



# Housing heats up Ward 19 debate

By DANIELLE CLARKE  
and DOHA HANNO  
The Observer

From affordable housing to park toilets, this week's Ward 19 all-candidates meeting covered an array of critical topics.

Thirteen of the 16 candidates came together for the event Tuesday evening in a packed basement at Hope United Church. The meeting was hosted by the Danforth Village Community Association and moderated by minister Brian Stevens.

Candidates were given two minutes to introduce their platforms, followed by one minute to answer each question.

Hot topics included affordable housing, transit, and the always-controversial bike lanes.

One issue that all of the candidates agreed on is the lack of affordable housing in the Beaches-East York community.

Another was transit. Many commuters continue to voice their frustrations.

"Transit is what connects people to opportunity," Brad Bradford said. "Transit that goes all day in all directions."

Candidates and audience members disagreed over the organization and implementation of bike lanes in the community.

Two audience members said they didn't care about bike lanes and that the candidates should focus on other issues.

Most of the candidates agreed that the bike lanes should be moved from Woodbine Avenue to Coxwell Avenue.

"Cyclists need to take a more responsible attitude," Donald Lamoreux said.

Matthew Kellway offered up his solution.

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Rushanthi Kesunathan/The Observer

## Church service goes to the dogs

Rev. Ian LaFleur blesses Jan Goodman's 10-year-old English Springer Spaniel at St. Cuthbert's Church in East York. The church's Blessing of the Animals ceremony took place Oct. 6.

## COMMUNITY

# When neighbour disputes go too far: A story of two families

Five years of fighting about noise, dogs and fences has torn these neighbours apart

By SERGIO ARANGIO  
The Observer

Long-standing animosity between the Meaney and the Carpenters on Woodmount Avenue really boiled over when Drake Carpenter called the police on neighbour Paula Meaney for allegedly kicking him in the shin.

Meaney says she was about to walk her dog

when Carpenter shouted at her and kicked her dog, prompting a kick from her in return. Carpenter remembers the event differently, saying Meaney's dog peed on his shoe, so he stomped his foot on the ground to startle him.

That was just one tense incident in a five-year battle between neighbours.

The Meaney family, who have lived in their East York home for almost 20 years, say their issues began shortly after the Carpenters moved next door five years ago.

The fighting started with noise complaints, then progressed to a dispute over a fence covering the right of way being ripped out by their neighbour, and then to an argument over the

Meaney family supposedly digging into the Carpenters' house foundation to build a garden.

Now, the two neighbours are involved in an issue over arborists hired by the Carpenters using the Meaney family's backyard garage roof to trim surrounding trees without their permission.

It was trespassing, says Keiron Meaney, who had run home from his job as a chef to deal with the situation. "If you have a right of way ... the right of way is over there, it isn't on our roof."

Meaney said while he and his wife Paula are typically friendly with their neighbours, the Carpenters are an exception. Thousands of dollars have been spent between the two parties in their disputes. While the issues are frustrating

on their own, Meaney said these disputes might be easier to handle were it not for Drake Carpenter.

"He comes on my property, he's (hurt) my dog ... I don't want this guy anywhere on my property."

Carpenter said the Meaney family can't be reasoned with and seem to feel they have a constant right to meddle with property that's not theirs.

Warren Morris, a mediator based in East York, has a technique he often uses with two parties in a dispute to help each side see the other's point of view. The exercise has each side

■ See MEDIATOR, page 8

## WHAT'S UP IN E.Y.

### Healthy eating for seniors

Milka Milicevic, a registered holistic nutritionist, will give a free lecture on healthy eating for optimal health for seniors. It will take place Oct. 25 from 2 to 3 p.m. at the S. Walter Stewart Library, 170 Memorial Park Ave.

### Celebrating the Day of the Dead

Evergreen Brick Works, 550 Bayview Ave., will host its eighth annual Day of the Dead celebration on Oct. 28 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Traditional Latin celebrations, family activities and food and drink will be featured.

### Who was that masked child?

Families are invited to Tod-morden Mills for a spooky Halloween mask-making workshop. It will be held Oct. 20 from 1 to 3 p.m. at 67 Pottery Rd. and is suitable for children six and up. Attendees must be accompanied by an adult. Reservations are required and can be made online. Tickets are \$5 for children and \$10 for adults.

### Pumpkins on parade in E.Y.

The East York Village Pumpkin Parade will be held Nov. 1, 6:30-9 p.m. at the East York Civic Centre, 850 Coxwell Ave. Bring your Jack-o'-lanterns any time after 6 p.m. to light up the pathways with your creations. For more information, contact [eypumpkinparade@gmail.com](mailto:eypumpkinparade@gmail.com).

~ Fleur Boomsma



Bobby Hristova/The Observer

**Justin Van Dette, a community activist in East York, wants the TTC to try a pilot 24-hour-service program. He says almost 1,000 people have signed his petition.**

## Want 24-hour subway service?

Then join the almost 1,000 people who have already signed this man's petition

By **BOBBY HRISTOVA**  
The Observer

Even though it was 2:15 in the morning when Justin Van Dette found himself on the subway platform at Times Square, it was only minutes before he was riding a train back to his hotel in Manhattan. If only he could do the same in Toronto.

"We need an overnight subway," said Van Dette, a community organizer in East York.

He wrote a letter about his trip to Rick Leary, CEO of the Toronto Transit Commission, describing the "incredible" ability to hop on one of their trains at 2:15 a.m. and get home within minutes.

Van Dette launched a petition in mid-July. He said it boasts close to 1,000 signatures.

"People from time to time write very real, sad stories to me about how it would

be better," he said. "School and jobs are a necessity, and it's reassuring advocating for something that means a lot to people."

This idea isn't new. The TTC considered full-time subway service in 2006 but never committed. Stuart Green, a senior communications specialist at the TTC, confirmed the organization isn't considering Van Dette's dream.

"It would severely impact our ability to perform essential maintenance. It would also be very expensive," Green said in an email response.

Van Dette points to Nuit Blanche, an annual city-wide art exhibition, which had all-night subway service.

"They already do it once a year. Why not try for 100 nights a year?" he said. "It could be a pilot you only run on one line or something that runs from Thursday to Sunday."

Green says the TTC offers 24-hour service through its Blue Night network, which has 27 bus routes running every 20 minutes.

But for at least one person, the overnight network isn't enough.

"Even if a subway left once every 20

minutes you could at least count on it," said Margaret White, a registered nurse. "Right now, there's nothing."

White is no ordinary nurse. As an agency nurse, she works in every hospital across the city and thinks any nurse who works in Toronto would want full-time subway service.

"We work 12-hour shifts, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.," she said. "On Sunday night shifts, you can't get home and on day shifts, you can't get in."

White, who lives near Main Street station, said her "nightmare" commute has led to multiple \$30 cab rides and rides with "some really scary characters."

She added that the lack of a late-night subway could impact nurses in the critical-care units waiting for co-workers to get to work, and could even impact patients who need specialized care.

"It's one nurse to one patient," she said. "There are only so many hospitals that specialize in certain areas."

Despite this, she doesn't think the TTC will act.

"There are not enough people who want it to make it justifiable," she said.

## Rare sports cards bring out local collectors

By **D.J. LLEWELLYN**  
The Observer

John Gatsis collects sports cards, some of which are so rare that only a handful of copies were ever printed.

"It's pretty cool that I've got three of the rarest Auston Matthews rookie cards you can get," says Gatsis, who was both buying and selling at the Toronto Card Show on Oct. 14.

"One is a cup printing plate and is the only one of its kind. The other two cards are one of only six and one of only 10."

Started in 2006, the Toronto Card Show is a monthly event that draws many of Ontario's high-end vendors. This one was hosted by Leaside's Amsterdam Brewery, so traders, buyers and sellers got the bonus of grabbing a pint along with some rare sports cards.

Graham MacKrell runs a small collectibles business as a hobby. He's been coming to the show for years to buy and sell new cards.

"I've been collecting things since I was a kid, whether it was posters, hockey cards, toys, you name it," MacKrell said. "A part of me refuses to grow up, and that's OK because this community is mostly made up of grown-ups."

A wide collection of sports cards, from hockey to football, is available to buy and the price range is remarkable.

Some cards go for less than a dollar. Others are worth thousands.

For the chance to score some cool sports cards and collectibles of your own, the Toronto Card Show will be back on Nov. 18. Details are at [www.torontocardshow.com](http://www.torontocardshow.com).

## Police seek woman in arson investigation

By **TIARA CHUTKHAN**  
The Observer

Toronto Police are seeking a 50-year-old woman in connection with a suspected arson on Dawes Road near Victoria Park Avenue.

Officers responded to a fire at an apartment building on Sept. 25 at about 5:50 p.m.

Firefighters were able to extinguish the fire and no injuries were reported.

It was later discovered that the fire had started in the fire

chute of the building.

Police have released a photo of Dianna Carroll, the woman they are seeking.

Anyone with information is asked to call police or crime stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).



■ DIANNA CARROLL

## POLICE & FIRE

### Local principal charged with assault after incident at Chester school

The principal of Chester Elementary School in East York has been charged with assault following an incident in the school's playground. According to police, the principal allegedly kicked and stomped on a child while trying to intervene during a fight in the playground. The child reportedly spat on him. The alleged incident happened on Sept. 19. The principal turned himself in to 55 Division two weeks later on Oct. 3. Charged with assault is principal Sean Hume, who was released on a promise to appear in court. That court date has not been set yet.

### Police car crashes into bus shelter at Woodbine and O'Connor

A Toronto police officer has minor injuries after crashing into an East York bus shelter on the morning of Sunday, Oct. 7. The crash happened around 9:15 a.m. at the intersection of Woodbine and O'Connor avenues. Police say the bus shelter was demolished completely in the crash. The officer, who is in his 30s, was taken to a local hospital with minor injuries. The roads remained open after the incident. The bus stop has been relocated one pole west as broken glass remains around the bus shelter.

~ David Lynch and Tiara Chutkhan

■ BEACHES-EAST YORK ALL-CANDIDATES MEETING

# Housing, bikes and washrooms hot topics

Ward 19 candidates agree on one thing: we need more toilets at Taylor Creek Park

Cont'd. from page 1

"I would have a third party who has studied bike lanes look at traffic school zones and safety," he said.

Some of the questions were submitted by audience members and drawn randomly from a ballot box.

One addressed the addition of more toilets at Taylor Creek Park. All of the candidates were in favour.

"When out in nature and nature calls, there should be toilets," said candidate Paul Bura.

The audience seemed shocked when the next question pulled from the box asked who the candidates are voting for as mayor and why. Most were undecided.

In addressing the issue of how to implement affordable housing, all of the candidates appeared to have an action plan.

David Del Grande stressed the importance of diversifying housing options.

"We need to allow different housing types in the neighbourhood and



Danielle Clarke/The Observer

The Danforth Village Community Association hosted a Ward 19 all-candidates meeting Tuesday night at Hope United Church on Danforth Avenue. Thirteen of the 16 candidates were in attendance.

work with developers," he said.

Veronica Stephen spoke about her plans to focus on inclusionary zoning, which would require a portion of new developments to provide affordable housing for people with lower incomes.

Joshua Makuch spoke about increasing the amount of subsidized housing available in the community.

When asked about unity, Brad Bradford said he has included a neighbourhood association office in his plan.

Another concern for some candidates, including Morley Rosenberg and Matthew Kellway, was senior citizens.

They want to make sure seniors are able to afford rising living costs in Toronto by providing them with

affordable housing options and accommodating jobs.

The meeting ended with questions directed at specific candidates followed by closing statements.

Voting day in Toronto is Monday, Oct. 22.

# Fresh faces compete for Ward 19 city council

By TAYLOR BRIDGER and CHELSIE ORTIZ LUIS  
The Observer

In light of the reduction to the number of Toronto wards, the old

Wards 31 and 32 have been combined into the new Ward 19.

The incumbents of those wards have decided to retire and endorse new faces in their stead.

Janet Davis, of Ward 31, has en-

dorsed a former Beaches-East York MP, Matthew Kellway.

Mary-Margaret McMahon, of Ward 32, has endorsed Brad Bradford.

That makes the Oct. 22 election a

battle between fresh faces to municipal politics, with infrastructure playing a large role in the candidates' platforms.

Each has a unique view of how things such as public infrastructure

should be handled in Beaches-East York.

Here are the views of seven of the 16 candidates running in the race for Ward 19's new representative on city council.



■ BRAD BRADFORD

"I really would like to see a more positive type of politics. Too many people and too many politicians are focused on what divides us instead of what brings us together. I want to bring people together, look at the concerning evidence (transportation, affordable housing, road safety and the environment), speak to people, and actually move forward."



■ DIANE DYSON

"There's no need for political obligations. I come at this election with the obligation of finding people and neighbours who need help with any worries in general. That's where my priorities are."



■ MATTHEW KELLWAY

"My experience as a community advocate and elected representative makes me the best candidate in Ward 19. I have deep roots in the community, having lived and volunteered here for over 20 years. Residents need to know that their councillor has a deep commitment to our neighbourhoods, and the understanding, passion and experience that it takes to move things forward. I'm ready to stand up for Toronto, and for you. Together, we can build the city and community we want."



■ BRENDA MACDONALD

"I am a community advocate who offers non-partisan representation for all the constituents in Ward 19 and (at) City Hall. I will work with any mayor and all councillors elected. I can demonstrate fiscal responsibility in setting priorities, offering an equitable plan of action for Ward 19 — to develop a long-term approach to changes to our infrastructure planning, investment and shared development of our great city."



■ JOSH MAKUCH

"Being a young person who commissions as an officer in the military, it is a huge crash course in leadership. I was only 24 years old and I was in charge of 40 soldiers. Being in Afghanistan, these 40 soldiers would look at me as their leader during a real fight, waiting for me to make a decision for them. That's a unique kind of leadership that I experienced. Leadership is one of the things that's missing in this city and with it, we can tackle hard challenges to make this city greater."



■ FRANK MARRA

"Hi, my name is Frank Marra and I am running for council in Ward 19. My election priorities are to improve transportation movement for all modes, including TTC service, social housing, especially the TCHC, and the safety of our streets. In addition, development matters along the waterfront and Danforth are a priority, too. I want to increase recreation opportunities while preserving our small community feel."



■ ADAM SMITH

"I have been involved in community issues for years now, volunteering and advocating for many causes and organizations. My passion for community work and the resulting knowledge of this ward are what drive me. My platform centres around a community voice: for better public consultations, safe and efficient transportation; using my years of studying traffic and transit to devise safer solutions for our roads, and ensuring development that respects the character of our neighbourhoods."



Fleur Boomsma/The Observer

(Left) Amanda Munday relaxes in the children's playroom at The Workaround, a unique space that offers parents a place to work while being close to their kids. (Right) Participants are invited to set up their laptops in the common area, which consists of high- and low-top tables, chairs and couches.

## Looking for balance? Here's a solution

New start-up The Workaround offers parents a place to work and their kids a place to play

By FLEUR BOOMSMA  
The Observer

After going through two maternity leaves, Amanda Munday understands what it's like to work from home with children. That's when she learned there was a demand for a parent-friendly workspace that also offers a full play-based-curriculum daycare.

She looked at ways that parents could be an asset to the economy. On Oct. 1, Munday opened up an office space that offers entrepreneurs part-time childcare.

The name of the east-end start-up, The Workaround, comes from the idea of "working around" your kids, other parents and your challenges.

"You can work around your children with help, which (The Workaround) can (offer)," Munday said. "You can work around other parents who can amplify your work to be stronger and better."

Munday said people often assume that because parents have to take care of young children, they're less available for work, "which is not true."

The Workaround is located at 2080 Danforth Ave., right outside the Woodbine subway station. It used to be a bank. Now it provides 8,200 square feet of workspace and the opportunity for parents to bring their children to a morning

or afternoon daycare program.

Munday said this location is important because the area east of Pape has "only enough spaces for 28 per cent of the families to access high-quality licensed care."

Brandie Weikle, who is an editor, writer and parent spokesperson, says there is a critical shortage of good childcare, so any time a new type of daycare opens in Toronto it is a victory.

"That's awesome, because work is also changing at this time," she said.

"Some may have this romantic idea that you can still spend loads of time with your kid at home and then also still work.

"With little children, that is extremely difficult, so I think that's great that (The Workaround) has opened up — work for a few hours and work nearby (your kids). We need way

more of that kind of thing."

The Workaround offers an open workspace, meeting rooms, a podcast room, two early registered childhood education rooms and teachers, a silence room and a WiFi-free room (located in what was the bank's vault). You also don't have to be a parent in order to make use of this space.

A membership to use the office space costs \$318 per month. There's an option to add children's programming for \$10 an hour.

For most entrepreneurs and work-from-home parents, the busiest time on email is after 8:30 p.m., Munday found. That's when parents put the kids to bed and get back online.

"If we can reduce that and help them (finish work) during the day and relax in the evening," she said, "then that's a better quality of life for everybody."



Tiffany Fung/The Observer

Brother Neil proudly displays his new album.

## Brother Neil shares musical message

Singer-songwriter hopes new album will motivate people to embrace nature

By TIFFANY FUNG  
The Observer

It's been a few months since S. Walter Stewart Library has hosted a concert, and the return of music featured not just a soulful voice and guitar melodies, but also a heartfelt message.

Singer-songwriter Neil Parent, known by the stage name Brother Neil, performed as part of Culture Days, a celebration of the province's diverse arts and culture

community that took place Sept. 28-30.

While Parent played songs from his latest album, *Away Avenue Away*, released last year, he also had a suggestion for East Yorkers.

"I think everybody should spend some time in nature," he said. "If you can get out there, experience time away from the massive cluster of people."

That sentiment comes up on the album's title track, which includes a line about "a wide-open sky where stars shine right above."

Parent made the album hoping to motivate people to travel to the countryside and enjoy Mother Nature with loved ones. When he was young, he explained, his

family moved many times between countries and cities. Now that he's no longer living in the countryside, he longs to go back.

Despite how peaceful East York is, residents should still find a chance to go somewhere else for relaxation, Parent said.

He called his Culture Days invitation an honour. "They wanted me to be a part of something," he said, describing his experience — the first time he has played in East York — as beautiful.

Asked if he will perform at East York again, he said, "Absolutely."

The next Brother Neil album is scheduled for January.

## Poet encourages people to have fun with poetry

By YONATHAN ENRIQUEZ  
The Observer

The auditorium of the East York library may have been cold, but the sharing of poems brought comfort and warmth to an event held as part of a program to promote arts and culture in diverse communities.

The S. Walter Stewart Library host-

ed Ontario's Culture Days over the last weekend of September. The program was launched in 2010.

Toronto poet-singer Honey Novick hosted the "Have Fun with Poetry!" workshop on Friday (Sept. 28).

"Poetry is a tool that serves as a connection to another person," Novick said.

She identified "sincerity" as the driving force behind her work as a poet.

Having interest in whatever you're writing is one of the most important factors in creating poems, she added.

"While poetry can make us vulnerable, it allows us to communicate our experiences with one another."

This was proven when participants were asked to write their own "I am" poems. The process of writing a poem involved using both the imaginative and

the factual, and piecing it together with the use of senses.

"I thought that writing this poem required thought but was very engaging at the same time," said local librarian Tara Stadius.

Attendees were able to create their own poems and read their work to one another, and take home with them a better understanding of the art of poetry.



HONEY NOVICK

# One reusable container sparks zero waste plan

East York farmers market offers alternative to single-use items

By ANJELICA BALATBAT  
The Observer

When Katrina McGuire brought a reusable container to the Withrow Park Farmers Market to buy lunch, she didn't realize it would spark a market-wide initiative to go zero waste.

After noticing the amount of garbage created by packaged foods, McGuire decided to make a change.

In July, the East York community member launched the Zero Waste Station as a pilot project. In place of single-use items, it offered attendees reusable cutlery, plates, napkins and cups.

None of the inventory used for her initiative has been purchased new. Since starting, McGuire has washed over 1,700 pieces.

"I went to thrift stores and purchased second-hand items that I could use at the market," McGuire said. "Also, in-kind donations. We put out calls to the public on social media, and people were so kind to have donated unneeded items that they had around the house."

To ensure cleanliness at her station, McGuire enrolled in the Toronto Public Health's Food Handler Certification Program.

"I learned the health codes that any restaurant, café or food establishment would have to abide by and I learned how to sanitize the dishes

properly according to the health standards of the city, which I do every week," she said.

The reusables project has, however, faced some challenges.

"There's a shortage of inventory and there's some items that we've been unable to find, but we make do with what we have," McGuire said.

"Another challenge is public awareness. There's still a bit of a stigma around reusables."

Yet with the support of food vendors and its success throughout the season, the Zero Waste Station has remained a permanent service at the Withrow Park Farmers Market.

"I think it's a wonderful idea," said vendor David Ng of Feast of Fields.

So does Robert Mayer, owner of Gemaro Bakery.

"It's amazing, because keeping things out of the landfill is important," he said. "Whenever possible we only give out paper, and using this is so much better. Lots of people come with their own shopping bags, especially at this market."

For those looking to live waste-free in their own life, McGuire has a couple of suggestions.

"Start with items you already own. There's no need to go out and replace all the plastic items you have in your house," she said.

McGuire's future ventures include working with the Centre for Social Innovation to launch waste-reduction initiatives and pursuing a membership-based, reusable-take-out-container program in the city.



Anjelica Balatbat/ The Observer

**Katrina McGuire's Zero Waste Station at Withrow Park Farmers Market includes a table of reusable plates, cups and cutlery.**

## SPORTS



D.J. Llewellyn/ The Observer

**David Shoalts discusses his new book, *Hockey Fight in Canada*, at the S. Walter Stewart Library in East York.**

# Book looks at fight for Hockey Night in Canada

Author David Shoalts uncovers details about bidding war between CBC, Bell and Rogers

By D.J. LLEWELLYN  
The Observer

The gloves are off in David Shoalts' latest book, *Hockey Fight in Canada*.

S. Walter Stewart Library hosted a small crowd who came to hear the longtime hockey and sports writer talk last Friday night about the bidding war for *Hockey Night in Canada* between CBC, Bell and Rogers — and how Rogers' surprise win didn't mean a big return (so far) on its investment.

Despite covering hockey for more than 30 years, Shoalts' latest book was one he told the audience he initially didn't want to write.

"Even though I knew it was a very popular topic I wasn't real keen to write a book on it,"

Shoalts said.

"One day I got a call from a book agent that said we should pitch a book on this to publishers, that it would do quite well."

After a couple months of talking with the book agent and lots of deliberation, Shoalts decided to write it.

"It took a while, but looking back I'm glad I did," he said.

Shoalts had spent several years previously covering the bidding wars for *Hockey Night in Canada*, including the battles among CBC, Bell and Rogers; the effort to bring Ron MacLean back, and stories on NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman himself. And of course, let's not forget the saga of Don Cherry.

"Viewers really like Don Cherry because that's exactly how he is in real life.," Shoalts said. "A lot of guys try to put on an act but for him, that's how he is all the time."

He might be hoping Cherry gives the book a thumbs up — just in time for hockey season.

# 'There Is No Word For Wilderness', a play about the environment

By ALEX GOUDGE  
The Observer

A play at the Evergreen Brick Works not only entertained an all-ages audience but also delivered a powerful reminder about the land on which they were enjoying it.

Written by and starring Lisa Hamalainen, the family-oriented *There Is No Word For Wilderness*, performed Oct. 3 and 4, delivered a potent message: Do not take the environment for granted.

"It's about not seeing nature as a resource, but seeing it as energy and spirit," Hamalainen said.

It also provided a lesson on Indigenous culture and heritage.

Prior to the play's start, an acknowl-

edgment was made of the Indigenous land upon which Evergreen stands. The story centres on a woman who is lost in the forest but befriends animals along the way in order to gain clarity.

Annie Vandenberg, program manager at Evergreen, thinks the play was a success.

"I'd like to see something like this in elementary schools," she said.

The most powerful part of the evening took place after the play ended, when Shelba Deer, a friend of Hamalainen, led an Anishinaabe teaching.

Held around a fire, it provided a lesson about the land and spirituality, which included the audience participating in a traditional smudging ceremony and an offering to Shkagamik-Kwe, or Mother Earth.



Alex Goudge/ The Observer

**Lisa Hamalainen stars in *There Is No Word For Wilderness*, a play held at the Evergreen Brick Works on Oct. 3 and 4.**

EDITORIALS

# Get out and vote

A lot of voters weren't happy with the outcome of the Ontario provincial election in June.

One reason: Premier Doug Ford cut the size of Toronto city council from 47 to 25 councillors, a move with which 76 per cent of voters disagreed.

This summer, only 58 per cent of registered voters went to the polls. Though that was the highest participation rate in an Ontario election in years, it's clear that not enough people took the time to be informed and involved in Ontario's politics.

For the upcoming Toronto municipal election, it is important for everyone to cast their ballot as a way of expressing their opinion.

A recent Nanos Research survey found that 34 per cent of municipal voters across Ontario were unaware of the upcoming election.

Even more importantly, some didn't even know they are eligible to vote, or didn't know enough about the candidates and their policies.

Here are two reasons why you should vote.

First, it's easy. Any Canadian citizen over the age of 18 who is able to show proof of residency in their riding can cast a ballot. You have the right to vote even if you don't have a voting card.

Second, it's a right. There are immigrants in the GTA that don't hold Canadian citizenship, meaning they don't have the right to vote. In fact, immigrants and refugees might have come from non-democratic countries where they weren't able to exercise their right to vote (or didn't have candidate options). In Canada, it's considered a privilege and a civic duty to take the opportunity to elect a candidate who demonstrates your values and opinions.

Citizens who aren't casting their vote are letting others decide for them. Simply, if you believe you're not informed enough, you are encouraged to go to your ward's council meetings, listen to the candidates, and have them answer your questions.

Even if none of the candidate's policies and promises satisfies you, it's still important to choose.

Democracy is an opportunity, and votes should not be wasted. The power and future are in your hands. Election day is Oct. 22, from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

~ Fleur Boomsma

# Helmet law unfair

Premier Doug Ford has done it again. Ontario will join Alberta, British Columbia and Manitoba in exempting helmets for turban-wearing Sikh motorcyclists.

The issue is so controversial that Ford held the news event in Brampton for Punjab media and ignored the Queen's Park press corps.

In 2014, then-premier Kathleen Wynne faced a political and religious backlash for opposing the no-helmet exemption.

So, what's the issue? Turbans are a vital part of the Sikh faith and identity, but helmets do not fit over the turbans, which take about 10 to 15 minutes to tie.

Two things. First, those extra minutes will be well worth it if it means preventing someone's brains from splattering across the street.

"The safety of our roads will always remain a priority," Ford said in a statement Oct. 10. "But our government also believes that individuals have personal accountability and responsibility with respect to their own well-being."

Which leads to the second point: Why not apply the exemption to all motorcyclists and not just those wearing turbans?

Consider other religious accommodations. In the early 1990s, Mounties were permitted by the federal government to wear turbans instead of police caps. In 2016, RCMP Commissioner Bob Paulson approved the decision to allow Muslim women Mounties to wear the hijab. There is no safety concern in the aforementioned. However, to exempt helmets for motorcyclists in turbans is a question of safety.

Likewise, wearing a hijab to a citizenship oath is OK. These are sound and reasonable religious accommodations.

The helmet exemption exploded on Twitter last week, with most asking who would cover insurance and medicare bills. Others questioned common sense and safety, and some wondered about riders signing donor cards.

The Sikh Motorcycle Club of Ontario, in a Facebook post, announced an event on Oct. 18 to thank the Ford government for the move.

The Facebook page has about 2,200 likes and followers. A pretty small population, give or take. So, does the government assume accidents won't be likely and Sikh riders will, in fact, wear helmets despite the exemption?

If Ford really believes the people of Ontario are accountable for their own safety and well-being, a helmet exemption should apply to all riders.

That would have been a more inclusive move.

~ Rushanthi Kesunathan

COLUMNS

# Assisted dying for kids?

In the May issue of *Paediatrics and Child Health*, paediatricians raised the issue of a possible future where "mature minors" may be eligible for MAID (medical assistance in dying). For adults it's a reality, but kids?

It seemed like a far-fetched idea at the time. That was until this month, when a report came out about SickKids Hospital, whose draft policy on MAID also suggests this as a possibility.

As the paper's abstract says, "While MAID is currently available to capable patients in Canada who are 18 years or older, we write our policy with an eye to the near future when capable young people may gain access to MAID."

Medically assisted suicide for "capable" minors (someone under 18, according to the government) — *children*. The paper, in the *Journal for Medical Ethics*, is "intended as a road map through the still-emerging legal and ethical landscape of paediatric MAID."

The most alarming issue with this report, whose contents were reported by Postmedia, is in the form of a question: "Are there situations in which MAID requests and administration would be kept secret from parents and other family members, for example, if a capable patient were to indicate that they do not want family members involved?"

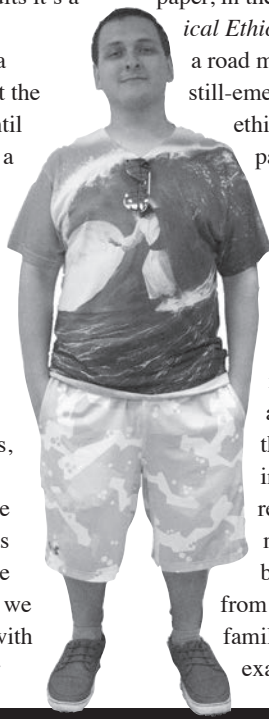
*Secret*. In other words, what if a "capable" child wanted medically assisted suicide but not to have his or her family notified?

Children aren't legally allowed to smoke, drink or vote. They can't join the military or be tried as adults in court because THEY'RE CHILDREN.

Their brains are still developing, no matter how "mature" they are. That is precisely why parents must always be part of the discussion.

It is truly heartbreaking to see (or simply imagine) children and youth suffering from illness and pain so terrible they wish to die. I can't imagine how hard it would be for a parent to have such a discussion with a doctor.

Now think how terrible it would be if such a talk took place without the parents' presence being required.



D.J. Llewellyn

# The cost of scalping

With the recent backlash Ticketmaster has faced after being caught up in a new scalping scandal, the question inevitably arises: "Is scalping really that bad?"

The answer is yes.

Scalping is the resale of tickets, primarily for concerts or sports events, on a secondary market, usually at a skyrocketing rate.

Nobody wins when it comes to scalping except, perhaps, Ticketmaster. An undercover investigation by CBC News and the Toronto Star concluded that Ticketmaster is essentially allowing scalpers to purchase tickets in bulk at face value and then resell them on their own platform at whatever price point they see fit.

Ticketmaster says, "It is categorically untrue that Ticketmaster has any program in place to enable resellers to acquire large volumes of tickets at the expense of consumers."

The catch is that Ticketmaster allegedly collects fees twice: once from the initial purchase and again when a fan purchases the ticket at resale price. This is why this particular scandal is different. Ticketmaster appears to be helping the "bad guys."

For example, the well-known punk band Alexisonfire played a four-night stint at the Danforth Music Hall last December. To no one's surprise, tickets sold out almost instantly. However, a simple check on secondary ticket sites showed tickets for the shows at a significantly higher price.

Those shows aren't anything out of the ordinary, either. A quick check of one of these secondary sites for multiple shows at Scotiabank Arena yields several tickets way over face value for shows claiming to have low ticket availability or be sold out.

This practice can also hurt the bands. Having a chunk of tickets taken away from legitimate fans is never good. Toronto is a city with a lot of mid-sized clubs and theatres. Those smaller acts would feel the blow from scalpers significantly more than the superstar artist, since the pool of tickets is smaller to begin with.

Bands that play at these types of places aren't the millionaire Jay-Z or Beyonce type but rather more modest touring bands.

One hundred scalped tickets does a lot more damage at Danforth Music Hall, with a capacity of 1,500, than it would at Rogers Centre, which can hold more than 50,000. Having some of those tickets go unsold because fans found them too expensive on resale sites would have more impact at these smaller venues.

The Ontario Liberals had anti-scalping legislation set to take effect on July 1, 2018. The bill would have capped the price at which tickets could be resold at 50 per cent above face value. However, Ontario's Conservative government shelved the bill, crushing the dream of finding a fairer way to buy tickets.

Not having to get tickets months in advance, or getting a second chance at those hard-to-acquire tickets, seems pretty nice. But is the price really worth it?



Alex Goudge

# Danforth streetcars a thing of the past



City of Toronto Archives



Taylor Bridger/The Observer

Remember when streetcars patrolled Danforth Avenue? Probably not, unless you lived in the area about six decades ago. Then you might have seen something like in the October 1960 photo, above left, with tracks running east and west. The picture was taken on Danforth looking east from near Westlake Avenue, past wooden hydro poles and car dealerships. The October 2018 photo, above right, is missing the tracks and auto dealerships, features modern light standards, and looks eastward toward the Main Square highrises. Which do you like better?



Photo courtesy of Tim Leyes

Hannah Levinson (left) plays Iris, while David Storch is Sims/Papa. Shows will run every week, Tuesdays to Saturdays, at 7:30 p.m. up until Nov. 7.

## Coal Mine Theatre brings dark play 'The Nether' into the light

By JESSICA LAM  
The Observer

Director Peter Pasyk is aware *The Nether* is one of the darker productions the Coal Mine Theatre has put on.

"You have to have a good sense of humour about these things so it doesn't stay with you," he says.

That's why the cast and production staff kept things light during rehearsals by laughing and being positive and supportive.

Originally written by American playwright Jennifer Haley, *The Nether* is about a virtual world where people can divulge their deepest desires without consequences.

When entering the Coal Mine Theatre on Danforth Avenue near Monarch Park Avenue, the audience is warned by a sign of violent and sexually explicit content in the show including rape, murder, suicide, and pedophilia that may be disturbing to some, though nothing graphic is shown onstage.

The play is a co-production between the Coal Mine Theatre and

Studio 180 Theatre, and Pasyk was hired to work on it. He has had experience directing at the Coal Mine Theatre — his first time was four years ago.

Directing a play with this kind of material is a challenge, but Pasyk is up for it.

"It's definitely the most ambitious production technically because of all the design elements and video design," he says.

Since the script had very little stage direction, most of the decisions were left to Pasyk and the design team. Pasyk was able to add his own interpretation to the script.

A problem he and the design team focused on was how to make the different worlds presented in the play contrast with one another.

The play is not written in chronological sequence, as it goes back and forth in time a lot. The entire team worked with the actors to put scenes in chronological order for rehearsals to make it easier to wrap their heads around what is happening. A lot of planning and work took place before they even started rehearsing on their

feet.

"I had a dream team," Pasyk says. "They are all fantastic. The cast is top-notch Canadian talent. Everybody got along really well."

Meanwhile, stage manager Hannah Thompson focused on what was happening on stage during rehearsals, including blocking, props, costumes and any director's notes. She also made sure everyone was on schedule. During the actual shows, Thompson works behind the scenes, making sure all the actors are in their places and all the lights and sound are on point.

This is Thompson's first production with the Coal Mine Theatre and Studio 180 Theatre. She joined the production after Pasyk called and asked if she was available.

"I had heard a lot of great things about the Coal Mine shows," Thompson says. "Peter sent me the script and I devoured it. I couldn't stop reading it. It's been a great pleasure to bring this story onto the stage."

Opening night was Oct. 11. There will be shows every week, Tuesdays to Saturdays, until Nov. 7.

### THE ENVIRONMENT

## Helping the planet stay green, one item at a time

By TYRONE HENRY  
The Observer

The Evergreen Brick Works was bustling with shoppers from all over Canada on Sunday, drawn by an assortment of gently used items at an event that works to keep things green.

Drop, Swap & Shop is held twice a year. It allows shoppers to reduce their waste and breathe new life into donated items. From children's clothes and sports equipment to shoes and even instruments, there was no shortage of choices.

Attendees could donate up to 15 items in return for swap tickets to be used as currency at the event.

"It's an opportunity for members of the public to get involved in the sharing economy," said Cameron Dale, project manager for the public markets team. "We invite the public down to drop off pre-loved items and they can be swapped with other members of the public so that we're giving thousands of items new homes within the city, stopping them from becoming landfill."

"What we want to do is show people that there's an alternative to just throwing things into the trash, that we can treat all of these items as a resource, give them a new home, and let other people love them and use them."

Ryan Fukunaga, the business director for Free Geek Toronto, and other

members of the company were present, collecting electronics and e-waste alike.

Free Geek gathers donated electronics to refurbish, and disposes of e-waste responsibly. Their goal is to promote social and economic justice, working toward giving everyone access to a computer and internet.

"Free Geek's a non-profit that takes unwanted electronics and uses them to help people who face barriers," Fukunaga said.

"Everyone's got a drawer of wires and stuff they don't want. They should consider donating it to Free Geek instead of it going into the garbage."

Alan Ching and his daughter had come to the Evergreen Brick Works from London, Ont., to find clothing for his granddaughter.

"She has a new baby, so she's exchanging some baby stuff," he said.

"It's my first time here, and I find it interesting. There's a restaurant and a lot of different stuff. If Toronto developed this into a tourist spot, that would be great."

Drop, Swap & Shop has been going on for five years. It was also held this year on April 22.

Those keeping an eye out for Free Geek can find them at the Eco Fair at the Barns or at their location at 180 Sudbury St. in the Queen and Dufferin area, or online at [www.freegeektoronto.org](http://www.freegeektoronto.org).



Tyrone Henry/The Observer

Shoppers browse at Evergreen Brick Works' market on Oct. 14.

# Pole dancing: More than just a dance

Instructor Pierrette Wiseman discovers her happy place while hanging upside down

By DANIELLE CLARKE  
The Observer

This month is a special time for Pierrette Wiseman. The 40-year-old mom is celebrating her new life as an instructor at Redefine Fit, a pole-dancing studio on Danforth Avenue that just marked its third anniversary.

When she first decided to begin pole dancing, Wiseman wanted a new way to stay fit but also express herself.

"I was getting lost in the mom life," she says. "My son was about five years old and ready to go back to school, and I decided to take some daytime classes at a studio."

Six years later, she's fallen in love with the art form.

"Originally for me it was a moment where I could be myself and sexy. Now it's more for athleticism and a form of modern dance.

"I absolutely adore teaching," she adds. "I think I like it more than learning new tricks."

Wiseman has been teaching at Redefine Fit for two years.

"Redefine Fit is more than just a place to have a good workout. It's a really close family," she says. "Most of the pole dancers choose to train here because we have social events and you are able to make friends."

Wiseman wasn't always so confident about pole dancing.

"I used to weigh close to 300 pounds," she says. "I didn't build the courage to try it until I lost the weight, and I regret that. I've met so many phenomenal plus-size pole dancers."

Pole dancing has become an escape for Wiseman.

"It keeps me happy. If I'm having a horrible day and I train for an hour, I leave on cloud nine," she says.

Wiseman wasn't a big fan of athleticism before she began pole dancing.

"I never liked exercising," she says. "When I found the pole, I fell in love with it. It took me about a year and a half to go upside-down the



Danielle Clarke/The Observer

**Pierrette Wiseman hangs out upside down in the 'layback' pose at Redefine Fit Studio on Danforth Avenue. She's been a pole dancing teacher for two years.**

first time."

Now, going upside-down — the formal term is inversion — is her favourite routine to teach pole participants.

"Inversions 101 is all about conditioning your body and getting over the fear of going upside-down," she says. "I like to see the progress in my students and also how proud they are of themselves."

A student of Wiseman's, Roxanne Muir, says she has been inspired by her classes.

"Pierrette is an amazing instructor and a talented pole and circus expert. I love the way she challenges me and explains the moves. I always feel very successful after her classes."

As entertaining as pole dancing is, it is not without controversy. The question of appropriation has come up in reference to fitness studios

using pole dancing as a form of exercise. Many people look down on the form of the dance when women are performing in clubs but are willing to participate in it when it is presented in the form of a trendy bodybuilding technique.

"I think there's enough space in the pole world for both," Wiseman says.

Pole dancing didn't originate in the West. It was created as an activity and exercise through a traditional Indian sport called *mallakhamba*, which can be traced back at least 800 years.

"It wasn't originally a sport for stripping," Wiseman says. "It was originally done in India by men. Somebody at some point saw that and brought it to North America and put it in strip clubs."

Cynics still have negative attitudes toward pole dancing, both as exotic dancing and as a form of exercise.

"I think those people have never tried it or walked into a pole studio," Wiseman says. "Everyone that I know who works as an exotic dancer has chosen the profession. I believe you can work in the sex industry and be a feminist. I know many of them."

Recently, discussions have been held about adding pole dancing to the Olympics. The Global Association of International Sports Federations has officially granted pole dancing "observer status," which gives it provisional recognition.

Gaining observer status is the first phase that international federations must attain before becoming official GAISF members, which could then put pole dancing in a position where it could one day land in the Olympics.

However, Wiseman has mixed feelings about that.

"There's positive and negative aspects of it. It will bring pole to a higher platform as a sport. But I also think it will bring a lot of challenges within the pole industry, because once it goes up to the Olympics, it needs to be regulated, which means the studios will have to pay a lot more fees."

Pole dancing may seem risqué to some in the beginning, but Wiseman has seen many studio-goers overcome their fears.

"The amount of people I see come in here who are shy and reserved and after a couple months of doing pole dancing, they flourish and they are outgoing."

## Mediator helps feuding parties find common ground

It's important to develop a friendly relationship from the beginning, expert says

Cont'd. from page 1

try to articulate the other's feelings about the issue.

"Once each party feels heard, it de-escalates the emotional vigour," Morris said.

"The other side doesn't seem as evil when you hear them actually articulating your side of the story."

The problem in the case of neighbours like the Meaney and the Carpenters, however, is the fact that neither side wants anything to do with the other in terms of finding common ground.

Often times, Morris said, it can be extremely difficult to come back from such a history of neighbourly dysfunction.

That's why it's important to develop a friendly relationship from the beginning, he said, so that any disagreements can be handled from a place of familiarity rather than only ac-

knowledging a neighbour's existence when an issue arises.

The majority of the issues, the Meaney admit, stem from a lack of knowledge on their part of the rules surrounding a right of way. Keiron Meaney says the sometimes meticulous laws around shared space between neighbours can be confusing to navigate.

Toronto-based litigation lawyer Jared Brown defines a right of way as a registered legal agreement between neighbours to use a property owner's land for a certain purpose that the two parties agree to.

The most typical use of a right of way is as a means to travel behind the properties (to a detached garage, for example), but the particular terms of any easement must be agreed to and registered with the land through a lawyer.

If a legal agreement is already in place from a previous property owner, current neighbours can renegotiate the terms if they so choose.

What the two neighbours can't do, however, is anything that negatively impacts the other neighbour's enjoyment or use of their property.

That includes everything from shovelling snow onto a neighbour's property without permission to erecting a fence that crosses the



Sergio Arangio/The Observer

**Keiron Meaney and his wife Paula have had numerous battles with their neighbours, the Carpenters, since the latter couple moved in five years ago.**

property line.

The one point the Meaney and Carpenters can agree on is that there's no longer any potential for a relationship.

Keiron Meaney said he will tolerate Drake Carpenter as long as he, as someone whose

name is apparently not on the deed to his residence, stays off his property.

"We've never done a single thing (to them)," Meaney said.

"We're good people. They couldn't ask for better neighbours."