

THE

UNITER

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Curing loneliness at a cost



FURRY FRIENDS IN A TIME OF ISOLATION



The Uniter is seeking a city reporter

The Uniter is seeking an individual who is passionate about our city, our communities and the many people who are working to make this a better place to live.

For more information, email
Thomas at editor@uniter.ca.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

When Winnipeg artist Hannah Doucet was a seriously ill child, she became a Make-A-Wish recipient. She did what more than half of kids in her situation do. She went to Disney World. Read more on page 6.

BONUS BOOSTED

THOMAS PASHKO
MANAGING EDITOR



THOMASPASHKO

I finally received my bivalent COVID booster shot this past weekend. It had been more than 10 months since my last COVID shot, which was my third dose (or first booster), and I’d been waiting with frustration as the province dragged its feet on eligibility for second boosters.

Second-booster eligibility remained wildly inconsistent from province to province before the bivalent shot arrived in September. Back in August, five provinces (Alberta, New Brunswick, Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan) had opened second-booster eligibility to everyone over 18, while in Manitoba, it was still restricted to people over the age of 50 (or 30 for Indigenous folks). In British Columbia, only those over 70, or 55 for Indigenous folks, were eligible.

This lack of coordination betrays just how bad provincial governments still are at managing the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Despite rising local deaths and test-positivity rates (in the last provincial surveillance report, for the week of Sept. 18 to 24, 17 new deaths and a test-positivity rate of 22.2 per cent were announced), masks remain optional in most public spaces, travel safety protocols are being lifted, and public institutions seem committed to pretending this pandemic is over.

Fortunately, at the vaccine clinic this past weekend, the scene was very different. The huge space in the business park at the corner of Notre Dame and Keewatin was fully staffed with volunteers, and dozens of masked citizens rolled up our sleeves, got the shot and waited the standard 15 minutes before leaving.

Far from the nervous energy of the room when I received my first vaccine, the vibe here was cheerful. Staff and patients were chatty and friendly. Kids proudly flashed their vaccine stickers to passersby. There was even a dog present.

Manitobans are still happy to keep each other safe during COVID. If only those in charge would give us more opportunities to do so.

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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 editor@uniter.ca for more details.

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SUPPLIED PHOTO

More Manitobans are turning to the internet for help learning to forage for mushrooms, berries and other wild food.

MOREL GUIDANCE

An insider’s handbook to foraging in Manitoba

CIERRA BETTENS | ARTS AND CULTURE EDITOR | FICTIONALCIERRA CIERRABETTS

Every day, a handful of the 16.6 thousand members of the Foraging Manitoba Facebook group log on for some morel support. No, that’s not a typo.

“Can you identify this strange plant? Are these mushrooms edible? What should I make with these lovely violet berries growing in my yard?”

These questions occupy the expanding Facebook page each day, where budding fungi scavengers seek the advice of experienced foragers.

Louisa Longford is one of many long-time foragers who began replying after noticing a few well-intentioned but inexperienced friends post on the forum.

Her inkling for edible plants was passed down from her grandfather. Now, she shares that knowledge with strangers on the Foraging Manitoba Facebook group.

“I’ll gently guide them in the right direction,” Longford says. “(It) made me feel like there’s knowledge I have, that I can support people in their journey and guide them in the ways I was taught, which is very, very conservative.”

For many, the group isn’t just a way to prevent an aching stomach or avoid an emergency phone call to poison control. It’s also a way to build a sense of community with like-minded fungi hunters and edible-plant enthusiasts.

Two years ago, John Bo, like nearly everyone else, found himself cooped up in his home, longing for a way to get out

and keep his hands busy.

In early 2020, he tried – and failed – his hand at foraging.

“I kind of was just walking out with a friend in the forest just looking for anything,” Bo says. “I couldn’t find anything that was edible or was what I was looking for.”

But this year, with a guidebook in hand and a wealth of knowledge from the Foraging Manitoba group, he succeeded.

“They have a lot of proof of concept,” Bo says of the Facebook group. “If you see pictures of people posting them, you feel pretty good about going out and finding them yourself.”

The local foraging boom is welcomed by Tom Nagy, the co-founder of River City Mushrooms, who knows his lobster mushroom from his chicken of the woods. As the *Winnipeg Free Press* put it in December 2020, he’s “a real fungi.”

River City Mushrooms, Nagy’s passion project, was established a few years back to get people excited about fungi in Manitoba.

“My main goal, at first, was to increase what I call ‘mycological literacy’ in the community,” Nagy says. “What I mean about that is to develop and cultivate an appreciation for and a knowledge for working with fungi for all the various reasons and uses that it has for us.”

As Nagy explains, mushrooms have a host of unique characteristics that make

them appealing to humans and the greater environment.

“Since fungi and mushrooms are decomposers, they’re incredibly efficient at transforming waste material and natural organic compounds and converting them into a format that can be used by themselves to create energy,” Nagy says. “They can create food for us. They can create medicine for us. They can create all of these really interesting novel compounds.”

Such characteristics make foraging a gift that keeps on giving – but not without limits.

Nagy believes there’s a tendency for beginners to take more than what they need. While he says individual foragers hold different perspectives, he’s maintained a set of principles to ensure environmental ethics are upheld during his forest travels.

“I don’t forage for profit,” Nagy says. “I would forage for myself, I would forage for my friends and family, I would forage for my community, but I would personally never commodify or sell what I forage.”

Similarly, Longford encourages amateur foragers to go in with few expectations and the intention of only taking what they’ll use. When in doubt, don’t hesitate to ask.

“It was always taught to me that you don’t pick the first one you find. You don’t pick the last one, and you only pick it if you need it,” Longford says.

Additionally, Nagy says libraries, online forums and local guided tours are the amateur forager’s best friends.

“If you can find someone – a friend, a family member, someone in your community – that knows about this sort of stuff really intimately and you trust that they have your best interests in mind, absolutely, 100 per cent go that route,”

Nagy says. “Trying to accumulate as much information as you possibly can before going out for your first time will really help.”

As Manitoba’s fungi hobbyist community grows, others forage to heal. Carla Dyck, who resides in Gladstone, was introduced to foraging as a young girl. In her 40s, she began collecting wild chamomile (pineapple weed) as a natural remedy for anxiety.

“I lived in town when I began foraging wild chamomile and was picking my chamomile at a family member’s farm,” Dyck says in an email sent to *The Uniter*.

After battling breast cancer, foraging helped her bring a renewed sense of wellness.

“I’m on my way back to health, and foraged products are some of my best tools,” Dyck said. “This year, I’ve started making oils, salves and tinctures with poplar buds, wild chamomile and plantain weed for physical pain and skin conditions.”

Whatever their reason – be it scavenging salad toppings, home remedies or simply to relish the joy of finding – those bit by the foraging bug say it has indelibly transformed their connection with the land.

“Foraging, in a sense, is a great way to develop a connection with your local environment and also to be a steward of that environment,” Nagy says. “If that’s something that you want to continue doing, then of course you’re going to need to try your best to advocate for the protection of the environment and the habitat that those organisms need.”

“Once you start to look at one particular aspect of the natural world, you quickly realize that it’s attached to everything else.”



ORIGIN STORIES: GREG MACPHERSON, SINGER-SONGWRITER

An affinity for song and safety

ARMANDE MARTINE | FEATURES REPORTER | 1MANDE7

Born in Sydney, Nova Scotia, Greg MacPherson has moved a lot in his life – a total of 41 times. His father was a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force and was transferred to Winnipeg in 1986, where MacPherson lives today.

Although he has resided in various cities as an adult, MacPherson always returns to Winnipeg. This locale is where the Canadian singer-songwriter got his start.

“I always felt compelled to play, and I fell in love with the guitar when I was a teenager. I was always writing little tunes. There’s the sense that you’re creating something that is kind of magical,” he says.

While attending Westwood Collegiate in Winnipeg, he belonged to bands he considered terrible. In university, he met people from the opposite end of the city in Transcona who shared his musical interests.

“We hit it off, and we still play together, actually. We started a band called The Apartments when I was about 20,” MacPherson says.

He discovered the possibility of songwriting from his Apartments bandmates, Jared Ozuk and Dan Martins.

“They were quite talented songwriters, and I learned a lot from them. I’d never taken (songwriting) that seriously, but they could

just write songs so easily. It suddenly dawned on me that I could, too,” MacPherson says.

He wrote songs for The Apartments and then started playing solo.

“I just started writing so many songs, and I just couldn’t keep up with all of them. I just wanted to play them, so I played solo,” he says.

His songwriting talent was recognized in 2010 when his sixth recorded album, *Mr. Invitation*, was long-listed for a Polaris Prize. The award is based on artistic merit and not on record sales.

Music is MacPherson’s primary pursuit. While dwelling in Toronto, he worked as a professional musician. He toured, put out albums, had record labels and basically made a living playing music.

After relocating to Winnipeg, MacPherson took on a variety of jobs to supplement his music-related income.

“I’ve always augmented (music) with other work. I started working as a commercial painter. I’m pretty handy,” he says.

He subsequently landed a job with the City of Winnipeg interviewing landlords for an energy-efficiency project.

Through that work initiative, he was approached to be a safety and wellbeing coordinator for the city. MacPherson has an inclination toward community work, spe-



Singer-songwriter Greg MacPherson has moved 41 times in his life, but Winnipeg keeps calling him home.

cifically for providing refuge and security.

“I think it’s something to do with my personality. I have this proclivity for safety. I’m very sensitive to things as an artist, I suppose,” he says.

He brings that community wellness aspect with a social-justice lens to his musical projects.

As a member of Figure Walking, MacPherson released the band’s first single, entitled “Victorious,” in 2017. Deemed a rock justice tune inspired by Winnipeg’s political landscape, the song intentionally

promotes allyship with those experiencing poverty, racism and inequity.

In 2011, MacPherson co-founded Disintegration Records with producer and engineer Cam Loeppky.

“We founded Disintegration to give great local artists a platform and vehicle through which to release important music. Not all of the artists have social or political messages in their music. I certainly do,” MacPherson says.

MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY SUNDAY

6AM

MORNING BREATH

The Sentinel's Marvellous Kaleidoscope

Worldbeat Canada Radio

FLY Travel Radio

FANTASTIC FRIDAY

THE SATURDAY MORNING SHOW

CKU-SPEAKS

7AM

Folk Roots Radio

FRAÑOL

CANQUEER

World - Island Music

8AM

Shortwave Report

Talking Radical Radio

Making Contact

OutSpoken

Wooden Spoons

DEAD MEDIUM

9AM

CounterSpin

FREE CITY RADIO

After Thought

Truth Before Reconciliation

SHADES OF CLASSICS

10AM

DEMOCRACY NOW!

DEMOCRACY NOW!

MUD PUDDLE RADIO

Classical and New Age

11AM

DEPARTMENT 13

This Way Out

VOYAGE

BRIDGING THE GAP

For Kids (Adults too)

Medicine Wheel

NOON

POP/ROCK

WINGS

(Jazz)

ACCESSIBILITY MATTERS

THE ELECTRIC CHAIR

TEMPLE TENT REVIVAL

of Music

1PM

COMEDIOLOGICAL REPORT

BOOTS & SADDLE

COUNTRY

YEARSHOT DAILY

NEON BEIGE SOUND EXCHANGE

2PM

outSpoken

THE GREEN MAJORITY

ALTERNATIVE RADIO

BINKY PINDER'S FUNHOUSE

THE IVORY TOWER

YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM GOD

3PM

Truth Before Reconciliation

GLOBAL RESEARCH NEWS HOUR

Eclectic Mix

Gospel

4PM

GROUNDWELL

The Stuph File

The Phil-In Show

CKUW Album Feature

Active Voice

5PM

SEAN SHOW

Winnipeg Arena is on Fire

SPACE CADET

STARROAD JUNCTION

DEEP THREES

THE TRIP

BOOTS & SADDLE

6PM

Radio Eco Shock

SQUARE WAVE

AMATEUR HOUR

PAGES

Behind the News with Doug Henwood

PSYCHEDELIC ROCK

BARKING DOG

7PM

Journey Into Sound

Video music and history

So Bad, It's Good

EAT YOUR ARTS & VEGETABLES

THE HOW DO YOU DO REVUE

WE BUILD HITS

THE C.A.R.P.

8PM

THE WORLD

Lost Chunes

TWANG TRUST

TAWNY, THE BRAVE

Adult Kindergarten

HECK CA Funky

RED BOX

SOUNDS LIKE MUSIC

9PM

THE TONIC

On My Way Home

S.A.N.E. * RADIO

QUADRAFUNK

DANCE HALL FEVER

ISLAND VIBES

10PM

DESTINATION MOON

Indigenous in Music

Radio Art Hour

StreetKilliaz Generation

GIRLIE SO GROOVIE

11PM

TEARSHOT DAILY

MONKEY SPARROW

Two Princes

PHASE ONE

MANITOBA MOON

MIDNIGHT

BREAK NORTH RADIO

LISTENING PLEASURES

WINNIPEG ARENA IS ON FIRE

THE WONDERFUL & FRIGHTENING WORLD OF PATRICK MICHALISHYN

Your Show Here

Rainbow Country

1AM

METAL MONDAY

NIGHT DANGER RADIO

THE META WORLD STOOPALOOP SHOW

REVOLUTION ROCK

2AM

MODERN JAZZ TODAY

The Motherland Influence

Hurlements Sur La Toundra

3AM

AMPLIFIED RADIO

BACKBEAT

4AM

5AM

6AM

8

12

6

9

12

MUSIC

LOCAL SPOKEN WORD

SPOKEN WORD

ALTER-NATING

WEEK

Temporary Programming

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Some programs are on hiatus and/or airing different content due to university closure for COVID-19.

New shows are marked with a star ★

Live shows are marked with a lightning bolt ⚡



ARTS

WHEN YOU WISH UPON A STAR

Hannah Doucet explores the commodification of childhood illness

MATTHEW TEKLEMARIAM | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | [MATTTEKLE](#)

Ask a child their dream destination, and it'll likely boil down to two options: Disneyland or Walt Disney World.

It may come as no surprise, then, that more than half of all critically ill children afforded trips or experiences by wish-granting agencies choose to visit a Disney park. Organizations like the Make-A-Wish Foundation have become synonymous with the theme parks.

But what is it about the Disney experience that makes it so alluring to children who may not live to see another wish fulfilled? In *A Wish Stays with You*, Winnipeg-born photographer and visual artist Hannah Doucet reflects on, and satirizes, her own experience as a critically ill child with a mouse-eared dream in her heart.

"When I was 10, I was just finishing up treatment for lymphoblastic lymphoma, and I received a wish from a wish-granting agency, and I wished to visit Disney World. That initial life experience is what sparked the idea for the show," Doucet says.

The solo exhibition, which combines multiple disciplines into a holistic experience, is displayed at the Platform Centre for Photographic and Visual Arts from now until Oct. 22. Stark photography, sculpturing and videography give a glimpse at the thin veneer shrouding corporatized wish fulfillment.

"That's something I'm really fascinated in," Doucet says. "I think, culturally, we just revere Disney, and they're such a large creator of media for children and for adults. I think there's potentially internal rationales within

wish-granting agencies to get kids to visit Disney just because it's a very achievable wish, but it still has that element of magic and fantasy.

"It really started with thinking about that space of Give Kids the World Village (GKTWV) and the way fantasy and illness coexist in that space."

GKTWV, founded in 1986, is a non-profit resort in Kissimmee, Fla. that provides accommodation for critically ill children and their families as they visit Disney World.

Doucet, who identifies primarily as a student of the photographic arts, features a series of shots in the exhibition closely examining GKTWV and its fantastical structures, taken on location.

"They isolate different elements of these spaces. They kind of showcase the materiality and façade of these fantasy spaces. I wanted to highlight that in some of the images. The weirdness, the loose failures of the space are kind of the best part for me," Doucet says.

She is quick to note that the exhibit is not a condemnation of the charitable tradition. Instead, Doucet hopes to provide a more nuanced perspective to an otherwise typically sanguine story.

"I think that wish-granting agencies do come from a good place, and they are doing something quite beautiful," she says. "It's nice that sick kids have their wishes come true, but it's also a little more complex than that ... most people don't take the time or have the desire to look at that with a more critical eye."

Doucet points to public research on



SUPPLIED PHOTO

More than half of Make-A-Wish recipients choose to visit a Disney park. Winnipeg artist Hannah Doucet was one of them.

breast cancer and the use of the emblematic pink ribbon in corporate marketing as a ubiquitous comparison.

"There's been a lot more public research around the pink ribbon, around how mainstream large corporations exploit that image to sell products. I think you can look at that with a similar lens for childhood cancer, which is my own experience, or for other childhood experiences of illness," she says.

Born in Winnipeg and located in the city for most of her life, Doucet is proud to be able to bring an ambitious art project years in the making to her hometown.

"It felt really special to be able to show at Platform and be able to show in Winnipeg for the first time publicly," Doucet says.

Meganelizabeth Diamond, artistic director of the Platform Centre, was inspired to connect with Doucet after viewing documentation shots of the project, originally her master's program thesis.

"Hannah was one of our photography

award winners back in 2017. We, as an organization, have supported Hannah's practice from early on and are continuing to do so," Diamond says in an email to *The Uniter*.

Platform commissioned Emily Doucet, Hannah's sister, to write a review for the exhibition, which is now posted online. A printed brochure designed by John Patterson is also available, Diamond says.

If there is one thing that Doucet hopes people walk away from the show with, it's food for thought.

"If people can see the complexity within it and still see the beauty and the capitalist critique within it, that's exciting to me," she says. I think the work can be appreciated in a lot of different ways. I think you can appreciate it visually and aesthetically and also dive deeper. I hope some people take the time to dive deeper, as well."

***A Wish Stays with You* runs until Oct. 22. Platform Centre is located at Suite 121-100 Arthur St. in the Artspace Building.**

ARTS BRIEFS

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

Writing the city

Winnipeg's premier writing festival has reawakened for another year. The annual THIN AIR festival commenced on Sept. 20 and will host writing events, workshops and more until Oct. 18. A swath of virtual and in-person programming is planned, including a writing walk with Tanis MacDonald on Oct. 10 and a wrap-up party at Kilter Brewing Co. (450 Rue Deschambault) on Oct. 18. Visit thinairfestival.ca for more details.

Celebrating moving image

The annual WNDX Festival of Moving Image is set to return this year from Oct. 5 to 9. The festival promises a melange of classics like the One-Take Super 8 screening and special programming like Queer City Cinema shorts. In-person admission is pay-what-you-can, and everything takes place at the Artspace building (100 Arthur St.) and the Manitoba Museum Auditorium (190 Rupert Ave.).

Call for Indigenous filmmakers

Budding Indigenous filmmakers are encouraged to apply for the RBC Emerging Indigenous Filmmaker Award by Oct. 14 to be eligible for \$7,500 worth of professional-development funding. The grant can be used to fund a project, participate in training or further a career in film. Eligible Indigenous filmmakers can fill out the application at bit.ly/3e91ulq.

Multimedia connections

As part of Winnipeg's Culture Days programming, Jazz Winnipeg is expanding their 2021 pilot of PROJECT JAZZ on Oct. 7 and 8 from 7:30 to 11:30 p.m. in Old Market Square. The multimedia art project features local filmmakers' visual projections accompanied by local musicians' audio work. The installation is free to view.

The Handmaid's Tale at RWB

The ballet adaptation of Margaret Atwood's critically acclaimed dystopian novel *The Handmaid's Tale* will take the stage at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet from Oct. 12 to 16. Reserve seats at the Centennial Concert Hall (555 Main St.) at bit.ly/3Cz7aEW.

Network at Royal MTC

The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre's forthcoming production, *Network*, is a satirical commentary on the news biz in the 1970s. It all starts when news anchor Howard Beale defiantly decides to go off script. The show plays from Oct. 19 to Nov. 12. Tickets can be purchased via bit.ly/3RDyK8r.



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Curing loneliness at a cost



Furry friends in a time of isolation

Becca Anderson, adoption counsellor at Winnipeg Pet Rescue, holds a rescue named Dragon.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many companies transitioned to remote work. Employees remained at home and often lacked social interaction. To mitigate this absence, some people turned to social supports in the form of cute new furry companions.

Carla Martinelli-Irvine, the founder and executive director of Winnipeg Pet Rescue, says the pandemic played an important role in the adoption of animals in a very positive way, especially during its first wave.

“That’s where we saw most adoptions take place,” she says. Martinelli-Irvine says Winnipeg Pet Rescue cautioned people that they “would eventually be going back to work at some point” and shouldn’t adopt pets impulsively.

“Adopting an animal shouldn’t just have

to do with wanting a companion during the pandemic. It should have to do with the (potentially) 16-year commitment.”

Many pet guardians, however, have since returned to the office. That transition, coupled with inflation, has impacted their ability to care for these new pets. It has become increasingly difficult for people with pets to remain financially stable while purchasing necessary pet items and comfortably leaving their animal companions at home for several hours on end.

Pet costs may include veterinary bills, grooming expenses, food, treats and training classes. Lenore Hume, director of marketing and communications at the Winnipeg Humane Society (WHS), says the organization’s surrender list has been

steadily growing, even prior to the pandemic. A surrender list tracks animals whose owners are waiting to relinquish their pet to a shelter.

“It’s been very challenging, because we only have so much capacity here at the shelter ... there (are) always animals coming in ... (but) we had to triage and prioritize surrenders,” Hume says. “We have a surrender waitlist, which currently has just under 300 animals. Whereas a few years ago, our surrender list might (have hovered) around 100 to 150 animals.”

Common reasons for surrendering a pet can range from financial or housing struggles to behavioural problems with that animal. Hume says some owners’ reasons for surrendering a pet are associated with lon-

ger-lasting effects of the pandemic.

Specifically, many dogs and puppies have been surrendered because of behavioural problems, which are likely due to their lack of socialization with other people and animals.

“It could be that someone got a puppy during the pandemic and hasn’t had the resources or availability to do the training (the same way) they would if we hadn’t had a pandemic (and returned to work in person),” Hume says.

On the other side of the city at Winnipeg Pet Rescue, the shelter experienced much more adopting out than relinquishing of pets. Martinelli-Irvine says she believes one of the main reasons that the pandemic called for many pet adoptions is due to the loneliness many people experienced.



Carla Martinelli-Irvine, founder and executive director of Winnipeg Pet Rescue, holds a 10-week-old puppy named Tai.



Some of the 18 puppies that came in to the Winnipeg Pet Rescue shelter in one night after being found abandoned at the dump in Shamattawa First Nation, Man.

Companionship

“There was a lot of loneliness during the pandemic, especially for people who were living at home by themselves and no longer working in person. They didn’t have that socialization that we humans tend to crave,” Martinelli-Irvine says. “Animals can mend that loneliness. They depend on you to get up in the morning ... to feed them, to let them outside. They’re a commitment.”

Pets may have also helped people experiencing loss during the pandemic, whether of a loved one, a job or an overall sense of safety and security. Martinelli-Irvine describes pets as “God’s creations that are there to help us emotionally” and clarifies that pets aren’t simply “just cats and dogs.”

“They’re beings with sentience and presence,” she says. “Just having that presence in your home can help end loneliness altogether.”

Martinelli-Irvine emphasizes that having an animal around throughout the pandemic seemed trendy. With family members returning to work in-person work and many houses becoming empty during the day, some may have opted to bring home a furry friend to aid the loneliness.

Pride, guilt and shame

Both Hume and Martinelli-Irvine believe pet owners don’t always admit to the real reasons they relinquish animals, likely to protect their sense of pride. Reasons related to job loss, financial instability and inability to care for an animal may leave people feeling embarrassed or uncomfortable.

To combat these feelings, Hume and Martinelli-Irvine say pet guardians may instead place blame on the animals themselves, citing behaviour problems instead of the truth. They may also feel guilty or shameful about seeing relinquishing an animal as their only solution.

“It might actually be because of a landlord that’s complaining about barking. Dogs bark, so it may not necessarily be a behavioural issue that the animal is having



From left to right: 3-year-old Bernard, 1-year-old Cricket and 2-year-old Guinness are some of the longest-term dogs at the Winnipeg Humane Society

so much as a rental issue,” Hume says. “It could be that the landlord just isn’t that sympathetic to what having an animal is like, or they have a very low tolerance for it. The reasons that people surrender their animals are very complex.”

Martinelli-Irvine says Winnipeg Pet Rescue has seen pet owners provide misleading information when relinquishing animals. However, she also mentions the humiliation people may feel when unable to financially support their pet any longer.

“There is a sense of shame when people don’t have the financial means. That’s one of the main reasons why we may have seen a small uptick in relinquishing (during) the pandemic,” Martinelli-Irvine says.

“We do have people that have relinquished because they can’t afford vet bills anymore, but it’s really nobody’s business what financial situation anyone else is in ... We simply reassure them that we’re going to take care of their animal. We handle things with kindness and grace.”

According to Hume, the WHS also



Winnipeg Pet Rescue on Portage Avenue



Becca Anderson holds two very young kittens.



Esmeralda is one of many puppies up for adoption at Winnipeg Pet Rescue on Portage Avenue.

strives to be a judgment-free zone when it comes to relinquishing animals. She says their job is not to accuse anyone of doing something wrong, but to simply help pets and their owners. “If someone is looking to surrender their animal, no one is being judged as a bad pet owner. We just want to offer as many programs as we can that will offer assistance to this need,” Hume says. Martinelli-Irvine also reminds pet parents that it’s okay to leave animals at home for short periods of time. “It’s the quality of time that you spend with your pet when you’re at home. If you’re going to school or work, and they’re being left for eight hours alone, don’t feel guilty. We have to work. Not all of us have the privilege of bringing our pets to work with us,” Martinelli-Irvine says. “When you get home, your animal will love you. It’s better than being in a shelter where everything is strange to them.”

Serving the community and the animals

Those making the difficult decision to surrender a pet may assume doing so is their only option. However, Hume says there are other ways to divert animals that may enter the shelter system. “We work with the community members who can’t afford regular vet care, for example, to help them get the animal

through those medical needs ... (We do) anything to ensure that the animal can stay in their home, which is the best place for a pet,” Hume says. Some of the programs the WHS offers include behaviour classes, a behavioural help and training program, an emergency food bank, their safepet program, the home-to-home program and options for emergency boarding. “We really encourage people to utilize the home-to-home program. It’s an online tool that pet owners can use if they need to rehome their animal,” Hume says. “(This allows) pets to find a loving new home without entering the shelter.” Some pet owners, regardless of the programs and assistance offered, may still feel that relinquishing their animal is the best option for them. Martinelli-Irvine cautions those who may pass judgment on pet owners who have had to make this decision. She reminds individuals that no one truly knows the events happening in others’ lives. “I think it’s very important for people to be aware that they won’t be made to feel bad should they need to relinquish their beloved pet,” Martinelli-Irvine says. “I’d much prefer animals be brought into our shelter, where people don’t have to worry about feeling ashamed or guilty about doing it. We’re here to serve the community and the animals.”



Becca Anderson checks on a mama cat and her young kittens.



A mural on the exterior of Winnipeg Pet Rescue

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CITY BRIEFS

TESSA ADAMSKI | CITY EDITOR |  TESSA_ADAMSKI  TESSA.ADAMSKI

Minimum wage increases

As of Oct. 1, minimum wage in Manitoba has increased to \$13.50. The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives defines a living wage for a family of four in Winnipeg as \$18.34 an hour.

Less than three weeks to vote

As of publication, voters have less than three weeks to cast their ballots for the 2022 Municipal Council and School Boards Election. People can check their voter eligibility on the City of Winnipeg's website and learn more about the mayoral, city-council and school-trustee candidates.

Winnipeggers show support in Iranian protests

Protestors in Winnipeg gathered at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights on Oct. 1 to support Iranians mourning the death of Masha Amini. The Iranian woman was arrested for allegedly wearing the hijab improperly and died in police custody. Her death has sparked major uprisings in Iran. Winnipeggers protested in solidarity with the Iranian Community of Manitoba.

UWSA byelection campaign week

From Monday, Oct. 24 to Wednesday, Oct. 26, students at the University of Winnipeg can vote for any of the nine UWSA byelection candidates. Voting is available both online and in person for the following positions: accessibility director, education director, environmental ethics director, graduate students' director, 2SLGBTQ* students' director, PACE students' director, women, trans and non-binary students' director, UWSA regents and UWSA senator.

Pride for newcomers

New Pride of Winnipeg is a social support group offered by Rainbow Resource Centre, which is a safe space for 2SLGBTQ+ individuals that also provides access to counselling and educational resources. This program specifically supports newcomers who identify as 2SLGBTQ+ and runs on the fourth Thursday of every month. The next gathering is from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on Oct. 28 at the Qube. Attendees can expect to make new connections, practice their English, eat different foods and discuss any experiences, challenges or joyful moments relating to their identities.

Future on Fire

On Saturday, Oct. 22, McNally Robinson Booksellers and Fernwood Publishing are hosting a virtual book launch for *Future on Fire: Capitalism and the Politics of Climate Change* by David Camfield from 7 to 8 p.m. Camfield says capitalists, state bureaucrats and politicians who uphold the status quo are not going to make a just transition between fossil fuels and sustainable options. Instead, he shifts the conversation to how mass social movements and supporters of climate justice have the power to make substantial changes toward eco-socialism. People can access this book launch through YouTube livestream or by participating in the Zoom webinar.



‘A HUMAN COST’

Addressing houselessness during Winnipeg winters

ALYSSA WARGA | VOLUNTEER | ALYSSA.WARGA

Between 2010 and 2017, 100 hypothermia deaths were recorded in Manitoba, 24 of which occurred in Winnipeg. During this period, the average extreme temperature for the month of February was -27.4°C, which is especially concerning for the city’s houseless population.

The severe temperatures aren’t supposed to improve this winter. According to the Farmer’s Almanac, the upcoming season will be “frigid,” especially in the Rockies and Prairies. Many locals dread these conditions, but they can be a matter of life or death for the approximately 1,100 Winnipeggers who lack access to adequate shelter.

Jamil Mahmood, the executive director of Main Street Project, says there are a few ways people can help. Main Street Project is a community centre that seeks to help marginalized people, especially those experiencing houselessness and addiction.

Mahmood says people belonging to these vulnerable groups “can be some of the most isolated individuals in the city.” He emphasizes a need for positive interaction and immediate relief, which can look like providing warm meals, inquiring about people’s wellbeing and calling for transportation to temporary shelters.

However, these are short-term solutions. To prevent more exposure deaths and eradicate houselessness in Winnipeg,

the city needs to change – and a number of candidates in this month’s municipal election propose solutions to this crisis.

Daniel McIntyre city-council candidates Omar Kinnarath, Sal Infantino and Cindy Gilroy all pledge to address houselessness throughout Winnipeg. When individually asked about long-term solutions, each candidate agreed that a housing-first initiative based on affordable housing and social programs is the only viable solution. Mahmood agrees.

Infantino specifically says that such a program will require learning. “What’s wrong with looking at a study that’s actually in play and studying that?” he asks.

Infantino mentions Finland, a country known for their housing-first strategy that has a similar climate to parts of Canada, including Winnipeg. “There are so many things there that we can learn ... (but) the learning curve is the most expensive part of any problem solving.”

To Kinnarath, prioritization and budget have been major barriers to progress on the issue. He says houselessness needs to be a central focus for all city councillors and stresses the need for immediate investment. “It’s all about investing in people,” he says. “Homelessness has a human cost.”

Gilroy says “we are at crisis level” and notes that provincial funding must be



PHOTO BY KEELEY BRAUNSTEIN-BLACK

Jamil Mahmood, executive director of the Main Street Project, says unhoused Winnipeggers will need extra help as temperatures drop this winter.

combined with municipal action to truly help Winnipeggers who lack access to consistent, safe shelter.

Winnipeggers will elect a new mayor and slate of city councillors on Oct. 26.

Information about candidates and their campaign promises is available on the City of Winnipeg website. Advance voting locations are available throughout the city.

A CITY IN DECLINE

Largest strike mandate since 1919 looms over Winnipeg

PAUL CARRUTHERS | COMMENTS EDITOR

A recent report by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) shows that the City of Winnipeg’s wage decline is causing drastic service cuts, resulting in a risk of further decline and the most extreme strike action by City workers since 1919.

Niall Harney, senior researcher and Errol Black Chair in Labour Issues for the CCPA, says that, upon their analysis, city workers’ wages are not keeping up with cost-of-living increases.

“When we compare the increase of wages for city workers against the cost of living, we find that the actual amount of goods and services that a city worker in the positions we studied since 2005 can buy is actually lower, and that’s in large part due to low wage increases over the past 20 years, and the major rise of cost of living in the past 18 months,” Harney says.

Inflation is not the only contributing factor. Based on Harney’s analysis, “This issue has become a crisis, because we’ve seen a 14-year tax freeze, 10 years of reducing the business tax. We’ve had only small increases in property taxes in the past 10 years, which have almost entirely gone to roads and police. This is resulting in major cuts to basic services like 311, like libraries and recreation.”

Harney also says these community services all help foster social inclusion and address the root causes of poverty and crime.

“There is a direct link to the City’s investment in police and emergency services and the decline of social services and the

conditions of increasing rates of poverty and crime,” he says.

Gord Delbridge, president of CUPE 500, the union representing City workers, says some of the lowest-paying jobs are typically held by marginalized people.

“These positions are filled with women, People of Colour and Indigenous folks. These are folks that are struggling with the current rate of pay and (are) having to find other employment,” he says.

The City of Winnipeg has traditionally relied on high-school and university students to fill many positions at municipal facilities. While these jobs once held the appeal of high pay to supplement tuition, many students are now fleeing due to the wage decline.

This summer, for example, around 40 wading-pool attendants resigned to work in the service industry, Delbridge says. “They get paid better and get tips.”

Despite ongoing negotiations between the City of Winnipeg and CUPE, the disparity between wages and cost of living for city workers may lead to further service disruptions in the form of a strike action.

“We’ve always tried to resolve issues. We haven’t been on strike in 100 years, since 1919. A strike is always a last resort. Our members take a lot of pride in serving the City of Winnipeg, but they’re citizens themselves and raising families, and they need to be compensated for their work,” Delbridge says.

Despite the difficulties ahead, Delbridge



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

describes a hopeful future for the City.

“Whether it’s expanded library hours, recreation services and innovation that can make our community a better place to

live in, there’s so much that can be done. It starts with having good leadership ... that’s going to listen and share these values and get things done.”



‘WRITE YOUR OWN STORY’

Liz Howard on poetry and breaking free from the past

MEGAN RONALD | CAMPUS REPORTER | MEGANLYNNRONALD

Liz Howard is a renowned writer of mixed settler and Anishinaabe heritage. Her debut poetry collection, *Infinite Citizen of the Shaking Tent*, was the winner of the 2016 Griffin Poetry Prize, and her second collection, *Letters in a Bruised Cosmos*, made the 2022 short list. She joins the University of Winnipeg as the Jake MacDonald writer-in-residence for fall 2022.

Howard’s love for writing poetry began at six years old, when she was first introduced to William Shakespeare’s play *Macbeth*. She was captivated by the women protagonists: the Weird Sisters and the tragic queen Lady Macbeth.

“What really stuck in my mind was the manner in which these characters were speaking. The meter verse in which their speech was written got lodged inside of my brain almost like an earworm. I found my internal speech and my thoughts becoming tuned or entrained to this meter of speech,” Howard says.

This introduction prompted Howard to begin writing down her thoughts. Her feelings and ideas became poetry.

Howard’s writing process is shaped by whatever reading and research she happens to be doing at the time.

“I’ll spend (periods) of time just sitting with my journal and writing these blocks of text, doing an almost sort of

stream-of-consciousness style of writing,” she says. “This produces a lot of content (that I can) work with.”

“I’ll go back successively and pick out language in pieces from this big block of text that I want to work with and shape. That is how poems are born for me.”

For those interested in writing, Howard recommends letting thoughts and emotions move freely, without pressure or preconceived expectations.

“Let your thoughts flow on the page. Let your interests, your everyday life and your obsession guide what you write about,” she says. “We don’t always have to go straight for the throat of beauty and truth. So many things can be right for a poetic or writerly treatment.”

Poetry, like other literary pursuits, traces its origin to “the greats,” to dead white men who continue to shape and reform how people think about literature today. These hegemonic, inaccessible standards have the potential to limit or exclude anyone who isn’t white or a man.

In her poem “Contact,” Howard rewrites an epic from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow “The Song of Hiawatha.” Howard inserts her own language and experience into Longfellow’s work, a racist and incorrect account of Anishinaabe oral history.



RALPH KOLEWE (SUPPLIED)

Celebrated poet Liz Howard is the new Jake MacDonald writer-in-residence for fall 2022 at the University of Winnipeg.

For marginalized people who find themselves outside of these limiting traditions, Howard urges a similar spirit of repossession.

“Go ahead and write your own story on your own terms,” she says. “There are many writers who might take a work from the ‘canon’ and then perform various interventions upon it in a way that represents their experience.”

For those hoping to move beyond these traditions, Howard recommends a collection from the Canadian poet Lisa Robert-

son titled *Debbie: An Epic*. “She’s working with but also against the epic poetic tradition, dominated by the great classical male poets Homer and Virgil.”

Howard will participate in two public events during her residency: the Jake MacDonald Reading and the International Writers’ Panel, where she and another writer will discuss creative writing and social justice.

‘IT’S BOTH OR NEITHER’

Fridays for Future Manitoba protests seek climate action

MEGAN RONALD | CAMPUS REPORTER | MEGANLYNNRONALD

In 2018, Greta Thunberg sat in front of the Swedish parliament every school day for three weeks to protest the lack of government action to mediate the climate crisis. Little did she know that this single decision would begin an awakening that is still circling the world more than four years later.

In September 2019, thousands gathered in front of the Manitoba Legislative Building to take part in a strike organized by Manitoba Youth for Climate Action. This event was one of the largest protests to ever take place in the city, but the urgency awakened in this moment seems to have since dissipated.

Pierce Marks Plikett is hoping to change this by beginning weekly protests on the Legislative grounds. Through these meetings, Plikett hopes to promote a “just transition from governments and companies to limit global warming to 1.5°C and to promote equity including Indigenous solidarity.”

Yiseul Kang, an international student from Korea, says attending a climate protest was a clear choice. She was willing to skip class to show her support and learn more about Winnipeg’s community of conservationists.

“I want to be connected to other activists,” she says. “I want to know more about (the) real situation and major agenda in the movement.”

Plikett is the organizer of Fridays For Future Manitoba. He was inspired to create the Manitoba chapter of the global movement after recognizing a lack of action in the province.

“I know there’s people who care about this issue,” Plikett says, mentioning that his initial

idea was to start a local chapter and launch social-media pages. “The more voices that are speaking about this issue, the more that will be done about it.”

The impacts of climate change on others drives Kang to action. “I can sympathize with the people suffering from climate change ... (while) I can afford (the cost of) living,” she says. “I feel guilty because it means that I have privilege.”

Whether someone is passionate about combating the climate crisis or simply learning more about the movement, Kang encourages everyone to attend the next Fridays for Future Manitoba gathering.

“I want to tell them it’s not (just) my problem. It’s our problem,” she says. “We are all connected, and our daily behaviours and choices are constantly affecting other beings in the world.”

For those unsure where to begin, Kang says to start by “acknowledging your positionality and privilege and taking action (wherever) you can. There are so many things that you can change. Listen to others and share your thoughts and power.”

Plikett adds that while it is easy to become overwhelmed, it’s important to maintain a positive outlook.

“I want you to know there is hope,” he says. “The better things (become now), the better things will be for you and your family in the future. It’s in everyone’s interest to do everything they can towards mitigating climate change.”



PHOTO BY DANIEL CRUMP

In this archival *Uniter* photo from September 2019, protesters prepare signs for a Fridays for Future rally.

It can be easy to lose sight of what action is needed on a provincial or municipal level, especially when people are bombarded with headlines describing a global climate collapse.

Close to home, Plikett mentions the Augmented Flow Program (AFP) on the Churchill River, which was the second largest commercial fishery in Manitoba. Since, the demand for profits has destroyed the local ecosystem.

He encourages local activists to demand responsibility from those in positions of power. One way to do so is by signing petitions, like the one against silica sand mining.

“It’s (at) risk (of) contaminating the groundwater,” he says. “Silica particulates when it gets into the atmosphere. (It) can

cause lung disease. It’s similar to asbestos.”

Plikett says the federal government should find new jobs for those who currently work in oil and gas industries and stresses the importance of including everyone as communities transition away from using these resources.

“We can’t have it both ways,” he says. “(It’s) helping people and the planet, not one or the other. It’s both or neither.”

Sign petitions and find information about the movement on Twitter at @for_manitoba. Plikett and other Fridays for Future members meet west of the Manitoba Legislative Building from 12 to 1:30 p.m. every Friday.



EXPLORING A LESS MALE-ORIENTED PERSPECTIVE

Aileen Friesen, associate professor,
Department of History

ARMANDE MARTINE | FEATURES REPORTER | 1MANDE7

Aileen Friesen was raised in Charleswood and is of Mennonite descent on both her parents' sides.

"My grandparents on my maternal side came in the 1920s from the Soviet Union, and they were Mennonites. On my paternal side, my ancestors came in the 1870s. (They're) also Mennonite from Imperial Russia," she says.

Friesen's Mennist ancestry creates an intersection between her personal and work life.

Co-director of the Centre for Transnational Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg, Friesen is also the executive director of the D.F. Plett Historical Research Foundation. The not-for-profit organization supports projects dedicated to Mennonite culture and origins.

Friesen's first book project involved her editing *The Russian Mennonite Story*.

"I'm working on my second book project. My first book had to do with orthodox peasants in Siberia, so not on a Mennonite topic. I think there are a lot of stories that have not been told about that immigration," Friesen says.

"The stories that have been focused on

(are) ... this issue of self-defense during the civil war. There was a lot of violence in what is present-day Ukraine," Friesen says.

A recent federally funded project will allow Friesen to explore how women experienced similar events, giving new perspectives on the mass migration from Russia.

"Some Mennonites took up arms, and there's been a lot of focus on that story without any concern with what women thought about this breach in religious principles or (focus) just sort of solely (told) from this male-dominated perspective," she says.

In regards to the Russian invasion and recent annexation of Ukraine, Friesen had this message to add:

"I might have described myself as a Russianist in the interview, but that's a frequently used term in my field I no longer identify with," Friesen says.

What is the best thing about your work?

"Getting to work with archival documents. I love to travel to these places.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Obviously, right now, because of the war (in Ukraine), my ability to travel to the places that I study has been limited."

What was your worst grade in university?

"B+ in biology."

What do you do in your spare time?

"I have a six-year-old, so my spare time is not my own. I run my son's schedule. With all the projects I have going, I work a lot."



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WINNIPEG

Student Services

Fall Reading Week

The University of Winnipeg's annual Fall Term Reading Week will take place from **Oct. 9-15**. No classes, except for Education students taking 4000-level certification courses who are required to attend class and practicum during this period. Please consult your course outline for more information. The University will be closed for Thanksgiving Day on **Oct. 10**.

Career Chats on Instagram

Drop in for Career Chats - live sessions on Instagram that feature advice from an employer or other career-related expert. Hosted by the Academic and Career Services Dept., these live sessions take place every other Thursday at 11:00 am on UWinnipeg Instagram. Upcoming speakers:

- Oct 13 at 11:00 am with Ali Raza from UWinnipeg's International, Immigrant and Refugee Student Services (IIRSS)
- Oct 27 at 11:00 am guest TBD
- Nov 10 at 11:00 am with Alisha Nickel from enVision

Webinar Wednesdays

Webinar Wednesdays is back this fall with valuable strategies and tips to help you succeed at UWinnipeg.

Student Services staff cover a wide variety of topics - see below - in weekly lunch-hour sessions (12:30 to 1:00 pm). And this year you get to choose whether to attend the sessions via Zoom or in-person!

Topics/Dates for Webinar Wednesdays - Fall Term 2022:

- The Work-Study Program - Oct. 19
- How to Choose and Declare (or Change) Your Major - Oct. 26
- Travel the World: Undergraduate Exchange Opportunities - Nov. 2
- To Drop or Not to Drop - Nov. 9
- Enhance your Resume - Become a Volunteer Note-taker with Accessibility Services - Nov. 16
- Finding a Balance: Using "Wise Mind" to Help You Thrive - Nov. 23
- Expand Your Career Potential with a Master's Degree - Nov. 30
- Preparing for Winter Term - Dec. 7

Find out more and sign up here:

www.uwinnipeg.ca/student-services/webinar-wednesdays.html

Exchange Opportunities

Are you a UWinnipeg student who wants to study abroad and explore the world? Studying in another country offers students the unique opportunity to attend a university for one or two terms in another part of the world, while retaining UWinnipeg student status. Find out more at an info session:

- In-person info session **Oct. 19**, 12:30 to 1:20, in Room 2M70, or
- Zoom info session **Oct. 26**, 12:30-1:20 pm (contact Natalie Brennan for the Zoom link)

For more info: www.uwinnipeg.ca/study-abroad/information-sessions.html

Need a Spot to Store your Stuff? Rent a Locker!

Locker rentals have resumed on campus, with options available in various locations. Find details and cost, along with an online form, here: [www.uwinnipeg.ca/accepted-students/get-](http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/accepted-students/get-ting-ready/locker-rental.html)

[ting-ready/locker-rental.html](http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/accepted-students/get-ting-ready/locker-rental.html)

Apply for February Graduation

Finishing your last courses in December? Interested in graduating in February? The final date to apply to graduate in February (in absentia) is **Nov. 1**.

To apply for graduation, go to the "Student Planning/Registration" link on WebAdvisor. Click on the "Graduation" tab and complete the form.

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 or in-person meeting with a student central staff member or an academic or career advisor. Appointments with advisors can also be booked through the website: www.myvisit.com.



ACCORDING TO HER

Privileged

CIKU GITONGA | COLUMNIST

“*Nitumie ka-mia mbili*,” Mom texts. I roll my eyes. But I send her the \$200 immediately. Some weeks later, I will call her. I will be sitting on the ground beside my shopping cart at Value Village.

“Just send me a hundred for now,” I will say. “My grant money is coming at the end of the month. I’ll pay you back.” I have a savings account, but I try not to think of it as real money, money I can reach out and touch.

My parents drained their savings to immigrate here. Back in Kenya, Mom was an accountant, and Dad had a job in corporate insurance. We lived in a not-so-great but not terrible neighbourhood in Nairobi. We went to private school. Mom would browse flea markets for encyclopedias she could buy us. She paid for piano lessons, which we hated.

“You guys were so fancy,” a childhood friend says, “with your piano lessons.”

In Winnipeg, Mom has an entry-level job with the government. Dad is a truck driver.

“Stay in school,” Mom tells me. “Get those master’s, PhDs, whatever. Get all of them.” Every now and then, I have a small crisis about money. Writers don’t get paid, and neither do professors.

Dad says to me, “Have you ever gone to bed hungry?”

I shake my head.

“Have you ever lacked anything?”

“No,” I say. “We were never rich, but somehow we always managed.”

Every now and then, my sister has a small crisis about wasting her life. She says, “I don’t want to just freeload (off) Mom and Dad.”

“You have a job,” I say. “And you’re 21. Cut yourself some slack!”

Her words grate the part of me that is ashamed I can’t hold down a service job like a normal person. How will I survive as I go through grad school?

Mom says, “You know why we decided to get a mortgage for this place?”

Our two-bedroomed apartment with its balcony door looking out at the pastel sunset each evening.

“Anywhere you children go, know that you have a home waiting for you.”

This summer, my sister and I scrambled to find an apartment in Ottawa. Everything moved quickly. Everything was too expensive. We sent in applications and were rejected for the \$1,200 place, and then the \$1,500 place that would strain our budget anyway.

I hold my head in my hands. “Where will we live?”

Dad says, “Is there a problem we can’t fix?”

One apartment accepts our application.

A \$1,700 place does not reject us.

“We can’t afford the rent,” I say. But



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

school starts in two weeks, however, and this is a bird in hand.

“Just a year,” Mom says.

The apartment is on the seventh floor with a view of treetops and a winding river and faraway highrise windows lit up yellow in the darkness. My sister and I

look down in silent pleasure.

In my heart I feel lucky.

Ciku Gitonga is a fourth-year minor in creative writing at the University of Ottawa. She is not looking forward to her entrance into the “real world.”



COMMENTS

‘MADE TO FEEL COMPLICIT’

Pro sports teams fail women employees, often before they’re hired

DANIELLE DOIRON | COPY AND STYLE EDITOR | DANIELLEMDOIRON

In a boardroom of about 20 prospective interns, I learned the first rule of sports media: don’t look down in the locker room. The seasoned professional chairing our meeting addressed us all, but she directed her comments to the women.

Wandering eyes or glances held a beat too long could be interpreted as interest, desire, consent. We’d learn to trust our instincts and the few athletes who stayed fully dressed for post-game interviews, she said.

I remembered her warnings when, a few months later, a team official told me point-blank during a front-office job interview that he wouldn’t tolerate my sleeping with players. I never asked whether player signings hinged on similar agreements.

My contract may have included a fraternization clause or policy. Many organizations now formally outline rules for maintaining professional, appropriate work relationships, including sports teams and leagues.

In mid-September, the NBA’s Boston Celtics suspended coach Ime Udoka for the entirety of the 2022-23 season for violating such team policies.

“One person briefed on the matter who was not authorized to speak publicly about it said Udoka had an inappropriate relationship with a female team employee,” the *New York Times* reports.

The Celtics organization originally believed this relationship was consensual.

However, according to *The Athletic*, unnamed “sources said that the woman recently accused Udoka of making unwanted comments toward her — leading the team to launch a set of internal interviews.”

Media coverage of the decision focuses on what ESPN calls a “largely unprecedented” suspension for a sitting head coach and centres Udoka’s coaching success and promise, instead of his alleged misconduct.

Fans, rather than show outrage about Udoka or his replacement (Joe Mazzulla, who, as a college athlete, pleaded guilty to assaulting a woman at a bar), flooded social media with speculations about the unnamed Boston employee’s identity.

I don’t know this woman’s name, let alone anything about who she is as a person. But I likely know how she feels.

In Lisa Moore’s novel *This is How We Love*, one character describes how a customer assaulted her at work as “not a touch exactly,” but “a brush with the back of the hand.” On-lookers would see a joking, friendly gesture, “like she was one of the guys.”

“But he knew, the guy knew, it meant she couldn’t say anything, couldn’t make a big deal over it,” the character explains. She was “made to feel complicit.”

It’s been almost a decade since a mentor counselled me to avoid certain sightlines in locker rooms. Seven years since a potential employer warned me not to sleep with play-



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

ers. Six since two of those players assaulted me in team hotels while on the road.

It took me almost that long to realize I wasn’t complicit, no matter where I stayed, what I wore or how much I drank those nights. I couldn’t shake those first lessons that taught me athletes’ actions could be, *were* my fault.

Assault and abuse allegations echo through the sports world in a “constant drumbeat,” columnist Kurt Streeter writes.

I can’t speak for the woman involved in

Udoka’s case, nor the countless others in similar situations who remain unnamed or who haven’t come forward. But I know the lessons, warnings and overwhelming burden of complicity can sometimes sound even louder. If only the sports world would listen.

A former sports broadcaster, Danielle Doiron is now a writer, editor and educator. Find them in Winnipeg, Philadelphia, Fargo and, occasionally, on the airwaves.



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- ACROSS**
1. STARCHY VEGGIE (SL.)
6. SLIPPER
10. REAR
14. DARK WOOD
15. TELEPHONE
16. SOUP VEGETABLE
17. NORWEGIAN
18. WATERLESS
19. RUCKUS
20. BALLERINA'S SKIRT
21. DEEP RESPECT
23. HI-FI SYSTEM
26. NOTHING MORE THAN
27. LAWFUL
29. BRINY
34. ____ RIPKEN OF BASE-BALL
36. SEARCH BLINDLY
39. TRIMMED
40. OPERA HIGHLIGHT
42. PRACTICES BOXING
44. POKE
45. JEANS MATERIAL
47. SELECT GROUP
49. WHICHEVER
50. NAVY RECRUIT
52. GEM WEIGHT
54. ALASKAN PORT
57. FIGHT BACK
60. WAYS IN
65. SHARPEN
66. SELDOM SEEN
67. FARM MEASURE
68. SUB FINDER
69. PORTENT
70. PORK CUT
71. TEACH
72. POPPY OR SESAME
73. STAINED
74. HOLLERS
- DOWN**
1. CAMP SHELTERS
2. REGARDING
3. MEAT-FILLED PASTA
4. GUARANTEE
5. DELI BREAD
6. OLD WOUND
7. SULTAN'S WIVES
8. COOK'S OIL
9. CHURCH OFFICIALS
10. TEDIOUS ONE
11. SIMILAR
12. GATOR'S RELATIVE
13. ____ WINSLET OF "TITANIC"
22. HARVEST
24. BREAKFAST FOOD
25. ROWER'S NEEDS
28. EASY STRIDE
30. TRACK CIRCUIT
31. ILLOGICAL
32. BROADWAY SIGN
33. WATER WHIRL
34. RASCALS
35. LOCALE
37. COMRADE
38. FUNNYMAN ____ IDLE
41. FEEL UNWELL
43. NIGHT TWINKLER
46. DA VINCI'S "____ LISA"
48. LYRICAL "BEFORE"
51. PRESIDENT ____ REAGAN
53. ON DRY LAND
55. DOCTOR ON "STAR TREK"
56. MYSTERIOUS
58. GARDEN PEST
59. COASTAL BIRDS
60. GREEK CUPID
61. DESIGNATE
62. LUMBER SOURCE
63. TEAR APART
64. BROADCAST
68. PIG'S DIGS

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- ACROSS**
1. NURSERY ITEM
5. WATER PITCHER
9. NOBLEWOMEN
14. SHARPEN
15. RESIDE
16. RIDICULOUS
17. DESERTED
19. BOLDNESS
20. DRINK DAINTILY
21. UNCOVERS
22. TELEVISION AWARDS
23. MAIN COURSE
25. OPERA HIGHLIGHT
26. PART OF ETA
30. MOLLUSK
33. VEGETARIANS' TABOOS
36. CHINESE STAPLE
37. ALIAS INITIALS
38. WHEEL SHAFT
39. UPRISINGS
40. REWRITE TEXT
41. PEN POINT
42. CAPITAL OF NORWAY
43. ODOR
44. DEER
46. ANCIENT EGYPTIAN KING
48. DITTY
50. CAVERN
54. "WEST SIDE STORY" CHARACTER
56. BURNING
59. GOAL
60. SACRED IMAGES
61. UNHAPPY
63. PUT BACK TO ZERO
64. SHE, IN TOULOUSE
65. SECLUDED VALLEY
66. STUDENT'S ASSIGNMENT
67. MUST HAVE
68. WILLIAMS AND KOPPEL
- DOWN**
1. RUN AFTER
2. BATMAN'S SIDEKICK
3. NOT APPROPRIATE
4. LONDON'S BIG ____
5. LAS VEGAS GROOM, OFTEN
6. MERLOT, E.G.
7. SMOOTH
8. CINCINNATI BASEBALLERS
9. ROADSIDE EATERY
10. WEAK
11. CITRUS PRESERVE
12. JEALOUSY
13. NOTICES
18. ACHIEVERS
24. PERCENTAGE
25. PUB BEVERAGES
27. ____ SETTER
28. FIDDLE'S KIN
29. ROLE PLAYER
31. SIMILAR
32. DAMON OR DILLON
33. SUPPLIES WORKERS
34. WAY OUT
35. LARGE SEABIRD
39. STRONG CORD
40. CANYON EFFECT
43. MORE PAINFUL
45. ____ PIG
47. CAME TO TERMS
49. MEAN
51. DINETTE PIECE
52. LAID BATHROOM FLOORING
53. FORETELLING SIGNS
54. DEEP MUD
55. EXPERTS
56. HYMN ENDING
57. RANK AND ____
58. CAPRI OR MAN
62. FBI EMPLOYEE (ABBR.)



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The Uniter is seeking an outgoing and organized individual to intake, mentor and train volunteer contributors.

For more information, email Thomas at editor@uniter.ca.