners were unheard-of in our house.

On June 29, 2021, the temperature in Lytton hit 49.6°C, shattering the record for the highest temperature ever in the history of the country. The previous record was 45°C, set in 1937 in Saskatchewan. This heat wave was blamed on a heat dome.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Service, heat domes are like a lid or a cap that traps hot ocean air in the atmosphere. A heat dome is essentially a mountain of warm air that prevents the weather from moving on.

News stories that followed the heat-wave were both scary and heart-breaking. Over 719 unexpected deaths occurred in BC during that period, a

number three times higher than the norm. A hospital ER employee who recounted his harrowing experience at the time said that the emergency parking lot in the hospital where he worked ran out of ambulance parking space.

Crisanta Sampang

*On
Second
Thought*



The morgue personnel had to store the extra dead bodies on the floor of the morgue.

Mussels, barnacles and other immobile sea creatures died by the thousands in the beaches of Vancouver, according to a marine biologist. All these were attributed to the recent extremely high temperature.

Environmental advocates and experts agree that global warming is a big problem now and it could only get worse.

The Centre for Climate and Energy Solutions (C2ES), a non-profit organization working to find practical solu-

tions to climate change, is projecting a scary future for the world. "Across the globe", according to the C2ES, "hot days are getting hotter and more frequent, while we're experiencing fewer cold days."

"By the middle of the 21st century, if greenhouse gas emissions are not significantly curtailed, the coldest and warmest daily temperatures are expected to increase by at least 5°F in most areas of the world."

In simpler words, we are heading straight into trouble. The earth is heating up. Global warming is happening right under our noses, but most people don't seem to be aware of it. Or even care. We just go through our daily lives merrily consuming energy and releasing carbon dioxide and other pollutants into our atmosphere.

And I'm just as guilty as any of my friends and relatives in this manner. Being aware of climate change and being conscientious about trying to help slow it down is a not an easy job. I do a lot of recycling, I don't drive if I can help it, but most of the time, I just give in because I want to get things done and get to places faster. I tell myself, I'll do better next time, but by the time next time comes along, I will be back into being in a hurry.

What exactly causes global warming and how dangerous is it?

Global warming occurs, according to the National Resources Defense Council, when air pollutants in the atmosphere absorb sunlight and solar radiation that have bounced off the earth's surface. These pollutants, which include carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, water vapor, and synthetic fluorinated gases, trap the heat and cause the planet to get hotter.

We are now starting to realize the disastrous effects of climate change: longer and hotter heat waves, more frequent droughts, heavier rainfall, and more powerful hurricanes. If not slowed down, global warming will just keep getting worse. We are already witnessing it today.

We may not be able to reverse global warming, but we can help slow it down. Conserve energy. Take public transit, or drive a car with low gas mileage. Do carpooling. Ride a bike. Walk more. Even work from home.

I have since decided to stop justifying my own careless actions that help heat our planet faster. I will contribute my bit for the health of our environment. Maybe others will take notice and do the same.

Crisanta Sampang is a Filipino-Canadian author and filmmaker who is living in Vancouver, B.C. She wrote the book Maid in Singapore in which she describes her experience working as a nanny.

Journey's End

It is summertime, and I am outdoors watching nature marching on, soon on its way to fall. Much that has bloomed until now will, far too soon, be laid to rest, transformed into something else. It makes me think of Benjamin Franklin's statement that "nothing is certain except death and taxes," and the proverbial 'circle of life', where everything has a lifespan. All living things will surely die, as will all inanimate objects, although their "death" will be significantly slower, like the ongoing erosion of mountains, or the disintegration of celestial bodies.

In the presence of this reality human beings often tend to focus on their voyage in life, and avoid contemplation of its dreaded and inevitable end. However, at some point, perhaps after a life-threatening event, or during one's senior years, we are likely to be confronted by the question: What should be done with us at the end of our life? In other words, barring any estate considerations, what should be done with our corporeal self?

Traditionally, human beings either buried their deceased, or cremated them. In either case, millennia-honed rituals helped people to mourn, and to accept the end of the deceased person's earthly journey. Nevertheless, death was often associated with suffering—pain, agony, or trauma—and therefore as something to fear or shun, despite its 100% inevitability. Perhaps because of that, people still avoid, or are uncomfortable when discussing it. Therefore, the question of one's eternal resting place is often left unaddressed, until the inevitable happens; the necessary and difficult decision is then left to loved ones, or, in their absence, to related public agencies.

The reluctance to decide between burial or cremation is understandable, however, not for the typically suspected reasons: fear, anxiety, or distaste. It is a difficult decision because of its inherent implications and consequences, and the permanency inherent to determining one's own "forever resting place." What are these implications?

Until recently, burial has been the more common approach. Its attraction is that one is clearly allocated a place of rest—a dedicated plot of land, typically identified with a long-lasting though not truly permanent headstone

or marker, and possibly some sort of feature, such as a statue, a commemorative plaque, a bench, etc. For most of us, these markers are typically placed

**Ron
Kuban**

**Time
Passages**



in cemeteries, some of which symbolize our earthly "tribe", the association with which, it has long been presumed, would continue past death. Furthermore, it has long been hoped that one's grave markers, whatever they are, would ensure one's immortality where generations to come would be able to remember one's name and deeds.

With respect, these long-held assumptions-cum-beliefs, may not be well-grounded (forgive the pun). Given our interconnected and integrated world, let alone intermarriages, the continuity of one's tribe into the forever afterlife raises a whole host of yet unanswered questions: What is the afterlife? Would one's earthly location truly make a difference, because if it does, what of those who are interned outside the tribal plot, not at a dedicated, faith-based cemetery? What should be our actual "footprint" on earth, the headstone we leave behind or the legacy of our actions and contributions? What about our continued environmental footprint, where our burial plot would eternally consume space that may otherwise be used by future generations? What of the likely contamination of the soil by the many embalming chemicals?

The other option, cremation, has become more acceptable over time, and more popular, if for no other reason than its significantly lower cost. It seems to appeal to those who are concerned by the ever-increasing space consumed by cemeteries. Unlike a burial plot, cremation allows one's remains to be placed in an urn, be cherished, and be easily transported by one's relatives or friends, or returned to nature when distributed at a chosen

site. The process is certainly more environmentally friendly, although not completely pollution free.

The apparent downside of cremation—a clear turnoff for some—is the thought of having one's remains burnt, which is clearly not the same as being burnt alive, or the idea that a loved one will literally be consumed by fire, which resembles the proverbial hell. Another likely consideration is the relatively more limited and less durable presence of a cremation urn, even when placed in a small vault, a memorial garden, or other space. However, for some, these options are less attractive than the longer-lasting or more prominent memorial of headstones or other markers. Some people, most likely at a subconscious level, also believe that gravesite markers help us as individuals and as a people

to recall (and retell) our history; obviously, cremation makes such a retelling of the existence and contributions of individuals less visible, hence potentially less attractive.

Clearly, the decision regarding one's final resting place is troubling, extremely emotional, and potentially stressful. It may also be influenced by many other factors, including pride, tradition, sense of self, and many long-held religious and cultural beliefs. Although difficult, the decision needs to be weighed carefully, and should not be avoided for two main reasons: First, to alleviate the pressure on others to make this key decision, and second, to become less-burdened by death and more focused on living life to its fullest.

Dr. Ron Kuban is a long-term community volunteer and activist.

Catholic Social Teaching is essential

Edmonton Catholic Schools Trustee Laura Thibert

The pandemic has turned our world upside down, and in doing so reshaped the way the Edmonton Catholic Schools (ECSD) Board of Trustees connected with its schools, staff, students, and parent/guardian communities over the past year. Both as a board and individually, the Trustees have continued to be responsive to the needs of the school community. Through the use of technology, we met virtually with our MLAs, government officials, and stakeholders to ensure they understood and responded to the needs of ECSD. We continued to provide a student perspective to improving the quality of education in the Division through on-line meetings with the Student Voice representatives. The technology also meant we were able to join our schools for celebrations and school council meetings. When it was deemed



Trustee Laura Thibert

safe to do so, we served our schools in a physically distanced manner, volunteering at hot lunches and school yard cleanups. We were challenged to dig deep and get creative to figure out ways to maintain connections and we persevered!

The discovery of 215 children in unmarked graves at the Kamloops Residential School, and the revelation of more graves at other residential school sites, has caused many Canadians to reflect deeply upon the impact of the events that occurred there. For a society that values equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism, the naming of buildings and spaces after historical figures whose actions are no longer considered acceptable in our modern culture has become a point of discussion and action. In our ongoing commitment to bring the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action to life, our Division felt incumbent to ensure that it was not honouring any aspect of the legacy of the residential school system, and further traumatizing members of the Indigenous communities we presently serve. At a special public meeting in June, the Board of

Trustees voted unanimously to rename Grandin School. Bishop Grandin's name and the mural depicting him have been removed from the exterior of the school building. ECSD will determine what the renaming process will be over the next few months. We would rather take time and do it well and honour the voice of our stakeholders so that the school has a positive journey with a new identity.

Catholic Social Teaching is a central and essential element of our faith. Edmonton Catholic Schools has a long and proud tradition of participation in acts of Christian charity, and in this spirit our schools were encouraged to take their children through a broad range of activities that allowed them to experience the many ways that they can make a difference in the world. The 2020-21 Social

Justice report which shares the stories of the transformative work performed at our schools was presented to the Board at the June public meeting. The Board is proud of how our students responded to the overwhelming needs in our world, and their desire to make things better. As the leaders of tomorrow, our students are aware that change begins with them. The report can be found on the ECSD website at www.ecsd.net.

Although trusteeship has looked a little different this year, we continued to make informed decisions in the best interests of our schools, staff, students and families. Wishing you a safe and enjoyable summer. I look forward to seeing everyone again in the Fall!

We all have an important role to play in success of students and I look forward to working closely with parents and government to ensure that this is an exciting and rewarding year. I encourage open communication and welcome your input on educational matters. You can reach me at 780-231-6312 or laura.thibert@ecsd.net. You can also connect with me on Facebook and Twitter @LauraThibert.

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Iran's new president Ebrahim Raisi has a bloody past

The June 18 election of Iranian chief justice, Ebrahim Raisi, as president of Iran - through behind-the-scenes manipulation by Supreme Leader Khamenei and his Council of Islamic Guardians - bodes ill for Iran and could lead to more political instability in the Middle East.

With Raisi's win, leading institutions - from the presidency, military to parliament and judiciary - have passed into the hands of militant clerics, shifting the country towards a one-party state.

Voter turnout in a population of 82 million was 48.8 per cent - a quarter lower than in 2017. "It was a protest vote ... against the political system," says Sanam Vakil, Iran expert at Chatham House. "... frustration that (Iranians) are no longer ... considered ... important to this process."

Khomeini-backed Raisi, promises without giving details to tackle inflation, create one million jobs annually, promote transparency, and fight corruption.

As proxy president, 60-year-old Raisi, who lacks experience in politics, governance and diplomacy, will protect the 82-year-old Khomeini's legacy and safeguard the interests of his son Mojtaba. The struggle between the hardliners and pragmatists, such as outgoing president Hassan Rouhani, may end.

Iranians' aspirations for a better life are now at odds with an unreformable regime. Iran's society remains divided,

with the tipping point in the regime's favour. Its totalitarian methods will increase schisms and instability, forcing more skilled Iranians to leave the country, thus stunting economic growth.

Raisi has a bloody past. In 1981, aged 20 and a regional prosecutor, he over-

and unchecked abuse of human rights. Billions were spent from the Persian Gulf to Iraq supporting Bashar al-Assad's brutal civil war in Syria and funding Hezbollah and other terrorist groups in Lebanon and elsewhere.

Raisi rose through the ranks of the judiciary, specializing in crackdowns on dissent, including the violent suppression of protests in 2009 and 2019. He became prosecutor-general in 2014 and chief justice in 2019 - the same year that he was placed on the U.S. sanctions list for his oversight of human-rights abuses, including the execution of juveniles and punishment by amputation.

He played a leading role in Iran's investigation into last year's downing of Ukrainian Airline Flight 752 by Iranian missiles, which killed all passengers, including 138

Canadian citizens or travellers to Canada. Iran refused to give Canadian investigators full access to the crash site, and concluded that the disaster was caused by human error.

What happened wasn't an accident. The governments of the victims should file claims, naming the regime as a defendant for perpetrating a terrorist act. A state sponsor of terrorism is fortunately an exception to the legal principle of sovereign immunity.

The U.S. government wants to reach a comprehensive agreement with Iran to roll back Tehran's missile program and curtail the influence of its regional militias. Raisi has said that he won't meet U.S. President Biden and that the

Iranian ballistic missile programme and its regional policies are "non-negotiable". Iran insists on a written commitment that no future American administration will withdraw from the deal.

Saudi Arabia, the UAE and many other governments mistrust the Iranian regime, sensing that it's determined to export its Shiite revolution. They want a solution that muzzles both Iran's nuclear program and its support to regional militias. Continued backing of Iran's proxy militias in Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Lebanon accentuates the spiral of tensions, conflicts and violence in the Middle East. Governments in NATO and beyond must stand with democrats in Iran, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and elsewhere throughout the region.

In short, it's difficult to see for now how Iran's new president on taking office next month will assist the cause of regional peace in any way.

This article was first published by the *Toronto Sun*.

David Kilgour, a lawyer by profession, served in Canada's House of Commons for almost 27 years, representing southeast Edmonton. He was Secretary of State for Africa and Latin America and Asia-Pacific. He is the author of several books and co-author with David Matas of Bloody Harvest: The Killing of Falun Gong for Their Organs.

**David
Kilgour**

**A Canadian
View on
World Events**



saw the crackdown on Baha'is, Payam Akhavan, an Iranian-born Canadian lawyer specializing in prosecuting war crimes/crimes against humanity, remembers his uncle being tortured to death. Raisi was a "fanatic" willing to follow any of Khomeini's orders.

In 1988, following the overthrow of the Shah Pahlavi monarchy, Raisi - now 33 - served on a panel of judges - the "Death Commission". Thousands were executed behind Evin Prison. Khomeini's model of religious fascism became - and remains - one of the world's most inhuman regimes. It has spent vast sums crushing dissent and imprisoning/executing dissenters. Its practices include rampant corruption

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PM announces first Indigenous Governor General for Canada

On July 6, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced that on his recommendation, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II has approved the appointment of Mary Simon as the next Governor General of Canada.

As Governor General, Ms. Simon will be the representative of Her Majesty The Queen in Canada. She will be Canada's 30th Governor General since Confederation, and the 13th Governor General appointed by Her Majesty during her 69 years on the throne.

Throughout her distinguished career, Ms. Simon has been a tireless advocate for Inuit rights and culture, and the rights of all Indigenous peoples. Over four decades, she has held various senior leadership positions, including President of Makivik Corporation, where she helped to protect and promote Inuit rights through the implementation of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. She also served two terms as President of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, now known as the Inuit Circumpolar Council, and as President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami.

As the first Canadian Ambassador for Circumpolar Affairs, Ms. Simon played a leading role in strengthening the ties between the people of the Arctic regions nationally and internationally, including through the creation of the Arctic Council. She is also the founder of the Arctic Children and Youth Foundation, and has served as the Ambassador of Canada to Denmark.

The selection was informed through the advice of the Advisory Group on the Selection of the Next Governor General. The group was mandated to deliberate and submit a shortlist of outstanding Canadians for the Prime Minister's consideration to fill the office.

"I am very pleased to announce that Her Majesty The Queen has graciously approved the appointment of Mary Simon as the next Governor General of Canada," said Trudeau. "Ms. Simon has dedicated her life to advancing social, economic, and human rights issues for Canadian Inuit and Indigenous peoples, and I am confident that she will serve Canadians and promote our shared values with dedication and integrity. Through this appointment, we are ensuring that Canada is represented by someone who exemplifies the very best of our country. I also join Canadians in thanking His Excellency the Rt. Hon. Richard Wagner, for serving as the Administrator of the Government of Canada the past few months."

Quick Facts

- As a constitutional monarchy with a parliament comprised of the Sovereign, the Senate, and the House of Commons, Canada's form of government is among the most stable and enduring in the world. With an evolving role that predates Confederation, the Governor General acts on behalf of the Sovereign, Canada's Head of State.
- The Governor General's responsibilities include carrying out constitutional duties, serving as commander-in-chief, representing Canada at home



"I can confidently say that my appointment is a historic and inspirational moment for Canada and an important step forward on the long path towards reconciliation." - Governor General Designate Mary Simon
Photo: Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (left) announced the appointment of Mary Simon as the next Governor General of Canada on July 6 at The Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau, Quebec.

Photo: Sgt Johanee Maheu, Rideau Hall © OSGG, 2021

and abroad, encouraging excellence, and bringing Canadians together.

Who is Mary Simon?

Mary Simon has attained national and international recognition for her work on Arctic and Indigenous issues and as an advocate for Inuit rights and culture.

Born in Kangiqsualujuaq, Nunavut (Quebec), Ms. Simon began her career as a radio broadcaster with the CBC Northern Service (now CBC North) in the 1970s. Following this, she held a series of executive positions with the Northern Quebec Inuit Association and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, centred on negotiating the first land claims agreement in Canada. As President of Makivik Corporation, she was directly involved with the implementation of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, and with the protection and promotion of Inuit rights under that agreement.

Along with fellow Indigenous leaders, she was actively involved in the negotiations leading to the 1982 patriation of the Canadian Constitution, which formally entrenched Aboriginal and treaty rights in the supreme law of Canada.

She later joined the Executive Council of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (now the Inuit Circumpolar Council), for which she served two terms as President. She was Commissioner of the Nunavut Implementation Commission and Policy Co-Director of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

From 1994 to 2003, Ms. Simon served as Ambassador for Circumpolar Affairs, becoming the first Inuk to

hold an ambassadorial position. During this time, she negotiated the creation of the Arctic Council. Concurrently, she served as Ambassador of Canada to Denmark from 1999 to 2001.

Beginning in 2006, Ms. Simon served two terms as the President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. In 2008, in the House of Commons, she delivered a response on behalf of Inuit to the formal apology on residential schools. She is the founder of the Arctic Children and Youth Foundation and, until 2014, she was the Chairperson of the National Committee on Inuit Education.

In 2017, as the Minister's Special

Representative, Ms. Simon delivered a report to the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs on A new Shared Arctic Leadership Model, setting the stage for important policy and program development in support of the Arctic and its residents.

Among other distinctions, Ms. Simon is an Officer of the Order of Canada, and an Officer of the Ordre national du Québec. She is also a recipient of the Governor General's Northern Medal, the Gold Order of Greenland, the National Aboriginal Achievement Award, the Gold Medal of the Canadian Geographical Society, and the Symons Medal.

www.pm.gc.ca



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Eagle feather tradition takes flight

The Edmonton Police Service (EPS) is adding the eagle feather, a sacred Indigenous symbol, to its policies and procedures to be more inclusive of the community it serves.

In Indigenous culture, it is believed that all things possess inherent power and wisdom, and the eagle is a powerful spiritual symbol signifying a connection with the Creator.

The eagle is seen as a messenger of the Creator who imparts wisdom and medicine, so its feathers are sacred gifts to be used reverently in ceremonies, to honour people, show respect, or to purify and pray for blessings.

The eagle feather has always held special significance for recently retired EPS Det. Eric Wilde, whose family originates from the northern Alberta Cree community of Desmarais.

Det. Wilde was passionately involved with the Indigenous community as an advocate and mentor over his 30-year policing career, but always felt that EPS needed to do more to be inclusive of the community's culture and traditions.

When eagle feathers were introduced into Alberta Courts for the swearing of oaths on Nov. 8, 2019, he saw an opportunity for EPS to use the feathers in a similar manner to show respect for Indigenous culture and move forward with reconciliation.

Not long after on Jan. 8, 2020, Det. Wilde brought this initiative forward to Chief Dale McFee and the EPS Leadership Team and received overwhelming support to amend EPS policy to include the use of an eagle feather for the swearing of oaths.

With the assistance of Andrea Levey, EPS Indigenous Equity Advisor, Det. Wilde began the journey of bringing together community members to fashion the eagle feathers in a way that would honour the spirit and traditions of the Indigenous peoples.



EPS Retired Detective Eric Wilde brought the Eagle Feather initiative forward.

Photo: Edmonton Police Service

As eagles are a protected species, Director Sue Cotterill with Alberta Fish and Wildlife helped obtain the eagle feathers for the initiative. Afterwards, Métis artisan Lisa Ladouceur added the beading, ribbons and sage to the feathers, and woodworker Roger Freeman crafted the cedar boxes to protect them.

Indigenous Elder Betty Letendre was sought out to assist with the cultural protocols of incorporating the eagle feathers into EPS operations, and later presided over a pipe ceremony to welcome the eagle feathers into the community on June 18, 2021.

Together, these community members helped create seven eagle feathers for EPS to use at each police division and in recruit training, and without their dedication and support this initiative would not have been possible.

Now new police recruits, witnesses and complainants have the option of swearing their oaths with a sacred eagle feather, Holy Bible, Noble Qur'an, or affirmation / solemn declaration. The feather can also be used for community ceremonies where appropriate.

Because the eagle feather represents truth, power and freedom, those who hold it must also speak the truth with honour and respect, so EPS will be training employees to understand its proper use and context.

It is hoped that the sacred eagle feather can provide grounding, connection and strength for all who use it, and help demonstrate the Edmonton Police Service's ongoing commitment to the community.

The eagle feathers were introduced at EPS locations on National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21, 2021.

www.edmontonpolice.ca

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AWESOME BLOCK AWARDS

Edmonton

Dog therapy returns to Grey Nuns Community Hospital

By Brenton Driedger

Stephanie Prien loves dogs of any kind.

"I've always had dogs all my life. I've gone from shepherds to Rottweilers to Yorki-Poos to wiener dogs to Malteses and mutts. I've had them all and loved every one of them just the same."

As a regular visitor to the Grey Nuns Community Hospital, Stephanie is grateful to be greeted at the entrance by Blu, a miniature Australian shepherd and pet therapy volunteer.

"He's an absolutely beautiful-looking animal, very calm," says Stephanie. "I think it cheers you up a little bit. My husband is dying of cancer and to be able to meet somebody both going in and out, it's nice."

Blu recently returned to the hospital after the pet therapy program had to be halted at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, Blu and his handler, Michelle Aberant, regularly visited patients on the fifth floor and in the emergency department. Now they're stationed outside the front entrance to interact with visitors, patients or staff who stop by.

Michelle says Blu has adjusted well to his return to work.

"For the first eight months, he didn't see anybody outside of our immediate family — just me and my husband and his dog sibling. Then he'd visit with all the seniors walking on the walking trail behind our house, and he got right into loving to do that again. So it was really natural for him to get back into pet therapy. He was right into it again."

Volunteer services manager Teresa



Staffing clerk Jacqueline Ward spends a few minutes with Blu.

Photo: Covenant Health

Lucier says there are two teams participating in dog therapy at the Grey Nuns hospital: Blu and Michelle and golden retriever Abbe with her handler, Ernie Tremblay. Both teams are members of the Pet Therapy Society of Northern Alberta. They plan to continue to do outdoor visits as long as the weather permits and until volunteers are allowed back on the units.

"It brings back a little bit of normal because the dogs were here pre-COVID-19 and now people can see the dogs again — in a different format, but they're still here. It puts a smile on people's faces when they come in. It makes

people feel a bit of relief from the stress and anxiety of coming to the hospital. Before they go into the hospital or when they come out, they can have that little bit of pet therapy and enjoy being around one of our furry friends."

As part of COVID-19 precautions, participants are masked and screened and asked to sanitize their hands before and after petting the dogs. Michelle says Blu is used to being around masks and hand sanitizer from his experience working in the intensive care unit. And even though it's a different environment, the benefits of pet therapy remain.

"It's a stress buster. It's just normal. It's a normal thing to be able to pet a dog. Even if they have to wear a mask and hand sanitize, they just get to pet the dog. I think that part of it brings some sort of stress relief to a stressful situation."

Michelle says studies show that pet therapy benefits include lowered blood pressure and heart rate and improved sleep. Additionally, dogs can detect and help relieve stress, she says.

"The dogs are very intuitive. They know that's happening, and they'll often go and just snuggle in for a couple of minutes and release that little bit of stress, even if it's only for five minutes."

Dog lover Dave Latta has been in the hospital for more than five months, and he enjoyed his recent outdoor visit with Blu.

"Even two seconds is worth it," says Dave. "Seriously, it makes you feel calm. It's nice to have that contact again. Especially if you're a pet owner or lover of pets, it's just nice."

As Blu rests in the shade between visitors, Michelle says they're both glad to be back helping patients again.

"He's loving life," says Michelle. "He's just happy to be working again. He's tired when he gets home, which is good. It's been good for both of us."

Brenton Driedger, a former broadcaster and journalist, works as a Social Media and Storytelling Advisor at Covenant Health.

This article was first published in *The Vital Beat*, a weekly newsletter published by Covenant Health.

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Important deadline looms for certain out-of-status foreign nationals in Canada

Certain individuals currently inside Canada with expired temporary resident status have until August 31, 2021 to apply for a restoration of their status as a worker, student, or visitor under an existing temporary policy.

The policy provides a temporary exemption from the usual requirement that a worker, student, or visitor must apply for a restoration within 90 days of their loss of their temporary resident status.

Introduced on July 14, 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the temporary public policy allows out-of-status individuals who are outside of the usual restoration window to apply for a restoration of their status as long as they had valid temporary resident status on or after January 30, 2020 and their status expired on or before May 31, 2021.

The government introduced this temporary policy recognizing that the pandemic may have caused some temporary residents to fall out of status by hampering their ability to submit complete extension applications in a timely fashion, or by making it difficult for individuals to arrange their departure from Canada.

The ability to apply for restoration of temporary resident has long existed in Canada's immigration regulations. In order to be eligible for a restoration of temporary resident status, an individual must continue to meet the initial requirements of their stay – such as satisfying the immigration officer that they continue to be a genuine temporary resident who will depart Canada when their authorization to remain in Canada comes to an end.

While some limited exceptions exist, a restoration is generally not available if the temporary resident has failed to comply with any of the conditions of their stay; for example, an individual who worked while having an expired work permit might not be eligible for a restoration.

A restoration fee of \$200 must be paid in addition to any applicable work permit or study permit application fees, and an applicant must remain in Canada until a decision on the restoration application is made.

The requirement that an application

as an additional grace period allowing them to continue as normal for an additional 90 days.

On the contrary, an individual should always try to avoid being in the 90-day restoration period because it means that temporary resident status has already been lost, usually resulting in significant personal upheaval. For example, once a worker's work permit expires he or she is immediately out of status and no longer has authorization to work – while the worker can apply for a restoration of his or her status as a worker if the aforementioned requirements are met, it is not until the approval of that application that temporary resident status and work authorization are regained.

While the current public policy temporarily facilitates interim work authorization for certain workers, it is important to recognize that individuals with expired work permits would normally have to stop working while they wait for the processing of their restoration applications.

As an individual does not have status or work/study authorization while waiting for the processing of a restoration application – and processing times for restoration applications can be lengthy, it is always preferable that temporary resident status be main-

tained by submitting an extension application prior to the expiry of the current temporary residence status document rather than applying for a restoration after those documents have been allowed to lapse.

For foreign nationals who have inadvertently or unavoidably fallen out of status, however, a restoration application often represents their final chance to regularize and regain their status – this is often a high-stakes application and individuals may wish to consult with an experienced immigration lawyer and must in all cases be careful to apply within the relevant eligibility period, either prior to the expiry of the temporary policy on August 31, 2021 or within the normal 90 day period which will again apply thereafter.

**Nathan
A. Po**

**Immigration
Lawyer
in
Edmonton**



for restoration be made within 90 days of losing status is one that would normally be strictly applied but is being suspended for applications received prior to August 31, 2021.

Significantly, the temporary policy has an additional benefit for recent work permit holders who are applying to restore their status as workers, providing them with a process to request interim working authorization so that they can resume employment while they wait for their restoration application to be processed.

In our experience, individuals sometimes have an incomplete understanding of what it means to be in the 90-day restoration period and misunderstand the effect of a restoration application. It is important to understand that the existence of a 90-day restoration period does not mean that temporary resident status is automatically extended by an additional 90 days beyond the expiry of the status document – we often see individuals who mistakenly treat the restoration period

Nathan Po is a partner at McCuaig Desrochers LLP, a general practice law firm with Edmonton's largest group of immigration lawyers (www.mccuaig.com). This article is intended to provide general information only and should not be relied on as legal advice or opinion.

Letters to the editor are welcome

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The MEADOWS
COMMUNITY LEAGUE

Titilope Sonuga named Edmonton's ninth Poet Laureate

On July 1, 2021, Titilope Sonuga became Edmonton's ninth Poet Laureate.

Titilope Sonuga is a poet, playwright and performer whose work grasps moments of tenderness and persistent joy at the intersection of blackness and womanhood. She is a leading voice in local and international poetry communities who has travelled extensively as an artist and facilitated adult and youth poetry workshops worldwide. She has served on various artistic and community boards in Edmonton and is the founder of the Breath In Poetry Collective. Sonuga is the author of three collections of poetry, *Down to Earth* (2011), *Abscess* (2014) and *This Is How We Disappear* (2019) and has released two spoken word albums, *Mother Tongue* (2011) and *Swim* (2019). She has facilitated numerous youth and adult poetry workshops locally and internationally. She has also penned three plays and has scripted global advertising campaigns for organizations such as The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Google, Intel Corporation, The World Health Organization, White Ribbon Alliance and The MacArthur Foundation.

"Since 2005 the City of Edmonton has been entrusting artists to observe and reflect our lives, our city, and our people through poetry," says Mayor Don Iveson. "I am delighted to welcome powerhouse local poet and community builder Titilope Sonuga to the role of Edmonton's Poet Laureate and



Titilope Sonuga is a poet, playwright and performer whose work grasps moments of tenderness and persistent joy at the intersection of blackness and womanhood.

Photo: Supplied

see how she transforms the role, and our city through her passion and stunning prose."

Supported by the City of Edmonton, the Edmonton Arts Council and the Edmonton Public Library, the role of Edmonton's Poet Laureate is to reflect

the life of the city through readings and poetry. As an ambassador for the literary arts, the Laureate brings poetry into a range of official and informal city events.

"As Poet Laureate, Nisha Patel has been a dynamic voice, exploring

diverse and challenging themes in her poetry. Her passion for mentorship has empowered emerging voices in Edmonton's literary community and has offered a unique lens on the stories that touch our city," said Edmonton Arts Council Director, Sanjay Shahani. "Titilope Sonuga will also bring a welcoming and inclusive spirit to the role. Her focus on healing and hope makes space for all Edmontonians to come together through poetry and is exactly what the City needs in this moment."

"EPL is excited to welcome accomplished poet, writer and performer Titilope Sonuga as our ninth Poet Laureate," said Pilar Martinez, EPL CEO. "Titilope's demonstrated success in building and healing community through spoken word is a remarkable asset to the role. We look forward to seeing her artistic vision come to light as she shares her poetic lens of Edmonton with us all."

Titilope Sonuga will serve a two-year term as Edmonton's Poet Laureate beginning July 1, 2021.

Keep informed about Titilope's work and events by following @deartitilope on Twitter and Facebook, @titilope on Instagram, and visiting her website titilope.ca.

The Edmonton Arts Council (www.edmontonarts.ca) is a not-for-profit organization that supports and promotes the arts community in Edmonton. The EAC works to increase the profile and involvement of arts and culture in all aspects of our community life.

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City releases joint plan to address racism and make Edmonton safer for all

The City of Edmonton, Edmonton Police Service and Edmonton Police Commission have developed a joint work plan to enhance community safety, well-being, inclusion and anti-racism in Edmonton.

Following public hearings on anti-racism, recommendations from the Community Safety and Well-being Task Force, and input from Edmontonians, Council directed Administration to return with a work plan on actions that could be taken in the short term. The work plan will be presented to Community and Public Services Committee on June 30, 2021.

This work plan identifies nearly 70 action items that are either currently underway or scheduled to begin by the end of the year, including:

- Intentionally building more diverse workforces through paid internships, new recruitment practices, and targeted outreach activities
- Increasing training on bias, anti-

racism and trauma

- Introducing policy development processes that build understanding and reduce bias

• Piloting a Community Outreach Transit Team to respond to situations involving overdoses, public intoxication, mental health crises, and other issues related to the safety and security of transit users

- Adding in-car video cameras for police officers

• Enhancing partnerships that divert vulnerable Edmontonians away from the justice system when possible

- Increasing public transparency about safety and well-being by developing an online reporting dashboard

"We want Edmonton to be a compassionate city where everyone has a sense of safety, well-being, trust and belonging," said City Manager Andre Corbould. "We believe the Edmontonians who told us there was more work to be done, and we are tak-

ing actions to make Edmonton that place."

"The Edmonton Police Commission is confident that the initiatives outlined in this report will help improve community safety and well-being and are committed to ongoing collaboration with our partners in pursuit of this goal," said Micki Ruth, Chair Edmonton Police Commission.

"Action is not possible without partnership, and through our work with the City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Police Commission we have identified tangible steps toward creating better outcomes for all Edmontonians," said Edmonton Police Chief Dale McFee. "This work plan emphasizes a human centred approach, focusing efforts on integrated solutions that will make the largest impact in our community."

Two other reports addressing community safety and well-being will also be presented to the Community and Public Services Committee on June

30, 2021:

- A report by RECOVER Urban Wellness highlights how well-being and design work strengthen well-being outcomes.

• A business case from the City and Edmonton Police Service to move toward a more integrated call evaluation and dispatch system. This system would include crisis diversion and mental health teams as well as police, firefighters and Emergency Medical Services personnel. The business case includes 47 recommended actions with targeted milestones over the next three years.

City Administration expects to outline additional engagement on longer-term plans and identify actions that can be taken in partnership with community agencies and others in additional reports scheduled for 2022.

For more information: Reports are available at edmonton.ca/meetings.

40 km/h default speed limit coming to Edmonton August 6 to make streets safer

On August 6, the speed limit will change to 40 km/h on most residential and downtown streets.

An extensive public education campaign has started to help Edmontonians become aware of the change and adjust their behaviours. Edmontonians are encouraged to be part of the change using the Safe Speeds Toolkit, a resource that includes community signage and shareable graphics to show

support of the change to a safer speed limit in our communities.

"40 km/h will make our streets calmer, quieter and safer," said Jessica Lamarre, Director of Safe Mobility. "The 40 km/h speed limit is critical to achieving Edmonton's goal of Vision Zero - to eliminate serious injuries and fatalities on our streets by 2032. 40 km/h increases drivers' field of vision, gives everyone more time to react and

reduces the likelihood of tragic crashes. Thank you for being a part of this change."

The City of Edmonton and Edmonton Police Service (EPS) work together to enforce speed limits and make Edmonton's streets safer for everyone.

"EPS supports the speed limit reduction to residential and downtown streets," said Keith Johnson, Inspector of EPS' Traffic Services Branch.

"While speeding and careless driving are traditionally the top neighborhood complaints we hear about, the nice weather and easing of pandemic restrictions will likely result in more foot traffic to the downtown core. The 40 km/h speed limit change to these residential and heavy pedestrian areas of the city will make our streets safer for everyone."

More info: edmonton.ca/SafeSpeeds

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Every year the Edmonton Police Service hires people from a wide variety of backgrounds; born in different cities, countries and speak a variety of languages. One common factor they have is the desire to serve the citizens of Edmonton.

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Income tax, GST, Canada Child Tax Benefit & property taxes

Each level of government - federal, provincial and municipal - collects taxes to pay for services such as roads, schools and health care.

Income tax

For each calendar year, you must submit a personal income tax return (form) by April 30 of the following year. In February, March and April, community organizations and immigrant-serving agencies may offer free information sessions on how to complete tax returns.

The amount of income tax you must pay depends on your taxable income. You must report all of your sources of income on your tax form.

If you are employed, you must allow your employer to deduct income tax from your pay and submit it to the Canada Revenue Agency. Your employer must mail a T4, *Statement of Remuneration Paid* form, to you each year by the end of February. It will include information about your employment income for the year and amounts deducted for income tax, Canada Pension Plan and employment insurance.

If you are self-employed or own a business, you must make arrangements to pay income tax directly to the Canada Revenue Agency.

In order to complete and file your tax return, you will need a tax package, which includes a general guide and forms book, an income tax return and schedules. You can get a free tax package at any Canada Post outlet from February to May or by contacting the Canada Revenue Agency.

The pamphlet *Newcomers to Canada* (T4055) explains the Canadian tax system and how to complete your first income tax return. To find out more about when and how to file your income tax return, go to www.cra-arc.gc.ca/newcomers.

After completing an income tax return, you may find that either you need to pay the government for additional taxes owing or you have paid too much tax and will get a refund.

Goods and Services Tax

The federal government collects a five per cent sales tax called the goods and services tax (GST). GST is added to the price of everything you buy except for basic groceries, rent, used goods and some services (for example, many health care and education services).

If your income is low, you may qualify for a goods and services tax/harmonized sales tax (GST/HST) credit. To receive this credit, you will need to complete the *GST/HST Credit Application for Individuals Who Become Residents of Canada* (form RC151). To continue receiving the credit, you (and your spouse or common-law partner) must file an income tax return

Welcome to Alberta

Important information for immigrants and other newcomers

for each year you are residents of Canada. For a copy of the application form, or for more information, see the website of the **Canada Revenue Agency** at www.cra-arc.gc.ca.

Canada Child Benefit

If you have children who are under 18 years of age, you may be eligible for the Canada child benefit. Parents who are eligible for this benefit receive tax-free monthly payments to help with the cost of raising children. The amount depends on your family's net income. To apply for this credit, complete a *Canada Child Benefits Application* (form RC66) and submit it, along with any required documents, to the Canada Revenue Agency. You may also need to complete and submit the *Status in Canada/Statement of Income* (form RC66SCH).

To find out more, read *Canada Child Benefits* (T4114). For a copy of this pamphlet or to order forms, visit the website of the **Canada Revenue Agency** at www.cra-arc.gc.ca.

Property tax

If you own a home, commercial building or land, you will have to pay property taxes to the municipal (local) government. The amount you pay depends on the value of your property and where you live. Property tax assessments are mailed to property owners once a year. Renters do not pay property taxes.

Residential Property Taxes in Edmonton

Property taxes help pay for civic services like police and fire protection, road maintenance and snow clearing, sewers, parks and swimming pools, public transit and neighborhood infrastructure.

All Edmonton residential property owners pay annual property taxes, which are due June 30 each year. Assessment notices are mailed early in January. Tax notices are mailed in late May.

Property taxes can be paid in full or in monthly payments.

Residential property taxes make up about 11% of the total revenue the City needs to pay for services, amenities and infrastructure. The remainder of all costs are paid for with revenue such as grants, user fees, development fees, and business / non-residential taxes.

Your property tax is made up of:

- A municipal portion – based on the budget City Council sets at the end of each year (about 65% of your total residential bill)
- A provincial education portion – the Alberta Government sends the City an invoice for the education tax. The City of Edmonton is required to collect this tax from property owners on behalf of the province. (about 35% of your total bill)
- Some residents (about 25% of all Edmonton properties) also pay local improvement charges.

Your share of the municipal taxes is determined by your Property Assessment.

Mailing the assessment notices early in the year allows homeowners to estimate their taxes that are due June 30 and to help budget for any increases.

For more information about property taxes in the City of Edmonton, visit the city's website at www.edmonton.ca, click on the link **For Residents** and then **Residential Property Taxes**, or phone the City's **Customer Services Office** at 311.

In the next issue of the Mill Woods Mosaic, we will provide information about health care, including registering for health insurance and getting additional health care coverage

Reprinted with permission from *Welcome to Alberta: Information for Newcomers*, produced by Alberta Employment and Immigration. Visit the Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website at alis.alberta.ca/publications to view or order your copy (free to Albertans).

Welcome to Alberta: Information for Newcomers is also available in eight other languages (French, Spanish, Farsi, Arabic, Mandarin, Amharic, Dinka and Punjabi). Translations can be downloaded from the website of the Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies at aaisa.ca/alberta.php.

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Resources for Temporary Foreign Workers

ALBERTA

Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan

www.health.alberta.ca

Alberta Provincial Nominee Program

www.alberta-canada.com/pnp

Alberta Temporary Foreign Worker Helpline

Call: (780) 644-9955 (Edmonton local calling area) or 1-877-944-9955 from anywhere in North America

Employment Standards

Call: (780) 427-3731 (toll-free in Alberta by dialing 310-0000 first)

Temporary Foreign Worker Advisory Office

North Location
2nd Floor, 10242 - 105 Street
Edmonton, AB
T5J 3L5

South Location
5th Floor, Century Park Place
855 - 8th Avenue S.W.
Calgary, AB
T2P 3P1

E-mail:

tfwadvisory.office@gov.ab.ca

To contact an advisor, call the Alberta Temporary Foreign Worker Helpline.

WCB Alberta

Call: Toll-free in Alberta
1-866-WCB-WCB-1
(1-866-922-9221)
Outside of Alberta 1-800-661-9608

E-mail: contactcentre@wcb.ab.ca

www.wcb.ab.ca

Workplace Health and Safety

Call: 1-866-415-8690

www.employment.alberta.ca/whs

CANADA

Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Call: 1-800-242-2100

www.cic.gc.ca

Service Canada

www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/workplace_skills/foreign_workers/index.shtml

Important addresses for immigrants and other newcomers

If you are new to Edmonton and don't know anybody, it can be tough to find a place to stay, a job, the right school for your children or good health care services, but there is plenty of help available.

Here are some of the main agencies specializing in helping immigrants and other newcomers in the Edmonton area:

Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers
11713 - 82 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5B 2V9
Tel. (780) 424-7709
Website: www.emcn.ab.ca

The Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers offers a wide variety of programs for newcomers and helps immigrants to find a place to live, a job and English classes.

Welcome Centre for Immigrants in Mill Woods
Suite 200, Tower II, Millbourne Mall
7609 - 38 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T6K 3L6
Tel. (780) 462-6924
Website: www.mwci-edmonton.net

The Welcome Centre for Immigrants in Mill Woods offers many programs and services for immigrants, including settlement assistance, language and educational counseling, employment assistance, citizenship classes, English classes, computer classes, public speaking classes, and youth programs.

Changing Together Centre for Immigrant Women
3rd Floor, 9538 - 107 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5H 0T7
Tel. (780) 421-0175
Website: www.changingtogether.com

Founded in 1984, Changing Together is a non-profit, charitable organization operated by immigrant women for immigrant women. Its mission is to help Edmonton and area immigrant women and their families overcome personal and systemic barriers that keep them from participating fully in Canadian Society.

Catholic Social Services
8212 - 118 Avenue NW
Edmonton, Alberta
T5B 0S3
Tel. (780) 424-3545
Website: www.catholicsocialservices.ab.ca

For more than 50 years, Catholic Social Services has welcomed immigrants and refugees to Alberta. The services are free and offered in both official languages and more than 50 other languages. In the Meadows, CSS runs a drop-in group for women of all ages and backgrounds. Participants connect through diverse activities like speaking English, sharing cultural experiences, learning to use computers and connecting with useful resources. The program, called Tea Connections, runs every Friday from 10 a.m. to noon, in the room of The Meadows Community League on the 2nd floor of the Meadows Community Recreation Centre, 2704 - 17 Street. For more information, contact Raminder Dhindsa at raminder.dhindsa@cssalberta.ca or 780-391-3204.

Family Futures Resource Network
5704 - 19 A Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T6L 1L8
Tel. 413-4521
Website: www.familyfutures.ca

The Family Futures Resource Network (FFRN) is a non-profit organization providing support to families and parents in the areas of early childhood education, child and youth, family and adult support and parent education. The FFRN has three separate

locations in Mill Woods: Millhurst Site (5704 - 19 A Avenue), Knottwood Site (1733 Mill Woods Road) and Millbourne Community Site (3756 - 78 Street).

Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative
9538 - 107 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5H 0T7
Tel. (780) 423-1973
Website: www.mchb.org

The Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative is a registered worker's co-operative with members from immigrant and refugee communities, providing culturally and linguistically relevant prenatal education, post-natal outreach, parenting support, family liaison and community development support to immigrant and refugee families.

Indo-Canadian Women's Association
9324 - 34 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T6E 5X8
Tel. (780) 490-0477

The Indo-Canadian Women's Association is a not-for-profit organization for enthusiastic volunteers committed to full participation of immigrant and visible minority women and men in economic, social and political life in Canada.

The Shaama Centre for Seniors and Women (formerly Multicultural Women & Seniors Services Association)
329 Woodvale Road West
Edmonton, Alberta
T6L 3Z7
Tel. (780) 465-2992

The Shaama Centre for Seniors and Women (SCSW) is a non-profit, organization. The focus is to provide service and programs for immigrant women and senior men and women. Program goal is to promote and enhance the well-being and self-reliance of seniors and women especially those at risk and isolated before a crisis situation occurs. SCSW provides social support, information sessions, and skill building classes, home and hospital visits, as well as translation, and referrals to other service providers. It also offers family support and crisis intervention. For youth, there are Urdu and math classes and homework help, and there is also an Urdu library with more than 2000 books. The SCSW is open from 9 am to 4:30 pm Monday to Friday.

Youth Empowerment and Support Services
9310 - Whyte Avenue (82 Ave.)
Edmonton, Alberta, T6C 0Z6
Tel. (780) 468-7070
Website: www.yess.org

The Youth Emergency Shelter Society is a not-for-profit organization serving young people between the ages of 15-18 who are in crisis, at risk or homeless.

Alberta Employment Standards
Edmonton Office - Main Floor Sterling Place
9940 - 106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta, T5K 2N2
Tel. (780) 427-3731
Website: www.employment.alberta.ca

Alberta Employment Standards is a provincial agency responsible for the administration and enforcement of employment standards in Alberta.

AES has publications available for temporary foreign workers and their employers to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under Alberta's employment standards and workplace health and safety legislation. These publications are available in Chinese, English, French, German and Spanish.

NorQuest College
10215 - 108 Street NW
Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 1L6
Tel. (780) 422-2020
Website: www.norquest.ab.ca

NorQuest College is a public college offering many programs, including English as a Second Language classes and employment programs for immigrants.

Alberta Health and Wellness
Edmonton Office
Telus Tower North, Main Floor
10025 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
Tel. (780) 427-1432
Website: www.health.alberta.ca

Alberta Health and Wellness answers any questions about health care and health care insurance coverage in Alberta.

Immigrant Access Fund Canada
45, 9912 - 106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 4M9
Tel. (Toll Free) 1-855-423-2262
Website: www.iafcanada.org

The Immigrant Access Fund provides micro loans to internationally trained immigrant professionals, trades people and skilled workers so they may obtain the Canadian licensing and/or training that will allow them to obtain employment in their field.

Other important phone numbers:

Edmonton Police Service

Emergency calls only 9-1-1
Police - Fire - Ambulance
Life & death, injury accident, crime in progress

Non-emergency calls (Dispatch) 780-423-4567
Report of suspicious activity, calls for assistance, advice, etc.

Poison Centre 1-800-332-1414

Hazardous Material Spills 9-1-1

Utility Trouble Calls Only:

Power Emergency 780-412-4500
Within Edmonton

Gas Emergency 780-420-5585
Edmonton & Area

Drainage Trouble 780-496-1717

Sewer Trouble 780-496-1717

Wastewater (odour hotline) 780-469-8176

Water Emergency Service 780-412-6800

The next issue of the Mill Woods Mosaic will be published on August 15, 2021. The deadline for advertising and editorial is Friday, August 6, 2021.

Schools should be safe and welcoming **Edmonton Public Schools Trustee Bridget Stirling**

This June, the Board of Trustees passed our new Anti-racism and Equity policy, replacing the former Multicultural Education policy, broadening the scope from simply what we teach to how we live our lives in schools. This policy is one piece of our response to the community's calls for Edmonton Public Schools to take action on racism through our work in schools. It marks an important milestone in the division's work to ensure every child and every family experiences school as a place where they can belong and feel safe.

Work on this policy began in 2015 with a preliminary review of policies across Canada, followed by work on an initial draft and then the formation of a community advisory committee made up of students, family members, community members, EPSB teachers and staff, and experts. Following the development of a version we felt comfortable bringing to the board for first reading, we then engaged in a series of Listening Circle conversations with groups of students, families, community members, relevant organizations, and EPSB teachers and staff, with translation support across multiple languages, along with a public survey, to reach the version finally passed at our public board meeting on June 22.

This feedback made some important changes in the final version. The policy includes requirements for continuing community consultation, accountability mechanisms, and a safe reporting mechanism for anyone experiencing racism in schools, providing strength to the policy implementation to follow.

And there is a lot of work to follow. We've already seen this policy shape our work on two other key pieces of policy review: our new Early Years policy, which recognizes the importance of students' cultural connections in early childhood development, and our Student Code of Conduct, which now not only clearly addresses racism both as a conduct

issue but also recognizes the complexity of students' lived experiences. Following this policy, an administrative regulation will be developed to establish the practical steps for implementation, and schools will revise their school handbooks to reflect this policy and the new Code of Conduct.

Further work is to come. We heard about the need to review human resources policies to address how systemic racism affects workers in schools. That work is beyond the scope of a student policy; however, the incoming Board of Trustees following the October school board election will take up this next step as well as continuing the work of understanding how to collect and use race-based data appropriately to support students in their learning.

Schools should be a place where every student, every family, every teacher and staff member, and every visitor feels safe and welcomed. As a Division and Board of Trustees, we are committed to the continuous action, learning and improvement that is essential to building anti-racist and equitable learning and working environments. We acknowledge racism does exist in our Division and this must change. We are committed to working to bring about systemic change.

As an institution, we must work together to create safe learning spaces that are diverse and equitable. The diversity in our schools is a strength. That strength is built upon a respect for diverse cultural perspectives, traditions, languages, beliefs and values. As we seek to help build a better world for future generations, we know our students, staff and families are poised to be the catalysts for this growth and meaningful change.

As always, and for a few more months, I'm honoured to serve as your Edmonton Public School Board Trustee for Ward G. You can contact me at bridget.stirling@epsb.ca or 780-429-8086.



Trustee Bridget Stirling

What's up?

Community events in Mill Woods

After more than one year of COVID-19 restrictions, Alberta is now in Stage 3 of the Open for Summer Plan. All public health measures have been lifted except in specific settings.

Mask use in public indoor settings is no longer required except for some specific situations:

- working in or visiting any continuing care facility, as well as any facility operated by Alberta Health Services, Covenant Health or their contracted service providers
- using public transit, including ride share vehicles, taxis, motor coaches and shuttles

Note: Municipalities and businesses are free to set masking requirements as they see fit. For example, businesses may require staff and/or customers to wear masks inside their place of business.

While masking is no longer required in most situations, it is important to support those who may wish to continue wearing masks while adjusting to Stage 3.

All other public health measures have been lifted. This includes all restrictions on:

- social gatherings - there are no longer capacity limits on either indoor or outdoor gatherings
- recreation, performance and entertainment activities
- business closures and capacity restrictions
- large events, including concerts, sporting events, exhibitions and festivals

Sustained reopening will require Albertans to get fully vaccinated with 2 doses during the summer to prevent future spread. COVID-19 vaccines are safe, effective and save lives.

For more information, visit the website of the Government of Alberta at www.alberta.ca or www.albertahealthservices.ca.

Do you have a community event in Mill Woods to announce? Please send us the information, and we will include it in this community calendar in the next issue of the Mill Woods Mosaic. Tel. (780) 465-7526 or e-mail to: mwmosaic@telus.net. The next deadline is Friday, August 6, 2021.

**Do you have
any story ideas
for the *Mill
Woods Mosaic*?
Give us a call at
780-465-7526
or e-mail to
mwmosaic@telus.net**

***Mill Woods
Mosaic***

Serving our Communities of Old Strathcona & Surrounding Area Since 1960

**South Side
Memorial Chapel**
by Arbor Memorial
8310 - 104 Street, Edmonton, AB
780-432-1601 • www.southsidememorial.com

Our Team: Eden Tourangeau ♦ Kristie Tourangeau ♦ Janelle Caouette

A touch of home at new workplace

By Lisa Brunelle

Dr. Michele Harvey-Blankenship was surprised to see a powerful link to her family when she stepped off the elevator for her first visit to the Child Health Clinic at the Grey Nuns Community Hospital. Hanging on a wall outside the clinic is a larger than life-sized mural her mother painted in 1986.

"I had no clue mom's mural was there," says Michele. "I saw it and thought, my mom is here!"

For Michele, who started working at the Grey Nuns hospital on June 15, the mural is a reminder of her family every time she heads into the clinic.

The painting takes Michele back to her childhood, her parents' tenacity in going on a family sailing trip for a full year in the 1980s, and her mom's commitment to the art she loves. Her father is also connected to the hospital as he served as an orthopedic surgeon before and after the sailing trip.

Michele's mom, Maureen R. Harvey, donated the triptych (three part) mural, *Green Flash* to the hospital in 1990 because her husband worked there, and to support a child clinic. Inspired by the family's year-long sailing trip, the mural features an amalgamation of children they encountered.

"The painting is about the empowerment of love, dignity and respect. It allows the viewer to search for the impossible in the ordinary," says Maureen.

She says the mural's home outside the Child Health Clinic is a perfect fit.

"My hope is that the painting will be a stress reliever for the children and their caregivers who come to the clinic and to the staff who work there," says Maureen. "I hope it lifts up the spirits of everyone who sees it."

Michele and Maureen are grateful to the hospital for taking such good care of the painting and for finding it such an appropriate home.

Michele is working part-time as a general pediatrician at the Pediatrics for Kids in Care, also known as the foster care clinic. Her career has included work in international human rights, forensic pediatrics and general pediatrics with a focus on vulnerable and high risk families.

"I'm looking forward to continuing a multi-disciplinary approach to providing health care to children with complex needs," says Michele.

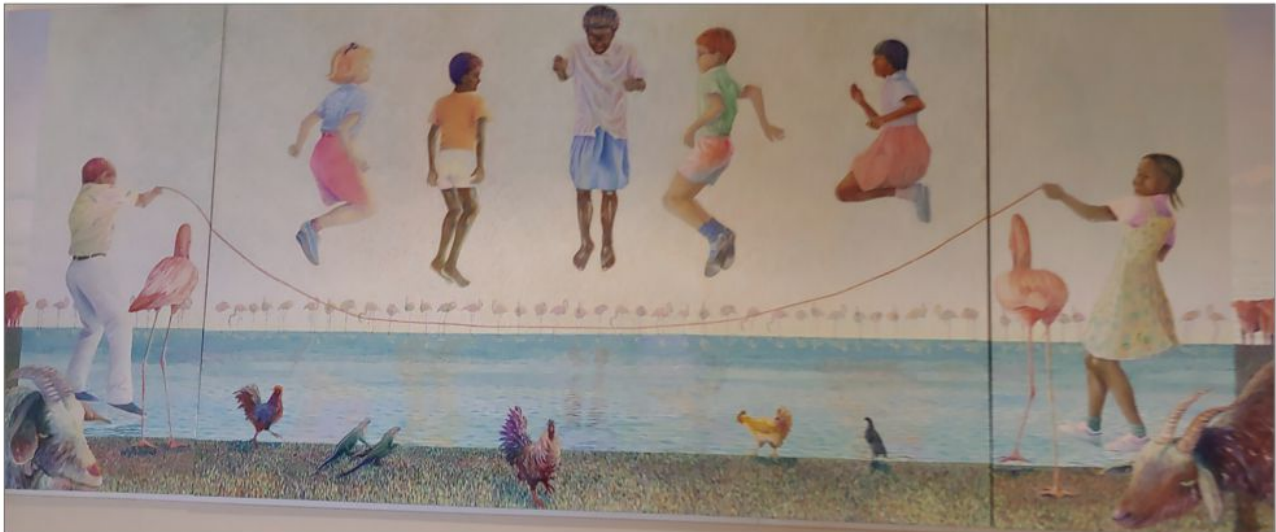
Lisa Brunelle works as a communications advisor at Covenant Health.

This article was first published in *The Vital Beat*, a weekly newsletter published by Covenant Health.



At 82, Maureen R. Harvey still paints and sketches.

Photo: John Harvey



The three-part mural "Green Flash", which was painted by Maureen R. Harvey in 1986, is displayed on a wall outside the Child Health Clinic at the Grey Nuns Community Hospital in Mill Woods where Maureen's daughter, Dr. Michele Harvey-Blankenship, works as a physician.

Photo: Bonnie Ford