



Staff /// Observer

## Liberal convention fails to make the grade

East Yorker Erin Crawford (left) joined teaching colleagues Doreen Sacchett (centre) and Nicole Bleau at Allan Gardens on Saturday, as thousands of teachers and other union-members gathered to march on the Liberals' provincial leadership convention at Maple Leaf Gardens.

## CITY POLITICS

# Ford decision 'surprises' Davis

East York councillors Davis and Parker have mixed reactions to mayor's win in court

By ERIN CASSIDY  
The Observer

East York's delegation to city hall is divided on the reprieve granted to Rob Ford's mayoralty. But the councillors are agreed that it's time to move on.

Ford had been appealing a fall court order that found him in conflict of interest for the overlap between his municipal dealings and his football charity. Losing the appeal would have meant his removal from office, prompting city councillors to either call a byelection or choose a replacement.



"We can all now focus our attention on running the city."  
~ John Parker



"It's hard to believe (Ford) can continue to get support."  
~ Janet Davis

But on Jan. 25, a panel of three judges agreed with Ford's lawyers, and overturned the lower court ruling.

In East York, where voters strongly supported Ford's opponent George Smitherman in the 2010 mayoral race, local councillors had strong feelings about Ford's victory.

Ward 31/Beaches-East York Councillor Janet Davis said she was surprised.

"It's hard to believe he can continue to get support unless council can get behind him," Davis added.

On the other hand, Ward 26/Don Valley West Councillor John Parker said

he's glad Ford will remain in office.

"Those of us who work in this building can be happy that we will be spared the agony of perusing the questions that were occupying people's minds: who would be appointed; who would be a candidate," he said. "We can all now focus our attention on running the city and avoid being distracted."

Davis agreed, but noted that council had worked well together even while Ford's future was doubtful.

Ward 29/Toronto-Danforth councillor Mary Fragedakis was unavailable for comment.

## PROVINCIAL POLITICS

# Wynne makes 'her'story

By DILLON HILES  
and ERIN CASSIDY  
The Observer



■ KATHLEEN WYNNE

Now the hard part.

For Kathleen Wynne, the hoopla around her election as Ontario Liberal leader and premier-designate is already giving way to some harsh political realities.

And at Wynne's riding office on Eglinton Avenue, there are already signs that her Don Valley West staff and constituents are going to have to make

some adjustments too, as they share their MPP with the rest of the province in a way they haven't had to — until now.

"I know that there are some extra resources that have been brought in," said Kelly Baker, the premier-designate's press secretary, referring to the sudden uptick in hustle and bustle at the riding office, as constituents and others vie for their piece of the incoming premier.

Wynne has served as a minister in Dalton McGuinty's cabinet in four separate portfolios since 2006: education, transportation, municipal affairs and housing, and aboriginal affairs.

But despite ministerial responsibilities, she's maintained enough of a personal touch to ensure local voter satisfaction — and election with true majorities since 2003 (even when then-Conservative party leader John Tory parachuted into the riding in 2007, thinking Wynne's seat was ripe for picking).

But that was before Wynne won her governing provincial party's leadership on Saturday, automatically becoming the premier-in-waiting. Already, her Queen's Park office has increased security and press secretary Baker confirmed that she'll soon have personal bodyguards from the OPP.

As for changes in constituency work, Baker said, "I think that's a long-term discussion. I think it's too early to say."

A staffer at Wynne's 795 Eglinton Ave. E. office put it more bluntly.

"We're in the dark," he said, when asked what might be in the offing at the constituency level — considering that the member of provincial parliament is about to become the premier of the province.

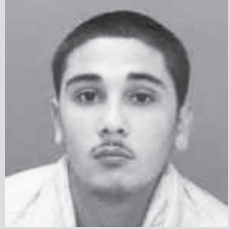
Baker said no date has been set for Wynne's official ascension. But she conceded that it's almost certain Wynne will take her oath of office before the legislature resumes sitting, and Wynne has said that will be on Feb. 19.

Then the incoming premier faces an uphill battle to stay premier. She inherits a minority government. Her party has been trailing both the Conservatives and the New Democrats in the polls. Almost half of her caucus supported other leadership candidates.

And the Liberals have alienated some traditional supporters, like public school teachers who are angry about

■ See WYNNE, page 5

**POLICE BRIEFS**



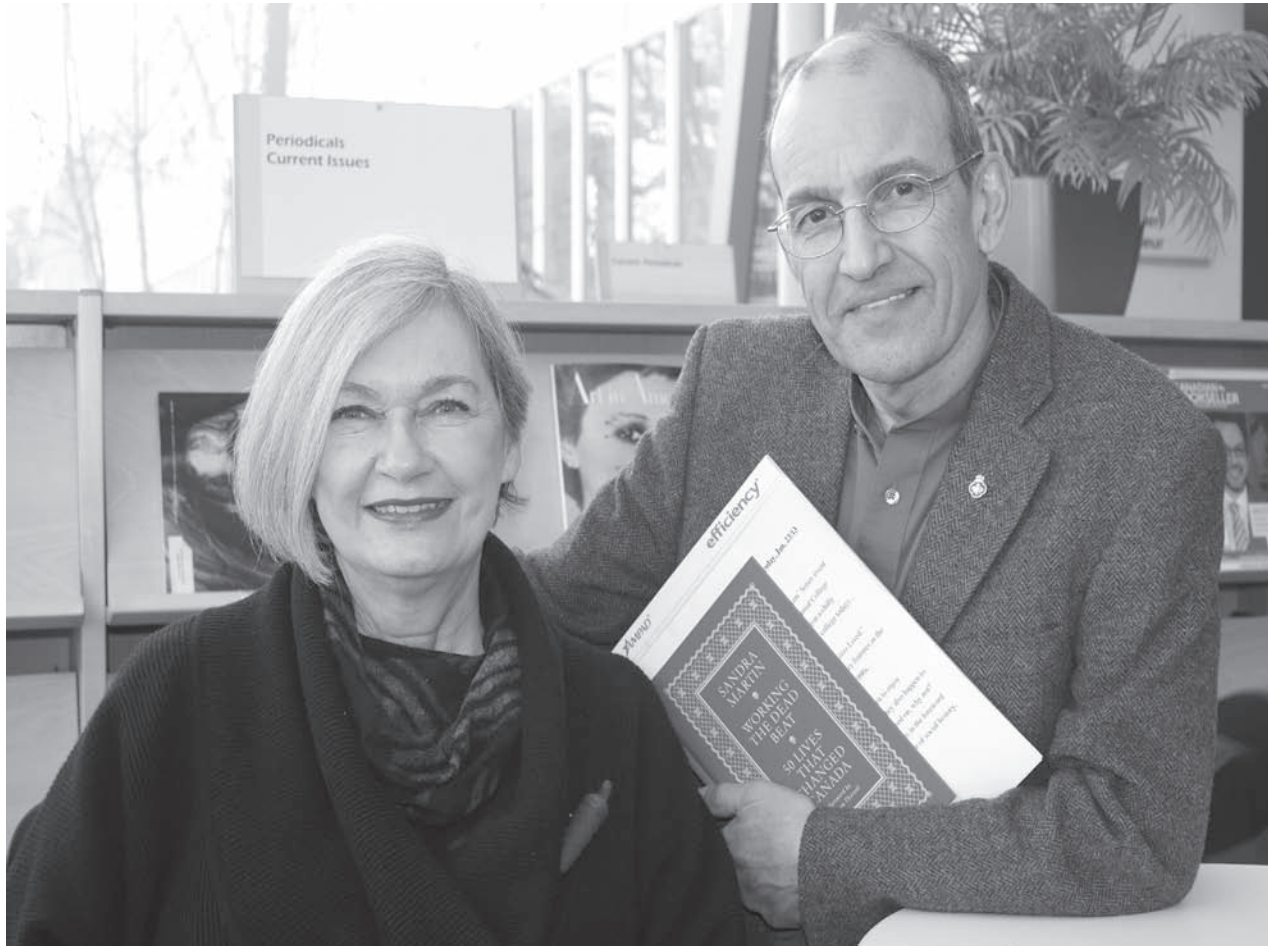
■ Jackson

**'Dangerous' suspect sought in shooting**

Toronto Police are searching for a man believed to be responsible for the Jan. 24 shooting that left another man fighting for his life. The shooting took place in the Greenwood and Danforth avenues area.

It is alleged that a man got into a verbal dispute with a group of other men, then left the scene and returned later that evening with a handgun. He shot one of the other men in the back. The victim was rushed to hospital with life-threatening injuries. 19-year-old Javell Jackson is described as black with a light complexion, 5'6" and 150 pounds. Jackson should be considered armed and dangerous. Anyone with information regarding this case is asked to call 416-808-5500 immediately, or anonymously call Crime Stoppers at 416-222-TIPS (8477).

~ Joshua Genereux



Theresa Spohn // Observer

Obituary writer Sandra Martin, shown with professor Ted Barris, spoke to East York college students about her new book, *Working the Dead Beat: 50 Lives That Changed Canada*.

**Tales from the 'Dead Beat'**

By **THERESA SPOHN**  
The Observer

The ability to celebrate life in the face of death takes a special talent.

Sandra Martin, obituary writer for the *Globe and Mail*, explained how she practises her craft in a recent talk to journalism students at Centennial College's East York campus. Martin discussed her book *Working the Dead Beat: 50 Lives That Changed Canada*.

Martin started by noting how her occupation can make others uneasy.

"I have come to accept that people take a step back when they hear what I do for a living, as though I have some-

thing catching," she said.

She acknowledged how even her colleagues consider her role the "Siberia of journalism."

But there are other forces in play generating such strong responses to this writer.

"They think of me as a symbol of death," she said. "I think we are a little afraid of death and as a society we are very afraid of death."

Martin is clear about the reason for her work.

"The real purpose of obituaries is to construct a narrative about people's lives in the context of their time," she said. "They are also vibrant building blocks of a country's social and cultural history."

History-making can be an

exacting science when accuracy is paramount and deadlines are tight.

"Obituaries are usually written under extreme deadline pressure," Martin said. "They are the final word on somebody's life. So you have to get it right. There are no follow-ups."

As a journalist, she said she is not writing eulogies for the recently departed. Rather, she believes she has an obligation to report the truth as she sees it.

"That means including the quirks as well as the triumphs; the faults as well as the achievements," Martin said

For example, when writing about Bertha Wilson, the first woman appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada,

Martin described how Wilson helped give meaning to Canada's newly minted Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Wilson argued for a woman's right to choose, for spousal abuse as a defence for manslaughter and for a refugee claimant's right to be heard. Martin did not shy away from describing the jurist's stubborn and difficult streak.

Throughout her career as an obituary writer, Martin has dealt with grieving relatives and the daunting task of describing complete lives in an impossibly short space. But her dedication to the craft has never wavered.

"I want my subjects to breathe one more time on the page," she said.

**WHAT'S UP IN E.Y.**

**TCDSB presents new comedy**

The Toronto Catholic District School Board is presenting "Dear-ly Beloved," a comedy produced and performed by TCDSB staff and written by Jessie Jones, Nicholas Hope and Jamie Wooten. Show-time is 7:30 p.m. this coming Thursday through Saturday, Feb. 7-9, in the theatre at St. Patrick Catholic Secondary School, 49 Feldstead Ave. Tickets are \$20. For more information please visit [www.tcdsb.org/staffarts](http://www.tcdsb.org/staffarts)

**Hockey history comes to life at local library**

Speakers will revisit a storied chapter of East York and Canadian hockey history on Wednesday, Feb. 13. Alan Redway will lecture on the East York Lyndhurst Hockey Team at the S. Walter Stewart Library, 170 Memorial Park Ave., beginning at 2 p.m. Also speaking will be Pat Cole, the sister of George Sayliss, who played on the team that represented Canada in the dramatic 1954 world championship of hockey.

~ Kristin Eliason

**SANDRA MARTIN'S MOST IMPORTANT CANADIAN**

**"Pierre Trudeau. He made this country modern. He changed this country enormously. In terms of what happened between Quebec and the rest of Canada, the Charter, multiculturalism, the alienation of the west with the National Energy Program. He had a tremendous impact on this country."**

**TEGH opens new space for kids and teens**

**Clinic offers a 'child-friendly environment'**

By **KRISTIN ELIASON**  
The Observer

Toronto East General has opened a special new space for area youth.

The hospital's Child and

Teen Clinic was launched with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Jan. 10.

Around 100 children, adults and staff attended the event.

The facility gathers, for the first time, teen and child clinics that were scattered throughout the hospital.

"The clinic is a consolidation of pediatric clinics from throughout the hospital,"

said Linda Young, director of Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Services.

"(Before), we had (clinics) stuffed in adult patient areas, in-patient units, in small places, but really not working together as a special place for children," she said.

"So the new clinic pulls almost all pediatric ambulatory services into one space so that we have a child-friendly



■ Young

tactile and extremely spacious, with large examination rooms and hallways wide enough for parking strollers.

environment." Designed in a colourful bubble theme, the facility is bright, cheerful,

The result is a more comfortable environment for children and parents according to Dr. Constantine Petrou, chief of pediatrics.

It also gives the pediatric department the ability to independently manage its resources, which he believes will benefit patients.

"With this new clinic, we have the capability to advance certain clinics that

are busy with more time, alleviate the congestion and hopefully decrease the wait times," Petrou said. The response so far has been positive, he added.

"(Staff and parents) were delighted," Petrou said. "Their children are much happier being there. They are not as fussy because of the environment and the friendly, colourful area."

# Mobile crisis team comes to East York

By SARAH TAGUIAM  
The Observer

After almost four years of applying, East York is getting its own Mobile Crisis Intervention Team (MCIT).

Consisting of two nurses from Toronto East General Hospital (TEGH) and one police officer from each of Toronto police's 54 and 55 divisions, the MCIT will assist people who are experiencing a mental health crisis in the community.

"A number of years ago, it became clear that, unlike other parts of Toronto, TEGH and 54 and 55 divisions were in somewhat of a disadvantage for not having a process to deal with emotionally disturbed persons," said Linda Young, TEGH's mental health director.

The new police and nurse tandems will respond to situations with people under serious emotional and mental stress. They'll assess if they should be sent to the emergency department or referred to other support services like counselling.

"We've been trying for years to have a program like this, but for one reason or another, we haven't gotten some momentum until recently when discussions about mental health increased," said 54 Division Staff Insp. Mark Barkley.

The new initiative follows last year's police shooting of Michael Eligon, 29, near TEGH. Eligon had walked away from the hospital in his hospital gown. He was believed to be mentally ill and was seen charging bystanders with a pair of scissors in his hands.

"I'm actually surprised that they just started this now, taking in considerations what's happened in the community," said Fae Abdu, a student at the East York campus of Centennial College, a few blocks west of TEGH.

Young said the timing of the MCIT's activation is not related to the Eligon shooting, but was dictated by the availability of funding.

Arrangements are still being finalized, but Young said the teams will cost about \$280,000 a year. The program will get funding for its nurses, while Toronto police will provide the officers without additional cost to its budget.

TEGH is in the process of hiring two full-time and back-up MCIT nurses. 55 Division is assigning one of its officers to the team and 54 Division has selected Const. Peter Sidlauskas to be its representative.

TEGH, along with mental crisis teams associated with other hospitals, has developed a special training program for the team.



Theresa Spohn // Observer

## That sinking feeling

A gigantic sinkhole opened up on Glenwood Crescent near O'Connor Drive and St. Clair Avenue on Wednesday afternoon as the result of a water main break. Both Enbridge and city crews were out Thursday morning checking gas and sewage lines. At press time, officials did not know when repairs would be completed.

# Donations fuel TEGH facelift

## Plans proceed for 'beautiful new modern building'

By LOUISE ANDRE  
The Observer

Toronto East General Hospital's facelift is proceeding apace with government support and ongoing donations.

The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care has approved TEGH's "functional program." The hospital's president and CEO, Rob Devitt, says the program is planning documents that detail how the redevelopments will happen.

The main redevelopment will be the new Ken and Marilyn Thomson Patient Care Centre, a \$211-million project. The new medical building will have more wheelchair accessible washrooms and more private rooms.

Devitt said it will be a much-needed addition for the patients of TEGH, as well as for the residents of East York.

He explained that currently only six per cent of rooms are private at TEGH — but after the Thomson centre is constructed, that number will go up to 70 per cent.

"In an era where we have superbugs and hospital-acquired infections, more private rooms is better in terms of safety and avoiding the spread of those infections," Devitt said.

TEGH first opened its doors in 1929. Since its construction and despite additions and renovations over the years, advances in technology have rendered many of the facilities out-of-date, said Teresa Vasilopoulos, president of the Toronto East General Hospital Foundation.

The chair of the foundation,

Michael Burns, added that TEGH is unique because it is still largely a residential neighbourhood around the intersection of Mortimer and Coxwell avenues.



■ Devitt

Burns said. "We're going to be able to redevelop the land, so there's more accessible parking."

The TEGH Foundation will contribute \$60 million of the \$211 million needed to complete the new building.

Vasilopoulos said the expansion project will vastly improve accessibility for patients.

"A patient might have to go to a number of different floors to have different tests," Vasilopoulos noted of the current situation. "The modernization is going to consolidate all of the outpatient services into one area."

She added that the redevelopments will also mean that residents of East York will have better access to the clinics.

"When you look at the current facilities and so many of them being 80 years old, it means it's time for an update to have the facilities match the excellent care that's provided at the hospital," she said.

Devitt said the improvements are important for both members of the community and patients at the hospital.

"We have out-of-date facilities that are in need of replacement," Devitt said, "and it's going to happen."



Photo courtesy of Toronto East General Hospital

Peter and Diana Thomson and daughter Caroline applaud an artist's rendering of the new hospital wing named for their family. The Thomsons donated \$5 million to Toronto East General.

For more stories on all things East York, please visit [torontoobserver.ca](http://torontoobserver.ca)

## ■ HUMAN RIGHTS

# Zimbabwean journalist finds freedom

Farai Gonzo fled to Canada after being tortured for balanced reporting

By NINO MEESE-TAMURI  
The Observer

Breathing freely and not having to watch her back is something veteran journalist Farai Gonzo has to get used to, now that she lives in Canada and works at Centennial College's Carlaw Avenue campus as "storyteller in residence."

In Canada, she said, "while writing a critical article, I was constantly checking with the editor if it was OK for me to write what I wanted. He said 'go ahead. Write what you feel and what you know.'" Gonzo was volunteering here for Africa Files, an online newspaper, where she wrote about her native Zimbabwe.

"I felt justified and I could write whatever I wanted without any fear," she said of her initial Canadian experience. "It's very different."

Gonzo is used to the harsh and unpredictable conditions of Zimbabwe, where 88-year-old President Robert Mugabe has ruled with an iron fist as long as Gonzo can remember. She grew up in a precarious catch-22 situation in the nation's countryside, which sees continuous fighting between rebels and government forces.

"When the war started, guerillas would come and take food, other resources from the villagers. They were not considerate. Then, when the soldiers would come into the village and hear that the rebels took food, you were tortured by the soldiers, saying that we supported the guerillas," Gonzo said. "My uncle's whole family was killed that way. The children were killed by the guerillas and he was killed by the soldiers."

At the age of 17, in search of more security and to pursue her passion for journalism, Gonzo moved to Zimbabwe's capital, Harare. She worked at government-controlled media and quickly moved up the ranks. However, being a journalist in

a country that does not tolerate criticism of the government can be tricky. Things got especially dangerous for Gonzo once a stronger opposition to Mugabe's rule formed. Her journalistic instinct to present more balanced coverage at her radio station got her quickly into trouble.

"In my live phone-in programs, people were talking freely in the safety of anonymity. They were saying things like, 'This is not working, Mugabe must go!' and the government was on my throat now," Gonzo said. "The program was actually balanced with Mugabe MPs and opposition MPs both in the studio, but the government MPs were failing dismally and people said whatever they wanted."

After this embarrassing performance by Mugabe's representatives on her show, the government was angry at Gonzo. That anger led to two nights in a cell — and agonizing torture. At 4 a.m. one night, two guards beat her legs with a spiked rope and caused severe burns on her chest and back with a red hot curling iron.

"I just felt like I moved outside of myself and I was watching myself. It was so painful. The pain went right to my heart and I could smell flesh burning," Gonzo said. "They asked: 'Why are you sell-outs? Tell us who is paying you!'"

After her release, Gonzo's mother urged her to flee the country. She still had a valid U.S. visa from her time interning at the UN headquarters in New York, but no money for a plane ticket. To get Gonzo on that lifesaving flight to America, her mother decided to sell the family's main possessions — three cows — to a butcher. Soon after she left, her mugshot flashed over all media channels in Zimbabwe and border guards were instructed to arrest her on sight if she ever returned. She was wanted for treason.

"My friends in Zimbabwe would tell me on the phone, 'You are all over the news. Don't you dare come back!'" Gonzo said. "I knew I couldn't go back home, so what was going to happen to me? I was like a moving zombie. I had no feelings. My sister would tell me to eat, but I just couldn't eat."

Despite her traumatic experience, Gonzo



Nino Meese-Tamuri /// Observer

Zimbabwean journalist Farai Gonzo now works at Centennial College's East York campus as "storyteller in residence."

was lucky compared to her two cellmates whom she met during those fateful two nights in jail. She said one was found guilty of having worked secretly as a part-time correspondent for the BBC, sending reports from inside Zimbabwe. He was found dead on the tracks near a railway station. It was intended to look like an accident. The other worked as a human rights activist, but was accused of recruiting youth to be militarily trained in Botswana to fight the government. She was imprisoned and tortured.

After a few months in the United States, Gonzo was assisted in a move to Canada. Her son, who got arrested and questioned in Zimbabwe following Gonzo's disappearance, has now joined her here. But Gonzo's mother refuses to leave Zimbabwe, even

though the government has cut off her farm subsidies in retaliation for her family associations. She insists that that she cannot abandon her husband's grave in her village. Instead, she wants to be buried right by his side.

Gonzo said she is looking forward to her new role as the storyteller in residence at the East York campus of Centennial College. Starting this winter semester, she'll be engaging students in communication arts programs with her personal story to generate an appreciation for free media and expression — and she'll strike up discussions with faculty and staff as well.

She is the first member of an international Scholars at Risk program at the East York college campus.

# Layton remembered with local street's renaming

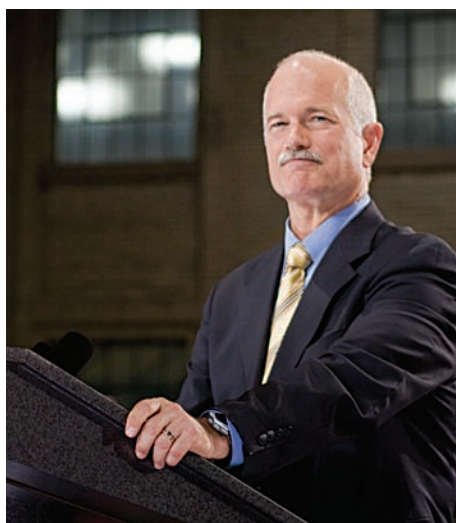
East York councillors are proud of the recognition given to beloved politician

By THOMAS MORRISON  
The Observer

The Toronto and East York community council has voted unanimously to send a proposal to Toronto city council that would expand Jack Layton Way.

The proposal, which was addressed at the community council's Jan. 22 meeting, would see the current Jack Layton Way, which runs from the Don Valley Parkway to the northern portion of Don Jail Roadway, expand east. This would form one continuous street from the DVP to Broadview Avenue.

The idea of naming a road after Layton, a Toronto-Danforth MP, leader of the federal NDP and former city councillor who died in August 2011, came from city councillor Paula Fletcher. The current street limits were adopted by coun-



■ Jack Layton

cil on Nov. 27, 2012.

"He was a great man who served the people well for 15 years as a councillor and federally in East York," Fletcher said, adding that Jack Layton Way is a street that "many people would walk on."

The area surrounding the street includes the Bridgepoint hospital, a park and a hospice for children who are fighting life-threatening chronic illnesses.

"It's building the city and that's what Jack was about," Fletcher said.

In East York, Janet Davis, the councillor from Beaches-East York-Ward 31, described Layton as an inspiring councillor who worked to keep streets safe and livable.

Mary Fragedakis, representing Toronto-Danforth-Ward 29, sees the renaming of the street as a "fitting tribute to an important community member who did a lot of great work for not only the community, but country as well."

Layton's son, city councillor Mike Layton, sits on community council and said he is appreciative of the "lovely" gesture.

"The family is honoured that the city pays that kind of tribute," he said. "We'd spend a lot of time in the Gerrard and Broadview area and it's great having a legacy there for (Jack)."

City council will be debating the naming at a meeting on Feb. 20. The proposal is expected to pass with little difficulty.

## FACTS ABOUT JACK

■ Layton was first elected to Toronto City Council in 1982. He ran unsuccessfully in the 1997 federal election.

■ In 2003, Layton was elected leader of the New Democratic Party.

■ In 2004, he was elected MP for Toronto-Danforth.

■ In 2011, Jack Layton led the NDP to 103 federal seats and official Opposition status.

■ Layton died on Aug. 22, 2011 after a battle with cancer. He was 61.

# Wynne ready to tackle gridlock

Cont'd. from page 1

the province's imposed contract. About 20,000 teachers and other union members made that point clear with a massive rally on Saturday outside Maple Leaf Gardens — where Wynne was fighting a come-from-behind battle to become Ontario's first female premier, and the first openly gay one.

The results of the first ballot at the party's leadership convention had Sandra Pupatello leading Wynne by two votes among the delegates from across the province, 599-597. Gerard Kennedy, a former Liberal MPP and MP, followed with 281 and Mississauga-Erindale MPP Harinder Takhar pulled in 235. Mississauga South MPP Charles Sousa had 222 votes and St. Paul's MPP Eric Hoskins came in last with 150, meaning that he was dropped on the second ballot.

Pupatello opened up her lead in the second round with 817 votes. Wynne held second place with 750. But then the tide turned in Wynne's favour, when both Sousa and Kennedy walked across the hall to Wynne, symbolically throwing their support to her.

That left just the two women on the final ballot, with Wynne having clear momentum. At around 8:40 p.m. on Saturday, the results were announced: 1,150 votes for Wynne, 866 for Pupatello.

"I am delighted, and I hope you can see it," Pupatello said in her concession speech. "When I see my Ontario Lib-

eral Party coming together for a spectacular candidate, I am thrilled for us."

In her final campaign speech that morning, Wynne surprised some by referring to her sexual orientation, asking "Is Ontario ready for a gay premier?"

She said the answer is yes, because "this province has changed." She cited the acceptance of her orientation by the voters of Don Valley West as proof.

Wynne was first elected in Don Valley West almost 10 years ago. Wynne is 59 years old, has three children, grandchildren, and lives with her spouse, consultant Jane Rounthwaite.

While Wynne's election represents two firsts — Ontario's first female and first openly gay premier — she is not the first premier from the East York area. That was George Stewart Henry, who was a farmer in East York before becoming first member of the provincial legislature for the riding then known as York East and then premier of the province from 1930 until 1934.

In a campaign interview with the Observer before the convention, Wynne hinted at her priorities for the coming legislative session.

"I'm very interested in resolving issues that have developed between us and teachers, and the broader public sector," she said, referring to the McGuinty government's Bill 115, which imposed a contract on public school teachers cancel-



Staff /// Observer

**Kathleen Wynne supporters Allan Cobb (left) and Walter Pedersen were among those Ontario Liberal leadership convention delegates who took a break from the proceedings inside Maple Leaf Gardens on Saturday... only to discover that they'd have to navigate a sea of protesters to get back in.**

ling some of their sick days and limiting their right to strike.

"I'm not the type of person who believes it's the best idea to impose public sector agreements, for example. My hope would be that there are collective agreements in place and we won't have to impose legislation in the new session. I think that we have been in very difficult economic times; we had to make some very difficult economic decisions. Those of us at the table really grappled with that. Some of the processes around those de-

isions haven't been what they could have been and the premier has acknowledged that, and so my hope would be that we can repair those relationships, and then put in better relationships going forward."

But when asked about the economy, Wynne seemed to warn public service unions that she won't be loosening the province's pursestrings.

"When I say I want to work on labour, that doesn't mean I want to back off compensation constraints. I think we have to continue to do that," she said.

"The bigger issue is that we need to bring industry to Ontario. We need to look at other areas of the world that have business, that have capital, that want to come to Ontario. We need to make sure we've got the right conditions in place so those businesses will come.

"We have to have a plan where businesses can be confident about what we've invested in our infrastructure. In the GTA, that means transit investment, and that we take action to take care of the gridlock."

## FEMALE PREMIERS IN CANADA

■ With premier-designate Kathleen Wynne's victory at the Liberal leadership convention on Saturday, there will now be six female premiers in Canada.

■ The other five are Nunavut's Eva Aariak, Newfoundland and Labrador's Kathy Dunderdale (Progressive Conservative), British Columbia's Christy Clark (Liberal), Pauline Marois (Parti Quebecois) of Quebec and Alberta's Alison Redford (Progressive Conservative).

■ Collectively, these leaders govern 87 per cent of the Canadian population.

■ The first female premier in Canada was Rita Johnson of British Columbia. She was elected in 1991.

~ Theresa Spohn

# Education activist says no to Bill 115



Jamie Anderson /// Observer

**Elizabeth Rowley, education activist and Ontario leader of the Communist party, has been speaking out against Bill 115 and provincial education policies.**

By JAMIE ANDERSON  
The Observer

A name familiar to many East Yorkers who have followed local politics over the years has resurfaced — amid the controversy swirling over Bill 115.

Elizabeth Rowley is an East Yorker, former local school board trustee, and longtime leader of Ontario's Communist party. In a series of news releases issued to local media since the fall, she has come out swinging in her opposition to the provincial government's imposition of a contract with public school teachers.

Bill 115 is the legislation that the governing Ontario Liberals wrote to force their terms on the elementary and high school teacher unions without the usual collective bargaining. Those terms include the cancellation of some sick days and limits the right to strike. Once the contracts were imposed, the government repealed the legislation, but the contracts remain in force. Teachers have withdrawn their participation in extracurricular activities as a protest — and on Saturday, they rallied in the thousands outside the Liberal leadership

convention at Maple Leaf Gardens.

Rowley calls 115 "very dangerous," saying it "effectively eliminates free collective bargaining and the right to strike," Rowley said. "These are essential labour laws that are protected by the United Nations, the International Labour Organization, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Ontario Labour Relations Act."

Rowley argues that the government's repeal of the legislation is meaningless. "If they were really repealing it, they would repeal the collective agreements they've imposed. They would restore free collective bargaining in the province," she said.

"It's like injuring someone and then throwing the weapon in the river and saying 'It didn't happen,'" Rowley said. "But of course it happened."

For Rowley, the Liberals' powerplay with teachers, along with the government's bypassing of the teachers' actual employers — the province's school boards — is all ominously reminiscent of her own experience in the education sector.

From 1994 until 1997, Rowley was a trustee on the East York Board of Edu-

cation. But in '97, the provincial government of Conservative Mike Harris forced the East York board into a merger with what is now the Toronto District School Board.

Rowley remembers that there "was actually a legal challenge to stop them from doing it." But, in the end, the Harris Tories prevailed.

"Government has nothing to do with bargaining. It funds school boards. That's it," Rowley said. "There are right-wing governments across the country that would like to do away with school boards," she continued. "If you do away with school boards, you do away with public input into curriculum, into everything. So it's pretty important that we protect school boards."

But Rowley adds that school boards should be doing more for themselves.

"I am sorry that the public school boards haven't spoken up more forcefully against this legislation.... They do have an interest in it. They are one of the two legal bargaining partners in education," Rowley said. "I would have expected they would be more vocal in their opposition to their rights being suspended."

■ EDITORIALS

## Plan to Wynne

Kathleen Wynne hopes to make a change in Ontario

The party's over — and now Kathleen Wynne is preparing to take on her new role: premier of the province of Ontario.

Many in Don Valley West and the rest of East York must have felt a surge of pride when one of the community's "favourite daughters" won the Ontario Liberal leadership convention last weekend.

Wynne is the first woman to be premier, but she is also openly gay. So aside from her new political clout, she'll now have an impact as a role model for both women and the LGBTQ community.

But let's not forget that as she takes her place as Ontario's new premier, she has many challenges ahead of her — like trying to reduce the province's \$11.9-billion deficit. Wynne has high hopes of writing off the deficit by 2017-'18, but just how is she going to do that? That's a lot of money.

We hope that Wynne can drive Ontario out of the ditch that former Premier Dalton McGuinty left us in. But to do that, she's also going to have to mend some fences.

"We are one government," she has said. "We are one team." But her own caucus is divided. The opposition Conservatives and the New Democrats have been leading the Liberals in the polls. They need to work together all right, or the promise of the Wynne era may turn out to be very fleeting thing indeed.

Wynne also has to deal with the province's public school teachers and their ongoing resentment over Bill 115, the austere contract imposed on them. Our hope is that, under Wynne, the province and teachers can move forward and go back to working with students by, for instance, reinstating extracurriculars. As a former school trustee, her experience will be tested with educators who are usually loyal party supporters — but at the moment, who are angry and alienated.

As for the infrastructure of the GTA that she can now help bolster, the area that we're hoping she'll tackle first is transportation. Public transit, especially, requires attention. And it's time to fix up deteriorating roadways. Published reports hint that she's ready to impose road tolls or other revenue generators to make the city more practical to get across. Let's just hope that it doesn't cost us taxpayers and motorists and straphangers too much.

~ Bernard Toney

## Jack Layton gets his way

Local road to bear name of former NDP leader

The spirit of a much-loved leader will soon take its place nearby.

The late NDP Leader, Jack Layton, who died of cancer in 2011, is expected to be honoured by the naming of a neighbourhood street, to be called Jack Layton Way. It will be at the site of the new Bridgepoint Hospital, near East York's southwest corner. Toronto city council is expected to approve the designation sometime later this month.

It's a fitting development, because Layton was a great supporter and hardworking advocate on behalf of his Toronto-Danforth constituency, despite the simultaneous, onerous demands of his federal party leadership.

The tribute has already received an important local stamp of approval. On Jan. 22, Toronto-East York Community Council approved the motion — to rename half of the Don Jail Roadway that runs between St. Matthews Road to Broadview Avenue, on the campus of the hospital that's under construction next to the Don Valley Parkway. Final approval is expected at full city council on Feb. 20.

Layton's widow, Olivia Chow, issued a statement in connection with the designation in which she talked about her husband's commitment to his riding of Toronto-Danforth.

"Ward 30 is home to a diverse array of populations and activities, encompassing neighbourhoods such as East Chinatown, India Bazaar and the film district," said Chow, a New Democrat MP — and potential candidate for the Toronto mayoralty. "Jack had deep ties to this community, having proudly served Ward 30 as a city councillor and later as a member of Parliament."

Having Layton specifically commemorated in the riding he loved is a wonderful idea. And it's all the more fitting, considering that this particular hospital, Bridgepoint Health (the old Riverdale Hospital), is one that specializes in treatment of chronic disease and rehabilitation — and one that Layton worked with closely to expand and redevelop. Bridgepoint even issued a statement after Layton's death, in which they praised his efforts, noting how he "marshaled community support to keep the doors open and help develop plans to build a state-of-the-art facility."

Naming this street after this leader is one appropriate form of recognition for his significant contributions to both his riding and the country. He shaped our vision for compassion, integrity and dedication to each other.

With the construction of Bridgepoint Hospital and the city council vote in less than three weeks to include a specific tribute to the late NDP leader, we are creating a lasting tribute to the man and his message of "let us be loving, hopeful and optimistic."

~ Thomas Ma

■ COLUMNS

## Valentine's Day: Two Views

# All you need is love...

As John Paul Young sings, "Love is in the air..." At least it is over the next couple of weeks, in the run-up to Valentine's Day.

As Feb. 14 approaches, there is the usual buzz around town, with shops putting up red and pink displays and restaurants featuring specials for lovebirds.

I have never celebrated Valentine's Day. Not because I didn't want to, but because there was no one to celebrate it with.

I have occasionally wondered why we can't use the occasion to show our love for the people around us generally. But, for the most part, I find myself on the side of those who want to celebrate Feb. 14.

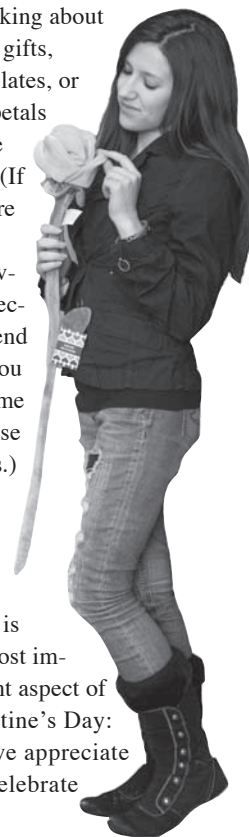
No, I don't buy into the argument that 'couples should just love each other every day without having a commercial holiday dedicated to showing that love.' I think those well-meaning people have got it wrong. (Or maybe they just want to get away without having to buy a gift for their partner or

spouse at this time of year.)

The beauty of St. Valentine's Day is to remind people that they can go that extra mile for their significant other. I'm not necessarily talking about fancy gifts, chocolates, or rose petals on the floor. (If you are a guy, however, I recommend that you do some of those things.)

What I am talking about is the most important aspect of Valentine's Day: that we appreciate and celebrate

**Radina Vencheva**



romance.

After all, no one will turn down a little bit of gentleness and romance... even if it's cheesy, even if it's before or after Feb. 14.

And even if you're single, you can always use this time of year as an excuse to send an anonymous valentine to your crush.

So in this spirit, I offer the following reminders: There's a "Valentine Card Making Family Workshop" this Sunday, Feb. 3 and a "Valentine Candy Making Family Workshop" the following Sunday at the city's Todmorden Mills Heritage Site at 67 Pottery Rd.

And if you can't wait that long, there's a "Valentine's Shopping Spree" for romantics looking for that special gift tomorrow (Feb. 2) at Leaside Presbyterian Church, 670 Eglinton Ave. E.

I may even go. Because while it's true that I haven't really celebrated Valentine's Day in the past, this year, for the first time, I'll be an active celebrant.

## ...or a tub of ice cream

Valentine's Day is one of those days that some people would rather see dropped from their calendars forever. And when I say "some people," obviously, I mean singles — the ones that, for one reason or another, don't have a date.

Feb. 14 is just two weeks off and for the romantic ones among us, it can be the best or the worst day of the year, depending on whether you have a significant other by your side... or just a tub of ice cream.

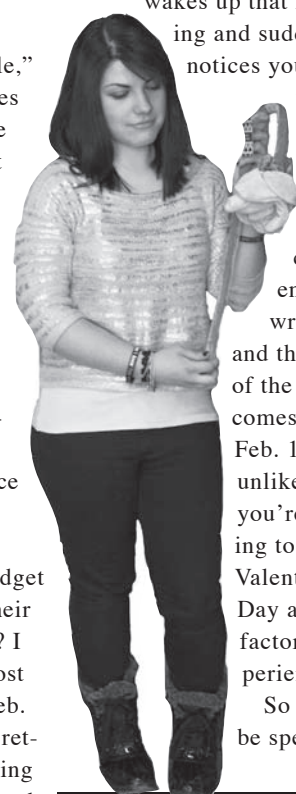
Let's be honest. Who hasn't felt a bit like Bridget Jones at least once in their life on Valentine's Day? I can relate to Bridget most of the time and when Feb. 14 comes around, I'm pretty sure that Helen Fielding wrote her best-seller based on my life.

Being single on Feb.

14 can be depressing and lonely, but what can you do about it? Unless your crush wakes up that morning and suddenly notices you, or

the Mays got their calendar wrong and the end of the world comes on Feb. 13, it's unlikely that you're going to find Valentine's Day a satisfactory experience.

So I will be spend-



**Erika Marucci**

ing Valentine's on my own. And while the Bridget in me might prefer to spend the evening at home watching television and singing "All By Myself" (who doesn't remember that scene?), my inner independent woman is striving to come out and plan a nice night out with the people who will never break up with me — and are probably more reliable than any boyfriend ever will be anyway.

Obviously, I'm talking about my girlfriends. So if a date isn't in the offing for two weeks from tomorrow, then why not enjoy the day with your friends?

After all, Valentine's Day is all about love, and we love our friends. Have fun and think about the positive side of being single. This day comes once a year; let's spend it in the best way possible.



Katie Wright /// Observer

**Project Fusion members (l-r) Chris Micolino, Robyn McCabe, Ashleigh Mair, Barbara Loureiro, Jeff Bomben, Sarah Mackinnon, Donna Lindell and Trevor Pettit.**

## Students aim for change

By **KATIE WRIGHT**  
The Observer

At the start of the school year, the staff at Centennial College's East York campus embarked on a plan to have students collaborate on "city-changing" ideas.

Dean Nate Horowitz decided that Donna Lindell, whom he'd met in December 2011, was the best person to lead the initiative, considering her history of local activism. She had worked as co-chair of the Emerging Leaders Network, a part of the GTA Civic Action Alliance.

"I sat on the advisory committee for a while trying to formulate how could this group get going and be established," Lindell said of her association with Centennial's Carlaw Avenue campus.

Initial tasks included figuring out how to form the group, how to recruit and retain members, what it would look like and deciding upon issues to tackle. It was a way of having students from different programs at the campus come together and meet new people.

"In the real world, certain disciplines will be attracting one another. Journalism people will definitely be interacting with public relations people," Lindell said.

The main goal of the project is building leadership skills and networks. Lindell emphasized that this is a safe place to fail.

"If they pursue an idea and it just doesn't happen for whatever reason, that's OK. One of the lessons in that is 'Why did it fail?'" she said. "Maybe it wasn't the right time, maybe we didn't have the right team, we didn't have the right plan and that's how great ideas happen."

Currently, the group is working on a transit project. They're offering input on what needs to be done and how it can be accomplished. Transit is an important issue in the GTA and the TTC is looking for ways to maintain itself.

"They want to have a say. They want to have an impact. They have an opportunity to impact that demographic by reaching out," Lindell said.

At the beginning of the project, there were 60 people enrolled, but attendance has dwindled, so the team is seeking new members.

Student Barbara Loureiro is part of the group. She got involved because it is a good way to meet new people and experience what it would be like in a "real world" interactive setting.

"There's so many programs at Centen-

nial that really interlink and there was never really a place where you could go and work with each other and bounce (ideas) off of each other," she said. "It's a great place where you can start networking and start understanding other people's positions and jobs."

Students involved come mainly from fine arts and corporate communications.

"Why not get involved? Here you're in a huge group that is making a difference, which is a nice change of pace," Loureiro said. "There are youth that don't think they're part of the city... Why would you not want to make change?"

Robyn McCabe is also involved and believes students should take advantage of the opportunity before going out into the workforce.

"I think a lot of us will be seeing each other in the future, so it's better now to work on things (and) know each other," McCabe said. "Being able to work in a team setting is key and if we can build awareness for something... I think it will make us feel good about ourselves and build confidence for us."

For more information, contact Donna Lindell at [dlindell@rogers.com](mailto:dlindell@rogers.com)

## Shakespeare comes alive in East York

By **BECKY ROBERTSON**  
The Observer

Sparking youth's interest in literature can be difficult, but the Toronto-based Shakespeare in Action organization is making Shakespeare's plays fun for kids through a program running in libraries in East York and beyond.

The Shakespeare for Kids Library Club is starting at the S. Walter Stewart branch of the library this month — and at the Pape-Danforth branch in the spring. The program is completely free and is running at a total of 30 Toronto libraries.

It runs one day a week for six weeks and includes theatre play, group reading games, scene acting and even writing.

"We really try to familiarize young people with these important texts," said Shemina Keshvani, the general manager of Shakespeare in Action. "It's a fun way for them to learn to love reading."

The organization also offers student programs, Shakespeare summer camps for kids and teens and other community activities in the Toronto area that relate to the canonical writer's works.

Shakespeare in Action's mandate is focused around "fostering literacy, enhancing creativity and promoting speech arts by making the language and stories of Shakespeare accessible and relevant to young audiences," according to its website.

The self-proclaimed "multicultural theatre company" also makes sure to represent and encompass Toronto's varying demographic.

"We support diversity and try to make the plays relevant to multicultural audiences and just to everyone," Keshvani says. "It's really fitting for Toronto."

Shakespeare For Kids is scheduled to run Saturdays, 10 a.m. to noon, from tomorrow, Feb. 2, until March 9, at the S. Walter Stewart branch, 170 Memorial Park Ave. It runs at the same time from April 6 until May 11 at Pape/Danforth. The dates for other Toronto libraries and more information can be found at [www.shakespeareinaction.org](http://www.shakespeareinaction.org) and at library branches.



● For more about East York, please visit us online at [torontoobserver.ca](http://torontoobserver.ca)

## Non-profit group rescues dogs in danger

By **BECKY ROBERTSON**  
The Observer

With six-year-old Jacquimo's docile demeanour, puppy-like enthusiasm and loving gazes, it's hard to imagine the affectionate black lab once faced a dire future or death on the streets of Taiwan. After being abandoned and losing his front left leg to a steel trap, this strong-willed pup was taken in by a Taiwanese shelter and later rescued and brought to Canada by GTA-based TEAM Dog Rescue.

TEAM, which stands for Together Every Animal Matters, is a volunteer-run non-profit started just this year. Members regularly make trips to rescue dogs and cats that are sometimes days away from euthanasia, co-ordinating adoptions and foster care for them in the GTA.

East York resident Kendrah Forbes was interested in helping TEAM in any

way possible and volunteered to provide a temporary foster home for Jacquimo. But she immediately fell in love, deciding to adopt him within a few days of his stay.

"I was doomed as soon as I saw him getting along so well with my other dog," she said with a smile.

Forbes has since fostered multiple dogs, enabling them to make their way out of shelters and into permanent homes. It is volunteers like her that make TEAM's work possible.

"Although located in Ontario, we have answered the pleas of desperate pets out of time in neighbouring Quebec, and recently, North Carolina," said TEAM representative Nancy Gothard.

"Our success is reliant on our wonderful foster parents who continue to open their home to pets in need while we find an ideal adopter."

Tarah Motuzas, another East Yorker, has been working with the organization

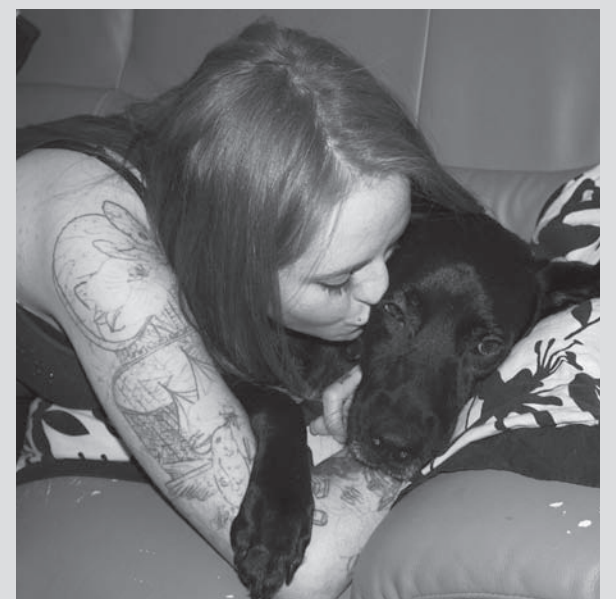
from the outset.

As an animal lover and activist, she was ecstatic to find a group that provides a voice to animals in need. She is currently fostering her second dog through TEAM.

"My first foster was adopted last week and the feeling of helping her find her loving 'forever' home is something I can't even explain," she says. "To know these animals once had no chance at life, and now they have all the love in the world, is truly the best feeling."

Although TEAM has dedicated volunteers like Forbes and Motuzas, they are always looking for more individuals to donate, foster, or adopt within the GTA.

"Thinking that any of the dogs I've fostered would have been dead had I not taken them in... I can't even imagine not offering my help," Forbes said while cuddling on her couch with Jacquimo. "It has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life."



Becky Robertson /// Observer

**East Yorker Kendrah Forbes with three-legged Jacquimo, rescued from Taiwan by TEAM dog rescue.**

■ WINTERLICIOUS



Robin Dhanju // Observer

Chris Christodoulou, owner of Pan on the Danforth restaurant, says he is excited to take part in Winterlicious 2013.

## Foodies celebrate the flavour of Winterlicious

By ROBIN DHANJU  
The Observer

The city of Toronto is once again injecting something delicious into the proverbial bleak midwinter.

Winterlicious and its sister food festival, Summerlicious, were created in 2003, when Toronto was desperate to woo back visitors after the SARS crisis.

In the decade since, it has seen steady growth — and it now enlists 191 higher-end restaurants offering special fixed-price menus over two weeks.

The event is designed to drive traffic into restaurants during slow times.

This year's version of Winterlicious started a week ago and wraps up this coming Thursday, Feb. 7.

Restaurant-goers "have responded very well. They take advantage of the exceptional offers that they can get," said

Chris Christodoulou, owner of Pan on the Danforth, one of the participants.

"Of course, the menu is the value and the better the menu, the better the response from the customers," he said.

Restaurants that wish to take part in the festival have to apply and be chosen by a city committee that looks for, among other things, positive reviews for the restaurant in established publications.

Once selected, "there's all kinds of promotion that introduces our restaurant to a new realm of people that do Winterlicious," said Vito Marinuzzi, co-owner of 7 Numbers, an Italian restaurant on the Danforth in its fourth year of Winterlicious.

"Between the marketing and advertising, our name gets put on a list of all kinds of people's minds. And we get people that come every year just for Winterlicious."

Participating restaurants

offer a "prix-fixe" menu of three courses and limited choice.

Depending on the restaurant and the meal — lunch or dinner — the prices range from \$15 for lunch at a trendy bistro to \$45 for supper at a top venue.

Overall, East York-area restaurateurs says the mantra for success during Winterlicious is simple: continue to produce good food.

"It's very simple what you have to do — the guidelines that you have to follow from the Winterlicious organizers," Christodoulou said.

"You don't cut corners; you don't want to give customers less of a portion because it's Winterlicious. By doing that, you're hurting yourself, because they get a bad impression."

For more information about the event, you can visit the Winterlicious website at: [www.toronto.ca/winterlicious](http://www.toronto.ca/winterlicious)

## How to keep your home safe and secure

East York residents get tips and information to help prevent break-ins

By TARAH BLEIER  
The Observer

It's the nightmare of homeowners everywhere: victimized by robbery, a window has been smashed and their most valuable possessions are gone.

A significant number of East Yorkers have experienced this over the past month — with stats on the Toronto Police website citing 11 recent residential break and enters locally.

So the main question on many residents' minds may well be: "How can I protect my home?"

Const. Ingrid Hannah of 54 Division provided some answers at a seminar held on Jan. 22 at the S. Walter Stewart Library on Memorial Park Avenue.

She shared resources on crime prevention and home security with 10 East York residents in attendance.

Most break-ins occur in the mid- to late-morning hours, when people are out for the day, Hannah said. She emphasized the need for community members to stay alert and be aware of what is going on in their neighbourhood.

"(Criminals will) use whatever they can to avoid detection," she said. "The key here is visibility. You want to be able to see what is going on around you at all times."

According to Hannah, all it takes is three to five minutes for a criminal to steal valu-



■ Const. Ingrid Hannah

ables and ransack a home. She said that to help prevent such crimes, homeowners should install a security system and/or follow these tips:

- Install a deadbolt lock, as well as a security strike plate on your doorframe.
- Do not keep spare keys in hiding places outside.
- Utilize timers for your lights.
- When on vacation, cancel all deliveries and have someone pick up your newspapers and mail.
- If you see any suspicious activity, report it.

### IT'S A CRIME

**54 Division:**  
(E.Y. eastern sector)

Break and enter commercial: **3**  
Break and enter, residential: **11**  
Robbery, street: **8**

**53 Division:**  
(E.Y. western sector)

Break and enter commercial: **3**  
Break and enter, residential: **9**  
Robbery, bank/business: **1**

Police data on theft in East York between Dec. 21, 2012 and Jan. 20, 2013

## Readership for ethnic newspapers still going strong

By HASAN ZAHID  
The Observer

It's not news that many newspapers are struggling in the digital multimedia age. But some community newspapers remain entrenched, thanks to small but loyal readerships looking for neighbourhood news they won't find elsewhere. And that can be especially true for members of ethnic groups in a community like East York — and the newspapers that cater to them.

So a paper like Vorer Alo ("Light of the Dawn") can thrive among people from Bangladesh who are now living here.

The paper, with offices in the Danforth-Victoria Park area, is only a year old, but it has already built a circulation of 6,000 and has emerged as one of the city's leading Bengali weeklies.

"We have one of the best circulations among Bengali newspapers," says editor Abdul Ahaed Khandakar. "We cover the news which are of the community's common interest and benefit. They can know about things related to the immigrants' interests."

Mazibur Rahman, an immigrant and resident of East York, is an ardent reader of Vorer Alo. "It's my favourite newspaper. I read the paper

regularly since its publication started a year ago," Rahman said. "An ethnic newspaper cannot meet up every demand of a reader for financial reasons, but this newspaper accommodates maximum news."

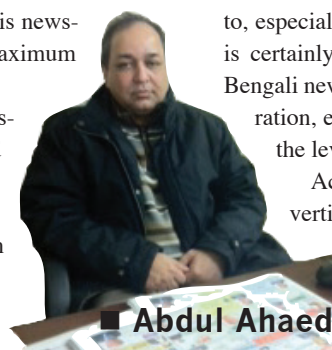
In some East York restaurants, supermarkets and roadside boxes, the colourful newspapers represent an ever-growing ethnicity in Toronto.

Taslina Sultana, a Centennial College student

and a local resident, also reads the newspaper regularly.

"I love to read Bengali newspapers in Toronto, especially those in East York and Vorer Alo is certainly entertaining.," Sultana said. "The Bengali newspapers are our community's inspiration, even though some of them are not at the level of the typical newspaper."

According to Sultana, too many advertisements can clutter a newspaper and Vorer Alo is no exception. But, she added, copies are free of cost and serve the news and views of the community well.



■ Abdul Ahaed