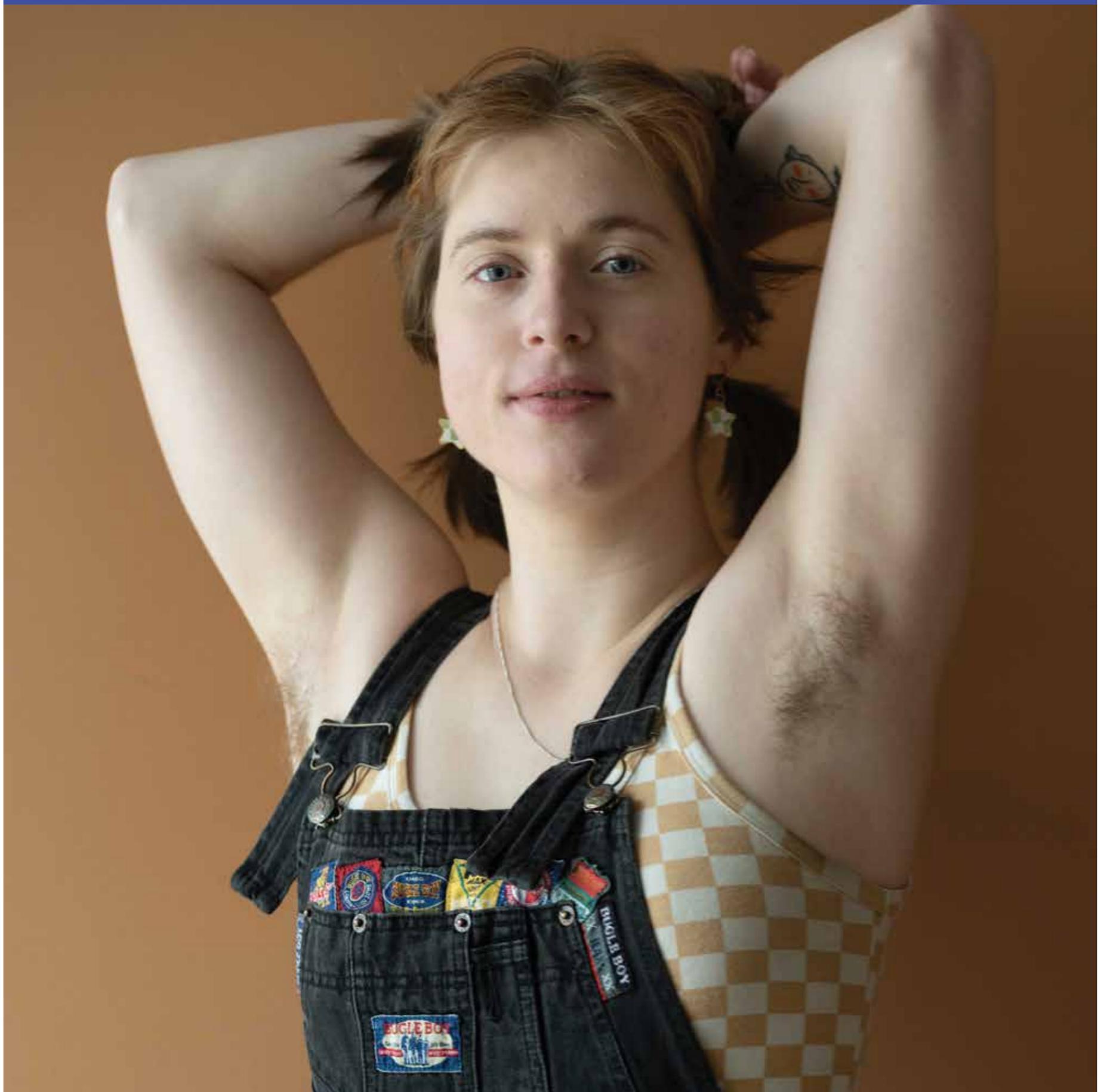


THE **U** N I T E R

WRESTLING IN THE MUSEUM—P5 | COME ON DOWN!—P11 | LECTURE SPARKS TRANSPHOBIA ALLEGATIONS—P12 & 13

Shaving, waxing, tweezing



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PHOTO BY ISAIAH SANCHEZ

The City of Winnipeg has announced that it's cutting the hours of the city's only dedicated public washroom. Read more on page 10.

OUCH, MY COMPUTER

THOMAS PASHKO
MANAGING EDITOR

  THOMASPASHKO

While working on this week's issue of *The Uniter*, I ran into a problem that stopped me in my tracks. I arrived home from the office, opened up my laptop to continue my work, only to find that my PC wasn't working. Unable to log in and access my files, panic set in.

After a couple hours in a customer-service chat with a Microsoft rep, the diagnosis was clear: my most recent Windows update file was corrupted, and I would have to perform a factory reset on my laptop.

Anyone who's been in this position knows how unmooring it can be to lose your entire computer setup in an instant. Fortunately, I have some limited automatic file backup. Some things, like my text documents and images, can eventually be recovered. Larger and more time-consuming projects, like music files, demo recordings and the like, are gone for good.

During the isolation of the early years of COVID, the line between "real life" and the digital world became even more blurred. When the borders of my world shrank to my apartment and the odd masked-up trip to Safeway, my laptop became my window to the rest of humanity. I watched news from the rest of the world through that window. Even though it's just "stuff," there is a small grief in seeing it broken.

As I begin what will be a weeks-long process of recovering, reinstalling and rebuilding what I can, I'm pouring one out for the music and creative projects that helped me pass the time during the pandemic, now lost in the digital wind.

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SUBMISSIONS

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.

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.

CORRECTIONS

In the March 9 article "The need to reconnect," we said that Lindsey Bond grew up in Saskatchewan. She actually grew up in Amiskwaciwâskahikan (Edmonton).

The Uniter regrets this error.



TUNING (THE) FORKS

Music fills the marketplace with free, local song at no cost

MATTHEW TEKLEMARIAM | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | MATTEKLE

The city's most famous meeting place is going to sound that much sweeter this month.

Manitoba Music at the Market is a new series of free, pop-up concerts staged at The Forks Market. Presented by Manitoba Music and Real Love Winnipeg, the project endeavours to bring accessible and family-friendly live music to the masses. After a successful first leg in November, the program is back this month with nine performances from nine Manitoban artists.

"The concept really was to have something that is really high quality in terms of having this parade of fantastic artists playing in an environment where everyone can enjoy it," Sean McManus, the executive director of Manitoba Music, says.

"We have had an ongoing relationship with The Forks. As partners, they're such huge supporters of the arts scene in our city and in our province and of the music scene especially."

Spurred by the preclusion of live music and concerts over the last three years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the series is touted as a celebration of the music that helped many through isolation and the artists behind it.

"We felt that one of the groups of folks along with many others including health-

care workers and others that were impacted by the pandemic were musicians and artists and not being able to tour and play shows. That's how this came together," McManus says.

"We had sort of an open call, so folks could submit to perform. (Real Love Winnipeg) helped us put together a program that we thought was reflective of the diversity of genres and the diversity representative of the Manitoba music scene. We're really grateful for their partnership on this."

Local artists taking part include Cassidy Mann and Boy Golden on March 23 and Keisha Booker, who already took the stage at the EQ3 Lounge on March 9.

"Real Love actually reached out, and I'd done some events with them in the past like Bands as Bands and a few other events at the Good Will," Booker says.

"I just agreed to do the gig because they always put on really great shows. I love an aesthetic vibe, so I loved the idea that they were putting the event together at The Forks in the EQ3 Lounge. I love intimate, living-room sessions-type events, and that's what it's like but in a public space. It's really cute in there, and the acoustics are awesome."

Booker cites an "interactive" crowd as a highlight of her performance and stresses the importance of day-to-day art events



Local singer-songwriter Fontine (right) performs at The Forks on March 9 as part of Manitoba Music at the Market.

like Music at the Market in the city's cultural scene.

"It was just good energy and good vibes all around. I think it adds something to the city that it needs. It doesn't necessarily have to be a big event, but just in everyday settings," she says.

And with one more date left following tonight's performances by artists Blue-

loads, Adiyio and Mattmac, McManus anticipates a big finish for their closing show.

"The fact that our closing artist for the last show on the 23rd is Boy Golden playing solo is special. Boy Golden is an artist that came together during the pandemic and wrote a bunch of the music and put the project together during that time," he says.

TAKING POP SERIOUSLY

Carlo Capobianco on his debut album and the allure of pop stardom

PATRICK HARNEY | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER

Local up-and-coming pop artist Carlo Capobianco is set to release his debut album at the end of the month. He describes the release, entitled *Pray to You*, as "my little bible of music about love."

Capobianco is heavily influenced by 1980s pop and new wave. He says he's attracted to the era's permissive attitude toward popular musicians, including their being able to wear makeup, fishnets and, generally, disregard gender norms.

"If you are a musician and a guy, you can wear makeup and fishnets and be androgynous. It was a cool thing," Capobianco says. He mentions how the music of the '90s pushed some of pop music's glitz and glamour to the wayside.

Produced by Yes We Mystic's Adam Fuhr, *Pray to You* sonically recreates the lost features of '80s pop, emphasizing grandiosity in its sound with huge synthscapes and booming drums.

The album is "a love letter to the '80s, but my take of what the '80s would have sounded like as a younger person," Capobianco says. "Most of the music from the '80s just sounds so iconic."

Through his music and stage presence, Capobianco hopes he can capture the spirit of the '80s – a time in pop when icons like Madonna and Prince made huge splashes with every release.

"There used to be music videos, and

when they were released, it was an event," Capobianco says. "it was more than pop music. It's pop culture and music."

According to Andrew Burke, an associate professor of English at the University of Winnipeg, the figure of the popstar predates the 1980s. Yet, it was during this time and its melding of popular music and television that artists were really able to jump off.

"There is something interesting about the 1980s with the emergence of MTV and the growth of the music video which brings together the idea of the popstar in a different way from previous eras and melds it with the visual," he says.

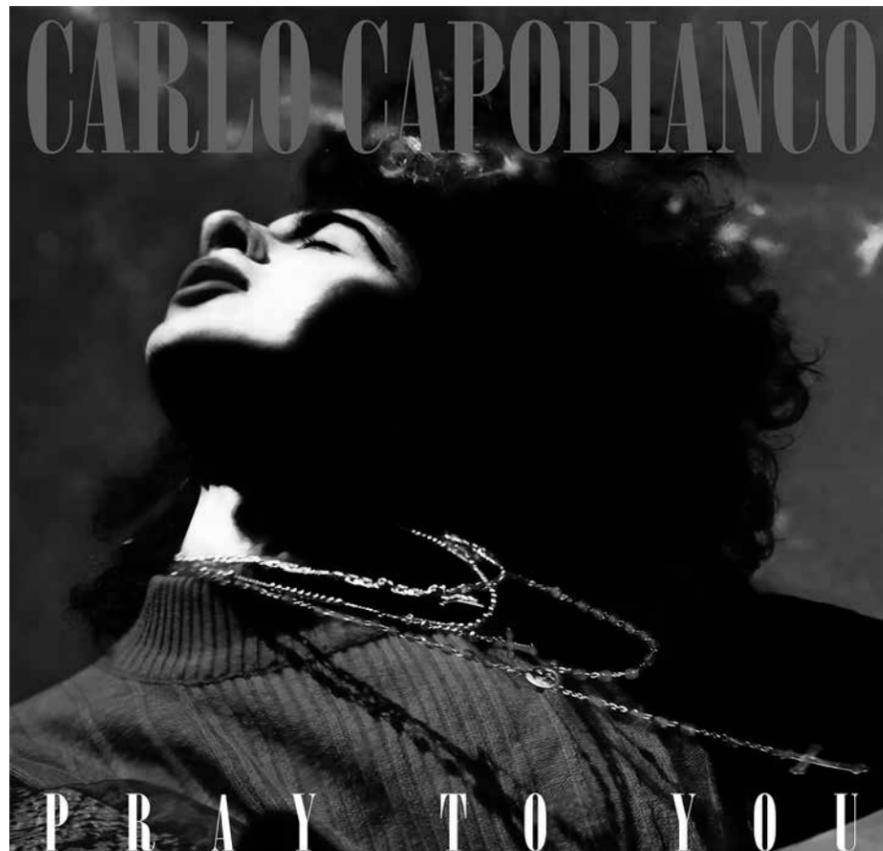
Burke says pop music is often looked down on as a less-serious form of music compared to traditionally male-dominated genres like rock and roll or hip hop.

"There's long been this divide within popular-music criticism ... the idea that rock should be the mode that deserves serious study, while pop is just the stuff of teenage girls," Burke says.

Capobianco initially felt this divide but says it is slowly changing.

"A lot of people don't want to go see a pop show, because they think it's not real music," he says. "The indie scene is more rock-punk oriented, but I think people are softening to pop."

Burke says pop music is perceived as



Pray to You, the new album from Carlo Capobianco, is a love letter to pop superstars of the MTV era.

something that is manufactured, inauthentic and not "real." The oxymoronic idea of the independent pop musicians is an opportunity for artists to lean into that escapism and create figures audiences can identify with.

"It is someone we can invest desire and energy into. They become this kind of icon in whom we invest our desires," Burke says.

Capobianco says he experiences this

same escapism on stage.

"I think that the Carlo Capobianco on stage is completely different from what I am. I am quite reserved and quiet and timid," he says. "Once I get on stage, it is definitely a different person and mindset. I don't try, but it just comes out."

Pray to You releases on April 20. Follow [carlocapobianco.bandcamp.com](https://www.carlocapobianco.bandcamp.com) for updates.



COMPETITION IN BITS AND BYTES

Gamers compete live at the West End Cultural Centre

PATRICK HARNEY | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER

Over the past decade, professional video gaming, or esports, have rapidly ascended from basement LAN parties and dank arcades to sold-out stadiums across the globe.

The early success of arcade legends like Billy Mitchell has been dwarfed by the gargantuan earnings and fanbases of modern professional players like Johan “N0tail” Sundstein or Lee “Faker” Sang-hyeok.

The explosion of esports has churned out flocks of young people eager to compete and reach esports stardom. On March 18, Winnipeggers can see aspiring Canadian pros compete during CECS Live at the West End Cultural Centre.

Participating gamers will compete as part of the seventh season of the Canadian Esports Championship Series (CECS), a tournament that draws teams from across Canada to compete. The event on March 18 will focus on *Valorant*, a 5v5 first-person shooter released in 2020 by Riot Games.

CECS Live is organized by the Manitoba Esports Association, a not-for-profit that promotes esports in the province. Active since 2019, the association spawned out of University of Manitoba Esports, which started in 2014.

“Esports has always been thriving in Manitoba, but it’s always been at the community level,” Melanie Penner, the Manitoba Esports Association’s CEO, says.

Now, the association wants to extend its reach beyond the local level to gain legitimacy and, importantly, funding.

“You’re kind of solidifying that this group exists or that this industry exists,” Penner says. “It’s important that there is a non-profit to represent these people, since it’s been difficult to get validation from those higher up. You need support to get grants, funding or any investment.”

Penner says participating in esports is a chance for individuals who can’t or don’t want to participate in traditional sports to enjoy and experience competition.

“It’s an awesome extracurricular, especially during the pandemic. You can get together with friends online and hang out and compete,” Penner says. “We have had people with disabilities or individuals who can’t afford traditional sports who get to participate.”

Although the need for a laptop or \$400-plus video-game console seems high, competitive games are often free to play, and traditional sports can cost from \$200 to \$2,000 each year. Compounded with the need to transport kids or themselves to and from events, many lower-income individuals might see esports as an equitable option for participating in competition.

Attending a live event is also an opportunity to connect with and support the larger esports community with an artists’ corner where vendors can sell video-game merchandise.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Gamers and spectators alike can enjoy the wonderful world of esports at the West End Cultural Centre on March 18 and 19.

“There are a lot of aspects that aren’t just about watching the show but also supporting the community,” Penner says. “There are lots of brick-and-mortar stores that rely on these events.”

For those on the sidelines, the opportunity to watch people compete has its own level of excitement. Like any competition, esports allows spectators to get in on the action and feel the highs and lows players experience.

While many of the larger team North American competitions are centred around Los Angeles or other major United States cities, CECS Live is an opportunity for Winnipeg’s esports enthusiasts to get together around the thrill of competition.

CECS Live runs from the morning of March 18 to the evening of March 19. Tickets can be purchased online through manitobaesports.com.

AND IN THIS CORNER...

High-flying Winnipeg Pro Wrestling league brings the pain

MATTHEW TEKLEMARIAM | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | MATTEKLE

Cruisin’ for a bruise? Don’t bother waiting for WrestleMania. There’s plenty of gut-churning, turnbuckle action right here in the Prairies.

Winnipeg Pro Wrestling (WPW), one of the city’s hot spots for raw, smackdown-type action, is celebrating its fifth anniversary this year. The roster of wrestlers features both local and international talent.

“Our mission is to bring top-level competition and athletes to Winnipeg to compete in a professional wrestling ring for championships and pride and glory,” Devin Bray, booker, co-owner and co-founder of WPW, says.

“We also aim to have a really diverse lineup, so that includes women and People of Colour and LGBTQ wrestlers. We’re just looking to have a more equitable and diverse lineup.”

WPW had its inauspicious origins after a group of Bray’s friends visited Los Angeles for some big-league wrestling but were ultimately inspired by the city’s less-ambitious exploits.

“They went to an event called Bar Wrestling and were really impressed with that particular show. It was something that maybe we could replicate here. Since then, our scope has grown a lot,” Bray says.

After debuting at the Sherbrook Inn in 2018, the league sought more room to rumble.

“When we wanted to try something bigger, we found the West End Cultural Centre, and it just sort of went from there.

Now we’re kind of branching out into different venues,” Bray says.

He refers to the upcoming and sold-out Fight at the Museum on April 18 at the Manitoba Museum, an event that WPW is touting as their biggest show yet.

“With the museum, we just wanted to branch out somewhere that had a little more of a capacity but keep that unique sort of aesthetic we’ve really worked hard to have,” he says.

AJ Larocque, a wrestler, DJ and entertainer, is among the event’s participants. Wrestling under the stage name AJ Sanchez, he was the first-ever WPW champion, utilizing the “low blow” as his signature move in the ring.

“I’ve been with WPW since the inception, and I’ve been involved in the local scene for about 21 years now,” Larocque says.

“It’s been fantastic. The guys, they’ve got a real family-type atmosphere. As a performer, my favourite part is just being able to be in the centre of the ring or on the stage and commanding everybody’s attention.”

Bray believes the WPW continues the city’s longtime tradition of professional wrestling greatness and hopes to pay homage to those who’ve blazed a trail.

“With wrestling, there’s sort of inherent tradition and respect for those who pave the way. There’s always been independent wrestling in Winnipeg at community centres and bars. That’s where Chris Jericho



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Winnipeg Pro Wrestling follows in the city’s long tradition of independent wrestling, while also spotlighting women, LGBTQ and BIPOC wrestlers.

got his start,” Bray says.

“They had a thing called the American Wrestling Association, and that was top names like Ric Flair and Andre the Giant, these massive shows at the Winnipeg Arena. It’s always fluctuated up and down, and I think wrestling in general is hitting another hot period right now.”

And while they’re more than happy to

carry the torch, the greatest reward comes from sharing their love for the sport.

“A lot of people who aren’t even wrestling fans come to these shows. To make lifelong fans at these shows has been really special for (those of) us who were always lifelong fans. It’s showing them what we love about it,” Bray says.

AFTER THE SWAN SONG

Behind the scenes of RWB's *Swan Lake*

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

André Lewis is no stranger to *Swan Lake*. The artistic director's career at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet (RWB) has spanned three decades. Over the phone, he vividly recalls dancing in the RWB's first full production of *Swan Lake* in the late '80s.

"You learn from the generation that has just done it. Each generation brings a further evolution to it," Lewis says.

This edition of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's ballet, which premiered in 1877, is technically a few years in the making. In 2021, the RWB released *Visions of Swan Lake*, a video series of the RWB performing the ballet's most iconic scenes.

But leaving it to the digital realm didn't suffice. So, from March 8 to 12, the ballet took to the Centennial Concert Hall stage.

This year's ballet was particularly special for Lewis. Soon, he'll sing his swan song. He plans to retire from the company in 2025. While the RWB conducts a coveted search for its next artistic director, Lewis will bear witness to another rendition of the timeless ballet.

Likewise, it's not the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra's (WSO) first rodeo – or ballet, rather – either. Both the RWB and the symphony share a home at the Centennial Concert Hall,

with productions like *The Nutcracker* returning each holiday season.

When conducting a standalone symphony, principal conductor Julian Pellicano dedicates 100 per cent of his attention to the musicians on stage. But when he's in the orchestral pit, it drops to 80 per cent. The remaining 20 per cent observes the delicate rhythms of the dancers' feet.

It's how music and movement converse in the same language.

"As a conductor for the ballet, you need to be sensitive to choreography. You need to be interested in the bigger picture, beyond just the music," Pellicano says.

"Often, music on its own can be very ambiguous as to exactly what it says. We can kind of feel what it says, but it's hard to pinpoint exactly what music is about. But when it comes to ballet, the story and the choreography and the way that the production is directed can be very specific."

In Act III, the ballet welcomes the Rusalka Ukrainian Dance Ensemble to the stage to perform the Mazurka, a Polish dance number.

"This style of dance is similar to some of what we are used to, although it's obviously more balletic than it is Ukrainian," Christine



SUPPLIED PHOTO

A photo from the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's most recent production of Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*

Preachuk, Rusalka's technical director, says. "The two countries do border each other in Europe, so there are a lot of similarities in classical verse steps."

The dance ensemble, which celebrates its 60th anniversary this year, is guided by two former RWB dancers: Dmitri Dovgoselets and Tristan Dobrowney.

On the night of the Saturday show, young women came with ribbons in their hair and fashion that could be deemed "balletcore" on social media.

Pop culture never ceases to absorb classic tales, and *Swan Lake* has inspired no shortage of new works, the most popular being Darren Aronofsky's film *Black Swan*.

Lewis has never seen the film but assures readers that he's "not at all" like the distasteful director.

While most relics of pop culture fade into history, *Swan Lake* carries a timeless quality that renders it a cultural heirloom.

"It's like a fine wine," Lewis says. "It improves with age."



CRITIPEG

SHAY WOLF'S STAY EP

Out now on streaming services



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

Prairie born-and-raised artist Shay Wolf's debut EP, *Stay*, is available now on all major streaming platforms. Prowling the scene since 2016 as an artist and creator, the Winnipeg-based songwriter has chosen now to pounce into plain view.

Stay is a feather-light foursome of ballads that showcase Wolf's range and sometimes limitations. A trained classical pianist, Wolf wisely centres her debut here on the double threat of her airy lilt of a voice, very much reminiscent of other singers in the folk-pop sphere, as well as her keywork, which is paradoxically delightful in its melancholy.

Overseeing the production is prolific Winnipeg-based producer John Paul Peters, with additional instrumentation provided by drummer Jon Plett and cellist Julian Bradford, among others. Sparse musical arrangements and sombre textures reign supreme throughout.

The EP opens with the titular track "Stay," a minimalist and endearing ballad that immediately conjures reverie-like imagery as Wolf implores a lover to stay for just one more moment.

Despite some complementary studio effects and production choices, this is the cleanest exhibition of Wolf's technical ability, as her voice deftly soars, and the tumble of her pianism serves as the track's foundation.

In "Alone Together," Wolf duets, or perhaps duels, with the buck and bending of a guttural, bluesy guitar. With the first introduction of another major musical element, she establishes the forward momentum that will continue to ramp up over the rest of the EP.

The morale boosting of "Fighting" is a highlight, a quietly triumphant power piece that crescendos with a touch gentle but firm. And closing stomp-clap pop tune "Deeper" is fundamentally sound if a slight betrayal of the rest of the EP's textures.

Lyrical, *Stay* is somewhat anodyne, with words clear and concise enough for imagining the inspiration without quite feeling it. I can appreciate the catharsis of a track like "Stay," even if the imagery of walking a moonlit night is a bit played out.

But what is said is less important than *how* it is said. The lyrics here function best as a ve-



SUPPLIED PHOTO

hicle for demonstrating Wolf's enviable vocal talent. Her melismatic manner of vocalization can stand proudly among the emerging artists of this era of music.

This EP could neatly fit amongst the bevy of similar folk-pop that came about during the mid-to-late 2000s. Influence from artists such as Regina Spektor and Feist is plainly felt, and the best of this project will titillate the same sensibilities that made that earnest era of pop songwriting so effortlessly popular.

But Wolf threatens some of her own credi-

bility, as the track "Deeper" evidently vies for the kind of Top 40 territory that artists like Spektor and Feist proved doesn't need to be conformed to.

One thing to consider about this particular record is that it is essentially an auricular debutante ball. Where Wolf comes up short stylistically, she makes up in terms of technical ability, and that's not to say this EP left me totally cold. Colour me impressed, if not especially touched.

ARTS BRIEFS

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

Feelin' lucky

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day the Irish way in Winnipeg's French quarter. Hosted by the McConnell Irish Dancers, the event will bring ample amounts of Irish food, beverages and performances. The event takes place on Friday, March 17 at the Centre Culturel Franco-Manitobain (340 Provencher Blvd.) at 6 p.m. Adult tickets are \$20 and can be purchased via bit.ly/42gMU5W.

Submit your ArchiShorts

The Winnipeg Architecture Foundations wants your shorts – on buildings, that is. March 19 is the submission deadline for the 2023 ArchiShorts Film Competition, which accepts two-minute movies about architecture using the digital recording device of the artist's choice. Visit adff.ca for detailed submission information.

A Millenium Centre soirée

A crew of talented women musicians will bring the music to an unlikely location this Friday, March 17: the Millennium Centre (389 Main St.). Vancouver-based violinist Kytami and Phonik Ops will form an EDM duo alongside MOUSAI. The party starts at 8:30 p.m. and doesn't stop until 1 a.m. Advance tickets are \$33.28 and can be purchased via bit.ly/3LvEH85.

Talking movement

On Friday, March 17, join Christopher House for a studio performance and artist talk presented by Winnipeg's Contemporary Dancers. Starting at 7:30 p.m. in the Rachel Browne Theatre (211 Bannatyne Ave.), House, a queer choreographer, performer, director, educator and curator, will present a choreographic adaptation of *NEWS* followed by a talk.

From the Junos to the Limelight

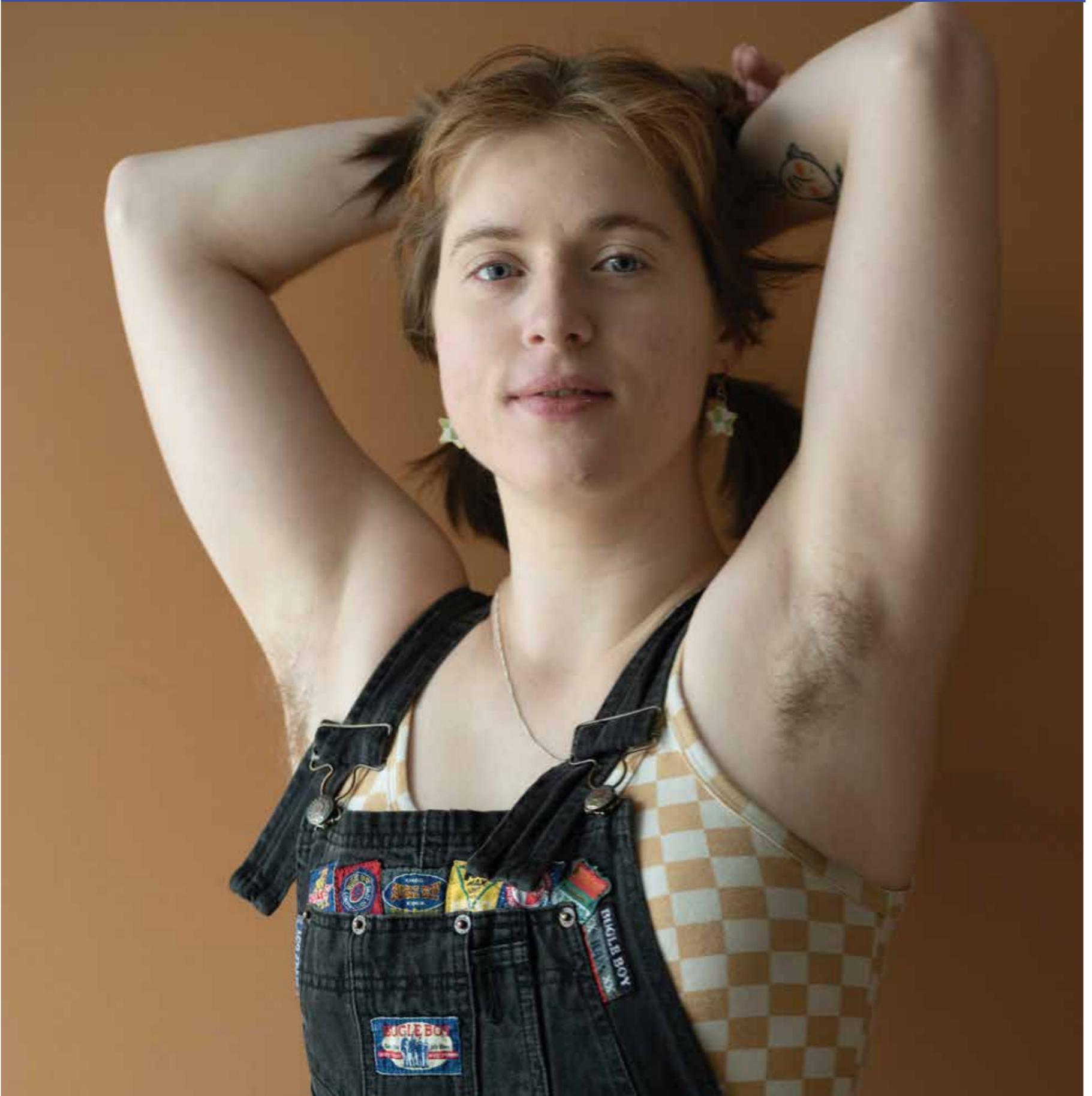
After attending the Juno awards earlier in the week, Toronto-based comedian Courtney Gilmour will make a stop in Winnipeg to headline Neurohilarity. It's the second edition of the comedy showcase since 2022, which will also feature Lyric Avra, Scott Koropas, JD Renaud and Going Greene. Doors open at 8 p.m. at Limelight Karaoke Bar (531 St. Mary's Rd.), and the show begins at 9 p.m. Reserve your tickets via bit.ly/3Fqez09.

It's worth the trip: *Here & There*

Hit the road this weekend to catch the final days of *Here & There*, an exhibition by artists Patricia Beech and Jean David at the Art Gallery of Southwestern Manitoba (710 Rosser Ave #2 in Brandon). Beech's Prairie vignettes contrast with the shores, valleys and hills depicted in David's work. The final day to view the exhibition is March 18. For hours of operation, visit agsm.ca.

Shaving, waxing, tweezing

Body hair, social norms and perceived 'femininity'



Sarah Struthers, photographed at the Asper Centre for Theatre and Film

I keep checking under my chin for this one persistent hair that grows in fits and starts. I'll check every day for weeks and then one day, I wake up and it's like half an inch long. For just over a year now, I've only done some light hair removal on my face. I let everything else grow long and dark. I'm really pale, so my body hair is noticeable. I don't like how it looks on me, and I worry what other people think, too.

I stopped shaving my legs about eight or nine years ago. My first boyfriend and I had just broken

up, it was winter, and I was wearing pants all the time. Who was I even doing it for?

There are lots of body-hair removal methods available today, like shaving, tweezing, threading, waxing, sugaring, laser hair removal and electrolysis. And until recently, I would say I was just lazy. I didn't want to put in the time, effort or go through the pain and expense of engaging with these practices. Plus, I figured I could be doing literally anything else, like napping or eating.

But Kayla Chafe, a 39-year old cisgender wom-

an, called me out for using that word. People who are socialized as girls are expected to remove certain body hairs. We're supposed to believe we're "lazy" if we don't.

When I stopped shaving my legs, I was also a budding feminist. I was majoring in gender studies and thinking a lot about the patriarchy, the beauty industry and their role in my life. Not shaving was, in some ways, a political statement. It felt really good, but it was scary, too.

First times

When I was a kid, I knew one day I'd get hair on my legs, and I'd start shaving. It was a rite of passage. I'd be a woman, or something. But these first experiences with body-hair removal aren't always joyful.

The first time I shaved my legs, I shaved my arms, too. I wasn't sure which parts of my body were unacceptable. I regretted it afterwards when I realized that girls in my classes had arm hair. Ironically, I wore long-sleeved shirts for a while to cover up my hairlessness.

Of course, "The gender binary is very clear on the amount of hair that people should have and where they should have it and where it should be groomed," Dr. Fiona Green says. Green is a cisgender professor of women's and gender studies at the University of Winnipeg.

She says people don't often think critically about the habits and practices we see as "normal." Even children police each other's body hair.

As a kid, Sarah Struthers, a nonbinary 24-year-old who goes between identifying as femme and masc, remembers their cousin calling them "hairy knees," which I was so confused by, because we're literally kids. And ... I'm thinking of this. I'm conscious of it now."

Jordyn Wiebe, a cisgender woman, owns The Sugar Freak, which is a sugaring shop in Winnipeg that also sells sex toys and advocates for reproductive rights. Wiebe says, "I knew in school, people were bullied about body hair. So there was one day where I took my mom's razor, and I actually razored one square out of my arm, just to see what it would look like. And I was like, 'Why did I do that?'"

The expectation to remove hair comes from more than just peers, though.

Struthers says that when they started puberty, their mother and sister noticed their hair growth and asked if they needed to start shaving their underarms. "It was embarrassing ... secretly shaving my armpits," they say.

Wiebe, however, says attitudes toward body hair are likely "more of a generational thing. I don't know that I've had my own peers say anything, but I've definitely had family say things when I'm growing out my armpit hair or if my legs aren't done."

These pressures and expectations never really go away.

Pressure, expectations

Green says that while growing up in the '70s, autonomy was a value feminists rallied around, particularly regarding reproductive rights.

"However, it extends beyond that," she says. Body hair is about "how we want to present ourselves in the world, how we want to be read and understood and how we define ourselves, and that goes with gender (and) sexual orientation."

Green remembers how societal pressures to shave different body parts intensified in the '70s and '80s, with the intention of making women look more childlike. In particular, feminists saw these expectations change in magazines like *Playboy* and *Penthouse*, where women's vulvas "went from being a natural hairy area to being groomed ... and then (the hair) slowly became removed completely."

By 1985, when Green married, she felt pressured to wax her underarms because of the gendered ritual and performance of marriage. "It was recognizing that I was going to be surveilled, I suppose, by guests at the wedding." She says she didn't want to distress anyone.

With the advent of social media and bombardment of advertisements, no one can escape gender norms.

For example, in shaving commercials, Struthers says "their legs are already shaven. The image of a woman with hairy legs is so appalling for the public to see."

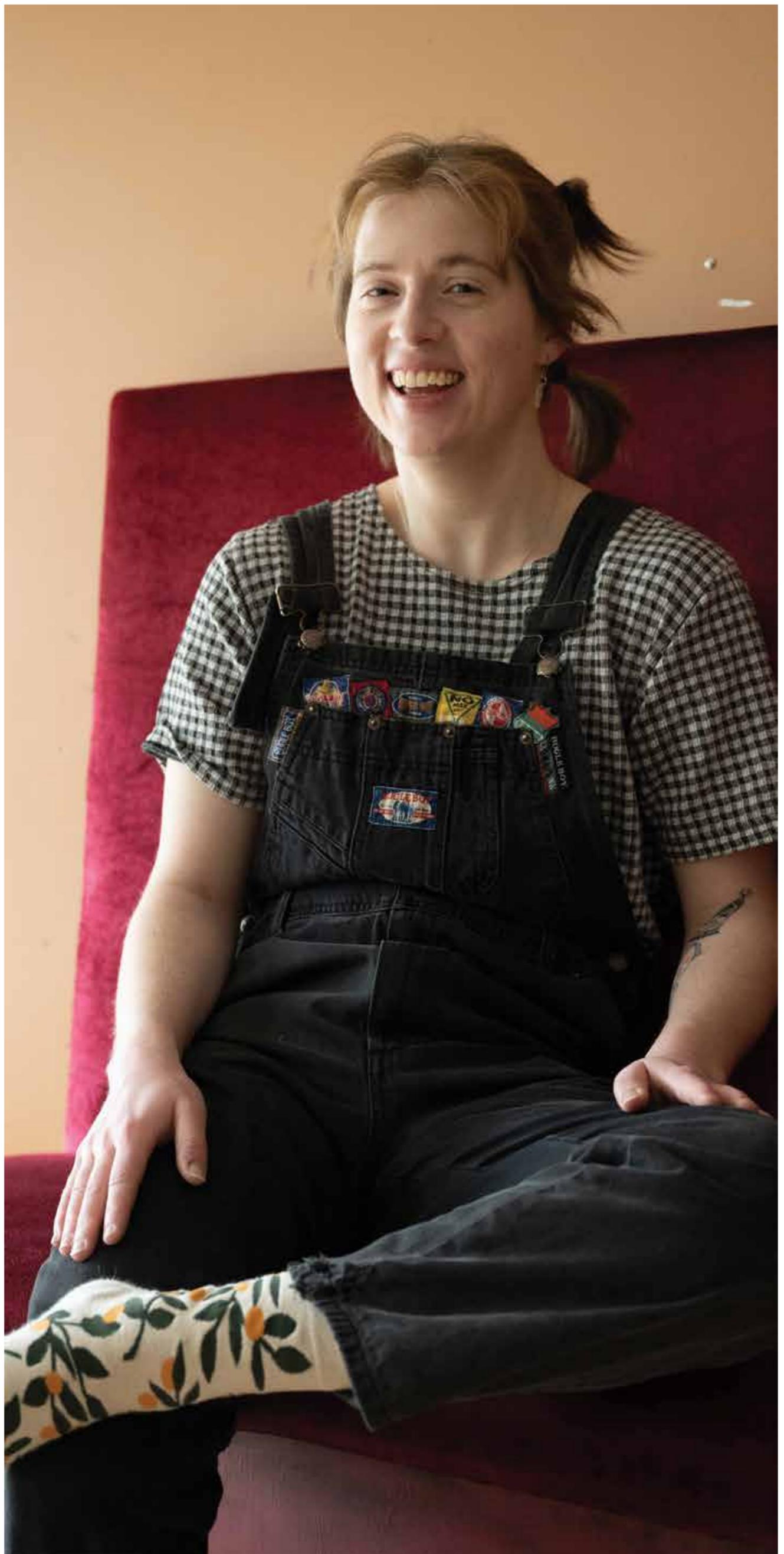
Wiebe, on the other hand, makes social-media posts where she sugars herself. "Some of (the comments) will be like, 'Oh my god, you had so much hair to begin with.'" She says it's mostly men who make these comments.

"It's definitely something people want gone."

Romance

Until about a year ago, I would constantly get the urge to shave my legs every time I had a new romantic partner. More often than not, I'd give in. That said, when I did shave, I wasn't only doing it for my partners. Like many people, I *like* the feeling of soft, silky legs. It's nice.

My experience is pretty typical. For instance, Wiebe has sugaring clients who come in before dates. "They do it so their first impression with



Sarah Struthers first became conscious of the social pressures of body hair as a child, when their cousin called them "hairy knees."



"It really took some time to decondition myself from what is dubbed as normal." - Kayla Chafe



Chelsea Howgate says that waxing at a salon "is giving someone access to a part of my body that I'm still really self-conscious about."

somebody when they're about to possibly get intimate with someone is that they don't have any hair."

Struthers' past partners have pointed out their body hair. "When I was in my first serious relationships, I started to get comments. One of my boyfriends would say, 'Your legs are kind of prickly.' It's just like, what the heck?"

And Chafe says she felt the need to announce her body hair to partners.

However, sometimes partners help encourage us to be ourselves.

Struthers says, "I was with someone else who was like, 'You can do whatever you want. It's your body.' And that opened my eyes more to like, yeah, it is."

Winnipeg winters, Winnipeg summers

On the one hand, Winnipeg winters are great opportunities to not worry about body hair. Wiebe mentions people who visit The Sugar Freak and say things like 'Oh, it's winter. Who cares about my legs right now?'

But the long winters mean there's less oppor-

tunity to work on self-acceptance.

Wiebe says her business is busier over the summer. "People want to remove the hair so that other people can't see it."

And that makes sense. After all, "If you're wearing a bathing suit and there's pubic hair seen, that's often frowned upon. That's seen as disgusting or dirty or poor hygiene," Green says.

In fact, I've somehow trained myself not to gaze at my legs, because every summer, I put a skirt on for the first time, and it's a big surprise that my leg hair is there. Was it always so long and dark? And I don't want to get rid of it, and I can't anyway, because my skin is too sensitive these days, but I certainly don't feel pretty.

It turns out that removing my body hair and ignoring it have the exact same effect. I still haven't learned self-acceptance. But I still wear whatever I want. And every time I push through that fear, it gets smaller.

Trans and nonbinary experiences

Transgender women and nonbinary people have different experiences with body hair than me.

Chelsea Howgate, a trans woman, says that before transitioning, she didn't shave her face. But now, "That's another source of dysphoria ... Now it feels like there's a need to shave."

In Manitoba, trans women who experience body-hair dysphoria can receive health coverage for laser hair removal or electrolysis. "But, unfortunately, laser doesn't work for everyone. There's better alternatives, but a lot of those are considered cosmetic rather than a medical necessity, so they aren't covered," Howgate says.

She also says it can be difficult to find a trans-friendly clinic. "With waxing ... I would have to go to a salon. And that is giving someone access to a part of my body that I'm still really self-conscious about."

Howgate points out that feminism has made it easier for trans women to go without shaving. "I can have the kind of body hair that's starting, in a way, to become more acceptable for cis women to have. Like, sometimes, I'll go a while without shaving my legs."

Overall, "Gender non-conforming people exist, and you're just going to have to deal with it," Struthers says.

Education and empowerment

With education, people will likely come to think of body-hair removal as a choice.

Struthers has noticed more of their friends have stopped shaving, and Chafe says knowing others who don't shave normalizes body hair. "It doesn't really feel like I'm out here alone."

"It really took some time to decondition myself from what is dubbed as normal," Chafe says. "I am not doing anything else in life unless it empowers me and it's my choice fully and not because of systems or culture or people's opinions."

Of course, people remove their body hair for lots of good reasons. "People feel sexy ... They feel good about themselves," Wiebe says. For people with skin conditions like psoriasis, she says sugaring helps because their skin feels less itchy. "It overall helps with their mental health."

Ultimately, "It is a personal decision," Green says. "Who am I to tell anybody if they should or shouldn't be removing their hair? That's none of my business, and it's no one else's business what I do with my body, either."

MANITOBA ANNOUNCES PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS

Province unveils plans for new \$126M homelessness strategy

MATTHEW FRANK | CITY REPORTER |  MATTDFRANK

On Feb. 28, the provincial government announced a new housing-first homelessness strategy called A Place for Everyone, which promises \$126 million in funding and 700 social housing units. The province is providing \$58 million on top of \$68 million promised in 2022.

Non-profit organizations, community advocates and municipal and provincial officials collaborated to create the strategy in 2022. More than 400 people were consulted, Families Minister Rochelle Squires said during a news conference.

“We recognize that people become homeless when they fall between the cracks and we understand that those cracks are largely provincial systems,” she said. “This shift is necessary if we want to end homelessness, rather than just managing it.”

Squires said this is the first whole-of-government homelessness strategy enabling service providers to move from primarily crisis-orientated care to focusing on prevention.

The End Homelessness 2022 Winnipeg Street Census, which was completed over a two-day period, found 1,256 people experiencing homelessness in Winnipeg, with likely more unreported.

The housing-first model focuses on modernizing the emergency response, providing housing with supports, preventing homelessness, developing person-centred services and building northern and rural capacity.

Some of the new initiatives include increasing funding for shelters to operate as 24/7 service hubs and adding 700 social housing units with support teams in 2023 and 2024. These support teams will provide help with getting personal documents, social services and daily clinical support.

The strategy will also continue providing increased annual funding for N'Dinawemak, Manitoba's only Indigenous-led 24/7 shelter funded by the province and a community-based bridge program for people waiting for Employment and Income Assistance (EIA).

Provincial Working Group chair for the Right to Housing Coalition Kirsten Bernas says the Province still has to do more for housing in Manitoba. She says the provincial government has invested little in social housing, and Manitoba has lost many units in recent years because of buildings being sold or falling into disrepair.

Bernas says the impact of less social



PHOTO BY ISAIAH SANCHEZ

On Feb. 28, Manitoba announced the "A Place for Everyone" homelessness strategy to help assist unhoused people.

housing is felt within the province, but it's difficult to know exact numbers because the data isn't easily available.

“It didn't seem to be a political priority before this announcement, and I'm not sure it is now, either, even with the strategy, because we only have the one-year commitment. It's going to take more than that for people to feel reassured that this government is serious about ending homelessness,” Bernas says.

According to the Manitoba Non-Profit Housing Association, Manitoba needs 8,700 very low-income units to fill the current need.

University of Winnipeg geography professor Dr. Jino Distasio says housing is key to ending homelessness.

“There's a lot of instability in a lot of

people's lives,” Distasio says. “The gold standard is getting people into independent, safe, affordable housing and then having access like anybody else to the support they need to live a real, fulsome life.”

Distasio says political will and community empowerment will impact how successful the strategy will be.

“We need all levels of government and the community to say enough is enough.”

“I'd love to see a day in Winnipeg where we aren't focused on thousands of people. This strategy won't get us there, but it's moving the needle. We need to do more.”

CITY OF WINNIPEG CUTS AMOOWIGAMIG'S HOURS

Budget constraints impact the downtown public washroom

MATTHEW FRANK | CITY REPORTER |  MATTDFRANK

Due to budget constraints, the City of Winnipeg is cutting the hours of operation for Amoowigamig, the only dedicated public washroom space run by the City. Starting on May 16, the washroom will be open seven days a week for eight hours a day instead of 10.

Since opening on June 3, 2022, Amoowigamig has been used more than 20,000 times.

Trevor Lambert, a community member, has frequently relied on the washroom and was surprised by the quality of the space when it first opened.

“When it was being built, I was thinking people were going to camp out there and just wreck it, but there's well-trained staff there,” Lambert says. “They have a good deal of understanding of what it's like to be on the street.”

This positive impact is linked to the city's partnership with community organization Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre, which operates the facility and provides peer-support services and harm-reduction supplies.

Discussions for a permanent public washroom began in June 2020. This spe-

cific project was funded by the COVID-19 Community Response Fund for Vulnerable Populations, which supports people experiencing homelessness, and Circle of Life Thunderbird House, an Indigenous community centre.

The total cost for the washroom was \$874,489, with an annual, City-set budget of \$200,000. However, according to a City report, the facility's operating costs have exceeded this budget.

Coun. John Orlikow, who chairs the standing policy committee on community services, says the City would've kept the hours open longer, but the budget ran out for the pilot project.

“It's always easy to spend the money, but where do we find the money is the problem,” he says. “The fact that the program was so successful will help in trying to find funding for it.” Orlikow also says the City needs to look at “finding partners with some existing infrastructure.”

Jamil Mahmood, the executive director of community organization Main Street Project, says the washroom's reduced hours show how the municipal government isn't prioritizing Winnipeggers' ba-



PHOTO BY ISAIAH SANCHEZ

Only nine months since its opening, the City of Winnipeg is cutting the hours to the Amoowigamig public washrooms.

sic needs.

“It's very clear that the City isn't making the investment in community and public services that we need to be. We're a major city in Canada, and to think we don't have one 24-hour staffed washroom in the core of our city is mind-boggling,” he says.

While Main Street Project has washrooms available, Mahmood says their space is often full, and individuals have to go through the shelter intake process to access the washrooms.

“Why should you have to go through a shelter intake to access a washroom when there's a public washroom right there?”

he says.

Besides Amoowigamig, the only other City-run washroom facilities are four temporary portable toilets. Lambert says the lack of accessibility makes the task of going to the washroom difficult.

“I don't like going to the bathroom. I hold (it) for as long as possible, because there's not many places to go, and then finally I'm in crisis mode,” he says. “I wish the washroom was open for 24 hours.”

Funding for Amoowigamig will end on Dec. 31. City council will vote on increasing funding and hours or maintaining the current model.



KERN-HILL FURNITURE STANDS THE TEST OF TIME

U of W Archives digitize the furniture store's classic commercials

MEGAN RONALD | CAMPUS REPORTER | [@MEGANLYNNRONALD](#)

While students may not remember the glory days of local commercials, many Winnipeggers can't forget Kern-Hill Furniture's high-energy TV advertisements. The University of Winnipeg Archives recently digitized Kern-Hill's locally famous commercials, which are now available online.

The ads feature Kern-Hill owner Nick Hill, who ran the business from 1957 until his death in 2003, donning his signature cowboy hat and rhythmically chanting like an auctioneer. He shares the screen with his "No. 1 son," Andrew, who modulates his father's rapid claims with a more passive delivery style.

"Kern-Hill has an iconic place in Winnipeg's business history," Thomas Nesmith says in an email to *The Uniter*. Nesmith is professor emeritus at the University of Manitoba's archival-studies department. He notes the similarities between *The Price is Right* and Kern-Hill's commercials.

The "game-show announcer always called audience contestants to the stage with 'come on down' to try to win merchandise not unlike what Kern Hill (was) selling. Making the business of selling a kind of game show may have helped Kern

Hill a lot," Nesmith says.

He adds that Winnipeg's business history, including Kern-Hill's legacy, should be better known. "There is much more to know about these fascinating entrepreneurs and the less flashy ones who also shaped our city life," Nesmith says.

Brett Lougheed is a digital curator at the U of W Archives. He says the archives are reaching out to the Hill family about acquiring records to further illustrate the furniture store's local impact.

The archives received the commercials on analog video cassettes. Lougheed says archival preservation is expensive. To convert these cassettes to more modern, accessible formats, they shipped the original commercials to a vendor in Toronto. There is also an ongoing cost to store the converted digital information.

"Digitization is a complex and costly task," Nesmith says. "It's not simply a matter of pressing a camera button."

However, this cost is often worth it to preserve history when possible. Lougheed says digitization can help more people access important archival materials.

"Archives reflect society. They provide documented evidence of activities under-



The University of Winnipeg Archives partnered with the Hill family to digitize and preserve the iconic Kern Hill Furniture ads featuring the fast-talking patriarch Nick Hill.

taken by individuals around the world," he says.

"If there were additional funding resources available to us, archives might be able to digitize more content to make more content accessible to people online and ensure that important documentary heritage is preserved for the long term."

Nesmith says it's not possible to digitize all archived materials, as "the holdings of archives are so massive, in most cases, or continually growing." However, he says the classic Kern-Hill commercials are among local stories "needing to be archived before they are lost forever."

Lougheed agrees. "If we don't (archive certain historic materials), it's possible that

records of importance to society will be lost forever," he says.

The U of W Archives received a grant from the provincial Department of Culture, Heritage, and Sport to digitize the videos. Andrew Burke, an associate professor of cultural studies at the U of W specializing in film and television, also received funding from the U of W to assist the digitization process.

To watch these kitschy gems of local history, visit the University of Winnipeg Archives' YouTube channel.

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CITY BRIEFS

TESSA ADAMSKI | CITY EDITOR | [@TESSA.ADAMSKI](#)

Death records for residential-school children

The Province has agreed to share the death records of Indigenous children who went to residential schools with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. These records will be used to identify and commemorate loved ones, provide burial locations, enable research and provide causes and rates of death. This agreement fulfills one of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls for action.

True North proposal for Portage Place

On March 13, the city's executive policy committee voted to allow The Forks North Portage Partnership to grant True North the option of purchasing Portage Place mall. True North owns the Winnipeg Jets and is proposing to use the space for housing, services and programs that suit the area's social and economic needs. The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives says True North's proposal lacks Indigenous leadership and is calling on governments to decline the offer. The vote will go before city council on March 23.

Renaming three Winnipeg streets

The City's Indigenous-relations division has been appointed to help rename three Winnipeg streets: Bishop Grandin Boulevard, Bishop Grandin Trail and Grandin Street. Following a meeting with Elders, knowledge-keepers and residential-school survivors, they have proposed the boulevard be changed to Abinojii Mikanah (A-bin-oh-gee Mee-kin-ah), the trail be changed to Awasisak Mēskanov (Aa-wa-sis-uk Me-ska-noh) and the street be changed to Taapweewin Way (Tap-way-win). Bishop Grandin was a key supporter of the residential-school system.

HSC to open minor-treatment clinic

A new minor-treatment clinic is expected to open this summer at the Health Sciences Centre. After being triaged and assessed at the ER, patients will be referred to the clinic and treated for injuries or illness, including stitches or conditions requiring antibiotics. HSC hopes to reduce the number of people choosing to leave without having been seen in the ER due to lengthy wait times. The clinic will open on the first floor of HSC, across from the 700 William Ave. entrance. It will be open for 12 hours per day and be staffed by one doctor and one nurse.

Introduction of Addiction Services Act

On March 14, the Manitoba legislature introduced Bill 33, the Addiction Services Act, that would regulate drug-treatment facilities and safe-consumption sites. The bill would require organizations to apply for a federal exemption from Health Canada and a license from the province. They would also be required to take staff training, record incident reports, provide records to the province on request and allow them to have a say in management and operation. Organizations already focusing on harm reduction would have up to six months to apply for government approval.

Release of 2022 fatal overdose data

Moms Stop the Harm, an organization of families affected by substance use-related deaths and harms, released their 2022 fatal overdose statistics after the provincial government refused to earlier this week. They say at least 377 people died from overdoses between January and November. No data is available yet for December. Sunshine House, a drop-in and resource centre, had more than 4,500 people access their mobile overdose-prevention site from November to February 2023. Manitoba is the only province west of Atlantic Canada without access to supervised harm-reduction consumption sites.



ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND ANTI-TRANS RHETORIC

Lecture by U of W poli-sci professor sparks community concerns

MEGAN RONALD | CAMPUS REPORTER | @MEGANLYNNRONALD

On March 3, Joanne Boucher, political science professor at the University of Winnipeg (U of W), gave a lecture titled “The Commodification of the Human Body: The Case of Transgender Identities.” The language used on promotional flyers to outline the aims of her lecture, such as the term “transgenderism” and the “economic interests involved” in gender-affirming health-care, signalled potential anti-trans themes. The circulation of Boucher’s abstract prior to the event garnered backlash from both university students and staff, and the queer community at large.

Emma Joyal, a fourth-year U of W student, started a petition urging the university to cancel the talk, due to its potential to threaten the school’s purported respectful and inclusive learning environment and circulate misinformation about trans lives and experiences.

Alyson Brickey, an assistant English professor at the U of W, led a Trans Love Cupcake Hour, and Brie Villeneuve organized a rally. Organizers scheduled these events at the same time as Boucher’s lecture, and both counter-events were attended by those wanting to show their support of the trans

community.

A day before the lecture was due to occur, the university published an email stating that it would not intervene or attempt to cancel the event. By way of explanation, it cited its commitment to academic freedom and its commitment to “fostering an environment in which freedom exists to question and discuss issues using a scholarly and respectful approach.”

Brickey, in an email to *The Uniter*, defines academic freedom as “a fundamental privilege that academics earn by becoming trustworthy experts in their chosen field.”

She adds that this freedom “protects our right to engage in intellectual critique without the fear of losing our jobs or being unfairly disciplined by the university.”

Brickey emphasizes that “academic freedom is not the same as unbridled free speech. It does not give professors free rein to say anything they like without consequence.”

She quotes clause 7.02 of the collective agreement between the university and those teaching, which states that “academic freedom implies a respect for the rights of others, a tolerance of other points of view and a duty to use that freedom in



PHOTO BY KEELEY BRAUNSTEIN-BLACK

The UWSA held a rally for Two-Spirit, trans, nonbinary and gender-diverse safety on March 3, to coincide with a lecture from political-science professor Joanne Boucher.

a responsible manner.”

However, the appropriation of this term by the far-right furthers an increasingly altered understanding of what academic freedom means. Whose academic freedom comes first, and at what cost?

Peter Ives, a political-science professor at the U of W, says that when it comes to opposing freedoms, scholarly responsibility must come first.

“I think in general, people have thought about this issue and this particular talk on campus as if it were a question of free expression, and was this hate speech or not,” he says. “I think that’s a misunderstanding of academic freedom.”

“The direction of research ethics for the last 20 years has been saying that if we’re working on research topics, that people are a part of our topics, then we have a lot of responsibility to them,” Ives says.

Brickey adds that, in recent years, there has been a rise in academic freedom used “as a protective cloak” to engage in ho-

mophobic, racist and otherwise discriminatory behaviour.

“These instances weaken the principle of academic freedom because they represent a failure to uphold the duty that academics have to use our privilege responsibly,” Brickey says.

She says the ability to disagree with responsible academic work does not mean the right to restrict it. Academic freedom does include the right to debate and discuss research.

Villeneuve, 2SLGBTQ* students’ director for the University of Winnipeg Students’ Association, says that Boucher’s claims reflect anti-trans rhetoric.

Villeneuve adds that if criticism is restricted, academic freedom comes into question.

“Trans people are people. The healthcare we get is affirming to our gender,” Villeneuve says. “Academic freedom does not protect you from others critiquing what you’ve researched.”



PROFile

JEWISH CRIME

Alex Tepperman, assistant professor in the Department of Criminal Justice

SYLVIE CÔTÉ | FEATURES EDITOR

Sitting in his office in Centennial Hall, Alex Tepperman talks about his upcoming book on Jewish crime. They are an assistant professor in the University of Winnipeg’s Department of Criminal Justice.

Tepperman has undergraduate, master’s, and doctoral degrees in history from the University of Toronto (U of T), the University of Rochester and the University of Florida. He completed his master’s in criminology from the U of T, as well.

“I do historical criminology, so I try to use historical methods and perspectives to understand present-day criminal justice-related concerns, so in issues related to things like race, class, gender, sexual orientation. Basically everything has this long, historical tale, so I try to use this historical tale to understand the present,” Tepperman says.

To better understand criminal justice in the present, they also completed a certificate in qualitative and multi-method research.

“I did this program at (Syracuse University) so that I could learn how to do ethnographic work, which means working within certain populations so that I can better understand (the) mindsets and perspectives of people unlike myself,” they say.

Tepperman is Jewish, and he says it’s helpful to study communities that you’re

part of.

Still, they note important differences between themselves and the people they will study. “Frankly, there’s going to be an unspoken divide between me and people in Brooklyn, because I’m not from Brooklyn, I’m not Orthodox ... So they won’t see me as ‘properly’ Jewish, a lot of them,” he says.

“I’m really excited, actually. I’ve been interested in areas related to Jews and Jewish crime for a while,” Tepperman says. “In about a month, I’m going to stay in Brooklyn for three weeks and then Pittsburgh for a week in the Jewish areas there.”

What is something you’ve learned from your students?

“I’ve learned everything from my students!”

What do you do in your spare time?

“I’m a dad of three dogs, and (I do) CrossFit with my wife.”

What do you like most about Winnipeg?

“I like its oddness ... The worst thing a place can be is boring, and I do not find Winnipeg boring at all.”



SUPPLIED PHOTO



MOTHER OF GOO

Consent isn't rocket science

MADLINE RAE | COLUMNIST | MOTHEROFGOO

Content warning: This article mentions non-consensual sexual encounters and grooming.

For this month's *Mother of Goo*, I felt like getting back down to basics: consent. Planned Parenthood's FRIES model can help bring clarity for those who are still not quite sure what is involved in comprehensive consent. In this article, I will break down each section of FRIES and contextualize it for you lovely *MOG* readers.

F stands for Freely Given:

This section addresses coercion, substance use and power dynamics. Power dynamics refer to if a person involved in the interaction holds persuasion or sway over the other person(s) involved. This component of FRIES also refers to age of consent laws. These laws are in place to protect young people who are susceptible to grooming.

The reality is, people have sex while on substances, and this complicates consent. If you plan to use substances while engaging in sexual activity, it's important to discuss what your boundaries are beforehand. The use of a safe word may help in this instance. Explicit check-ins and boundaries are a minimum. Waiting to sober up is best practice.

R stands for Reversible:

Consent can be revoked at any time during an encounter. The fact is that sex is better when all those involved are tuned in to each other. Reversing consent can also involve the use of a safe word or safe action. Safe words I've used include: spaghetti, pineap-

ple, banana and (oddlly) Glenn Close (yes, from *Fatal Attraction*).

I stands for Informed:

Informed means that people deserve to know what they are consenting to. This doesn't require a person to bare their soul, but necessary information can range from an explicit understanding of what is involved in a specific sex act to actual legalities around sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections (STBBIs). A previous *MOG* article covers HIV disclosure laws in Canada.

E stands for Enthusiastic:

This section is connected to F. It isn't really enough to just ask someone for a "yes" or "no." This is *especially* true if there is any hint of a power dynamic involved. Being in tune with the people you engage with is necessary. You don't have to be a mind reader, but if you notice the person(s) don't appear to be enjoying themselves, check in and *ask*. *Never assume*.

S stands for Specific:

Giving consent for one type of sexual or romantic activity does not mean blanket consent for all. Consent must be ongoing and asked for along the way. Examples of this sound like: "How does this feel for you? Can I add another finger?" and "I want to flip you over this way" or "I'd really like to go down on you right now."

FRIES is a helpful reference tool when ap-



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

proaching consent. Sex isn't a given. Writing this article is me giving myself over the past 15 years a big hug. I was never taught consent in school, and neither are many adolescents. Consent is an ongoing process that requires active participation and attention. So pay attention! Love you!

Madeline Rae, a University of Winnipeg alum, is a sex educator and writer living in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. She holds a BFA in performative sculpture, a BA in psychology and is studying her masters of clinical social work at Dalhousie University.

SHUTTING DOWN HATE ON CAMPUS

Why activists must go beyond petitioning university administration

MISHA PENSATO | VOLUNTEER | BARITONEFEMME

Earlier this month, professor Joanne Boucher gave a talk at the University of Winnipeg (U of W) provocatively titled "The Commodification of the Body: The Case of Transgender Identities." The description for this talk mirrored many familiar anti-trans talking points while using a critique of the for-profit medical system as plausible deniability.

Seeing the talk for what it was, many U of W staff members, students, faculty and broader trans community members – including myself – sprung to action.

At first, this organizing centred around a petition submitted to the U of W administration to have the talk cancelled, which received more than 1,700 signatures. The U of W administration responded with a statement affirming their support for "those in our 2SLGBTQ+ community" but also stating that they would not intervene, citing commitment to academic freedom.

Though petitions can be a good place to start, they run into problems when requesting event cancellations. When activists demand that an authority cancel an event, reactionaries can respond with the bad-faith argument that the left is trying to take away their freedom of speech.

Free speech is often hypocritically invoked to create space for the spread of bigoted opinions. This is a shame, since across Canada and the United States, freedom of

speech is under attack for many marginalized groups. For instance, in March 2019, Seven Oaks School Division in Winnipeg cancelled a talk by a Palestinian-American feminist after hearing complaints from Zionists.

In addition, petitions can transfer momentum out of activists' hands and leave decision-making power with the authorities being petitioned. Activists cannot count on institutional good will toward 2SLGBTQ+ people. We need to realistically assess who our allies are and build our own counter-power.

As an institution that relies on both public and private funds, the U of W administration is fundamentally concerned with its reputation, which impacts its ability to receive donations.

Right now, the U of W is presented as a welcoming place for 2SLGBTQ+ people. But with anti-trans movements gaining momentum across the globe, activists need to prepare for the possibility of anti-trans sentiment becoming a stronger force in Canada, even at liberal institutions such as the U of W.

If defending the humanity of 2SLGBTQ+ becomes an obstacle to expanding donations and enrollment, 2SLGBTQ+ advocates need to prepare for the possibility that the university's messaging could change.

2SLGBTQ+ activism is the strongest



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

when it comes from the community, by organizing with the university's staff, faculty, student body and broader affected communities. Real leverage exists within these groups, not in the administration. Without workers and students, there is no university. Direct action can include protesting bigoted talks, taking over discussion periods and doing community educational events to counter misinformation. The Trans Cupcake Love Hour organized by trans-affirming U of W faculty was a great example of this kind of work.

The community response to Boucher's

talk brought together many people committed to transgender liberation. While the U of W administration has stated its support for 2SLGBTQ+ people in its response to the petition, that support is only made reality by the day-to-day efforts of the students, faculty and staff at the university. Our strength is based on our collective commitment as students and workers to making the U of W what it is.

Misha Pensato is a trans woman, a U of W alum and a member of Solidarity Winnipeg.



COMMENTS

ZERO FARES

Low-cost transit is safe transit

ADAM JOHNSTON | VOLUNTEER

Security concerns are impacting Winnipeg Transit's image and discouraging ridership.

The City recently approved a \$5 million budget for a new transit security force. Instead of spending more on security, the City should consider other solutions to address the public-transportation crisis. This could include offering free or low-cost bus fare to every Winnipegger.

Support for free bus fare is gaining traction. According to a *New York Times* article published in 2020, about 100 cities around the world have some form of zero-fare policy. Kansas City completely eliminated fares in 2019. Other United States cities, including Denver, Salt Lake City, Los Angeles and Boston have contemplated similar initiatives.

In Canada, a section of Calgary's C-Train is complimentary. Children under 12 in Victoria are allowed to ride free of charge. Here in Winnipeg, children 11 and under are allowed to ride the bus for free if accompanied by a fare-paying passenger.

Free fares can help increase the safety of drivers and passengers.

Earlier this month, Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1505 president Chris Scott told CBC that discounted bus fares could help reduce passenger conflict.

Marginalized citizens rely on public transit more than others. Every time bus fares increase, they cut into people's transportation budgets. Rising prices and general cost-of-living increases can lead some passengers to refuse to pay bus fares and

escalate tensions between bus operators and riders.

Zero-cost transit has the potential to increase ridership, reduce car dependence, drastically reduce transportation poverty and help mitigate security problems for passengers and drivers.

Brian Pincott of Functional Transit Winnipeg, a group that advocates for transit improvement, said that reducing fares would advance ridership while cutting security concerns. He said increasing Winnipeg Transit fares limits access for those who need bus services the most.

Kansas City's zero-cost transit system has demonstrated what advocates like Pincott have been saying for years: If you provide free transit, they will come. Kansas City Regional Transit Alliance chair David Johnson said that since removing fares from Kansas City buses, passenger confrontations have decreased. Kansas City's free-transit trial expires this year, but the policy is expected to be renewed.

Winnipeg still has a long way to go before reaching fare zero. A defeated 2021 motion by Coun. Vivian Santos proposed the implementation of a \$1 fare. At a recent public-works committee meeting, Santos urged other committee members to acknowledge the success of discounted fares in other cities and consider employing something similar in Winnipeg.

However, critics say offering free or low-cost fares is not feasible due to a 2022 budget deficit of \$54 million.

Kansas City offers a glimpse of what's possible when a city invests in public



PHOTO BY LEIGH LUGOSI

The City of Winnipeg is spending \$5 million on transit security, but one of the most effective ways of increasing safety on buses is by lowering fares – or removing them altogether.

transportation as a public good rather than a commodity, by providing a secure service that benefits everyone. Rather than adding more security personnel, Winnipeg Transit needs to consider more creative options, including increasing use by lowering fares and increasing frequency of services.

Winnipeggers must consider discounted bus fares as an equity, climate and security policy to ensure the city moves forward.

Adam Johnston is an active- and public-transportation advocate. Follow him at adammjohnston.wordpress.com or on Twitter at [@adamjohnstonwpg](https://twitter.com/adamjohnstonwpg).

BEFORE MY OBITUARY

Coming out to be recognized, remembered and immortalized

DANIELLE DOIRON | COPY AND STYLE EDITOR | [@DANIELLEMDOIRON](https://www.instagram.com/daniellemdoiron)

As the family's resident copy editor, I was tasked with proofreading my grandfather's obituary before publication. What should have taken a lunch break stretched into a weeklong project, as relatives chimed in with additions, revisited anecdotes and questioned my capitalization choices – all things I should have expected from fellow storytellers.

Hours of work, phone calls and fact-checking Google searches later, someone pressed "send." I opened a book (well, scrolled through my browser tabs to a digital copy of *It Was Vulgar and It Was Beautiful*) and serendipitously read a quote attributed to activist Richard Elovich:

"I didn't want people to learn that I was queer from my obituary."

I don't equate my experiences with Elovich's at the height of the AIDS epidemic. Still, this got me thinking.

Perhaps it's natural to contemplate how you want to be remembered while memorializing someone else. While searching a box of papers for my grandfather's will, I was overwhelmed by how much I didn't know.

I was elated but unsurprised when I found a photo of him onstage in full drag. His gender-bending *Cinderella* performance had been an often-repeated part of family lore since before I was born. The box held thank-you notes, letters from government officials, copies of elementary-school report cards, the meticulously collected detritus of an octogenarian life.

I knew my grandfather was a poet, a historian, a chemist. Somehow, despite my decade working in journalism, I never

knew that he, too, wrote for a newspaper. I forgot his career as a politician, his interest in photography, his flag collection.

While reworking his obituary and sorting through that single time capsule of a box, I learned more about my grandfather than I could have expected. I haven't yet looked through his writings, but they'll likely reveal intimate emotions, experiences and beliefs he wouldn't have divulged to a grandchild.

I can't be the only writer in the family who expresses themselves more fully on the page. There's safety in jotting down thoughts on a blank document or across a stray piece of paper. There's a chance no one will consume my words – but if they do, it likely won't be while we make eye contact.

That's partially why I chose to come out online, during yet another wave of pandemic-induced restrictions. It was a simple Instagram caption about my updated pronouns. Then another, more than a year later, proclaiming the sexual orientation I had first, secretly claimed at six years old.

Both times, I turned my notifications off and my phone over. I readied myself for judgment, ridicule, prying questions. There was, later, a little of each. Notably, though, there was nonchalance. Many of the people closest to me already knew. Others either speculated about my identities or didn't care.

Regardless, it was freeing. Yes, I came out for myself, as the expression goes, but it was also for external recognition. I wanted people to know this part of me. I



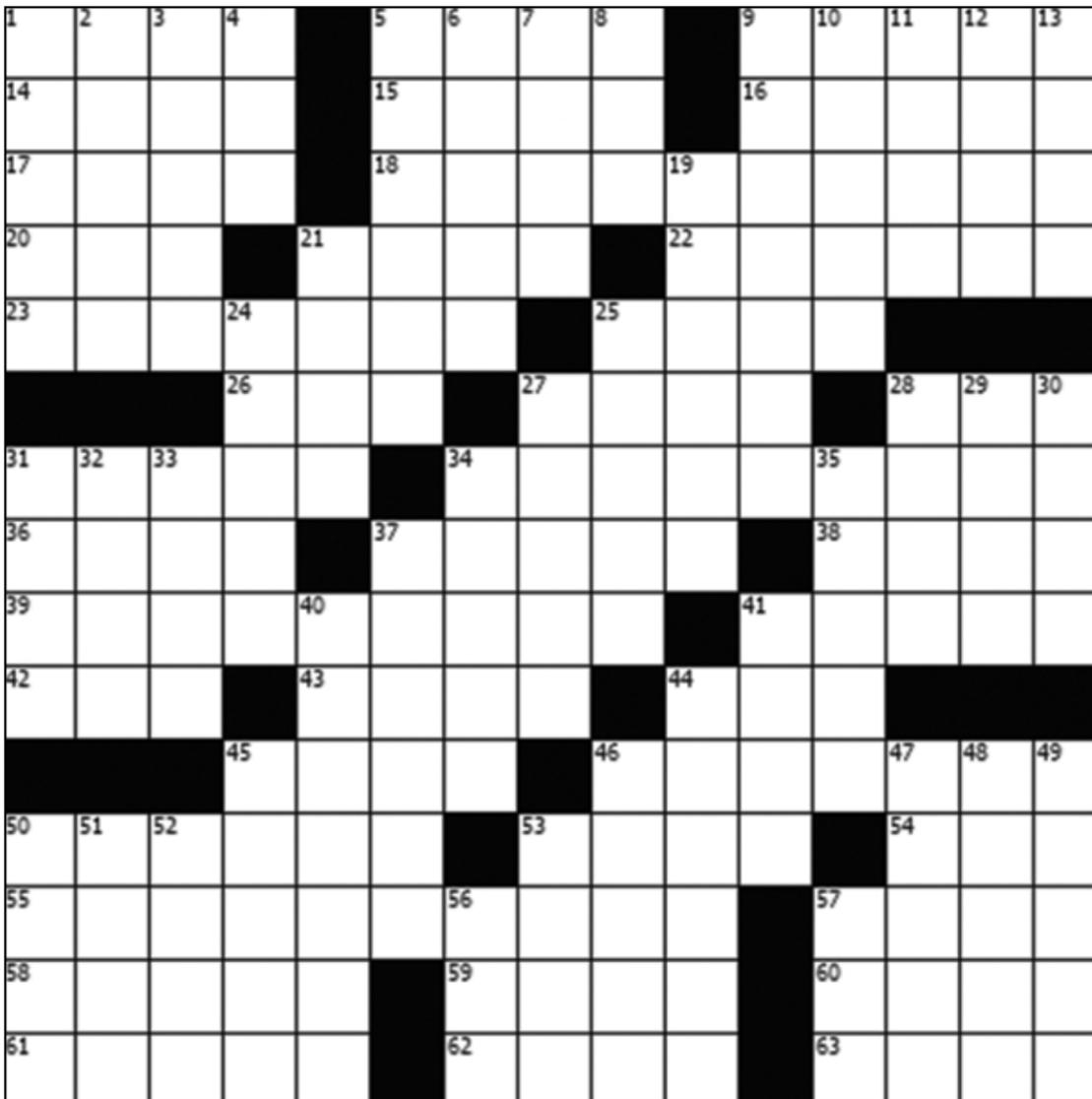
ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

revelled in finally, fully being seen. This was tangible (well, online) proof that I existed in my sexual orientation, in my gender identities somewhere beyond my own mind.

Years down the line, when family members gather and argue over my obituary, I hope someone recognizes, remembers and

immortalizes these parts of me. My story wouldn't be complete without them.

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



ACROSS

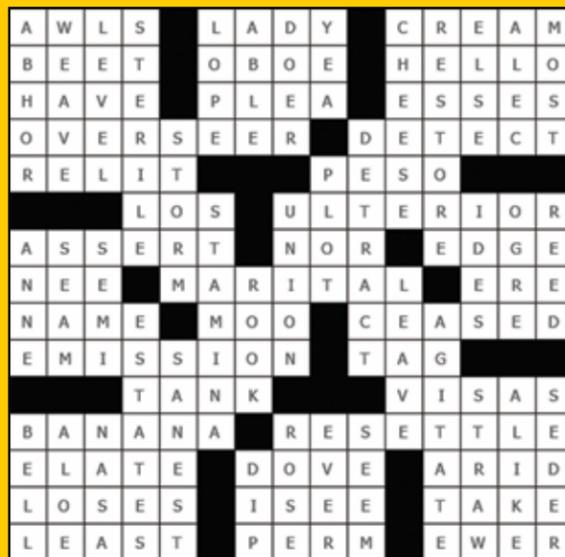
- 1. IF NOT
5. NOT WILD
9. DICKENS TITLE BEGINNING (2 WDS.)
14. CHARGED ATOMS
15. HIGH CARDS
16. FATHERED
17. SMALL PEST
18. ON A ____ (WITH LITTLE MONEY)
20. FEMININE PRONOUN
21. FRET
22. FORMAL AGREEMENT
23. GAVE MEDICAL AID TO
25. OAHU WREATHS
26. "VIVA ____ VEGAS"
27. FORAY
28. NILE VIPER
31. DAPPER
34. NASHVILLE'S STATE
36. HEALING PLANT
37. ROBERTS AND CLAPTON
38. ISN'T, INCORRECTLY
39. SUPPORT FOR AN INSTITUTION
41. KNIFE FEATURE
42. DOUBLE CURVE
43. SELF-CENTERED
44. CASUAL SHIRT
45. RELIGIOUS ORDER
46. NERVOUS STRAIN
50. SAHARA, E.G.
53. MOTHER'S SISTER
54. HEAT'S LEAGUE (ABBR.)
55. EASY TO REACH
57. MOLECULE COMPONENT
58. STOCK UNIT
59. HAVE TO
60. LIBERATE
61. RACETRACK ANIMAL
62. SCHOOL GPS.
63. HURL

DOWN

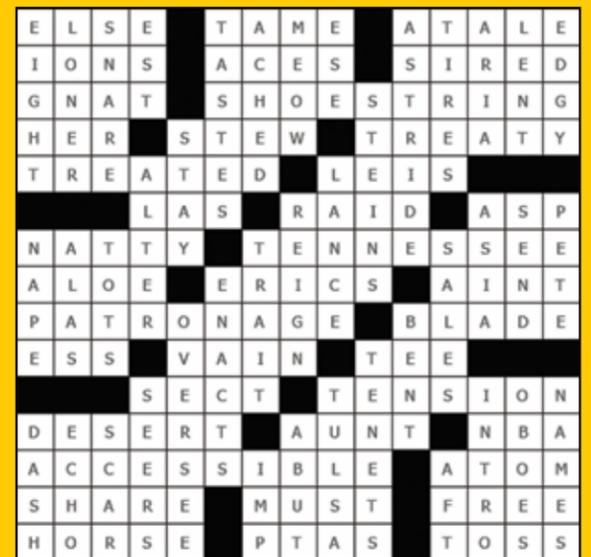
- 1. BLACK POOL BALL
2. RECLUSE
3. TYPE OF DRUM
4. NH TIME ZONE
5. SAMPLES FOOD
6. WAS SORE
7. CAT'S CRY
8. COMPASS POINT (ABBR.)
9. WITH A LEG ON EACH SIDE
10. BECOMES WEARY
11. DIVA'S SOLO
12. FASTING SEASON
13. JUMPY
19. BEER MUGS
21. DON'T GO
24. TAILOR
25. CYCLIST ____ ARMSTRONG
27. ROYAL RULE
28. VIETNAM'S CONTINENT
29. BROADCAST
30. SINGER ____ SEEGER
31. NECK AREA
32. OH, DEAR!
33. TODDLERS
34. DISTINGUISHING QUALITY
35. ____ TAX
37. MAKES INTO LAW
40. SUPERVISE
41. NOT STRAIGHT
44. RELIGIOUS BELIEFS
45. PROPHETS
46. OKLAHOMA METROPOLIS
47. PREFACE
48. CERTAIN WOODWINDS
49. MONIKERS
50. PUNCTUATION MARK
51. REPEAT
52. BLEMISH
53. ADJOIN
56. NAUGHTY CHILD
57. STERNWARD

ONLINECROSSWORDS.NET

Crossword solutions 77-21



This week's issue



THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

Student Services

SPRING TERM REGISTRATION

The Spring Term 2023 timetable is now available. Students were sent their registration start date/time to their University webmail account in early March. Tiered registration for Spring Term will begin March 17. Open registration will begin March 31. More information here: https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/registration/spring-process-and-procedures.html

GRADUATION POW WOW

Hosted by the Aboriginal Student Services Centre (ASSC), the Pow Wow will be held Sat., March 18 at the Duckworth Centre. Everyone is invited to attend! More information here: https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/assc/graduation-pow-wow.html

WEBINAR WEDNESDAYS

The series continues with a wide range of sessions geared to helping you succeed at UWinnipeg and beyond! Upcoming sessions: March 22 - What can I do with my Degree? March 29 - Overcoming Test Anxiety

For details and to register, please go to: https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/student-services/webinar-wednesdays.html

CAREER CHATS ON INSTAGRAM

Drop in for Career Chats - live sessions on Instagram that feature advice from an employer or 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. The next sessions are: March 23.

ASK AN ADVISOR ON INSTAGRAM

Academic & Career Services hosts a live take-over of the @UWinnipeg Instagram account every second Thursday from 11:00-11:15 am CDT.

At each session a guest from the UWinnipeg community talks about a timely topic, event, or service offered at the University. Students can use the chat feature to ask questions in real time.

Can't make it? No problem! Each session is also viewable afterwards on IGTV.

Upcoming topics:

March 30 - Exams and Student Wellness



GET PUBLISHED!

The Uniter is seeking volunteer writers, illustrators and photographers.

You don't need experience, just a desire to tell stories!

For more information, email Carla at volunteer@uniter.ca.