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HAITI**

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THE EAST TORONTO

OBSERVER

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BEAT THE
BLAHS**

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Observer, Victoria Gray

URBAN ARTS: Judith Petit-Frere, 12, dances with fellow students at the close of the Urban Arts Day at Gordon A. Brown Middle School on Jan. 21. The students enjoyed a day of learning from volunteers in the community about environmental initiatives, different forms of dance, printmaking, photography and beat boxing.

East York campuses brace as college strike clouds gather

By **VICKEN POLATIAN**

One strike and 1,000 students at college in East York are out.

Teachers and students at the two colleges on Carlaw Avenue are awaiting the results of a contentious contract vote that will be held on Wednesday.

This week, the provincial council that governs Ontario's community colleges went to the Ontario Labour Relations

Board for permission to bypass the teachers' union and put what it says is its final offer directly to a faculty vote.

In doing so, the council turned down the union's proposal that both sides submit to binding arbitration. When it made that proposal on Monday, the union also set a Feb. 11 strike date, but it's now postponed that to Feb. 17.

See **COLLEGES**, page 2

Pedestrian crisis felt on E.Y. streets

By **VANESSA BROWN**

The surge in pedestrian accidents across the GTA didn't end in January, and it certainly hasn't stopped at East York's borders.

On Tuesday night, a woman crossing Coxwell Avenue, reportedly in the middle of the block between Mortimer and Sammon, was struck by an unmarked police car.

The accident occurred in front of Toronto East General Hospital, where the woman, reportedly 41 years old, was treated and released.

Her injuries were minor enough that the accident was not referred to the province's Special Investigations Unit, which probes incidents involving people hurt during interactions with police.

But Coxwell Avenue was closed temporarily.

Meanwhile, bouquets of flowers and sympathy cards adorn two lamp posts at the corner of Broadview and Danforth avenues, to memorialize another pedestrian — the first killed in the East York area in 2010.

That 57-year-old man became the 12th pedestrian death in the GTA this year when a dump truck hit him on Jan. 22. Police Sgt. Tim Burrows said paramedics pronounced him dead at the scene.

After the crash, two crutches lay near the victim. Francine She, who attends the same adult education classes as the victim, said he had polio.

She contributed to the collection of flowers last week, but thinks the impromptu memorial needs more.

"I'd personally also like to see a book," she said. "That way any student can go sign the book and write their memories of him, so the family can keep... a memento of him." She described him as "friendly" and "always smiling."

Max McGowan, who also takes classes at the same school, said police need to do more to ensure pedestrian safety. But Sgt. Burrows said drivers need to find a way to share the road with pedestrians.

"We need people to take more time, be more aware... and take care of each other," Burrows said. "This is frustrating. It's a very simple, predictable and preventable event."

Police haven't released the victim's name at the request of his family. They haven't yet laid any charges.



Observer, Vanessa Brown

IN MEMORY: Family and friends leave flowers at the Broadview and Danforth intersection to honour a pedestrian killed there on Jan. 22.

Crackdown on jaywalkers a safety plea

By **VANESSA BROWN**

Toronto police officers are hitting the streets in the name of road safety.

Police launched an enforcement and education campaign Jan. 27 in response to 14 pedestrian deaths across the GTA that month.

They're looking to catch jaywalkers in the act, and will issue \$50-fines and give warnings with more frequency than usual.

Drivers who clog intersections by running yellow lights are also on their radar.

The campaign is an effort to make Torontonians think twice before driving or walking irresponsibly.

See **CROSSING**, page 2

Ootes out, Pitfield in, others ponder politics

By **SAMANTHA BUTLER**

East Yorkers won't be going to the polls for another nine months, but already some candidates are lining up to run for positions on city council and school boards.

Nominations for the Oct. 25 election opened on Jan. 4, and almost immediately, there were indications of at least one interesting race to come.

In Ward 29/Toronto-Danforth, veteran Councillor Case Ootes announced his retirement, and four would-be replacements have already said that they'll vie to succeed him.

And one of those is no stranger to East Yorkers: Jane Pitfield, the former Ward 26/Don Valley West councillor who was David Miller's major opponent in the 2006 mayor's race.

But there are other, less-well-known candidates who have also filed for Ootes'



OOTES

seat on council.

One contender is John Richardson, who called Ootes' decision to retire "commendable."

"I think he has been an asset to the city," Richardson said. "He is one of the few councillors who

will be missed. But city politics should not be a (career) for life."

A self-employed businessman who finished fifth out of six candidates for Ward 29 councillor in 2006, Richardson is so far sharing the race with Pitfield, urban sustainability expert Chris Caldwell and Mike Restivo.

The 59-year-old Restivo, a semi-retired

field technician and lifelong East York resident, is a first-time contender.

"I have no campaign manager," he joked. "But I've got an understanding of the needs of the people...and some good books on hand."

He's running a campaign office from the second floor of his Coxwell Avenue home and office, and hoping to access voters with an expanded website later on in the year.

In the meantime, he says he's going door-to-door to distribute his resume, and meet Ward 29's constituents.

In Ward 26/Don Valley West, newcomer John Burnside announced that he'll challenge the incumbent, John Parker.

Burnside is a 10-year veteran of the Toronto Police Service.

In Ward 31/Beaches East York, incumbent councillor Janet Davis also has one challenger so far: Donna Braniff.

Other nominees can come forward until Sept. 10.

Meanwhile, nominations are also open for seats on both the Toronto public and Catholic school boards.

Only one incumbent has registered so far: Sheila Cary-Meagher in the public board's Ward 16/Beaches-East York.

Gerri Gershon, the incumbent in public Ward 13/Don Valley West, plans to run again, but has not officially declared, and neither has anyone else.

In public Ward 15/Toronto-Danforth, incumbent Cathy Dandy hasn't filed papers yet, but a challenger has: Robert Spencer.

Meanwhile, not a single candidate has been nominated for either of the two Catholic board seats from East York.

The incumbents are Ward 9's Catherine LeBlanc-Miller and Ward 11's Angela Kennedy — who chairs the board.

Jaywalker breaks leg, gets ticket

By VICTORIA GRAY

The January spike in pedestrian accidents included a mishap at Secord and Eastdale avenues that sent a man to Toronto East General hospital.

Just after 4 p.m. on Jan. 28, a light blue Honda struck a man at the intersection.

Jesus Hipolito, 45, witnessed the accident.

"As I was turning left, I saw a man standing on the sidewalk. He was about to cross the street," Hipolito said. "This car hit him. When he fell to the ground, I stopped the car, I got out."

Hipolito stayed with the pedestrian while his wife called an ambulance.

The Good Samaritans did not know the severity of the man's injuries and took precautions against further harm.

"We didn't want to touch the man," he said. "He was groaning and moaning, 'I'm hurt.'"

Another bystander diverted traffic away from the injured man.

"Another man in a blue Matrix stopped and directed traffic.... Other passersby were coming to his aid but we said, 'It's under control. Don't touch him,'" Hipolito said.



Observer, Victoria Gray

JAYWALKER HIT: The driver of this blue Honda struck a jaywalker as he crossed Secord Avenue. The left side of the car struck the man, causing damage to the side view mirror and breaking his leg.

Toronto police Const. E. Goodwin said the pedestrian sustained minor injuries and was taken to Toronto East General Hospital for treatment. Goodwin, the investigating

officer, said that pedestrians need to be reminded to act with caution when crossing the street.

"Pedestrians need to watch what they are doing," she said.

Goodwin confirmed that the pedestrian was charged with failing to yield to traffic and received a \$110 fine. She also confirmed that he broke his leg and hurt his arm.

Colleges prepare for possible strike

Cont'd from page 1

The Ontario Public Service Employees Union, representing the teachers, has already rejected management's offer. In a union vote held on Jan. 13, 57 per cent of faculty across the province voted to give OPSEU a strike mandate if negotiations fail. But that's considered a weak mandate, and the vote on the contract is also expected to be close.

"The strike going through would be anybody's guess," said Rosanna Cavallaro, Centennial College's associate vice-president of marketing.

Centennial shares the building at 951 Carlaw Avenue with the Toronto branch of Collège Boréal, the province's francophone college. At their joint East York campus, a strike would affect about 60 teachers and 1,000 students.

"The main issue is workload. The faculty is looking to have more involvement into curriculum," said Jacques O'Sullivan, president of Centennial's union local.

There's also a pay gap: management is offering a 5.9-per cent raise over three years; the union is asking for 7.5 per cent.

"Of course, the students are the ones who are losing," said Vishal Member, president of the Centennial College Student Association.

The last strike closed the campus and colleges across Ontario for about three weeks in March 2006.

That included a shutdown of the Observer, which is produced by Centennial journalism students under faculty supervision. This time around as well, a strike would mean a suspension of Observer publication.



Observer, Chris Higgins

CUTTING IT CLOSE: Police are cracking down on drivers who block pedestrian walkways, as well as pedestrians who jaywalk, in an attempt to make roads safer.

Crossing unsafely? You could be fined

Cont'd from page 1

According to Const. Wendy Drummond, the unusually high number of fatal collisions involving pedestrians prompted the force to respond.

"Essentially, this (campaign) is the most immediate," she said. "We thought, 'What can we do right now that is going to help stop fatalities?'"

Traffic officers are being stationed at intersections that are known to be risky, such as the one at Broadview and Danforth. Within 10 minutes of starting his shift there several days ago, an officer stopped two people who crossed the road dangerously and ticketed one of them.

East York resident Rocky Warner, 49, got off with a warning that day. He said he wouldn't have taken a jaywalking fine seriously.

"I would've laughed in his face," he said. "They've got better things to do with their time than stand at the corners

and watch people jaywalking."

The officer was patrolling that intersection because a man was killed there two weeks ago while crossing the street.

Because each of the January collisions was unique, Drummond said planning a road safety campaign is difficult.

"There was nothing really consistent to an area...a neighbourhood, a time," she explained. "There wasn't anything there to suggest a certain reaction to the fatalities...so we had to address everybody."

Whether or not their approach has prompted Torontonians to slow down remains to be determined. After police cautioned Warner about crossing on a yellow light, he admitted he will continue to jaywalk when he feels it's safe.

"It's a long wait (to cross), especially in this cold weather," he said.

It's a Wynne-Win for the transportation ministry

By LLOYD QUANSAH

Don Valley West MPP Kathleen Wynne views her transition from education minister to transportation minister as a new crossroads in her political career.

"This is a new adventure for me. This is a new area (for me) and it's an extremely important area for the city (of Toronto)," she said.

After three years with Wynne as education minister, Premier Dalton McGuinty decided to shake up his cabinet. Wynne was one of eight members to change positions.

Though reports deemed the move a demotion, her former colleagues disagree. Sheila Cary-Meagher, TDSB trustee for Beaches-East York, believes Wynne needed a change of scenery to expand her political chops.

"It's time, I think, for her to spread her wings. I don't see it as a demotion; I see it as a move to...give her more opportunities," Meagher said.

Wynne accomplished a lot in her three years in education. She introduced full-day learning and an equity and inclusive education policy, the initiative she is most proud of.

Transportation has a few projects she must oversee, including Metrolinx, which is a plan for Light Rail Transit (LRT) on major streets in Toronto.

Don Valley East trustee Gerri Gershon was happy to work with Wynne, even if she didn't agree with all of her decisions.

"But when you talk about an overall performance," she said, "I think she was very good for the people of Ontario and for our community."

What's on

Students speak

On Wednesday, Feb. 17, the 13th annual Agnes Macphail Public Speaking Contest will take place at 7 p.m. in the True Davidson Council Chambers of the East York Civic Centre. The contest features students from grades 6-8, from East York. Call George Hurst at 416-421-2656.

Free tax lecture

Are you on disability and wanting to claim deductions on your 2009 income tax return? Meet at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 9, in the lecture theatre at Toronto East General Hospital for an information session. Refreshments will be served and admission is free. Call Bjorn Harper at 416-481-8975.

Join the club

The Leaside Garden Society is looking for more gardeners. Meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. at the Leaside library branch at 165 McRae Dr. The next meeting is Thursday, Feb. 11, and it features expert gardener Shari-Lyn Safir and a winter minishow. For more information, call Nora Mular-Richards at 416-421-4284.

Tutors wanted

Two free hours a week is all that's required to help another adult improve his or her reading, writing or math skills. If interested, please call the East York Learning Experience at 416-425-2666.

—Dan Heyman

Police briefs

Man assaulted

A 47-year-old man was attacked on Jan. 15 at Sibley and Danforth avenues. Three men, 21-23 years old, struck him with a stick and tried to rob him. The victim fought back and escaped without injury. The suspects ran away empty-handed. Police are asking for the public's help in identifying all three attackers, described as white, about 5'5" with thin builds.

Armed robbery

Six men were involved in the robbery of a 19-year-old man at gunpoint on Jan. 18 near Coxwell and Danforth avenues. The victim reported that one of the suspects brought out a gun when they demanded his cash. A struggle ensued but the thieves eventually ran off. Police say the suspects are all 27-30 years old.

Teen attacked

Two men robbed a 15-year-old boy near Pape and Danforth avenues on Sunday, Jan. 31, at approximately 8 p.m. The suspects punched the boy and stole his iPod and cellphone before fleeing. The first suspect is 20-23 years old, white, 5'7", with brown eyes, brown hair and a thin build. The second is 20-23 years old, black, 5'4" to 5'5", with brown eyes, black hair and a thin build.

—Natasha Ali



Observer, Victoria Gray

JEWEL DELIGHT: R. Rukumany and Kamala Poopalasingam make jewelry that will be sold at the library in the coming weeks. They teach Indian dance at Harmony Hall to other seniors.

Seniors beat the winter blahs with fun activities

By VICTORIA GRAY

When Colleen Anne McKay retired, she needed something to fill her days. She says that if she stays at home for too long, she feels as if the walls are closing in on her.

"Now I don't have a reason to get up and eat breakfast early in the morning, so I'm going to sleep in... and if you don't use it you lose it," she said. "Luckily I had someone in my apartment building who said 'C'mon, c'mon,' and I did," she said.

McKay joined Harmony Hall a year ago and says she leads a healthier and happier lifestyle as a result.

"I am diabetic and I was on the needle and now I'm not. So it's improved my health," McKay said.

Both the Harmony Hall Centre for Seniors at 2 Gower St. and Community Care East York at 840 Coxwell Ave. offer low-cost services to help older people get out and have fun all year round. That includes great ways to stay safely active in the winter.

Seniors experience difficulty exercising during the winter months for a variety of reasons. Experts believe seniors may

fear falling or injuring themselves. This often leads them to think that staying inside is safer, but Sherri Bulmer, the English program co-ordinator at Harmony Hall, believes that ice, darkness and poor weather can all deter activity in the winter.

She also believes that Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) contributes to reduced exercise and depression.

"SAD... would affect (seniors) a lot because they are already dealing with a lot, not just losing family and friends but losing abilities," she said. "On top of that, when you don't get your efficient vitamin D, which you also need for your bone density, you're going to get more depressed."

Isolation, which is a large problem for seniors, can also lead to depression. McKay has found that having a friend to go out with motivates her to get out.

"I'm a very social person.... I don't like being alone very long," she said. "I like to have people around me."

Dr. David Ryan, the education co-ordinator of the regional geriatric program of Toronto at Sunnybrook

Hospital, recommends that seniors try to continue with the active lifestyle they had in the past.

"If people have (been active in their youth), then I would encourage (them) to maintain some sort of continuity of a sense of who (they) were," he said.

Activity gives seniors more control over their daily lives, which can also alleviate depression.

The manager of wellness services at Community Care East York, Sarah Blackwood, believes that helping seniors stay healthy depends on preventive care. Giving seniors care before they get sick can keep them out of assisted living programs longer.

"We want to help (seniors)... have that quality of life and age with dignity," Blackwood said, "and stay in their home as long as possible."

Feeling needed in the community leads to gaining increased control over life, which can also help prevent depression.

"They need a reason," Bulmer said. "You need to know that your life is worthwhile."

Community centre's \$2-million renovation a boon to local youth

By FRANCOIS BIBER

Young people living in East York's northeast corner now have a revitalized place to call their own, with their once-withered community centre now transformed.

Jan. 16 marked the grand opening of the newly renovated O'Connor Community Centre.

The centre is located at 1386 Victoria Park Ave. Over the past year, it has undergone major renovations in an effort to keep up with the community's demand for a larger, youth-friendly space.

Beaches-East York MP Maria Minna's eyes became misty as

\$2 million — much more than the initial \$500,000 grant that the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration had pledged.

"It took nearly two years until leveraging started kicking in, which in the end was terrific," Minna said.

The list of renovations includes a new basketball court, weight room and meeting rooms.

The upstairs youth lounge is now equipped with Xbox and Wii videogame consoles, ping-pong and foosball tables.

Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment donated a 60-inch TV.

This is a group of Toronto citizens who... have a great deal of dignity and self-respect, and who all deserve our attention.'

—Maria Minna

she reflected on how the newly renovated community centre made her feel.

"I'm so proud of it," she said. "This is a group of Toronto citizens who live, who are proud and have a great deal of dignity and self-respect,

and who all deserve our attention."

Minna spearheaded the initiative to turn the centre around.

"When I got here, it was a forgotten area. The people felt like they were forgotten," she said.

"I come from a community activism background... having knowledge of how government works, it is my job... to help develop community support."

What began as weekly meetings between community organizations soon turned into a plan to transform the community centre into a modernized recreational facility.

Working together with community partners such as Youth Vybes, Toronto Community Housing and Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment, support for the initiative grew.

The Partnership Opportunities Legacy fund made the renovation possible.

As more partners donated to the cause, funding approached

Most of the renovations focused on building space for young people to come in and engage with other community members.

Community recreation programmer Pat McNaughton emphasized the necessity of having a facility geared to youth.

"It's an outlet (away) from school, an outlet away from home and when they come here it's a different family setting," McNaughton said. "It's a lot more relaxed."

With the new facilities completed, McNaughton now looks to take full advantage of the gift the community has received.

"We will continue to work with the community and the youth to advocate to everyone and create more programs, to think outside the box and be more creative," she said.

McNaughton stressed the need for an ongoing partnership between the centre and the community. This will ensure that future generations can be a part of the experience.

"Come out and experience it for yourself. Come and be a part of our family," she advises the centre's neighbours.

"Once you walk into the building, you will exhale and you will feel at home."

Lakeside cottage a gardener's dream come true

By MEEGAN SCANLON

A cabin on a rock seemed like the ideal getaway for Susan and Michael Dolbey: no lawn to mow and no garden to tend.

But fate had other plans.

On Jan. 21, the East York Garden Club gathered at the Stan Wallow Community Centre to see a presentation titled "Roughing it in the Bush — Our Cottage Garden."

The Dolbeys spent the evening explaining to the group how they discovered gardening.

In 1980, the couple bought some property in the Kawartha Lakes area, roughly a two-hour drive northeast of Toronto. At the time, neither had much experience in gardening...nor the desire to start.

"As a boy, I used to earn money by gardening for others," Michael said. "That is why I wasn't keen on gardening."

Both wanted something

that would require very little maintenance.

In the end, they bought a large, rugged piece of land with a slightly run-down cottage at the right price.

But starting with a vegetable garden, their 15-acre property bloomed into a horticulturalist's dream.

Jumping on board the naturalist movement, they developed a strong focus on environmental sustainability.

"It was the '80s, with back-to-the-land and things," Michael said. "So we started with that."

They have since developed multiple gardens, as well as the woodlands on their property.

"We don't use any fertilizers or pesticides, other than our own compost that we make," Michael said. "That's primarily because we're on a lake and the lakes are extremely vulnerable to pesticides."

Gardening is now a huge part of both their lives.

"It gives us a great deal of pleasure and also we've developed a tremendous circle of friends who are interested in gardening," Michael said.

The couple is involved in half-a-dozen groups, from East York to North Toronto and Parkdale. They are also members of the Ontario Rock Garden Society.

Michael said gardening has brought a lot of richness to both his and Susan's life.

For the Dolbeys, their cottage has taken on many forms.

From entertaining guests, to a hot afternoon spent enjoying the cool shade of a tree, they have no regrets when it comes to their peaceful retreat.

And all of it centres around the development of their land.

"We are very glad we did not find that little cottage on a rock," Michael said.



Observer, Meegan Scanlon

GARDEN OF WEEDIN': Michael and Susan Dolbey, longtime members of the East York Garden Club, say gardening has enriched their lives enormously.

The people of East York respond...

Concern grows for survivors of earthquake

By SAMANTHA BUTLER

Haitian people living in East York, including Collège Boréal student Micheline Marie Beauvais, have been anxiously monitoring the international relief effort to help restore their homeland.

"I want to go back tomorrow," Beauvais said at a fundraising event hosted by the Carlaw Avenue college on Jan. 20.

Collège Boréal is a French-language college with several campuses in northern Ontario — and a Toronto branch at 951 Carlaw, in a building shared with the East York campus of Centennial College.

Staff and students from Boréal and Centennial came together on Jan. 20 to collect food, clothing and monetary donations for Haitian relief.

But Beauvais said she anticipates a more daunting challenge ahead.

The emotional toll of the 7.0-magnitude earthquake, which leveled two-thirds of the Haitian capital, Port-au-Prince, on Jan. 12, concerns her the most.

"I am most afraid for the children," she said, holding back tears. "Their houses have fallen. There are dead bodies and the children are living beside them."

Beauvais was also worried for victims losing limbs to amputation as doctors rushed to save lives with limited medical supplies.

"(The doctors) don't have medication, so what do they do?" she asked. "They cut."

In an economy where she said many people have "just their hands for work," amputations will further devastate quake

survivors trying to regain their normal lives, trying to return to work to support themselves.

According to East York social worker and psychotherapist Christiane Martin, having work to do plays an important role in trauma recovery. It propels victims away from disaster, she said, and gives them something to feel positive about.

"It combats the feeling of powerlessness," she said. "It gives a sense of agency (and purpose)."

Martin, who has been offering psychotherapy at a clinic on the Danforth for the past 12 years, doesn't plan on making the trip to Haiti herself.

However, she said that the recent influx of relief workers into Port-au-Prince from the international community will do a lot to support emotional healing.

"To feel part of a community is one of the most important things for victims of trauma," Martin said. "One of the worst things (for victims) is isolation."

Beauvais, who studies social work at Collège Boréal, said she hopes to go lend that support in Port-au-Prince as soon as she can.

She last went home in 2002. Her brother and three-quarters of her family currently reside in Haiti. Her pregnant sister-in-law died in the quake, leaving behind a young son.

In the long term, Beauvais said, she'd like to work in Canada for several years, so that she can take full advantage of her learning opportunities here — and return to Haiti later in life.

"I want to give to Haiti what Canada is giving to me," she said.



Photo courtesy of Canadian Feed The Children

REBUILDING: After an earthquake such as the one that struck Haiti on Jan. 12, communities find it difficult to return to normal life. Canadian Feed The Children is organizing aid for communities in Haiti to establish basic necessities and rebuild.

Feed The Children's reach extends all the way to Haiti

By AARON LUI

The Canadian Feed The Children headquarters, located at East York's northeast corner, looks like any other office. But the employees here aren't dwelling on budget reports or data spreadsheets. These days, they're focusing on sending relief to the people of Haiti.

Canadian Feed The Children, a non-profit and non-governmental organization (NGO) housed at 174 Bartley Dr., near O'Connor and Eglinton, works with partner organizations to fight poverty in developing countries. The organization's mission strives to establish basic necessities for children and their families, such as food, water and medical supplies.

As the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, Haiti was already on Feed The Children's list of recipients before Jan. 12. But since the 7.0-magnitude earthquake ravaged Haiti, the organization is prioritizing the devastated nation.

Bella Lam acts as the program co-ordinator for relief efforts such as the aid bound for Haiti. She explained that aid at the grassroots level serves to develop a solid community base,

after which restructuring will begin.

"What makes us unique is that we're an international NGO, but we also have a domestic program," Lam said. "We work with indigenous organizations... that have the capacity to deal with the local context."

Lam emphasized the importance of developing a sustainable community because a major earthquake destroys economic foundations and all sense of normality.

She refers to "economic sustainability in the sense that we work with partners to introduce programs that are helping communities to be more empowered that, in turn, can find solutions."

The majority of the aid that Haiti receives from Canadian Feed The Children comes from monetary donations. Versatile and convenient for donors, money will be spent on a variety of aid options, such as food allowances, rebuilding damaged structures and medical supplies. Restructuring plays a major role in the relief effort, especially now that the initial shock of the natural disaster has passed.

"We've already sent \$100,000 out to our partners in Haiti,"

Lam said. "We have a plan with the partners... and we say, 'OK, in light of the earthquake, what has changed? What do we need to reprioritize so that we can allocate resources?'"

Canadian Feed The Children will continue to send aid to Haiti.

However, the disaster may lose its place in the media spotlight and this can lead to a slump in donations. The director of communications at the organization, Marianne Chilco, refers to this concept as "donor fatigue."

"I think that you're going to be able to find the resources when you have that high state of emergency and you can immediately have compassion for what (Haitian) parents and children are going through," Chilco said. "We're not too worried that our donors are going to have donor fatigue... I think they understand that the role that we play is an important and ongoing one."

To donate to Canadian Feed The Children's Haiti relief program, visit www.canadianfeedthechildren.ca or call 1-800-387-1221. Donations can also be mailed to 174 Bartley Dr., Toronto, M4A 1E1.



Observer, Francois Biber

STUDENTS CREATING AWARENESS: Rosette Mubalutula and Odette Nusawu, both College Boreal students, volunteer to accept donations for the Canadian Red Cross at the school's Jan. 20 Hope For Haiti benefit.

Canine unit ready, eager to help

By NASTASHA ALLI

The officer in charge of the Toronto Police Service's canine unit says his team is ready to assist with relief efforts in Haiti, but hasn't been given official orders to go to the earthquake-ravaged country.

Staff Sgt. Max Carter's East York-based unit is part of the Canadian Heavy Urban Search and Rescue (HUSAR) team.

"We got a phone call on the 13th (of January) and were told to get your stuff together," he said. "Everybody was ready to go. The dogs were all prepared."

So far, the HUSAR team,

which is made up of approximately 70 Toronto-area volunteer police and firefighters, is in a holding pattern.

"We are part of the team and we provide the canine search and rescue aspect for them," Carter said.

The canine unit has six officers, five search and rescue dogs and one cadaver dog involved with the HUSAR team. Since forming in 2005, HUSAR has never been deployed for a mission.

"Everything's been in training," Carter said. "We wait and we look for catastrophes to put our abilities to the test... You

can never simulate a training exercise to what we would (potentially) experience there."

"There's additional training that needs to be done," he added.

Carter's black Labrador mix, Rip, is a cadaver and explosives detective dog trained to seek out human remains.

"Just going from what I've read, you get off the plane and all you smell is death. I've smelled it before but I'm talking one person, not 100,000 people," Carter said. "When you get something to that degree, I can't even imagine what it would be like. Not even close."

...to the earthquake in Haiti

E.Y. colleges collect over \$3,000 during fundraiser for Haiti

By DAN HEYMAN

Just one week after a 7.0-magnitude earthquake devastated Haiti, an East York college with ties to the island nation held a benefit to aid relief efforts.

The Toronto campus of the province's francophone Collège Boréal is in a building shared with Centennial College at 951 Carlaw Ave. Public relations students at Centennial and student council members from Boréal began planning the Hope for Haiti fundraiser on Friday, Jan. 15, three days after the quake.



RÉMY

Centennial's Corporate Communications and Public Relations Program co-ordinator, Barry Waite, explained events leading up to the Jan. 20 benefit.

After the quake, students developed a plan over the weekend. By the following Wednesday, the Canadian Red Cross had supplied donation boxes, set up on tables and circulated through the halls by students.

Other fundraising initiatives included a silent auction with contributions from Centennial fine arts students, books from faculty and other community donations. The event raised a total of \$3,022.61 and clothing donations filled three bags. Donations continue to roll in.

"We wanted to show the students, faculty and staff from Collège Boréal of Haitian background that (the Centennial College community was) there to support them," Waite said.

Chief of cultural integration at Collège Boréal, Bululu Kabatakaka, echoed this sentiment.

"As a community, it's a synergy to make our action more powerful. (The money was raised) in only 90 minutes, which is a very powerful message to our colleagues from Haiti that we share their pain and are with them. We reached our goal," he said.

He said that 20 to 30 students of Haitian descent attend the college, which operates out of seven campuses throughout Ontario. Two faculty members and two support employees have Haitian backgrounds as well.

Student Linda Étienne, 22, gave an emotional reading of a poem written by a fellow student documenting the ongoing strife Haitians have endured. This was followed by a song sung and written by Boréal professor Marlène Thélusma Rémy.

Her mother was visiting Haiti during the quake, and Rémy spoke with her for the first time five days later.

"Thank God, she survived and is on her way back to Canada," Rémy said.

She also lost her stepbrother in the disaster. "He will be missed. He was like a true son to my mother," she said.

Rémy explained that while the homes of people like her cousin were destroyed, Haitian people weren't running amuck in the streets. Like her family, people would stay by their properties amongst neighbours.

Rémy wants to ensure that international response continues.

"I hope this response is not just an emotional one but that it's genuinely long-term," she said.

"I'm making a request to the whole world to keep going... to help Haiti fully emerge from this impasse."



Observer, Veronica Blake

COMEDY AND COSTUMES: Alastair Forbes (left) and James Gangl are members of the improv group 3 Dudes from Under the Sea. They recently performed at the Globehead tournament.

Homegrown comedians share laughter for Haiti

By VERONICA BLAKE

Laughter at a fundraiser for Haiti relief efforts may seem inappropriate, but comedians across Toronto deserve a round of applause for the money they raised for the beleaguered country.

Toronto Comedy Week for Haiti ran from Jan. 24 to 31. Comedy venues across Toronto came together to donate a night's box office sales to the Canadian Red Cross Haiti Earthquake Fund. The Bad Dog Theatre at Broadview and Danforth chose last Friday as its Comedy for Haiti night.

This coincided with their annual Globehead improv competitions. Kerry Griffin, a founding member of the Bad Dog Theatre and a co-host of the evening's festivities, explained how the comedy community fits into disaster relief.

"(Comedians are) not just goofing around and having fun," Griffin said. "We also (can) come together for an important cause and do things to make a

difference in the world, apart from just spreading laughter."

The Bad Dog Theatre is not-for-profit. Box office revenues keep the theatre afloat, and many of the performers work on a volunteer basis. This is a group of people who love local, independent comedy.

Tom MacKay performed with the group Toxic! at the Globehead tournament.

"We're talking about...a lot of people who are starving actors...but they love what they do...and they want to give," MacKay said.

Jan Caruana co-hosted with Griffin at the show, and produces and directs at the theatre as well.

"I think anybody that can lend a talent is more than happy to do so in times like these," Caruana said. "At the end of the day, the horrible things that are going on in Haiti are nothing to laugh at."

Co-hosts Griffin and Caruana made pleas to the audience to help those "poor people in Hai-

tia." Caruana also auctioned off a half-eaten Mars bar for \$20.

Laughter and fun ultimately opened up the audience's hearts and wallets, with the Bad Dog Theatre raising \$1,000 that night. To date, Toronto's Comedy Week for Haiti has raised \$10,000 for the Red Cross.

"We're so protected here," Caruana said. "We can turn off the news very easily. But the story still exists even when you're not watching it."

Attending a comedy show is a fun and easy way to help the people of Haiti. There's always more that can be done, from giving your time, or even money to reputable charities.

Caruana has other ideas of how she can help. She could go to Haiti.

"Maybe I'd bring a Haitian baby back, if that's not too Angelina Jolie for everybody," Caruana said. "When you see those pictures they're so devastating. You're seeing all these Haitian children, and then your heart just breaks."

**The hand in the hand of the Lord
Haiti, you will triumph
Your hand in His hand on these somber paths
You will have a beautiful morning
With joy you will see appear
The sun dissipating the clouds**

—Excerpt from Haiti You Will Triumph by Marlène Rémy



Observer, Victoria Gray

BEANS FOR HAITI: Since the earthquake in Haiti, Starbucks partner Elliott Shamy, 22, has been collecting donations for the bean drive at the company's Laird Drive location.

Starbucks makes every bean count

By VICTORIA GRAY

Helping Haiti can be as easy as picking up your morning coffee.

The day after an earthquake struck the island nation, 24-year-old Diviyana Matheeneran, manager of the Starbucks at 62 Laird Drive in Leaside, made his store a place for people to donate to Haiti by guessing how many beans are in a jar.

"I know it's tough right now... things are looking up, the world is taking notice and we're willing to do whatever it takes to get (them) back on track," he said.

When he received an email from fellow store manager Christine Poulin, 27, he and his employees jumped at the chance

to get involved.

"The devastation that occurred in Haiti was really shocking and really eye-opening but doing whatever we can at the store level, we can really make a difference," Matheeneran said.

As a district, their stores have already raised \$3,500. Poulin is optimistic that her store can raise \$3,000 with its Kids Helping Kids initiative for Haiti.

The two, with district manager Victoria Rucks, are applying for a grant to have Starbucks match donations from the district.

"Number one, it's the right thing to do," said Rucks, adding that she thinks the company will definitely approve of their plan.

"Immediately our foundation

donated \$1 million to the American Red Cross."

It costs a dollar to guess how many beans are in the jar, but patrons have donated much more than that. The draw will be held on Feb. 28.

Starbucks employee Elliott Shamy, 22, believes community initiatives are extremely important.

"It's really cool to see how much people care," he said.

Matheeneran hopes his store continues as a place where people can give.

"The Leaside community has been really supportive of all of the initiatives," he said. "They were willing to do whatever it takes for people in need."

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Local elections need trimming

Elsewhere in this paper, you will find our first coverage of the 2010 municipal election campaign.

East Yorkers will be going to the polls on Oct. 25. But already, candidates are filing nomination papers. The 2008 federal election took only 36 days. Surely, we can manage our local elections within 60 days if we better automate the process.

There are two main procedures involved in the city election: creating voter lists and campaigning by the candidates. As it stands, each phase takes about half a year.

Currently, the city creates draft voter lists from property tax rolls. It then mails letters to residents who respond in turn by mail. Instead, how about a system in which officials could inform people where to register online via posters and television advertisements? Couldn't arrangements be made whereby residents could then register to vote at Service Ontario kiosks?

Dare we dream that residents could even vote at these kiosks using photo ID? Of course, the province would have to increase the number of kiosks as well as upgrade software and network security. Maybe mobile voting kiosks could also be set up for improved convenience — for example, in the lobbies of community housing, hospitals, nursing homes and long-term care facilities.

The city should set a voting period of a month, rather than calling it an "election day." Doing so would reduce time wasted in lineups, increase convenience around both the time and place to vote and reduce absenteeism. The bureaucracy need not materially revise regulations or the basic election system. If one includes advance polls, the voting period already extends for a month, but the city only mentions it as an exception.

We can easily collapse the campaign process since not much happens during the first seven months. Declared candidates for this November's vote aren't allowed to place signs on campaign offices or elsewhere in the neighbourhood yet anyway. The delay only dulls the process.

This lethargy is reflected in the slow pace of registration. The registration process started on Jan. 4. Yet, three weeks later, in East York, only one candidate for city councillor had registered in each of Wards 26 and 31. Nobody has yet registered to serve as a Catholic school trustee for Wards 9 and 11.

The Toronto campaign would be more exciting if it entailed a three-week multimedia blitz involving television debates and town hall meetings. People could later download clips of these events in the form of podcasts. Gone would be the days of candidates or their volunteers knocking intrusively on our doors after we have sat down for a quiet family dinner.

So next time a candidate knocks on your door, ask him or her to automate the voting process. If they object, offer them bandages for their knuckles and their feet.

—Reuben Sokol

Government's antics stand unchallenged by Canadians

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.

Remember the last time our government auto-asphyxiated? The sheer notion of a coalition appeared to be a godsend, a *dues ex machina* of sorts. Well, at least in my circle of friends it did. The coalition never came to pass and the Conservatives got back to work. I wept for the "Oui Coalition" sign in the window of my earnest living room. My hopes deflated and I resigned myself to the inevitability of the blue and white party.

Resignation appears to be a Canadian trait; the frog trusted the scorpion and accepted its fate to the bottom of the pond, and so the story goes. Now our government has its nation in a stranglehold, devoid of its democracy. But before we can cast stones at 24 Sussex Dr., I tend to wonder: do we have anyone to blame but ourselves?

I attended the protest held at that abomination that is Dundas Square on an unseasonably mild

Ryan
English



Saturday. With my husband and a few good friends in tow, I stood and screamed amongst the raucous Canadians until my throat was sore. Without question, it was the most vocal of rallies I've ever attended. Nine people holding cue cards spelling d-e-m-o-c-r-a-c-y posed for voracious media on Yonge Street just north of Queen. You've seen the pictures by now.

There were speeches in four languages other than English. It was a wonderful display of diligence and unity from such a rich cross-section of people from all over this great nation. Then we congratulated ourselves for our bravery and good intentions and went on our way.

In our culture, we are taught to forgive, but people never

really forget. I am frustrated by this quasi-parental 'Because-I-Told-You-So' act in the twisted show called Harper & Friends.

It's not enough that the Conservatives have prorogued the government once before, denied funding to crucial social and arts programs across the country or attempted to abolish the civil rights of gays and lesbians. Canadians require Parliament to enter into a state of veritable purgatory twice before they can stage a protest or engage in any act of civil disobedience. We're too polite. Hold the door open too long and the flood gets in.

A prominent local news outfit recently reported 1,000 people in attendance at the protest at Dundas Square — when in fact the number was somewhere in the neighbourhood of 7,000. It's textbook; diminish the numbers, diminish the efforts and the morale.

Something tells me it's going to take more than a rally.

Love isn't a math equation: Follow your own rulebook

Dating is one of the most tedious processes to go through, but it's absolutely essential in developing relationships. And sure, it can be fun and exciting. But it's especially dreadful when treated like a math equation.

In dating, there are implicit rules that most people follow: they hope that 'Don't do this' plus 'Never do that' will equal a one-way ticket to relationship city. But that math equation doesn't always work out, and you're left with a missed flight. Just take it from me; I know from experience.

A guy who just happened to be tragically gorgeous, with an amazing personality to match, gave me his number. Yet I waited two days to phone him. On the third day, after countless mock conversations with myself, I got up the nerve to call and we made a great connection.

Although I had a million things to do the next day, I was constantly distracted by thoughts of him. But despite

Alicia
Baird



how eager I was for us to speak again, I refused to call because I didn't want to look like a stalker. More importantly: I had made the first move, so it was only natural to wait and see how long it would take him to phone me, right?

A day later, he asked me out on a date, but I declined — because I didn't want to seem too available. By the seventh day, it was official. He was gone.

When I ran into him a month later, I asked what happened. His response was, "I gave up because you just didn't seem that interested." Actually, I was more than interested; I just had to follow those darn rules.

You see, the trouble with following the rules is that we practically brainwash ourselves

into thinking it's beneficial, when in actuality, it's quite the opposite. In doing what we believe to be the "right" thing in dating, we push our love interest away and risk becoming a "Single Sam."

Why do we constantly do this? Why do we place ourselves into this equation? It's not like playing by the rules is an easy task. It gets tiring to wait by the phone for a call when you can simply make one yourself. It gets tougher to make up excuses when asked on a date because you want to make it clear that you have a life too. It's much easier to just tell the person you're interested in them. (Besides, it'll prevent many unwanted wrinkles and cure future migraines.)

One year after that disaster — and some other failed attempts at the "math" — I've finally figured out the equation: 'Be yourself,' plus 'Just go for it,' equals a much-improved dating experience.

Editorial: Haiti aid must get to those who need it most

The tragedy in Haiti is being felt around the world, and East York is no exception. On Carlaw Avenue, some of the Haitian-Canadian students and staff at the Toronto campus of Ontario's French-speaking college, Collège Boréal, have suffered personal loss. Others in the broader East York community are also mourning family and friends — or are worrying about how loved ones who survived the quake will now cope. Many with no direct links to Haiti have still come up with money for relief efforts. In East York, at the Bartley Drive headquarters of Canadian Feed the Children, they're working to get aid down there.

The Haitian government fears this earthquake will claim up to 200,000 lives — making it the worst natural disaster in the world since the tsunami in the

Indian Ocean five years ago.

The reasons for Haiti's disproportionate suffering are well-established. It's the poorest country in this hemisphere. Hundreds of thousands of people lived in earthquake-vulnerable shacks crowded together near the epicenter of the quake. It had almost no infrastructure to begin with — and what little there was crumbled with the shaking: water supplies, food distribution, medical care....

But we in the countries that rushed to Haiti's aid must also take some of the responsibility for poor emergency management in the days immediately following the disaster. Because there wasn't enough heavy rescue equipment, many died while still being trapped in the rubble, or shortly after they were rescued. Food, water and medical

care all bottlenecked at Haiti's sea and airport for days.

Yes, aid is flowing out through the country more freely now. Yes, Canada hosted a one-day conference in Montreal last week about rebuilding Haiti. And yes, donor countries will meet again at UN headquarters in New York in March. Ensuring that Canadian and other contributions get to the most vulnerable should be a top priority.

Some of the money should be spent on monitoring how relief and rebuilding efforts are distributed throughout the country.

Many aid agencies are doing their best to get relief supplies to the people who need it most. But in this early phase, the situation is apparently so dire that they fear their vehicles will be ambushed.

So, for example, one way the money could be well-spent would

be organizing a safe route for vehicles carrying aid and providing security for aid workers.

Despite all of the devastation and destruction, there have been remarkable rescue stories, with reports of people being pulled out of buildings after a week of being trapped.

Our job is to now write a Haiti-wide rescue story that's just as remarkable.

—Ozman Omar

We welcome your input

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Observer, Veronica Blake

SMALL WORLD: Speaker Gib Goodfellow (right) catches up with fellow Junction resident Henry Calderon. Goodfellow showed slides at the East York Historical Society's January meeting.

E.Y. celebrates historic bond to 'The Junction'

By **VERONICA BLAKE**

It might seem strange that the East York Historical Society devoted its January meeting to learning about the diverse heritage and unique history of The West Toronto Junction, a community far removed from East York.

In many ways, however, that distance is only geographical. The neighbourhoods actually have a lot in common, says the president of the West Toronto Junction Historical Society, with both boasting active historical societies within close-knit communities. They also share a history of independence from the City of Toronto and see themselves as distinct societies within the larger city in spite of amalgamation.

With the aid of a slide show, Gib Goodfellow noted that The Junction became the City of West Toronto in 1908. It amalgamated with the City of Toronto the following year.

"We don't use the word annexed," he told the 50 historical society members and guests in attendance at the Jan.

26 meeting, which was held at the S. Walter Stewart Library. "We were a city by that time. So we sat down at the table and negotiated. It was a marriage."

The Junction adopted temperance in 1904, and remained a dry community until 1996.

"Not a drop of liquor was served," Goodfellow said. "That was rather unusual. And I think that people did it just because they liked to be different."

The junction of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Canadian National Railway helped the town prosper. With the arrival of the car, families stopped shopping locally and the economy suffered.

"The railroads made the town, and the automobile destroyed it," Goodfellow said.

Today, people are taking a newfound interest in The Junction. Artists, new shops and bars have revitalized the neighbourhood.

"There is a feeling that The Junction is coming back," Goodfellow said. "The spirit has always been... (of a) strong

community, and it's getting more so."

Goodfellow, who joined the West Toronto Junction Historical Society about 15 years ago, has been presenting the slide show for the past 10 years.

"I'm a resident of The Junction... I'm part of the history," he said. "So there's just sort of a natural connection."

Audience member Ambrose Montagu, 31, said she enjoyed her first meeting of the East York Historical Society.

"It's excellent that you have one community host another," she said. "It speaks a lot about the spirit of Toronto."

Meanwhile, the organization's new president, Margaret McRae, wants to extend the presence and reach of the society within the East York community.

"I feel we do have a wonderful history," she said. "It's very important for people to know about it, and pass it on to newcomers and younger people...to preserve (the) information and pass it on, so the information does not die."

Groceries only the beginning at local food bank

By **TAYLOR MARSDEN**

The government of Ontario announced last month that it would partner with the City of Toronto and the United Way on a plan to designate "community hubs" in poorer areas of the city.

The Building Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy hopes to develop job opportunities and increase economic growth in parts of the city that struggle. East York may eventually get one or more of those designations.

In the meantime, there's already a hub of sorts in one disadvantaged neighbourhood — without the multi-million dollar funding.

According to Flemingdon Park Ministry's Rev.

Helena Houldcroft, the Flemingdon Food Bank has become more than just a pantry for the hungry.

It's a safe haven for residents of the area — and provides services that otherwise wouldn't exist.

"We have programs that are about trying to empower people to move beyond their need for the food bank," Houldcroft said.

"People want to access their own needs, but they need to feel empowered to do so."

The food bank in Flemingdon Park started around 1970 under the auspices of the Red Cross. The York-Scarborough division of the Toronto Anglican diocese took it over about five years ago as part of its storefront ministry in the neighbourhood — and usage rose to about 2,000 people per month.

But last year, around the same time that the food bank was evicted from a local shopping plaza, the church indicated

that it needed partners to continue running it.

Now Flemingdon Food Bank is managed by a co-operative of Anglican, Presbyterian, United Church and Muslim faith groups, and it occupies the basement of a condominium building at 10 Gateway Blvd.

That limited space has been divided into two rooms, each with a specific purpose.

"The 'quiet program' space is open to all faiths and is where we have regular prayer, and then

There's hardly any public space, and that's what's needed.'

—Helena Houldcroft

we have a women's group that meets regularly," said Houldcroft. "It's here that we also do our STAR project, which is Skills Training Access and Resources — so

working with people to try and help them meet their goals."

Next door is a drop-in area where people can sit, have a cup of coffee and use the free fax and phone while their children play with provided toys and games.

Tucked in a corner stands a bookcase holding clothing donations that residents can take with them, free of charge.

Houldcroft and the faith co-op hope to continue developing both spaces, but a lack of funding creates a challenge on moving forward with those projects.

"What needs to happen in this community is exactly what the City of Toronto just said they were going to do," she said.

"There's hardly any public space and that's what's needed," she added.

But until the Neighbourhoods Strategy is applied to Flemingdon Park, Houldcroft says the food bank at 10 Gateway Blvd. will be there for the local residents who need it.

Danforth cafe gets interest with unique marketing ploy

Proprietor blogs about highs, lows of life at Teatree

By **KERRY PRUNSKUS**

Every afternoon when the lunch rush ends, Erin Pim sits down with her laptop to write her daily blog entry and recount the events of the day.

Pim, 26, is the proprietor of the Teatree Café and Eatery on Danforth Avenue. She began the teatreecafe.com blog three weeks before she opened the doors of her new establishment on Jan. 4. Her decision to start a blog confirms the first of several talents.

"I'm an aspiring writer as well," she said. "I really enjoy writing a blog every day. It's satisfying to me and it's good marketing."

Even though her blog currently has an intimate following, her witty and expressive narratives add flavour to the photos of her vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free recipes.

Pim's entries also describe some of the obstacles she encountered before opening her cafe and some of the memorable moments that occurred once business got rolling.

"I had a total crazy person come in the restaurant the other day and I just like relaying stories like that," she said. "It's all with a sense of humour. I love retelling ... I could base a character on her so that's why I enjoy it."

An excerpt from a December entry shared the story of a peculiar discovery that began with a leaky ceiling.

"When my father and I excavated the ceiling, we found — you'll never guess — a bucket," she wrote. "Full of water. Sealed into the ceiling!"

Her father, Michael Pim, played a key role in the renovation of the cafe.

"I originally phoned him and asked him if he could give me a couple of days here and there, but he was here once a week at the least," she said. "To say he helped is the biggest

understatement of the century."

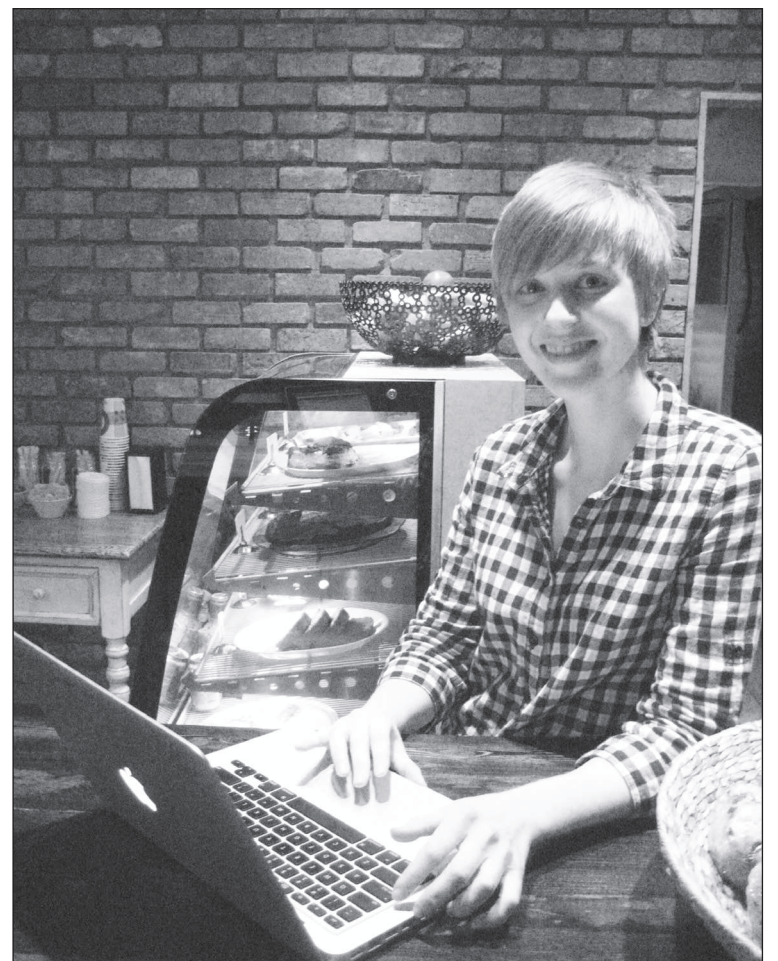
In the past, Pim spent summers shadowing her father in his contracting business, an experience that gave her the tools to develop her own skills that she applied when renovating.

From reupholstering the chairs to jig-sawing a display tree and building a brick backdrop wall, Pim also uses her hands to create each and every item offered on the menu. She even hand-kneads the sandwich bread.

"It's like a little workout every morning," she said. "I'm gonna have pipes by the end of this."

Although she enjoys building muscle strength, Pim's reason for touching every element of her business runs much deeper.

"I want it to be more special, more personal," she said. "It magnifies my vision for the restaurant. It doubles your time to do these things, but I felt that was important and I feel people notice that as good thing."



Observer, Kerry Prunskus

KEEPING HER HANDS FULL: Erin Pim, 26, proprietor of Teatree Café and Eatery, adds an entry to her daily blog after a busy day. Since the cafe opened on Jan. 4, Pim's been filling the role of baker, barista, renovator and artistic decorator.



Strange Duck Media, Irene Duma/Inset: Observer, Samantha Butler
A PASSIONATE MAN: Paul Quarrington was determined to 'squeeze the last drop from life' during his eight-month battle with cancer. **INSET:** Allen's Pub commemorates the local artist.

A little bit of soul taken away from the Danforth

By SAMANTHA BUTLER

Paul Quarrington didn't waste any time worrying about death. When his doctor diagnosed him with stage-four lung cancer in May 2009, he chose instead to focus on living the remainder of his life to the fullest.

Someone who knew him well is John Maxwell, owner of Allen's pub on the Danforth, where Quarrington met with friends and colleagues for over 20 years.

"He was ready to squeeze the last drop from life... stimulated by the ticking clock," Maxwell said. "He became invigorated."

The award-winning Canadian author and screenwriter, front man of beloved local blues ensemble the Porkbelly Futures and former East York resident died on Jan. 21. He leaves behind a legacy of acclaimed literature and art, but what the people at Allen's will remember most is his remarkable passion for life. "He accomplished so many things," said 25-year-old friend and server James Lynch. "If you had a dream or something that you wanted to do, somehow after a conversation with Paul it seemed more realistic."

Lynch began bartending at Dora Keogh, Allen's next-door neighbour and affiliate, five years ago. He first got to know Quarrington when his band, the Porkbelly Futures, played there

once a month. Lynch began dating Quarrington's daughter, Carson, in 2007.

Lynch said the shows were unlike anything else at Dora. "When (the Porkbelly Futures) played, especially at his last few shows, it was almost like you couldn't get in the building."

"Paul made the party. (People) divide events they (attend) into two groups — the ones where Paul was there and the ones where he wasn't. There was nothing like being at a party with Paul."

Porkbelly Futures gigs continued as Quarrington's cancer spread. Undeterred, he still got up on stage with the band, sometimes attached to a ventilator.

"You'd never know anything was wrong, except for the tank," Lynch said. "He just carried on."

The show scheduled for Jan. 22 wasn't cancelled until the Wednesday of that week, when Quarrington's health took a sudden turn for the worse.

While shocked by how quickly his friend died, Lynch said he's relieved "that his quality of life was never compromised...He had it right up until the end."

Quarrington, 56, published 16 books. His novel, *Whale Music*, won the 1990 Governor General's Award. He penned six screenplays and wrote regularly for Canadian television.

He also taught creative writing at Humber College and served as a member on the boards of Fringe Theatre Toronto and PEN Canada.

He contributed to BookShorts' Moving Stories Film Festival, often appeared at the Harbourfront International Reading Series and chaired the Writers' Union of Canada.

After his diagnosis, he maintained a moving diary on the National Post website, which publicly documented how he came to grips with his mortality.

"If I could accomplish half the things in my life that he did, I'd be pretty happy," Lynch said.

So while the city and the country are marking the loss of a prodigious writer, teacher, musician and filmmaker, Quarrington's gang at Allen's Pub and Dora Keogh Danforth will be missing their friend.

"He was one of our people," said Maxwell, who has placed a framed photograph of Quarrington on the Allen's bar.

"He was an amazing character. He combined enormous creativity with great humour, wonderful human sympathy."

When asked to recall a special moment, Lynch said: "With Paul, there was no particular moment. With Paul, it was every moment."

Play honours Jamaican hero and independence

By JACQUELINE DELANGE

In drama, oftentimes it's not what you say, but how you say it.

Theatre Archipelago's production of *I, Marcus Garvey*, directed by Rhoma Spencer, says it with a Caribbean accent.

"Just follow me, guys," Spencer says to her players during rehearsal. "It's Caribbean, not Caribbean."

I, Marcus Garvey, written by Edgar Nkosi White, tells the story of Marcus Garvey, a Jamaican national hero and founder of the United Negro Improvement Association. The showcase production premieres at East York's Papermill Theatre tonight, Feb. 5, runs there again tomorrow and on Sunday moves to William Doo Auditorium in downtown Toronto. Spencer chose to premiere this play in Toronto during Black History Month because White's ideas still apply to modern life in Canada.

"Black people are still at the bottom of the totem pole and the ideology he talks about is where we must reclaim our 'African-ness,'" she said. "As an artist in this city, I feel that I have to create that kind of independence, similar to what it is Garvey talked about: having independence as black people."

Spencer asserted her own Caribbean background when she founded Theatre Archipelago in 2004. Since then, the theatre has produced plays such as *Garvey* to promote Caribbean theatre. However, a lack of funding makes these productions few and far between.

"(Government arts programs) always have money set aside for diverse companies, but even

within that pool we are still considered to be at the bottom," she said. "It has always been an uphill battle to get the funding to do your work."

The Ontario Arts Council declined to fund *Garvey* and the Toronto Arts Council offered only a paltry sum. Spencer thanked the Toronto Dominion Bank for sponsoring the play so that she could tell Canadians the *Garvey* story in her own unique way.

In the past, her productions featured only one or two actors so that if they weren't profitable, fewer people would be affected financially. However, the *Garvey* script called for a cast of 16. Spencer put a unique spin on the production by limiting the cast to the principal, Garvey, and a chorus of five.

"There are scenes that are crowd scenes and I'd like to see a few more bodies... but I thought (my challenge) has been overcome because of the craftsmanship of the actors," she said. "I think they make life easy for me."

The cast consists of Andrew Moodie as Garvey and Colin Doyle, Owen 'Blakka' Ellis, Quancetia Hamilton (*Da Kink in My Hair*), Sarah Michelle Brown and Kevin Sinclair in the chorus.

Commitment from a limited but devoted band of cast members and financial backers allowed Spencer to stage a brand of drama rarely seen on Toronto stages.

"In terms of what is available to the audience in Toronto, this will be a breath of fresh air," she said.

Seats cost \$10 for general admission and \$5 for students.



John Hasyn for Moorelands Community Services

ALL SMILES: Moorelands' after-school programs engage children in under-served communities with fun activities ranging from cooking classes to sports.

After-school program returns

By TARA LOSINSKI

The after-school program at Thorncliffe Park Public School is back in business.

Run by Moorelands Community Services, it was suspended last fall because of a funding shortage. It resumed operation on Jan. 11, with a little help from the Kiwanis Club of East York and, organizers hope, the community as well.

Thorncliffe's program is one of three offered by Moorelands. At each location, a program leader and two assistants work with 24 children aged six to 12 every school day until 5:30 p.m. The schedule is filled with activities meant to develop self-esteem, social skills and character.

Last fall, the non-profit organization faced what was de-

scribed as its "toughest" decision ever — which program to cancel after a drop in donations.

It chose Thorncliffe's program, which had run for six years.

"We tried to serve the most children with what we had," said Patricia Jacobs, Moorelands' executive director. "It doesn't mean it (the Thorncliffe program) wasn't needed."

Despite a funding shortage of \$10,000, Moorelands announced intentions to restart the program in December. Unlike Flemingdon Park, which receives support from the Ministry of Health, Moorelands runs the Thorncliffe program entirely through donations.

Jacobs understood they took a risk proceeding without secured financing.

"We thought if we could let people know that's all we needed, donations would come through," she said.

That's where the Kiwanis Club of East York comes in. A member of the club read an article published by the *Toronto Star* and brought it to the attention of the board. Club president and retired educator George Rowell contacted Moorelands, and the board met with Jacobs to review the program.

"It was everything that we like to support," Rowell said.

The club pledged to match a total of \$5,000 in donations made to the after-school program. It will support the donation through regular fundraising initiatives such as its "Kash for Kids" lottery.