



Melisha Ratnarajah /// The Observer

Getting ready for some wild weather

Dash McGorman (bottom) and Leo O'Reilly put their all into hosting the Wild Weather Exhibition at the Ontario Science Centre. The exhibit is open until Jan. 8.

Man shot to death on Donlands

Bystanders claim Wednesday incident increasingly typical

By **EVANGELO SIPSAS**
The Observer

A man is dead after being shot in East York late Wednesday night.

The shooting occurred at about 10 p.m. on Wednesday, on Donlands Avenue north of Plains Road.

The victim, who has been identified as 46-year-old Adrian Kaloshi of York Region, was leaving a social club at 393 Donlands Ave. Police and paramedics at the scene said another man apparently approached the victim outside and shot him in the head. He was rushed to a nearby trauma centre, but succumbed to his injuries shortly after.

Published reports say Kaloshi was known to police.

Witnesses at the scene told the Observer they saw the man falling, but did not hear any gunshots.

Concerned bystanders said this was not the first time such an incident has occurred in the vicinity.



Evangelo Sipsas /// The Observer

Paramedics and firefighters load a stretcher holding Adrian Kaloshi into an ambulance, after he was shot on Donlands Avenue late Wednesday night. He later died.

One who claimed to be a resident of the neighbourhood but who didn't want to be identified said "yelling and screaming" happen "all the time" nearby. A second bystander described another occasion when one man armed with a

machete chased another down the street.

But police said the social club where they were called on Wednesday has never been an issue.

Still, the bystanders said they're familiar with street crime in the

neighbourhood. Two weeks ago, a nearby convenience store was robbed at knifepoint.

The police are searching for video footage from nearby stores and they're encouraging anyone with information to come forward.

Think traffic on local streets is bad now?

East York councillor warns it will get a lot worse if proposed tolls get the nod

By **BIANCA QUIJANO**
The Observer

Mayor John Tory's endorsement of a toll for motorists on the Don Valley Parkway and the Gardiner Expressway has garnered both applause and criticism.

That being said, East York residents may have their own cause for concern. Councillor Janet Davis of Ward 31/Beaches-East York thinks the tolls will result in a significant amount of traffic leaving the highways and entering East York streets.

"There will be a 12-per-cent diversion into local streets from the DVP and nine per cent from the Gardiner Expressway," she said.

According to Davis, these estimates were presented in a report provided by Toronto city staff. It gave no further information about the impact of tolls on local roadways, she said.

Councillor Jon Burnside of Ward 26/Don Valley West has his own mixed reaction to the toll proposal. He agreed that traffic may be lessened on the highways, but the tolls may well serve as an incentive for people to use local sidestreets. Overall, he said, there may be little improvement in traffic woes.

"Anyone who says this will lessen congestion is talking out of both sides of their mouth," Burnside said.

He added that the tolls will not necessarily encourage use of public transit.

The proposed tolls could raise \$166 million per year in revenue and help pay for \$33 billion of unfunded infrastructure projects, including new transit like Smart Track and the downtown relief line. They could also lessen highway traffic — and therefore commuting time, by two to eight minutes.

But the Canadian Taxpayers Federation said in a news release that the tolls will cause "gridlock" in nearby streets. It has launched an online petition to stop the motion.

"There will be further reports on traffic impact in the new year," Davis says.

The tolls must be approved by the province. The City of Toronto Act, which prevents the municipality from maintaining a toll highway, must be amended in order for the project to go through.

POLICE & FIRE

Subway assault

A man is now facing charges of criminal harassment, attempted sexual assault, carrying a concealed weapon and two counts of assault following a Nov. 9 incident around the Victoria Park subway station. A woman at the station complained to police that she was followed by a man who then attempted to kiss her. When she resisted, she was further assaulted. Charged is Muhunthan Cham-basivam, 32.



■ **SIRBU**

Man missing

Toronto police are searching for a man reported missing on Nov. 27. Giuliano Sirbu, 23, was last seen in the Dawes Road-Park Vista area at around 9 p.m. the day before. He was wearing a black T-shirt, blue jeans and blue running shoes. He is described as 5'10", with brown eyes and short black hair. Anyone with information is asked to call police at 416-808-5400.

~Cherry Liu

Correction

The Nov. 25 story "The lady is 90 — and she's on a mission" (page 8) mistakenly identified the priest at Beryl Beard's East York church, St. Luke's, as her son. Her son, Kimberley J. Beard, is a priest at St. Paul's on the Hill in Pickering. It is at St. Paul's that Mrs. Beard and her teammates doing medical-construction missionary work gather. Also, their forthcoming trip to Tanzania will not involve building six churches as reported, but helping repair and paint those churches. Finally, Mrs. Beard is 89, not 90.

Commuters want better service

By **KRYSTAL REYNOLDS**
The Observer

East York community activist Justin Van Dette faced a challenge from a neighbour last month. A fellow commuter standing with him at a TTC bus stop wondered when the next bus would arrive.

"I can't understand why it takes so long for the TTC to print out schedules that are online," Van Dette said. "People are tired of paying more and seeing less in return."

Discontent among some East Yorkers about TTC schedules and on-going traffic congestion seems to be growing. So on Saturday, a group of them, spearheaded by Van Dette, congregated in the parking lot of a local drugstore at Woodbine Avenue and O'Connor Drive to discuss bus schedules and poor traffic light timing.

Among other issues, with the winter season arriving, Van Dette said he has concerns for commuters standing in bus shelters in the cold weather. He couldn't understand why the TTC has not made bus schedules more available.

"They are playing with people's lives that rely on transit every day," he said.

"We are no longer updating Infopost (schedules and route maps on posts) at the



Krystal Reynolds // The Observer

East York activist Justin Van Dette (centre) and other TTC riders rallied on Saturday to express their discontent with local transit.

TTC bus stops," countered Stuart Green, a TTC spokesperson. "Instead, we are encouraging our customers to use ttc.ca or one of the numerous third-party mobile apps available."

He said the TTC is attempting to cut down on paper copy and clutter on street poles. He suggested those customers without wireless technology could call TTC customer information for route schedules

for specific days.

Van Dette said the TTC has been unresponsive to his emails in recent months.

"As the past president of a community association, (I) have (received written complaints) several times in recent months," he said. "That's 150 pages worth of emails."

■ See **RESIDENT**, page 8

Last call may soon be later in East York

By **DANIEL MCKENZIE**
The Observer

The reaction among stalwarts of the Danforth's late-night scene is mixed, as a city committee looks into the potential benefits of extending bar hours beyond 2 a.m.

The Toronto Music Advisory Council, which consists of city councillors, music industry professionals and artists, recently presented its case for the change to the Economic Development Committee.

Norm Kelly, a city councillor and vice-chair of the development committee, said the focus revolves around studying what is known as the "night economy" of Toronto.

"Frankly, I had never heard of the concept before... but it's intriguing," he said.

"We are emerging as one of the premiere cities of the world and the arts and cultural segment of the economy seems to be growing very rapidly... so when a group appeared before committee to discuss the night economy, I thought it was worth taking a look at."

Kelly mentioned New York City as an example of how a night economy can help propel a city forward.

The city will reach out to various communities — BIAs, bar owners, music and cultural representatives — to see if extending bar hours would offer more benefit than harm.

Initial concerns centre around potential problems with crime, noise and transportation.

"It's more than just bar hours," Kelly said. "It's an attempt to examine the concept to see the degree to which it exists in Toronto and to see if we can facilitate it in a way that limits the more deleterious aspects of its nature."

Singer-songwriter Julian Taylor has been part of the East York music community for more than 12 years, performing at venues such as The Danforth Music Hall and Dora Keogh.

He's neither for nor against extending last call, but acknowledges the potential of it being a cultural draw for the city. He



Photo courtesy of David Goodfellow

Julian Taylor performs regularly at local venues like Dora Keogh on Danforth Avenue.

doesn't expect it to put any more money in his pocket as a performer, though.

"I've rarely seen a percentage of the bar (as payment), which is the only reason I'd see musicians making more money with extended hours," he said. "I see that the economy will make more money, and the bars and bartenders will make more money, but I don't see how it will benefit musicians in any other way."

Taylor said from a musician's standpoint, he'd prefer an initiative to actually get more money directly to the performers.

"Forcing the clubs to have a minimum rate that they have to pay these musicians would be amazing," he said.

Hanka Stepanova has bartended at the Black Swan, another East York music venue, for 17 years. She says it's about time Toronto loosens its grasp on last call.

"As a worker, of course I don't want to be up past three in the morning. But you have to get into the shoes of the customers. They pay the bills," she said.

"Some people cannot even comprehend that somebody is telling them when they can drink. It's so strict, the rules here."

Stepanova is originally from Prague, Czech Republic, where she says bar owners get to decide how late they stay open based on how busy they are.

She doesn't think extended hours would cause more problems in the community. If anything, she said people get more upset with the current law.

"If you have tourists, people not from Canada, it's last call (at 2 a.m.) so they order five more drinks, then after 45 minutes they can't finish it so I have to spill it out and they are upset," she said.

By comparison, last call is 3 a.m. in Montreal and 4 a.m. in New York. Toronto already extends last call to 4 a.m. during festivals such as Canadian Music Week and North by Northeast.

Kelly said no changes will be made until at least midway through 2017.

WHAT'S UP IN E.Y.

A Christmas Carol reading

Come by the Cosburn Arts Centre at 1108 Greenwood Ave. to hear a dramatic reading of the Charles Dickens Christmas classic, which is being presented by The Community Art Time Studio and Capricorn 9 Productions. The readings are to-night, Dec. 9, at 8 p.m. and tomorrow at 1:30 and 8 p.m. Afternoon tickets are \$10. Evening tickets are \$15. For more information, call 416-421-5711 or email online@EventBrite.ca.

Connect with the hotspot

The community is invited to the third annual Cultural Hotspot Connect. Come to Community Centre 55 at 97 Main St. on Thursday, Jan. 5 from 6 to 8 p.m. for information about the 2017 Cultural Hotspot. From May to October 2017, the East York community will feature arts and culture activities and events and Toronto Arts and Culture wants to hear your ideas. A light dinner will also be provided. Those who plan to attend are asked to RSVP at 416-392-1210 or culturalhotspot@toronto.ca.

Local church hosts cantata

Celebrate the season in song as music director George Couperas and the Eastminster Choir and Friends present a Christmas Cantata. It will take place on Dec. 18 at 10 a.m. at the church, 310 Danforth Ave.

~Scout McCraw

TCDSB chair ready for round two

Angela Kennedy to focus on children's fitness, wellness and efficiency during second term

By **CHERRY (CHANGHONG) LIU**
The Observer

After her re-election in a 6-4 vote at the board's annual inaugural meeting, East York trustee Angela Kennedy is ready to continue where she left off in her second term as the chair of the Toronto Catholic District School Board.

"I'm very glad, because the first year, it's about getting your feet wet and the second year is going to give me a chance to get some of the things done that I would like to accomplish," she said.

"You never know until the end of the day, so I'm very thankful to the people who voted for me, and it's nice to see that they have confidence in me."

In the coming year, Kennedy is looking to improve governance efficiency of the board, build parish-school relationships and focus on fitness and wellness for children.

Karina Dubrovskaya, student trustee in her second term, is excited about Kennedy's re-election, having watched her during her first year.

"She really has the voice of students in mind, and she really wants to represent the students and their perspective," Dubrovskaya said. "She always looks at the needs of the students first then after that she'll find ways to make it work within the budget or the policy."

"There was a time where buses were cancelled for a school, and Angela fought for them to be reinstated even though that wasn't in our budget, because she knew that those students needed to get those buses."

Geoffrey Feldman, chair of the Catholic Parent Involvement Committee, is also optimistic about Kennedy's second term.

"If there's anything I have a question about,

she's always willing to phone me back within 24 hours to give me an answer," he said. "She's been very approachable to the parent groups, and I'm sure she will continue to work with us."

Kennedy was first elected as a trustee for the TCDSB in November 2000 and has represented East York's Ward 11 for four terms. She has seven sons, and has been active in local school councils for her children for as long as she can remember.

"I love advocacy, and I love helping people," Kennedy said. "I have a passion for education, so after my kids were grown, I thought this was just the natural next step to still be involved."

Kennedy's experience on various councils and committees and as a parent of seven children align to help her in her role as chair of the TCDSB.

"I'm able to listen to the other trustees. I can take a thoughtful step back when needed, and parents know that I have integrity and experience," Kennedy said.

Dubrovskaya believes a school board should be governed not just by the staff and the trustees, but in collaboration with the parents and students, and that's what Kennedy strives to do.

Even now, Kennedy still has conversations with her children about their views on education.

"I have a lot to learn from my own children, and I'm open to that," she said.

"My youngest son Kieran is a supply teacher, and he sent me a link about schools in Sweden. He was like, 'Look at what they do in Sweden, they have this infrastructure and there's lots of opportunities for kids to be active and still get high academic scores with this different approach,' and that's something I take into consideration."

Having grown up in the Beaches, Kennedy is the longest-serving employee of Michael Garron Hospital, formerly known as Toronto East General, with over 45 years as a registered



Photo courtesy of Angela Kennedy

Toronto Catholic District School Board vice-chair Frank D'Amico with newly re-elected chair — and East York trustee — Angela Kennedy.

nurse and diabetes educator under her belt.

"More than half of my life has been spent in the east end, so representing it feels very comfortable to me," she said.

In and out of her school board role, Kennedy has been an activist in the community.

"I have to continue to work as a trustee for my own constituents in Ward 11," she said.

From 2000 to 2002, she played a lead role in bringing about the diabetes education pro-

gram known as DECNET (Diabetes Education Community Network of East Toronto). She has been active in the Out of the Cold program that runs out of St. Brigid's Church on Wolverleigh Boulevard. She even used to have a float in the Beaches Easter parade.

Kennedy never has a moment to sit still, but it's what she loves to do.

"I have a passion," she said. "I have a passion for nursing, and I have a passion for advocacy."



Observer staff photos

Ready for a Merry Little Christmas

The congregation of Woodbine Heights Baptist Church ushered in the yuletide season with "Merry Little Christmas," their drama club's traditional offering of the Christmas story. The church's observance of the season continues with another community event on Sunday, Dec. 18 at 7 p.m.: an evening of traditional Christmas carol singing. East Yorkers are invited to come and sing some carols, and share in the season of light and hope.

Death of pedestrian 'could have completely been avoided'

By **TEMI DADA**
The Observer

A resident from the Cosburn and Cedarvale avenues area calls the intersection a "time bomb" when it comes to pedestrian safety.

On the afternoon of Dec. 1, police say a 69-year-old woman crossing at that intersection in East York was struck and killed by a moving pickup truck. Some who live in the area have campaigned to have traffic-control devices installed where Cosburn and Cedarvale intersect,

Norman Fuller among them.

"A lot of people... drive too fast. It's like a drag strip," Fuller said. "A few people have already been hit here. People do not pay attention."

Clint Stibbe, of Toronto Police Services, said the force received emergency calls about the accident at 1:38 p.m. that day.

"The woman was crossing Cosburn at Cedarvale when she was hit by a truck when the driver tried to make a left to go east on Cosburn Avenue," Stibbe said.

The 60-year-old driver of the pickup truck re-

mained at the scene, and at press time, police had laid no charges.

Konstantina Tsigaridis, who lives on Cosburn Avenue, said members of the community have complained often about the danger to pedestrians.

"We have asked for a four-way stop, speed bumps, anything to reduce the drag-style racing that happens up Cosburn," she said.

Tsigaridis said she spoke to the Ward 31/Beaches-East York councillor, Janet Davis, via email. She said Davis has requested that the in-

tersection be reviewed for the possible addition of a traffic light. She said a report showed the intersection does not meet the city requirements for a traffic signal.

"It could have completely been avoided," Tsigaridis said. "Drivers blow through this intersection all the time... It is horrible that someone had to lose their life to bring more attention to this intersection."

So far this year, 41 pedestrians have died on Toronto streets, two more than last year, according to the Toronto police.



Courtesy of Jeremy Lewis

Figure skater Tom Kalweit, former NHLer Terry Caffery, the daughter of Leaside skating activist Ian Shaw and former CFLer Mike Bradwell (l-r) pose with their honours from the Leaside Sports Hall of Fame.



Courtesy of Jeremy Lewis

The "Athlete of the Year" is Remy Cattell (second from right, here with her family). Remy is a Grade 10 student at Leaside High School and a runner who has been cleaning up in regional track competitions.

Leaside sports stars inducted into Hall of Fame

Annual event includes posthumous recognition of girls hockey activist

By DANIEL MCKENZIE
The Observer

Ian Shaw had a pretty simple life motto: if you want to be happy, make someone else happy.

As a husband, father and volunteer in the Leaside hockey community, he did just that.

"He was very generous.... anything he could do for anybody, he'd do it," said Pat Shaw, Ian's wife of nearly 40 years.

"It was wonderful to have such a fine husband that not only was a wonderful volunteer but a fabulous husband and father. He was playful and funny and had so many other talents."

Mr. Shaw died in March at the age of 65.

On Friday, Nov. 18, he was inducted into the Leaside Sports Hall of Fame for his more than 25 years as a volunteer in the girls hockey community.

Pat and their three daughters – Catherine, 36, Mary Anne, 35 and Jennifer, 33 – attended the ceremony and accepted a plaque on his behalf.

Members of the community turned out to honour the accomplishments of Mr. Shaw and others on Nov. 18 at Leaside Memorial Gardens Arena. Terry Fallis of Leaside, an author and two-time winner of the Stephen Leacock Memorial Medal for Humour, was the guest speaker at the fourth annual event.

The "Athlete of the Year" was Remy Cattell. Remy is a Grade 10 student at Leaside High School and a runner who has been cleaning up in track competitions at the city, district and provincial level.

Mike Bradwell was another of the inductees. Bradwell played for the CFL's Toronto Argonauts until last year, after studying and playing at McMaster University. While he was an Argo,



Courtesy of Jeremy Lewis

Members of the Shaw family came to represent Ian Shaw, who died in March. Mr. Shaw served for a quarter-century in various capacities — including as president — with the Leaside Girls Hockey League and its successor, the Leaside Girls Hockey Association.

he also coached football for his alma mater, Leaside High School.

Fellow inductee Tom Kalweit had a 26-year career at the Leaside Skating Club beginning in 1981. Besides his own personal accomplishments as a figure skater, including national and international competitions, he coached at all levels, established a successful competitive junior synchro team, and helped run the local club.

Also inducted was Leaside native Terry Caffery. He grew up playing hockey at Leaside Arena, where he captained the Leaside Lions championship teams. His resume includes the

Toronto Marlboros, the Canadian National Team, the minors in Dallas and Cleveland, and both the Chicago Blackhawks and the Minnesota North Stars.

Mr. Shaw was the only posthumous honouree. He began volunteering as an assistant coach in 1989, when Catherine joined the Leaside Girls Hockey League. At the time, it was just a branch of the much larger boys league.

Within two years, Mr. Shaw spearheaded a group to incorporate the league and in 1991 he was elected the first president of the newly formed Toronto Leaside Girls Hockey Association (TLGHA).

In the beginning, it consisted of 12 house league teams. Mr. Shaw helped grow it into a league with nearly 1,600 registered players across 93 teams (76 youth and 17 adult).

"It's the largest in Canada and we suspect it's the largest female hockey association in the world," said current TLGHA president Jennifer Smith.

Mr. Shaw's impact went much further than the growth of the league, though. His training and certifying of referees also created new job possibilities for girls in the community.

"Ian went beyond being a volunteer to being a builder, a champion and an advocate. He was instrumental in building a program at Leaside where each year we certify 30 to 60 new referees, almost exclusively young female referees," Smith said.

"Part of our mandate is also creating hockey leadership roles for women... and Ian did more for that cause probably than any single person in our association."

Mr. Shaw was TLGHA president from 1991-2000 before becoming referee-in-chief of the league, but those were hardly the only titles he held. He was a coach, trainer, manager, time-keeper, referee, convener, vice-president and everything in between.

"He absolutely embodied the character and values we'd want to see, not just in youth sports, but in our communities in general," Smith said.

"Particularly overseeing all the officiating, he just brought such patience and class to the role. When we lost him, the feedback from parents, particularly those of young referees who have been through his program, (was) they couldn't have asked for a better role model."

His widow Pat said her husband was an amateur singer, musician and actor — and a handyman and gardener around the house. His 'day job' was systems analyst and project manager.

"A very caring and giving person," she said. "One in a million, I would say. Which is pretty incredible because I had the pleasure of spending so many years with him."



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NEIGHBOURLY NEWS

Highlights from the pages of the East York Observer.
Wednesdays at 8:30 a.m. and Fridays at 4 p.m.
On CJRU/AM 1280.

■ COMMUNITY



Sam Seon /// The Observer

Local art enthusiasts enjoy paintings on display in the Don Valley Art Club's showroom space at the Todmorden Mills Heritage Site. The club has almost 200 members, many of whom exhibited at the organization's latest show, which concluded last week.

She wanted to dance - so she did, on canvas

Local artist captures feelings of happiness in 'Aqua and Gold Dance'

By SAMANTHA SEON
The Observer

Encarnita Seco Gardner's painting "Aqua and Gold Dance" positively glowed in the centre of the Don Valley Art Club's showroom space at the Todmorden Mills Heritage Site on Pottery Road. At the club's most recent show, which concluded last week, the abstract piece drew admirers with its hypnotic swirls of lively blues and radiant gold.

Just one of almost 200 club-members — many of whom exhibited at the November show — this painter and poet said she's drawn to the abstract style of painting to as an expression of her feelings... like the warmth and joy that comes through in Aqua and Gold Dance.

"When I'm painting still life, that's when I'm painting what's outside of me," Gardner said. "But when I do abstract, I'm painting what is inside of me. I had a happy day, that day. I wanted to dance."

Gardner has been a member of the Don Valley Art Club for over two decades, including one brief hiatus. She has also joined the Toronto Watercolour Society and the Willowdale Group of Artists.

"It's a special group of people who come here," Gardner said of the DVAC in particular.

The Don Valley Art Club has been in existence, in one form or another, for almost 80 years. It was once a roving group of artists that even intermittently included Group of Seven members Arthur Lismer, Lawren Harris and Frederick Varley. In 1940, they were granted squatters rights from what was then the Borough of East York for a piece of land at the foot of Don Mills Road for \$1 per year.

The current building that is now part of the



Sam Seon /// The Observer

Artist Encarnita Seco Gardner found inspiration for her painting 'Aqua and Gold Dance' in her personal experience of joy.

city's Todmorden heritage site is the very same that was used by these masters of the craft. Renovated and remodeled though it may be, above the smooth surfaces and clean white walls there are still hints of the original brickwork and wooden beams in the slanted ceiling, reminiscent of an old church or barn.

"It was our home," said Gerre Virsunen, president of the club. "It was where we lived and painted every day."

When the space was originally renovated, it was turned fully into a gallery and showroom, and the artists were given residence at the brick works site around the corner on Bayview Avenue.

Eventually, the Don Valley Art Club moved

to a headquarters on Eglinton Avenue West near Spadina. But Virsunen still calls the site on Pottery Road in East York the club's "home away from home."

"This is a beautiful space," Virsunen said. "We love putting our paintings up here."

The members of the DVAC range in background. Gardner, for instance, didn't even consider herself an artist until she was well into her 40s.

"I always liked to scribble when I was a child, but I never really followed it seriously," she said.

"It was later when I was a mature person that I decided to start painting."

It's been almost 20 years since then, and her

passion has grown.

As a novice, she took classes to gain skill and confidence. She recalled a class at Seneca College, where the instructor had the attendees paint a simple still-life.

"The teacher put an apple in front of the class to paint," she remembered. "I realized, in the end, that mine was one of the best apples in the class. I thought 'Oh my goodness I can do it!'"

Painting is Gardner's 'other' artistic pursuit. The first was poetry. She lived in Spain, wrote two books of poetry there, married and moved to Canada with her husband — where she taught Spanish for a time.

When Gardner first arrived in Canada, she said, she struggled to express herself in English. Perhaps that contributed to her awakening as a visual artist.

"Painting is the universal language," she said.

Gardner has a new book in the works. Coming sometime in early 2017, she has translated each of her earlier poems into English from Spanish. Each poem will be accompanied by a painting.

Gardner said she's self-publishing this time around to ensure that she gets to present her art on her own terms. And she's even keeping it in the family, with her husband being her first editor, her daughter being her second editor, and her daughter-in-law publishing the book through her agency.

Although Gardner said she doesn't consider herself an abstract painter exclusively, that is the style that she's most enamoured with.

"I do look outside, at the universe, at nature, and interpret that," she said, "and put feeling into it."

Gardner will be drawing on these interpretations for her new book.

"It's very emotional. When I want to really express my feelings, that's when I go to abstract," she said. "Abstract is when I paint the internal, how I express my feelings, my emotions."

■ TOLL ROADS: TWO VIEWS

Time to pay up

Ding. Ding. Ding.

Do you hear that? The bell is tolling for Toronto. It's time to implement new revenue streams for the city to help maintain and improve its infrastructure.

Mayor Tory's proposal to implement tolls on both the Don Valley Parkway that runs through East York and the connecting Gardiner Expressway is already unpopular in some quarters. And there are other equally or more effective measures to move this city forward.

But tolls are a necessity to get things started.

Building city infrastructure is a long-term proposition. Even just setting up the system for collecting the tolls is a long-term proposition. But while this will not bring about any immediate changes, it's a step in the right direction for a city that continues to spend more than it has.

But the problem isn't actually spending. The problem is funding. And measures such as tolls on the DVP and Gardiner will help ease it.

Yes, there are concerns over things like pushing frugal drivers to side-streets in East York and elsewhere. But at this point, they are just that: concerns. None of that is definite. What is definite is the city's shortage of money to refurbish itself for the 21st century.

So let's consider the likely outcomes from tolls on the DVP and Gardiner: They include city residents carpooling. Or commuting via public transit. Or simply paying the proposed nominal toll.

Is that proposed figure really the back-breaker that will push hordes of people off the DVP and Gardiner? It essentially equates to losing a cup of Tim Hortons coffee. And if that's what it takes to add to the city's revenue, it's high time Torontonians — and especially those outside the 416 — pay up.

With an estimated 40 per cent of drivers using the DVP and Gardiner coming from outside the city, the free ride on these highways cannot continue. It just isn't fiscally possible to maintain the status quo. So Toronto should follow the lead of London and some of the world's other great and future-looking cities... and adopt tolling on city highways.

~ Paolo Maquiraya

It's too big a toll

Why should we oppose the roads tolls proposed for the Gardiner Expressway and Don Valley Parkway?

Because East Yorkers and other Torontonians should not have to shoulder another economic burden.

We're told that Mayor John Tory's bad idea will make getting from Point A to Point B in this city a more efficient proposition. We're told that it will encourage some people to use alternatives — like GO Transit.

Great. The GO trains coming from the east and west are already packed during the morning and afternoon rush hours. And with the cost of riding public transit always on the upswing, it's less and less of an economic advantage to its riders.

This is already an expensive region to live and commute in. You would think that our elected leaders would have realized that and would be showing us a little more respect. But the cost of living keeps going up. And so do taxes. And now we're faced with the prospect of road tolls to take another bite out of our budgets.

Why can't the City of Toronto do a more effective job lobbying the federal and provincial governments for funding, instead of resorting to this toll measure? Why can't the city come up with lower-cost solutions to produce effective and affordable ways of transportation in Toronto — for the people who keep this city humming, but who need effective means of commuting to do that?

Surely there are alternatives in the revenue enhancement department. With a lower Canadian dollar, how about trying harder to draw American and international tourists here to spend their money (and pay hotel and restaurant and sales taxes)? How about even stricter parking enforcement — and revenue through more or more expensive parking tickets?

And in making the economic argument, we're leaving aside another disadvantage to Gardiner and DVP tolls: the spillover from those highways onto city streets running alongside them.

There are already estimates that streets in East York (and elsewhere) that are adjacent to the expressway and parkway will see a significant increase in traffic when tolls come into effect. That's because some drivers who would ordinarily use the highways will try to save money by avoiding them and their tolls in favour of free, parallel routes through our community.

All in all, the highway toll idea is a bad one. Fine for the 407, which everyone is used to. But let's leave it there. And not import it here.

~ Ali Naqvi

■ COLUMN



Sanjeev Wignarajah /// The Observer

The 2016 Observer staff bids farewell, as we head off to future endeavours in newsrooms in the GTA and beyond. Best of luck to the incoming Observer student-staff, and thanks to East York for the stories — and for reading us!

'Til next time, East York

By SCOUT McCRAW

The Observer

I am sitting in the newsroom of the East York Observer, at the Carlaw Avenue campus of Centennial College. I am looking around at my fellow journalism students whom I've gotten to know over the last three years. And I can't believe that we are finally at this point.

I feel their stress as the semester comes to its climax — with all of the looming deadlines in all of the fall courses. Some of us sometimes seem as ready to snap as a rubber band that's been pulled too far.

But there's something else. The knowledge that we are so close to the finish line. And the knowledge of the rewards that await us. As we wrap up the semester, everyone will take a collective breath. And in January, we'll do it all over again.

But in the new year, we will replace our newsroom, which has come to feel like a second home, with new, uncharted territory. We will leave for our internships (and then spring graduation) and a new crop of students will take our place.

So, to those students, we would like to say good luck.

And to you, the 7,000 East Yorkers who read this newspaper, we would like to say thank you.

Some of us live in East York. But most of us commute to school every morning from all over the GTA. From North York and Scarborough and Ajax and Brampton. We wake up at 6 a.m., gulp down a cup of coffee — or three — and brave Toronto traffic to come to our home-away-from-home in East York. (Seriously, there have been times when I've spent the entire night on-campus... and I'm 100-per-cent sure that I'm not the only one).

It didn't take long for us to learn that East York is a very special place, from the bustle of the Danforth and picturesque Leaside to what is, in my opinion, one of the best views of the city. (If you haven't been to the Chester Hill lookout, you should check it out.)

And in our three years at journalism school here, we've had the opportunity to witness some pretty big stories. Outside of East York, we watched the Trudeau legacy continue and we saw the loss of the beloved-and-abhorred Mayor Rob Ford. We saw the country come together to help Fort McMurray in the wake of the

fires... and we saw Donald Trump elected as America's next president.

We also got to cover some awesome stories in our own backyard. My colleague Kirk Budden remembers covering the Greek soccer rivalry of Panathinaikos vs. Olympiakos. Sadiyah Rahman remembers when East York supported Syrian refugees with a benefit concert. And Krystal Reynolds talks about the very recent experience of joining Todmorden Branch 10 of the Royal Canadian Legion on Pape Avenue for its 90th anniversary.

It's been an exciting year, and as it comes to an end, we would like to say goodbye.

So thanks to our professors for throwing us into the pool before we knew how to swim and for helping us if we floundered. You taught us what we need to know. Now, it's up to us.

Thanks to all of you in East York who allowed us to tell your stories and those of you who read them every other week.

Finally, thanks to my classmates. Our professors made this possible. East York made it worthwhile.

But you guys made it fun. And I want you to know that I believe in you.

The East York

OBSERVER

CENTENNIAL COLLEGE

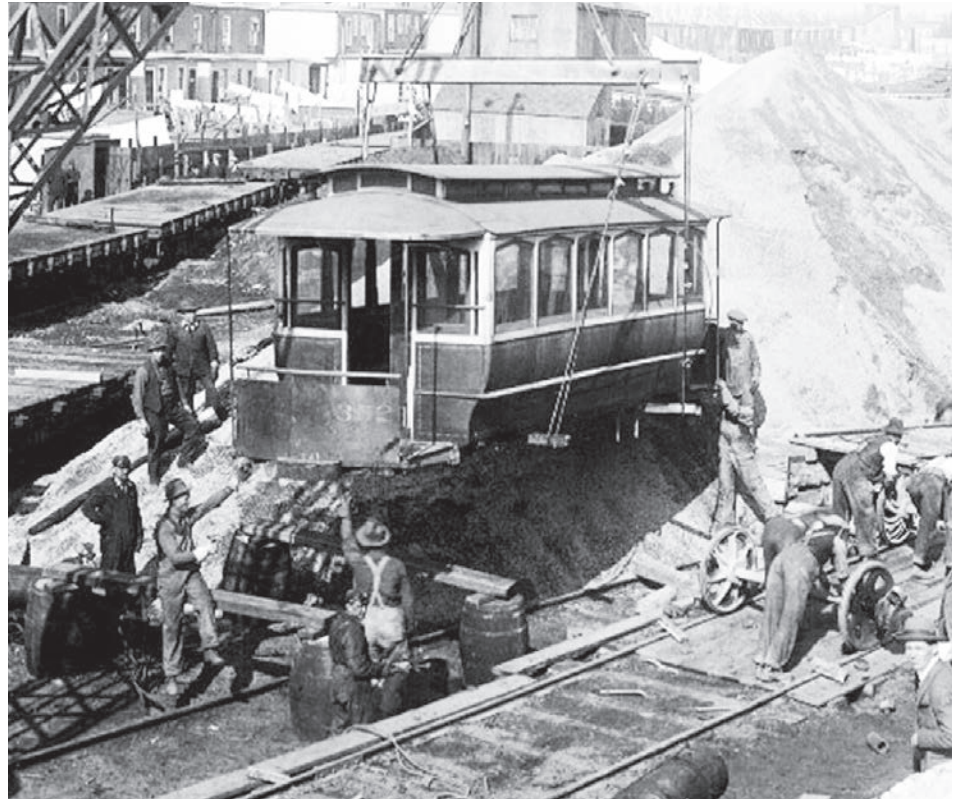
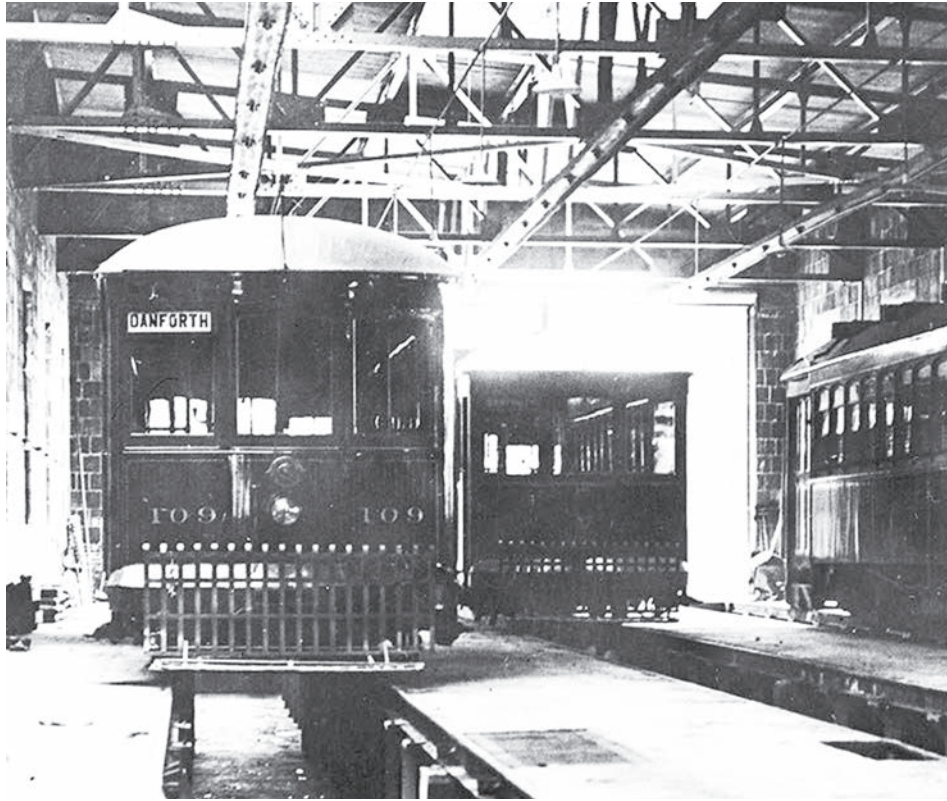
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Recalling East York's streetcar past



Courtesy of City of Toronto Archives

The Observer continues its look back on East York history through photographs from the City of Toronto Archives. These two pictures both recall a closed chapter of local transit history: the streetcars that used to crisscross the community. The photo on the left was taken on Sept. 23, 1915, and shows the interior of the then-new “Danforth Carhouse,” which was located at the southeast corner of Danforth and Coxwell Avenues. Godfrey Mallion and James Bow, writing for the website “Toronto Transit,” note that the facility was active right up until 1966, when streetcars finally disappeared from the East York area. But it still remained open under varying uses until the TTC finally closed it in 2002. The picture on the right was taken on Oct. 10, 1922 at the “Coxwell Yard,” just outside East York’s southwest corner. It shows an old Toronto Railway Company streetcar body being lifted onto a Canadian National Railway flatcar. This was one of many old streetcar bodies shipped north to Haileybury, Ont. to serve as temporary housing for residents of the town — which had been devastated by an Oct. 4-5 wildfire that is still referred to as “The Great Fire of 1922.”

■ COLUMN

Approach commute with the right spirit

There’s nothing quite like the inside of a Toronto subway, bus or streetcar. For many, public commuting conveyances are a part of urban life they would gladly forgo. Not me. I enjoy people-watching. And my one-hour, two-buses and nine-subway-stop commute is the best way to indulge this guilty pleasure.

Humanity — in all of its shapes, colours, beauty... and even nastiness — is on full display in this environment. The majority of transit-users, myself included, usually ride the Rocket behind a mask of anonymity. It comes in an assortment of forms. Reading a book. Taking a nap. Listening to a few tunes. Pretending to scroll through our phones even though we all know there isn’t any decent wi-fi outside of Line 1.

It’s when we break character that I see that there is so much more that connects us. Earlier this fall, it was two strangers bonding over their wacky Halloween costumes. Now that Christmas exams and essays are upon us, it’s students frantically trying to squeeze in some last-minute studying. And — always — it’s that collective

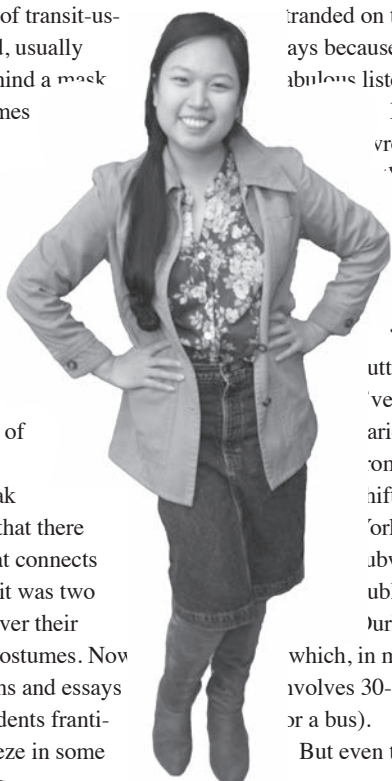
eye-roll when someone takes up two seats during rush-hour.

There’s even a silver lining inside the cloud of traffic jams above-ground and system delays below.

Take The Great Snowstorm of 2014. That’s when I discovered the magic of radio. I was stuck inside a bus for two hours. Anna Maria Tremonti, from CBC Radio’s “The Current,” was conducting live interviews with truck drivers in the U.S. who had been stranded on the highway for days because of the storm. It was fabulous listening.

Now don’t get me wrong. I agree with those who say that the TTC needs improvement. With its endless delays and shortage of stops, “improvement” is uttering it lightly. But I’ve experienced a variety of public transit: from Manila’s make-shift pedicabs to New York’s roller-coaster-like subways. And other GTA public conveyances, like Durham Region Transit which, in my experience, often involves 30-minute wait-times (or a bus).

But even that’s not so bad. The trick is stepping aboard in the right spirit.



Bianca Quijano



Aprons for ammo?

Turnout was good for the recent annual general meeting of the East York Historical Society, held at the S. Walter Stewart public library branch on Nov. 29. Besides the traditional business of the AGM, two speakers were featured, including Barbara Dickson, the author of *Bomb Girls: Trading Aprons for Ammo*. The book won this year’s Heritage Toronto Book Award for its portrayal of the women working in a Second World War munitions factory in East Toronto.

Samantha Seon///The Observer

■ COMMUNITY

MGH is a champ when it comes to patient safety

Michael Garron Hospital recognized for putting patients at the forefront

By **BIANCA QUIJANO**
The Observer

Michael Garron Hospital (MGH) has won the 2016 Patient Safety Team Organizational Champion Award.

Presented by HealthCareCAN and the Canadian Patient Safety Institute (CPSI), the honour is given to organizations providing outstanding patient-centred care and engagement.

Mari Iromoto is the director of quality and innovation at MGH, the former Toronto East General Hospital. She said that patient-centred initiatives are embedded in their culture.

"We consider our patients as partners," she said. "We've always done it this way."

Since 1996, the hospital has implemented various initiatives that put patients at the centre of their operations. That year, patients were first included on the research ethics board.

It has since invited patients onto over a dozen committees, including their patient experience panel and the falls prevention committee. In 2015, patients were included on the hiring panel and take part in interviewing potential staff.

"Caregivers may sometimes think that they know what a patient wants," Iromoto said. "We believe that you have to ask them directly. Provider perspective is different from patient perspective."

In 2011, MGH began producing patient videos. In the clips, patients share their experiences at the hospital and provide their feedback.

The candid reviews are presented in front of hospital staff and board members at weekly operations meetings.

To date, the hospital has produced over 150 videos.

"It can be uncomfortable at times, but these videos give us constructive feedback on things that we can improve on," Iromoto said. "It prevents patients from feeling isolated. We make sure that their voice is constantly heard."

MGH also makes an effort to ensure its care providers are part of the conversation, she added. Each week, staff are invited to attend story-telling sessions where they share experiences with their patients.

With its strong East York roots, MGH is not only a hospital, Iromoto said, but also an anchor for the community.

"A lot of the people that work here not only live here, but we also born here," she said. "This really is their hospital."



Sam Seon /// The Observer

Resident complains about seven-second traffic light

Cont'd. from page 2

But Green said that TTC staff have been in regular contact with Van Dette.

Van Dette said he also has issues with the traffic light at Woodbine and O'Connor. He pointed out that drivers turning onto Woodbine from O'Connor have only seven seconds to complete their turns.

"Traffic congestion hurts our economy and hurts our personal lives," he said. "It takes time away from parents to be with their children."

Van Dette challenged transportation planners to pay more attention to the needs of East York commuters.

"City staff engineers need to get out here as soon as possible," he said. "This is unacceptable."

Happy Holidays!

This is the last East York Observer until the new year. The Observer is published by the journalism students of Centennial College, who are going on their Christmas break — and professional newsroom internships starting next month. But the Observer's new student staff is waiting in the wings, and they'll re-open our East York newsroom in January. Until we publish again around the end of next month, you can still follow the Observer at our companion website, torontoobserver.ca, and on our companion radio show, Neighbourly News, aired at 8:30 on Wednesday mornings and 4 on Friday afternoons, on CJRU Radio, 1280 AM. For now, we wish you and the rest of East York the best of the season.



Elsa lights up tree-lighting ceremony

In East York, the Christmas season can be said to officially begin with the lighting of the community Christmas tree at the East York Civic Centre. Last Friday, Dec. 2, residents gathered at Coxwell and Mortimer avenues for the ceremonial flip of the switch (and then the traditional family pictures by the grand evergreen). As an additional attraction, the little ones even had the opportunity to be photographed with Elsa, the princess from the movie Frozen (interpreted here by actress Marissa Kleinberg from Perfect Productions).