



"A safe and caring place for all to learn"

THOM TIMES

"The End-of-Year Edition"

@thomtimesnews



All unmarked photos and art have been drawn/taken by : Hannah H., Grade 9 (She/Her)

Why, hello there!

Are you a student or staff member interested in having your work in the school paper?

We'd love to get in touch with you and see your art, know your thoughts, and hear anything else you would like to share!

Send us a message through :

our Instagram : ***@thomtimesnews***

our email : ***thomtimesnewspaper@gmail.com***

You can also reach out to us in person

The End

Ben S., Grade 9 (He/Him)

Here it is. The last edition of the *Thom Times Newspaper* of the 2020-21 school year. It's sad, but life must go on. And hey, it's grad season and Walmart now has grad cakes - I like the extra icing. I mean, you probably didn't do much this year because of the circumstances, but that's okay because chances are your next stage of life is going to be even better.



Complete topic change, but let's discuss yearbook quotes. They should, in theory, represent the person, but knowing yourself is hard. So I'm wondering if there is a "pick for me" option, kind of like a random quote generator? My



guess is most grad quotes will mention Covid in all kinds of ways. Chances are you're going to need to explain to your future kids what Covid was when they're looking at your yearbook.

Also, chances are by the time you are reading this, the vaccine has been distributed so that's great - we are finally getting to the end of this, even if it felt like it would never end. Sure, good things end, but bad things do too. Besides, it's not like you won't have your memories to accompany you.

It's honestly amazing we are all getting through this *pandemified* school year. That's right, this year has been so wild that I am making up words. But trust me, even if nobody says it, they are proud of you for making it through this wacky school year. We did this thing, even if it was incredibly difficult, so we can probably do anything.

Thanks for reading the paper this year. We all deeply appreciate it.

My Experience of Growing Up Canadian

Isaac M., Grade 12 (He/They)

The idea of ‘growing up Canadian’ is a phrase that brings a great deal of thoughts to mind. On one hand, I am grateful for the services that are available to me and for the things that I have been able to achieve because of them. On the other hand, these services are not equally accessible, nor as helpful to everyone as they were for me growing up and in the current day. The services I once thought were there to protect and help guide me, turn out to have the exact opposite impact (fear, anger, pain, and death) on people with darker skin than mine, people who present more femininely than I do, and people who are more disabled than I am. While I now understand this is the reality, the idea of how my privilege has affected me in my past and how it will affect my future, especially living and growing up in Canada, has been a question that I have been asking myself for a while, a question I will be asking myself for the rest of my life.



Growing up, I was bullied for being the weird, fat kid in the back corner. Because of these years of bullying, I was not particularly fond of myself. While my peers were not fond of me for reasons mostly out of my control, I had my book smarts to help me through school and to help me bond with my teachers who were often my only friends. Because I wanted to have friends my age, I quickly learned how to blend in and make sure people no longer saw the ‘weird’ things I would do like daydream or fidget. At school, this was especially important because it meant less attention was put on me, thus I was hurt less. My homelife was not the best either. Similar to the kids at school, my dad would get mad at me a lot, often for reasons I did not understand. His emotional and psychological abuse lasted until the day I ended the relationship between the two of us in February 2020, meaning I would no longer have contact with him in any form. While my relationship with my mother was not as bad, there were things she would say that, when looking back, I am confused by. For example, whenever I would be in the car with her, if we saw a police vehicle she would tell me,

“now we know we’re safe”. At the time I believed her and began understanding that the police and other front line workers were there to protect us and prevent bad things from happening to members of our community. As I look back on that innocent and ignorant period of my life, I am not sure if the things that I believed were all completely true, or if the truth behind them was only true because I



benefited from them. In other words, was my trust and hope a feeling shared equally by everyone these systems affected, or because I was (and still am) male-presenting, tall, and most importantly white?

Because of the pandemic and the lockdown that quickly encompassed all of our lives, I found the opportunity to try and slowly peel back the layers of armour that I had built up to protect myself over the years; because I am neurodivergent, queer, non-binary, and plus-sized, I have had to build brick walls around who I actually am to minimize the harm that other people could effectuate on me, which has ultimately led to no one knowing who I truly am out of fear of being rejected and misunderstood. For example, I mask (*a process in which an individual changes or "masks" their natural personality to conform to social pressures, abuse or harassment - Wikipedia*) my OCD traits because people have called them *weird* and *strange* in the past. The same goes for my tics and my difficulties with attention and memory. By masking, I have created this alternate persona that people know me by that is only partially real. I change the way I speak, the way I move, and how I present myself to others, making sure I seem engaged and happy most of the time. Because I have had time during the lockdowns, I have been able to consume content by people more similar to myself, I have been able to figure out who I truly am and become more comfortable with it. Since returning to school, I have begun trying to show that more and more, trying to keep in mind that if I had seen other people like me growing up, it would have helped me to avoid some of the difficulties of simply living.



Another aspect of my introspection has been seriously examining my privilege and how it has affected me and those around me. One thing I have learned from this is that in Canada, we often do not take our racism as seriously as we need to because we are constantly comparing our racist actions to those of our counterparts in the U.S.A.. This is an issue. Rather than comparing our actions to another nation, we should be examining the issues that plague our country on the federal, provincial, municipal, and interpersonal levels. For example, instead of pointing fingers and saying, “well you had slaves and don’t care about Black people”, we should be acting on the anti-black, Asian, Latinx, and Indigenous racism that plagues every aspect of our country. The latter is the most important because it is the Indigenous



people whose livelihoods have been stolen from them by white colonizers. Between “1863 [and] 1998, more than 150,000 Indigenous children were taken from their families and placed in [residential] schools” (BBC). While this number is horrific, the complete number of indigenous people affected by residential schools and other extremely traumatic events caused by the Canadian government and churches of all kinds is “1.67 million” (Government of Canada/ Gouvernement du Canada) or 100% of ‘Canada’s Indigenous population. It is not the responsibility of Indigenous people to teach our government what to do but rather for the Canadian government to accept that

they have taken part in centuries of genocide towards it’s own people, followed by immediate action to repair the damage they have caused.

As far as learning about how the words and actions I use affect others, I have learned that I have unconscious biases towards people of colour, feminine presenting people, and those who have been incarcerated, among others. Because I am working on being more aware of my place in our society, it is my responsibility to examine how and

why I do things like ‘mansplain’ concepts that have just been explained well, or how I speak over my peers of colour and who were assigned female at birth. This has led me



to realize that I am indeed part of the problem. Though I tick some marginalized group boxes, I still present as a tall white guy, which comes with a significant amount of privilege.

As of right now, I am in a place where I do my best to consume content from varying marginalized groups, including: people of colour, people with disabilities, queer people, and plus-sized people. As a white person, it is my responsibility to change my actions that negatively impact marginalized groups around me, as well as to educate

myself; it is not the responsibility of the oppressed to teach their oppressors. I think it is so important to do this because for roughly the first 15 years of my life, I was only shown one idea of how people are supposed to be. However, if the only people on Earth were nice, straight, white, and able-bodied Canadians, the world would be incomplete. One of the most important things I have learned from these newly found

content creators is how severely capitalism, the patriarchy, and white supremacy affect them in their daily lives. For example, if we did not live in a capitalistic society, there would not be world hunger, poverty, nor ‘developing nations’, all of which more heavily affect marginalized groups. If we all began learning from, listening to, uplifting, and understanding the voices from these groups, the world would be better as a whole, something I have learned on a personal level. Being diagnosed with OCD and having tics, while now going through the



diagnostic process for ADHD has been extremely difficult on my mental health, especially taking the pandemic and school into consideration. However, these creators have taught me that being neurodivergent is not a hindrance, but rather one of the best aspects of who I am because it allows me to see things and communicate in a more direct way. While they have taught me this excellent lesson over the past year, I know that this hasn’t been the case for all, which brings me sadness; we should all be

earnestly looking into ourselves to find our flaws, seeing how they affect others and modifying them so that we stop hurting those around us.

While I have grown up Canadian, it is not the only identity I place upon myself, nor is it something I find a great deal of pride in. Though growing up Canadian has shaped who I am, it has been my privilege in our Canadian society that has shaped me the most. Although I will never know to what extent it has shaped my life, I can say that I am actively working to be better. During every minute of my life, I am doing my best to educate myself and others about how as Canadians, we have a responsibility to do better and to create a world where people are not persecuted for the colour of their skin, who they love, how they identify, their size, or how their brain functions. It is my responsibility as a white, XY person to educate myself on how my actions affect others and how I can change them for the betterment of those around me, because if I want to see change happen, intersectionality will be vital.



Sources :

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How to Practice Emotional First Aid by : Guy Winch

Marjan R., Grade 12 (She/Her)

“You can’t treat a psychological wound if you don’t know even know you are injured”

May marks the beginning of Mental Health Awareness Month and establishes the need to raise awareness about the inequalities in treating mental health afflictions and physical health problems. These inequalities are seen through the underfunding of mental health services, persistent stigmas that underpin the importance of mental health, and the lack of resources to treat mentally ill patients who pose a great risk to the well-being of society at large. The message is unequivocal yet it is



largely overshadowed: **we need free mental health care services and it should be delivered to everyone with utmost equality and integrity. Mental health is just as important as physical health; there should be no discrimination between them.**

According to CAMH (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health), “One in two Canadians have—or have had—a mental illness by the time they reach 40 years of age.” In fact, “according to the World Health Organization around 450 million people currently struggle with mental illness, making it the leading cause of disability worldwide.” These statistics are a tribute to people around the world whose quality of life has been impacted due to the lack of awareness and lack of attention to mental health services. It goes without saying that someone close to us has suffered from mental illnesses and ensuring they are being heard is not always easy.

Guy Winch is a renowned psychologist who offers a promising take on how to practice emotional aid in times of depression, anxiety, heartbreak, low-self esteem and many other problems. Relying on ourselves and trusting ourselves with the process of healing is just as important as seeking help from others. The human mind oscillates between a reckless race and a tedious path to reach our assumed sanity and reconcile with ourselves. Yet, we often sacrifice our self-esteem and our identity to claim this

divine image of happiness when its true essence is ambiguous and undetermined. **It's okay to give yourself permission to practise self-care and love yourself, despite making mistakes. It's okay to take some time off. Your feelings are valid and deserve acknowledgement.** Injury to your mind is not worth the cost of what impact it will bear to your self-esteem and overall identity.

TREAT EMOTIONAL BLEEDING

Often a series of negative thoughts hinder us from being productive and remain committed to our daily tasks. It can come in the form of rumination (playing repetitive thoughts over and over) and overthinking which can be paralyzing to the individual. One can actively deter these thoughts by thinking about whether the issue they are ruminating about will impact



them in 5 to 10 years time? Or, what are the consequences from engaging in rumination and is it worth the cost to their mental health? These questions should help prioritize your thoughts and reach a productive solution. According to OnTheGoga, “You can also distract yourself with engaging activities like hanging out with your friends or family and doing fun activities.”



According to Winch, “Rumination involves a repetitive focus on negative thoughts and memories of all kinds (not just related to heartbreak) that can easily become habitual and lead to elevated risk of clinical depression. The key to breaking free of rumination is to counteract its negative pull by fostering ways of thinking that are strictly nonjudgmental. The most potent and successful of these techniques is called mindfulness meditation.”

MONITOR DAILY THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS

Rakesh Kiran Tejomurthula wrote about “5 Essentials of Emotional Hygiene”. His advice: “Similar to how we keep ourselves checked on our physical health, do the same for your mental health” by journaling or visualizing through an image board. For some, writing things down or using visual symbols are an effective way for them to communicate confidently. Do what suits you the best. This will help remove the burden of your thoughts and will allow you to visually see how your mind is processing your thoughts. If you find any trigger points (habitual thoughts, thoughts of committing suicide or doing self harm) that appear worrisome, do contact the healthline or schedule a meeting with your family doctor to come to a productive solution. According to Rakesh, “If you keep any symptoms unattended for too long, the wound will dive deep and may become chronic.”



Common emotional wounds to be aware of (according to Guy Winch)

1. **Failure:** *Once your mind is convinced that you are indeed a failure, you will feel paralyzed and refrain from doing anything productive*
2. **Loneliness:** *Chronic loneliness can cause debilitating physical health illnesses like high cholesterol, heart diseases, and even death.*
3. **Rejection:** *Ruminating over “our faults and shortcomings can destabilize our self-esteem and worsen our depleting image of ourselves ... One should first find ways to recover their self-esteem as it is the only vehicle that can push someone to get back on track ... Treat yourself with compassion as you would to a friend.”*
4. **Rumination:** *Chewing over the same thoughts over and over again in a linear fashion can make the person prone to extreme anxiety, clinical depression, and cardiovascular diseases. More often than not ruminating can feel like we are doing something productive when in fact we are not. (Source: [Guy Winch](#))*

PRACTICE COMPASSION

Guy Winch comments that “The battle ahead requires courage and determination but also knowledge and awareness: We have to understand the ways our mind is working against us and take steps to counter the unhealthy urges and habits that are setting us back. We have to fight the addictive tendency to keep those whom we have lost in our lives, whether via memories or reminders. We have to rebuild our self-esteem by practicing self-compassion. We have to adopt mindfulness to battle obsessive thoughts of our loss. We have to recognize the voids that have been created in our lives and take steps to fill them. We have to reconnect to our core so we can get back in touch with the essence of what makes us who we are.” Practicing compassion can be done by treating yourself with indulgences like chocolates or doing something that gives you joy. It can also be done by doing something nice for others and building your confidence as you do more good.



Please reach out to someone you trust or schedule a meeting with our lovely guidance counsellors here at École Thom Collegiate. They have dedicated themselves to help students in need and to bring forth an inclusive school community.



Check out these links for more information: https://www.ted.com/talks/guy_winch_why_we_all_need_to_practice_emotional_first_aid/footnotes?language=en#-47305 ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vBqoA1V6Fgg&t=791s>

Credit: <https://www.slideshare.net/rakeshkiran7799/5-essentials-of-emotional-hygiene> ; <https://www.camh.ca/en/driving-change/the-crisis-is-Real> ; <https://www.onthegoga.com/blog/2017/9/28/emotional-first-aid>

What Being a Thom Senior Meant to Me

Emmalea H., Grade 12 (She/Her)

If I am being honest, I wish I didn't have to write this article, because the moment I begin, reality sets in. As of writing this, I only have 10 more days of walking through the halls, seeing all my fellow Trojans, and feeling that overwhelming sense of growing up.

When I remember back to grade nine, that was a year of my life that I was not excited for. All because I knew it meant a new chapter of my



life, and just starting at a fresh school. Now I can look back at that year and think of all the memories I would have missed out on if I didn't go to Thom. Without my grade nine year, I would have never met some of my friends, whom I am still friends with to this day. I would never have made my way through the AP English Program



with the help of Mr. Atchison and Mrs. Lenihan. I would never have pursued my passion for music and singing through after-school classes without Thom. Without École Thom Collegiate, I would not be where I am today.

As a grade nine and even a grade ten student, you will often think you can't wait to be a senior, and can't wait to graduate, and finally be on your own. As a grade eleven student you will thrive on the idea of almost being done highschool, but be careful what you ask for. Don't rush these four years; they are already speeding by, even if you don't think so. As a senior, I want to pass on the advice to live life, enjoy the moments, and experience new things! I can certainly say that my high school experience would have been boring if I didn't live it up!

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As a senior getting ready to graduate this June, I look back on moments like having



potlucks with my SRC friends at lunch hour. I think of English classes with Atchison, and all the mini-embarrassing moments in those hours. Watching the “Into the Woods” musical production, and getting to cheer on my fellow classmates! A favourite memory across the board would have to be “Beat Cancer” week, especially the chili competitions or jail break day,

which is paying to get out of class. Another favourite of mine, and many others, would have to be when Mr. Bekker and Mr. Balas performed a lip sync battle, singing “A whole New World” on a magic carpet. Oh yeah, that reminds me of the time Atchison and previous Thom Graduate, Austin Herndier, wrestled in front of everyone! And we can’t forget about the daily mental breakdowns everyone has had in and out of a math class. Every spring fling and winter formal. Being a part of the École Thom Collegiate Music Program has awarded me some amazing memories from the sliding drum set, talent show, and music trips to Edmonton. A memory I never thought I could have was when the whole school joined together singing a song; that was an amazing moment!



High school is a chapter in your life that you want to rush through when you start, but by the end, you wish you could just have been given a speeding ticket for going too fast. In hindsight it really does go too fast. Being a senior is something that you dream to be! But the moment you’re in it, you wish you could walk through those halls for the first time again. I could not be more grateful to be in this moment and all the memories I have made during these fast four years.

I am a couple weeks away from walking across that stage, and I am filled with joy, but also anxiety. So, I guess what I am trying to say is to always live for the memories, live for the struggles, and to just soak it all up!

Once a Trojan, always a Trojan!

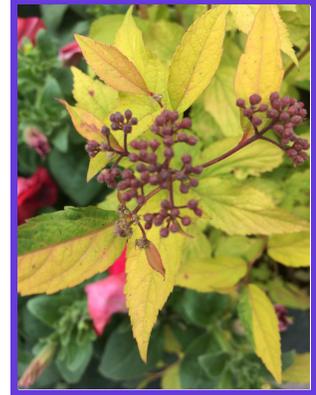
What Are Your Summer Plans?

Emmalea H., Grade 12 (She/Her)

Helloooo Trojans, it's your girl Emmalea! I never thought this day would come, but the 2020-21 school year is about to come to an end. So in the spirit of summer, I asked all of our Trojan teachers what their summer plans are!

Ms. Nicholson :

Moving to a new house and swimming in my new pool. Hopefully spending lots of time outside with friends and family, and going to the family cabin in B.C.



Mr. Atchison :

Hopefully go to B.C. and Montréal and hang out at home (with my donkey)

Mr. Audette :

Camping with my family/painting houses



M. Clément :

Spend time relaxing on the beach

Mr. Houston :

Finish the kitchen cupboards.

Mr. Bekker :

Mostly yard work, I'd like to visit my parents in Saskatoon if the pandemic permits!

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Ms. Kodas :

Gardening and socially distanced outdoor coffee with a friend! I miss people!



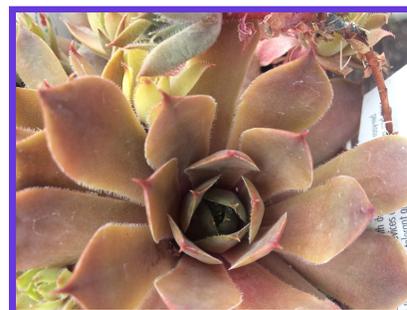
Mrs. Gibson :

My summer plans are to sit back, relax, and enjoy the sunshine at the lake with my girls. Most days are spent at the beach and the evenings around the campfire. My biggest wish for summer is that it is safe to hit the road to see some of our extended family members that we haven't seen since the pandemic started.



Ms. Kuntz :

I will be spending as much of the summer outdoors with my daughters. We will be camping, biking, hiking, swimming, exploring, and visiting friends and family as much as the pandemic allows. Oh, and relaxing on my unicorn floaty as much as possible, of course!



Miss. Edey :

Mostly, I like to stick around home, walk my dogs, visit with friends, and work in my yard and garden, but I am



looking forward to meeting my family at Cypress Hills. We did this two years ago and had a blast. We competed with the go-karts, went on a trail ride, walked the trails, and ate together. I'm looking forward to seeing my siblings, my nieces and nephews and my great nieces and nephews. I look forward to laughter and fun in August.



Ms. Powers :

Lots of fishing!

Henderson :

I will be assessing hail damage to farmers' crops again this summer.

It takes me all over Saskatchewan and I absolutely love it! I will also be spending time with my parents and puppies at

their new cabin on Last Mountain Lake.

Merkster :

Hanging out with my children, going on lots of bike rides and working in our garden.



Mme. Campbell :

Teach French, tend to my garden, and go camping with my family.



Mrs. Armstrong :

Hopefully travelling to see my parents in BC, moving my son to Lethbridge, getting out on our bikes and kayaks, seeing if I can survive tenting again, and visiting with friends (in person!).

Mrs. MacAulay :

Going to my cottage, take my kids wakeboarding on our boat, and watching my boys play baseball and football.



Mrs. McCredie :

Camping, hanging out with my dog and husband, and farming.



Ms Grabka :

I hope to spend many hot days at Katepwa Lake. I love to kayak on the lake and in the evening sit around the fire. We are hoping the travel restrictions are lifted, so we can visit family in Edmonton and Calgary.

Blondeau :

Going to the Lake and getting married on July 17th.
(*Congrats, Blondeau!!*)



Mr. Flood :

I plan to spend as much time outside as possible: camping, hiking, kayaking, biking, gardening, and creating art. Most summers I drive to the mountains in my native B.C. to do some camping and hiking. This year, I plan to check out some of Saskatchewan's beautiful hiking trails and drive to places I've never been.



Ms Lenihan :

Relaxing in my backyard, golfing, going to the park with my kids, and getting to finally hang out with extended family!

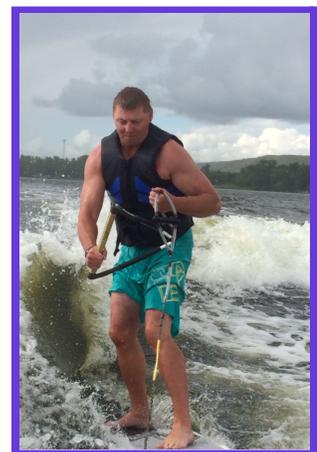


Mrs "Front" :

I'm going to hang out with my new best friend TJ.

Mrs. Armstrong :

Hopefully travelling to see my parents in BC, moving my son to Lethbridge, getting out on our bikes and kayaks, seeing if I can survive tenting again, and visiting with friends (in person!).



Mr. Babcock :

Waterski and golf everyday

Ms. Tomyn :

Spending time at the lake



École Thom Collegiate



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Dear Parents, Guardians and Students:

The end of Quint 5 is approaching and final exams are scheduled for June 23rd and 24th at 9:00 am and 12pm. Because of these, we want to remind you that our Thom Student Services team is available to students and families during regular school hours.

Students who require personal, crisis, academic, career or post secondary counselling can reach out to a member of the Student Services team by email or phone to make arrangements for support:

Lori Benoit – lori.benoit@rbe.sk.ca (306) 523-3614 Personal / Crisis Counselling

Claudine Neetz – claudine.neetz@rbe.sk.ca (306) 523-3608 Personal / Crisis Counselling

Bonnie Baron-Williams – bonnie.baronwilliams@rbe.sk.ca (306) 523-3607 Career / Post-Secondary

Luke Blondeau – lucas.blondeau@rbe.sk.ca (306) 523-3615 Indigenous Advocate

In the event of a crisis or emergency, please contact Mobile Crisis (306-757-0127), the Police Department (306-777-6500) or call 911.

Please also consider the following community resources that are available to you and your family during this time:

- Kids Help Phone 1-800-668-6868, text 686868 or connect via Facebook Messenger • 211 Saskatchewan call 211, text 211, or visit www.sk.211.ca
- Regina Crisis / Suicide Line (306) 525-5333
- Child & Youth Services (306) 766-6700
- Planned Parenthood (306) 522-0902
- Sexual Assault Line (306) 352-0434
- Sexual Health / STI Clinic (306) 766-7788
- Social Services Income Assistance (306) 787-3700
- Street Culture Youth Shelter (306) 545-3445
- Family Service Regina (306) 757-6675

School-Based Websites and Social Media:

- <https://thomcollegiate.rbe.sk.ca>
- <https://thomcollegiate.rbe.sk.ca/guidance>
- Facebook and Instagram @*thomcollegiateguidance*

Sincerely,

Thom Student Services Team

On behalf of all of the contributors of École Thom Collegiate's *Thom Times Newspaper*, thank you for the support and for taking time out of your day to read our work!

Thank you to Hannah H., Ben S., Isaac M., Marjan R., Emmalea H., Ms. Kuntz and all of the participating teachers for making this edition of the *Thom Times Newspaper* possible!