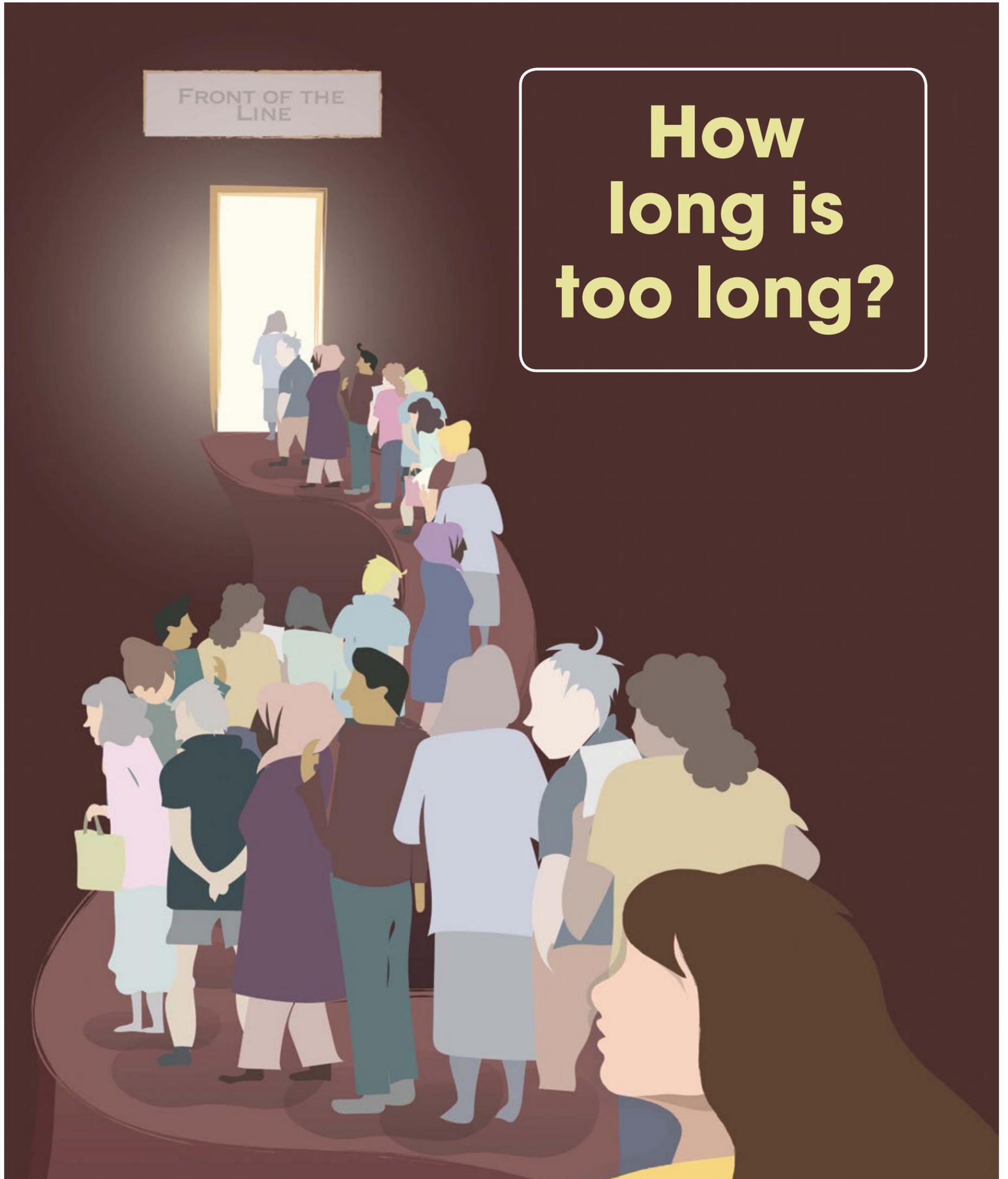


# THE **U** N I T E R

MANITOBA BEACHES' MOONLIGHT SPECIAL—P4

PROFESSORS DONATE TO TRUCKER PROTEST—P12

WANING RESOURCES FOR EATING DISORDERS—P14



## WAIT TIMES FOR MENTAL HEALTHCARE IN MANITOBA NEED TO BE ADDRESSED



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ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

# SEARCHING FOR SOLACE

THOMAS PASHKO  
MANAGING EDITOR

THOMASPASHKO

I think if you ask anyone in the Ukrainian-Canadian diaspora how they're doing, most of us will tell you that the last two weeks have been among the worst, most stressful periods of our lives. That's certainly been the case for me.

Since Russia drastically ramped up its invasion of Ukraine, indiscriminately bombing cities and massacring civilians, I haven't really stopped feeling sick. Sick with worry for loved ones, sick at the images of violence, sick at watching helplessly from afar as an imperialist invader systematically destroys a place that is sacred to me.

In this time, I've been trying to find tiny bits of comfort wherever I can. Nothing can really make the worry and hurt disappear, but every little moment of levity helps. This past Monday, I made tacos for dinner. It's a small comfort, but it was the first time I'd had the motivation to cook a proper meal in days, and squeezing a lime into a batch of homemade refried beans was a brief, fragrant distraction.

That evening, I ducked out of my apartment to catch a movie in the theatre. I'd been avoiding seeing anything in the theatre since the Omicron surge began, but I needed an excuse not to look at my phone or cable news for two or three hours.

During my workday, I've been listening to cheesy 1970s easy listening music. It's certainly not my go-to genre, but there is something soothing about surrendering to the sounds of Elton John or Smokey Robinson like I'm slow-dancing at a sock-hop in 1978.

My problems are nothing compared to the horrors many are experiencing on the other side of the world. As such, it's important to take solace wherever I can get it. This week, that means tortillas and "Tiny Dancer."

Students and academics react to the news that several Manitoba university instructors donated to the so-called "Freedom Convoy," an anti-vaccine protest that welcomed white supremacists and conspiracy theorists. Read more on page 12.

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Submissions of articles, letters, graphics and photos are encouraged, however, all new contributors (with the exception of letters to the editor) must attend a 45-minute volunteer orientation workshop to ensure that the volunteer understands all of the publication's basic guidelines.

**In-person volunteer orientations are currently suspended due to COVID-19, but over-the-phone and remote orientations can be arranged. Please email [volunteer@uniter.ca](mailto:volunteer@uniter.ca) for more details.**

Deadline for advertisements is noon Friday, six days prior to publication. The Uniter reserves the right to refuse to print material submitted by volunteers. The Uniter will not print submissions that are homophobic, misogynistic, transphobic, ableist, racist or libellous. We also reserve the right to edit for length/style.

# ALL ABOARD THE MOONLIGHT SPECIAL

The secret history of beach travel in Manitoba

CIERRA BETTENS | ARTS AND CULTURE EDITOR |  FICTIONALCIERRA  CIERRABETTS

*“The story of the Moonlight Special could be heard in song hits that dance bands blared over the years. Men in flannels and white sweaters, girls in summer dresses danced to the soft strains of ‘Let Me Call You Sweetheart,’”* states an article in the *Rivers Gazette* from Nov. 15, 1951.

Today, Manitoba’s beaches are generally only accessible by car. However, that wasn’t always the case.

From 1916 to 1956, hundreds and occasionally thousands of Manitobans hopped aboard an evening train that took them to Grand Beach and Winnipeg Beach. Known as the Moonlight Special, the trains opened beach and cottage life up to Winnipeggers before the rise of the automobile.

The Moonlight Special operated through two world wars. For many Winnipeggers at the time, it was a one-way ticket to the dance pavilion at Winnipeg Beach, which brought lovers together with rhythmic ballads. Just 50 cents allowed a round trip by rail, and a night of dancing could be purchased for an extra nickel.

Barbara Lange spent years compiling an oral history of the Moonlight Special for her book *Memories of the Moonlight Special and the Grand Beach Train Era*. Doing so was Lange’s way of preserving the bygone era.

“I was quite astonished to find out how many generations of people owe their existence to the fact that their parents, grandparents or great-grandparents met on the trains, on the Moonlight,” Lange says.

“When I’m talking to these seniors and mention the Moonlight Special train, their eyes would just start twinkling, as if they’re thinking back to those times.”

Though many couples who met on the trains have since passed, romantic folklore is preserved by stories passed down through generations.

“There’s almost a mythology built up around the experience,” Dale Barbour, a historian and author of *Winnipeg Beach: Leisure and Courtship in a Resort Town, 1900-1967*, says. “It was a chance for couples to get together after the dance. There was always a sort of talk that the lights switched off so people could be in the dark together.”

Indeed, as a *Winnipeg Free Press* article from July 1950 titled “YOUNG HOOLIGANS ON BEACH TRAINS GET WARNING” reported, a judge once fined a youth rider \$25 for “turning out lights on a moonlight train.”

The Moonlight Special’s allure began declining against the rise of the automobile. What used to be a treacherous journey to Winnipeg and Grand Beach became smooth riding with the construction of Highway 59, Lange says.

However, one strange event also contributed to its demise: on Labour Day of 1950, the dance pavilion, which was a staple of the Moonlight experience, mysteriously burnt down. By 1963, the railways were dug up for good.

What remains of the Moonlight Express are the memoirs of a bygone era, passed on



An advertisement for a boardwalk dance from the May 21, 1920 issue of the *Manitoba Free Press*

through generations – many of which can be traced back to the late-night trains.

“The railroads made them exciting,” Barbour says. “You’d have the trains showing up, you’d have hundreds of people flowing off these trains ... the trains could create the moment.”

Barbara Lange’s book *Memories of the Moonlight Special and the Grand Beach Train Era* can be purchased at McNally Robinson Booksellers.

# PTE LAUNCHES TWO NEW STREAMING PROJECTS

Productions experiment with digital mediums

CIERRA BETTENS | ARTS AND CULTURE EDITOR |  FICTIONALCIERRA  CIERRABETTS

Whether dystopian audio dramas or animated serials are your jam, the Prairie Theatre Exchange (PTE) has you covered.

After postponing in-person performances, PTE announced the March release of two digital projects. *Places We Go*, an episodic series, streams from March 1 to 31 and is followed by *A Dance to the End of the World*, an audio drama available from March 14 to Apr. 10. Both are free of charge and can be enjoyed anywhere with an internet connection.

Hazel Venzon and her husband, illustrator David Oro were approached by PTE’s artistic director, Thomas Morgan Jones, to commission a digital show.

“The criteria was that it should be beautiful, hopeful and digital and be offered as an episodic,” Venzon says. “I brought it to David, and he was the first one to say ‘we should do *Places We Go*.’”

Several years ago, when Venzon lived in Yukon, she was asked to tell a Filipino folk tale at a children’s literacy event. After having difficulty translating folk stories from Tagalog into English without sacrificing the cultural nuances, Venzon decided to take a different route.

She made one up.

Inspired by her cousin’s story of being separated from her family in the Philippines for six years, Venzon created *Places We Go*, which is told from the perspective of a young Filipina girl whose nanay (mother) works in Winnipeg.

“This girl is eight years old. She wakes up and chooses to buy her mother a birthday present, which is a plane ticket back to Manila,” she says. “The challenges that she finds are essentially the issues around poverty in the Philippines.”

“She learns the lesson, for the first time, that money can’t buy you love.”

The oral story of *Places We Go* toured through different mediums, languages and cities. Its latest installment at PTE features illustrations by Oro, Venzon’s voice acting and sound design by RP Singh.

The vision behind Jones’ project *A Dance to the End of the World* started a decade ago after Jones read a book about the bubonic plague. Ripe with metaphor, the audio drama critiques power relations through the tale of a pre-modern plague.

“It acts as a really interesting metaphor



A still from *Places We Go*, an original Filipino folk tale written by Hazel Venzon and illustrated by David Oro

for government, capitalism or larger structures that inform who has power (and) how they exert power,” Jones says.

The project will be released as an audio play with accompanying digital illustrations. Shifting to the virtual realm allowed PTE to explore new ways to tell stories while expanding audience accessibility, Jones says.

“My main focus over the last number of years was to continue to tell stories and

continue to reach people with stories,” Jones says.

“We say things like ‘digital production,’ but there are so many different ways that you can do that. For every way there is to do it, there’s an audience who prefers that or is only able to exclusively interact with that.”

To stream *Places We Go* and *Dance to the End of the World* free of charge, visit [pte.mb.ca](http://pte.mb.ca).



# PROMOTING MUSIC WITH (REAL) LOVE

## Real Love Winnipeg celebrates 10 years

ISABELLA SOARES | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | [BELLASOARES0601](#) [@BELLA\\_SOARES16](#)

For emerging and established artists, getting the word out about upcoming gigs is the secret ingredient for a great show. Real Love Winnipeg recognized this need and now works to build community between music lovers and makers.

To celebrate their tenth anniversary, the concert promotion company is presenting a three-day concert showcase that will run on March 25, 26 and 31 at the Good Will Social Club and the West End Cultural Centre.

Founded by Adam Soloway and Gil Carroll, Real Love started out with a small project called Beach Station Blues, a series of compilation albums filled with tunes that were created by emerging bands in a studio at Winnipeg Beach. From there, the company transitioned to concert promotion and festival planning.

"We started putting out concerts with the bands involved in those compilations, as well as different bands that we met along the way. In 2014, we were asked to do our first festival in Gimli. It all just blossomed from there," Carroll says.

One of the bands involved in the Beach Station Blues initiative was alt-indie local group Slow Spirit.

"They helped us put out our first album release show at the Good Will Social Club, and it was a very beautiful event," Slow Spirit singer/bassist Natalie Bohrn says.

The band is included on the lineup for Real Love Winnipeg's 10-year anniversary concert series. Slow Spirit plans to play their popular tracks, as well as a couple of fresh tunes from pandemic songwriting sessions.

"Real Love has done such a great job connecting the Canadian and the American music community with travels and opportunities to meet people, as well as putting on shows for artists to come to Winnipeg and build a network," Slow Spirit guitarist/saxophonist Eric Roberts says.

A surprise addition to the show lineup is the inclusion of Living Hour, a band that includes Real Love's founding members.

"It's pretty rare for Living Hour to be performing at a Real Love event, because we are so busy promoting opposed to performing, but we thought it would be appropriate to perform for the 10-year event, because it would be special to celebrate how our music developed alongside Real Love," Carroll says.

For Carroll, one of the major takeaways from working with Real Love was having a



ERIC ROBERTS (SUPPLIED)

Local band Slow Spirit has been working with Real Love Winnipeg since the release of their first album.

well-rounded understanding of the process of coming up with events and making sure everything is aligned.

"By booking a lot of shows and focusing on our music scene, we always try to make opportunities for up-and-coming artists to put together their own show or open for another band. We have learned a lot through-

out the years about how to put a build together or the best venues for a certain type of music. We are very lucky to have this gig," Carroll says.

**For more information about the 10-year anniversary shows, visit [reallovewpg.com](http://reallovewpg.com).**

# RWB DANCER RETURNS FOR *THE SLEEPING BEAUTY*

## Catherine Wreford Ledlow is back as The Queen

ISABELLA SOARES | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | [BELLASOARES0601](#) [@BELLA\\_SOARES16](#)

To live life to the fullest is to focus on your passions as if there were no tomorrow. After receiving a brain cancer diagnosis in 2013, dancer and former Broadway performer Catherine Wreford Ledlow decided to return to Winnipeg and take a second shot at dance.

"When I was diagnosed, I hadn't been doing any dance for nine years. I was running a mortgage company in LA, and I became a nurse. I just had my life on a totally different page. When I started treatment, I thought about the two to six years (life expectancy) and what I wanted to do, which was to perform again. I had to meet that long-term goal one day at a time," Wreford Ledlow says.

Now, in 2022, she is back on the Royal Winnipeg Ballet (RWB) stage for another anticipated production: *The Sleeping Beauty*. After performing as Lady Capulet in the 2019 *Romeo and Juliet* ballet run, Wreford Ledlow says returning to the RWB stage was even more home-like this time around.

"My son started taking classes at the RWB, so being there more often and showing up on Sundays when he is studying musical theatre and seeing everyone there feels like home to me," she says.

"Having Catherine with us, she comes into the studio with that quintessential RWB energy of dancers loving to dance, that you can't help but feel motivated," Tara Birtwhistle, the associate artistic director of

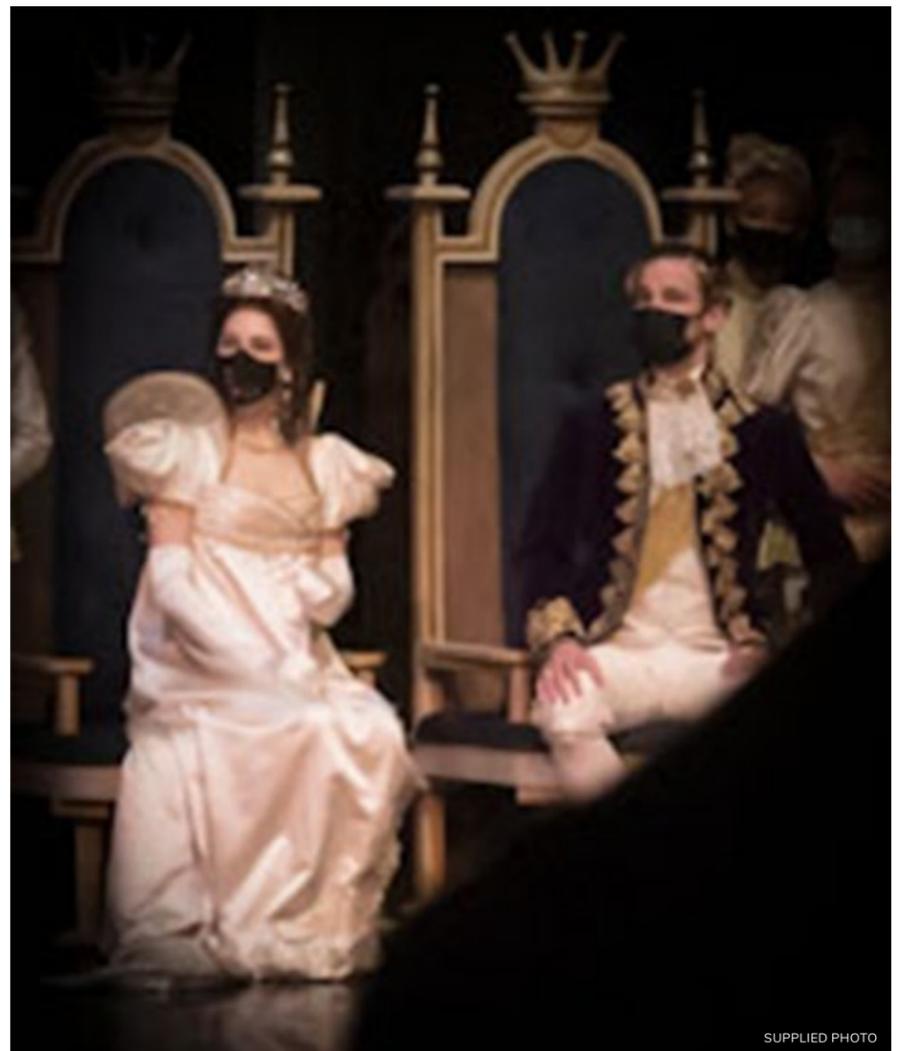
the RWB, says.

Taking dancers and patrons' safety into account, *The Sleeping Beauty* performance was pre-recorded for audiences to watch from their homes as the ballet company eases back to in-person shows. Although there were different angles to explore, the goal during the filming process was to emulate a regular performance night.

"Filming ballet is different from performing onstage. Dancers are trained to do well once, leave the stage and do it again the next day. It's very different on film, because there is no audience to feed off from. It was very important for me to work with the production company and make sure that they captured it very well once. If there was one thing or another to fix, we would run it again," Birtwhistle says.

This pre-taped presentation also includes only one group of dancers, as opposed to having more than two sets of performers per production. Taking centre-stage alongside Wreford Ledlow is Liam Caines as The King, Alanna McAdie as Aurora, Yue Shi as Prince Désiré, Stephan Azulay as Carabosse and Elizabeth Lamont as Lilac Fairy.

With Marius Petipa's choreography to the sound of Tchaikovsky's composition, Birtwhistle pinpoints *The Sleeping Beauty* as the ideal ballet variation to admire and soak in during moments of distress.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet's production of *The Sleeping Beauty* is available on demand.

"*The Sleeping Beauty* is the joy of true dance and being swept away to a time when things were simpler and vast in beauty," she says.

***The Sleeping Beauty* is available on demand until March 13 for \$40 per household. Tickets can be purchased at [rwb.org](http://rwb.org).**



SUPPLIED PHOTO

# ORIGIN STORY: HEATHER BISHOP

Folk singer decorated for activism in song

ARMANDE MARTINE | FEATURES REPORTER | [1MANDE7](#)

When Heather Bishop relocated from her hometown of Regina to Manitoba in 1975, it was a career move for the folk singer – one that turned out to be highly successful.

“Winnipeg was the heart of folk festivals in Canada, if not also influencing the US. I was thinking of launching a music career, and Winnipeg seemed like a good kickoff place,” Bishop says.

Bishop’s activism in song has been decorated on multiple occasions. Among many awards, she has received the Order of Canada, the Order of Manitoba and an honorary doctorate of laws.

As a young adult, Bishop debated between a career as a visual artist or one as a veterinarian.

“Vet school was in Saskatoon, and I had no money, so that made my decision. I went to art school in Regina,” she says.

After obtaining a fine-arts degree, Bishop realized it was difficult to make a living as a visual artist. She decided instead to pursue a different art form she had studied as a child: music.

While in university, Bishop was in an all-women’s dance band called Walpurgis Night.

“We traveled all over Saskatchewan,

singing at all kinds of weddings and country dances. We did old-time music, and when the crowd got pretty drunk, then I could sing the blues,” Bishop remembers.

From there, a solo music career didn’t seem like a big leap.

“The music that really inspired me was the music that came from the people who were telling the truth about their lives, about what the world was like. So my heroes were Buffy Sainte-Marie and Nina Simone. Not surprisingly, *People of Colour*,” Bishop says.

Wanting to imitate her musical heroes, Bishop was faced with the dilemma of maintaining integrity within her own music. As a lesbian, that meant she had to tell her truth – which was risky at the time, since homosexuality had only recently been decriminalized in Canada.

“I wasn’t going to go on stage and pretend to be someone I wasn’t. My career (was) going to last about five seconds, but (I had) to do (it). My activism, as a person who stands for truth and integrity, was the cornerstone of moving into music,” she says.

Bishop had always wanted to live in the countryside. In 1978, she bought land close to the United States border in Woodmore, Man.

“It’s not on any map. That’s one of the things I like about it,” Bishop says.

Bishop retired as a musician about 10 years ago. A woman of many hats, she uses her carpentry skills on her organic farm. In summer, she can be found building greenhouses or homes for extended family members who live on the organic farm turned small community.

In the wintertime, Bishop writes short stories for pleasure.

“I have no trajectory for those. I’ve been approached many times about writing my story. Why? Who would be interested?”

Bishop has several nuggets of wisdom to impart to emerging artists.

“In terms of following a passion or pursuing an art form, make sure that you pursue your skill’s development at the same time if you want to make a living from it,” she says.

“You create your own life. You create your reality. Act as if it’s already there.”

## ARTS BRIEFS

CIERRA BETTENS | ARTS AND CULTURE EDITOR | [FICTIONALCIERRA](#) [@CIERRABETTS](#)

### McNish: *Variety of Connections*

The latest exhibition at the cre8ery gallery (125 Adelaide St.) features work by visual artist Marilyn McNish. *Variety of Connections* is a collection of realist paintings that capture the beauty of the natural world. The show runs from March 17 to 29. Visit [cre8ery.com](#) for hours and more information.

### The Festival of Fools is back!

The Festival of Fools, presented by the Winnipeg International Children’s Festival, is back with fun and foolishness for all. Circus workshops, performances and dance extravaganzas are included in the festivities, which run March 26 to Apr. 1 from 12 to 2 p.m. on the second floor of The Forks Market.

### The Prairie Joggers at the Daughter

This Saturday, March 18, folk-rock duo The Prairie Joggers with guests Scott Nolan and Jason Willows will perform at The Handsome Daughter (61 Sherbrook St.). Doors open at 8 p.m., and the music starts at 9 p.m. Advance tickets can be purchased via [bit.ly/3hU18DP](#).

### Opening reception: *Feast, Famine*

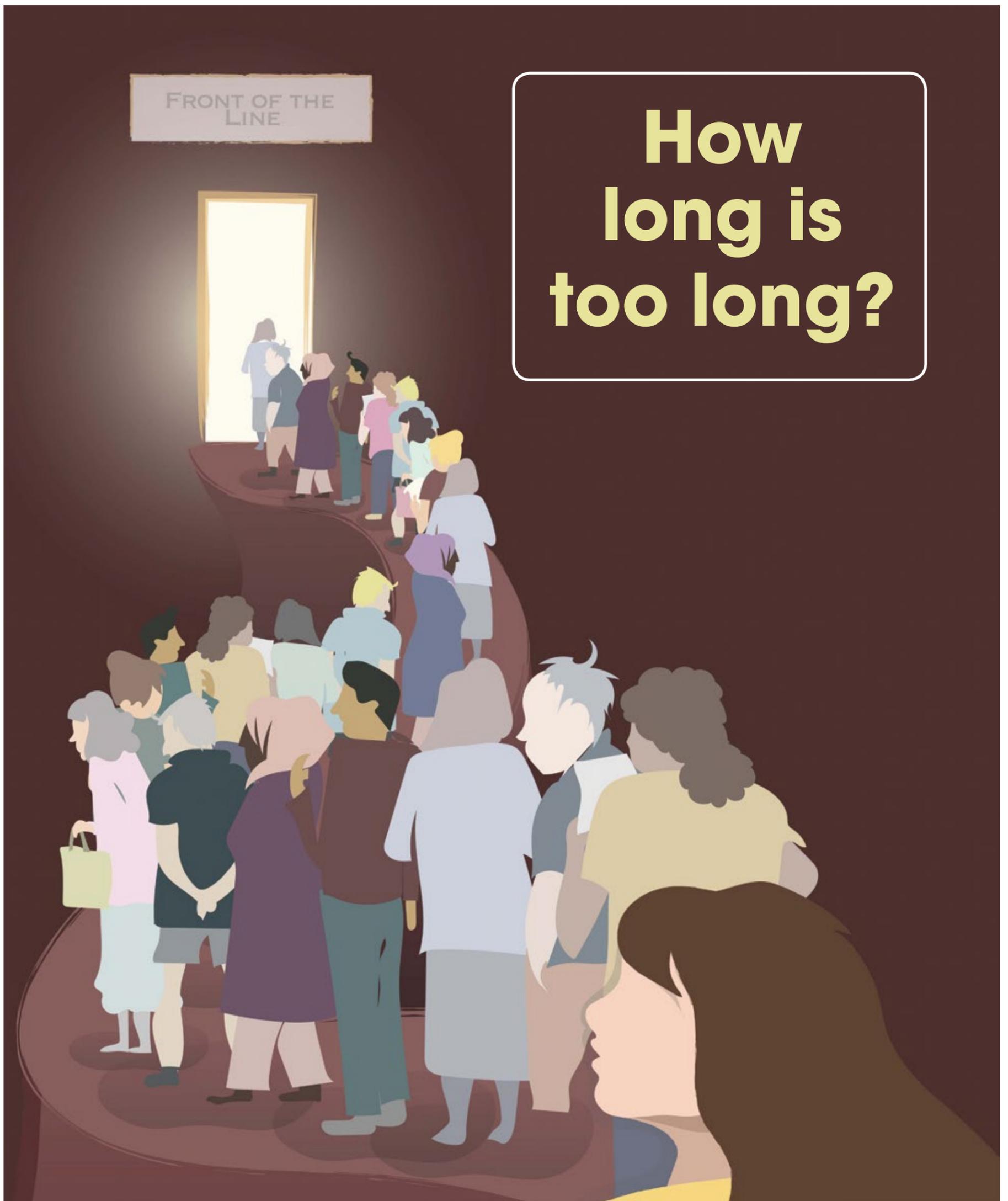
The work of a dozen local artists will be displayed at the Manitoba Craft Council’s latest exhibition. According to the program description, *Feast, Famine* “explores how climate change relates to food: how it’s served, prepared, grown and distributed” through art. An opening reception will take place on March 11 from 6 to 9 p.m. at the C2 Centre for Craft (329 Cumberland Ave.). Registration is required. To pre-book a time slot, visit [bit.ly/3hO5Xyo](#).

### Black Horror series at Cinematheque

Black Horror: Perspectives and Intervention is the latest film series at Cinematheque (100 Arthur St.). The series will screen several horror flicks by Black filmmakers, examining the evolution of the horror genre through a Black lens. As part of the programming, a conversation with scholar, producer and writer Tananarive Drive will be conducted virtually by curator, artist and community organizer Mahlet Cuff on March 17. Visit [bit.ly/3sSK2fG](#) for more information.

### The WSO presents *The Spirit Horse Returns*

A symphonic tale of Ojibwe horses, *The Spirit Horse Returns* will be performed by the Winnipeg Symphonic Orchestra on March 13 at the Centennial Concert Hall (555 Main St.). The concert features music by Anishinaabe storyteller Jodi Contin, artwork by Métis-Ojibwe painter and knowledge-keeper Rhonda Snow, as well as an original orchestral score by Cree composer Andrew Balfour and Kevin Lau. The event starts at 2 p.m. and will later be available to stream. Visit [wso.ca](#) to purchase tickets and learn more.



## Wait times for mental healthcare in Manitoba need to be addressed

According to a report from the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) published in May of 2021, half of Canadians wait up to a month for ongoing counselling services, while one in 10 Canadians may wait more than four months.

A significant amount of this data was sourced before the COVID-19 pandemic,

but it can be quite helpful when identifying strengths and weaknesses within Canada's mental healthcare system.

The Mental Health Commission of Canada indicated in a report from 2011 that "in any given year, one in five Canadians experience a mental illness or addiction problem."

Although these are pre-pandemic sta-

tistics, and we are unlikely to see updated information for another few years, it does lead to a big question: If people require mental-health services and could not receive them before the pandemic, how has the pandemic now affected the number of people with mental-health and substance-use disorders?



### Mental-health treatments can't wait

One in 10 Canadians recently had thoughts or feelings of suicide, according to a national survey created and released in late 2020 by the University of British Columbia and the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA). This is an increase from “six per cent in the spring and 2.5 per cent throughout pre-pandemic.”

The pandemic has proved that incorporating virtual therapies and programs can help those who could not access them before.

“Before the pandemic, we didn’t have a virtual platform,” Lori Peters, a counsellor in the Provincial Eating Disorder Prevention and Recovery Program at Women’s Health Clinic (WHC), says. “It is incredible that now anyone in Manitoba, if they have access to the technology, can access our programs. Accessibility is crucial to help those in surrounding communities.”

However, referral to a specialist can take a long time.

The Fraser Institute documented in their 2021 *Waiting Your Turn* report that “specialist physicians surveyed report a median waiting time of 25.6 weeks between referral from a general practitioner and receipt of treatment – longer than the wait of 22.6 weeks reported in 2020.” For those in Manitoba, the average waiting period is 31.5 weeks.

These statistics are generalized for all medical treatments. For example, when looking at Manitoba’s psychiatry waiting list, patients would possibly wait 5.5 weeks after asking their general practitioner for a referral to a specialist. On top of that, patients would wait another 18.5 weeks between seeing a specialist and receiving treatment. That is 24 weeks between seeking help and finally receiving treatment.

The average wait time in 2020 was 12.9 weeks between seeing a specialist and receiving treatment.

According to this same report, programs in Manitoba that have the longest wait are eating disorders, housing and assertive community treatment, all with a general waiting period of 36 weeks.

### Early intervention isn’t currently feasible

If someone in Manitoba seeks information about possible treatments for an eating disorder, they may be scared off by the length of time it takes to receive treatment. According to the WHC, the potential waiting period to get into the Provincial Eating Disorder Prevention and Recovery Program is 18 to 24 months.

To help those waiting for treatment, Peters says the counsellors like to speak with those waiting so they can provide short-term options for treatment. Some options include connecting them to online support groups, providing access to WHC workshops and providing reading materials.

“We have seen an increase in the number of people seeking help for eating disorders in the pandemic ... I would say it has almost doubled,” Peters says.

“We have always had a high need for our services, but the pandemic increased people’s worries, anxieties ... There’s been so much grief and sadness and isolation. More and more people are needing support and calling us,” she says.

The issue with these kinds of wait times is that someone with mental illness can easily become emergent in a short period. Often, those seeking treatment are left waiting, because their physical symptoms

don’t seem to require immediate care.

This was the case for Taylor Pryor, who died by suicide in Winnipeg in 2019. Before her death, Pryor was assessed and treated by 13 psychiatrists and five doctors from Victoria General Hospital, Health Sciences Centre and St. Boniface Hospital. She also visited the Crisis Response Centre six times.

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**“Early intervention really helps for positive outcomes ... I can see how it can be really discouraging and not very helpful to have really long waiting periods.”**

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Pryor’s mother Darseen has spoken about how the long waits she experienced increased her agitation. When Pryor was admitted to Victoria General for the last time, she was waiting to be admitted to the Selkirk Mental Health Centre to receive dialectical behavioural therapy. The six-month wait to get into the program was reduced to two with the help of a Liberal MLA. Pryor was four days away

from being admitted to the centre when she died.

“Early intervention really helps for positive outcomes,” Peters says. “I can see how it can be really discouraging and not very helpful to have really long waiting periods.”

### Pathway to a better healthcare system

Manitoba’s suicide rates are among the highest in Canada. Manitoba also has some of the highest mental-health, substance-use and addictions needs in the country, according to a report titled *Improving Access and Coordination of Mental Health and Addiction Services*.

These statistics were highlighted in the Government of Manitoba’s latest proposed vision for wellness care titled “A Pathway to Mental Health and Community Wellness: A Roadmap for Manitoba.” The plan, announced in February, is part of “a new direction for the province’s mental-health, substance-use and addiction recovery system, and broader wellness and health promotion programs over the next five years.”

“Ensuring that individuals have access to appropriate mental-health and addictions supports and treatment services when they need them is a priority for Manitoba,” a spokesperson for Sarah Guillemard, the provincial Minister of Mental Health and Community Wellness Minister, says.

The government says it will invest \$23.7 million to support ongoing initiatives related to the proposal’s priorities.

The 30-page document discusses where Manitoba is currently lacking in its mental-healthcare programs and focuses on initiatives that are priorities for the first



three years. The document does not outline what the first steps will be or what will be implemented within the first year.

Looking toward other accomplished facilities in the country, like the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) in Toronto, which is a world-class research facility and Canada's largest mental health hospital, could be useful.

"As an acute care hospital, our services vary," Hayley Chazan, manager and media strategist at CAMH, says. "Some specialized ones require referrals, and our forensic mental-health programs are mandated by the Ontario Review Board.

However, people can also self-refer for services through Access CAMH, and our emergency department is open to everyone 24/7/365 for people experiencing a mental-health crisis."

CAMH provides care to more than 34,000 patients annually. If Winnipeg were to open a mental-health hospital, it could potentially help the other hospitals that have, in the past, bounced patients back and forth due to lack of space.

It would also help with emergency-room waiting times and could reduce agitation in those seeking mental-health treatment.

Chazan says she has heard from psy-

chiatrists at CAMH that many people coming into the emergency department are increasingly co-presenting with substance-use disorders, which has been different from pre-pandemic patients.

#### **Solutions to current mental healthcare deficits**

Since Manitoba has a large number of people living with substance-use disorders, having a specific facility for treatment could save more people and potentially save the province millions of dollars that

could be reintroduced into the healthcare system in different areas.

The provincial government could also look at CAMH's new McCain Complex Care and Recovery Building, which will house a number of both in-patient and out-patient services and 110 beds for inpatients with "serious and persistent mental illness like schizophrenia and mood disorders."

When the building was first announced, the CAMH described the new addition as "a symbol for the future of mental healthcare."

CAMH's four-year strategic plan titled One CAMH could be used as a blueprint for what could be done here. Some of the

plan's priority areas include timely access to patient-centred care, engagement and well-being of CAMH people, growth in the mental-health movement, improvement in equity, diversity and inclusion, influence of CAMH discoveries and innovations, quality of patient experiences, enhanced safety and effectiveness of care.

"One CAMH is more than a response to a changing world. It is an ambitious call to action in a world that isn't changing fast enough," Medhat Mahdy, chair of the board of trustees for CAMH, says.

Another area that could be improved is how Manitobans can navigate available resources and information.

"I think a lot of people feel (navigating information) is quite overwhelming and sometimes confusing, even to kind of know where to go and who to call," Peters says. "When you don't get to the right place, that can feel discouraging."

Peters recommends adding a support system people can access to figure out how to navigate Manitoba's health system. She says the province should also implement policies to help with access to "good healthcare."

"We know that things like racism, transphobia, homophobia and, even in our program, fatphobia and all the intersections of those can be really harmful to people's physical and mental wellbeing," Peters says.

"What's ultimately important is that we don't lose sight of mental health being a personal, individual problem. It is also very largely impacted by larger social influences."

Manitoba's mental healthcare system needs to be rebuilt. It will take time, but by looking to places like CAMH, there is a hope that the province will find a better solution.



**For more resources, CMHA has a resources for Winnipeg document you can download from their website. If you or someone you know is experiencing suicidal thoughts or ideation, please contact one of the following services: Manitoba Suicide Prevention and Support Line at 1-877-435-7170 and [reasontolive.ca](http://reasontolive.ca) or the Klinik 24-hour crisis line at 204-786-8686. To speak to someone about addictions, please contact the Manitoba Addictions Helpline at 1-855-662-6605.**

## CITY BRIEFS

ALEX NEUFELDT | CITY EDITOR

### Rally against police brutality

On March 15, the International Day Against Police Brutality, Winnipeg Police Cause Harm will hold a march and rally from 6 to 8 p.m., beginning in front of City Hall and ending at the Winnipeg Police Headquarters Building.

### Shining through the snowfall

Sunshine House is hosting the second annual Shine-a-thon on March 19 from 5 to 9 p.m. The event will include music, drag, comedy and a raffle and will be broadcast on Facebook and YouTube. The annual event raises money for Sunshine House's programming.

### Got Glenwood zoning opinions?

The City of Winnipeg is looking for public feedback regarding infill in the Glenwood neighbourhood. The City has created a planned development overlay and is looking for feedback from Glenwood residents through a survey at [engage.winnipeg.ca](http://engage.winnipeg.ca).

### Free tests hit retailers and libraries

As of March 2, retail chains in Manitoba and public libraries in Winnipeg have free rapid antigen tests available to the public. Tests are currently available at select Co-op, Loblaw, Shoppers Drug Mart, London Drugs, Northern, NorthMart, Solo; Rexall, Save On Foods, Safeway, Sobeys, IGA and Walmart locations, in addition to Winnipeg Public Libraries.

### Failure to consult faculty

The Manitoba Association of Faculty Associations has released a statement regarding the implementation of Bill 33, which would give the provincial government control over tuition and student fees. The association says that while the province has been in consultations with students and university administrators, have not consulted with faculty associations. The statement calls for the province to pause implementation until proper consultation has occurred.

### Walby publishes Prison Pandemic Papers

On March 8, the Prison Pandemic Papers, an endeavour to release previously unpublished government records regarding the state of COVID-19 spread in imprisoned populations via freedom of information requests, was published. Kevin Walby, associate professor of criminal justice and director of the Centre for Access to Information and Justice from the University of Winnipeg, led the project. The reports for all provinces can be accessed at [ruor.uottawa.ca](http://ruor.uottawa.ca).

# REPRESENTATION MATTERS

## Looking at diversity in Winnipeg politics

CALLUM GOULET-KILGOUR | CITY REPORTER |  CGOULETKILGOUR

2022 is a municipal election year for Winnipeg. In just over seven months, voters will head to the polls to elect a new mayor and city council.

Mayor Brian Bowman, who has been in office since 2014, is not running for a third term, leaving the top job wide open. So far, Coun. John Orlikow and social entrepreneur Shaun Loney have declared their candidacies. Several other city councillors, including Scott Gillingham, Markus Chambers and Kevin Klein, have expressed interest in the position.

Some people have noted that the pool of candidates – which is, so far, exclusively male – lacks diversity. This has long been the case in Winnipeg municipal politics. The city has only had one woman mayor: Susan Thompson, who served from 1992 to 1998. Furthermore, only five of the 15 current city councillors are women: Vivian Santos, Cindy Gilroy, Sherri Rollins, Devi Sharma and Janice Lukes.

Meghan Chorney, chair of Equal Voice Manitoba, says municipal politics can be particularly challenging for underrepresented groups, since there are no party organizations that support political candidates with knowledge and resources.

“Running for office is, in a way, a one-person job, but it also isn’t a one-person job, since you need people to be behind you and support you,” she says.

Equal Voice, a national organization

that advocates for and supports women and gender-diverse candidates at all levels of government, tries to fill that gap. They provide resources and host events to encourage and support both potential and current candidates.

A key feature of municipal politics is how difficult it is to unseat incumbents. In Winnipeg, only a handful of incumbents have been defeated in recent years. Furthermore, most councillors win with more than 50 per cent of the vote, with some obtaining 90 per cent or winning by acclamation. This can make it hard for underrepresented groups to make electoral breakthroughs.

Another organization working to address this problem is Operation Black Vote Canada. Their goal is to increase the number of Black people elected in Canada. Their chair, Velma Morgan, says that while progress is being made in terms of the number of Black candidates, there has not been a proportionate increase in those elected.

“Our end goal is not to have more people just running. Our end goal is to have more people elected,” she says. “Studies have shown that having more diverse voices at any decision-making table makes for better outcomes for everybody.”

When asked about whether progress on women’s representation in Canadian politics is being made fast enough, Chorney says that, at the current rate, it would take approximately 150 years for equal represen-



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Velma Morgan, chair of Operation Black Vote Canada

tation at the federal level. She says we need to move much faster.

“We need to get more people involved ... because when women and gender-diverse people are at the table, better decisions are being made,” Chorney says.

Winnipeg’s municipal and school boards

election will take place on Oct. 26.

**Information on the 2022 Municipal Council and School Boards Election can be found at [winnipeg.ca/clerks/election/election-2022](http://winnipeg.ca/clerks/election/election-2022).**

# WELCOME TO WINTERPEG

## Unusually cold and snowy winter has wide-ranging impact

CALLUM GOULET-KILGOUR | CITY REPORTER |  CGOULETKILGOUR

Winnipeg is known for its cold winters. Depending on who you ask, “Winterpeg” is used to refer to Manitoba’s capital either as a badge of toughness and grit, or as part of a deprecating comment implying we’d rather be in Hawaii. Though Winnipeggers are used to harsh winters, this year’s has been particularly difficult.

In addition to breaking records for the cold, we have also had an unusually high amount of snow.

“By the end of February, we had approximately 160 cm of snow at the Winnipeg airport, much higher than the long-term average of 100 cm of snow,” Dr. Nora Casson, associate professor of geography at the University of Winnipeg, says.

Extreme winter weather has many consequences. On the top of many Manitobans’ minds is the risk of spring flooding, though Casson says other factors also contribute to this.

“The risk of floods also depends on how wet it was in the fall, how quickly the snow melts and what happens in other parts of the Lake Winnipeg Basin, especially in the US,” she says.

There are many other consequences to a snowy winter that are discussed less often.

“Large spring melts can also be a risk factor for poor water quality later in the season,

although this also depends on other factors,” Casson says. In fact, snowmelt is one of the main sources of nutrient pollution (especially of phosphorus) to lakes.

In addition to having an impact on the physical environment, extreme winter weather can influence many people’s mental health. The most common manifestation of this is seasonal affective disorder (SAD).

According to the Canadian Mental Health Association, 2 to 3 per cent of Canadians experience SAD in their lifetimes, and an additional 15 per cent experience a milder form. SAD is more prevalent in women, adults and people who live in northern areas.

Kirt Hayer, president of the University of Winnipeg Students’ Association (UWSA), says a subset of students have been particularly affected this winter.

“Some international students may come from milder climates, and extreme winters are especially challenging for those students,” he says.

In addition to having to mentally cope with this weather, they may face physical challenges.

“From what I’ve heard, something that is challenging for international students new to extreme winters is walking on slippery surfaces,” Hayer says, adding that “it often



PHOTO BY KEELEY BRAUNSTEIN-BLACK

The massive amount of snowfall this winter will have a bigger impact than annoyingly tall snowbanks.

takes some time and some falling” to learn how to navigate ice.

Casson says that while “Manitoba winters are getting shorter, warmer and less snowy,” this is due to climate change, which has many negative impacts.

“There are lots of ecological and societal processes that depend on cold and snowy weather,” she says.

“Things like skating on the river, ice carv-

ing at Festival du Voyageur and ice roads that connect remote communities all depend on cold weather,” Casson adds.

**The UWSA encourages students to use campus mental-health resources, which can be found at [theuwsa.ca/mental-health-resources](http://theuwsa.ca/mental-health-resources).**

# DONATION PROCESSING

## The Freedom Convoy campus fallout

ALEX NEUFELDT | CITY EDITOR

On Feb. 14, hackers accessed and released the personal information of those who donated to the so-called Freedom Convoy through GiveSendGo, a Christian crowdfunding site that facilitates public donations.

Among the list of convoy donations from Manitoba were the names of several faculty members working at different universities in Manitoba. Three of these donations used faculty email addresses, including one using the name and email address of Joanne Boucher, who teaches at the University of Winnipeg in the political science department.

Students on campuses across the province have been processing and responding to the information, and there is not a clear mechanism in the structures of academia for doing so. One clear point of comparison would be the principle of academic freedom, often invoked when students and professors clash over politics, but the details of academic freedom do not apply to this situation.

In an email comment to *The Uniter*, Shannon Dea, professor and dean of arts at the University of Regina and author of "On the uses and misuses of 'academic freedom'" published in *University Affairs*, explains that academic freedoms include a variety of freedoms, including the "freedom to engage in extramural expression (so, to speak publicly about matters)," which may be most applicable to this situation.

"Imagine that the donation was on a public GoFundMe page rather than a private GiveSendGo page. Imagine that the professor added a comment along with

their donation. The combined donation and comment would count as extramural expression and be protected under an academic freedom article in the collective agreement. That expression might worry students," she says, "but it is still protected."

"It is worth saying though that the professor likely didn't even intend the donation as extramural expression," they say. "As I understand it, these donations were all made on the down-low. They were publicized by the hackers, not by the donors." She notes that the issue may be being addressed through another policy, such as the Respectful Working and Learning Environment policy.

Lili Lopez, alum of the University of Winnipeg political science department, is looking at options for raising concerns with the department head.

Dea says that, based on the way that many people use work email addresses as their only email addresses, she doesn't think that the use of faculty accounts impacts the ethics angle, but for Lopez, the use of a faculty email address "crosses a line."

"I would still think it's wrong and would still disagree, but when you're using your university email, you're in some sense representing the university and especially the political science department," she says.

"The political science department is very important to me as an (alum)," she says. "I would love for the political science department to put out a statement about the matter. I think that brushing it under the rug is not the way to go."

"It's hard, because I'm not sure if the right



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

thing is for something to happen to Boucher's position. I don't think that's my place to say," she says. "I had her as a professor, and I had a fun experience with her, but there's so much diversity in the political science department and in the university in general." Lopez says that, as an immigrant, seeing a former professor associated with an anti-im-

migration group is "super disheartening." The University of Winnipeg, University of Winnipeg political science department, Political Science Students Association and University of Winnipeg Students Association declined to comment for this article.

## PROFILE

# AN ICON AND A COMMODITY

## Yongshan He, assistant professor, Faculty of Arts, University of Winnipeg

ARMANDE MARTINE | FEATURES REPORTER |  1MANDE7

This is Yongshan He's first year teaching for the Department of Religion and Culture at the University of Winnipeg. He originates from the landlocked Sichuan province in Southwest China.

"It's the place in China known for its spicy food," she says.

A PhD candidate at the University of Toronto, He's focus is Chinese Buddhism. Interested in the connection between Buddhist materials and the history of emotion, she specializes in Buddhist material culture.

"It's the study of all the material things related to Buddhism, so it's things like statues, art and religious objects," He says.

The history of emotion is a new field of study. For instance, the Max Planck Institute for Human Development seeks to answer questions about whether emotions have and make history.

"It's the study of the variations of emotional experience and concepts under different historical, social and cultural contexts," He explains.

In 2019, He published a paper on the commoditization of the sacred in reference

to Buddhist statues. The paper begins with the question "What was a Buddhist statue in medieval China?"

"The statue is a religious icon, but it was also a commodity to be produced and traded in the market. So there is this contrast to it being both sacred and also profane. This ambiguity of its status made it possible for people to engage with statues in different ways," He says.

She teaches Buddhism in East Asia, Chinese culture and Chinese language. He says her courses attract students from different disciplines and varying backgrounds.

"There's a diversity of students majoring in different fields. I think their general interest is exploring the religious culture of East Asia," He says.

In her personal life, He sometimes practices Buddhist meditation.

In the West, "it's more famous as Zen Buddhism. It's a Japanese transliteration of the original Chan tradition," He says.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

**If you could travel anywhere, where would you go?**

"Space."

**What is the best thing about your work?**

"Smaller classes, which allow for discussions on Buddhism."

**If you could have any superpower, what would it be?**

"Resistance to the cold."

# ONE GREEN CITY

## Carbon's ugly cousin: methane

ALLYN LYONS | COLUMNIST | @ALLYNLYONS

Most Winnipeggers likely think the only options for their waste are “recycling” or “garbage.” Even a lot of environmentalists who try to avoid plastic packaging likely toss their organic matter in the trash without wringing their hands over it too much. But when those potato peels, eggshells and old leftovers decompose in the landfill, they produce methane.

Methane is a greenhouse gas 25 times more powerful than carbon dioxide when it comes to trapping heat in the atmosphere. In Winnipeg, Climate Change Connection considers organic waste to be a major source of the city's greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions. These emissions could be significantly reduced if the city instated a curbside composting system.

When organic waste is composted, microorganisms break down compounds to produce carbon dioxide, a less harmful GHG than methane. For this to happen, organic waste needs exposure to air, worms and other microscopic creatures. When trash is thrown into a plastic garbage bag, this breakdown can't happen.

Methane can also be converted into carbon dioxide through gas collections. In 2012, the Brady Landfill introduced a methane-gas collection system, where a compressor draws gas from the landfill, heats the gas to 871° C and releases carbon dioxide instead.

While this does cut down on methane released into the atmosphere, a compost system would have the added benefit of cre-

ating a nutrient-dense addition to soil that can help farmers prevent topsoil erosion. Cities can then sell the compost for agricultural purposes, generating a profit while keeping methane out of the atmosphere.

The City of Winnipeg does not currently offer a city-wide compost system. There are private composting services, like Compost Winnipeg, that offer pickup for residents, but it comes at a cost – and not everyone has the extra \$35 a month for compost collection.

Additionally, not everyone knows about the service. Whereas recycling has become ubiquitous, with blue bins in almost every classroom, shopping mall and home, compost often remains out of sight and out of mind. By not offering a composting system, the city is (perhaps unintentionally) telling citizens that composting is less important than recycling.

Compost Winnipeg is currently picking up around 70,000 kg of compost a month, but the compost is technically still going to a landfill. Because they are still a fairly small organization, there isn't enough compost to sell for agricultural purposes. Instead, the compost is used as topsoil to keep trash from blowing away and to act as a biofilter that captures some of the landfill's greenhouse gas emissions.

While Compost Winnipeg is still performing an important role capturing GHG, the city is losing out on an opportunity to divert more organic waste from heading to a landfill while creating a vital resource for



Disposing of organic waste by composting can help drastically reduce greenhouse-gas emissions.

agriculture.

The city is currently halfway through a two-year composting pilot program. According to a survey, nine out of 10 of the participants are in favour of a curbside composting system. But Winnipeg is already behind other provincial capitals across Canada. Given the clear ecological benefits and strong community support,

the city should create a city-wide composting system now.

**Allyn Lyons is an RRC and U of W Creative Communications grad, an avid reader and a Pisces.**



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## Student Services

### Webinar Wednesdays

Student Services staff share some valuable strategies and tips to help you succeed at UWinnipeg. Upcoming dates/topics for these Zoom webinars include:

**March 16** - Developing your own Personal Brand: Part 2 “How to Brag about Yourself”

**March 23** - Applying for Loans and Bursaries

**March 30** - Planning for Spring Term

All sessions are from 12:30 to 1:00 pm via Zoom. For more information and to register online, please go to: [uwinnipeg.ca/student-services/webinar-wednesdays.html](http://uwinnipeg.ca/student-services/webinar-wednesdays.html)

### UWinnipeg Award Applications Now Open

For current students:

- UWSA Student Conference/ Travel Fund Award - Online application deadline **March 15**. [www.uwinnipeg.ca/awards/](http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/awards/)

[apply-for-awards/index.html](http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/awards/)

2022-23 President's Scholarship for World Leaders – web application form now open; deadlines vary by term start and program of entry (PACE, ELP, Collegiate, Undergraduate, Graduate Studies).

2022-23 President's Scholarship for World Leaders – web application form now open; deadlines vary by term start and program of entry (PACE, ELP, Collegiate, Undergraduate, Graduate Studies). <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/awards/awards-bursaries-and-scholarships/international-students.html>

### Winter Term Courses – Final Withdrawal Date

The final day to withdraw from a Winter Term class is **March 16**. No refund is applicable. Courses are dropped through WebAdvisor using the “Student Planning/Registration” link.

### End of Winter Term + Make-up Days

**April 6** is the last day of Winter Term 2022, except for courses that had a class on the first three days of term, which were cancelled due to concern about the surging Omicron variant:

- class cancelled Thursday, Jan. 6 --> make-up class is Thursday,

**April 7**

- class cancelled Friday, Jan. 7 --> make-up class is Friday, **April 8**

- class cancelled Saturday, Jan. 8 --> make-up class is Saturday,

**April 9**

**April 9**

### Student Services Continues Remote Service

Departments in Student Services are continuing to offer their services remotely. No appointments for in-person meetings are available. Please see this webpage for details about each department: [uwinnipeg.ca/student-services/](http://uwinnipeg.ca/student-services/)

### Use the myVisit App

Need some help from staff in Student Central and/or Academic & Career Services? Download the myVisit app today. The myVisit app enables students to add themselves to a virtual line for drop-in Zoom sessions at Student Central. The app can also be used to book appointments for a Zoom meeting with an academic or career advisor. Appointments with advisors can also be booked through the website: [www.myvisit.com](http://www.myvisit.com).

### Klinik Health Services

Klinik on campus is once again available to provide virtual appointments to the University community. For more information, please visit: [uwinnipeg.ca/student-wellness/health-services.html](http://uwinnipeg.ca/student-wellness/health-services.html)



## SUPPORT IN SEVEN PAGES

### With my anorexia diagnosis, everything and nothing changed

DANIELLE DOIRON | COPY AND STYLE EDITOR |  DANIELLEDOIRON

I sat, hunched, in the emergency room for six hours before being shuttled down the corridor to yet another crammed, industrial space. I don't remember the colour of the curtains hung around my bed (likely beige) or the precise antiseptic scent in the air.

Even though I'd waited decades to hear them, I can't recall the exact words the doctor said. An older white man who prodded my abdomen and barely met my eye, he pronounced me anorexic. Even though I'd hardly eaten in days, he offered no treatment options. He removed his gloves and washed his hands of me, then referred me to a hospital counsellor.

I sat, hunched, on the same hospital bed when she caught my gaze and handed over a stack of still-warm printouts. Years later, I picture this counsellor as a mousy Penelope Garcia, conveying digital information to an otherwise stranded, forlorn and overwhelmed agent.

She seemed apologetic for her meagre offering: seven pages from the Women's Health Clinic and NEDIC, the National Eating Disorder Information Centre. I found them in a pile, nearly undisturbed, while cleaning my apartment last week. In one corner on the last page, her curved handwriting lists the names of mindfulness apps.

This, and her kindness, was all St. Boniface Hospital gave me before discharge. So I left, defeated, discouraged and half-heartedly thumbing through the documents.

One sheet from the Women's Health Clinic informed me of a "wait list for treatment" that was six to 12 months long.

I've lived with eating disorders for as long as I can remember. An open secret, they were something concerned teachers and well-meaning family members referenced in hushed conversations, but never by name. As if acknowledgment were enough, the closest people in my life reminded me to eat, purchased foods I enjoyed and never, to my knowledge, sought out formal treatment.

In adulthood, I've opened up to doctors and friends. I speak about recovery, describe my healing, knowing both are processes and not things I'll ever fully attain. I wonder if earlier intervention or adding my name to that Women's Health Clinic waitlist would have changed anything.

This year, I learned anorexia may be responsible for weakening my bones, causing two stress fractures still healing in my feet. I'm still waiting on a confirmatory bone-density test, which will likely happen at St. Boniface Hospital.

This time, I'll bypass the emergency room and walk their halls armed with an appointment and a diagnosis. I may again leave with only seven pages of greyscale printouts.

Since that first hospital visit, everything and nothing has changed.

Like the well-intentioned teachers who saw me struggling, I check in on my stu-



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

dents who barely open their lunches or skip the meal entirely. I can commiserate, treat them to snacks from the cafeteria and listen – but I can't offer them more than a far-too-short list of resources and the acknowledgment that I've been there, am still there, too.

Danielle Doiron is a creative and educator who splits her time between Winnipeg, Philadelphia and small Midwestern towns. Catch them reading, procrastinating or defending the pineapple on pizza.

## NEVERENDING WAITLIST

### Dispatches from Manitoba's surgery backlog

MISHA FALK | COMMENTS EDITOR

This February marks one year of waiting for a surgery I was told I would receive in three months. I am not alone in this. The organization Doctors Manitoba currently estimates there are 161,585 Manitobans waiting for surgeries or other diagnostic procedures, such as MRIs and endoscopies. The total number waiting represents roughly 10 per cent of the entire province.

The COVID-19 pandemic hit Manitoba's healthcare system hard. After years of austerity cuts from the Pallister government, the provincial healthcare system was ill-prepared to deal with the increased strain brought on by the pandemic. Successive waves of infections and new variants, particularly Omicron, have only made things worse. While the Manitoba government announced the creation of a task force to address the surgery backlog in December of 2021, the number of people waiting has only continued to climb.

I am waiting for a gender confirmation surgery (GCS) as part of my gender transition. Getting to the point where I could apply for this surgery required being approved by two different assessments, each of which included their own wait times. Everything had gone smoothly. However, after consulting with my surgeon, the fi-

nal step in the process before my surgery was scheduled, I received a phone call informing me that my procedure would be indefinitely postponed.

This particular surgery only takes about 30 minutes, and the surgeon is a specialist in this area, meaning he is likely not being called to work with COVID patients or other backlogged areas. This made me wonder why our healthcare system is being affected so broadly.

According to a Doctors Manitoba report, the three top barriers to addressing the backlog are "insufficient nursing resources and a lack of OR (operating room) time and recovery space." In my circumstance, GCS is considered an elective procedure in Manitoba, despite multiple studies showing that access to GCS can be a major determining factor in reducing trans people's risk of suicide and improving overall mental health. Because the surgery is considered elective, it will be ranked as a low priority as the province tries to clear the backlog.

It's a terrible feeling to be ranked in order of priority against others who are also facing the distress of not knowing when they will get important surgeries. Having my medical needs deprioritized has defi-

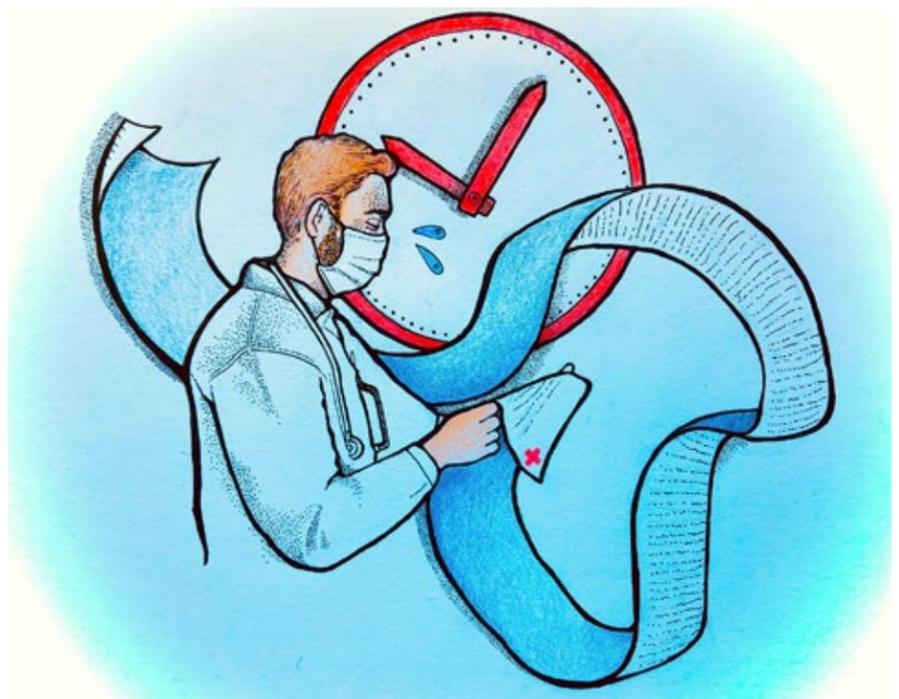


ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

nately led to some moments of frustration and resentment. However, it has also taught me how interconnected our health is and that Manitoba desperately needs a strong public health system for all.

My surgery date is in limbo, and I am stuck with the uncertainty of not knowing how long the wait will be. I've looked into private clinics in the United States that have shorter wait times, but they come at a significant financial cost. I've read about DIY surgeries and underground clinics and hope this will never be a choice I seriously have to face.

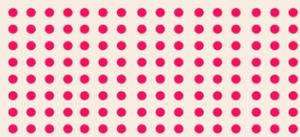
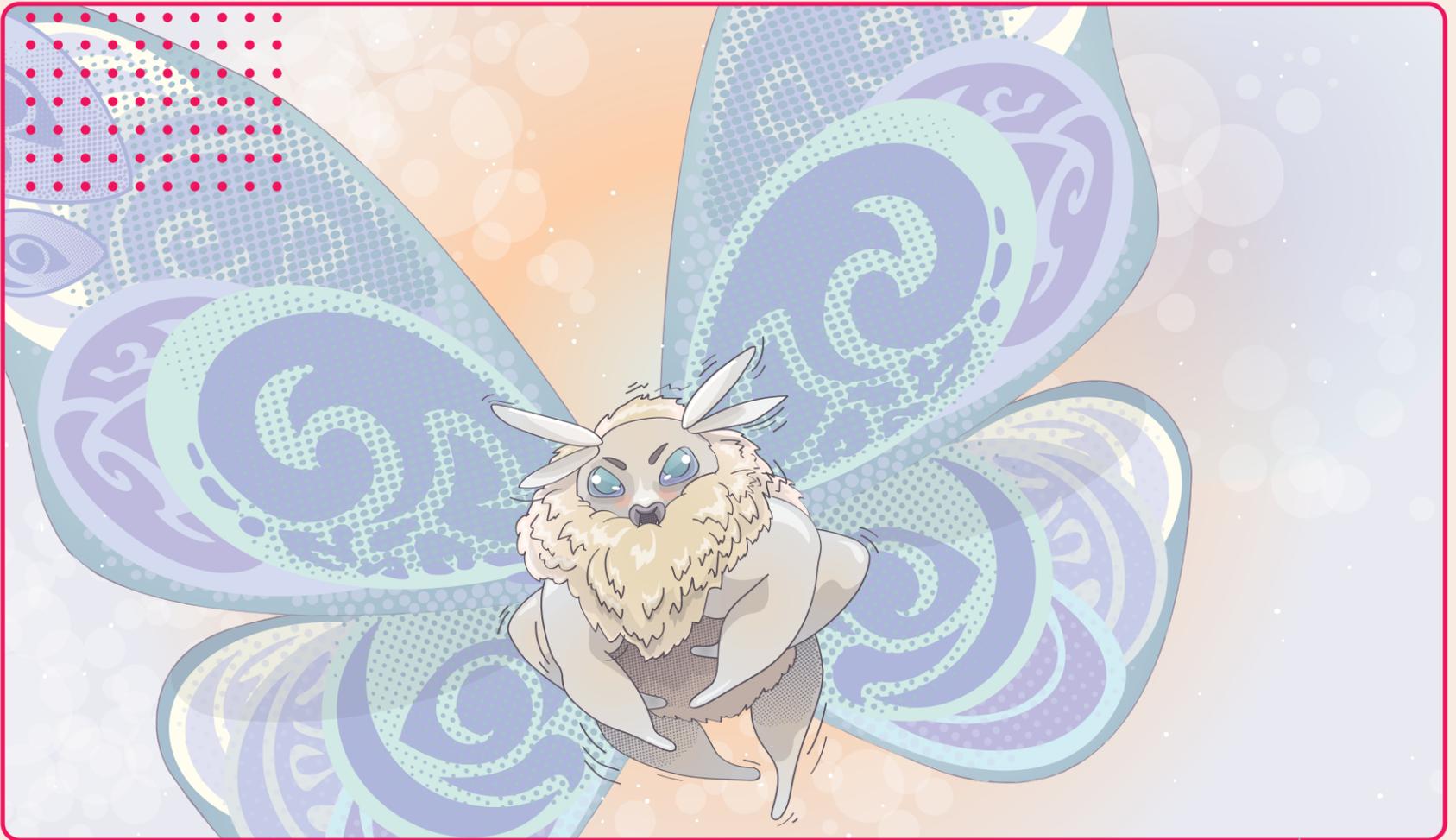
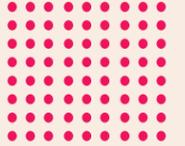
While Manitoba Premier Heather Stefanson has clearly stated her belief that "the government can't protect everybody out there," the provincial government should acknowledge its own role in contributing to the current surgical backlog. Investing in our healthcare system and supporting healthcare workers will help us get through the current crisis and better prepare the province for the future.

Misha Falk is a writer, artist and independent researcher.



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MOTHRA			



# MOTHRA

@PUNCHIECOMICS

WOW!!



YOU'VE MADE IT TO THE END!



YOU'VE LEARNED SO MUCH!



THAT'S NO EASY FEAT, I'M PROUD OF YOU!



YOU DESERVE A REST.



I'VE BEEN WAITING HERE FOR EONS.





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