

STREET'S

SERVING WINNIPEG'S WEST END

APRIL 2025

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM OUR COMMUNITY | VOL 3 NO 6 | FREE TO WEST END RESIDENTS

WOLSELEYLEAF.CA



Ready for spring training: SWB shows their team spirit and new team shirts

Can disability rights trump Trump? Federal Election Issues

By Terese Taylor

The Manitoba League for Person's with Disabilities (MLPD) is organizing an all-candidates debate with hopes that the significant strides

made during the Trudeau era will not fall to the wayside.

"The Accessibility Canada Act (ACA) took a lot of work to create and we want that work to continue, and to improve the act," said Melissa Graham, executive director of MLPD.

"We want to remind candidates that even in times of crisis, it is really important that a country supports all of its people. All sorts of people get marginalized when times get difficult and we don't want to lose the progress we've made as a country."



Melissa Graham, executive director of MLPD

continues pg 10...

Sports Without Boundaries

By Terese Taylor

"Sports Without Boundaries is more than a soccer organization" says soccer coach, and director of operations for SWB Seidu Mohammed. "We are doing this for the kids and youth out in our community so

we can teach them to play soccer, at the same time so they can have fun. It's also an organization where we sit with the men and talk about life and how it's treating them. So its like community work we are

doing."

The University of Winnipeg rec plex filled up on March 8th midway through the 2025 training season for Mini (ages 6-11 years) and Youth (ages

continues pg 2...

EARTH DAY meeting presenting plan to save elm trees

By Mike Maunder

What better way to celebrate Earth Day than attending a meeting that might save dozens of majestic trees in our neighbourhoods from certain death?

"SAVING OUR ELMS" is being held Earth Day, April 22, at 6:30 pm at McLure Place, 533 Greenwood Place. The event is focused on the elm trees of Wolseley, but offers information and inspiration that

could help other neighbourhoods.

"We've all seen the orange dot of death on too many elms in our neighbourhood," explains Pat McCarthy-Briggs of the Wolseley Residents Association (WRA), describing the ravages of Dutch Elm Disease in her community. "But with recent developments in tree care, there is now something that can be done to prevent Dutch

Elm Disease!"

The exclamation mark is McCarthy-Briggs's way of conveying the excitement she and other tree-lovers feel in discovering there is a way to save many trees which, until now, we've accepted as being doomed.

She is part of the WRA's Tree Committee which has

continues pg 6...

BUILDING SPORT



SPORTS WITHOUT BOUNDARIES from page 1

Team members get in some good shots, above. Seidu Mohammed (center photo) knew there was a lot of untapped enthusiasm and talent in Winnipeg's newcomer communities

12-17) teams eager stretch their skills during a long lasting winter.

The season will run until August, and practices will move outside once the weather allows, on the shared soccer field at the Gordon Bell Green-space.

The program was started to provide recreational opportunities for low income youth, many of them newcomers to Canada who lacked the financial means to join other community sports.

"It can be expensive," says Gelord Nshombo, another coach in the program, "with some training programs running up to \$1500 per person."

"All those costs are all on us," Nshombo said of SWB, which needs to do active fundraising to keep the program going. "Our main goal was to get students out of the streets, stop them from joining gangs...

get the kids together and keep them busy on the weekend."

"By the time they are done with us," laughs Nshombo "they will only want to eat and sleep."

The success of the program has led to an increase in opportunities for talented youth who otherwise may not have had anyone to advocate on their behalf.

Mohammed knew there was a lot of untapped potential in Winnipeg and along with Gode Katembo, helped to start a new league for young adults. The Canada African Cup of Nations (CACON) tournament has been so popular, said Nshombo, that the competition has spread to the greater Toronto area, bringing teams from Hamilton, Scarborough, and Mississauga. Brampton, Ajax and Toronto proper.

Nshombo is team captain of the Winnipeg league's Team

Congo, one of sixteen different teams in Winnipeg now competing in the CACON tournament, out of which an all star team representing Manitoba will be selected to play against Ontario. Nshombo assures *The Leaf* "Winnipeg is the best!" with the Manitoba All Star team winning 5 -1 in a show game against Ontario in 2024.

Its about the game, but also about the excitement of bringing people together to celebrate sport, culture and team spirit says Nshombo.

Several young athletes in the program have been able to access sports scholarships at universities across the country, including the CMU in Winnipeg, and almost ten athletes offered scholarships in Alberta.

Jordan Kananga began training with Sports Without Boundaries as a youth before becoming a volunteer assistant coach for the SWB program,



Gelord Nshombo (left) has been a coach and mentor to Jordan Kananga, who has just signed on to a league in Ontario.



and was directing youth on the field before everyone assembled for a photo with their new team shirts. Kananga's skills in soccer have taken him to meets across the country. Within a

week of this interview, Kananga was signed onto League One Ontario. We wish him success!



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There are six candidates running in the federal election in Winnipeg Centre:

Leah Gazan, NDP, the incumbent

Gary Gervais, Green Party

Tom Bambrick, Conservative Party of Canada

Rahul Walia, Liberal Party

Debra Wall, Animal Protection Party of Canada

Donald Grant, People's Party of Canada

STREETS sent each candidate six questions. Four candidates responded. Here are their answers..

What do you think is the most important federal issue facing Winnipeg Centre residents? (Max 50 words)

Leah Gazan, NDP

One of the most pressing issues is the housing crisis. The most recent street census found there were 1,256 un-housed people in Winnipeg. This does not include those who are precariously housed. If we are truly going to tackle the crisis of gender based violence, crime, mental health and addiction, then we need to address housing. Being safely housed is the foundation of a good life.

Rahul Walia, Liberal Party

I don't think there is a single issue affecting Winnipeg Centre community members, but rather a plethora and at the centre are: The rising cost of living, free and universal access to pharma and dental care, and President Trump's sovereignty threats and unjustified tariffs.

Gary Gervais, Green Party

The most urgent issue getting all the attention is the actions of the U.S. government. However, the most IMPORTANT issue remains the climate emergency. Trade disputes will get settled and society will adjust. The long-term impact of climate change for all livg on our planet is per-manent and profound.

Debra Wall, Animal Protection Party of Canada

The most important issue facing Winnipeg Center, Canada and the planet as a whole is the existential threat of the impending climate catastrophe. All other issues will pale by comparison if we don't ensure we have a livable planet.

What will you advocate for in regard to this issue? (Max 100 words)

Leah Gazan, NDP

We cannot rely on private, for-profit corporations to solve the housing crisis. Even when they receive subsidized public financing, these companies are known for 'renovicting' tenants, jacking up rents, and replacing affordable units with unaffordable luxury rental suites.

Housing is a human right, not a cash grab for big corporations. That's why I'm pushing for federal funding allocated to public, non-profit and co-operative housing with rent-geared-to-income. I'm also advocating to reform the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to prioritize the right-to-housing and prohibit rent-gouging corporations from accessing subsidized loans and mortgages.

Rahul Walia, Liberal Party

If and once elected as your MP for Winnipeg Centre, I will advocate for tax cuts for low and middle-income earners as well as support small and medium local businesses while working towards finding sustainable rebate programs that ensure more money is kept in your pockets. Furthermore, I will ensure Canada stands up to President Trump by becoming less reliant on the United States and finding ethical trading partners, ensuring short and long-term economic prosperity for our community and Canada as a whole. These measures will ensure the effective tackling of the rising cost of living.

Gary Gervais, Green Party

I will advocate for decisive climate action. This includes halting new fossil fuel projects and investing in a nationwide power grid, creating thousands of good jobs and lowering energy costs. Holding big polluters accountable by ending public subsidies to oil and gas companies and enforcing strict, science-based pollution limits is crucial. Additionally, I support establishing a Youth Climate Corps to engage young Canadians in climate resilience efforts.

The Liberals were quick to abandon the carbon tax when it became a political liability. The NDP went along and the Conservatives don't believe the environment matters. The Greens are the only ones to be trusted with prioritizing our life support systems.

Debra Wall, Animal Protection Party of Canada

We can't ignore the "cow in the room." Animal agriculture is one of the most destructive industries on the planet. Besides causing suffering on a monstrous scale, it produces more greenhouse gases than all forms of transportation combined, is responsible for habitat and species loss, fresh water waste and pollution, ocean acidification and dead zones, is creating antibiotic resistant microbes and checks off all of the boxes for conditions that could/will lead to the next pandemic. We need to operationalize the Canada Food Guide, end subsidies to animal agriculture and transition to a plant-based food system.

Can you list three other issues you consider as priorities? (Max 150 words)

Leah Gazan, NDP

Trump's unprovoked trade war has understandably caused major concern, as these attacks threaten jobs and economic security for countless folks across Canada. We cannot rely on an authoritarian like Trump to negotiate in good faith, and we need to ensure we expand EI and income supports to those affected and invest in Canadian jobs.

We are facing a climate crisis, with consequences that are jeopardizing future generations. We must ensure we build our economy in alignment with sustainability and carbon reduction goals. A future with a livable planet depends on maintaining this balance.

We are also experiencing a time where human rights and international law are under attack. Whether it is reproductive justice and bodily autonomy, migrant rights, or the sovereignty of nations, we must ensure that human rights are protected and international law is upheld both in Canada and around the world.

Rahul Walia, Liberal Party

Truth and Reconciliation - Recognizing that Winnipeg Centre has the highest urban Indigenous population in Canada, I will ensure Indigenous youth has equitable access to opportunities by advocating for robust funding for organizations like Jordan's Principle.

Enhanced Access to Affordable Childcare - With the Liberal government creating \$10-a-day childcare, there has been high demand within the community. Hence, I will advocate for more local childcare spaces to enter this agreement and ensure these are and remain appropriately staffed.

Addressing Rising Crime Rates - I will be working towards reducing crime rates within our community by addressing the root causes of poverty, putting a focus on affordable housing, broadening access to mental health support, and enhancing funding for social service providers.

Gary Gervais, Green Party

Affordable Housing: Everyone deserves a safe and affordable place to live. I support increasing investment in co-operative and non-market housing, making sure housing built with public money stays affordable forever, and to stop large corporations from buying up single family homes to ensure housing remains a human right, not a commodity.

Indigenous Reconciliation: True reconciliation means action, not just words. I advocate for fully implementing the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, act on every Call for Justice from the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry, and upholding Indigenous sovereignty through meaningful consultation and shared decision-making.

Caring for Canadians: A just society ensures no one is left behind. I support strengthening healthcare by expanding pharmacare and mental health services, increasing support for low-income families and seniors, and investing in community programs that foster well-being, equity, and resilience for all Canadians.

Debra Wall, Animal Protection Party of Canada

I propose the DOG and CAT (Direct Our GST and Companion Animal Tax) Act where the hundreds of millions of dollars in tax revenue generated by the \$10B Canadians spend on their "pets" annually be used to solve animal related issues in the country. One example is the over population of dogs in remote communities which also affects the health and safety of residents..(b) Our economy, based on endless growth and consumerism, is widening the gap between the wealthiest and the rest of humanity and pushing the boundaries of Earth's ecosystems. We need to transition to what is known as a "steady state" economy where we address human population pressure and our needs are met within the means of the planet. (c)There is a well-documented link between animal abuse and violence towards humans. We need humane education in all curricula to strike at the roots of violent crime..

ASK THE CANDIDATE

Is there anything you'd like Winnipeg Centre residents to know about your personal record?

Leah Gazan, NDP
 My work does not begin or end in parliament; I have been a tireless advocate for human rights, social justice, and community empowerment for more than three decades. I have strong bonds in our community, which drives my work in Ottawa. I have been able to achieve so much for our neighbourhoods because I take direction from advocates, frontline organizations, grassroots leaders, and those with lived experience. I work with elected officials and advocate across party lines to get things done for our community.

Rahul Walia, Liberal Party
 While I may be a young face, I have dedicated a great portion of my life to public service. I began my journey interning under the late Senator Murray Sinclair, where I learned about the importance of Truth, Reconciliation, and Indigenous Sovereignty. This passion for policy and social impact drove me to not only pursue a Master's in Political Management at Carleton University, but also serve as a case worker, supporting seniors, newcomers, and all those in need of government services. I also had the privilege of serving as Regional Advisor to the Minister of Transport, where I always put Manitoba's needs at the centre.

Gary Gervais, Green Party
 I'm the owner of Heartland International English School which has operated successfully in downtown Winnipeg since 1999. I served as an elected official for 8 years as a school trustee in Louis Riel School Division, including two years as Chair of the Board. I led the board, along with the administration, through a lengthy consultation process with the community to develop Manitoba's (and likely Canada's) first comprehensive school board diversity policy. As a trustee I continuously advocated for environmental issues and was successful in getting green policies implemented

Debra Wall, Animal Protection Party of Canada
 I had my "a-ha" moment in 1978. When a little calf I met licked my face, I realized they were no different than a dog and immediately stopped eating meat. I worked as a veterinary assistant for 35 years, now retired. A self-proclaimed "hack of all trades," I fancy myself an artist and writer and have had dozens of LTEs published. I have been playing drums and singing in punk bands since 1979. I completed the first Manitoba Marathon and entered a bodybuilding competition for my 40th birthday. In the 80's I earned a certificate in massage therapy.

What are your thoughts about the polarization that is affecting so many of us? Do you have any solutions?

Leah Gazan, NDP
 Extremists thrive on fear and pessimism and they take advantage of moments of economic and political upheaval to drive wedges between us. The antidote to extremism is community. That is why my work is always focused on building community well-being. Communities are dynamic. We must create spaces where different perspectives can be honoured while also ensuring that peoples' human rights are upheld. That is reconciliation. At a time of growing division and threats from the south, we are learning that we need to build unity and understanding, and strengthen our capacity to organize across differences.

Rahul Walia, Liberal Party
 Our entire campaign has been about positivity and unity in an effort to keep Canada Strong. This is the overwhelming sentiment that I am trying to instill in everything I do through my time in office, if and when elected as your next MP for Winnipeg Centre. This election is not about pointing out the shortcomings of my opponents but rather about informing voters of what the best solution is to challenge our common aggressor; President Trump, through his unjustified tariffs and mockery of our sovereignty.

Gary Gervais, Green Party
 We need to promote media literacy so people can critically assess information, avoid echo chambers and encourage cross-group dialogue to help humanize opposing views. Electoral reforms like ranked-choice voting will reduce extreme partisanship. Strengthening local community engagement will foster cooperation beyond political divides. Social media reform can limit divisive content, and foster a culture of curiosity and encourage thoughtful, good-faith discussions.
 Vote Green! The Liberals and Conservatives want you to think it's a binary choice. We see how destructive that has become in the U.S. Every vote that doesn't go to a major party sends a strong message to those parties that we're not falling for their false dichotomy. The enemy of polarization is more options!

Debra Wall, Animal Protection Party of Canada
 Politically speaking, I think a lot of division is due to our archaic first-past-the-post voting system that pits parties against each other. We need proportional representation where all votes count, every voice is heard and there is more collaboration between parties. It is interesting to note that in countries where PR exists, members of animal rights parties have been voted into parliament.

Anything else? (Max 100 words)

Leah Gazan, NDP
 Winnipeg Centre is the most beautiful, vibrant, and spirited community in Canada. That is why I often lovingly refer to our community as the centre of the universe. It has been my greatest honour and privilege to represent a riding that I love and live in for nearly six years. I am asking for your support to continue collaborating with organizations and individuals in our community to keep the momentum going. Let's work together to keep community at the centre in Winnipeg Centre.

Rahul Walia, Liberal Party
 I have an outstanding track record in terms of advocating for Manitobans and Winnipeggers, playing a pivotal role in the rebuilding and reparation of railways and ports in Northern communities, as well as expanding the Thompson and Winnipeg Regional Airports. It is this drive and result-based approach that I intend to bring in as your next MP for Winnipeg Centre.

Gary Gervais, Green Party
 I've lived in Winnipeg Centre for 15 of the last 25 years. This is home for me, my wife Fernanda, and our dog Kiwi (naming our dog after a green fruit wasn't about showing devotion to the Green Party, I promise). Winnipeg Centre a fantastically diverse community with many challenges, and many opportunities. We can be proud to call this place home and should be engaged and active in finding solutions to our challenges and making it even better.

Debra Wall, Animal Protection Party of Canada
 I am not running "against" anyone. I'm running "for" the animals. An increasing number of Canadians are learning that our country has some of the weakest animal protection and transport laws in the developed world and want this to be an election issue. I'm hoping that, by running, I'll help put this onto the other parties' radars. We must make our animal cousins' voices part of the conversation if we want to achieve true reconciliation. Otherwise we are merely regurgitating the same anthropocentric and colonial narrative that got us into the mess we find ourselves today.


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NATURE

EARTH DAY - SAVING ELMS- from page 1

been investigating ways the elms can be saved. They have investigated an inoculation procedure which, although expensive, prevents Dutch Elm Disease from killing the tree for a limited period. Two years ago, residents on one street in Wolseley (Newman Street) banded together to donate and raise funds to inoculate seven elms on their street. (See February Leaf.)

The Earth Day meeting will feature some of those neighbours telling their story; information about the inoculation process from an experienced arborist; and the unveiling of a plan to save elm trees on Westminster and Wolseley Avenues.

“Westminster & Wolseley Avenues are the gateways to Wolseley and the heart of our community,” explained McCarthy-Briggs. “There are about 150 elm trees on these two streets. They offer shade and are a prized part of the character of our neighbourhood. They create the environment that defines us.

“Each year, Dutch Elm Disease is killing 10-15 of the trees on these streets. At that rate, in 10 years, there will be no elms left on either of these important routes.”

The WRA Tree Committee will present a plan at the Earth Day meeting to save some of these trees.

It may not be that all trees on a street will be saved, but the hope is that enough trees can be saved that the streets can be a mix of trees – tall mature old elms providing shade and character and a variety of new young saplings planted that, in 30 years, will begin to provide the kind of benefit the older trees provide.

Celebrate Earth day by learning about Dutch Elm Disease and a new way of prevention:

SAVING OUR ELMS

EARTH DAY

Tuesday, April 22nd,
6:30 pm

McLure Place,
533 Greenwood Place
(just south of Portage)

“Preserving as many mature elm trees as possible allows newly planted trees to mature beneath a healthy canopy,” says McCarthy-Briggs.

“We encourage all who love these majestic trees to attend,” she explained. “As well as the plan to save trees on Wolseley and Westminster, you’ll also learn how you can protect elm tree on your property and street.”



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HEALTH

Wounds of racism in sport run deep: affecting families and generations

by Terese Taylor

In an intimate exploration of racism, a new documentary created in Winnipeg shows that incidents of racism don't just affect individual athletes, but the wounds of discrimination often affect the whole family.

Sidelined, The Colour of the Game launched at the Canadian human rights museum on March 22, with a panel discussion with Daria Jorquera Palmer, executive director of

the anti-racism in sport campaign (arisc) and director of the documentary, and athletes featured in the film.

As talented athletes have entered the sports world, even as youth, they have come face to face with name calling and physical gestures of disrespect, and often a dismissive attitude from competition hosts.

A Manitoba coach was stunned when one of her team

athletes was targeted throughout a final competition match, and the referees took no action.

The team decided on the approach they would take in



Celebrating the launch of Sidelined at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (above), director Daria Jorquera Palmer centre front, Front runner Patrick Bruyere shares a story on a panel discussion after the film was shown, along with (from left) Palmer, Benjamin Savea, Tina Savea, and Adinah Sheppard (below). Photos Terese Taylor



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the competition, to support each other and take a stand, but the experience was also devastating for the athlete's mother who had hoped that the behaviour would have ended in her own generation.

In another instance, a white father realized that the lack of diversity at the board level was hindering the awareness and focus on racist incidences in the organization, with incidents his daughter, a person of colour, was experiencing.

Patrick Bruyere received an apology for an official act of racism during the 1967 Winnipeg Pan Am Games 32 years after it happened (as documented in Run as One: The Journey of the Front Runners, available online). As Bruyere shared in the panel discussion of the film, he realized that the years living in Indian residential school caused depression and a sense of hopelessness, and had taught the front runners to not fight back.

"I might as well cry because I cried all through the film. For myself and my family. Now I'm calling meetings in our school district and trying

to get them to take cultural awareness training. You just need one big mouth, like me, to get it going," said Tina Savea, a Cree mother who now lives in BC. "This is just the beginning. I feel excited and very honoured to be a part of it."

Adinah Sheppard, a rising hockey star, said "intersectionality is a very important to acknowledge, its important for girls and boys to see."

Nigaan Sinclair hosted the discussion, sharing the story that the only time Wilton Littlechild, an Indigenous athlete renowned in both hockey and baseball, was allowed to speak his language at residential school was while playing hockey in school tournaments.

"We went to our community and asked who should we talk to," said Palmer, who worked on the project with the support of Immigration Partnership Winnipeg, and received funding from Heritage Canada. "What is happening in sport is a microcosm of society because of the attention paid to it. It feels great that we can amplify voices. We aren't just statistics, we are community, we are family."

● GREEN PARTY



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WinnipegCentreFederalGreenPartyAssociation

Authorized by the official agent for Gary Gervais



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Gary Gervais
Winnipeg Centre

**Building a better future for Canada
one bold step at a time**

Southern Chiefs Organization hopes to inspire gardening, and sports, language and cultural reclamation, in Healthy Living Campaign

by Terese Taylor

The Southern Chiefs Organization announced that it is investing in community programs to educate and inspire action to bring down an 11 year life expectancy gap in Indigenous communities.

Jerry Daniels, Grand Chief of the SCO announced a Healthy Living Campaign that will include sports and cultural camps throughout the summer, a gardening competition, and investment in the Manitoba Indigenous Games that have been revived this year after a ten year hiatus, in the host communities of Sagkeeng and Norway House. More than 4000 people are expected to attend the games.

Sagkeeng Chief EJ Fontaine announced that the games in August will host competitions for youth aged 14 and under and 16 and under in archery, athletics, basketball, ball hockey and golf and will demonstrate the sport of Lacrosse, an Indigenous game that has wained in Manitoba and been dom-

inated by the Mohawk in recent memory.

But Fontaine added that Manitoba communities have a strong history in Lacrosse, and he is hoping to stimulate a revival in the sport. "At one point we were known as a powerhouse all across Canada," said Fontaine, and shared that cultural teachings and connections with elders when he was a young man coming out of residential school and dealing with depression, were really important to set him on a positive path.

"It's only through investment in sports and recreation that we are going to steer our kids away from some of the drug problems and violence that we have in some of our communities. Our community is excited for the games, and we are cleaning up the community and making it beautiful," said Fontaine, "not only Sagkeeng, we are in partnership with Black River, Hollow Water and some of the Metis com-

munities."

The gardening competition will be promoted on social media, and is one way to support access across communities to fresh healthy produce that is often much more costly in rural and northern communities.

"A lot of government policies that came down were designed to eliminate our ways of living, and this investment will have a big impact on the community and get our people back on the land, said Fontaine, who remembers when he was young that everyone used to have a root cellar, to keep their garden produce, and hunting was more common.

"The Anishinabe and Dakota teachings are powerful," said Daniels, and almost 60% of people in the communities that were surveyed identified language and cultural immersion and preservation as a necessary for healthcare, including in hospitals.

The SCO is dedicating

100,000 towards summer basketball camps across communities, 100,000 towards cultural programming, and 1 million towards supporting athletes from SCO communities competing in the Canadian Indigenous games in Ottawa this summer.

"Manitoba has the highest rates of type two diabetes children in the world," said Assembly of First Nations

Manitoba Regional Chief Willie Moore. "Not in Canada, not in North America," he stressed, "in the world."

"Indigenous children have a rate 20 times higher than all other Manitoba children. The AFN fully supports this investment... there has been no increase in funding in the Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative since 2005," he said.

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Approved by the registered agent for the Animal Protection Party of Canada



Zine maps housing systems and dreams about West Broadway solutions

By Mike Maunder

A group of West Broadway / Wolseley housing advocates have created a short Zine – “Root Problems” – which uses a “systems-thinking” method to map housing issues in West Broadway, and to dream about possible solutions.

The process of creating the Zine was led by Maddie Mesich, who worked as a tenant support worker for West Broadway Development Corporation two years ago, and who is now studying systems-thinking and other urban processes at university in Madrid, Spain. She was back home at Christmas and led a couple of workshops in the process, and continues to lead sessions over Zoom.

“Systems-thinking” is a method in which issues are broken down into a sequence of factors, represented graphically in a loop of inter-connected factors. Factor # 1 affects Factor # 2 and on, until four or more factors form the

“systems loop” that begins again at the beginning. Loops can show how things continue to get worse, or get better, or stagnate (ie: keep from getting better) or stabilize (ie: keep from getting worse.)

For instance one loop in the Zine shows how landlords can use upgrades to raise rents. The raised rent is factor #1. It leads to low-income tenants moving out, factor #2. This leads to more high-income tenants moving in (factor #3). This leads to a better commercial atmosphere, more “hipster” businesses and higher desirability of the neighbourhood (Factors # 4 and 5). These lead to apartments becoming more valued and landlords raising rents (Factor # 1 repeated). And so on, in a loop that shows how rents keep going up.

Those working on the Zine created a wide variety of loops culminating in a West Broadway systems map that showed many housing issues

including: neglected repairs, un-needed upgrades, the province’s inadequate and reactive rent control mechanisms, the role of police, the decline in systems of care, quality of life and the difficulties of preserving nature in areas of high density.

Using systems-thinking to highlight the problems, the Zine then encouraged its creators to “dream” about possible solutions. As an example, one loop in the Zine showed how “Rent Assist” helps tenants by topping up their rents, but, in reality, this keeps rents high and puts public money into the pockets of private landlords. Instead, the Zine creators dreamed of public money going into high quality, good homes for everyone in the community by supporting construction of public housing, non-profit housing and co-ops. “These are ways our money can go directly to providing us with good housing, instead of

going into the pockets of landlords,” explains the Zine.

Copies of the Zine are available from the West Broad-

way Tenants Committee, which is housed at West Broadway Community Organization, 748 Broadway.

Creators of “Root Problems” included (left to right) Anny Chen (front), Amanda Emms, Rebecca Hume, Alexandra Caporale, Josie Penner, Marianne Cerilli, Maddie Mesich, and Leslie Scott.

(Below) Maddie Mesich explains a “systems loop” at December workshop into systems-thinking.



DISABILITY ACTIVISTS from page 1

Federal funding for new housing has taken off, however disability organizations have been disappointed at a lack of inclusion, and regulation of accessible design, including support for people to be able to age in place.

Community conversations need to continue about barriers to accessibility and disability, and a general lack of enforcement at the federal level, said Graham.

A similar sentiment has emerged about the section of the ACA meant to address the

distressing experiences many disabled people have faced when trying to travel by air, with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance stating that the ACA’s laws “unfairly depend too heavily on air passengers with disabilities to be private accessibility cops.”

The Canada Disabilities Benefit Act (CDBA) was a grassroots initiative called for by a lot of groups throughout the country to support working age people with disabilities, says Graham, but is “not getting to the people who need

it the most.” The process to apply for the benefit can be incredibly onerous, the benefit amount is quite small, and many low income people will not qualify based on their income, explains Graham.

“They could have structured it in a much better way,” she says, tying the benefit to social assistance, or creating a basic income for eligible persons.

In Manitoba, eligibility for Jordan’s Principle funding on First Nations has become uncertain, “making people vulnerable if they don’t know if

their funding will continue,” said Graham.

Federal funding for new housing has taken off, however disability organizations have been disappointed at a lack of inclusion, and regulation of accessible design, including support for people to be able to age in place.

Community conversations need to continue about barriers to accessibility and disability, and a general lack of enforcement at the federal level, said Graham.

“There are a lot of areas where the disability com-

munity worked with the Trudeau government very, very hard to improve accessibility and a lot of us are nervous that because there is a pivot to focus on everything Trump does, we may lose some of that momentum,” emphasizes Graham.

The event will be held on Tuesday, April 8th from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Church on 603 Wellington Crescent in Winnipeg.

THEATRE

Weekly co-working drop-in pilot at R.A. Steen

In Wolseley, says Buffy Davey, many people, like her, are working from their home. The flexibility has lots of benefits that people sometimes need, she says, but working in isolation may be causing mental health and other social issues.

"Work isn't just work," explains Davey, who works as a consultant independently. "Work is where we spend a third of our lives. It's a whole segment of our lives."

Davey approached other people in the community she knew were also working from home (almost every second home, she noted), and quickly discovered that other people were craving what she hoped to create: a common working space where they could work alongside others, and get some of the benefits of social inter-

actions that happen in them.

When she talked with Joel Fingard, manager of R A Steen Community Centre, they agreed to launch a pilot project to see how much interest there is, and how a shared workspace could function at the community centre.

The program will cost \$5 per drop-in, but if it goes well, Davey is hoping that there may be funds that the community centre can access to cover the costs of the program, or bring its costs down.

The second floor at the centre will have desk space and chairs, "has great wifi," and is a bright room with lots of sunlight and a great view, says Davey.

The first weekly drop-in will start Thursday April 10. More info at www.robertasteencc.ca

'I learned my lesson!'

"The women who raised me instilled deep values and an unshakeable sense of humour," says playwright Keith Barker

Every mother hopes in those moments of having to capture the attention of your child and inform them that something different needs doing, that they will look back and see the mixture of love, and admiration that goes with the consternation behind it.

In Prairie Theatre Exchange's last show of the 2024-2025 season, the solo show *Raised by Women* is an exploration of the intense relationship between mothers and sons, and the truly safe space that Metis playwright Keith Barker existed in growing up.

There is no soft landing in the part of the play performed for the media call; Barker doesn't get to do what he had planned, and lets his mother know exactly what he thinks of that. But those are foundational moments that Barker does now look back at with admiration and respect.

"That's something I learned by making a really big

mistake and being taught by my mom. She taught me to see myself in other people, and to look at how we treat people," he says. "I tell people that empathy is a learned behaviour."

At this particular moment in history, with a seeming lack of empathy circulating around the world, *Raised By Women* may have some interesting points to make.

"I was raised in an beautiful and honest and loving way, to be kind and respect people, but you are seeing other things in the world," says Barker. "Like what does it to be a man and be vulnerable? I was around other boys and the

women in my life kind of kept going, whoa, don't do that, - or that's wrong."

Barker says that he learned a lot "in kitchens. I lived around my aunties and my cousins and all the women around me all did everything. There was no inequality in that space," he recalls. His mom played baseball, and his sisters became scientists. "Women could do anything" at the time, he says.

But with women's rights being "scrubbed," especially down south, says Barker, it's really important to bring that recognition to the women and mothers in our lives. *Raised By Women* runs until April 13.



Keith Barker shares the secret to a

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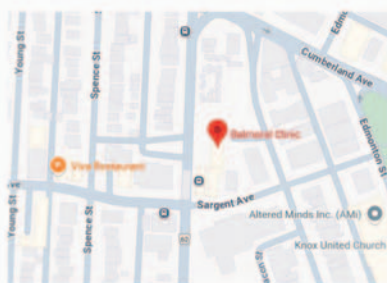
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