

# *Mill Woods* **Mosaic**

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The Multicultural Voice of Edmonton Southeast

Independent • Non-partisan • Interdenominational

## This month:

### Pandemic brain

Have you ever heard of the phrase "pandemic brain"? Crisanta Sampang explains.

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### We are entitled, but ...

We are entitled to our opinions, but we must rely on facts, says Ron Kuban in his latest column.

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### Civil Society



21 civil society organizations will benefit from \$7 million in provincial funding to support community recovery from COVID-19.

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### Origami brings hope

A paper crane campaign has lifted the spirits of staff and patients at local hospitals during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Origami is the art of paper folding, which is often associated with Japanese culture. Members of the Edmonton Japanese Community Association folded more than 5,000 cranes for hospitals. See page 9 for story. Photo: Families and children from the Edmonton Japanese Community Association enjoyed making the origami cranes.

Photo: Covenant Health

## New pathway for temporary workers and international graduates

On April 14, Marco Mendicino, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, announced an innovative pathway to permanent residence for over 90,000 essential workers and international graduates who are actively contributing to Canada's economy.

These special public policies will grant permanent status to temporary workers and international graduates who are already in Canada and who possess the skills and experience we need to fight the pandemic and accelerate our economic recovery.

The focus of this new pathway will be on temporary workers employed in our hospitals and long-term care homes and on the frontlines of other essential sectors, as well as international graduates who are driving the economy of tomorrow.

To be eligible, workers must have at least one year of Canadian work experience in a health-care profession or another pre-approved essential occupation. International graduates must have completed an eligible Canadian post-secondary program within the last four years, and no earlier than January 2017.

Effective May 6, 2021, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) will begin accepting applications under the following three streams:

- 20,000 applications for temporary workers in health care
- 30,000 applications for temporary workers in other selected essential occupations
- 40,000 applications for international students who graduated from a Canadian

institution

The streams will remain open until November 5, 2021, or until they have reached their limit. Up to 90,000 new permanent residents will be admitted under these three streams.

To promote Canada's official languages, three additional streams with no intake caps have also been launched for French-speaking or bilingual candidates. Communities across Canada benefit from French-speaking and bilingual newcomers, and this pathway will contribute to the vitality of these Francophone minority communities.

As we continue the fight against the pandemic, immigration will remain critical to our economic recovery by addressing labour shortages and adding growth to our workforce, said Minister Mendicino.

With an accelerated pathway to permanent residency, these special public policies will encourage essential temporary workers and international graduates to put down roots in Canada and help us retain the talented workers we need, particularly in our health-care system.

"The pandemic has shone a bright light on the incredible contributions of newcomers," said Minister Mendicino. "These new policies will help those with a temporary status to plan their future in Canada, play a key role in our economic recovery and help us build back better. Our message to them is simple: your status may be temporary, but your contributions are lasting—and we want you to stay."

### Quick facts

- These public policies apply to workers in 40 health-care occupations, as well as 95 other essential jobs across a range of fields, like caregiving and food production and distribution.

- These policies build on significant steps that we've already taken to help those here temporarily stay permanently, including new measures to ensure that international students don't miss out on opportunities due to the pandemic and the largest draw in the history of the Express Entry system.

- Graduates and workers must have proficiency in one of Canada's official languages; meet general admissibility requirements; and be present, authorized to work and working in Canada at the time of their application to qualify.

- Immigration is essential to the vitality of Francophone communities across Canada, which is why these policies include dedicated spaces for French-speaking or bilingual candidates, and no limit on applications for them.

- Canada faces serious demographic challenges. In 1971, there were 6.6 people of working age for each senior. Today, there are 3—and by 2035 there will be only 2. Without newcomers, future generations will end up paying more to sustain the public services we rely on.

- According to Statistics Canada (January 2021), immigrants who previously held a work permit often report higher wages one year after becoming permanent residents.





## Happy Vaisakhi!

The Member of Parliament for Edmonton-Mill Woods, Tim Uppal, stood up in the House of Commons on April 14 on the occasion of Vaisakhi which is celebrated by Sikhs in Canada and around the world this month. Uppal used the opportunity to recognize the generations of Sikhs who have contributed to building Canada. Vaisakhi is known as the harvest festival of Punjab. It is celebrated by people across religions and has religious significance for the Sikhs, marking the beginning of the Sikh New Year.

Photo: Member of Parliament Tim Uppal (centre, back) celebrated Vaisakhi with his family.

Photo: Office of the Member of Parliament for Edmonton-Mill Woods

## Nominate a star volunteer

Nominations are open for the Stars of Alberta Volunteer Awards recognizing those making a lasting impact in their communities.

"Volunteers are the driving force behind the recreational, social and cultural programs that make our communities great," said Leela Sharon Aheer, Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women. "During these challenging times, it is more important than ever to recognize volunteers helping Albertans stay connected and feel supported. Please show your support for our extraordinary volunteers and their life-changing work by nominating them for a Stars of Alberta Volunteer Award."

The Stars of Alberta awards highlight and pay tribute to volunteers who give their time, energy and skills to make a difference in the lives of Albertans. Two awards are given in each of the following categories: Youth (up to 24 years of age), Adult, and Senior.

In addition, the Breaking Barriers category recognizes exceptional volunteers who are working to create

communities that are diverse and inclusive. Three awards are presented in this category to individuals who are addressing racism, advocating for LG BTQ2S+ inclusion and fighting gender discrimination in their communities.

The awards are part of the government's commitment to recognize the contributions of Alberta's volunteers, and is celebrated annually on or around International Volunteer Day on Dec. 5. Since the inception of the Stars of Alberta Volunteer Awards in 2000, 136 volunteers from across the province have been honoured.

Albertans are encouraged to submit nominations online. The deadline for nominations is Sept. 15.

Volunteers are the foundation for many community organizations providing recreational, social and cultural programs. Alberta has more than 26,400 non-profit organizations and, each year, more than 1.6 million Albertans provide more than 262 million volunteer hours to support the non-profit and voluntary sector at a value of \$5.6 billion.

## Close to home

After more than one year of COVID-19, the pandemic has hit home. My wife's sister died on April 8 after contracting the virus in Mandaluyong which is part of Metro Manila in the Philippines. She was only 67 years old.

This sad news has hit my wife Susan quite hard, not only because it was her only sister but also because she was not able to be there for her when she was sick. We helped the family financially, but Susan was not able to be at her sister's side in her final days, because she could not travel to the Philippines.

Since we received the devastating news, Susan has spent many hours crying and talking by phone with members of the family and friends. This communication helped her with her grieving, but it was very stressful, because she had to relive this sad experience over and over again.

It was heart-breaking to hear the sister on the phone gasping for air before she died.

This reminded me of the time when I lost my mother and my only brother within ten days 22 years ago. Like Susan, I was not able to be with my loved ones during their final hours, because they lived in Germany. It took me three weeks of mourning

until I was able to return to work, because I was physically and mentally drained.

But my mother, who had her share of hardship in her life, always said, "Work is the best medicine", and she was right. It is important to take time for mourning, but it is equally important to find closure and move on with life. But this, of course, is easier said than done during the pandemic. When we lose a loved one now, we can't even have a proper funeral, because there are so many restrictions.

But the good news is that my wife and I are already vaccinated. Susan received her second shot two days after her sister died, and I am waiting for an appointment for my second shot.

The fight against COVID-19 is now a race between vaccinations and the spread of the new variants of the virus. To win this race, all of us have to continue doing our part: stay at home as much as we can, don't gather with other people, wear masks, and keep a safe distance to slow the spread of the virus.



Anish Jooz





## Alberta's new curriculum is shockingly regressive and inept

The UCP-led provincial government has released their proposed new elementary curriculum, and progressive advocacy organization Public Interest Alberta joins scores of education activists and advocates to ring the alarm about this astonishingly regressive development – so inept that passages of the Grade 2 curriculum appearing to have been lifted straight from Wikipedia.

Terry Price, president of Public Interest Alberta and former President of the Canadian Teachers' Federation, stressed how damaging the proposed changes would be to the quality of public education in Alberta.

"In my former role, I was pleased to speak with leaders in educational innovation and research around the world. It was apparent that the Alberta Curriculum of Studies had achieved exceptional standing world-wide," said Price. "Yet, with this singular and utterly misguided document, Alberta under this UCP government has completed its rapid transition from an international leader in curriculum for our elementary and secondary schools, to a laughingstock – except that it is no laughing matter."

"Alberta's proposed new elementary curriculum is remarkable in how thoroughly it gets almost everything wrong – including how children learn, the education they will need in our changing world, the role of facts and ideas, the need for critical thinking,



**Terry Price**

Photo: Public Interest Alberta

and what is appropriate for younger children and their learning," added Price.

Price illustrated how this appalling proposal falls in line with the United Conservative Party's track record of backwards-looking policy.

"This attack on our education system is entirely consistent with the UCP's

regressive approach to all aspects of government: trying to revive the coal industry in the face of the climate emergency, relentlessly undermining public services and promoting privatization, cutting corporate taxes which further enrich the wealthy, and making massive cuts to our post-secondary system," said Price.

Price called on concerned citizens and advocates to demand the immediate withdrawal of the proposal.

"The curriculum proposal has been a disaster from top to bottom," said Price. "Two things must happen. First - This government must withdraw this document and start again. Second, Minister LaGrange has utterly failed in her duties and should immediately resign or be dismissed."

A grassroots-organized day of action took place on Tuesday, April 6 at various locations. Socially-distanced rallies and events were held in Edmonton at the Legislature grounds, and in Red Deer outside of Minister LaGrange's office.

*Public Interest Alberta is a non-profit, non-partisan, province-wide organization focused on education and advocacy on public interest issues. PIA exists to foster an understanding of the importance of public spaces, services and institutions in Albertans' lives, and to build a network of people and organizations committed to advancing the public interest.*

Website: [www.pialberta.org](http://www.pialberta.org)



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## Mill Woods Mosaic

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The Mill Woods Mosaic publishes a variety of opinions.  
Unsigned editorials express the view of the publisher.  
Signed pieces express the views of the writers only.

## Our Opinion

### What a waste!

The City of Edmonton has a new garbage collection system. Earlier this month, the City started distributing new waste collection carts to all single unit and some multi-unit homes. Every household has received two garbage carts, a green one for food scraps, and a black one for other garbage, and a new collection schedule. The food scraps cart will be collected weekly from spring to fall, and every two weeks in the winter, and the garbage cart will be collected every two weeks year-round. Recyclable items, like plastic containers, cardboard boxes, newspapers and bottles, will be collected in blue bags all year round on a weekly basis, and yard waste, like leaves and grass, will be collected twice in spring and twice in fall in clear plastic bags or double-ply paper yard waste bags and/or bundles wrapped in biodegradable twine.

The new system will be easier for the garbage collectors, because they don't have to lift heavy garbage cans and bags anymore, but for homeowners it will be more work, because they have to sort their garbage before it is picked up, and it will cost them more, because each customer's monthly waste utility rate will be "adjusted."

For more information about the new system, visit the City's website at [www.edmonton.ca/waste](http://www.edmonton.ca/waste).



Homeowners in Edmonton are receiving new garbage carts which can be rolled to the curb, and customers have to sort their garbage before it is picked up. Meanwhile, school boards in Alberta are reviewing a new curriculum for elementary students to determine if it is worth the paper it is printed on, or if it should be recycled.

Cartoon by Susan Moshynski ([www.bythebay.squarespace.com](http://www.bythebay.squarespace.com))

## Getting a pandemic brain, on top of everything else

Ever heard of the phrase *pandemic brain*? Neither have I, until I read a story titled *We Have All Hit the Wall* in the *New York Times*. Written by Sarah Lyall, it came out about two weeks ago, a year after the Covid-19 was declared a world epidemic, and non-essential workers were cautioned to stay home to avoid getting infected.

The Covid-19 has since influenced every aspect of modern life as we knew it: Businesses closed, schools went online, economies suffered, public travel was restricted, more people went hungry, and millions died from the virus. The world limps along with no immediate end in sight. I didn't realize how the whole thing affected me until I read Lyall's story.

Sarah Lyall wrote about her current lack of inspiration and productivity, coupled with a much-slowed memory function. "I spent half an hour struggling to retrieve a word from the faulty memory system that has replaced my pre-pandemic brain."

Lyall did some research on the subject and discovered that she wasn't alone. "Sitting in the same room staring at the same computer for 12 straight months has left many of us feeling like burned-out husks, dim-witted approximations of our once productive selves."

I recognized the symptoms. I've been actually feeling a lot like that lately.

Six months into the Covid-19-related lockdowns and restrictions, I still remember being cheerful and engaged, and doing my writing every day. I read about people slowly losing their sanity being cooped up at home day after day,

**Crisanta Sampang**

**On  
Second  
Thought**



fighting with family members, or turning to drink to relieve their boredom and lack of freedom. I felt good that my husband and I were emotionally doing OK at that point, and told him so. Daniel said, it was because we were both self-employed and used to working from home day after day.

As the months came and went, however, I started feeling uninspired and my productivity went down considerably. My allergies came back with a vengeance. I've been spending a lot of time reading in bed and not doing much else. My excuse was that the gyms were closed. I didn't even enjoy

driving anymore.

I had been reading an amazing book called *Fantasyland: How America Went Haywire* by Kurt Andersen, and was totally enjoying it until I discovered Internet novels. I put down my Andersen book and went crazy over fictional werewolves. Daniel wasn't impressed. He compared reading internet fiction to eating baby food.

Lately, whenever Daniel turned to me in search of a word he needed, I usually respond with an empty stare, then take a minute to consider his question, before saying, "I'll get back to you." I used to know the word but have forgotten what it was.

Reading Sarah Lyall's story somehow comforted and reassured me, knowing that I was not alone. I'm not suffering an early onset of memory loss. There's a world of other people out there who, like me and Ms. Lyall, have been feeling the same pain. This fact is supported by a bunch of new research that proved stress and lack of activity can dull people's thinking.

Daniel says it doesn't have to be that way. There are lots of interesting things a person can do at home to stay mentally active. As proof, he dug up his collection of picture slides - thousands of them - from his decades of travel and work as a writer/photographer. He sorted them, labelled them,

culled those he didn't want, then dusted and scanned the rest one by one. Then he created a story book from a bunch of photos. He wrote the text and I did the layout. It turned out quite good, if I may say so myself. That got me out of my funk for a while.

But nothing much has changed since. I still need to find more interesting activities to keep my poor brain engaged. Covid-19 isn't going anywhere soon.

First confirmed in Canada January 27, 2020, the pandemic has shown no signs of slowing down a year later. Word has it that a third wave is coming, bringing with it new variants of the Covid virus, variants that spread faster and are harder to control.

Please, I encourage everybody, be careful. Avoid crowds. Wear those masks. Get vaccinated. Stay home when you can. Read good books. Exercise regularly. Work on improving that flagging memory.

We don't need a pandemic brain on top of everything else.

*Crisanta Sampang is a Filipino-Canadian author and filmmaker who is living in Vancouver, B.C. She wrote the book Maid in Singapore in which she describes her experience working as a nanny.*



## We are entitled to our opinions, however ...

Every so often, something completely ordinary can trigger a profound thought, where a belief which has been contemplated at length, suddenly becomes fully formulated. That was my experience recently, during a frustrating phone conversation with a loved but distant relative. It got me thinking that people should seriously consider placing boundaries around the often-expressed notion of everyone being "entitled to their opinion." Allow me to explain this notion, by first placing it in perspective.

My relative and I were chatting about family affairs, then ended up talking about health issues and national affairs. It quickly became apparent that I was talking to someone who firmly believed in conspiracy theories – the evil doings of powerful people or organizations, and the current "global hoax" of COVID-19. During our discussion, I was repeatedly chastised for being ill-informed; I was told that because the stated predictions would be proven in time, I simply needed to accept these theories and prepare for society's inevitable collapse.

Despite my requests for any evidence or the basis of the proffered ideas, none was presented other than further repetitions of these strongly-held opinions. Evidence presented by me was waved off with "you will see". World events, I was told, were being manipulated by those who conspire the demise of the common people. Accordingly, we are being "taken for a ride", intended to reduce us to servants of the mighty.

Such a discussion, between two relatives or even two friends, could become frustrating for one or both individuals; or, just as easily, it could end rather harmlessly when both parties agree to disagree. However, when it unfolds as part of a public discourse

- on social and the news media, or the political arena - the matter becomes more complex and significantly troublesome.

**Ron Kuban**

**Time Passages**



Consider for a moment, part one of the Oxford dictionary definition of an opinion: "A view or judgement formed about something, not necessarily based on fact or knowledge". This part is straight forward, logical, and appropriate. One can easily understand and support the often-made claim "I am entitled to my opinion". It empowers each of us to think for ourselves, and then communicate our own thoughts, feelings, and expectations. No one else can communicate these better than each of us speaking for and about ourselves.

As one would expect, opinions are profoundly subjective and often unpredictable, until they are expressed. The problem appears when opinions unsupported by facts become the basis of any meaningful discourse. In fact, the more weight given to a topic, the less relevant opinions become in its analysis. In some quirky sense, I am reminded of an old off-color joke that asks "what is the similarity between an opinion and a rectum?" Answer: "Everyone has one".

The difficulty with the "it is my opinion, and I am entitled to it" argument is

that, on its own, an opinion is completely indefensible beyond the person expressing it. Furthermore, most opinions are typically unsupported by facts.

Facts are commonly understood as elements which have an actual existence, specific occurrence, or objective reality. Facts are accepted as real because they are provable or confirmed through our five senses, scientific analysis, or rational reasoning. When put through these tests, opinions may well become less subjective and more objective. As such they better serve in the making of decisions on matters that carry significant or collective consequence.

Think of legal or scientific opinions as prime examples. While they are still considered "opinions", they nevertheless represent the second element of the Oxford dictionary definition of an opinion, as "a statement of advice by an expert on a professional matter". The word "expert" is critically important; it necessitates the presenter of this type of opinion to be learned or informed, reasonably experienced in the matter under discussion, and able to provide a rational argument to construct, then defend the professed opinion.

People who shore-up their position over matters that seriously affect others, with only "it is my opinion and I have a right to it," discredit their credibility. All too often, their statement

serves as an escape mechanism from the trap, created by their inability to defend with facts their proffered opinion. Instead, their entrenched position leads them to protect, and even reinforce, opinions that they should have reviewed, revised, or abandoned.

The fundamental travesty in all of this becomes evident in public discussions about questions concerning public policy or action. My point is that such discussions (e.g., on health, education, or national security), are best argued by those who rely on facts, not on opinions or personal preferences. Fact-based discussions, even debates, help us to better understand problems and produce more refined solutions.

Unfortunately, public debate which rightly seeks balanced presentation, pits the combined opinions of experts and non-experts, as if the two are equally credible. This simple and seemingly attractive approach, presents a false sense of equivalence. There is no meaningful debate when the facts and the objective arguments of experts, are countered by the subjective opinions of those whose basic argument is "I have a right to my opinion" or "I don't like what you are suggesting".

We are clearly entitled to our opinion. However, when it comes to dialogue on public issues, we must rely on facts and seek defensible arguments to guide our actions.

*Dr. Ron Kuban is a long-term community volunteer and activist.*

### Letters to the editor welcome

We invite you to write letters to the editor. A maximum of 275 words is preferred. Letters must carry a first name or two initials with surname, and include an address and daytime telephone number. All letters are subject to editing. We don't publish letters addressed to others or sent to other publications. Send to: The Editor of the Mill Woods Mosaic, mwmosaic@telus.net.

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## Have your say on new curriculum

### Edmonton Catholic Schools Trustee Laura Thibert

Spring brings a message of hope and, as Catholics, our faith centers on hope. Winter's harsh, cold days have given way to sun and warmth, and Good Friday has passed to Easter. We are an Easter people! We live in a resurrection life reflected in the new life springing up around us. We thank God for the hope and renewal that He brings to our world and to our hearts and lives.

We are pleased to announce that Edmonton Catholic Schools (ECS) will be consolidating all its departments, with the exception of Facility Services, to one central location! This will ensure that maximum education dollars will be directed to schools and classrooms rather than to support old and inefficient infrastructure. ECS has purchased the building known as the 50th Street Atria (9405 – 50 Street), which will bring together more than 300 Division employees under one roof, reducing our administrative physical footprint by 12 per cent. The purchase, which uses only Capital Reserves, will see us saving over a million dollars a year in operational and maintenance expenses.

The Alberta government has released the new draft kindergarten to grade six cur-

riculum. The new curriculum is founded on four key learning themes: literacy, numeracy, citizenship and practical skills. ECS will be engaging our teachers, administration, Council of Elders and other stakeholders before providing feedback to the government. The Government is seeking feedback and now is the time

for you to provide your input! You can find the survey on the government of Alberta website: <https://www.alberta.ca/curriculum-have-your-say.aspx>.

I hope that you and your family enjoyed an Easter season filled with joy. Even in these times of uncertainty, may we let the world know more than ever that Christ is risen! Together we must continue to focus on being diligent and look out for one another so one day we can gather together again in celebrating Catholic education

and all the joy it brings to our common home!

I encourage open communication and welcome your input on educational matters. You can reach me at 780-231-6312 or [laura.thibert@ecsd.net](mailto:laura.thibert@ecsd.net). You can also connect with me on Facebook and Twitter @Laura Thibert.

[www.ecsd.net](http://www.ecsd.net)



Trustee Laura Thibert



## Two Michaels and "Trials" in China

By David Kilgour,  
Clive Ansley & Peter Lamont

The sordid prison experience of Canada's two Michaels during more than 800 days in custody illustrate well why the rule of law and independent judges/prosecutors are essential to good governance.

In the immediate aftermath of Meng Wanzhou's arrest on an American government extradition application, both Michaels were arrested in China for allegedly stealing state secrets.

Some ask whether Kovrig and Spavor were tortured. Torture in China's "judicial" system is described by leading human rights organizations as "routine", "endemic", and "systemic", but the Chinese Communist Party's ("CCP") medieval torture equipment has likely not been applied to these two accused. On the other hand, many who are familiar with Chinese prison and detention centre conditions say incarceration in a Chinese prison is torture in and of itself.

Last week's secret two-hour trial of Michael Spavor occurred suddenly in Dandong near North Korea. No foreign diplomat, including Canada's, was allowed to enter the court. Precisely the same phenomenon has now occurred at the trial of Michael Kovrig in Beijing.

Why were the court hearings for the two Michaels so brief?

The hearings only appear brief to some of us because we expected a typical Chinese "show trial", televised

and theatrical, with great pains to disguise a Chinese "court" as one similar to those in countries with genuine judicial systems. We anticipated a spectacle similar to that of the Chinese tribunal which sentenced Canadian Robert Schellenberg to death in 2020. Once it becomes clear that for rea-

Court's CCP drives the agenda. The Adjudication Committee meets in secret and hears the recommendation of the presiding trial judge. The prosecutor is often present, but nobody represents the accused. The Committee may also hear privately from any party/state officials.

The Adjudication Committee instructs the three trial judges who then reconvene the "Court" and solemnly pronounce the Committee decision as their own, whether they agree with that decision or not. The trial itself is reduced to theatre (assuming it has been one of the rare open cases), with the actual decision making performed by a faceless committee in a back room.

China's Criminal Procedure Law explicitly requires all trials to be public, unless they involve "State Secrets", but in almost every instance, the trial is in fact closed because of "State Secrets". Any information disclosed by any criminal investigation is treated as a "State Secret". Moreover, it is difficult to find a judge with a deep interest in the wording of statutes.

Chinese judges are classified as civil servants in China's Civil Service Law. A Chinese "court" is simply a low-level administrative organ of the CCP.

Canadian opinion appears firm about trends in China. According to Nanos Research in early March, 61 per cent of us supported and 22 per cent somewhat supported the House of Commons motion last month declaring that the government of China was committing genocide against the

Muslim minority Uyghurs. Fully 51 per cent of us favour and 19 somewhat favour seeking to relocate the 2022 Winter Olympics away from Beijing.

We should heed the concluding paragraph in the judgement of the London Tribunal on forced organ harvesting from non-consenting donors in China:

"...any who interact in any substantial way with the PRC including: Doctors and medical institutions; Industry, and businesses, most specifically airlines, travel companies, financial services businesses, law firms and pharmaceutical and insurance companies together with individual tourists; Educational establishments; Arts establishments...; should now recognise that they are interacting with a criminal state."

**This article was first published by the New Delhi Times.**

*David Kilgour, a lawyer by profession, served in Canada's House of Commons for almost 27 years, representing southeast Edmonton. He was Secretary of State for Africa and Latin America and Asia-Pacific. He is the author of several books and co-author with David Matas of Bloody Harvest: The Killing of Falun Gong for Their Organs.*

*Clive Ansley is a lawyer who practised law in Shanghai for 14 years and then in Taiwan and British Columbia.*

*Peter Lamont worked for the federal justice department in Edmonton, studied law in China, and was later a military judge in Ottawa.*

*Both lived in Mill Woods when they resided in Edmonton.*

**David  
Kilgour**

**A Canadian  
View on  
World Events**



sons known only to its leaders the CCP has eschewed the opportunity for major theatre, then these trials do not appear brief by Chinese standards. Indeed, two hours could be deemed lengthy by the CCP trial standards. Complicated cases often require no more than half an hour of "court" time. The general rule is that Chinese judges try to finish before lunch.

A saying known to every Chinese litigation lawyer is: "Those who make the judgements have not heard the case; those who hear the case don't make the judgement." Chinese "courts" at all levels include an internal and invisible Adjudication Committee, consisting of the Court President and several other judges. The Secretary (Chairman) of the

### Letters to the editor are welcome

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## Immigration Law Explained: What is Implied or Maintained Status?

Temporary residents who submit an extension application before the expiry of their current status are permitted by law (Regulation 183(5) of Canada's Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations) to remain in Canada with valid temporary resident status while they await the processing of their extension application.

Similarly, IRPR R186(u) and R189 provide that applicants who have submitted in-Canada renewals of existing work permits and study permits will be permitted to continue to work or study, as applicable, under the terms of their previous permits until their work permit or study permit renewal applications are processed and so long as they remain in Canada.

The ability to remain in Canada and continue to work or study while awaiting the processing of your extension application has been commonly referred to as "implied status" though Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) has recently indicated that they will now be using the term "maintained status" instead.

As an example of this principle, if an foreign worker has a work permit that is currently valid, and submits an in-Canada work permit extension application prior to the work permit's expiry date, he or she would automatically receive the ability to remain in Canada and to continue to work pursuant to the terms of the previous work permit.

If the previous work permit was specific to a certain employer, occupation or location, the worker would continue to be required to work pursuant to those conditions while waiting for the extension application to be processed; for example, an individual with an employer-specific work permit who submits a renewal application (which might be an application for a work permit authorizing work with a different employer) would only be permitted to work for the employer specified on

their current work permit while they wait for their new permit to be processed.

Where an individual legally has the ability to continue working while awaiting the processing of their renewal application, a common problem that

that time. For those work permit extension applications that happen to take longer than 120 days to process, the individual would still have authorization to work pursuant to law but would have to request further proof of continued work authorization from IRCC via a web form.

These automatically generated letters are a positive development which will reassure employers by allowing them to receive and review official documentation of their workers' continued authorization to work.

As IRCC's online system will only generate a letter confirming ongoing work authorization if the work permit extension application was submitted prior to the expiry of the applicant's previous work permit, it is very important that applicants understand the exact filing deadline so that they can make sure that they file on time.

IRCC has recently clarified the exact deadline that must be met for electronically submitted renewal applications to be considered on time. According to a new Program Delivery Update posted on April 8, 2021, an electronic application must be submitted by midnight Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) on the date of the previous permit's expiry for it to be considered to be filed on time. It is very important to

note that Coordinated Universal Time might be 6 or 7 hours ahead of local Edmonton time, depending on whether daylight saving time is in effect – so last-minute applicants must recognize that the actual submission deadline may actually be 7 hours earlier than expected.

"Implied" or "maintained" status and the continued authorization to work or study pending a renewal application can be very important concepts to understand when contemplating an individual's immigration plan. While a basic outline of these concepts is provided above, there are often exceptions or subtle nuances that apply and readers may wish to consult with an experienced immigration lawyer for assistance.

*Nathan Po is a partner at McCuaig Desrochers LLP, a general practice law firm with Edmonton's largest group of immigration lawyers (www.mccuaig.com). This article is intended to provide general information only and should not be relied on as legal advice or opinion.*

**Nathan  
A. Po**

**Immigration  
Lawyer  
in  
Edmonton**



arose was that their employer would be hesitant to continue employing them because they no longer had a valid work permit and they didn't have any other official document that confirmed their continued authorization to work.

Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) has recently taken steps to address this issue. Since October 20, 2020, when an online work permit extension application is filed in a timely fashion, a letter will be automatically sent to the applicant through their online portal that confirms that their authorization to work has been extended for an additional 120 days or until a final decision is made – whichever is first. IRCC chose to specify a 120 day period for the automatic extension because they found that employers and other stakeholders would be more likely to accept a definite period of time as opposed to an unknown period of time such as "until a final decision is made" and because 90% of work permit applications are generally finalized within

### Letters to the editor are welcome

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# Paper crane campaigns lift spirit of staff and patients during COVID-19

By Brenton Driedger

Gagan Gill's eureka moment came one night as she was doing origami at home.

As she flipped through the pages of her instruction booklet, she discovered a design for an origami crane. It reminded her of how fellow students in her high school had made 1,000 cranes for a teacher whose wife had a terminal illness.

"The things that it symbolizes are peace, hope, love, and it's given to people who are sick, and it's a wish for hope. It's a wish for health," says Gagan, 23. "And instantly, I just thought, 'Oh my goodness, wouldn't this be such a great gift to give to people who are struggling with COVID?'"

Prior to the pandemic, Gagan would visit patients at the Misericordia Community Hospital for two hours each week. She missed being with the patients and thought receiving origami cranes might lift their spirits. That same night, she sent Misericordia volunteer coordinator Espie Alvez a "massive email" proposal. And on Easter Sunday, her idea will culminate with the delivery of more than 5,000 cranes to patients and staff at the Misericordia and Villa Caritas as well as several long-term care homes.

The tradition of 1,000 cranes has become well known because of the story of a Japanese girl, Sadako Sasaki, who developed leukemia after being exposed to radiation from the atomic bombing at Hiroshima. During her time in hospital, she folded hundreds of origami cranes. Today, the cranes remain a symbol of peace and are a common sight at Hiroshima memorials. Friends and family will often make 1,000 cranes for a loved one who is ill to wish for their recovery and health.

As Espie began asking other volunteers to participate, she worried that making 1,000 cranes might be a challenge.

"We started by trying to make the origami cranes, and I can tell you I'm all thumbs! So the first origami crane that I made really looked terrible."

Espie also invited local schools to participate and approached the Edmonton Japanese Community Association. Sanae Ohki, an association director who looks after cultural programs, shared the request with members.

"It's a good way for us to wish patients hope, peace and wellness," says Sanae. "By making origami cranes, we can encourage these people that we are here and that we are thinking about you."

Espie and Gagan's goal of reaching 1,000 cranes was quickly met. By the time all the cranes were received in mid-March, hospital volunteers alone had submitted about 1,200. Gagan and her friends and family had made about 1,000 and the Edmonton Japanese Community Association had contributed nearly 3,600.

"When we gathered everything together, we had more than 5,000 cranes. We could not count anymore," says Espie.

Espie needed about 900 cranes so that each patient and staff member at Villa



Caritas and the Misericordia hospital could receive one. She began offering the extras to seniors' homes in the community. Each crane was quarantined for five days so it could be safely distributed. Volunteers added a sticker with an encouraging message to each crane, which will be handed out on Easter Sunday.

"The more patients we can bring some light to, the better, I'm just so happy," says Gagan. "It's the little things that matter, that make a difference. It's the tiny gestures. There is

someone wishing for hope and peace and love, and I hope that the patients see that — as someone looking out for them."

Six weeks earlier, a different origami campaign helped lift the spirits of staff at the Edmonton General Continuing Care Centre. Colleagues in professional practice wanted to show support to frontline staff who had dealt with a COVID-19 outbreak. Their team made 1,000 cranes and included an encouraging quote in each one.

"Inside each crane was tucked a mes-

sage of hope, just something to hang your hat on when you were having a rough day," says Lynn Klein, senior director of operations, who keeps her crane on her desk. "It's wonderful to feel the support and know that you're part of a larger team."

Corina Walker helped distribute the Edmonton General cranes, which were delivered on Random Acts of Kindness Day, Feb. 17.

"They were all very excited," says Corina. "People were really touched that someone was reaching out and thinking of them through all of this."

Gagan noticed that her friends and family found a personal benefit in making the origami cranes.

"A lot of them would shoot me a text and say, 'This is so therapeutic. If you need any more, I can make 50.' And I thought, 'That's why we're getting this overwhelming response. This isn't just volunteering your time to make a gift. This is also a time for people to unwind, and it's therapeutic for them as well.'"

Espie is thrilled by the community response and is grateful for the continued support of volunteers, even though they're not able to be with the patients in person.

"Our volunteers have always wanted to reach out to patients," says Espie. "That spirit is still there with them. It never really left them. When you suggest a project to them which they can do at home, where they can still provide some happiness to the patients, they are very, very willing to do it."

*Brenton Driedger works as a Social Media and Storytelling Advisor for Covenant Health.*

This article was first published in *The Vital Beat*, a weekly newsletter published by Covenant Health.



Sister Annata Brockman students fold origami cranes.

Photos: Covenant Health



## Immigration minister launches plan to accelerate caregiver application processing

**Six thousand caregiver applications will be prioritized by the end of 2021; 1,500 by June 30, 2021.**

Caregivers from abroad play an important role in supporting Canadian families who are unable to find the care they need for a family member in Canada. The global COVID-19 pandemic has caused great disruption to life in Canada and around the world, including to application processing at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).

"We recognize that many caregivers working in Canada are waiting anxiously to be reunited with their loved ones, and they need their applications to be processed for that to happen," said Marco Mendicino, Canada's Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, on April 15.

That is why IRCC is working to overcome the pandemic-related roadblocks that have interfered with processing applications from caregivers and their families by announcing a processing plan for 2021.

As part of this plan, IRCC will

- finalize permanent residence applications for up to 6,000 caregivers who have completed their in-Canada work experience and their immediate family members, by December 31, 2021
- make at least 1,500 first-stage decisions on applications for the Home Child Care Provider and Home Support Worker pilots by June 30, 2021

- Prioritization of these decisions will allow more caregiver work permits to be issued for those who have valid job offers to work for families in Canada.

- increase the digitization of caregiver applications

- ensure applicants receive acknowledgment of receipt letters by May 31, 2021

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed significant challenges for application processing, particularly for paper-based applications. With reduced capacity and office closures resulting in more employees working remotely, in 2020 IRCC only entered as many mailed-in applications as was possible into the case management system. As a result, a new public policy is being issued so that IRCC can process applications in 2021 that were received in 2020.

The Home Child Care Provider and Home Support Worker pilots were launched in 2019. They feature a clear transition for caregivers from temporary to permanent status, as well as occupation-specific, rather than employer-specific, work permits. They also provide the opportunity for caregivers and their families to move to Canada as they gain work experience. The response to these pilots suggests these features are attractive to caregivers and the Canadian families who need in-home care for a family member.

"The pandemic disrupted people's lives in Canada and around the world, and Canada's immigration processes were no exception," said Minister Mendicino. "Immigrant caregivers, who take care of our families and elders, are often separated from their own families, and the pandemic has significantly slowed down permanent residence application processing, keeping them apart from their families longer than we would have hoped. With today's announcement, we're getting caregiver immigration back on

track which will help reunite front-line heroes with their loved ones."

### Quick facts

- The new public policy will take effect on May 3, 2021. Applicants to the Home Child Care Provider and Home Support Worker pilots in 2020 will not need to reapply.

- As of March 3, 2021, there were applications for about 12,000 caregivers and their accompanying family members in the processing inventory. This includes applications to both the Home Child Care Provider and Home Support Worker pilots, but also cases that we continue to finalize from caregiver programs of the past.

- As of April 8, 2021, an estimated

2,367 applications have been received for the Home Child Care Provider Pilot, representing about 86% of the number of applications that can be accepted for 2021. For the Home Support Worker Pilot, an estimated 516 applications have been received, representing about 19% of the number of applications that can be accepted in 2021.

- Nearly 2,900 caregivers and their family members became permanent residents in 2020.

- Caregivers who are already in Canada could also have the opportunity to apply for permanent residence through the recently announced creation of a permanent residence pathway for essential workers.

[www.canada.ca](http://www.canada.ca)

## A strategy to build resilience Edmonton Public Schools Trustee Sherry Adams

The Edmonton Public School Division recognizes that there is a need to look at how we can make our families, schools, and communities more resilient. According to Dr. Michael Ungar, "Resilience is the psychological quality that allows some people to be knocked down by the adversities of life and come back at least as strong as before. Rather than letting difficulties, traumatic events, or failure overcome them and drain their resolve, highly resilient people find a way to change course, emotionally heal, and continue moving toward their goals." As we continue to face the challenges of the COVID pandemic we are looking to find ways to build resilience and will be partnering with Dr. Ungar who is the Principal Investigator for the Resilience Research Centre at Dalhousie University, in Halifax.



Trustee Sherry Adams

Dr. Ungar says that resilience is not just something that is inside a person. Resilience is something that is nurtured by families, schools and communities when problems are large. An individual's ability to cope under adversity is seldom enough to sustain well-being without the support of caring others. Despite adversity, persons can still live well when that support is present.

Our District's work with Dr. Ungar will include several initiatives: Professional Learning on resiliency for school and division leaders, teacher resources to foster the development of resiliency in our students, virtual parent/caregiver sessions with Dr. Ungar, and a youth resilience survey will be administered for Grade 4-12 students throughout all the schools this fall.

Here are Dr. Ungar's keys for building resilience during this pandemic:

1. Maintain structure in our lives, which means getting up in the morning at a regular time and keeping as many routines as possible.

2. Find ways to be accountable to others, whether that is focusing on our role as a parent or helping to look after someone else's pet if they can't leave their home. The more accountable we feel, the easier it is to maintain our mental health.

3. Invest energy in our most intimate relationships. We will need these more than ever. Take time each day to show others they matter, whether that person is a spouse, child, close friend, or roommate.

4. Reach out and continue to nurture our social connections, whether online, or by

checking in on friends and family. The more we contribute to maintaining and building connections with others, the more we will fight back against depression and anxiety.

5. Take this opportunity to strengthen different parts of our identity, whether that is taking up a new hobby or simply showing others a different side of our personality. Becoming productive is key to our mental health.

6. Take control of whatever you can control. Whether that is limiting your television watching or exercising regularly, the experience of control gives you the strength to cope and to resist feelings of helplessness.

7. Nurture a sense of belonging and maintain your spiritual path. Look for opportunities to express your life purpose. If you are affiliated with a faith community, do whatever you can to continue your spiritual practices, especially if those practices remind you that you are not alone.

8. Insist on fairness for yourself and others. We are more resilient when we insist on fair treatment and take responsibility for ourselves and others.

9. Look after our basic needs. Put your house in order. Rearrange the furniture. Clean out closets. Review your bank statements. Do your taxes. The more parts of your life you put in order, and the more your basic needs are taken care of, the more secure you will feel.

10. Take care of your physical health. Stay as active as you can. This will lift your mood and prevent health problems that are unrelated to the pandemic.

11. When possible, stabilize your finances. Make a plan for how you will get through this time of economic uncertainty. Reach out for help from your family, your bank, or local not-for-profit if you are financially in crisis.

12. Think positive thoughts and count your blessings. Avoid catastrophic thinking by reading and watching things that lift your spirits. Talk to others about how you are feeling. Do whatever it takes to stay hopeful. Be grateful for anything that is going well, no matter how insignificant it may seem.

This is an important time to stay connected! If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 780-429-8087 or email [sherry.adams@epsb.ca](mailto:sherry.adams@epsb.ca). It is a pleasure to serve you as your public school board trustee!

### Letters to the editor are welcome

We invite you to write letters to the editor. A maximum of 275 words is preferred. Letters must carry a first name or two initials with surname, and include an address and daytime telephone number. All letters are subject to editing. We don't publish letters addressed to others or sent to other publications. Send to: The Editor of the Mill Woods Mosaic, P.O. Box 92087, Meadowbrook RPO, Edmonton, Alberta, T6T 1N1; fax (780) 465-3140 or e-mail to [mwmosaic@telus.net](mailto:mwmosaic@telus.net).

## City reduces 2021 business licence and vehicle for hire fees

On April 6, 2021, City Council approved a 50 per cent reduction in business licence fees for all Edmonton businesses. City Council also approved a 100 per cent reduction in 2021 dispatch and vehicle licence fees for limousines and a 50 per cent reduction in these fees for all other vehicles for hire.

"While licensing fees may only be a small portion of costs for business, these fee reductions demonstrate the City's continued commitment to help foster a vibrant economy and support local businesses through the pandemic recovery," said Stephanie McCabe, Deputy City Manager for Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development.

The fee reductions will automatically be applied when businesses or vehicles for hire renew their licence or apply for a new licence between now and March 31, 2022. Online business licence fee payments have been sus-

pended until April 9, 2021 to allow time for the City to program the fee reduction into its payment systems.

Business licence fees paid prior to April 1, 2021 will not be eligible for refunds. Businesses that already paid licence fees between January 1 and March 31, 2021 will receive the fee reduction when they renew their licence in 2022.

This is the second year in a row that the City is offering business licence and vehicle for hire dispatch and vehicle licence fee reductions. The costs associated with the business licence fee reductions will be covered through the City's COVID-19 Financial Stabilization Reserve. The City's vehicle for hire reserve will cover costs associated with the dispatcher and vehicle licence fee reductions.

For more information:  
[edmonton.ca/businessinfo](http://edmonton.ca/businessinfo)



## Funding not-for-profits to support Alberta's recovery

Twenty-one civil society organizations will benefit from \$7 million in provincial funding to support community recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

With the new Civil Society Fund, Alberta's government is providing \$20 million over three years to expand civil society's capacity to address social problems. This year, \$7 million will support vulnerable Albertans during the pandemic and help build lasting solutions to pressing social challenges, some of which have been aggravated by the pandemic.

"We have received a tremendous response for civil society funding from organizations across the province," said Rajan Sawhney, Alberta's Minister of Community and Social Services. "The successful projects will be crucial in helping to support vulnerable Albertans as they recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. This investment is critical to ensuring the needs of all Albertans are met, while sustaining core services over the long term."

Civil society includes not-for-profit and voluntary organizations, registered

charities, informal groups, private sector organizations and individuals pursuing social good.

The Premier's Council on Charities and Civil Society identified four main priorities to focus on in order to build capacity and move towards recovery:

- Enhance system infrastructure to enable collaboration.
- Advance civil society research and data to enhance cross-sector collaboration.

- Prioritize organizational transformation for innovative delivery models and more collaborative approaches.

- Support financial sustainability and resilience with innovative fundraising, social finance and social enterprise.

"The Civil Society Fund addresses the needs the Premier's Council on Charities and Civil Society heard during our stakeholder engagement," said Joel Christie, chair of the Premier's Council on Charities and Civil Society. "I am pleased to see the diverse array of projects being funded and believe this will have a significant impact on the civil society sector."

Applications for the first year of

funding through the Civil Society Fund closed in January. A cross-ministry review process, led by a committee of staff from the ministries of Community and Social Services, Seniors and Housing, Service Alberta, Children's Services and Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women, reviewed applications for initiatives that could build civil society capacity and promote further recovery of the sector.

A full list of the successful grant recipients can be found online: <https://www.alberta.ca/civil-society-fund.aspx>

Alberta's government is responding to the COVID-19 pandemic by protecting lives and livelihoods with precise measures to bend the curve, sustain small businesses and protect Alberta's health-care system.

### Quick facts

- Alberta has more than 26,000 not-for-profit organizations, employing more than 280,000 Albertans.
- Each year, 1.6 million Albertans provide 262 million volunteer hours.
- Civil Society Fund grants are one-time only.
- Eligible applicants can request up to \$1.5 million for their project.
- Successful applicants will have 24 months from the date of the grant agreement to complete their grant activities.



Minister Rajan Sawhney

Photo: Government of Alberta

### Letters to the editor are welcome

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## Edmonton Arts Council Seeks Edmonton's Ninth Poet Laureate

The Edmonton Arts Council, City of Edmonton, and Edmonton Public Library have issued a call for Edmonton's ninth Poet Laureate. As an ambassador for the literary arts, the Poet Laureate incorporates poetry that reflects Edmonton, its people, and its diversity into official and informal city activities.

"The Poet Laureate plays an important role in capturing the stories of our city. During the COVID19 pandemic, we've seen just how this position can amplify the voices and shared experiences of Edmontonians," said Mayor Don Iveson. "I look forward to seeing how our next Poet Laureate will continue to build on this role."

Edmonton's current Poet Laureate is award-winning Indo-Canadian poet and artist Nisha Patel. She is the 2019 Canadian Individual Slam Champion and Edmonton Slam Champion, and a recipient of the Edmonton Artists' Trust Fund Award. She is also the Executive Director of the Edmonton Poetry Festival. Her poetry speaks to themes of race, feminism, and identity, focusing strongly on her struggles and

triumphs as a woman of colour. During her time as Poet Laureate, Nisha has served as a literary ambassador at home and across the country. She also created five-month mentorship opportunities for local artists to learn craft and writing, performance, artist management, curation, networking, and relationship-building.

"Nisha's passion and dedication to issues of social and environmental justice, including the upliftment of marginalized voices in our community has been provocative, captivating, and impactful. Her words carry strength, inspiration, and hope," said Edmonton Arts Council Executive Director Sanjay Shahani. "We look forward to seeing how the next Poet Laureate will expand the reach of the literary arts in our city and engage Edmontonians through poetry."

"EPL is proud to champion Edmonton's Poet Laureate program as part of our role to enrich our communities through learning, discovery and connection. Through her compelling storytelling style and focus on social justice, Nisha Patel demonstrates the

power of language and its ability to engage community. We are encouraged by the abundance of talent in Edmonton's spoken word community, and we look forward to supporting Edmonton's next Poet Laureate."

The next Poet Laureate will serve a two-year term beginning on July 1, 2021. This is a part-time, flexible role

with an annual honorarium of \$10,000. Edmonton writers and poets are invited to apply for the role. The deadline for applications is 12:00 p.m. MST on Monday, May 3, 2021.

Full details for the call and a link to apply can be found at: [bit.ly/EACPoeLaureate](http://bit.ly/EACPoeLaureate)

### Welcome to our new bus network!

#### Edmonton City Councillor Mohinder Banga

The City of Edmonton is excited to be introducing its new bus network, which is set to launch on April 25, 2021.

The last time we redesigned our bus network was in the late 1990s, and it's safe to say our community has changed a lot in the last two decades.

As we prepare to grow to a city of two million people, the new bus network will modernize Edmonton's transit system. This means buses will be more frequent, more direct and better connected.

Over the past six months, you've probably noticed crews installing new bus stop signs across the city. These new signs provide important information about the routes using that particular stop, including temporary stickers that identify if the stop will stay open with new routes, if the stop is brand new or if it's closing on April 25. Visit [edmonton.ca/newbusstop-signs](http://edmonton.ca/newbusstop-signs) to learn more about how to read the new signs and new route numbering system.

A new feature with the bus network redesign includes On Demand Transit shuttle services, which will be available in 37 neighbourhoods and at 16 large seniors' homes that are losing community bus service in this

redesign. If you are visiting one of these neighbourhoods, you will be able to book a ride from the designated transit hub to an assigned drop off location in the community (and vice versa). Starting April 25, rides can be booked in three ways: use the *Edmonton On Demand Transit* app, visit [edmonton.ca/ondemandtransit](http://edmonton.ca/ondemandtransit) or call 780-496-2400.

For now, the most important thing you can do is plan your new trips before using the new bus routes. Visit [edmonton.ca/newbus](http://edmonton.ca/newbus) routes, or use the third party Transit app or Google Maps app on a smartphone to see how your transit journey will change. These tools will let you enter your starting point, where you want to go, and the time you want to travel.



Coun. Mohinder Banga

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The award-winning Indo-Canadian poet and artist Nisha Patel has been Edmonton's eighth Poet Laureate since 2019.

Photo: Yulia Skogoreva

### NEED A HAND AROUND YOUR HOME?

The Seniors Home Supports Program at Mill Woods Seniors Association gives seniors referrals to screened businesses, community groups, and individuals that offer:

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## Connecting utilities. landlord and tenant rights and insurance

Connecting utilities, making an inspection report, landlord and tenant rights, what to do when moving out of rental housing and protecting your belongings are important issues to know for people who are renting an apartment or home.

### Connecting utilities

Utilities such as electricity, water and natural gas services may be included in the rent. If utilities are not included in your rent, arrange to have services connected (hooked up) for the day you move in.

Several different companies provide electricity and natural gas. To find the provider in your area

- ask your landlord, friends, family or staff at an immigrant-serving agency who to call

- go to [ucahelps.alberta.ca](http://ucahelps.alberta.ca). Click on Retailers and Distributors.

Until you have established a credit history (proven your ability to pay your bills on time every month) you may have to pay a deposit or prove you can pay for the service before the utility company will connect your utilities.

It is important to pay your utilities on time every month. If you do not pay on time, you will pay a late fee or penalty and risk being disconnected.

### Making an inspection report

By law, you and your landlord must complete an inspection report form within one week before or after the day you move in. It is very important to describe in writing all of the existing damage and necessary repairs so the landlord cannot charge you for them when you move out.

### Landlord and tenants rights

Alberta's *Residential Tenancies Act* outlines the rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants.

#### Landlords must

- provide their name, address and telephone number so that you can send notices (for example, about moving out) to them
- pay you interest on the security (damage) deposit at a rate set each year by the Government of Alberta
- provide a reasonably safe, comfortable place for you to live
- give you at least three months' notice in writing before increasing the rent in a periodic (month to month) tenancy

## Welcome to Alberta

### Important information for immigrants and other newcomers

- not increase the rent until a minimum of one year has passed in a fixed-term tenancy (lease)

- give you an acceptable reason for asking you to move out if you pay monthly rent, unless you do not carry out your responsibilities (for example, do not pay rent on time)

As the tenant, you must

- pay the rent on time
- keep your rental unit clean and in good repair

- report any damage to your unit

- not interfere with the landlord's rights or the rights of tenants in other units

- not break criminal laws in or around the rental unit (for example, cause damage or carry on illegal trade)

- follow the rules in the lease, such as rules about pets or the number of people who can live in the unit

- give the required notice in writing if you are going to move out

For more information about landlord and tenant relations, go to [service.alberta.ca](http://service.alberta.ca) and click on the Housing, properties & utilities tab.

### Moving out

When you move out of your rental housing you must

- give notice in writing to tell the landlord when you will be moving out. For a periodic (month-to-month) tenancy, you must give at least one month's notice. For a fixed-term tenancy (lease), the tenancy ends at noon on the last day of the lease. Talk to your landlord to find out whether you may be able to get out of the lease early.
- have utility services disconnected when you leave (if they are not included in the monthly rental fee). If you do not, you will be charged for these services even after you move out.

- clean all rooms and appliances. Ask your landlord what must be cleaned before you move out.

### Protecting your property and belongings

If you buy your home, a homeowner's policy insures your property and personal belongings. An insurance policy will pay for most of the costs to replace or fix property and belongings lost or damaged by fire or theft.

If you rent your home, a home renter's insurance policy insures your belongings. Your landlord will not pay for your lost or damaged belongings. The owner of the rental property insures the building, but not your personal belongings.

When you buy an insurance policy, you pay an annual fee to an insurance company based on the value of the belongings and/or property you are insuring. If you rent, you will need a home renter's insurance policy. If you buy a home, you will need a homeowner's policy.

Insurance policies vary from one company to another. All policies have a deductible, usually at least \$500, which means you will be paid only for loss or damages above that amount. Compare rates and coverage from several insurance companies before choosing your policy.

To find out more about insurance

- contact an insurance broker or agent. To find a broker, go to the Insurance Brokers Association of Canada website at [ibac.ca](http://ibac.ca) and click on Find a Broker.

- contact the Insurance Bureau of Canada

- Call 1-844-277-5422 toll-free or 780-423-2212 in Edmonton

- Go to [ibc.ca](http://ibc.ca)

**In the next issue of the Mill Woods Mosaic, we will provide information about money, banking and shopping.**

Reprinted with permission from *Welcome to Alberta: Information for Newcomers*, produced by Alberta Employment and Immigration. Visit the Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website at [alis.alberta.ca/publications](http://alis.alberta.ca/publications) to view or order your copy (free to Albertans).

*Welcome to Alberta: Information for Newcomers* is also available in eight other languages (French, Spanish, Farsi, Arabic, Mandarin, Amharic, Dinka and Punjabi). Translations can be downloaded from the website of the Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies at [aaisa.ca/alberta.php](http://aaisa.ca/alberta.php).

## Resources for Temporary Foreign Workers

### ALBERTA

#### Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan

[www.health.alberta.ca](http://www.health.alberta.ca)

#### Alberta Provincial Nominee Program

[www.alberta-canada.com/pnp](http://www.alberta-canada.com/pnp)

#### Alberta Temporary Foreign Worker Helpline

Call: (780) 644-9955 (Edmonton local calling area) or 1-877-944-9955 from anywhere in North America

#### Employment Standards

Call: (780) 427-3731 (toll-free in Alberta by dialing 310-0000 first)

#### Temporary Foreign Worker Advisory Office

**North Location**  
2nd Floor, 10242 - 105 Street  
Edmonton, AB  
T5J 3L5

**South Location**  
5th Floor, Century Park Place  
855 - 8th Avenue S.W.  
Calgary, AB  
T2P 3P1

E-mail: [tfwadvisory.office@gov.ab.ca](mailto:tfwadvisory.office@gov.ab.ca)

To contact an advisor, call the Alberta Temporary Foreign Worker Helpline.

### WCB Alberta

Call: Toll-free in Alberta  
1-866-WCB-WCB-1  
(1-866-922-9221)  
Outside of Alberta 1-800-661-9608

E-mail: [contactcentre@wcb.ab.ca](mailto:contactcentre@wcb.ab.ca)

[www.wcb.ab.ca](http://www.wcb.ab.ca)

### Workplace Health and Safety

Call: 1-866-415-8690

[www.employment.alberta.ca/whs](http://www.employment.alberta.ca/whs)

### CANADA

#### Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Call: 1-800-242-2100

[www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca)

#### Service Canada

[www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/workplace\\_skills/foreign\\_workers/index.shtml](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/workplace_skills/foreign_workers/index.shtml)

Give us a call at the *Mill Woods Mosaic*:  
Tel. (780) 465-7526  
or e-mail to: [mwmosaic@telus.net](mailto:mwmosaic@telus.net)



# Important addresses for immigrants and other newcomers

If you are new to Edmonton and don't know anybody, it can be tough to find a place to stay, a job, the right school for your children or good health care services, but there is plenty of help available.

Here are some of the main agencies specializing in helping immigrants and other newcomers in the Edmonton area:

**Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers**  
11713 - 82 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5B 2V9  
Tel. (780) 424-7709  
Website: www.emcn.ab.ca

*The Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers offers a wide variety of programs for newcomers and helps immigrants to find a place to live, a job and English classes.*

**Welcome Centre for Immigrants in Mill Woods**  
Suite 200, Tower II, Millbourne Mall  
7609 - 38 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T6K 3L6  
Tel. (780) 462-6924  
Website: www.mwci-edmonton.net

*The Welcome Centre for Immigrants in Mill Woods offers many programs and services for immigrants, including settlement assistance, language and educational counseling, employment assistance, citizenship classes, English classes, computer classes, public speaking classes, and youth programs.*

**Changing Together Centre for Immigrant Women**  
3rd Floor, 9538 - 107 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5H 0T7  
Tel. (780) 421-0175  
Website: www.changingtogether.com

*Founded in 1984, Changing Together is a non-profit, charitable organization operated by immigrant women for immigrant women. Its mission is to help Edmonton and area immigrant women and their families overcome personal and systemic barriers that keep them from participating fully in Canadian Society.*

**Catholic Social Services**  
8212 - 118 Avenue NW  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5B 0S3  
Tel. (780) 424-3545  
Website: www.catholicsocialservices.ab.ca

*For more than 50 years, Catholic Social Services has welcomed immigrants and refugees to Alberta. The services are free and offered in both official languages and more than 50 other languages. In the Meadows, CSS runs a drop-in group for women of all ages and backgrounds. Participants connect through diverse activities like speaking English, sharing cultural experiences, learning to use computers and connecting with useful resources. The program, called Tea Connections, runs every Friday from 10 a.m. to noon, in the room of The Meadows Community League on the 2nd floor of the Meadows Community Recreation Centre, 2704 - 17 Street. For more information, contact Raminder Dhindsa at raminder.dhindsa@cssalberta.ca or 780-391-3204.*

**Family Futures Resource Network**  
5704 - 19 A Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T6L 1L8  
Tel. 413-4521  
Website: www.familyfutures.ca

*The Family Futures Resource Network (FFRN) is a non-profit organization providing support to families and parents in the areas of early childhood education, child and youth, family and adult support and parent education. The FFRN has three separate*

*locations in Mill Woods: Millhurst Site (5704 - 19 A Avenue), Knottwood Site (1733 Mill Woods Road) and Millbourne Community Site (3756 - 78 Street).*

**Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative**  
9538 - 107 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5H 0T7  
Tel. (780) 423-1973  
Website: www.mchb.org

*The Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative is a registered worker's co-operative with members from immigrant and refugee communities, providing culturally and linguistically relevant prenatal education, post-natal outreach, parenting support, family liaison and community development support to immigrant and refugee families.*

**Indo-Canadian Women's Association**  
9324 - 34 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T6E 5X8  
Tel. (780) 490-0477

*The Indo-Canadian Women's Association is a not-for-profit organization for enthusiastic volunteers committed to full participation of immigrant and visible minority women and men in economic, social and political life in Canada.*

**The Shaama Centre for Seniors and Women (formerly Multicultural Women & Seniors Services Association)**  
329 Woodvale Road West  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T6L 3Z7  
Tel. (780) 465-2992

*The Shaama Centre for Seniors and Women (SCSW) is a non-profit, organization. The focus is to provide service and programs for immigrant women and senior men and women. Program goal is to promote and enhance the well-being and self-reliance of seniors and women especially those at risk and isolated before a crisis situation occurs. SCSW provides social support, information sessions, and skill building classes, home and hospital visits, as well as translation, and referrals to other service providers. It also offers family support and crisis intervention. For youth, there are Urdu and math classes and homework help, and there is also an Urdu library with more than 2000 books. The SCSW is open from 9 am to 4:30 pm Monday to Friday.*

**Youth Empowerment and Support Services**  
9310 - Whyte Avenue (82 Ave.)  
Edmonton, Alberta, T6C 0Z6  
Tel. (780) 468-7070  
Website: www.yess.org

*The Youth Emergency Shelter Society is a not-for-profit organization serving young people between the ages of 15-18 who are in crisis, at risk or homeless.*

**Alberta Employment Standards**  
Edmonton Office - Main Floor Sterling Place  
9940 - 106 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta, T5K 2N2  
Tel. (780) 427-3731  
Website: www.employment.alberta.ca

*Alberta Employment Standards is a provincial agency responsible for the administration and enforcement of employment standards in Alberta. AES has publications available for temporary for-*

*eign workers and their employers to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under Alberta's employment standards and workplace health and safety legislation. These publications are available in Chinese, English, French, German and Spanish.*

**NorQuest College**  
10215 - 108 Street NW  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5J 1L6  
Tel. (780) 422-2020  
Website: www.norquest.ab.ca

*NorQuest College is a public college offering many programs, including English as a Second Language classes and employment programs for immigrants.*

**Alberta Health and Wellness**  
Edmonton Office  
Telus Tower North, Main Floor  
10025 Jasper Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
Tel. (780) 427-1432  
Website: www.health.alberta.ca

*Alberta Health and Wellness answers any questions about health care and health care insurance coverage in Alberta.*

**Immigrant Access Fund Canada**  
45, 9912 - 106 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5J 4M9  
Tel. (Toll Free) 1-855-423-2262  
Website: www.iafcana.org

*The Immigrant Access Fund provides micro loans to internationally trained immigrant professionals, trades people and skilled workers so they may obtain the Canadian licensing and/or training that will allow them to obtain employment in their field.*

## Other important phone numbers:

### Edmonton Police Service

**Emergency calls only ..... 9-1-1**  
**Police - Fire - Ambulance**  
*Life & death, injury accident, crime in progress*

**Non-emergency calls (Dispatch) ..... 780-423-4567**  
*Report of suspicious activity, calls for assistance, advice, etc.*

**Poison Centre ..... 1-800-332-1414**

**Hazardous Material Spills ..... 9-1-1**

### Utility Trouble Calls Only:

**Power Emergency ..... 780-412-4500**  
*Within Edmonton*

**Gas Emergency ..... 780-420-5585**  
*Edmonton & Area*

**Drainage Trouble ..... 780-496-1717**

**Sewer Trouble ..... 780-496-1717**

**Wastewater (odour hotline) ..... 780-469-8176**

**Water Emergency Service ..... 780-412-6800**

**The next issue of the Mill Woods Mosaic will be published on May 15, 2021. The deadline for advertising and editorial is Friday, May 7, 2021.**





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Questions? Email [dalygrove@epsb.ca](mailto:dalygrove@epsb.ca)  
Or call: 780-450-1532**

**1888-37 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta**

## What's up?

### Community events in Mill Woods

Many events in Mill Woods and the Meadows have been cancelled, due to the current COVID-19 health crisis. After the number of new cases has increased recently, the Government of Alberta has announced some new measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health system (updated April 15):

- All indoor social gatherings are still prohibited, and outdoor social gatherings can have up to 10 people with 2 metre physical distancing between households. This will be enforced with \$1,000 fines.
- Wedding and funeral receptions are not permitted.
- Maximum of 10 people for wedding ceremonies and 20 people for funeral services.
- Faith services are limited to 15% of fire code occupancy for in-person attendance.
- Physical distancing between households must be maintained.
- Working from home is mandatory unless the employer requires the employee's physical presence to operate effectively.
- Current child care and K-12 learning measures remain in effect.
- Retail services and shopping malls must limit customer capacity to 15% of fire code occupancy (not including staff) or a minimum of 5 customers. This includes individual stores and common areas.
- Masks are mandatory in all indoor public spaces, indoor workplaces, and places of worship.
- Restaurants, pubs, bars, lounges, cafes and food courts can open for outdoor patio dining, takeout, curbside pickup and delivery only.
- Patio sitting must be limited to a maximum of 6 people per table - individuals must be from the same household or the 2 close contacts for a person living alone.
- Tables and dining parties must be 2 metres apart or separated by an impermeable barrier that will prevent droplet transmission.
- No entertainment allowed (VLTs, pool tables, live music, etc.)
- The Mill Woods Recreation Centre and Meadows Community Recreation Centre are closed.
- The Edmonton Public Libraries in Mill Woods and the Meadows are closed.

For more information, visit the website of the Government of Alberta at [www.alberta.ca](http://www.alberta.ca).

**Do you have  
any story ideas  
for the *Mill  
Woods Mosaic*?  
Give us a call at  
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## The new experience of grief

By Shelly Decker & Jessica Hopley

There was no last in-person goodbye. There was no funeral to attend.

When Carleen Brenneis learned that a close friend had lost her mother to COVID-19, she wanted to show her support and share her grief. She joined more than two dozen people who wore masks and carefully socially distanced outside the family's home. They lit candles they brought, and one by one they placed them on the doorstep. Someone played *Amazing Grace*.

"I won't forget that," says Carleen. "It really helped everybody."

The director of Covenant Health's Palliative Institute knows first-hand how the pandemic has affected our ability to mourn a lost life.

"I have four friends who have lost a parent, and only one was able to be with their parent and have a funeral. They died during COVID, so you couldn't visit them. Two died of COVID."

"I think most people would agree that we're not able to grieve as we should."

The restrictions established to ensure public safety during COVID-19 have had a significant impact on traditional ways of openly grieving. Family members have been unable to hold the hand of a loved one or say a final goodbye at the bedside. Funerals have moved from intimate gatherings of remembrance to online ceremonies bereft of physical connection or quiet moments of closeness. Grieving the death of a loved one with others has been suspended for many who await the day they can gather with fellow mourners and meaningfully process their loss.

The possibility that a silent pandemic of grief is coming has been voiced by experts, and Carleen says it's something we should prepare for.

"I do believe it will happen. You won't see it in everybody. This is your 'Do you remember when?' year," says Carleen, a registered nurse. "The amount of grief that has not been absorbed or acknowledged — and it will be different for every person — it's a heaviness that people haven't experienced before. Some people will deal with it well, and others will struggle."

For some, such as those living and working in long-term care environments, loss has been amplified throughout COVID-19.

At the Edmonton General Continuing Care Centre, staff were devastated by last year's COVID-19 outbreak that claimed more than 30 lives. Theodora Agoawike, resident care manager on one of the units, says staff form close bonds with those in their care.

"For us, they become family," says Theodora. "Anything that hurts them, hurts us too."

And that hurt is still part of their lives.

"The pandemic is still with us," says Theodora. "We have not really mourned our people. We haven't really had that time. It has not been easy. For most of us, we go to the washroom, we cry, we wash our face and we come out because we still need to care for our people."

And there are those who face loss in the workplace and their home life. Even if the loss isn't specifically

caused by COVID-19, the pandemic has affected how we grieve. Geraldine MacInnis, a resident care manager at the Edmonton General, lost several residents to the outbreak, and her mother died from cancer in January.

"I have not been able to go back to Nova Scotia to do her burial yet," says Geraldine. "It's had a major impact on me personally and in my work life, but I can't crumble. I need to be here for my team and for our residents and their families."

The pandemic's toll and the waves of grief in its wake are ongoing, says Dr. Cheryl Nekolaichuk, a registered psychologist with Covenant Health's Palliative Institute and a professor in the Department of Oncology with the University of Alberta's Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry.

"We've never really witnessed this before. We're not quite sure what impact this is having on people, not just the immediate loss on a family but also on the community, and community can be described in lots of different ways, such as a continuing care centre," says Cheryl. "I think there will be a surge in the need for supports."

Cheryl says the loss of human touch and face-to-face support we see at traditional — and important — rituals such as funerals and memorials is "a huge loss." But what hasn't changed is the need to grieve.

"We're still going to be grieving — the emotional, physical, spiritual and social responses we have to a loss. That hasn't changed."

People need to be aware that there is no right or wrong way to grieve. People who suppress a loss will not escape it. "It will eventually find a way to work into your life even though you're trying hard not to face it or trying to put it aside," says Cheryl. "It is really critical that we all find our own way to grieve a loss." Longterm effects may include alcohol or drug abuse, trouble with relationships or problems at work, she explains.

All losses, in terms of how the person can be mourned, are impacted by the pandemic, agree the two experts. At the Edmonton General, memorial tables have been halted by the pandemic due to safety concerns. Normally, a resident who dies would be honoured with a framed picture, flowers and candles, providing a space for residents and staff to remember.

Diane Berge's 92-year-old mother, Theresa Schiller, died from Alzheimer's disease and other complex health issues on February 15. As her mother neared the end of her life, Diane was able to visit as much as she wanted, an eased restriction during the pandemic.

"It was really good that we could come as much as we wanted. The staff were so good about that," recalls Diane.

And when her mother died in the middle of the night, she was not by herself, even though Diane had gone home to sleep.

"The girls on the unit had become her family. She loved them. She was not alone," says Diane.

"We went to rest knowing she was being cared for in a loving, respectful, dignified manner. That was a wonderful feeling of comfort for me. I knew they had really cared for her."

Diane says she's not sure when restrictions will ease so that she can hold a mass for her mother and a sister who died in October from cancer. While that aspect of traditional mourning is on hold, she says her loss was made easier knowing her mother was surrounded with warmth and compassion from her care team.

"Everyone met all her needs, arranging spiritual care along with every need being met," she says. "Their

kindness and compassion were unmeasurable."

*Shelly Decker is Storytelling and Social Media Manager at Covenant Health, and Jessica Hopley is Creative Services Specialist at Covenant Health.*

This article was first published in *The Vital Beat*, a weekly newsletter published by Covenant Health.

## Tips to help you grieve

Our ability to outwardly grieve has changed during COVID-19.

Carleen Brenneis, director of Covenant Health's Palliative Institute, and registered psychologist Cheryl Nekolaichuk, also from the Palliative Institute offer tips to help navigate a loss.

### Acknowledge the loss

It's important to acknowledge the person who has died. Grief surfaces in emotional, spiritual, physical and social ways. Give yourself permission to grieve, remembering that it is a journey.

"It's OK to be grieving. It's OK not to grieve because you just can't do it today. You move through grief in your own way and at your own pace," says Carleen.

Be aware that the weight of your loss can surface in unexpected ways, such as turning on the radio in your car and hearing a song that reminds you of the person who's died, says Cheryl.

### Find ways to work through the process

Talk to friends, close colleagues and loved ones about the loss. Remember that children and youth are less likely to have the coping skills necessary to work through a loss without supports, says Cheryl.

At the Edmonton General Continuing Care Centre, resident care manager Geraldine MacInnis leaves her office door open so people can enter any time they want to talk. When she asks how people are doing, she does more than listen to their words. She looks into their eyes and observes their body language.

"A lot of times they may not want to totally express how devastated they're feeling because they may worry they'll be seen as not strong. What you feel is important, and it's important to talk and support each other through it. We can't change the grief, but we can move through it together."

While large funerals have been restricted due to COVID-19 safety precautions, we may find comfort in sharing stories through a Zoom call or writing journal posts about the person who's died. Connection doesn't end with death, says Cheryl. We can find ways to continue the bond with the person who's died, such as making their recipes or sharing stories with others.

### Make time for self-care

We need to make sure that we are finding ways to replenish our soul, such as reading a good book or talking with a friend. Taking care of ourselves is important for our overall well-being.

### Look for red flags

We need to monitor whether our coping mechanisms are healthy or harmful to our overall well-being, advises Cheryl. "Ask yourself, 'Of all the things I'm doing here, what might be helpful but what might not be that helpful?'" Some red flags include excessive drinking or giving up on exercising or cooking. Both encourage seeking professional support if you are struggling.