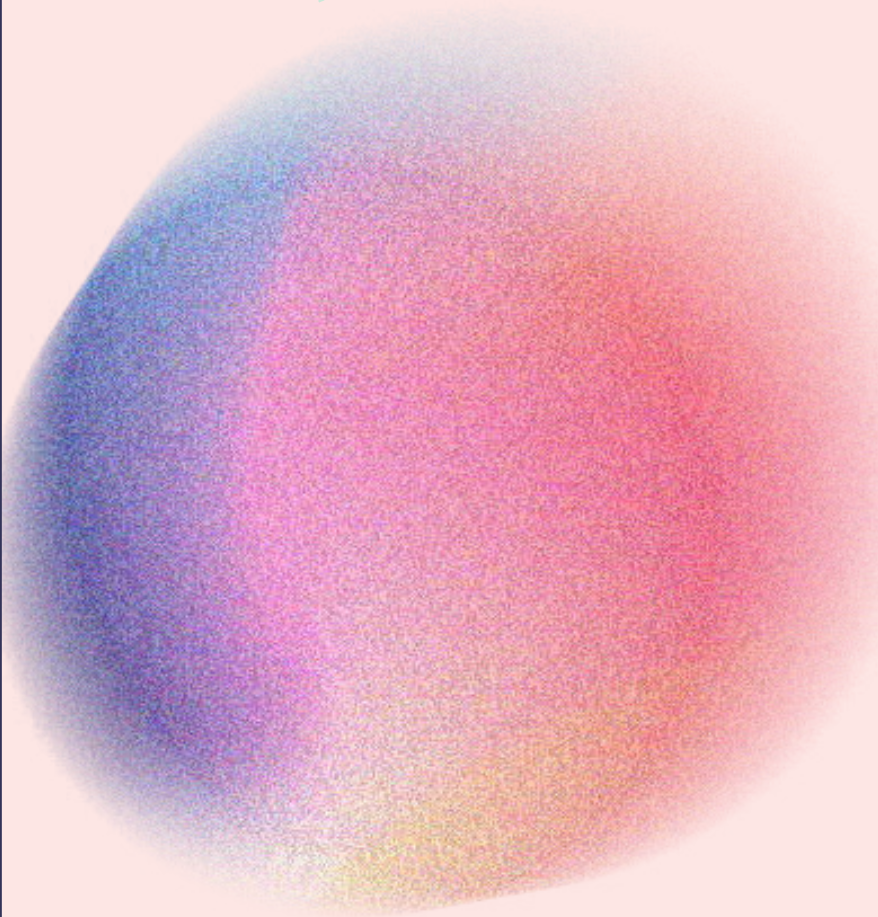
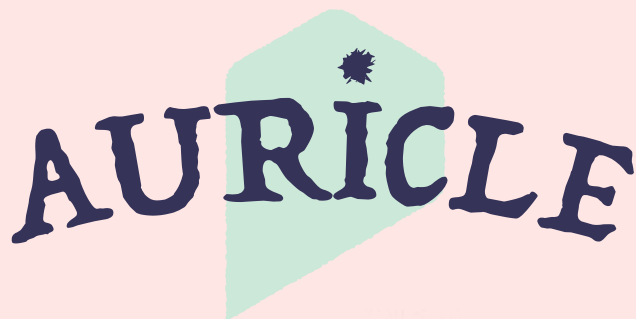


STORY PACK 1

2023



Stations

The stories in this pack are a sampling of 175+ stories collected on busses, LRTS and at transit stations -- including Churchill, Jasper Place, and Clareview. They offer a window into Edmontonians' everyday lives, and help us appreciate the wide range of experiences! There is no single story of transit & wellbeing. What different themes and patterns do you spot?



Churchill Station

4 of 43 stories collected at Churchill Station

Churchill Station: Story 12

I was once around transit... I had this one incident on the LRT. I pressed the emergency passenger alarm. I had my boyfriend with me at the time. My boyfriend was having an overdose. I checked on my boyfriend's pulse and it was really low. I couldn't feel his pulse. I tried waking him up a little bit. So I went to go get security. And I pressed the emergency passenger alarm. The train driver said, 'What's your emergency?' I said my boyfriend is having an overdose. The driver said, 'We're almost at the next station; I'll come back and check on him then.' Then the peace officers were called. The overdose gave him naloxone. And then he woke up and started freaking out and saying, 'why did you call them?' This was 5 or 6 months ago. At MacEwan. I've gotten banned from transit a lot.

...My experience made me feel awesome. In January. What made me feel awesome? How nice the peace officers were to me. Sometimes they would give me a ride home if I was too high. Normally I don't get drunk unless my ex-boyfriend...

Churchill Station: Story 9

Well, seeing the riff-raff and all that, it just, it gets my guard up, you know? A little more in self-defense mode type of thing. Just you know aware of my surroundings a little more. I've heard a lot of stories of the riff-raff, and that's the plan, get rid of the riff-raff. And the only way you can get rid of riff-raff is love. Everybody needs love. A lot of these people are hurt or sad. And they think no one loves them and they're mad at themselves for what they do. It's part of what they do. So that's why we're gonna need a different outreach team... When we get better, more successful, we'll be doing like YouTube channels, we're going to be selling merchandise, all geared towards helping the environment of the addicts and the homeless, basically. And that's the long term goal. Short-term goal is just getting awareness out. Like I make a fresh batch of bannock every day, and I go out and I get donations in exchange for that or whatever. Just to get things off the ground. I go all over. That's why I love the convenience of the transit.

Churchill Station: Story 68

So I was on a bus recently and I had recently become homeless and the bus security was helping me figure out a way in order to be able to get housing, to be able to reach all the different organizations, to help us out. He said if I'm ever feeling stuck and don't know what to do just to click on that emergency call button, and it's not just for problems. People will come in, they'll be able to help you find different organizations for you to reach out to, so I thought that was pretty cool.

Churchill Station: Story 83

Well at the beginning of this term in September, I started taking the bus at a particular time. And this one particular lady made it her mission to ensure that I had a space in the disabled transit section on the bus. I don't 100% need it but I definitely show signs of needing it. And it was, given the number of youth that tend to ignore the needs of the disabled, it was very pleasant to see this lady who was probably in her 40s, let's say, making sure that someone would vacate a seat for me. I have since seen her on the bus on a regular basis. And every time that we do share the bus, she makes sure that someone gets up or there's space on the bus - the seating for me. And that's pretty much it.



Jasper Place Station

4 of 44 stories collected at Jasper Place Station

Jasper Place Station: Story 38

I've been finding like the whole transit system with the changes there, it's been affecting my family and I, transportation-wise, in a negative way there. Because, I used to go on at 156. And it doesn't go on there anymore ...because if we want to go to Meadowlark Shopping Centre, we have to come to Jasper Place Transit Centre, go to the West Edmonton Mall, then take a bus from West Edmonton Mall going to Meadowlark Shopping Centre, and in that time, a person could walk from where we live to Meadowlark Shopping Centre. We're like, hey, alright, at 99 Ave there and 156, so to go from there to Maylark Shopping Center is about a half hour walk there, if you're not like taking any detours there. And to go from where we left to here, to West Edmonton Mall and Meadowlark Shopping Centre, you're probably about doubling your time there.

It happened just last week. I was just wanting to do some shopping at Walmart. To get there, I had to take a lot of busses, a lot of public transportation by myself. Just to get some milk there. Everybody has the place that they like to shop there. Some people would go to Sobey's or Save On Foods. Myself and my partner, we like to go to Walmart and Superstore for shopping.

Jasper Place Station: Story 35

I was going to shelter, and they said at that time, because it was Covid and shit, they said that it was free to go to shelter, so when I was going to shelter... The bus driver started going and fucking he was being an asshole, he said, 'I'm going to report you to the police for being on the bus.' I'm like, go ahead, I'm going to shelter. When the next bus stop came, he pushed on the breaks real fucking hard and I went flying over like that. And I was like, what the fuck is wrong with you? And I went to the front of the bus and I was like, "How the fuck would you like it if somebody did that to you just because I'm native? That's racist." And like that's stupid to say right, but it just felt like he didn't even want to give me a ride because I was homeless and broke, I don't know, he just made a really big deal out of it right? That was not necessary. He was trying to act like he was going to get out of his seat and then, I pretended, I was in camera and I was like that [makes gesture]. Like I didn't punch him, but I pretended to. I wouldn't because he seems intimidating, so like, I got charges for that actually. And then I got off the bus. I didn't hit him, but he said that I did assault him though so I went to jail for 3 months for that.

Like bus drivers, some of them are nice, they give you a free bus ride -- bus fares are expensive, especially for a limited time, like you don't even get a bus ticket, you just pay it once. Then again it does cost the bus gas and stuff. When you're living low-income, you're able to get a bus pass through the assistance program. But you need all your IDs to get on that and it's hard for a lot of people on the street to get all their IDs.

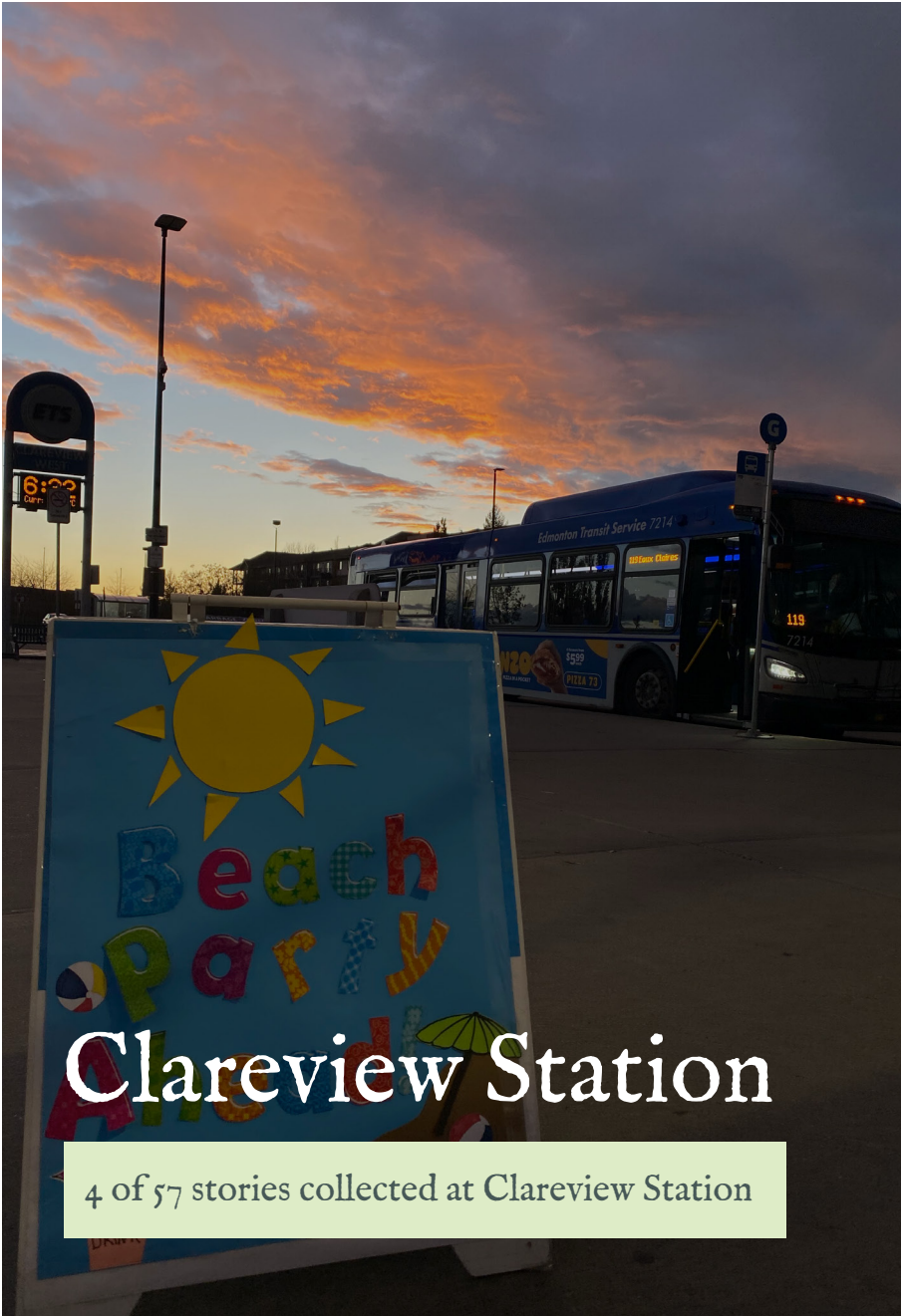
Jasper Place Station: Story 114

I guess showing my friend for the first time ever how to take the bus. Like she's never been on the bus, ever. So last Friday, we're going to watch the Five Nights at Freddy's movie. If you know the lore and stuff and the whole story, you will have a good time there. If you don't, it'll be kind of confusing. But um, yeah, she's never been on ETS before. Because she's always lived close to school. Miss Entitled! [laughter]. And I shared some of my horror stories with her. She was kind of scared to take it. But I was like, I'm gonna take it with you. Like, help you with it. It was fun, taking it with her. Because I was like, oh, it's for her first time! She's kind of excited, but also scared at the same time. Like, this is what I have to go through every day, twice a day... Yeah, usually whenever I go home or go to school, I never have anyone with me, it's just by myself.

Jasper Place Station: Story 8

Oh, good. Yeah, well, it started last September or last August. I went away to work for two weeks in Rimbey. Okay. And the place I was renting from, it's under Saamson Management, which by the way, they're not very good, but I've always paid my rent on time, it was always there, never faltered, right? Never late. So I came home, middle of August. I came back and my bathroom was leaking sewage on the ceiling, right. So I told them about it. They never got around to fixing it until about a month later, and I lost work over it, like that... during those months, those are the times when I'm the busiest working. Anyway, well, they finally got around to fixing it. But the manager of the building came in, and she told me I had to vacate my apartment right now, in order for them to fix it. So I'm just like, what? You know? And she was being totally unfair. So she evicted me over this. It wasn't my responsibility to do. She even got away with keeping my damage [deposit]. That really pisses me off too, see. Right now, I'm in a hotel. And I've been waiting for like over five years to get my license back. I'm finally doing it this weekend. It's in St. Albert. It's a two day course, right? But in the meantime, I'm staying in that hotel and I don't know, I've just been thrown a real loop. You know? I just need to get my license back. And all my stuff is back in storage...

If I had my license back, working wouldn't be a problem. Because I'd be out there right away. I'm sure there's outfits in Grand Prairie because they're always screaming for good workers, right? And they're very hard to find, especially someone who's got over 30 years oilfield experience. I only had to live here just to get some things done. And now I'm just about ready to go.



Clareview Station

4 of 57 stories collected at Clareview Station

Clareview Station: Story 125

Okay, so I remember taking transit, I think I've taken transit for probably about 34 years now. And I just remember this moment, this is like when they had the really old school 1980s buses that you had to walk up the steps to get on to. I just remember this moment where I got on the bus and there was something different about it. Like, I just remember the seats being like different colors and being plastic and squares. And it was all like this very graphic scene. I remember as a little kid, just being like, this is beautiful and amazing, and it's something that's always kind of stayed with me, and I feel like I only got on that bus once and I feel like I've always been like, searching for it. And it was just a really cool, cool moment and I feel like transit has always given me just a sense of independence and also like comfort, I think after you've been taking it for so long. I think it's just something silly that there are these things you remember as a little kid. I was for sure in elementary, so seven or eight, and this was my highlight of getting on the bus, and something was different and neat and interesting and beautiful.

Clareview Station: Story 149

So I've lived in Fort McMurray for most of my life. And then I moved to Edmonton about 10 years ago for university. So I came to the U of A and I lived in residence there. And in my first year, I felt like so much of my life was just concentrated on campus, very focused around my friends and my classes, and the places were there. I enjoyed it! And I don't think I noticed my isolation until I left residence and moved into an apartment and I was like, you know, Edmonton is actually a lot bigger than these four blocks of the University of Alberta campus. So I started trying to venture out -- you know, I didn't have a car - and I started to try and venture out into the city to discover a little bit more about it, places that I could walk. I went on the train, I think just once or maybe a few times when I was in my first year, just on weekends with friends. But I finally started to try. I said I'm gonna go in the daytime, I'm gonna go venture. I remember taking the train by myself for one of the first times and it felt like a very big deal that I was going by myself on the train and taking the train to Jasper. Specifically, I was trying to do some research, like what are places that I could go to and explore? I went to Audrey's bookstore on Jasper and I truly felt like the main character of a story. It was a moment of getting on the train, listening to my music, I took a little book with me to read on the train, and went to the bookstore. I think I might have even gotten a coffee at Starbucks or maybe somewhere local...

I took the train back and was very, very proud of myself for my first little by-myself excursion to get to know more of the city and help connect myself to a little bit more of Edmonton and venture beyond those four blocks of U of A.

Clareview Station: Story 11

Okay, so basically, I was waiting for my bus to take me home. And the bus got there, but we all got to go in. But it waits for a little bit just to see if all the people want to get on and then it leaves. When I was waiting, I was near the front of the bus. I think I was where the three-seaters are. And I was sitting in the middle between these two people. One of them was this lady and she was wearing scrubs. And I usually notice when people wear scrubs because I'm like, 'Oh, I wonder what their job is.' I was interested about like healthcare jobs and stuff. And then she looked at me, and then she like looked me up and down. But I just brushed it off. And then she was like, "Oh my gosh, I love your shoes." And they were these Hello Kitty X Converse high top shoes. So they were pretty cute. And then they even had like Hello Kitty laces. And I was just like, "Oh my gosh, thank you. You know, I really like them. I don't really wear them that often." And then this other lady overheard the conversation, you know, when you're on the bus, everyone hears everyone else's conversations. And she was like, "Yeah, they're so cute!" And these are all like grown women. These are all like women in their 30s. And I was like, I was still 16. So I was just like inviting all these women to look at my shoes. And then even this one guy with tattoos and some random biker vest was like, "Oh, yeah, they're really nice." And I was like, "Oh, wow, thank you."

And then my shoe conversation started opening up other conversations between those adults. You know, I made the bus alive. And then I was just like, I'm done here. But it was really nice just to see everyone started talking. Because you get to hear so many negative stories about the transit or like train stations, or you see people being sad or angry, or just like not talking at all, which is fine, because usually when people are taking the bus, they're exhausted and tired, because you know, you have to bus for a long time. But when you see just those little tiny interactions between people, it's really nice. Like if you take the train passing like Corona, no, Government station and University station you pass by the river. And I really like passing by there because you can just notice everyone in your car, like they always turn their heads for the window. Yeah, I think it's like a nice human moment. I'm just like, oh my gosh, I feel like I'm not with just robots.



Like all these people have their own lives. And they're not just interested about looking at the rubber. Right? And some people even take out their phones. I'm like, oh, it's so nice. I really like every time I take the train there, I always make sure to look. Because like, first of all, it's really pretty. I've managed to see like... I've been taking the train from grade 8 to grade 12, so I've seen the lake through each season, and like transitioning, and it's just so beautiful to see. You pass by the exact same spot but you get to see it in different lights. And then you can see all the different people who are just sharing the same experience with you. I just thought it's so wholesome. Cute. Yeah, that's my story.



Clareview Station: Story 12

Friend 1: Okay, so like, well every time I take the bus you, like, you make art out of your transit tickets and I collect them afterwards.

Friend 2: I would take the transit tickets and I just like, fold them kind of like origami, but I'll rip them as well, do different shapes and things. Just different intricate ways to keep me entertained while I'm on the bus.

Friend 1: Yeah, I have a collection of them.

Friend 2: This transit ticket, this isn't a great one, but this one is, it's in the shape of like a unicorn. A unicorn cat.



Thank you to our
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