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Re: Achievement in Publishing Nomination for Käthe Lemon, RedPoint Media/*Avenue*

Dear Suzanne and members of the AMC judging panel,

I am delighted to have the opportunity to support the nomination of Käthe Lemon for the 2025 Alberta Magazine Publishers Association Achievement in Publishing Award.

I've known Käthe for more than 20 years now, since I moved to Alberta to become associate publisher of Alberta Venture. At that time she was editor of *Avenue* Calgary and I met her through industry events such as the annual conference in Calgary, and we eventually had a chance to serve the industry together as board members of AMPA. I came to really appreciate Käthe's passion for magazines and recognized a kindred spirit in her enthusiasm for creating a stronger, better industry through service, celebration and learning.

Once I took the role of publisher at *Avenue* Calgary/group publisher at RedPoint Media, Käthe and I worked side by side in what was arguably one of the most growth-oriented phases at *Avenue*, but also one of the most difficult. This period in the Alberta economy was very chaotic, particularly due to a long recession caused by oil prices dropping, as well as an occupancy and retail traffic crisis in downtown Calgary that predated the pandemic lockdowns that were to come. Our plans were scuppered over and over by market forces beyond our control, but Käthe could always be counted on to offer her analysis and move forward without prejudice on difficult decisions. It really was a delight to work with her in that role, and I relied on her counsel in many situations.

There is an expression by pop culture writer Jacob Clifton that lives in my head rent-free, "Everything you ever wanted, in the worst possible way." This could be used to describe Käthe's opportunity to step into the leadership role at RedPoint in 2020. On the one hand, my departure left a vacuum that she was ideally suited to step into, and deserved. On the other hand, no sooner had she moved into the publisher role than the pandemic hit and the magazine industry –

especially magazines like *Avenue* that are picked up in public places – was devastated. In fact, RedPoint’s major external client (and at times a bigger contributor to the bottom line than *Avenue* or the other custom clients) WestJet, similarly devastated by government-ordered lockdowns, closed their magazine, and like most airlines, the inflight product was never brought back. (RedPoint also sold its interest in *Avenue* Edmonton in 2020, it was subsequently rebranded as Edify.)

Having the experience as publisher at RedPoint I have a window into how challenging this time must have been. They closed the office, off-boarded consultants, downsized staff, and scrambled (like everyone did) to stay open. It is really a credit to Käthe that the magazine and the company survived the pandemic. Käthe has proven capable of taking on more and more, and of giving back to the community in a way that makes her one of the most visible people in Calgary.

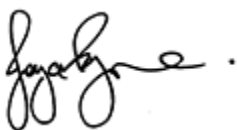
To have made it through those years intact would have been notable, but under her leadership *Avenue* is being remade from a magazine brand into a connector rather than a curator of content, and renewing its relationships with its readers and advertisers.

Käthe and her business partner purchased RedPoint in 2022, allowing them to proceed with this vision of transforming the company and the brands it manages, especially *Avenue*.

On top of her daily leadership responsibilities, Käthe stepped into the role of President of the International Regional Magazine Association - which I manage as Executive Director. I value her consideration of the big and small issues, and her willingness to share ideas with other publishers.

I hope the panel will agree that there is no better candidate this year for the Achievement in Publishing Award than Käthe Lemon. Having had the chance to work with Käthe over these many years, she is deserving of accolades.

Thank you, sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joyce Byrne", followed by a period.

Joyce Byrne
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