

# THE UNITER



## THE URBAN ISSUE

ADDRESSING VIOLENT CRIME



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# THAT'S ALL, FOLKS!

THOMAS PASHKO  
MANAGING EDITOR



It's the end of another publishing year at *The Uniter*. It's not, however, the end of the academic year at the University of Winnipeg.

For the students reading this: I know you don't need a reminder. But for our off-campus readers: the U of W made the decision to extend the academic year by an extra week following a devastating cyber attack that has impacted virtually all of the school's web services.

Our budget, however, has not received a weekly extension, so you're all going to have to endure your last day of classes without one last issue from little old us.

But I just want to extend a heartfelt "I feel for you" to all the U of W students right now. I know that it can feel like you're being forgotten, like you're bumping up against a bureaucratic brick wall. I just want you all to hear: what you're going through right now sucks. Truly, deeply sucks. It needs to be acknowledged. You're all superheroes.

So, too, are the university staff who are busting their butts to keep the ship running and get services back online. A heartfelt salute to you all, as well.

I, however, will not be here to offer you any moral support next week. After a hectic-as-hell year, I'm taking my two weeks of vacation as soon as humanly possible. If anyone needs me, I'll be hibernating.

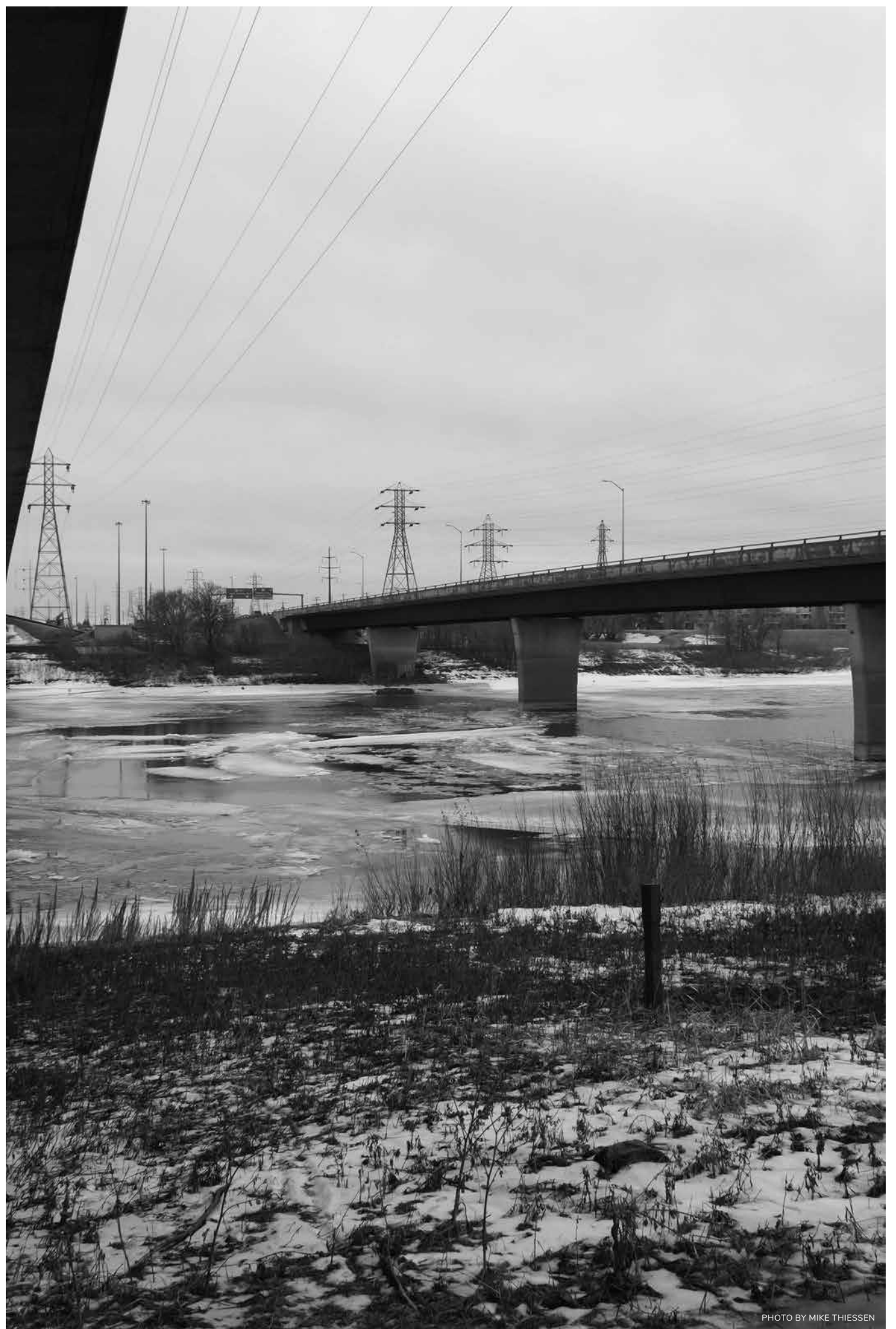


PHOTO BY MIKE THIESSEN

During the month of February, around 230 million litres of untreated sewage spilled into the Red River at the Fort Garry Bridge. Read more on page 10.

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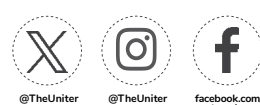
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Submissions of articles, letters, graphics and photos are encouraged, however, all new contributors (with the exception of letters to the editor) must attend a 45-minute volunteer orientation workshop to ensure that the volunteer understands all of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

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.



ILLUSTRATION BY TALIA STEELE

# THE URBAN ISSUE: ADDRESSING VIOLENT CRIME

## And why we're (mostly) not talking about police

THOMAS PASHKO | MANAGING EDITOR | [@](#) [X](#) THOMASPASHKO

It's a tradition here at *The Uniter* for us to release a special themed issue as our last weekly edition of the publishing year. **The Urban Issue**, as we call it, is an opportunity for us to look at social, political and street-level issues that are impacting Winnipeg as a whole: as a city, as a community, as a place, as people.

Past themes have ranged from the light and interpretive (2018's "Streams of thought" looked at the city's relationship to water) to the serious and specific (2023's "To police or not to police?" examined Winnipeg's expensive love affair with security infrastructure).

But anyone who has regularly read or watched the news over the past year has likely already noticed a troubling theme emerging all on its own: violence. The rate of violent crime in Canada has increased in the 2020s, but the problem is especially pronounced here. In Manitoba, the homicide rate was nearly triple the national average in 2022. In 2023, there were 43 homicides in Winnipeg – the fifth year in a row to surpass 40.

Social media and some news outlets are happy to serve up post-apocalyptic visions of downtown Winnipeg as a lawless wasteland where it's not safe to be outdoors after 8 p.m. These characterizations

are overblown and irresponsible. But it's still important to remember that victims of violent crime are people, community members who, like all of us, deserve to live lives free of violence. As a city, Winnipeg needs to do better to address violent crime at its roots.

### The root causes of violent crime

The Crime Prevention Council, which aims to create "a safe, equitable, and just community" in the Waterloo, Ont. region, identifies three primary root causes of crime. Acknowledging that the factors are "complex and interrelated," they say the root causes of crime fall under one or more of the following categories: **economic factors/poverty, social environment and family structures.**

When looked at through these frameworks, it's easy to see how we've gotten to the place we're in. Our municipal and provincial governments have consistently failed to adequately address these issues, and many of the recent news stories about violent crime have them as clear underpinnings.

Alleged serial killer Jeremy Skibicki took advantage of the housing crisis to stalk homeless shelters for victims. CSIS is warning of a threat of "extreme violence"

from the "anti-gender movement" following years of anti-queer hate whipped up by fringe and mainstream right-wing elements alike – including the PCs in the last provincial election. The recent mass murder of a family in Carman, Man. has laid bare the failings of the province's child-welfare system.

Funding efforts to improve these conditions should seem like a no-brainer. Even putting aside their role in increasing crime and violence, these are basic quality-of-life matters. But the release of the City of Winnipeg's preliminary budget in February shows just how little interest our leadership has in tackling the root causes of crime.

### Not talking about cops

Certain readers may find it puzzling to pick up an issue themed around addressing violent crime and see such little discussion of police. But there's a reason we aren't talking about police as a solution to violent crime (and it's not just that policing was our Urban Issue theme last year).

The reason that we aren't presenting policing as a solution to violent crime is that, frankly, it isn't one. It's not an accident that the Crime Prevention Council doesn't list "lack of police" as one of the root causes of crime.

Winnipeg might be the perfect illustration of this. Every year, Winnipeg spends more on police, at the expense of virtually every community service or social safety net that could address the root causes of crime. Every year, violent crime gets worse. And every year, we're told that the only way to address it is by throwing more money behind the police.

In 2024, Winnipeg will spend \$332.5 million on the Winnipeg Police Service. The only bigger expense, at \$356.3 million, is on streets, street lighting and parks. On community services, the city

will spend a comparatively tiny \$109.6 million. On organizational supports, \$148.7 million.

You'd be hard pressed to find two expenses with less return on investment than roads and cops. Roads are a necessity (though maybe they'd see less wear and tear if we carved out some of that budget to beef up the paltry \$115 million transit subsidy and reduce the number of cars).

But when it comes to police, what are we getting for our nearly one-third-of-a-billion dollars? It's certainly not a reduction in crime. They aren't doing a particularly good job. Look to one of the stories mentioned above. When Winnipeg police learned in June 2022 that Skibicki's victims' remains were in the Prairie Green Landfill, rather than doing their jobs and searching it, they simply chose not to – a fact they concealed from the public for six months.

Now, a years-delayed search is expected to cost \$90 million. \$40 million of that will come from the federal and provincial governments. None will come from the Winnipeg police budget. Now, justice for Mercedes Myran, Morgan Beatrice Harris and Mashkode Bizhiki'ikwe may finally come. But we're all still footing the astronomical bill for Winnipeg Police Service's staggering incompetence.

So that's why, for most of this issue, we're not going to talk about policing. Because, if we're going to talk seriously about addressing the root causes of crime, we need to talk about serious solutions. To include the police among those solutions would be inaccurate. It would be disingenuous. It simply wouldn't be serious.

However, they are noteworthy in one regard: when you wonder, "Why aren't we adequately funding solutions to our social, economic and family crises? Where is that money going?" That money is going to police.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Brendan Grey, frontman of Super Duty Tough Work

# ORIGIN STORIES: BRENDAN GREY (SUPER DUTY TOUGH WORK)

## 'A protracted struggle'

OMID MOTERASSED | FEATURES REPORTER | OMIDMOTERASSED

Coming off the success of debut LP *Paradigm Shift*, hip-hop frontman Brendan Grey reflects on his role at the intersection of music and politics.

Grey is the mastermind of Super Duty Tough Work, a seven-piece live ensemble formed in 2014. Embodying the golden age of hip-hop, their work is inspired by elements of jazz, East Coast production

and drum and bass, adding a punch of wit and political insight to every tune. Their first EP, *Studies in Grey*, released to critical acclaim in 2020.

"When I was a kid, I always wanted to be a rockstar," Grey says.

Growing up in a musical household, he developed a diverse taste and was encouraged to pick up an instrument. He started with the drums (a practice he continues to

this day) before uncovering his sharp lyrical abilities as a rapper.

He cites his parents as an early inspiration for the subject matter, especially his father's efforts to fight climate change and his mother's anti-racism work. "When I think about my parents' work, their level of engagement and intellectualism, it's something that I strive to emulate," he says.

He remembers his mother reading him *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* as a bedtime story. Grey admired Malcolm X's ability to use knowledge as self-defence, responding to racist, intellectual traps with cutting truths.

"I was always influenced by Malcolm X, more than anyone else," he says. "That's where I would like to be – in a place where I'm able to state my point, even while under attack."

Grey's political interests grew as he continued studying the American civil rights movements of the '60s. At the Black Panther Party Museum in Oakland, he recalls meeting two former party members.

"This man Arthur (League), he was like, 'When I joined the Panthers, I thought we were just gonna pick up a gun and do our

thing for a couple years, and then it was gonna be over. I didn't realize this wasn't something I was gonna see in my lifetime,'" he says.

Grey admits that the struggle for social change is multifaceted. "It's a long game. A 'protracted struggle,'" he says. "We know what needs to be done, but we're just trapped."

The situation is not entirely hopeless. He remembers a story his grandfather once told him about the first Black pope. The person responsible for appointing him had to consult with his associates before doing so. Members of the group each argued that the world was not ready for it, stating that another 10 years was needed, or 25 years, or perhaps even never. But then it just happened, without delay, and the world went on.

"Change can happen in the blink of an eye," he says. "(We must) be ready, so that when there is an opportunity for a shift, we're able to step up and seize that moment."

For Grey, coming together on behalf of a common goal is the key to salvaging our future. "There's no choice but to keep moving forward."

## ARTS BRIEFS

CIERRA BETTENS | ARTS AND CULTURE EDITOR | FICTIONALCIERRA CIERRABETTENS

### The symphony scores

In *Blockbuster Scores*, the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra (WSO) performs a selection of Hollywood's finest soundtracks. Hosted by CBC entertainment reporter Eli Glasner, the symphony will perform scores ranging from *The Godfather* to *E.T.* Tickets to the April 6 and 7 performances can be purchased via [bit.ly/3U2gM3J](https://bit.ly/3U2gM3J).

### Oh, the Humanity

Fourth-year honours students in the University of Winnipeg's theatre and film program will present *Oh, the Humanity and Other Good Intentions*, a play written by Will Eno. The six-person, nine-character play, directed by Suzie Martin, examines how language both divides and unites us. Admission to the play, which runs from April 2 to 6, is free. To reserve your seats, visit [bit.ly/3vCMBAm](https://bit.ly/3vCMBAm).

### A banned tale brought to life

A story that was once shunned in Nazi Germany will be warmly welcomed to the Winnipeg Jewish Theatre (WJT) stage from April 11 to 21. *Address Unknown* tells the story of two friends who are torn apart by the Nazi regime. It's described as "a timely warning of how humanity can fail in the face of extreme ideology." To purchase tickets to the play, visit [bit.ly/3U1cJof](https://bit.ly/3U1cJof).

### The secret resilience of geese

A new National Film Board (NFB) film chronicles one of the nation's most infamous creatures: the Canada goose. Directed by Winnipeg-based filmmaker Karsten Wall, *Modern Goose* tells the tale of how geese have persisted against urbanization. The film officially launched on April 1 and can be viewed via [bit.ly/3TZjVBs](https://bit.ly/3TZjVBs).

### Opening night: Friends of a Sick Girl

This Friday, April 5, artist Gabby Da Silva's *Friends of a Sick Girl* exhibition opens at the Arts AccessAbility Network Manitoba (AANM) gallery (102-329 Cumberland Ave.). The exhibition features a series of live-action and animated shorts introducing the artist's "friends" – in this case, body parts – and their relation to her. The free opening event takes place from 6 to 9 p.m.

### Carmen @ the Manitoba Opera

After weeks of community programming, the Manitoba Opera will perform the seductive show *Carmen* on April 13, 17 and 19. The opera tells the tale of Carmen, a French woman who discards men faster than cigarettes, and her love triangle with a soldier and a bullfighter. Purchase your tickets via [bit.ly/3xmcKdM](https://bit.ly/3xmcKdM).



# REBUILDING WITH PURPOSE

Social supports are the antidote to recidivism, expert says

MATTHEW FRANK | FEATURES EDITOR | [@MATT\\_FRANK](#)

Joey Fagnan remembers visiting his family for Christmas and holiday dinners as a child, where relatives shared their stories about the horrors of the residential schools. Fagnan feared he would be abused at school, too.

“I was literally thinking that I was going to get raped or beaten up or something going bad in school, which never happened,” he says.

“I was always having that (abuse) in the back of my head if I ever got sent to the office, or if I was ever alone with a teacher in a private room or with a guidance counsellor. So I said ‘Forget school.’”

When he left school behind between Grade 6 and 7, Fagnan got involved with gang culture and drugs. He started to rack up criminal charges and cycled in and out of custody.

Each time he was released, Fagnan had no interest in working and would return to selling drugs. When he found a job, he heard racist jokes and comments that would cut deep and push him away from working.

“I’m just like, ‘You know what, this is not for me.’ I’m not going to pick up an assault charge because I want to act out on this disrespect that they’re directing at me,” Fagnan says.

It wasn’t until Fagnan found Purpose Construction – a non-profit organization that specifically hires people with criminal

records – that he kept a steady job without feeling ridiculed or discriminated against.

Fagnan started as a general labourer, working on a bedbug cleanup crew and working his way up to becoming a division manager. He’s been with Purpose Construction for 11 years and is now a manager.

“My first goal was to have a one-year employment with one company, to stay in one place. And I’ve met that goal,” he says.

Manitoba Justice measures recidivism as “when a person is convicted of a new offence and is returned to provincial custody within two years of release from jail or other supervision.”

From 2022-2023, recidivism rates for adults in custody were 20 per cent, while adults on probation or who had conditional sentencing were 11 and nine per cent, respectively.

This past fiscal year has seen Manitoba’s prison population grow more than 12 per cent. The previous year’s prison population grew by three per cent.

Katharina Maier, associate professor of criminal justice at the University of Winnipeg and board chair for the John Howard Society of Manitoba, says research shows that having a stable job after release reduces people’s likelihood of reoffending. However, people who experience challenges maintaining a job have a higher chance of reoffending.

Maier says people have a greater likeli-



Joey Fagnan escaped a life of crime when he started working for Purpose Construction.

hood to cycle in and out of provincial prisons compared to federal prisons because of the lack of social support and the growing prison population.

It’s important to distinguish the difference between recidivism and reintegration, she says.

“Recidivism focuses much more narrowly on just offending,” Maier says. “Reintegration looks more holistically at what people do to rebuild and what people do to achieve a new sense of self.”

She says employment is only one challenge people face when leaving the justice system. Housing, ID access and healthcare all affect someone’s ability to reintegrate.

“Reintegration is a subjective experience.

Some people, their need is to focus on family and social reintegration,” Maier says. “Other people might have other priorities.”

If it wasn’t for Purpose Construction, Fagnan says he wouldn’t know what he would be doing.

“Everybody deserves a shot, no matter what your education is or who you are,” he says.

Purpose Construction has employed more than 400 people since opening. The company recently launched a new program for Indigenous, Métis and Inuit people who’ve had a history with the justice system for learning construction skills. The first cohort graduated March 29.

# SAFETY OFFICERS NOT ADDRESSING REAL CAUSE OF TRANSIT VIOLENCE

More social supports needed, not more policing

JURA MCILRAITH | CITY REPORTER | [@JURA\\_IS\\_MY\\_NAME](#)

Winnipeggers have mixed feelings about safety officers who began patrolling buses and bus routes at the end of February.

James Wilt is a public-transit advocate, member of Winnipeg Police Cause Harm and author of *Do Androids Dream of Electric Cars?: Public Transit in the Age of Google, Uber, and Elon Musk*. He says he is “certainly not feeling great about” officers in the transit system.

Wilt believes the actual way to fix transit in Winnipeg is to increase funding for the service, as well as social supports like addictions treatment, public housing, universal healthcare and mental healthcare.

“We know that criminalization only causes more issues and more harm,” he says. “If a person is already unhoused, or if they are having issues with stable income or access to food or social supports ... that is going to become even harder if they continue to be criminalized.”

“The person who may commit violence or threats, they are not going to get better by going to jail.”

Wilt says it’s “worrisome” the safety officers only received six weeks of training but have the ability to arrest people.

The City of Winnipeg says these officers are meant to assist those experiencing

homelessness, addiction and mental-health issues by connecting them with necessary resources.

They carry collapsible batons and handcuffs along with naloxone kits.

“(Law) enforcement is systematically racist,” Wilt says. “That’s harm in itself, because it obviously discriminates, and it can cause a whole bunch of issues. It can also deter people from using transit if they know there’s a likelihood that they will be profiled in this way.”

In 2022, bus drivers reported 104 assaults, according to Winnipeg Transit. The year marked the highest numbers since 2000 when the city started tracking that data.

Winnipeg Transit previously installed safety shields and cameras on buses to try and lower the rate of assaults, Chris Scott, president of the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1505, says.

He says those measures helped a bit, but the next step was to add safety officers.

“We want a safe transit system, but we don’t want a police state necessarily on the service,” Scott says. “Hopefully what these community safety officers do will be effective enough to reduce and hopefully eliminate violence on the transit system.”



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

Scott says he hopes this is the last step, but there is potential to expand the program if needed.

He recognizes much of the police interactions on public transit increased after the COVID-19 pandemic, because many people lost their jobs and stable housing. Scott says he has been advocating for the improvement of addictions treatment and housing supports.

“If there weren’t enough resources for them to stay at their standard of living, they were forced out onto the street,” he says. “Some probably felt it necessary to turn to

coping mechanisms. We need to give everybody a step up to get back to where they were.”

Scott would like to see a combination of policing and social-support funding to address these problems.

“The safety aspect is always implemented in an attempt to put a cap on the level of violence so it doesn’t increase,” Scott says. “But in order to truly reduce it, you need to backfill with supports to help people that have had to turn to or are struggling dealing with these issues.”



PHOTO BY KEELEY BRAUNSTEIN-BLACK

Dreamland Diner co-owner Kevin Ramberran (right) with team leader Sabrina Olson

# MORE WINDOWS SMASHED THAN BURGERS

Restaurateurs speak about the impact of crime on their profits and wellbeing

MATTHEW TEKLEMARIAM | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | @MATTEKLEMARIAM

Elena Grande has worked at Mona Lisa Ristorante for almost all of her adult life. As operations manager of the family-run business, she works tirelessly to keep her family's tradition alive.

"I've been here since I was 13. I would've started supervising when I was 19," Grande says. "This isn't just a job. It's my entire life."

Located in the heart of River Heights, where Grande grew up, the restaurant is like a second home to her. That's why she felt she was personally transgressed when Mona Lisa Ristorante was robbed in the early hours of March 25.

"When they're coming in, you feel a lot more violated. You feel more upset, because they're in your space," she says.

The thieves are purported to have broken in after hours while neighbour Stella's, with whom Mona Lisa shares a front door, was still open. They stole approximately \$500 worth of liquor before exiting through the front door and leaving it unlocked.

"It seems like they came in once, took what they could fit in their hands and then left," Grande says. "Because of the high security that they've enforced in the last four years in liquor stores, restaurants are now the easiest option."

During the second break-in at Mona Lisa within the year, no employees or customers were hurt, and no physical damage was incurred.

Yet Grande, like many other restaurateurs and small business owners, is con-

cerned about the effects of violent crime on their business, particularly on their operating costs. She reports having speakers, potted plants and trays of veal stolen during broad daylight, along with the restaurant's garbage bin being set on fire.

"It's almost like they're getting a little bit ballsy. They're getting too confident with their crimes," she says.

A November 2023 report from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) reported that 54 per cent of Manitoba small businesses are impacted by crime, directly or indirectly.

The province has experienced the highest surge of crime between 2019-2022 among all Western Canadian provinces. Property damage, theft and public intoxication are just a few of the criminal factors contributing to hard times for local proprietors.

"It's very difficult to run a restaurant these days. To also be hit with break-ins is just so hard and upsetting. It feels like you're getting hit in every direction," Grande says.

The study further stipulated that a staggering 78 per cent of Manitoba owners are actively concerned about the safety of their customers and employees.

"As far as I'm concerned, my preference is everybody there feels 100 per cent safe all of the time. I view that as one of the very few responsibilities of my job," Kevin Ramberran, who manages the St. James Burger

& Chip Co. and Dreamland Diner, says.

Ramberran says he has seen a record number of incidents in his establishments in the past year. His brother Ravi also operates The Saint Restaurant & Pub and the Four Crowns Inn.

"Over at the Four Crowns, there's lots of issues. But at St. James, 2023 was really hard for us. We got broken into three times over the year, windows smashed, issues with people under the influence misbehaving in the middle of the day," Ramberran says.

He reports attempted attacks on staff and weapons thrown in his restaurants.

Both Grande and Ramberran elected to upgrade their security systems in response to crime, but that came at a hefty cost. Grande chose not to pursue an insurance claim over the stolen liquor for fear of insurance premiums that would dwarf the initial loss. Ramberran corroborates that this is a common story among businesses of their size.

In August of 2023, the provincial NDP government pledged to create a \$2.5 million rebate program for security updates for small businesses, including security alarms and motion-sensor lights. But with a \$300 maximum rebate per business, some feel that it simply isn't enough to curb the cost of crime.

"We're having to pay for a whole new system now. That's going to cost another few hundred dollars, plus monthly fees ... at least over \$1,000," Grande says.

"If we take a \$5,000 loss in a month (due to crime), that's days or even weeks of profits. If we got broken into as often as we did that year, every year, I don't know if this business would stay open," Ramberran says.

Some businesses have taken justice into their own hands through a restorative approach. Verde Plant Design of the Osborne Village made a public call for a quiet resolution when their goods were stolen, resulting in full payment from one of the thieves. When the tip jar at Dreamland Diner was

taken, a community worker confronted the perpetrator after they were posted online and convinced them to make amends.

"That was a beautiful situation that resolved within itself, but that doesn't always happen," Ramberran says.

Following the unprovoked stabbing of an 18-year-old Olive Garden employee in July, and the fatal assault of Cork & Flame owner Kyriakos Vogiatzakis this year right outside the restaurant, the consensus is that something needs to be done on a large level before things get any worse.

"Do we want to put our lives at risk? We do this for passion. We don't do this to make a ton of money," Grande says.

She asserts that change on the judiciary level is a must to keep small businesses safe.

"I think it's partly the economy. But I also think it's because we're not being strict enough with how we're dealing with criminals. They get brought in, and they know they're going to get back out, and they only get better at it," she says.

Ramberran believes that violent crime affecting small businesses is inevitable, and that steps that the city takes towards harm reduction will help in the long-term.

"We need to address the reason that desperation is occurring as a city," he says. "We need to see our city's resources targeted towards stopping this from happening in 10 years, rather than deal with the ones who are doing it right now."

Both agree that the City of Winnipeg needs to address problems as soon as possible.

"Obviously, we're doing something wrong here in Winnipeg if we have so much crime ... something we're doing (is) not working," Grande says.

"I don't know how you can be in charge of a city that has severe violent crime at the level Winnipeg does and not be ashamed to lead that city," Ramberran says. "We're not going to be able to reinvigorate any areas of the city if the small business owners or operators are too afraid to operate."

# HARM REDUCTION TOOLS, SAFE CONSUMPTION SITES LOWER CRIME

NorWest vending machine removes barriers to access

JURA MCILRAITH | CITY REPORTER | @X JURA\_IS\_MY\_NAME

A new harm-reduction vending machine is now at NorWest Co-op Community Health's location at Access NorWest (785 Keewatin St.). The clinic is participating in the Our Healthbox program, a nationwide initiative by the MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions.

NorWest previously offered harm-reduction items for free, but those who needed supplies had to ask staff to access them. Shannon Milks, director of primary care, says this created a barrier for those in the community.

"When we heard about the vending-machine model and having free access and low-barrier access ... we thought, 'Wow, this would actually be a really good initiative in our community,'" Milks says.

Harm-reduction vending machines have been around since the late 1980s. Milks says she noticed a greater need for the supplies in the past year.

Now, participants can make anonymous user profiles for the vending machine and access anything in them for free. Available items include hygiene products like toothpaste and tampons, harm-reduction tools like naloxone kits and clean needles, and

basic care items like water bottles and granola bars.

Primary care nurse Beth Hudson-Keddy says she has seen trends in what people are taking since March 13 when the vending machine launched the Access NorWest clinic. She says smudging, injection kits, first-aid supplies and hygiene kits are the most popular items.

Hudson-Keddy says it's about looking beyond the obvious stereotypes surrounding those who use drugs.

"It's about not thinking in that way ... and knowing that these are people who most likely have struggled with things in their life that have led them down this path, and it doesn't mean they're bad people," she says. "They just need help."

Often, those living with mental-health issues or who use drugs are at a higher risk of violent victimization. In 2018, 15 per cent of people with a mental health-related disability said they used drugs, and 23 per cent had experienced homelessness, according to Statistics Canada.

Manitoba's chief medical examiner shows that a total of 445 people died from drugs in 2023.



The new Our Healthbox vending machine at the NorWest Co-op Community Health Centre provides hygiene products, harm-reduction tools and basic care items for free. April 2, 2024

More information from Statistics Canada shows that access to clean drug supplies, equipment and safe consumption sites lower the risk for accidental overdose.

Despite this data, it's hard to convince Winnipeggers to take action, Curt Pankratz, an associate professor of sociology at the University of Winnipeg, says.

"A lack of trust in science has really hindered the ability to convince ... politicians that these are good ideas," he says. "Winnipeg has a policing-first culture, even amongst the (general) population. Anything that might contradict what police say or the resources police want is usually met with hostility."

Pankratz points to the positive impact

of supervised injection sites in places like Vancouver.

Between 2000 and 2006, there was no increase in violent crime or drug crimes, according to a report on supervised consumption sites in Vancouver from Public Safety Canada. The city got its first supervised injection site in September 2003.

"Most of the crime associated with those comes with trying to get access," Pankratz says. "There was a real reduction in crimes ... particularly in the areas where drugs are available on the street."

Access NorWest is located at 785 Keewatin St. For more information, visit [norwestcoop.ca](http://norwestcoop.ca).

## CITY BRIEFS

THOMAS PASHKO | MANAGING EDITOR | @X THOMASPASHKO

### Kinew extends fuel tax cut

The Manitoba provincial government is extending its temporary halt to the federal fuel tax until September. The cut had previously been scheduled to expire in June. The tax, which is a key part of the federal government's strategy to curb the climate crisis, has created conflict with several premiers. Despite the economic impacts of a carbon tax, they have been shown to lower fossil-fuel emissions.

### Around the Kitchen Table

On April 11, University of Manitoba Press will launch *Around the Kitchen Table*, a collection of essays, stories and poems by and for Métis women. Edited by professors Laura Forsythe and Jennifer Markides, the project originated when the two noted the lack of texts focusing on the work of Métis women scholars. A launch event will be held at 7 p.m. on Thursday, April 11 in McNally Robinson Grant Park.

### Community orgs react to provincial budget

Various community organizations are weighing in on the provincial NDP government's 2024 budget. The Southern Chiefs' Organization praised spending on healthcare, harm reduction, homelessness and the Prairie Green Landfill search. The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives commended healthcare increases but said the budget "does not go far enough to addressing the costly social deficit, reversing regressive tax cuts and shoring up needed revenue in Manitoba." Winnipeg Police Cause Harm said the budget "maintain(s) a long-standing right-wing trajectory by increasing funding to policing at the expense of things that actually keep people safe."

### U of W student films to screen at Cinematheque

Students from the University of Winnipeg's Filmmaking 1 courses will screen their work for audiences at the Dave Barber Cinematheque (100 Arthur St.). The year-end screening will showcase work from student filmmakers made throughout the 2023-24 academic year. The screening will run from 6 to 9 p.m. on Monday, April 8. Admission is free.

### Province boosts healthcare spending

The inaugural budget from the new NDP government, led by Premier Wab Kinew, followed up on a key campaign promise to prioritize healthcare. The province will spend \$8.2 billion on healthcare, a 13.5 per cent increase, and will accommodate 1,000 new jobs. Healthcare spending was gutted by the previous PC government.

### Words of a Toole

Erin O'Toole, the former head of the federal Conservative Party, is alleging that Chinese interference played a role in his ouster as party leader following his 2021 election loss. At the time, O'Toole sought to punish Bert Chen, a Taiwanese-born Canadian member of the Tories' national council, for circulating a petition calling for O'Toole's resignation. The petition did not lead to O'Toole's resignation, which came after a February 2022 internal caucus revolt. Chen denies any ties to the Chinese government. Since the party's formation in 2003, it has been standard practice for its leaders to resign following election losses.





# OUTDATED AND OUT OF TOUCH

## Manitoba's sex-ed curriculum fails students at every turn

DANIELLE DOIRON | COPY AND STYLE EDITOR | @DANIELLEMDOIRON

Manitoba has one of the highest rates of teen dating violence in the country, according to a recent Statistics Canada report.

It found that 45 per cent of Canadian teens experienced some form of dating violence since turning 15. This “includes criminal acts such as physical and sexual violence, as well as acts that may not be considered criminal (like emotional abuse) but which can nonetheless have devastating consequences for victims.”

Emotional abuse (including name-calling, jealousy, stalking and online harassment) was most commonly reported, and all teens who experienced any kind of dating violence experienced emotional abuse, either on its own or along with physical or sexual violence.

Among the provinces, Manitoba recorded the second-highest rate of teen dating violence, according to 2022 police reports that mostly involved violence against teen girls.

Policy change can't eliminate any kind of violence entirely, but our current school system sets students up for failure.

Manitoba's sex-education curriculum is woefully outdated and inadequate across all grade levels. Human sexuality generally falls under the provincial Physical Education and Health curriculum, which hasn't been updated since 2005.

This curriculum hinges on addressing what the province considers major health risks for students, including “sexual behaviours that result in STIs and unintended pregnancies.”

It's all too reminiscent of Coach Carr's sex-ed lesson from *Mean Girls*: “Don't

have sex, 'cause you will get pregnant and die.” But Carr was a parody of seemingly everyone's inept health teachers circa 2004, when the original movie was released. Besides, even he was updated in the 2024 remake.

The province needs to abandon their risk-based, fear-mongering approach and listen to experts.

In a 2019 editorial for CBC, representatives from SERC, the Sexuality Education Resource Centre, urged Manitoba to adopt a “balanced, comprehensive approach” that “goes beyond the science of how bodies work and how babies are made” to include “rights, consent, pleasure and harm reduction.”

The writers stressed that a robust, updated curriculum should “reach all students in every school throughout Manitoba,” be taught by teachers with trauma-informed training and reflect students' diverse experiences, gender identities, sexual orientations and cultural backgrounds.

Almost five years later, many students still don't receive the information they need. Some don't attend sex-education classes at all.

In Manitoba, guardians can opt students out of health lessons about “potentially sensitive topics” like human sexuality and provide alternative instruction at home or through a church or counselling service. Even if this happens, there's no guarantee students will receive accurate, inclusive information.

All students need to learn how their bodies work, as well as how to understand



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

consent and recognize when behaviour is abusive. To do this, the province needs to better teach its educators, especially about what students do online.

The middle-school students I work with are starting to form romantic relationships, many of which happen almost exclusively online. In many cases, their parents don't allow dating, they aren't out publicly, or they live far apart from their partners.

Until schools teach comprehensive sexuality education that includes online safety, it's more important than ever to invest in community programs that address teen dating violence.

Locally, the “UMatter” Stop Youth Dating Violence Project out of Ka Ni Kanichihk works to address teen dating

violence through an Indigenous lens, including how technology is used in “harassing behaviours.”

SADI, the Sexual Assault Discussion Initiative offered through Survivor's Hope Crisis Centre, offers workshops for middle- and high-school students about media literacy, internet safety and sexual violence, among other topics.

**If you're experiencing dating violence, you can call the Domestic Abuse Crisis Line at 1-877-977-0007, Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868 or the Clinic Crisis Line at 1-888-322-3019.**

**Danielle Doiron (they/she) is the copy and style editor of *The Uniter*. Lately, they call Winnipeg, Philadelphia, Fargo and Canberra home.**

# WHAT LIES BEYOND THE PERIMETER

## Contesting the urban-rural divide on safety

PAUL HODGERT | BUSINESS MANAGER | @PAULHODGERT

Winnipeg is a crime-infested cesspool, where danger lurks around every corner — especially downtown.

Well, not really, but this is what I hear from people in my community on the eastern outskirts of the Perimeter Highway. While this is purely anecdotal, I'd be hard-pressed to think of anyone I know out here — who hasn't lived in Winnipeg in the past — who doesn't believe the city is a lawless hellscape.

I have always found this to be, frankly, quite funny. After nearly a decade of living in the country, I still bristle at comments about “city people” and how dangerous Winnipeg is.

My RM is comically over-policed. In addition to an RCMP dispatch in the area, there is also a separate Springfield Police force, for some reason. There's even a Citizens on Patrol Program (COPP) that consists mostly of retired white men snitching on teenagers driving around at night.

This is quite different from the world I remember as a kid.

I grew up in the South Osborne area of Winnipeg in the '80s and '90s and left the area in 2015, shortly before I turned 31. I not only left South Osborne, along with my wife and our newborn son, but I left Winnipeg altogether. We moved to a five-acre plot just east of the city in the RM of Springfield

where my wife grew up.

I enjoyed a childhood that my children, Lewis (9) and Margaret (4), could never dream of. Living in an urban area, I could walk and ride my bike to school or my friends' houses. If I wanted a treat, the Mac's convenience store on Osborne was always open, and I could easily go there with a little bit of change in my pocket and get whatever I wanted.

As a tween, I'd hop on the 16 Osborne bus downtown to purchase records and CDs from the Music Baron on Portage Avenue without stopping to think about how safe or unsafe I would be. Granted, some of this obliviousness to danger stemmed from my being a white, middle-class male, which is something I wouldn't have even considered in 1996.

Where I live now, I don't think we've ever locked our front door. The only crime I've been impacted by was when my neighbours were out of town and some people stole two broken power tools from their garage at 2 a.m.

My children live about five miles from the nearest school and convenience stores. They can't go *anywhere* without needing a ride. As such, I worry that they aren't going to learn the proper skills to keep themselves safe once they can drive and get away from their parents.

This may make them “safer” than I was, but it's a short-term, short-sighted solution.



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

My children have never interacted with unhoused people. They don't see institutional racism in front of them. They have limited exposure to extreme poverty.

I want them to be “safe,” but I also want them to develop compassion and love for people who haven't had the same advantages and privileges.

It's difficult to teach kids about these issues from a distance.

It's *especially* difficult if the prevailing narrative they hear from their friends and grownups in the community is that Winnipeg is dangerous, and you should avoid it at all costs.

**Paul Hodgert is the business manager for *The Uniter* and still thinks of himself as a “city boy” after nearly a decade in the country.**

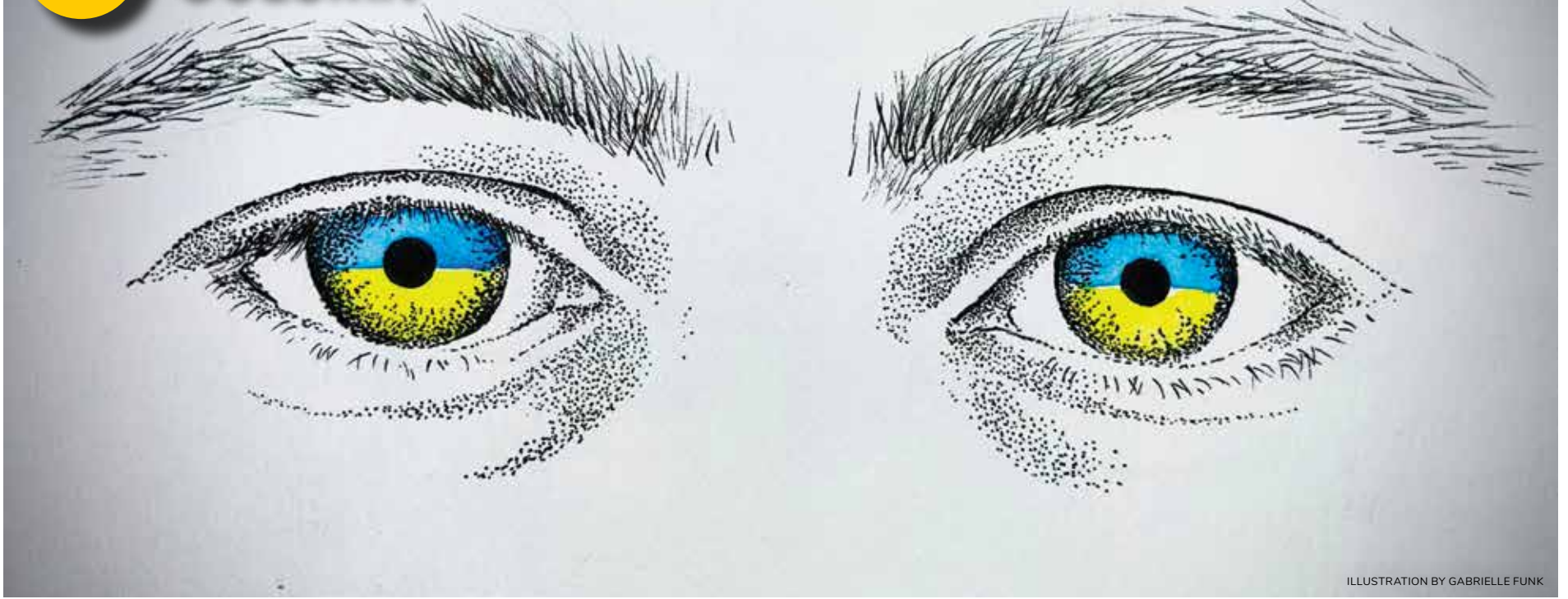


ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

# THE NEWCOMER EXPLAINS

## The war and the people

VOLODYMYR ANDREIKO | COLUMNIST

It has to be said that what happened wasn't anticipated. I vividly remember the news announcing the state of emergency. My parents and I started preparing our basement to act as a shelter, and my sister had evacuation training at school, where they would have to go to the nearest bomb shelter upon hearing the long bell or air siren.

The beginning of Feb. 24, 2022 wasn't welcoming. I woke up in the morning and immediately saw the news that Ukraine was being attacked and bombed. Kyiv suffered the

most. Just before the official attacks happened, women and children were evacuated from the Donetsk and Luhansk regions to Russia. Only men remained, who did not know that the territories would soon be invaded.

The beginning of the war meant a constant fear of catastrophe, an anxious anticipation of attacks and empty shops and supermarkets due to suspended supply chains.

All of this can leave people with a sense of uncertainty about the future, as it did for me. Daily, it was quite difficult to plan any-

thing. The news was nothing but war, and everywhere I looked, I saw destruction.

Another issue is the feeling of betrayal toward civilians who leaked information, such as the location of military objects or critical infrastructure, for monetary gain.

Soon, my grandparents came to live with us. They moved in because they lived on the eighth floor of a nine-storey building, and it was practically impossible to evacuate whenever there was an air siren.

We would sit together and talk quite a lot, and the most recurrent question was: "How is this possible in the 21st century?" We would replace these thoughts by trying to encourage ourselves and calm each other down, saying "It can't be that long, maybe two weeks, and it will be over."

However, the situation only got worse, as more and more men mobilized, and damage was done. Yet there was still hope. The war was an opportunity to start helping each other out, since so many people were in bad situations. This includes my relatives from Kharkiv. Recurring bombardment and the

presence of enemy soldiers made their city dangerous, and, after some time, they started to live with us.

My relatives later learned their apartment was destroyed in another bombing spree, leaving them with nothing and no place to return to. The same happened to their garage and their dacha (a second house located in the exurbs), which was used by enemy soldiers.

In that moment, we understood just how critical and significant our choices are.

So far, the full-scale war has been ongoing for two years. It is painful to say it's still there and to see all the damage and harm done to people. But, in a situation like this, helping each other is greatly needed. Whatever happens, we have to consider how we can help ourselves and those in need in order to improve and change things for the better.

**Volodymyr Andreiko is a newcomer to Winnipeg from Ukraine. He is a translator and student at the University of Winnipeg interested in music, literature, philosophy and culture.**

# DISGUSTING DISASTERS

## Sewage spill unveils ongoing environmental violence

PATRICK HARNEY | COMMENTS EDITOR

On Feb. 7, a pipe carrying waste from Winnipeg's southwest neighbourhoods to the South End Sewage Treatment Plant failed. The damaged pipe leaked raw sewage into the Red River near the Fort Garry Bridge.

At the time, officials were aware of problems with the line. A routine inspection in November 2023 found issues with two pipes built in the 1970s. In response, one was taken out of commission while the other, despite being in poor condition, was to remain until the city could complete a new bypass.

This was the pipe that failed, just two days after construction started on the bypass.

When the leak began, the city had to act quickly and expedite the bypass. However, getting the bypass operational was taking too long. Twelve days after the initial leak, the city sent out a plea for businesses and residents in southern Winnipeg to reduce their water use and lower the wastewater burden.

On Feb. 23, the bypass system was up and running. But within those 16 days, around 230 million litres of human waste was poured into the Red River.

In an open statement, Alexis Kanu, Lake Winnipeg Foundation's executive director, described the event as "horrifying."

While the effects on the local ecosystem are unknown at this time, Kanu's statement says "Raw sewage contains high concentrations of phosphorus, which drives the growth of algal blooms in Lake Winnipeg.

Raw sewage also contains E. coli, fecal coliform and other pathogens with potential risk to human health."

For at least the past decade, Lake Winnipeg has been constantly battling with the threat of eutrophication, the scientific term for excess algae growth in bodies of water due to increased nutrient load.

Eutrophication can have disastrous effects on aquacultures, lowering water quality, raising pH levels and blocking out needed sunlight for other organisms. Additionally, it has adverse impacts on human activity along Lake Winnipeg, such as recreation, commercial fishing and Indigenous ways of life.

The recent spill has contributed to the process of eutrophication, but there is a larger story involving the City of Winnipeg's consistent poor management of their wastewater system.

In 2005, the city was issued a licence to upgrade its largest plant, the North End Sewage Treatment Plant, by 2014. As of 2024, these upgrades have not been made due to struggles to raise funds, at one point emanating from an argument between the municipal and provincial governments over the plant's potential as a public-private partnership.

As a result, the poorly maintained plant has been spewing out inadequately treated waste for almost 20 years. According to the Lake Winnipeg Foundation, in December 2023



PHOTO BY MIKE THIESSEN

During the month of February, around 230 million litres of untreated sewage spilled into the Red River at the Fort Garry Bridge. April 2, 2024

alone, the plant dumped 4.4 billion litres of undertreated sewage into the Red River.

Now, the South End Sewage Treatment Plant has begun to slip. The spill on Feb. 7 signifies the ongoing history of environmental violence the City of Winnipeg perpetrates towards the surrounding ecosystem. The city's inadequate treatment of its wastewater infrastructure puts local ecosystems, people and cultural practices at risk.

The spill has opened questions regarding environmental law in the province about how affected communities are notified and

whether the city has to pay for damages. As it stands, the City of Winnipeg's irresponsibility regarding its wastewater infrastructure is disgusting, figuratively and literally.

Another question persists: what happens when cities that prioritize tax cuts run out of money for critical infrastructure resulting in significant damage to ecosystems, people and ways of life?

**Patrick Harney (he/him) is the comments editor at The Uniter. This marks his second consecutive week writing about shit!**



# AWAKENING THE CITY THAT ALWAYS SLEEPS

## On the decline – and necessity – of third places in Winnipeg

CIERRA BETTENS | ARTS AND CULTURE EDITOR | X FICTIONALCIERRA @CIERRABETTENS

Last summer, West Broadway residents witnessed the unceremonious replacement of the neon-lit windows that framed a neighbourhood diner with the tinted coverings of a new cannabis store.

Two months ago, the inner city lost what acted as a third place for many residents: the Good Will Social Club. In *The Great Good Place*, sociologist Ray Oldenburg defines third places as informal, public gathering spaces outside the home and work or school.

They are our libraries, diners, cafés and community centres. They are low-barrier generators of community life. They are places where we can be regulars. And in Winnipeg, they are increasingly scarce.

Now, the Good Will's collective of promoters, performers and patrons are left without their third home. So too are the Sunday brunchers at The Tallest Poppy and the regulars of former Winnipeg haunts that have faded into Yelp archives and our collective memory.

After the City of Winnipeg approved its 2024-2027 multi-year budget in March, residents were given a glimpse into what the future holds.

Earlier this year, arts workers sounded the alarm when the city planned to defund the public art program. A handful of public pools and summer Sunday hours at the Millennium Library are also on the chopping block.

As statistics reveal a rise in violent crime,

the city responds as it always has: increase police budgets.

It seems that decision-makers have a utopic vision, where a magic number of police officers patrolling the downtown will make it a "safe" place. And when that happens, perhaps the "for lease" signs will vanish, and the core will be brought to life again.

However, a far cheaper alternative to dumping millions of dollars into police budgets each year exists. Research has shown that increasing the number of informal, public spaces – third places – that boost neighbourhood interaction links to an increased sense of urban safety. These places, and the networks they build, are the source of "eyes on the street."

The demise of third places in Winnipeg has especially failed youth. In a car-centric city like Winnipeg, places for middle- and high-schoolers to hang outside of school and home are scarce.

In the suburbs, even corporate remnants are now disappearing, as chains like Starbucks close to drive-thru only. Gone are the arcades and the social clubs. Traditional hangout spots like the mall are increasingly more securitized.

There is, simply put, nowhere for them to go.

In a 2021 article in the *American Journal of Community Psychology*, Danielle Littman suggests that third places can help build so-



Patrons enjoy some of the last days of the Good Will Social Club. Jan. 6, 2024

cial cohesion and community connection among marginalized youth.

As headlines about youth violence permeate public discourse, it's worth asking: what spaces are accessible to young people? Where can they connect with their community?

While private establishments fill some of these gaps, municipal governments can champion these spaces, too. This can look like offering more youth recreational programming, extending library hours and revitalizing public parks and pools.

What a city invests in is reflective of its hopes and dreams for the future. While there are cuts, there is also optimism: a new Northwest Library is set to open, and the city will back youth programming at the Downtown Y.

Winnipeg has long been known as the city that always sleeps. But it is in these third places that we wake up.

Cierra Bettens is *The Uniter's* arts and culture editor.

	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	FRANÇOL	CANQUEER	World - Island Music		
8AM	Shortwave Report	Talking Radical Radio	Making Contact	OutSpoken	Wooden Spoons	DEAD MEDIUM	SHADES OF CLASSICS
9AM	CounterSpin	FREE CITY RADIO	After Thought	Truth Before Reconciliation			Classical and New Age
10AM	DEMOCRACY NOW!		DEMOCRACY NOW!			MUD PUDDLE RADIO	Medicine Wheel of Music
11AM	DEPARTMENT 13	This Way Out	VOYAGE	After Thought	SUNNY ROAD	For Kids (Adults too)	
NOON	POP/ROCK	WINGS	(Jazz)	BRIDGING THE GAP	Roots Music		
1PM	COMEDIOLOGICAL REPORT	BOOTS & SADDLE		ACCESSIBILITY MATTERS	NO FIXED ADDRESS	THE ELECTRIC CHAIR	TEMPLE TENT REVIVAL
2PM	outSPOKEN	COUNTRY		IFARSHOT DAILY	LIVED EXPERIENCES OF HOMELESSNESS		NEON BEIGE SOUND EXCHANGE
3PM	Truth Before Reconciliation	THE GREEN MAJORITY	ALTERNATIVE RADIO	BINKY PINDER'S FUNHOUSE	HOW TO SURVIVE A TORNADO		
4PM	GROUNDWELL	The Stuph File	The Meta World	TICKLE MY FANCY	GLOBAL RESEARCH NEWS HOUR	THE IVORY TOWER	YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM GOD
5PM	New Classical	The Phil-In Show	STOOPALOOP SHOW	Blues	CKUW Album Feature	Eclectic Mix	Gospel
6PM	SEAN SHOW	Winnipeg Arena is on Fire		BARKING DOG	CKUW Album Feature		Active Voice
7PM	(Local music)			Past 'n Present Folk 'n Roots			
8PM	Radio Eco Shock	SQUARE WAVE	SPACE CADET	STARROAD JUNCTION	THE EXILE FILES	Eclectic Residents	Orange Groove Radio
9PM	Journey Into Sound	Video music and history	MUSIC, OUT OF THIS WORLD	PAGES	DEEP THREES	THE TRIP	BOOTS & SADDLE
10PM	(Music History)	AMATEUR HOUR	So Bad. It's Good	EAT YOUR ARTS & VEGETABLES	Electronic/Expository	PSYCHEDELIC ROCK	BARKING DOG
11PM	THE WORLD	Lost Chunes	TWANG TRUST	TAWNY, THE BRAVE	Behind the News with Doug Henwood		
MIDNIGHT	World	Best of Bluesday	Country/ Roots/ Big, Dumb Rock 'n Roll	Pop/Rock	THE HOW DO YOU DO REVUE	WE BUILD HITS	THE C.A.R.P.
1AM	THE TONIC	On My Way Home	S.A.N.E. * RADIO	Adult Kindergarten	CHECK CA	Hip-Hop	The Completely Asinine Radio Program
2AM	Garage, Punk, Surf, and R&R	(Local indie)	Local Experimental Music		Funky	RED BOX	SOUNDS LIKE MUSIC
3AM	DESTINATION MOON	Indigenous in Music	Radio Art Hour	Dub City Steppers	QUADRAFUNK	Hip-Hop	THE GASHLYCRUMB TINIES
4AM	Sock-Hop-A-Go-Go	IFARSHOT DAILY	IFARSHOT DAILY	PHASE ONE	Electric Dance Party	DANCE HALL FEVER	ISLAND VIBES
5AM	IFARSHOT DAILY	MONKEY SPARROW	Two Princes	Electronic	StreetKilliaz Generation	Dancehall and Reggae	Caribbean
6AM	BREAK NORTH RADIO	LISTENING PLEASURES			(Local Hip Hop)		
7AM	METAL MONDAY	NIGHT DANGER RADIO	WINNIPEG ARENA IS ON FIRE	THE WONDERFUL & FRIGHTENING WORLD OF PATRICK MICHALISHYN	MANITOBA MOON	Your Show Here	Rainbow Country
8AM	MODERN JAZZ TODAY	The Motherland Influence	The Meta World				REVOLUTION ROCK
9AM	AMPLIFIED RADIO	BACKBEAT	STOOPALOOP SHOW				GIRLIE SO GROOVIE
10AM			Hurlements Sur La Youndra				

MUSIC

LOCAL SPOKEN WORD

SPOKEN WORD

ALTER-NATING

WEEK

Temporary Programming

WWW.CKUW.CA

OFFICE: 204-786-9782

NEWS DESK: 204-786-9998

ON AIR: 204-774-6877

FAX: 204-783-7080

EMAIL: CKUW@WINNIPEG.CA

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 -⚡



# PRISMS OF LIGHT

Dr. William Rory Dickson, associate professor of religion and culture

OMID MOTERASSED | FEATURES REPORTER | @OMIDMOTERASSED

Dr. William Rory Dickson’s dream is to make Sufism more accessible to all.

Dickson is an associate professor and chair of the University of Winnipeg’s religion and culture department, where he specializes in Islamic studies. He grew up areligious, but various life experiences in his late teens caused him to re-evaluate his faith.

“I started to think that there might be a lot more going on than meets the eye,” he says. “If that’s the case, how interesting is that? And what have people said about it?”

He remembers working in the northern Alberta oil fields, where he would spend his lunch hours reading any religious text he could find. Dickson converted to Islam at 18 and eventually pursued a master’s in religion at Wilfrid Laurier University.

Dr. Meena Sharify-Funk, his PhD supervisor, inspired him to dig deeper into Sufism.

“People don’t always think of Sufism when they think of ‘Eastern’ philosophy,” he says. “I would also say people don’t always think of philosophy and mysticism when they think of Islam.”

Despite Sufism being a diverse faith, Dickson characterizes the ultimate goal as being the emptying of oneself. “You have to get out of your own way, and once you do that, you can become a vehicle for these beautiful qualities of God to come into the world.”

His passion for the subject led him to author multiple books, including *Living Sufism in North America*, *Unveiling Sufism* and

*Contemporary Sufism*. Sharify-Funk co-authored the latter two.

Dickson’s latest book, *Dissolving into Being*, is an attempt to translate key passages of the *Fusus al-Hikam* (or the *Bezels of Wisdom*), a medieval philosophical text by Ibn al-‘Arabi. “You could say he’s the founder of the Sufi philosophical tradition,” he says.

One of al-‘Arabi’s key teachings is the *Wahdat ul-Wujud* or *Unity of Being*, which Dickson describes with an analogy.

“When you shine a light through a prism, there’s only one light, but on the other side, you (can) see multiple colours. In terms of appearance, the light is now many,” he says. “This is our world. It appears to be multiple in nature, but if you have spiritual insight, you realize it’s just one light.”

It’s only through the limitation of the prism that the different colours can be seen. According to Sufi philosophy, this does not diminish the individuality of each colour, but instead sees them all as equally integral manifestations of God. Dickson equates this to the unique knowledge and beauty of every human being.

“Each experiencing subject has a different revelation of God than every single other, and God never repeats himself twice,” he says. “The more differences you can appreciate, the more of God you can appreciate.”

His hope is that by shedding light toward the diversity and sophistication of Islam, it can be embraced as part of the pluralism of contemporary culture.



### What’s your favourite thing about Winnipeg?

“Gotta be the food scene. The restaurants here are definitely punching above their weight class. I’ve had some friends who are in the industry, and some of them have gone on to other parts of the world and done really well, so I feel really fortunate to live in a city that has that.”

### What is your favourite Sufi poem or saying?

“A thing can be explained only by something more subtle than itself. There is nothing more subtle than love. By what then shall love be explained?”

—Sumnun al-Muhib



THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

## Student Services

### WEBINAR WEDNESDAYS

The Webinar Wednesday series continues with these sessions:

- **April 10** – Government Student Aid Re-payment (rescheduled from April 3)

Webinar Wednesdays are held at 12:30-1:00 p.m. via Zoom. Pre-registration required. Please visit: [uwinnipeg.ca/webinar-wednesdays](http://uwinnipeg.ca/webinar-wednesdays)

### CONVOCATION AWARDS

Nominations for Convocation awards are now open for undergraduate students graduating in the 2023-24 academic year. Deadline to submit – **April 15, 2024**

### SINGLE-SESSION COUNSELLING

Student Counselling Services has launched “Single-Session Counselling,” based on the idea that sometimes, a single, well-timed conversation is just what is needed to facilitate change or offer support.

To find out more information and see if a single session would be a good fit for you, please visit: [uwinnipeg.ca/student-wellness](http://uwinnipeg.ca/student-wellness)

### GRADUATION POW WOW

The annual Graduation Pow Wow will be held on May 5 at 11:00 a.m. in the Duckworth Centre.

### STUDY SKILLS

The next offering of the Study Skills workshops will be **May 13 – 28**.

Topics include:

- Reading Strategies and Critical Thinking
- Dealing with School-related Stress
- Goal-setting and Time Management

Sessions are 9:00-9:50 a.m. via Zoom. Pre-registration is required. Go to [uwinnipeg.ca/study-skills](http://uwinnipeg.ca/study-skills)

### THE WELLNESS HUB

Check out the Wellness Hub, a digital platform on the UWinni-

peg website, with links to:

- informational websites about mental health
- tools to track how you are feeling and learn coping skills
- crisis and counselling services
- connections to specialized resources

You choose which links to access each time you enter the Wellness Hub.

Visit the hub any time: [uwinnipeg.ca/wellnesshub](http://uwinnipeg.ca/wellnesshub)



**U**

**Back for 2024,**

***The Uniter***

**Summer**

**Festival Guide**

Available around the city, on  
campus and online in late May



# Haiku HOROSCOPES

by Jonathan Ball, Registered Fraud

haikuhoroscopes.com



**Aries**  
March 21 - April 19  
Treat yourself with some  
Delicious crepes! Then treat the  
Ghosts to some ghost crepes



**Libra**  
September 23 - October 22  
It's silly to feel  
Bad about things you cannot  
Change, like that light bulb



**Taurus**  
April 20 - May 20  
That bump in the night  
Can easily be explained  
As clumsy monsters



**Scorpio**  
October 23 - November 21  
Play your summer safe—  
Wear a hat, lots of sunblock  
And don't fall in love



**Gemini**  
May 21 - June 20  
Where there is only  
One set of footprints, that's when  
I hijacked your car



**Sagittarius**  
November 22 - December 21  
The more that you learn  
About rabid dogs, the less  
You have to live for



**Cancer**  
June 21 - July 22  
Home is where the heart  
Is, beating loudly under  
Those pulsing floorboards



**Capricorn**  
December 22 - January 19  
As your trial drags on  
You'll wonder if that taco  
Was worth all of this



**Leo**  
July 23 - August 22  
If you want to be  
A better writer, then you  
Should learn what words are



**Aquarius**  
January 20 - February 18  
Without marketing  
You're nothing—you might as well  
Just kill yourself now



**Virgo**  
August 23 - September 22  
Your poetry would  
Benefit from editing  
Out all of the words



**Pisces**  
February 19 - March 20  
You're just dyslexic—  
A dog does not have to die  
To absolve your sins

# CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

01

O	D	D	S		E	L	S	E		L	O	S	E	S		
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A	I	D	E	S		P	E	R	P	E	T	U	A	L		
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03

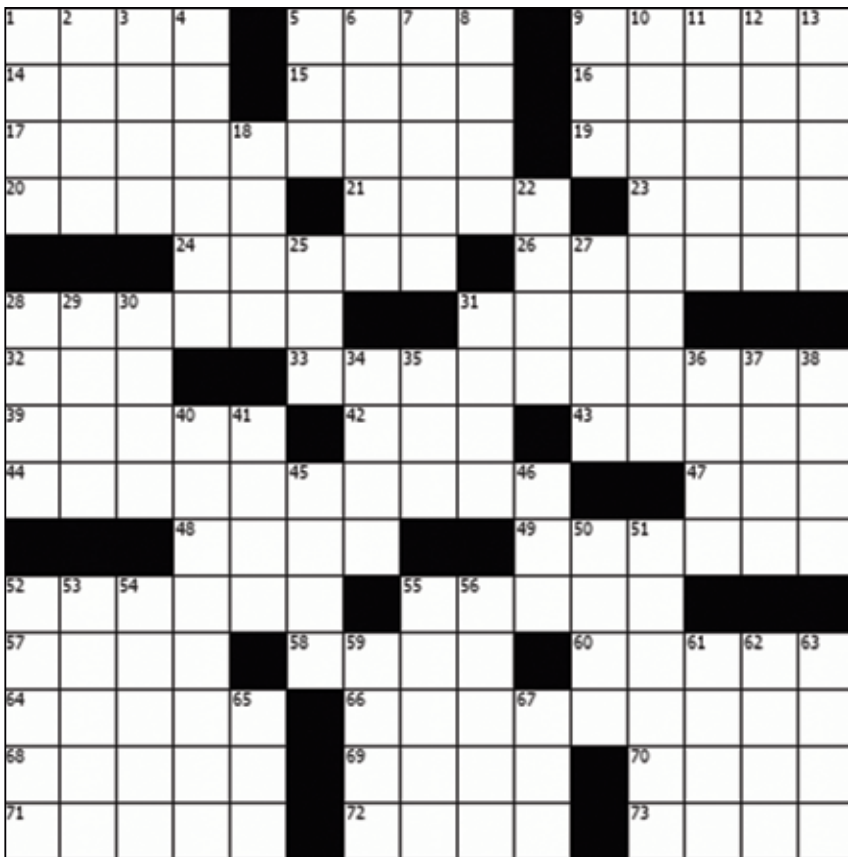
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I	M	P	A	S	S	E				T	I	N	G	E
D	U	O	S		E	R	A	S	E		S	T	A	Y
E	L	L	A		L	A	P	E	L		E	A	V	E
S	E	E	P		S	L	E	E	K		S	L	E	D

02

B	L	A	D	E		A	L	S	O		F	A	R	E		
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I	S	E	E		E	O	N	S		E	E	R	I	E		
T	E	D	S		R	E	D	O		A	R	M	E	D		

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION

S	E	M	I		A	P	A	R	T		N	E	T	S		
O	X	E	N		M	E	D	I	A		E	R	I	E		
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					E	R	R	A	N	D		D	O	E	R	S
A	P	P	A	R	E	L		T	I	N						
R	O	A	D	S	T	E	R		I	T	S	E	L	F		
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ONLINECROSSWORDS.NET

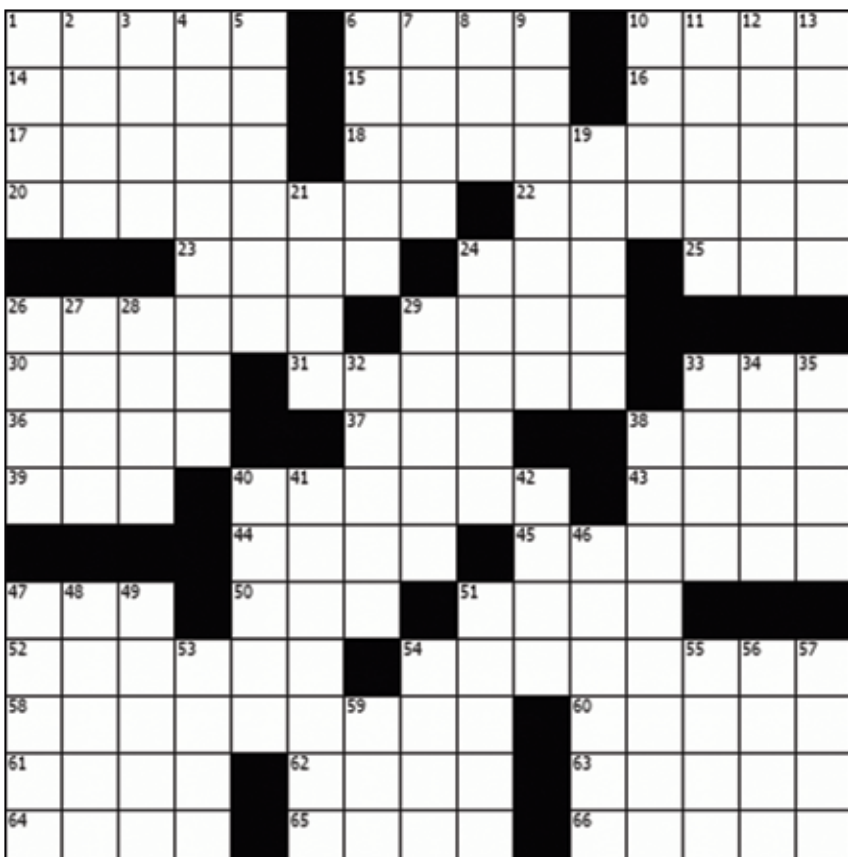
**01**

### ACROSS

- 1. GAMBLING TERM
- 5. ALTERNATIVE WORD
- 9. MISPLACES
- 14. DIVA'S FORTE
- 15. BUDDHIST MONK
- 16. GRANNY SMITH, E.G.
- 17. CITY IN NY
- 19. BEER MUG
- 20. HARPOON
- 21. FIFTY PERCENT
- 23. INTERESTED BY
- 24. MORE MATURE
- 26. MOB SCENE PARTICIPANT
- 28. TACK ON
- 31. FEATHERY PLANT
- 32. UNDERCOVER GP.
- 33. IMPOSSIBLE TO FILL
- 39. DOES NOTHING
- 42. LIST ENDER (ABBR.)
- 43. ICY PRECIPITATION
- 44. SLOW DOWN
- 47. SPASM
- 48. RENOVATE
- 49. GO OVER AGAIN
- 52. INHABIT
- 55. FRIGHTEN
- 57. PLOW-PULLING ANIMALS
- 58. \_\_\_\_ VALLEY (VINE-YARD SITE)
- 60. SMALL LANDMASSSES
- 64. HELPERS
- 66. UNCEASING
- 68. LONG CUT
- 69. SHE, IN VALENCIA
- 70. GUMBO VEGGIE
- 71. EDGY
- 72. SLUGGISH
- 73. COZY ABODE

### DOWN

- 1. ROWING NEEDS
- 2. LET FALL
- 3. GAMING CUBES
- 4. LARGEST DESERT
- 5. OVERHEAD TRAINS
- 6. WOOD TURNER
- 7. SMUDGE
- 8. CERTAIN NOBLEMAN
- 9. "VIVA \_\_\_\_ VEGAS"
- 10. NOT OBLIGATORY
- 11. PAID OUT
- 12. UPPER CRUST
- 13. SPANISH TITLE
- 18. GUITARIST \_\_\_\_ CLAPTON
- 22. STEW
- 25. \_\_\_\_ BETA KAPPA
- 27. PURPLE FLOWER
- 28. BORIC \_\_\_\_
- 29. OCEAN CURRENT
- 30. POWDER MINERAL
- 31. REALITY
- 34. ROMAN FIDDLER
- 35. AMTRAK DEPOT (ABBR.)
- 36. GREEK LETTER
- 37. OAHU WREATHS
- 38. ENGRAVE WITH ACID
- 40. CREEPINNESS
- 41. SNOW COASTER
- 45. FIRST GARDEN
- 46. HISTORIC TIME
- 50. CLEVELAND'S LAKE
- 51. ACTOR CHARLTON \_\_\_\_
- 52. \_\_\_\_ BEEF
- 53. BANISH
- 54. AUTO TYPE
- 55. INCANTATION
- 56. MONTE \_\_\_\_
- 59. TARZAN'S PALS
- 61. \_\_\_\_ SKYWALKER
- 62. HEARING ORGANS
- 63. BED BOARD
- 65. THAT WOMAN
- 67. BEAR'S FOOT



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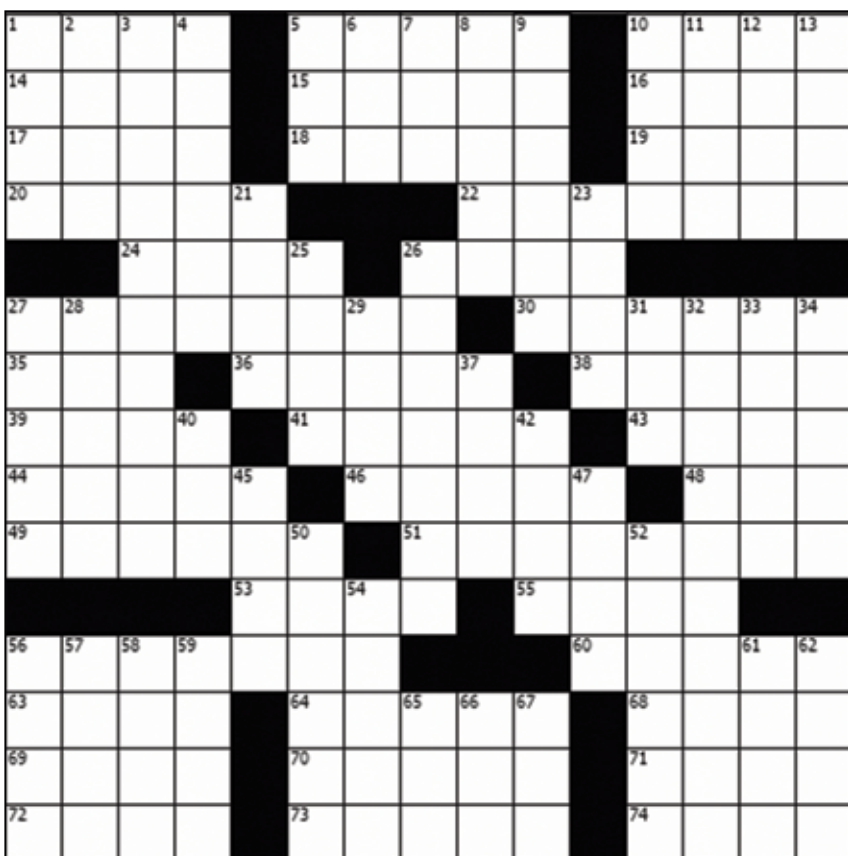
**02**

### ACROSS

- 1. KNIFE FEATURE
- 6. PLUS
- 10. PASSENGER
- 14. BATMAN'S SIDEKICK
- 15. DRIZZLE
- 16. LOCALE
- 17. TURN ASIDE
- 18. MEANING
- 20. HINDERED
- 22. LOAFER ORNAMENT
- 23. MEDIOCRE GRADES
- 24. ACTOR \_\_\_\_ ROBBINS
- 25. WOOLLY MAMA
- 26. HURRY
- 29. GENTLE
- 30. ABSORBED BY
- 31. HAVING ROWS
- 33. BIOLOGY, E.G. (ABBR.)
- 36. HEADLINER
- 37. EMINEM'S MILIEU
- 38. ENJOY A BOOK
- 39. TENNIS UNIT
- 40. SCANTY
- 43. ALLEVIATE
- 44. BOSTON, E.G.
- 45. SERIOUS PLAYS
- 47. ELDERLY
- 50. CAVIAR
- 51. BALL HOLDERS
- 52. PRESIDENT RONALD \_\_\_\_
- 54. NATIVE OF ENGLAND'S CAPITAL
- 58. ATMOSPHERIC PRESSURE GAUGE
- 60. NIGHT SOUND

### DOWN

- 1. SMALL NAIL
- 2. ADORATION
- 3. AID IN CRIME
- 4. ROBERT ALTMAN, E.G.
- 5. MENU ITEM
- 6. ZODIAC RAM
- 7. SOLID GROUND
- 8. COMMAND TO FIDO
- 9. FORMER (HYPH.)
- 10. PASSING CRAZES
- 11. ASCEND
- 12. REFRESH
- 13. U.S. SYMBOL
- 19. APPOINTED
- 21. LANDLORD'S DUE
- 24. FIELD COVERS
- 26. COBRA'S COMMENT
- 27. FEED THE KITTY
- 28. RIGHT NOW!
- 29. VISIBLY UPSET
- 32. WRATHFUL
- 33. STITCHED LINE
- 34. ROBERTO'S HOUSE
- 35. MARCH DATE
- 38. THINKER
- 40. BEAT IT!
- 41. EARLY SETTLER
- 42. BIBLICAL LOCALE
- 46. WHAT MOSES PART-ED (2 WDS.)
- 47. SATELLITE'S PATH
- 48. RENTAL AGREEMENT
- 49. VENTURED
- 51. UPPER BODY
- 53. EXITS
- 54. LOAN
- 55. AVERAGE
- 56. GREAT LAKE
- 57. WIND INSTRUMENT
- 59. SOCK PART



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**03**

### ACROSS

- 1. EXCLUDE
- 5. CANVAS COVERS
- 10. WAITER'S HANDOUT
- 14. COPENHAGEN NATIVE
- 15. HEAVYSET
- 16. GREEK GOD OF LOVE
- 17. GAMBLING CUBES
- 18. ARTIST \_\_\_\_ PICASSO
- 19. NOT TAPED
- 20. LAZINESS
- 22. TOY RACER (2 WDS.)
- 24. LISTEN
- 26. MARSH GRASS
- 27. EXTRA WORK HOURS
- 30. WANDERERS
- 35. DEFACE
- 36. MINOR DISAGREEMENTS
- 38. BRIEF REVIEW
- 39. PUB BEVERAGES
- 41. FATHERED
- 43. SKIN WOE
- 44. FROM THIS TIME
- 46. COFFEE TYPE, FOR SHORT
- 48. IGLOO MATERIAL
- 49. CLOTHING
- 51. SAT IN ON
- 53. LOG FLOAT
- 55. LILY SPECIES
- 56. DEADLOCK
- 60. TINT
- 63. COUPLES
- 64. DELETE
- 68. STICK AROUND
- 69. SHE, IN BARCELONA
- 70. COAT PART
- 71. ROOF PART
- 72. OOZE
- 73. GLOSSY
- 74. SNOW VEHICLE

### DOWN

- 1. PROBABILITIES
- 2. SEND
- 3. UNINTELLIGIBLE
- 4. SEESAW
- 5. CHEF'S UNIT (ABBR.)
- 6. \_\_\_\_ GLANCE (2 WDS.)
- 7. STEAL FROM
- 8. THROB
- 9. TAKEN ILLEGALLY
- 10. LIQUEFY
- 11. CLAPTON OR IDLE
- 12. CERTAIN STAR
- 13. CLIENT
- 21. BONNETS
- 23. STENCH
- 25. TEARS APART
- 26. HIDEAWAY
- 27. D-DAY BEACH
- 28. CLOTHING STAND
- 29. HOUSEKEEPER
- 31. "OH, GIVE \_\_\_\_ HOME..." (2 WDS.)
- 32. HAPPENING BY CHANCE
- 33. PROM
- 34. VELOCITY
- 37. RELIGIOUS ORDER
- 40. \_\_\_\_-FI
- 42. COMPUTER FODDER
- 45. GOOFS
- 47. TOUCHED
- 50. PAINTERS' STANDS
- 52. SOUNDS
- 54. UNTAMED
- 56. MARCH DATE
- 57. ARMY MASCOT
- 58. WARSAW NATIVE
- 59. RIGHT AWAY (ABBR.)
- 61. PRESENTED
- 62. WATCHED
- 65. CHIMPANZEE, E.G.
- 66. VISIT
- 67. LODGE MEMBER



# GET PUBLISHED!

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*The Uniter* is seeking volunteer writers, illustrators and photographers.

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

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For more information, email Thomas at [editor@uniter.ca](mailto:editor@uniter.ca).