

# EDMONTON INTERFAITH CENTRE FOR EDUCATION & ACTION



**ANNUAL REPORT**

2018/2019

# OUR VISION

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The Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action is recognized as a vital organization that addresses faith issues locally, nationally, and globally. We model a solidarity that embraces both diversity and commonality of faith groups.

# OUR MISSION

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The Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action promotes peace and facilitates interfaith solidarity among our members, and our local, national, and global communities, through educational programs, social action, and modelling respectful pluralism.

## EDMONTON INTERFAITH CENTRE FOR EDUCATION & ACTION

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The Edmonton Interfaith Centre was founded in December 1995 to promote respect, friendship, harmony and understanding between people of various faiths. Our programs aim to help people live together as good neighbors. The Interfaith Centre has lay and clergy members from many different faiths and has about a dozen different religions represented on its current board.

The objective of the Interfaith Centre is to educate its members and the wider community about the diverse religious faiths present in Edmonton. We have a long history of success in developing programs which communicate the importance of embracing diversity. We have implemented a wide variety of projects, large and small, which have brought together people of many faiths to discuss critical issues facing our community. These include lectures, prayer services, dialogues and presentations, and the Centre also works to raise awareness about local and global discrimination and to model a non-discriminatory lifestyle.

On an ongoing basis the Interfaith Centre provides speakers to schools across Edmonton, addressing the diversity of religious expressions found in the community. The Centre facilitates visits

to houses of worship both for children and adults and also coordinates interfaith prayer services throughout the year. We have hosted the North American Interfaith Network (NAIN) Connect conference twice, presented workshops both locally and internationally at every NAIN Connect for over twenty years, and at four Parliaments of the World's Religions.

We are particularly proud of our partnership with the City of Edmonton. Since 2006 we have had a permanent, changing display at City Hall, called "Celebrating our Faiths", full report follows. We have also implemented or created program material for use throughout the community such as the two peace posters created by local graphic designers, a booklet, "Seeking Peace...Visions of Peace from Twelve Faith Traditions", the "Walking Together" curriculum, and the "Faith in the Classroom" component of the "Safe and Caring Schools" booklets used by the Alberta Teachers Association.

The Edmonton Interfaith Centre looks forward to continuing to serve the community through the two arms of education and action.

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## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING JUNE 12, 2019 - AGENDA

- ▶ Welcome & Introductions
- ▶ Approval of Agenda
- ▶ Minutes of Last AGM (June 2018)
- ▶ President's Report
- ▶ Coordinator's Report
- ▶ Treasurer's Report & Financial Statements
- ▶ Committee Reports
  - Capital Region Interfaith Housing Initiative
  - Celebrating Our Faiths
  - Concert
  - Gender Based Violence
  - Interfaith Explorations
  - Lunch & Learn
  - Membership
  - North American Interfaith Network Connect – 2018, 2019 & 2020
  - United Nations International Days: Peace Sept. 21 & IDERD March 21
  - Invitation to the Annual Genocide Memorial – July 14, 2019
  - World Interfaith Harmony Week
  - Nominations Committee: Approval of Board & Executive
- ▶ Any New Business
- ▶ Refreshments & Program

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

## JUNE 21, 2018 - MEETING

### UNITARIAN CHURCH OF EDMONTON

**Attendance:** Jagjeet Bhardwaj, Guy Blood, Audrey Brooks, Dinesh & Sumatilal Burad, Keith Dannacker, Larry Derkach, Karen Farkas, Shulamit Gil, Ruth Hill, Pat Holt, Zohra Husaini, Prem Kalia, Shiraz Kanji, Paula Kirman, Donna Krucik, Lawrence Loyek, Don Mayne, Cecily Mills, Kara Murray, Pauline Paulson, Netta Phillet, Kathie Reith, Virginia Sharek, Shaykh Sheikh, John Wright, Mike Van Boom.

Host and Guest Speaker: Rev. Audrey Brooks: "Current Trends in Unitarian Universalism"

Meeting called to order and welcome at 7:51 p.m. by President Shiraz Kanji, he thanked Reverends Brooks and Kiely for their hospitality, and asked all present to give their names and say how long they have been members.

**Approval of Agenda:** Pat moved, Donna seconded, approved.

**Approval of Minutes from June 7, 2017 AGM:** Paula moved, Ruth seconded, approved.

**Reports:** The President's report, Coordinator's report, all committee reports, and the financial statements were presented and accepted as presented.

Motion to accept the reviewed financial statements, Karen moved, Jagjeet seconded, approved.

**Additional comments:**

- Capital Region Interfaith Housing Initiative, Mike Van Boom talked about ongoing work and challenges.
- Celebrating Our Faiths: Netta talked about reaction to the Scientology display in City Hall, and our gratitude to the city for backing us up.
- NAIN Connect 2018: Donna presented posters to be used at airport kiosks.

**Nominations:**

Board members who are finishing a two year term or starting another one: Jagjeet Bhardwaj, Audrey Brooks Dinesh Burad, Avau Fast, David Fekete, Karen Gall, Len Gierach, Zohra Husaini, Farah Jamil, Shiraz Kanji, Nasim Kherani, Paula Kirman, Kara Murray, Pauline Paulson, Kathie Reith, Virginia Sharek.

Three board members are not seeking another term: Salima Versi, Dorit Kosman and Karen Farkas. They were thanked for their contributions.



# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

## JUNE 21, 2018 - MEETING CONTINUED

### UNITARIAN CHURCH OF EDMONTON

#### Executive:

President: Pauline Paulson  
Vice-President: Jagjeet Bhardwaj  
Secretary: Paula Kirman  
Treasurer: Kara Murray  
Past-President: Shiraz Kanji

Nominated for a two-year term as a new board member is Guy Blood, he introduced himself: structural engineer, Baha'i, Life Member of the EIC (as is his wife Joan).

Motion to accept the slate as presented. Dinesh moved, Karen seconded, approved.

**New Business:** Kara expressed appreciation on behalf of the Scientology community for our support when their display was being criticized.

Shiraz handed over the keys to new President Pauline! She thanked him for his four years on the executive and the board and membership for our support in the next two years.

**Motion to adjourn:** Paula motioned. Meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m. Minutes prepared by Paula Kirman.



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT PAULINE PAULSON

I have now completed the first year of my term as President of the Board. I, first of all, want to thank Shiraz for steering us so successfully through the NAIN Conference. I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this momentous event. I also want to thank the members of the Board for their support and a special thank you to Netta for keeping me on track. I attended as many community functions as I could and, again, am grateful to those who filled in for me when I couldn't be there. This year, we have funds available through the hard work of volunteers at Casinos. We were able to host a film fest in February; begin production of a documentary video about the past, present and future of EICEA as well as looking into supporting projects of other community organizations. I want to thank those board members who have completed terms of office for their commitment to the work of Edmonton Interfaith. We welcome our new members and look forward to getting to know them and working together.

## COORDINATOR'S REPORT NETTA PHILLET

What a relief it was last fall to have NAIN behind us, and that it was a success in every way! Throughout spring and summer 2018 it demanded much of my time; we had a paid planner and excellent volunteer committees but the office was command central for registrants and their payments, speakers, tours and programs, paying expenses from two accounts, receipts, Thank You's, and many more details.

Some of the daily tasks of running a not for profit society in twenty hours a week are: completing the Alberta Registries and Canada Revenue Information Returns; applying for the City Investment Operating Grant; issuing tax receipts for donations; receiving and depositing membership dues, donations and sales revenue; tracking membership payments and renewal. Each of our events needs a venue chosen and booked, often needing deposits paid and proof of \$2 million liability insurance provided, speakers to be contacted and confirmed.

In November we had a table at the annual fair trade sale called "Just One World", one of the few opportunities we have to talk to the public. Another was just last month when we had a table at the City Wellness Fair, Virginia and Len showed off our "Celebrating Our Faiths" display and shared their enthusiasm for the activities of the Centre with employees from all departments and cultural backgrounds.

Having a casino has added a whole new dimension to the possible scope of our activities. As Kara will tell you in her treasurer's report it made a positive difference in the NAIN bottom line. It has also added a lot to my work - load, working with her to get permission to spend the proceeds (there are very strict guidelines), another bank account to keep track of and statements to prepare.

We remain passionate about doing what we can to remain involved with Indigenous affairs and are looking at Truth and Reconciliation recommendations that we might be able to accomplish. Several years ago I attended workshops arranged by the Aboriginal Commission on Human Rights & Justice on the topic of "Shared Communities: Intercultural Dialogue between Newcomer,

## COORDINATOR'S REPORT NETTA PHILLET

Multicultural and Aboriginal Peoples". This initiative was in response to the fact that some "new Canadians" arrive knowing little about Canadian Indigenous history; they also bring their pre-existing biases, plus can be negatively influenced by those of Canadians already here. I had an example very recently, was talking to a black friend who said, "We were slaves and when we were freed we had nothing, they (Indigenous) have been given everything so why aren't they doing better?" Sadly that is a common misconception. Our idea is to get the Blanket Exercise into mosques, gurdwaras, synagogues, temples, etc. We are perfectly placed for this, almost half of our board are not "new" but they were not born here and, partly through them, we have strong ties to various faith groups.

We were approached by the Sai Baba Centre to hold a Unity Walk for Peace and Love, in response to recent attacks on houses of worship, so we quickly put together a rally on May 24. Over 100 people stood in the rain hearing prayers from eleven faiths as well as songs from the Sai Baba choir and the Raging Grannies. We were pleased with its success and sad that it is still necessary.

On May 26 – 28 Audrey Brooks and I attended a conference at the Vancouver School of Theology on "Religion and Violence". This is a theme we've considered for years and have committed to addressing it this fall.

One of the highlights of NAIN was a river valley walk with Lewis Cardinal; he offered to do it again and we chose the weekend (June 1 & 2) with the 10+ bad air quality warning. Over 40 people were interested, after many contacts, updates, confirmations for each, I had to tell them we reluctantly decided to postpone it.

As often as I can I attend Interfaith Pride Services, events sponsored by the Edmonton Council of Muslim Communities and the Aga Khan Council, the Jewish Synagogues and Federation, Hindu Society, the Jains, Buddhists, Rev. Brooks' Genocide Memorial, etc. As always I thank the board and members for your support.

## TREASURER'S REPORT KARA MURRAY

The financial statements are towards the end of the report. We are grateful for the ongoing support of the Northern Spirit Regional Council of the United Church of Canada, the Edmonton City Investment Operating Grant and the Edmonton Community Foundation which administers our two funds, including the Lavinia Singh Fund for Peace. As well we appreciate the support of many individual donors and faith groups.

## CAPITAL REGION INTERFAITH HOUSING INITIATIVE (CRIHI)

AUDREY BROOKS, DON MAYNE & MIKE VAN BOOM | [INTERFAITHHOUSING.CA](http://INTERFAITHHOUSING.CA)

The Edmonton Interfaith Centre has been a member of the Capital Region Interfaith Housing Initiative since two board members attended the first planning meeting years ago. Pastor Mike Van Boom is the coordinator, Housing Ambassador and editor of The Neighbourly News, where those interested in an overview of some of the interests and concerns of neighbourhoods can keep abreast of current topics.

This Housing Initiative is concerned with building relationships across the city with a view to encouraging them to participate in dialogues about creating affordable housing for those in need. In particular churches are being approached to see if they have land to share and consider partnering with us to build housing there. In September 2018 a successful political rally was held in support of four critical priorities that included:

1. The Portable Housing Benefit; money every month to help with the rent.
2. The need for Mobile Support Workers to help vulnerable populations (including Seniors and low-income tenants) where they are.
3. Strong investments in Permanent Supportive Housing for people with very complex needs including addiction, trauma, disabilities and mental health challenges.
4. A vision of healthy integration of housing help and supports in every community.

Beginning in 2019 we also set out on a new direction, supporting local area networks of faith communities in five southside neighbourhoods. We aim to have these new gatherings of different faiths meeting together, learning together, and working together in their local community to address local needs related to poverty and homelessness.

This year, we hosted our first ever Faith Leader's Build Day with Habitat for Humanity and were grateful for some participants from the Interfaith Centre's network. Working together and learning more about each other is truly very rewarding.

CRIHI holds regular strategy, education and steering committee meetings, to update our processes, and reports on progress made to house the homeless and supports our Welcome Home volunteer visiting program. This program consists of two volunteers who visit with housed persons, go for coffee or a movie and provide social interaction to minimize loneliness and isolation for those who have made changes from the street to their own housing. Others work at the ReUse Centre or the prefab shop, and various faith groups provide lunches for work crews. Rev. Audrey Brooks serves on both the education and strategic planning committees.

## CELEBRATING OUR FAITHS NETTA PHILLET

Since 2006 we have enjoyed a partnership with the City of Edmonton, prompted by a comment to Mayor Mandel that City Hall belongs to all citizens, and city hall should reflect the diversity of faiths found here. It is a successful program which advances our mission and that of the city, to be a place of inclusion. In the last year we have celebrated

- Aboriginal History Month
- Islam Awareness Month
- Sri Sathya Sai Baba
- Eckankar
- the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- World Interfaith Harmony Week
- Zoroastrianism
- Sikh Vaisakhi

## CONCERT AUDREY BROOKS

Our “Building Bridges Among Faith Traditions,” concert was held on Sunday, February 10, at the Unitarian Church of Edmonton. This is an annual event created to bring people of various faith traditions together in celebration of World Interfaith Harmony Week, which was unanimously adopted by the United Nations on October 20, 2010.

As always our performers were exceptionally talented: The Young at Heart Jewish Choir; Carrie Day, Acoustic guitar and voice; Roylin Picou and Diana Harrington: Good News in Poetry and Music; and The Strawflowers: Bluegrass and vocal ensemble.

Our Interfaith Advocate Award was presented to Dr. Junaid Jahangir, for his many years championing LGBTQ+ acceptance and support among specific faith groups. Thanks to our stage manager Kimberly Lang, who once again kept things organized, to the volunteers who facilitated the silent auctions, to Elder Pauline Paulson for sharing a First Nations blessing, and Netta Phillet for organization and support for our crew.

## GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

JAGJEET BHARDWAJ, GUY BLOOD, ZOHRA HUSAINI, NASIM KHERANI

A new committee has formed to reinvigorate our commitment to this important issue. We first became involved when we collaborated with the Indo-Canadian Women's Association over 10 years ago; they had two major projects funded by Status of Women Canada and sought our help to ensure that there was a multi-faith approach, since this wide - spread problem is not confined to any ethnic, socio-economic or cultural group. One outcome of this was a brochure: "Perspectives: Faith Leaders Speak Out - Religious Leaders' Response to Harmful Cultural Practices". More recently we were invited to sign the city - led "It's Time - Gender Based Violence Prevention Initiative". Our experience and contacts are helpful, we recognize that there can appear to be support for gender oppression in religious texts. We also recognize that many faith leaders are indeed actively involved in providing education and support services to their members. Various ideas are being considered and a written proposal made, the work continues.

## INTERFAITH EXPLORATIONS

KAREN GALL

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## LUNCH & LEARN

NETTA PHILLET

This noon program began in January 2008 and continues to be popular. Speakers bring a 25 to 35 minute presentation and then take questions, we always have a lively discussion. Thank you to the speakers who have shared their knowledge, and please send your suggestions. Topics and speakers since the last report were:

- Abe Silverman - Israel
- Chuck - Pilgrimage Camino Walks
- C. Vasquez - The Art of Living
- Rev. Audrey Brooks - Will there be Whiskey at my Wake?
- Prof. Randy Haluza-Delay - Christian Peacemakers in Iraqi Kurdistan
- Farah Jamil - Ramadan
- Elder Pauline Paulson - Fasting in Indigenous Traditions



## MEMBERSHIP

GUY BLOOD, PAULA KIRMAN, KATHIE REITH

Membership in EICEA from all religious traditions is very important to support our claim of representing all faith-based organizations. It is concerning that membership numbers are dropping, currently, we have 146 members, with 31 of them Life Members. We would also like to promote membership enrolment to young people. The Membership Committee named February as Membership Month to take advantage of the World Interfaith Harmony Week awareness campaign. During the recent strategic planning meeting we brainstormed possible motives that people may have to supporting the Interfaith Centre by paying a membership fee. We also should list the benefits of membership on our website. A video documentary is being produced to aid in membership promotion, we plan to use this in meetings with faith groups during upcoming visits, reaching out to them to inform them of our work and encouraging people to join. As well, at every event we hold, we need to talk to those in attendance about becoming members and have our information brochure with us. We will also try to increase our presence by having information tables at major religious and cultural events in the city.

## NORTH AMERICAN INTERFAITH NETWORK (NAIN) CONNECT 2018

NETTA PHILLET

“Pilgrimage – Journeys of Discovery” Conference Celebrates 30 Years of Interfaith Harmony  
North American Interfaith Network (NAIN) Connect 2018 in Edmonton, July 31 - August 2  
“Make a pilgrimage to a 10,000 – year - old Indigenous Peoples’ sacred meeting site.”

That was the invitation that went out across Canada, the United States and Mexico. In a fractured and increasingly polarized world, interfaith harmony is something to celebrate. The North American Interfaith Network (NAIN) has been building communication and mutual understanding among interfaith organizations and diverse religious groups throughout North America for 30 years. The annual gatherings are an opportunity to share best practices, with each other and the public.

It was a very busy few days. Most events took place at MacEwan University, and keynote speakers included:

- \* Lieutenant-General, the Honourable Roméo Dallaire (Ret'd)
- \* Dr. Marie Wilson, Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- \* Stephen Kakfwi, former President of the Dene Nation and former Premier of the NWT
- \* Nakita Valerio, writer, academic, and advocate
- \* Shachi Kurl, Executive Director of the Angus Reid Institute
- \* Rev. Dr. Robert Sellers, Chair of the Board of Trustees, Parliament of the World's Religions

In addition, there were dozens of workshops and panels on a wide variety of themes such as interfaith dialogues, the role of faith communities in social issues such as homelessness and domestic violence, Indigenous topics, chaplaincies and pilgrimage in many forms. Afternoon tours

explored places in and around Edmonton that nurture our spirits and foster interconnectedness with Mother Earth, Creator, and one another. We explored worship sites in the inner city, U of A and south Edmonton, walked through thousands of years of history in the river valley, experienced a sweat lodge and discovered the new Aga Khan Garden, a \$25 million gift at the U of A Botanic Garden.

## NAIN CONNECT 2019

Will be in cyber space on August 12, a half day online with plenary and breakout sessions.

## NAIN CONNECT 2020

Will be in South Bend Indiana, USA, sometime between Aug 3 – 14, theme/topics will be: “Interfaith Response to Immigration/Migration”, hosted by the United Religions Council of St. Joseph County

## UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE (SEP. 21ST) AUDREY BROOKS

This annual celebration had fewer attendants than usual because it snowed the entire time! Elder Pauline Paulson welcomed us with a prayer, Mayor Iveson raised the peace flag, Maigan van der Giessen spoke about the work of the John Humphrey Centre, and Paula Kirman and the Raging Grannies sang.

## UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (IDERD) AUDREY BROOKS

On March 21 we gathered at noon in City Hall for our annual commemoration of a massacre of unarmed civilians in 1960 in South Africa. The proceedings were just underway when there was a fire alarm so we processed outside, fortunately not for too long. Elder Pauline Paulson welcomed us to Treaty 6 territory and shared a prayer, greetings were brought by City Councilor Scott McKeen and Acting Deputy Police Chief Chad Tawfik. The program began with the blowing of the shofar by Karen Gall, then an Islamic prayer from Junaid Jahangir and a Christian offering from Don Mayne. We heard Cree poet Naomi McIlwraith, Rev. Brian Kiely spoke on “Racism as a Learned Behaviour”, Manwar Khan told us “Do Not Be a Bystander”, and Malcolm Azania enlightened us about the valuable work of “The Good Fight”. As they do so often, the Raging Grannies were there too with their timely and critical look at current issues.

## INVITATION TO THE ANNUAL GENOCIDE MEMORIAL – (JULY 14, 2019) AUDREY BROOKS

Eleven years ago, with the support of the Unitarian Church of Edmonton and the EIC, Audrey founded the annual Genocide Memorial Service, which witnesses and honours people who died violent deaths because of war and other forms of intentional acts against them. This year the 11th anniversary of the Genocide Memorial Service will be celebrated on Sunday, July 14th at 10:30 a.m. at the Unitarian Church with the theme of Religion and Violence, Hope and Perseverance. All peace - minded persons are invited to attend the service and the potluck celebration afterwards. Bring your prayers, thoughts, and your families to this important event, where those lost through intentional attacks on them are not forgotten. Contact Audrey at [audbrook@telusplanet.net](mailto:audbrook@telusplanet.net) for ways you can participate.

## WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK (WIHW) LEN GIERACH

Since its creation by His Majesty King Abdullah at the Plenary Session of the 65th General Assembly of the United Nations in New York in September, 2010, we have embraced this new celebration as matching what we do. Our already existing concert was the first event we connected, and we've had presentations on the theme of the year as well as displays in city hall. This year we launched a larger effort, obtained declarations from civic leaders, launched a film festival and a short documentary contest for young adults, sponsored a spiritual poetry evening, and promoted various Open Doors events at faith communities. With more lead time and advance planning, perhaps a designated facilitator/coordinator/promoter, we hope to engage more events and to build awareness for WIHW February 1 – 9, 2020.

## NOMINATIONS AND APPROVAL OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS & EXECUTIVE

Board members are elected for a two-year term. The following members were elected or re-elected last term (June 2018) and have indicated their willingness to continue to serve one more year: **Jagjeet Bhardwaj, Avau Fast, Len Gierach, Zohra Husaini, Shiraz Kanji, Nasim Kherani and Virginia Sharek.**

The following members are completing the second year of their term and present themselves for election for another two-year term: **Audrey Brooks, Karen Gall, Farah Jamil, Kara Murray, Pauline Paulson and Kathie Reith.**

**We say ‘Goodbye and thanks for your service’ to Paula Kirman (4 years) and Dinesh Burad (2 years).**

The members of the executive committee will continue serving their current terms, with the exception of a change in Secretary, once ratified by the membership:

**President – Pauline Paulson**

**Vice-President – Guy Blood**

**Secretary – Farah Jamil & Virginia Sharek**

**Treasurer – Kara Murray**

**Past-President – Shiraz Kanji**

Joining the board are Mitra Knight and Manish Shah, returning for another term is Karnail Singh.

## BOARD MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES

**Jagjeet Bhardwaj** is a retired scientist who now devotes her life to full-time volunteer work. For the past thirty - five years she has volunteered for many organizations including the Girl Guides of Canada, Red Cross Society, the Marian Centre and the Millwoods Welcome Centre for Newcomers. Mrs. Bhardwaj is also a member of the Provincial Court Nominating Committee of Alberta. She is a recipient of the Centennial Medal from the Province of Alberta in recognition of her multi-faceted volunteer work. She has also been honoured by the Indo-Canadian Women's Association, with whom she has served as president and is currently treasurer for a third term. She also edited several publications for them. She has been nominated for the YWCA Tribute to Women of Distinction Award.

**Guy W. Blood**, *M.Sc., P.Eng.* has been a member of the Baha'i Faith since 1979, after an extensive search of all possibilities of committing to a spiritual path within a religious community. He has been interested in interfaith harmony for many years and demonstrated that interest early on by producing a weekly community television show in the early 80's, titled Unity in Religion. People from all faith traditions were interviewed using questions that focused on the similarities amongst religious traditions, rather than on the differences. That show ran for 3 years on local cable channel 10. Guy has functioned as a structural engineer since graduating from the University of Calgary with a Master of Science degree in Civil Engineering. Work included designing bridges and buildings, providing educational seminars on cement and concrete, teaching at NAIT, and most recently, structural engineering consulting, before retiring in 2018. He has held leadership positions with the United Nations Association in Canada, several condominium boards, the Edmonton Soaring Club, and the Baha'i Faith, and is currently chairman of the Parkland County Baha'i Assembly. Hobbies have included: golf, curling, photography, and currently flying gliders and tow planes. His wife is Joan Blood.

**Rev. Audrey Brooks** (*M. Ed; M.Div.*) continues to serve as Unitarian Chaplain at the Unitarian Church of Edmonton, 10804 - 119 Street, Edmonton, celebrating over 30 years in community ministry, with a focus on pastoral care and counselling. She values her service on the EIC board with enthusiastic and dedicated members who work for cooperation and friendship with diverse faith groups and many other service organizations.

### Dinesh Burad

**Avau Fast** was born in Baluchistan, a beautiful region north west of India, during the British colonial period. She grew up in an area replete with different ethnicities. Later in India no matter where she lived there were churches, temples, synagogues and mosques around the railway colony where she lived. Before attending boarding school she lived with her aunt, and every morning as they walked to pick up fresh vegetables from the market, at each place of worship on the way, they would stop to pray. She recalls that she really did not mind as this gave her a few seconds to rest her weary feet. Avau looks upon India as an old multicultural country and Canada as a new one. As a born Zoroastrian she is proud to be a part of the Canadian mosaic; studying and working among different faiths and cultures has always been her interest in life.



## BOARD MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES

**Karen Gall** In addition to sitting on this board Karen is Vice President of the Canadian Multicultural Education Foundation. For over a decade, she served as Chair of the annual CMEF Harmony Brunch which commemorates the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Karen continues to assist on the Harmony Brunch organizing committee. Karen is lay leader at Temple Beth Ora, Edmonton's Reform Jewish Synagogue, is a member of the TBO Ritual Committee and a founding member of the Chavurat HaShir singing group. She also serves as an occasional cantorial soloist. Karen focuses her time on successfully building bridges, using her appreciation and awareness of the value of multiculturalism and interfaith connections.

**Rev. Dr. Rob Hankinson** has been associated with the Interfaith Centre since witnessing the signatures of the Centre's founding board members to the Alberta Societies Act application, December 1995. Since then Rob has held a number of positions on the Centre's board, and is now happy to be an honorary member. In December 2012 Rob retired from 40 years ministry with the United Church of Canada. He continues to serve as an On Call Chaplain with the City of Edmonton, and in February 2018 Edmonton Presbytery of the United Church of Canada appointed Rob as its Chaplain. On the North American Interfaith Network (NAIN) Executive Rob serves as a Past Chair and member of the Program Committee.

**Dr. Zohra Husaini** is an educator and human rights activist. She was born in India and migrated to Canada in 1971. She received her Masters of Letters degree from Cambridge University, England in Philosophy and her Ph. D from the University of Alberta in Sociology. She has taught Philosophy, Sociology and Education both in India and in Canada. Her academic work has been in the fields of metaphysical epistemology, education, women's studies and minority and ethnic group's studies. Her community work is extensive in the areas of community action research, human rights, promotion of interfaith relations and advocacy on women's issues. She is Vice-President of the Canadian Council of Muslim Women, on the board of the Interfaith Council of Canada and Past-President of the Indo-Canadian Women's Association. At present she is working on a research project on Muslim Women, Human Rights and Law with the Intercultural Action Committee for Advancement of Women. She has received the Alberta Centennial Medal for her contributions to the life of our City as well as the Senior Women's Award and the Alberta Seniors Minister's Award (2013) for her work with immigrant women.

**Farah Jamil** is a Health Executive, where she has combined her love of science and business to work in several sectors, including: government, health region, non-profit and academia in Canada and the United States. While in school and during her career, she recognized the need for bringing down barriers and building bridges in the realm of interfaith dialogue. Therefore, Farah has volunteered for several interfaith boards, committees and organizations, including: the Edmonton Interfaith Center for Education and Action (EICEA), American Muslim Health Professionals (AMHP), A Common Word Alberta - Christian Muslim Interfaith Dialogue, etc. As a member of EICEA, Farah is committed to "help create a society which respects the richness of human diversity".

## BOARD MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES

**Shiraz Kanji** recently retired having worked in three different careers - professional engineer, Information Technology and recently as financial planning consultant. He has worked in three different countries and speaks five languages. Shiraz is passionate about public speaking and has spoken to a wide variety and sizes of audiences on different subjects including religion and Islam. He has been an active Toastmaster for over 30 years and has conducted many training seminars locally and overseas. He enjoys learning about different faith communities and participating in interfaith dialogue. Shiraz is an active volunteer, having served his Toastmasters District, his professional organizations, church and community organizations. He has also volunteered for the Provincial Government sponsored Board Development Program. His other interests include music, cinema and reading.

**Paula E. Kirman** was raised in a Modern Orthodox Jewish home but has been on a path that has led her to walk between a number of spiritual worlds. She is a writer, editor, photographer, filmmaker, musician, activist, and website/social media consultant. Paula is the Editor of Boyle McCauley News (an inner city community newspaper), an organizer with the Edmonton Coalition Against War and Racism, President of Project Ploughshares Edmonton, recently joined the board of the Edmonton Social Planning Council, and was a lead organizer of the local Women's Marches in Edmonton. She also publishes RadicalCitizenMedia.com, a blog that visually documents Edmonton's activist scene. Paula has received numerous awards for her work and activism, including the John Humphrey Centre's Human Right Champion Award (2016) and the Edmonton Social Planning Council's Award of Merit for Advocacy of Social Justice (2018).

**Rev. Dr. Don Mayne** was born in Edmonton but took his schooling, university, and theological training in Saskatchewan, and his master's degree at Boston University School of Theology. His doctorate is an honorary degree from St. Stephen's College. He was the founding President of the Interfaith Centre, serving for five years, then continued on the Board until he was appointed an honorary member in 2011. He served on the Board of the North American Interfaith Network and was President from 2000 to 2004. He also was a founding member of the No Room In the Inn Committee of the Edmonton and District Council of Churches. They have encouraged the congregations of the Council of Churches to donate to a different community agency each year to assist with poverty and housing issues, and in 19 years they have raised over \$1 million for various service agencies.

**Kara Murray** has 23 years of experience in the not for profit industry in various capacities such as program management, funds development, human resources and governance. She enjoys various projects and initiatives and has done some eclectic ones such as produced a sold out show of the Vagina Monologues at the Jubilee, hosted a 13 episode radio series and ran her own business, Beauty Blends. She has done guest lectures at Grant MacEwan on inclusion and disability services, participated on the board for the Edmonton Sport Council as a director, and ran a million dollar research project for the province. Kara loves collaborating and working together to bring about positive social change and has done so through 25 years of various volunteer work within the community.

## BOARD MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES

**Pauline Paulson** is a Metis Elder who was born and lived most of her life in Manitoba, the young years in Northern Manitoba, adolescence on a farm in the central part of the province and the balance in Winnipeg. Here in Edmonton she divides her time between Native Counseling Services as a spiritual and cultural advisor, the Elders Counsel for Concordia University and Elder in residence for the HIV Drop In Centre. Her formal studies include but are not limited to a diploma in Applied Counselling from the University of Manitoba, another in Child Family and Community Services through Red River Community College (Winnipeg) sponsored by Metis Child and Family Services, and the facilitator training program "In Search of Your Warrior" through Native Counselling Services of Alberta. Her informal education includes over 30 years of participating in aboriginal ceremonies and learning from various Elders, locally, nationally and internationally. She says, "I believe Spirit led me so I can fulfill the reason I was born into this world at this time".

**Kathie Reith** finds serving on the board to be an exciting and interesting opportunity. She works as an educational assistant at Daly Grove School, helping the students achieve their goals. As an active community volunteer she is involved with different causes such as homelessness, food scarcity, being more inclusive in our environments and promoting diversity, among others. In her spare time she enjoys music, reading, poetry and collecting ethnic dolls.

**Virginia Sharek** is an Albertan who attended the U of A. She completed a Bachelor of Education (1967), and a Bachelor of Arts (1990). After graduation she spent a year in London, England. Upon her return to Canada Virginia chose to teach in Calgary for one year. This was followed by a move to Edmonton to teach for an additional two years. Virginia was married in 1973 and chose to stay home to raise her family of two sons. In 1993, Virginia took the opportunity to serve as the ecumenical and interfaith officer for the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton, until her retirement in June of 2013. During those years she held number of positions in the Edmonton Council of Churches, as well as in the Western Diocesan Eparchial Coordinators of Ecumenism. She was the representative for the Ukrainian Catholic Church of Canada on the Canadian Council of Churches, for six years. Being a member of the "No Room in the Inn" committee since 2001 has provided the opportunity to get to know so many dedicated individuals in many organizations that are engaged in providing safe and affordable housing for people experiencing difficulties and hard times. In 2014, Virginia became a lifetime member of the Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action. With appreciation and enthusiasm Virginia, continues to be a part of the activities, educational opportunities and experiences, projects, workshops provided by the staff and members of the Interfaith Centre.

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## 2018 – 2019

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### EXECUTIVE

Pauline Paulson – *President*  
Jagjeet Bhardwaj – *Vice-President*  
Kara Murray – *Treasurer*  
Paula Kirmanj – *Secretary*  
Shiraz Kanji – *Past-President*

### GENERAL BOARD MEMBERS

Guy Blood  
Rev. Audrey Brooks  
Dinesh Burad  
Avau Fast  
Karen Gall  
Len Gierach  
Dr. Zohra Husaini  
Farah Jamil  
Nasim Kherani  
Kathie Reith  
Virginia Sharek

### HONOURARY MEMBERS

Rev. Dr. Rob Hankinson  
Sushil Kalia  
Rev. Dr. Don Mayne  
Jasvant Mehta

Netta Phillet – *Office Coordinator*

## AUDIT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**Edmonton**  
**Interfaith Centre**  
for Education & Action

### AUDIT STATEMENT

Fiscal Year 2018 - 2019

To the Members of the Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education & Action:

The Board of the Edmonton Interfaith Centre has chosen Len Gierach and Virginia Sharek to review the 2018 - 2019 Financial Statements.

Accordingly we have reviewed the TD Canada Trust records, cheques, deposits and bank statements for two accounts:

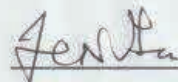
Operating Account # 0873 - 5203980 and

Casino Account # 0873 - 5223027.

We believe that the "Income & Expenses" statements and the "Balance Sheet" accurately represent the financial position of the Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019.

In common with other membership organizations, we could only verify income as deposited.

Signed:



Len Gierach

Dated May 24th, 2019



Virginia Sharek

Dated May 24, 2019

#113, 11148 84 Ave, Edmonton, AB, T6G 0V8  
•Phone: 780-413-6159 •Email: [intfaith@shaw.ca](mailto:intfaith@shaw.ca) •Web: [www.edminterfaithcentre.ca](http://www.edminterfaithcentre.ca)



## AUDIT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS


EDMONTON INTERFAITH CENTRE INCOME & EXPENSE		April 1, 2018 - March 31, 2019
Income		
NAIN Organization Donations		31,500.00
NAIN registrations		26,350.00
Donations from Individuals NAIN		9,535.00
Sales Revenue		13,683.60
City of Edmonton Grants		13,607.00 2 years
Donations from Organizations		8,225.00 includes \$ 8125 United Church (5 quarters)
Donations from Individuals		1,927.74
Membership Dues		1,925.00
Edmonton Community Foundation		1,204.00
Concert		1,249.00
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>109,206.34</b>
Expense		
NAIN Conference Expenses		43,507.72
Salary		29,707.42 includes one time bonus - \$2500
Rent Expense		8,318.98 8 months, 4 months from casino
Calendars		7,523.99
Office		2,792.40
World Interfaith Harmony Week		2,708.75
Concert		1,211.55 \$ 900 more paid from casino account, \$600 city refund owing
Paypal Charges		410.54 mostly NAIN registrations
Bank Charges		81.24
<b>Total Expense</b>		<b>96,262.59</b>
<b>Net Income</b>		<b>12,943.75</b>
Reviewed and Approved by		
Len Gierach		Virginia Sharek
May 24th, 2019		May 24th, 2019

## AUDIT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**EDMONTON INTERFAITH CENTRE  
CASINO ACCOUNT April 1, 2018 - March 31, 2019**

Balance Forward	57,242.99	
	<b>INCOME</b>	<b>EXPENSE</b>
FOR ADVISORS FROM AGLC	2384.90	
PAY ADVISORS		2402.40
NORTH AMERICAN INTERFAITH NETWORK (host)		22353.85
PARLIAMENT OF THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS (attend)		8934.91
RENT (4 months)		4033.44
"INTERFAITH IN EDMONTON" VIDEO		3000.00
WEBSITE & PROMO		1634.21
DIRECTORS & OFFICERS INSURANCE		750.00
MEMBERSHIP IN NAIN		125.58
CONCERT		800.00
BANK CHARGES		89.25
		<b>44123.64</b>
<b>BALANCE FORWARD &amp; INCOME</b>	<b>59,627.89</b>	
<b>LESS EXPENSES</b>	<b>44,123.64</b>	
<b>BANK BALANCE MARCH 31/19</b>	<b>15,504.25</b>	

**Reviewed and Approved by**



**Len Gierach**

**May 24th, 2019**



**Virginia Sharek**

**May 24th, 2019**

## AUDIT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### EDMONTON INTERFAITH CENTRE BALANCE SHEET MARCH 31st, 2019

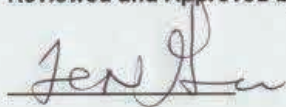
#### ASSETS

TD Bank Regular Account	41,213.01
TD Bank Casino Account	15,504.25
GST recoverable	2,431.57
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>59,148.83</b>

#### EQUITY

Restricted Funds	15,504.25
Unrestricted Net Assets	30,700.83
Net Income	12,943.75
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>59,148.83</b>

Reviewed and Approved by



Len Gierach  
May 24th, 2019



Virginia Sharek  
May 24th, 2019

## AUDIT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### NORTH AMERICAN INTERFAITH NETWORK CONNECT 2018

#### INCOME

INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS	22,830.75
ORGANIZATION DONATIONS	32750.00
REGISTRATIONS (FULL & PART TIME & YOUNG ADULT)	35,754.30
DALLAIRE TALK & BANQUET ONLY	2647.00
SALES	558.00

**TOTAL INCOME 94540.05**

#### EXPENSES PAID FROM OPERATING ACCOUNT

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH	300.00
G. MACEWAN FOOD	11,386.75
COORDINATOR	6300.00
COAST EDMONTON PLAZA ROOMS	15205.48
BANQUET EXTRAS	1136.22
TOUR BUSES	3654.00
SPEAKERS, ELDERS, ENTERTAINMENT, HONOURARIA	12218.43
DESIGN & PRINT MATERIAL	1598.03
U OF A GARDEN & INCIDENTALS	2096.16
LT. GEN. DALLAIRE (PARTIAL)	3324.26
EVENTBRITE & PAYPAL CHARGES	149.54

**57368.87**

#### EXPENSES PAID FROM CASINO PROCEEDS

LT. GEN. DALLAIRE (PARTIAL)	16012.50
GRANT MACEWAN ROOMS	10056.75
DESIGN & PRINT MATERIAL	1372.30
WEBSITE DESIGN AND MAINTENANCE	1963.06
SPEAKER	3987.50

**33392.11**

**TOTAL EXPENSES 90760.98**

**NET PROCEEDS 3779.07**



# EDMONTON INTERFAITH CENTRE FOR EDUCATION & ACTION

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Website - [edminterfaithcentre.ca](http://edminterfaithcentre.ca)

## ANNUAL REPORT

2018/2019