

The East York

OBSERVER

CENTENNIAL COLLEGE



BITE OF THE PAST

■ Apple Festival ushers in the fall **Page 8**

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Sarah Bhola/The Observer

Wrestling takes flight in Greektown

Channing Decker performs a modified diamond cutter on opponent Josh Alexander. See Page 5 for the story and more photos.

TTC's new bus service aimed at seniors

By **NICOLE REIS**
The Observer

East York resident Del Hursey, 71, is a fan of the new Community Bus service.

She says she likes it because she doesn't have to take as many bus transfers to get to where she needs to go.

"Not too many people know about this service," said Hursey, who recently used the Community Bus to get from No Frills on Victoria Park Avenue to Shoppers World on the Danforth. "It's convenient."

The TTC began its nine-month Community Bus pilot program along two routes this month. It's designed to connect senior citizens and Wheel-Trans customers along the Lawrence Manor 400 and East York 404 routes by offering door-to-door service to shopping centres, community centres, hospitals and seniors' centres.

"The pilot is part of a 10-year Wheel-Trans strategy aimed at transforming the way accessible public-transit services are delivered," TTC spokesperson Donna Harris said in an email. "The TTC's goal is to provide customers with increased flexibility and spontaneity."

Seniors who have tried out the service have mixed reactions.

Philomena Mcbolin, 94, uses a walker and says she doesn't like the change in bus stop locations that require her to walk to the opposite side of the plaza to catch her bus home. Janice Marshall, 79, says the Community Bus doesn't allow her time to shop before its final 4 p.m. bus.

The Community Bus program allows passengers to flag busses down along their route. Anyone can try out the new service. The TTC has reallocated \$400,000 within its existing Wheel-Trans budget for additional busses and to build awareness through posters, flyers and talking with riders.

The pilot will determine whether the service will continue or expand.

Police looking for man who fled after Leaside crash

Suspect, 22, wanted for 12 offences, including possession of loaded regulated firearm

By **OLIVIA BLACKMORE**
The Observer

Police are looking for a 22-year-old man who is considered armed and dangerous after they attempted to make an arrest Sept. 21 in Leaside.

At about 12:40 p.m., Toronto police stopped

a vehicle and police later tweeted one of the occupants may have had a gun. The vehicle left the scene and police followed.

A minor collision occurred when the vehicle struck a streetlight near the intersection of Eglinton Avenue East and Rumsey Road, according to a media release from the Special Investigations Unit.

A 60-year-old female passenger of the vehicle was taken to hospital, another passenger was arrested at the scene, and the driver of the vehicle fled, the release said.

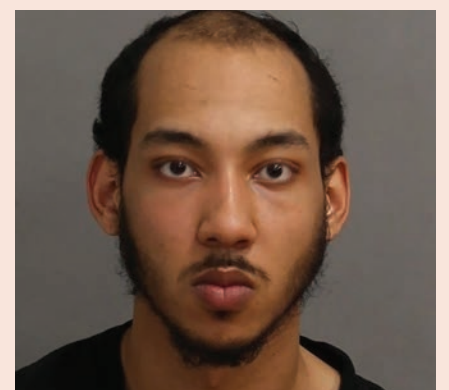
Police are searching for Kyle Rouse, 22, who

they said is wanted for 12 offences including possession of a loaded regulated firearm, possession of a firearm obtained by crime and dangerous operation of a motor vehicle.

Rouse has been described as six feet tall and 150 pounds with a shaved head. He was last seen wearing a white T-shirt and grey pants.

"The SIU is investigating the actions of police in relation to the injury sustained by the 60-year-old woman," said Monica Hudon, a communications co-ordinator with SIU.

■ See SIU, page 2



■ **KYLE ROUSE**

POLICE & FIRE

Arrest made following investigation

Members of 54 Division Major Crime Unit have made an arrest in an attempted murder investigation. On July 24, 2016, a man fired three shots at another man, aged 29, in the Main Street and Danforth Avenue area. Police say Astrit Shkurta, 67, of Toronto was arrested Monday, Oct. 2. Charges include attempted murder and unauthorized possession of a firearm.

Medication stolen Oct. 1

Police are warning the public to be on the lookout for medication that was stolen from an East York pharmacy on Sunday, Oct. 1. They say a large quantity of drugs was taken from the pharmacy, which is located in the O'Connor Drive and Curity Avenue area. The drugs can be harmful or fatal if ingested, especially by children. Anyone finding the medication is asked not to handle it, but to contact police.

Man falls off roof in East York

A worker is in critical condition after falling off the roof of a house in East York. Paramedics received a call around 12:30 p.m. on Sept. 30 after a man in his 50s fell off the roof of a house he was working on at Sutherland Drive and Astor Avenue. The man had no vital signs when paramedics arrived and was immediately rushed to hospital. The incident is being investigated by the Ministry of Labour.

~ Tiara Chutkhan



Connor Atkinson/The Observer

Over 400,000 bins have been delivered to residents across the city since April 2016. Most homeowners are happy with the bins, according to the city. Those who aren't are encouraged to call 311 with any complaints.

Green bins get thumbs-up

Feedback on 'raccoon-proof' bins has been very positive, says spokesperson for city

By CONNOR ATKINSON
The Observer

Enya Best's green bin was stolen, and she wants it back.

The East York resident says her house was vacant for a few months before she moved in. During that time, someone absconded with the green bin and Best is now left with a mess on her hands whenever the neighbourhood raccoon chooses to dine out at her home.

"The city is trying to track (the bin down) before they give us a new one," she said. "It's a hassle to be on your way, walk out to your car and see garbage everywhere. Then you're late because you had to get down and dirty."

Once Best gets her bin, whether it's the original or a new one, she'll join the rest of Toronto in its fight against hungry raccoons. The bins should be fully distributed to all homeowners before the end of No-

vember, according to city officials.

When the new bins were first introduced in the spring of 2015, Mayor John Tory claimed they were "raccoon-proof." They can only be opened by a latch, which the raccoon's hands are not large enough to turn, or by force of gravity, such as being held upside down by a garbage truck.

And while some residents say the bins are not all they're cracked up to be, overall feedback "has been very positive" said Siobhan Ramsey, a communications specialist for the City of Toronto. "We have not had a lot of complaints regarding the new bins."

"If residents are having issues with the bin, we encourage them to let us know by calling 311. The city will send a team out to investigate."

Meanwhile, those who are concerned that raccoons will go hungry as a result of the new bins need not worry. Suzanne MacDonald, a professor at York University, is currently doing research into whether the raccoon-proof bins will result in "skinny raccoons." So far, she sees little evidence of that.

"The raccoons can't be relying exclu-

sively on our green bins for food," she said, as they only have access to them once a week. That means they're finding food elsewhere.

"Our raccoons are very large, and many of them could stand to lose a few pounds," MacDonald said. "If they get slimmer, the females will have fewer babies each year, and the raccoon population will naturally decrease, which is good for the raccoons, and good for the humans."

As for the latch that's designed to make the bins impenetrable, MacDonald says it's hard to say how soon East York's raccoons will adapt to the obstacles.

The new bins are much bigger and heavier than the old bins, which makes them difficult to climb and hard to knock over, she said. However, she added, the bins can be opened by raccoons if other animals, such as rats or squirrels, chew through the plastic and make a hole large enough to admit raccoon fingers.

"If the bins are latched and stored properly, the raccoons can't get in," MacDonald said, "and at least from what I've seen with my motion-sensitive infrared cameras, the raccoons soon give up."

Police identify car used in 2016 murder

By SARAH BHOLA
The Observer

Toronto Police have released new information regarding the murder of 20-year-old Abdullah Farah.

On April 17, 2016, Farah was fatally wounded in a drive-by shooting at Danforth and Coxwell avenues. The incident happened in front of the now-defunct Cloud Nine Café.

In a press conference at Toronto Police

headquarters last week, homicide Det. Leslie Dunkley explained that Farah and two friends were refused entry into the café.

"(They) walked away and attempted to cross the Danforth, at which point Mr. Farah was gunned down by the suspect vehicle," Dunkley said.

Police have now identified the car involved in the shooting as a white 2007 Pontiac G5 sedan and have released CCTV footage from the night of the incident.

Hoping the vehicle is known to someone, Dunkley asks any witnesses to contact the homicide squad, CrimeStoppers or his direct line at 416-808-7400, ext. 7724.

Dunkley also said police have found the murder weapon, but would not disclose further details. Police still believe Farah was targeted and are appealing to the two witnesses with him that night for information.

The motive is unknown.

SIU seeks information about Leaside crash

Cont'd. from page 1

After the driver fled the scene, a neighbourhood manhunt ensued, with police closing roads along Eglinton from Hanna Road to Sutherland Drive and Rumsey Road. Although the incident appeared to be dramatic, some residents were not shaken by the events.

"No matter where you are, crime is going to happen," said Matthew Sheepwash, 28, who lives in Leaside.

He and his friend Ben Anderson, 25, were at a neighbourhood bar when they heard the news.

"I got a phone call from my mom, who lives in Barrie. She asked if we had heard and we were at the Leaside Pub and

I was at work all day so I hadn't heard anything," Sheepwash said.

Two investigators and two forensic investigators have been assigned to the incident.

The SIU is urging anyone who may have information about the investigation to contact the lead investigator at 1-800-787-8529.

WHAT'S UP IN E.Y.

New exhibit features historic sites

A new exhibit is coming to the Todmorden Mills Papermill Gallery. Daniel Rotzstain, a Toronto artist and urban geographer, will be showcasing his sketches of over 100 of Toronto's historic sites. The drawings show key architectural features of the landmarks, as well as some of their original artifacts. Visitors can view Rotzstain's drawings in a colouring book, *A Colourful History Toronto*. The exhibit is free of charge and will be available to the public from now until Oct. 15.

Support a good cause, get a haircut

Get your hair done this month at Elements Hair Design on 473 Cosburn Ave. The salon will be raising money during the month of October for ISAND Therapy Centre, an organization that provides services for young people with autism. The salon will donate \$1 from every hair service toward new programs.

Pop-up shop celebrates art

A new pop-up shop is coming to Woodbine and Danforth on Oct. 15. The Nooks is hosting Love Toronto and Friends, which includes five local Toronto artists. The collaboration features Love Toronto, Ave Mariabell Designs, Studio 324, n/a Stock Company and Tyleen's Art. The shop will be open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

~ Tiara Chutkhan



Sammy Abdo /// The Observer

Society president Pat Barnett (left) introduces actor Johnny Issaluk to the East York Historical Society on Sept. 26 in celebration of Canada 150.

Historical society celebrates Canada 150 with actor, author

Guest speakers talk to members of organization about what it means to be Canadian, history of Don Mills

By **SAMMY ABDO**
The Observer

The East York Historical Society commemorated Canada 150 at its most recent meeting.

Members gathered Tuesday night, in the midst of an oppressive heat wave, at the S. Walter Stewart branch of the Toronto Public Library.

They were given refreshments and an air-conditioned welcome as actor Johnny Issaluk and author Scott Kennedy spoke to them about Canada.

“I have listened to all the reasons why it is impossible to be proudly Indigenous and proudly Canadian,” said Issaluk, who is of Inuit descent.

“I have engaged in conversations with you about how we want to see Canada develop over the next 150 years.”

He wore a special red Canada 150 hockey jersey, which featured the official emblem of the event, a customized maple leaf with 13 diamonds.

“I’m sweating because it’s really hot down here. It’s snowing back home,” Issaluk joked as the crowd laughed.

Kennedy talked about the history of Canada, specifically the Don Mills area.

In his slideshow, he showed pictures of what the area used to look like, from forests and farms to roads and highways.

“The Don Mills was a term first coined by E.P. Taylor, who was part of a development company in the ’50s,” he explained.

After the slideshow, Beaches-East York councillor Janet Davis talked about the importance of recognizing the heritage of Indigenous peoples.

“We acknowledge the sacred land on which we operate and (that) has been the site of human activity for 15,000 years,” she said.

“Today the meeting place of Toronto is still home to many Indigenous people and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work with you on this day.”

Hospital finds it’s easy being green

East York facility saves energy by switching to LEDs, low-flow toilets

By **RHIANNE CAMPBELL**
The Observer

Michael Garron Hospital’s efforts to be eco-friendly have paid off.

Not only has the East York hospital’s focus on cutting down its use of electricity saved 419,000 kWh per year — the equivalent of taking 50 homes off the grid — but it’s also led to a hefty cheque from Toronto Hydro.

Every year, Toronto Hydro gives local hospitals thousands of dollars in cash incentives through its save-on-energy program.

On Sept. 11, Michael Garron Hospital officials accepted a cheque for close to \$200,000 during a special ceremony.

The East York hospital has reduced its energy consumption by installing low-flow toilets throughout the facility, replacing fluorescent light bulbs with LEDs and installing occupancy sensors, said hospital spokesperson

Erica Di Maio.

It’s also partnered with Honeywell Building Solutions to reduce energy consumption through facility equipment and operating systems.

“Our hope is that we can reinvest in additional infrastructure improvements to create more comfortable and healing environments for our staff and patients, or redirect savings to facilitate improved patient care,” Di Maio said.

According to data collected by Toronto Hydro, “hospitals and other health-care buildings account for approximately five per cent of Toronto’s overall energy use,” said Tori Gass, Toronto Hydro spokesperson.

In future, Michael Garron Hospital plans to use Leadership in Energy and Environment Design (LEED) certification to ensure new buildings are energy-efficient.

It will roll out its new Patient Care Centre next year using LEED Silver designation.

The LEED website defines the program as certification that a building, home or community was designed and constructed using eco-friendly strategies.



Rhianne Campbell/The Observer

Michael Garron Hospital recently received a cheque from Toronto Hydro in honour of its efforts to save energy.

WoodGreen offers a walk through the digital landscape

Four-month course designed to teach students how to use social media in the workplace

By **JORDAN BARRERA**
The Observer

Spots are still available in WoodGreen Community Services’ digital tech and computer program.

The four-month course was initiated about three years ago. This year’s version is

set to begin Oct. 31.

Angeli Mehrotra is an employment advisor to special projects for WoodGreen. She said that applications will be accepted as late as the week of Oct. 20, provided applicants meet the program requirements.

Enrolment is limited to adults 29 years and under who are receiving Ontario Works. They will need to provide a referral from their Ontario Works worker in order to be considered.

The course, which is open to East Yorkers, is designed to teach students basic

computer skills and how to use modern technologies, such as social media, in changing workplaces.

Lessons explore online communication, computer science and social media navigation.

New this year, students will receive a backpack full of supplies upon acceptance.

The digital training program will be held at 1533 Victoria Park Ave.

WoodGreen’s website shows the addresses and program types that are available across Toronto.

The organization has at least three locations along the Danforth between Pape and Coxwell avenues.

Saleem Hall, manager of special projects at WoodGreen, said the program is in response to the changing labour market, where digital knowledge is increasingly necessary.

“The idea is to help people gain the skills necessary to break into the labour market, and continue to pursue further education in a more targeted discipline within the digital tech field,” she said.



Alexa Battler/The Observer

Volunteers Stephan Acelar (left), Barbara Taylor and Bianca Sayan stitch damaged clothing at the Toronto Clothing Repairathon on Sept. 30.

Need a new button? Repairathon's here to help



Alexa Battler/The Observer

Bianca Sayan was one of the volunteers who hand-sewed and used a sewing machine to mend clothing at the Toronto Clothing Repairathon.

By **JORDAN BARRERA**
and **ALEXA BATTLER**
The Observer

“Reduce, Reuse, Recycle” added another “R” at the Withrow Park Farmers Market: Repair.

A non-profit organization, Toronto Clothing Repairathon, made its third visit to the farmers market on Sept. 30.

Participants could have up to two items of ripped or damaged clothes repaired free of charge.

The volunteer tailors stitched together torn clothing, sewed patches over holes or frayed fabric and reattached buttons.

Toronto Clothing Repairathon was founded by Michael Fagan in 2013.

The second-ever repairathon was held at Withrow Park Farmers Market that year.

Fagan said he was inspired by repair cafes in Europe, where pop-up shops offer spaces for people to have a variety of items repaired.

“It seemed like a great idea and something that would be nice to bring here,” he said.

While repair cafes in Europe offer fixes for everything from kitchen appliances to computers, Fagan said he chose clothing repair because of the accessibility of equipment (needles and thread) and people with sewing skills.

The organization also works to make those skills more common.

One of the repairathon volunteers, Barbara Taylor, said she has “always been sewing.” But

volunteers don’t have to be experienced sewers to help.

Toronto Clothing Repairathon also holds sewing workshops.

A recent repairathon in Regent Park gave families the option to have volunteers repair their clothing, or teach them to repair it themselves.

“We always encourage people to come out and join us,” Taylor said. “It’s been a really great way to get out into the community and meet new people.”

Volunteers both hand-stitched and used a sewing machine to do their mending.

Fagan said the Toronto Clothing Repairathon has received enthusiastic responses from the community. In fact, some of its events have been “really packed.”

“It’s almost sad when we have more clothes than the four or so volunteers we have for a particular event can do,” he said.

Fagan added that they have inspired a similar organization in Edmonton, suitably called Edmonton Repairathon.

“Maybe in the future with more volunteers we’ll be able to spread to other places ourselves,” he said.

While the environmental impact is obvious, Fagan said the repairathon gives people more than the cost of a new garment.

“Some things that you think, ‘Oh, it’s just a shirt, it’s so trivial,’ have real sentimental value for any number of reasons,” he said.

■ SKATING

Synchronize your watches for off-ice training sessions

Five-time national champion to help train members of the East York Skating Club

By **ZACK BODENSTEIN**
The Observer

Synchronized skater Becky Tyler, 22, will be instructing weekly off-ice training lessons starting on Oct. 10 for the East York Skating Club.

They will take place at Stan Wadlow Club House, behind East York Memorial Arena.

The one-hour classes will be held Tuesdays at 7:15 p.m., Wednesdays at 7 p.m. and Sundays at 5:30 and 6:30 p.m. Those attending are asked to bring a yoga mat and skipping rope.

The skater’s unique training outlook goes far beyond calisthenics and stretching.

Tyler, who has trained in the sport for 14 years, will challenge participants with pilates, ballet and theatre.

Appropriate techniques and injury prevention will be the main focus, and Tyler says the experience will be in a safe and positive environment.

While she’s been a synchronized skater since the age of eight, Tyler began her journey

on the ice at just three years of age.

She was a key component of the NEXXICE Senior team, and saw lots of success in her five years with the squad.

The Etobicoke native is a 2015 World Champion, three-time World Silver Medalist, five-time national champion and was recently an inductee in the Skate Canada West Ontario Hall of Fame.

She also has experience teaching, as she’s worked on instructional power skating with elite hockey players in the past, and is certified in First Aid and WaterART Aerobics.

For more information about the off-ice training lessons, contact EastYorkSC@rogers.com.



■ **BECKY TYLER**



Sarah Bhola/The Observer

Sonny (Concrete Rose) Kiss struggles to get up during a match with Canadian wrestler RJ City during a Greektown Wrestling event held Oct. 1 at the Slovenski Dom.

Greektown wrestlers thrill local crowd

Professional wrestling league delivers punchy performance for fans

By SARAH BHOLA
The Observer

The air was ripe with the scent of beer, pizza and sweat as East York's only professional wrestling league returned Oct. 1 to the Slovenski Dom on Pape Avenue.

Since arriving in East York two years ago, Greektown Wrestling has grown into a community, as evidenced by the excited spectators.

"It's a community-driven show that can entertain both families with kids and drunk 20-year-olds," Channing Decker said.

Decker and Trent Gibson, two East York residents who make up the duo The Fraternity, started the league in 2015.

The Fraternity, whose personas are an exaggerated stereotype of frat guys, are well known in the local pro wrestling community.

Many audience members were dressed in gear depicting their logo and seemed to know The Fraternity's signature chant "F-4-E," meaning

fraternity forever.

In the final match when Decker defeated Josh Alexander, the crowd burst into the frat-guy chant "Olé Olé Olé" popularized at other sporting events.

Hosting the event was Mike (Nug) Nahrgang, 43, a commentator on Sportsnet's *Aftermath*, a weekly show that recaps WWE events.

He's also a part of the Canadian sketch comedy troupe the Minnesota Wrecking Crew and for him, the best part of wrestling is "the funny stuff, because nobody gets hurt, nobody goes through a table and nobody takes thumbtacks in the back," he said.

The match between wrestlers Space Monkey and Joey Janela was a no-disqualification match, which means it allowed for the use of props: bananas were smashed, an aluminum garbage can was destroyed and a wrestler left the ring with thumbtacks embedded in his back — to the delight of the audience.

Omar Rahman, 29, a fan and friend of The Fraternity, brought his wife, brother-in-law and three young cousins to their first live wrestling event. During the intermission, Rahman's young cousins excitedly took pictures with wrestlers in costume.

"The energy, the atmosphere, a whole diverse group of fans that come in [and] enjoy themselves," Rahman said, explaining his love of live pro wrestling.

During matches, wrestlers often perform outside of the ring, interacting with members of the audience.

At her first event, Rahman's wife Moitry, 27, was accidentally bumped on the head when a performance overflowed into the crowd. While she wouldn't say being a part of the match in that way was exciting, she did say it would not deter her from coming back to another Greektown Wrestling event.

Helping out as one of the sponsors of the event were Dave Ocho, 32, and Josh Ortiz, 26, hosts of East York wrestling podcast "Ocho and Ortiz."

"I think it's great there's wrestling here right in Greektown now," Ortiz said.

"I'm a huge fan of Colt Cabana — I never had a chance to see him live before now," Ocho said.

At Sunday's match, proceeds from two raffles went to the John Howard Society on Danforth Avenue to aid in the rehabilitation and re-integration of community members who have had, or may be at risk of, trouble with the law.



Sarah Bhola/The Observer

The Mysterious Movado gives a young fan an autographed picture and a thumbs-up sign.



Sarah Bhola/The Observer

'The Bubblegum Princess' Alexia Nicole postures before her match with Penelope Ford and Selezuya Sparks.



Sarah Bhola/The Observer

'The Bad Boy' Joey Janela smashes bananas in the air with a mop's handle during his 'no disqualifications' match with Space Monkey.

■ EDITORIALS

The power of Ford

Does Toronto really want another Ford Nation?

Has the city learned from its mistakes? It's been almost three years since the first showdown between John Tory and Doug Ford — incumbent mayor Rob Ford had to drop out of the race because of his cancer diagnosis, and his brother Doug took his place and lost to Tory.

Tory is far from perfect — and quite frankly needs to spend more time and put more money towards issues that affect areas outside the downtown core that isn't the Scarborough subway.

Doug Ford announced his mayoral candidacy at Ford Fest last month. Will a certain nostalgia for the Ford years give him a fighting chance? Probably. But Doug is not his brother.

Ford appeals to the blue-collar families. Take Ford Fest, for example. That event in itself makes it feel as though Ford could be your next-door neighbour. Opening up your family home to thousands of people and having a backyard barbecue? Brilliant.

Ford Nation is cult-like, and the Fords know it. Famous for their customer service-like take on politics (they'll call you back and spray-wash graffiti off walls themselves), this works to a certain extent. People will vote for candidates who can bring them change they can physically see.

People may not see the impact that larger issues such as transportation, public services and even city planning pose until after decisions are made at city hall and have been implemented.

Many have said that Ford Nation died along with Rob Ford. Is it fair to make this conclusion? Maybe. Is it true? We will see over the next year.

Let's just hope that the next mayoral election won't become a Shakespearean tragedy like the last one. With everything going on south of the border, Toronto needs a reliable mayor who doesn't have a flare for the dramatic or a dislike for the media.

~ Olivia Blackmore

Time to compare

Gun violence.

We've heard these words echoed far too many times over the past few years.

With gun violence in the U.S. so prominent, one wonders when things will begin to change.

When will gun laws be up for debate? When will President Donald Trump address the issue?

In the wake of Las Vegas, it's an outrage, and it's frustrating.

Guns are a problem in Toronto, too, though not to the extent they are in the U.S. But there seems to be a relative lack of discussion about gun violence in Toronto.

Why discuss something that "sort of" happens here? Many people say that "Toronto isn't as bad as the U.S." or the events happening in the States "don't affect Canada."

However, gun violence in Toronto has seen a huge spike over the past few months.

The laws that are in place for gun control simply need to be updated in both Canada and south of the border.

The term "mass shooting" is used when four or more people have been hurt due to a firearm.

We've seen many mass shootings this year in the U.S. According to data from the Gun Violence Archive, an online directory for information about gun-related violence, a total of 273 mass shooting incidents have occurred in 2017.

These numbers are growing at a rapid pace.

Toronto has seen 36 shooting homicides in 2017 alone, ranging from gang violence to armed robberies.

We've all seen these numbers and heard the cries of victims' families.

When will it begin to change?

Here's a suggestion for all leaders, both political and non-political. There's a cliché we hear parents say too often, which is "we need to build a better life for our kids."

Gun violence may not be a "huge" issue in Toronto, but it is an issue that needs to be discussed, for the sake of the younger generations to come.

Toronto police and Mayor John Tory should look into having more frequent gun amnesties, allowing Torontonians to turn in their guns, no questions asked.

This program was conducted over a 14-day period last November and proved to be very effective. Police collected 86 long rifles, 22 hand guns and over 8,000 rounds of ammunition.

Meticulous background checks should also be conducted when someone is purchasing a firearm, making sure they are equipped to own one.

Yes, gun violence in Canada "isn't as bad as it is in the States," but it is something that needs to be addressed.

While our laws around gun ownership are different from the States, guns are deadly no matter the rules.

~ Kristen Doopan

■ COLUMNS

Logos honour East York

East York became part of an amalgamated Toronto in 1998. Yet East York pride can still be felt and lives on.

But it's about time we got a facelift.

In 2000 city council voted to remove the tags of the former boroughs from street signs in order to unify as one Toronto.

The logos still appear on various street signs across East York — some faded but nonetheless still present.

City council has voted in favour of having the name of former municipalities on street signs, which, also preserves the identity of East York.

The installation of logos on street signs is an important step to recognize a community within the larger metropolis and I'm proud and hopeful that East York will be the first.

The discussion on the feasibility of the

signs also included the former borough of Scarborough. But East Yorkers seem to be the ones raising their voices the loudest.

East York councillor Janet Davis, who brought the motion, has made her voice heard. She says there is a strong sense of pride in being from East York, even among youth who don't remember amalgamation.

Street signs with East York logos are a reminder that despite amalgamation, East York is still a proud and strong entity.

But some see the signs as the start of a street war.

Before the city council vote, councillor Stephen Holyday, of the former municipality of Etobicoke, told the *East York Observer* he is concerned over the practicalities of physically putting up logos.

Holyday says that even though some borough logos still appear on street signs in Toronto, it could take decades to

complete the task. "It's a really neat idea to put a previous city's logo on," Holyday says, adding that it could create a sticky situation.

"Before the former municipalities, there were smaller boroughs and smaller villages. That's another piece of history. It starts to get really complicated when you start talking about another layer of municipality."

But what is wrong with a little reminder of what was?

East York, once part of the former township of York, became a borough in 1967. My family owned a business in East York and I grew up surrounded by East Yorkers, East York stories and East York issues.

It's where my grandparents immigrated to and where my parents grew up. East York has what I haven't experienced anywhere else in the city — a sense of belonging and of community.

The notion that an amalgamated Toronto is somehow threatened by logos on street signs hints that some in Toronto are resistant to embracing history.

For East York, what better way to recognize the past than by returning the name to places of prominence — on street signs — 50 years after the community became a borough.



Tina Adamopoulos

Looking for a silver lining

In September of last year, two weeks after school began, I was in a car accident.

My family and I were on our way to eat at a restaurant.

As my dad made a right turn into the parking lot, we were struck from behind and thrown about 80 metres forward.

The physical injuries to me and my family affected us but not as much as the trauma that lingered in the year after.

It wasn't something you should simply brush away and pretend never happened. But that's what I did.

I pushed away the trauma, the anxiety and the fear. I didn't take my physiotherapy seriously. That was my big mistake.

The first thing to do after an accident like that, naturally, is to take care of your physical health, registered psychotherapist Berak Hussain says.

It is already hard enough to be a student undergrad. Now, add a traumatizing, life-changing experience to a life filled with classes and numerous commitments.

I simply didn't have time to heal. I thought: "It'll pass.

I'll just go to physio a couple times, and see a psychologist and I'll be fine."

A month ago was one year since the accident. For a year, my father has been unemployed.

I have found myself so overwhelmed that I cried to a friend over the phone about how messed up I felt.

I hated every minute of school, every second of physio and every moment of awkward silence at the psychologists' offices.

All I wanted was for someone to look at me and say, "I understand." I wanted a shoulder to cry on and a hand to hold.

But, in reality, the insurance company will try to tell you your pain does not exist.

People in your life will say,

"Oh, just toughen up."

This isn't a sob story. I already did that.

This is for those people who have had a tough year.

Let's look at the brighter sides of these situations.

A small moment, near death, clarifies to you what is most important in life. I had the time to reflect on who I am and what I want.

The most important thing is making time for yourself.

Pick up the phone and call someone. Cry, scream, blow your sorrows in napkins and fumbled words to a supportive soul.

"Speak to a counsellor to process the shock of the situation," Hussain says. "Accept that you can't change what happened but, you can change the way you look at this trauma. That's really empowering."

I didn't start healing until I became open enough to let the world in on my secretly hurting soul.



Fatima Al-Sayed

E.Y. transit evolves, accidents dissolve



William James/City of Toronto Archives



Ben Freeman Collins/The Observer

The corner of Danforth and Glebe avenues was the scene of a major accident in 1935 (left photo) when a Danforth streetcar (yes, there were streetcars on the Danny back then) hit and overturned a truck. Today (photo on right) we no longer risk such collisions on Danforth, although the area has been built up more and traffic is at an all-time high. Both photos, taken about 72 years apart, show Danforth facing west across from the corner of Glebe.

HOUSING

Demand for local real estate remains strong

By BEN FREEMAN COLLINS
The Observer

As the housing market in Toronto ebbs and flows, demand for East York homes remains strong.

The latest data from the Toronto Real Estate Board shows East York homes selling on average about 10 per cent above their Toronto counterparts throughout the last year.

In August, the average East York home was selling for \$873,993. That's 17 per cent above the Toronto average of \$726,712 for the same time period.

Much of the demand for East York housing is due to the unique community it offers, according to real estate broker Anna Michaelidis of Urban Reality.

"I think in the end it comes down to it being still like a small community type of feeling," she said. "It's like being in your own little town, your own bubble of East York."

The unique feel is combined with convenience. "I think the proximity to downtown makes this a very attractive option for most folks that need to commute into the core," Michaelidis said.

Access to nature is also a driving factor, along with plenty of parks to choose from and access to hiking trails in the Don Valley.

"It's like a little town within this major metropolitan city," she said.

All of this has created a strong demand for housing. "The folks are naturally attracted to the neighbourhood and there's not enough supply to keep people happy," Michaelidis said.

"So, what we really see in East York and some of the surrounding pockets is the opportunity for growth."

This hasn't been missed by store owners. "We've seen so many new retailers coming in because they see the demand," Michaelidis said. "It's definitely attracting more of the trendier kind of indie places, because they see a demand for the neighbourhood."

The neighbouring arteries along the Danforth are also seeing growth.

Pape Avenue in particular has seen a number of new stores opening up in the last couple of years. Michaelidis attributes a lot of this movement to the high expenses of operating a business on the Danforth and the property taxes that come with it.

"Pape is the new Danforth," she said. "That's the quoted phrase."

As market confidence rebounds since its short downturn in April, the East York market is expected to continue to grow.



Ben Freeman Collins/The Observer

House prices in East York have been rising steadily for the last couple of years.



Michael Chachura/The Observer

Toronto book award finalists (L-R) James Maskalyk, B. Denham Jolly, Catherine Hernandez and Jen Agg speak to the audience at the S. Walter Stewart Library.

2017 Toronto Book Awards finalists share their stories

By MICHAEL CHACHURA
The Observer

Think of it like Toronto's American Idol, but with books.

On Tuesday, the six finalists for the Toronto Book Awards, which acknowledge authors who write about the city, took to the stage at the S. Walter Stewart library in East York to read excerpts from their work.

In *I Hear She's A Real Bitch*, Jen Agg writes about being a woman in the male-dominated restaurant industry. She owns several restaurants, the most notable being the Black Hoof. When asked what she'd do with the prize money if she won, she said she'd donate it to Alzheimer's research in honour of her father.

The next author to read was Catherine Hernandez, who performed an excerpt from her book *Scarborough*. It was inspired by her experiences growing up in the eastern part of the city.

"I wanted to write a book that was speaking about my truths," she said. "I wanted to commit that to paper."

Presenting his book *In The Black: My*

Life, B. Denham Jolly read with conviction. He spoke about the struggles he has faced as a black man in Toronto, and his thoughts on society today. His book is biographical and serves as a testament of his life to future generations.

"I wanted to document principles we should all live by...I've been fighting all my life," he said.

Next came James Maskalyk, who read from his book *Life on the Ground Floor*. It documents his experiences working in an emergency room in Ethiopia. When asked what he'd do with the prize money, he said he'd use it to supplement a teaching award that's part of a leadership conference he is hosting in Ethiopia in two weeks.

Finally, Jane Farrow and Jennifer Coffey presented their anthology *Any Other Way: How Toronto Got Queer*. Coffey read her piece in the book, *And The Stars Look Very Different Today*, which was about her experiences serving drag queens at Fran's Restaurant in the 1970s.

The authors will find out which one of them wins the coveted \$10,000 first-place prize on Oct. 12 at the Toronto Reference Library. Finalists will receive \$1,000.

Apple festival celebrates orchards of yore

By ANNA BOYES
The Observer

Bayview Avenue got a festive make-over on the end-of-September weekend as the trees between Soudan and Davisville avenues were garnished with artificial apples to celebrate the second annual Apple Festival.

The two-day long event, presented by the Bayview Leaside BIA, pays tribute to the apple orchards that once occupied this land.

“Whether it’s an elm or honey locust, we turned them all into apple trees and it just makes me smile and I’m hoping it makes everybody smile,” event coordinator Debora Kuchme said.

From the historical Lea family orchards of the east to the Lawrence family orchards of the west, apples of all types have grown in Toronto. Kuchme notes the importance of the event is to let residents learn their own history while celebrating the season.

The autumn timing of the event is also important as it celebrates the coming of the late-blooming Northern Spy apple that grew on the Lea family orchard.

“What we are doing is so important to make a community feel like part of history — to educate people on what it means, what it was and what it could become,” Kuchme said. “It’s beautiful.”

The upscale section of Bayview street got a



Anna Boyes/The Observer

Artificial apples hung from trees along Bayview Avenue in celebration.

rustic feel for the event as folk and bluegrass street performers sat on hay bales outside local businesses.

Members of the BIA participated by featuring apple-themed products and providing attendees with free samples.

Naeem Memon of Refuel Juicery skipped the traditional cider to supply attendees with fresh-pressed apple juice, showcasing the purest natural flavour of the apple.



Anna Boyes/The Observer

Debora Kuchme (in hat) was the event co-ordinator and leader of the Bayview Pixies. She greets people attending Apple Festival 2017.

For Memon, the event is bringing out more customers than ever before.

“It’s actually bringing the people out. [We’ve] never had as many people on the street,” he said. “It reminds us what used to be in this neighbourhood a long, long time ago.”

Mayor John Tory stopped by the event on Saturday afternoon.

The event’s decor was created by the Bayview Pixies, a volunteer organization created to

beautify the area. It was formed when the BIA received a letter from a resident who was unhappy with the area’s appearance and offered her own time to fix it. Kuchme was inspired by the person’s willingness to help her community.

“What a great idea to have a volunteer group be a part of the beautification of Bayview,” Kuchme said. “We started as a group of three and it grew to a group of 12. We are all seniors and we all do this because we love it.”

Police counter ‘CSI effect’ to help protect homes in East York

People watch Hollywood shows and think they know all about how criminals work, officer says

By JOSEPH BURRELL
The Observer

While East York residents need not be fearful that a break-in is likely to happen to their home, a little vigilance goes a long way towards security and prevention, Const. Ingrid Hannah says.

Hannah spoke to residents when Toronto Police Division 54 held a presentation at the S. Walter Stewart library on Oct. 2.

“The first step is clearing up misconceptions,” Hannah said. “I call it the CSI effect. People watch Hollywood shows and think they know how things work.”

Although police dramas may depict some aspects of the job accurately, they also glamorize crimes, making them more entertaining than realistic, Hannah said.

“Break-ins in East York are not very sophisticated. Many think that criminals are casing out homes, but that isn’t true.

“These are crimes of opportunity here. They almost always happen between 9 a.m. and 12 p.m., when people are at work, but before lunch.”

Hannah says the best thing a homeowner



Joseph Burrell/The Observer

Const. Ingrid Hannah describes the homes that burglars choose to target in East York. She says break-ins here are “not very sophisticated.”

can do is create visible signs of traffic around a home. Criminals won’t approach if it’s clear that people come and go frequently. They’re even less inclined to do so if they think someone is inside.

While most of this advice may sound like common sense, Hannah emphasized that many

homeowners don’t watch for these details.

Last winter, Observer reported a string of break-ins in East York cars and homes. In June, Global reported a home invasion spike in nearby 42 Division, in which criminals used the exact techniques described by Hannah.

She also offered advice that may be count-

er-intuitive. Movies show us criminals breaking into homes in secluded neighbourhoods, but in East York the opposite happens.

“These people are good criminals, but aren’t very smart otherwise. Most of the time their judgment is impaired by drugs,” Hannah said. “Target houses are often on busy streets. The criminals are probably travelling between their home and their dealer when they choose a place.”

Hannah noted that this makes corner lots more likely candidates to be picked, because traffic passes them on two sides.

Final steps that can be taken to increase security include upgrading your doors. Ensure that strike plates have four-inch screws securing them not only to the door frame, but to a stud.

Escutcheon plates also strengthen the door around handle and lock. These are metal braces that extend further into the body of a door than a doorknob alone would.

Of course, the best security will always come from alarm systems, but if that solution is too costly, Hannah recommends simply placing a sign in your yard.

“You can use your imagination and make one yourself,” she said. “Sometimes the sign is even safer than the alarm. I had a woman remove her sign because she didn’t like the look of it. When a burglar did break in the alarm scared him away, but by that point the crime had already happened.”

Politicians launch petition to fight graphic abortion posters

By MARJAN ASADULLAH
The Observer

An online petition started by local representatives to stop anti-abortion material using graphic images has more than 2,000 signatures so far.

The recent anti-abortion campaign carried out by the Calgary-based pro-life group Canadian Centre for Bioethical Reform (CCBER), has residents in East York and around the city concerned over who might come across the

images, including children who may be left traumatized.

The petition was started by MPP Peter Tabuns, councillors Paula Fletcher and Mary Fragedakis, and TDSB trustee Jennifer Story. It was sent to Ontario’s Attorney General in August.

“Our concern is to protect children and adults who would be traumatized by distribution or display of these images,” the petition said.

A meeting in early September in Riverside

gave an opportunity to local residents and others affected by the anti-abortion campaign to discuss their concerns, some of which included harassment, women’s rights issues and the fine difference between free speech and hate speech.

Beaches-East York MPP Arthur Potts said in an interview the anti-abortion campaign is “offensive” and a “failed attempt by (CCBER) to influence people.”

Potts said the campaign is doing more harm to its cause than good. “There’s no role that the government can play to stop them. There’s a

free speech argument here. It’s important that people know that (anti-abortion flyers and posters) are around and hide them from their kids.”

Potts also spoke about how the residents of East York have dealt with the campaign and how they will continue to do so.

“I think it’s important that the community has come up and said we don’t like this, keep your trash off our front lawn or front door,” Potts said. “And I hope they get the message (that) whatever campaign they thought they were helping, it’s not working.”