



Anussa Nithiyathanan /// The Observer

## How sweet it is

Jackman Avenue Public School students (l-r) Sage Osborne, 9, Maeve McGrath, 8, and Jasper Hughes-Choi, 9, check to see how much sap they've collected from one of the sugar maple trees at their school. On April 8, they celebrated the results of their efforts with a pancake day featuring homemade syrup. See story, page 5.

## Project takes on dental elder abuse

By **MARWA MOHKAM SHEIKH**  
The Observer

Dr. Natalie Archer is intimately aware of the latest form of elder abuse, especially when she hears the excuses from the caregivers of some of her older patients.

"Well, my dad doesn't talk, so he doesn't need to have dentures," the local dentist recounted. Or, "She's been on IV fluids, so she just drinks out of a straw."

Having practised mobile geriatric dentistry for a decade in Ontario, Archer operates two clinics in Toronto - one in Runnymede and one in Rosedale - each specializing in geriatric care. She treats patients from across Toronto, including East York.

"We see a huge number of (older) patients here who just can't eat basic foods," Archer said. "It affects your willingness to live. It prevents them from being sociable. It prevents them from smiling and being confident."

Because the problem appeared to be widespread, some time ago Archer initiated the Dental Elderly Abuse Response (DEAR) Project to address the pitfalls of dental care in the seniors of Toronto.

"It was just a big black hole and that inspired me to start this," she said.

The DEAR Project is supported by the Canadian Centre for Elderly Law

■ See **PROJECT**, page 7

# Juice bar moves on from Hep A scare

By **KEI LAM**  
The Observer

Regular customers of The Big Carrot Organic Juice Bar don't appear to be worried about this week's hepatitis A scare.

On Saturday, Toronto Public Health issued a warning to customers of the juice bar, located at 348 Danforth Ave. Health officials said an employee had tested positive for the virus and anyone who had consumed juice at the restaurant from March 17 to April 2 should be vaccinated.

Customer Yan Fossat didn't seem alarmed.

"If they had found (the virus), it's probably much safer now," Fossat said.

Toronto Public Health said in a statement it believes The Big Carrot employee had contracted the virus while travelling outside of the country.

"In this situation, no health hazard was identified," Dr. Rita Shahin, associate medical officer of health, said in an email. "The staff member was not at work after she had been diagnosed."

After the health department visited the restaurant, Sarah Dobec, public relations co-ordinator at The Big Carrot, posted notices and a statement on the storefront and on social media.

"It's been a mixed review (on social media)," she said. "There are people who are understandably upset and worried for their health, but once they got the facts and information, they seemed to be happy with that."

Dobec said patrons felt The Big Carrot had handled the situation appropriately. She added while their customers were supportive and understanding, the scare had been tough on everybody.

"It has been stressful for our staff and our customers," she said. "We've also had... some negative comments, but we're handling that on a comment-to-comment basis."

Dobec said The Big Carrot remained open after the Toronto Public Health visit.

According to Toronto Public Health, symptoms of the disease usually begin 15 to 50 days after becoming infected, but symptoms do not always occur. Although chances of contracting the virus are low in this specific case, Toronto Public Health decided to open a vaccination clinic at the East York Civic Centre on Sunday to provide for those who may have been exposed.

Shahin said it's best to get the vaccine within 14 days of exposure.



Kei Lam /// The Observer

Juice enthusiasts continue to enjoy drinks from The Big Carrot Organic Juice Bar, in spite of this week's hepatitis A scare.



## POLICE & FIRE

### Man arrested after robbery spree

A 42-year-old man has been charged following a spree of robberies that included an East York store last week.

Police believe the same man robbed four banks between April 4 and 7. In each case, a man entered the branch and handed the teller a note demanding money and saying he had a gun.

On April 5, a man tried to rob a retail store near the corner of Pape and Danforth avenues in the same way, but he left empty-handed.

Charged is Tyrone Jason Wilson of Toronto. He made his first court appearance on April 8. Toronto police are asking anyone with information on the robberies to contact them at 416-808-7350 or Crime Stoppers anonymously at 416-222-TIPS (8477).

### Suspect in serial burglaries identified

Toronto police have identified a man whom they're looking for in connection with a series of business burglaries in the area of Danforth and Greenwood avenues on March 2. Someone broke into six businesses that day and removed merchandise from each.

Police have posted a picture on their website of 44-year-old John Thorpe, described as 5' 11", weighing about 180 pounds, with brown hair and eyes. Police would like anyone with information to contact them at 416-808-5500 or Crime Stoppers anonymously at 416-222-TIPS (8477).

### Pets shot with BB gun near Danforth

Police are investigating after they received separate reports of a dog and a cat being shot with a BB gun just southwest of the intersection of Danforth Avenue and Main Street.

On March 28, the small dog was in the owner's back yard when a BB struck it in the back. The dog was given medical treatment and is doing fine. Roughly three weeks later a BB struck a cat in the back across the street. The cat is also recovering well.

Anyone with information is asked to contact police at 416-808-5500 or Crime Stoppers anonymously at 416-222-TIPS (8477).

### Beware of suspicious salespeople

Police are warning homeowners in East York's southeast corner to be cautious of purported door-to-door salespeople around their homes. In recent weeks, they say, there have been reports from an area just south of the Danforth between Coxwell and Victoria Park avenues of individuals who present themselves as sales representatives but act suspiciously.

Const. Johnathan Morrice of 55 Division is warning homeowners to guard against theft. He said residents should question any salespeople carefully, and ask for a business card.

Any residents with concerns or questions can call Const. Morrice at 416-808-5579. Other information can be relayed to police at 416-808-5500 or Crime Stoppers anonymously at 416-222-TIPS (8477).

~ Jelicia Saulter



Suzanna Dutt // The Observer

### Sisters in stitches

These two sisters took part in a spring craft workshop at the S. Walter Stewart library branch. After a 20-minute tutorial, the girls carefully measured, cut, stitched and decorated felt pieces to make a phone case.

## Speed limit may drop

By DANIEL GOLDSMITH  
The Observer

Toronto and East York Community Council has decided to consider lowering speed limits on local roads. The 12-member council voted unanimously this week to hold a meeting to discuss the issue on June 22.

Council reached the decision at its Tuesday meeting. If members vote in favour, speed limits on local roads in the downtown and East York area will be reduced from 40 to 30 kilometres per hour.

Mary Fragedakis, councillor for Ward 29/Toronto-Danforth, said that lowering speed limits is popular among East Yorkers and will make streets safer.

According to a 2012 report, entitled "Road to Health: Improving Walking and Cycling in Toronto," a pedestrian hit by a vehicle travelling at 50 km/h has an 85 per cent chance of dying, while a pedestrian hit by a vehicle moving at 30 km/h has a five per cent chance of dying.

East York resident Daniel Chan prefers the lower speed option.

"I think lowering the speed limit will definitely be safer for the kids, because they are playing around here all the time," he said.

Fragedakis senses that's a common view.

"It's what the majority of people who I've spoken to

over the past year have wanted," she said. "People are speeding through the streets of Ward 29 on their way downtown."

Fragedakis also said that a lower speed limit would not increase traffic congestion.

"We're talking about the local streets, not major ones," she said.

Local roads are classified as those with a daily traffic volume of fewer than 2,500 vehicles that generally provide access to properties and that have sidewalks on at least one side. The community council is responsible for more than 600 kilometres of local roads in East York.

~ With files from Xue Bo



Courtesy of Toronto Police Services

Toronto police have released several images of potential witnesses in the investigation of a fatal shooting at a Danforth McDonald's.

## Police seek witnesses to shooting

By JELICIA SAULTER  
The Observer

Toronto police have released images of potential witnesses in the investigation of a fatal shooting at a Danforth McDonald's.

At around 3 a.m. on Feb. 28, police were called to the McDonald's at 1735 Danforth Ave. at the corner of Coxwell Avenue. When they arrived, they found Donny Ouimette, 25, and Ryan Hill, 39, with gunshot wounds.

Both men were pronounced



dead at the scene.

Police say a private security guard unaffiliated with McDonald's had come into the restaurant to order food and

had become involved in an argument with the pair. They say the dispute escalated until the guard pulled out his weapon and fired multiple shots.

No charges have been laid. Police continue to investigate, however, and would like to speak to the pictured potential witnesses or anyone else with information.

The investigators can be contacted at 416-808-7400 or through Crime Stoppers anonymously at 416-222-TIPS (8477).

## WHAT'S UP IN E.Y.

### Miapalooza

Miapalooza is the concert tomorrow, April 18, that wraps up the school year for students in the Music Industry Arts and Performance program at Centennial College's East York campus. The show is at 7 p.m. in the George Weston Recital Hall of the Toronto Centre for the Arts, 5040 Yonge St. Tickets are \$15.

### Grafixpalooza

The Toronto Centre for the Arts is also the venue for a display of work by the graduating graphic design students at the Carlaw Avenue campus of Centennial. The show opened this past Wednesday, and continues through Tuesday, April 21.

### Spring to action

Everyone is welcome to attend the 10th annual "Spring Into Action" walk and run diabetes fundraiser at Sunnybrook Park on Saturday, May 2. The event is being organized by Leaside's InsideOut Health and Fitness centre. Registration begins at 9 a.m. and costs \$25. For more information, call 416-849-4765.

### Magic creatures

Youth aged 11-18 are invited to visit the S. Walter Stewart library branch on Friday, May 15 for the library's "Get Inspired" arts program. Young people will learn how to make pom-pom creatures out of yarn. The program will run from 3:30 until 5 p.m. Supplies are provided. For more information, call 416-396-3975.

~ Daniel Goldsmith





Jelicia Saulter /// The Observer

Toronto police Const. Fitzroy Parker of 54 Division and volunteer Michael Vibert sweep the curb of Pape Avenue as part of the Kennedy House community cleanup.

## Cleaning up the negativity

By JELICIA SAULTER  
The Observer

Friends of Kennedy House picked up some garbage during a spring community cleanup — and hopefully turned over a new leaf in shelter-neighbour relations.

There has been occasional tension between nearby residents and occupants of the youth shelter — formerly known as “Touchstone” and located at 1076 Pape Ave. So one of the stated intentions of the end-of-March cleanup was to ease that tension.

“Historically, the community of Pape and Cosburn had some issues with the previous tenants at the shelter at 1076 Pape,” said one of the cleanup organizers, Const. Fitzroy Parker of Toronto police 54 Division.

Referring to Touchstone, he said: “When that shelter left, many of the residents did not want another shelter to come in. Once this new shelter was slated to come in we had numerous community meetings where a lot of the residents voiced their displeasure of having a new

tenant operating a shelter in the area.”

Catering to residents between the ages of 16 and 23 can be challenging, especially when some come with “baggage.” But Parker said that since Kennedy House’s opening last spring, “I can tell you that the police have had a significant drop in the amount of calls for service and the amount of reports from residents at the shelter and that’s due to the philosophy of management.”

Parker added: “One of the things we as police want to do in the area is show some of the good work that these guys here in the shelter are doing and this is one of the events I came up with.”

Also present were other officers from the division and Ward 29/Toronto-Danforth councillor Mary Fragedakis.

There were still a few awkward moments; although police volunteered to participate on their own time, some passersby yelled about tax dollars being wasted on garbage pickup. But generally things went smoothly.

The shelter supervisor of Kennedy House, Louis Davis, also volunteered to

help with the cleanup to “break that gap between the police and the youth that we service in the shelter.”

He added that a small group of the shelter’s young occupants also participated.

“We had a couple of the youth come out,” Davis said. “Our mission today was to be part of the community, and hopefully the youth can see police aren’t just here to arrest people, but they’re also here to serve and protect.”

Volunteer Michael Vibert wanted to give back to his former residence.

“Having the residents outside of the shelter and seeing people doing something positive from Kennedy House... is something that most people around here wouldn’t want to do themselves,” he said. “If you see someone from the shelter doing this, residents are going to have a more positive image of them.”

“We want to refresh the area and show the residents that these guys are here, they’re going to make a positive dent in the community and that we can all work together to maintain the sense of community,” Parker said.

### Triple threat

The Dufour-Lapoint sisters (left to right: Justine, Maxime and Chloe) recently stopped by the Sky Zone trampoline centre in Leaside to sign autographs and play a little trampoline dodge ball. They were on their way back to Montreal following a successful competitive ski season. Their Olympic medals (a gold for Justine and silver for Chloe) were a big hit with their fans.

Jason Sutcliffe /// The Observer

## New technology making life easier for the hearing impaired: Expert

By ALEX KAMAKARIS  
The Observer

There was an element of history to it, but Derek Rumball’s presentation to the East York Historical Society on March 31 was more about opening our eyes to the challenges faced by those who can’t open their ears.

Rumball is the executive director of the Bob Rumball Centre for Deaf, a long-term care residence in Barrie. It’s part of a small network of agencies for the hearing impaired stretching from the GTA to Parry Sound. It’s named for his father, noted athlete Bob Rumball, who is enjoying his senior years at a retirement residence in cottage country.

“He was a Toronto Argonaut and an Ottawa Rough Rider and had an opportunity to really change people’s lives through the work of the church, but also through the social services part,” Rumball said at an EYHS meeting at the S. Walter Stewart library branch.

East York Historical Society president Pat Barnett said she hoped Rumball’s presentation would illuminate some of the issues for those dealing with sensory loss.

Rumball explained the centre’s work: “These are people who are culturally deaf, whose first language is sign language. We also have services for the people in their senior years who are deafened, who are losing their hearing and need technical advice and maybe just help.

But the homes that we run and the dining services and all the type of things that we run are for those whose language is sign language — because if I started to talk like this....” He continued in sign language, to illustrate the difficulty of making oneself understood by people who can’t translate.

Rumball went on to explain that it’s fortunately becoming easier for hearing-impaired people to, for instance, order food at McDonalds, through new technology that gives the deaf community the ability to communicate — like showing their food order on their smartphone.

Christopher Salmond, a director of the EYHS, said he was impressed with Rumball’s presentation.

“I think he presented himself well and he got across the aims and principals and vision of his dad and the organization as it stands today,” Salmond said.

To end the speech, Derek left the guests with his motto: “Make tomorrow better than today for somebody. Love the people who are hard to love.”



Alex Kamakaris /// The Observer

Derek Rumball speaks (and signs) about impaired hearing at the East York Historical Society meeting at the S. Walter Stewart library.







Courtesy of TEGH

**Top: An artist's rendering of the new Patient Care Centre. It is expected to be completed by 2020.**

**Left: Ken and Marilyn Thomson's donation helped make the new Toronto East General Hospital building possible. The building will be named after the couple.**

■ MUSIC

# The Kops are back in town

By AMIL DELIC  
The Observer

An industry that was once lacking in sales due to digital distribution has made a comeback and is moving into the Danforth neighbourhood.

Kops Records was founded by Martin Koppel in the mid-1970s and has played an integral part in the Toronto music scene over the last four decades.

"We used to have a place in Markham and now we want to move everything to the city since vinyl is on the up," said Andrew Koppel, son of Martin Koppel, during a phone interview.

With vinyl sales up 49 per cent from 2013, according to Nielsen Soundscan, more music stores are beginning to expand their new, used and limited edition collections of vinyl.

Kops didn't only expand their vinyl catalogue; they opened a second location in 2013 in the Annex due to a warehouse that was flooded with records.

"The thing that Kops has over other places is that they have a massive 45 (RPM) collection that most record stores don't have at all," said Ian Gormley, Exclaim's pop and rock editor.

"It's a very specific niche market that's underserved in the city. They do have new records, but they do focus on older stuff."

Many music stores nowadays don't just offer just the music, but merchandise like books, memorabilia and clothing to go with it. Koppel said he's excited to get to know the new East York neighbourhood, because he said that it will be very different from their two other locations.

"Everything evolves based on the neighbourhood. We'll offer our standard hold of re-issues, seven-inches and new arrivals, and then as the neighbourhood warms up to us, we'll start catering to them," he said.

"We want to provide what our costumers want. If they want country, we'll start carrying more country."

Kops has been a family business since day one and the Koppels plan to keep it that way, even if business is booming.

Koppel hopes to open up the 1811 Danforth location by the end of May and with a focus on seven-inch singles (45s).

# TEGH reaches \$60-M goal

Foundation team, donors, staff credited with helping E.Y. hospital reach its target

By SIDRA SHEIKH  
The Observer

The signs are everywhere: '\$60 million raised! All thanks to you!'

Toronto East General Hospital (TEGH) has reached its fundraising campaign goal for the Ken and Marilyn Thomson Patient Care Centre.

"(After) probably close to eight years... it was completed," said Teresa Vasilopoulos, the president of the TEGH foundation.

She said the campaign was success-

ful thanks in large part to strong leadership from the foundation team, donors, 100-per-cent participation from hospital medical staff, volunteers and the community.

The centre gets its name from one of the donor families — the Thomson family, who played a vital role in this campaign.

"What really turned the campaign around was the leadership gift of \$5 million from Peter and Diana Thomson, and that gift really sort of helped to build the momentum that was necessary to complete the campaign," Vasilopoulos said.

"The Ken and Marilyn Thomson Patient Care Centre will feature 218 medical and surgical beds, more accessible

outpatient programs, modern infrastructure that will accommodate new technology and improved infection control through an increased number of single rooms, and units that can be converted to isolate patients in case of an outbreak," according to a news release from the hospital. "The redesign will also include a more accessible patient drop-off entrance, large lawn areas, a roof garden for patients, visitors and staff."

The centre will be located where the Sammon Avenue parking lot currently sits.

The groundbreaking for the centre is scheduled for 2017 and construction should take three years to be completed.

# Former mayor calls for change to megacity

By CHRIS DEMELO  
The Observer

A former mayor of East York remembers a time in Toronto before amalgamation.

"The vast majority of Torontonians have no idea of the background and the history of how we got to where we are today," says Alan Redway, also a former MP — and the author of a new book, called "Governing Toronto: Bring Back the City That Worked."

Redway has spent a lot of time and energy making the case that the former municipalities of Metropolitan Toronto — East York, Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough, York and Toronto — functioned better than the "megacity" that the 1998 amalgamation created.

In "Governing Toronto," Redway explains the way Metro Toronto dealt with large issues, while leaving the member municipalities to deal with local issues. He said, for example, that Metro Toronto saw the opening of the first subway line, water treatment facilities, rental housing for the elderly and the Gardiner Expressway.

"I think this book reveals for the first time the real inside story of how we got amalgamated,"



Zilun Zhao /// The Observer

**Alan Redway signs his book, "Governing Toronto: Bring Back the City That Worked," for a fan at his book signing at the TEGH lobby in March.**

he said. "The fact that it wasn't something that the residents of Toronto were clamouring for. It was really something that those who were elected to office in the past recommended."

Redway also explored how the 1998 amalgamation of the Toronto municipalities into a megacity was supposed to save taxpayers

money — the stated rationale of Mike Harris' provincial Conservative government, which forced the merger over local opposition.

He cited figures indicating that between the pre- and post-amalgamation periods, the combined operating costs budget of Metro, old Toronto, North York, Scarborough, Etobicoke,

York and East York didn't decline; it actually rose by just over 24 per cent.

Furthermore, he maintained that the cost of elected council representatives in the Metro system (in operation between 1954 and 1998) amounted to less than half of one per cent of local government expenditures.

"They didn't seem to realize that when you put everyone together (in an amalgamated council), you're not going to get the lowest cost situation," Redway said. "You're going to get the highest cost."

Redway served as mayor of East York from 1977 to 1982. He was then elected MP for the York East riding in 1984 and continued serving in the riding of Don Valley East through 1993.

"I was part of something called Team East York... which was organized to oppose amalgamation way back in 1997," he said.

Last month, Redway appeared at Toronto East General Hospital in East York to autograph copies of his new book.

"(Today) we need a groundswell of public opinion to say (amalgamation) isn't working and we need something else," he said. "I think personally the last election is a example of that. It has demonstrated the divided city we have."



## 'Horsepower' takes the lead at flower show

By **KELSEY CHENG**  
The Observer

Talk about a group of untamed volunteers.

Joanna Blanchard and her team of four volunteers from the Leaside Garden Society were awarded first place for their piece in the Open Design category at Canada Blooms late last month. The theme, 'Horsepower,' was inspired by the equestrian events at the Toronto PanAm/Parapan Am Games taking place this summer.

Blanchard started gardening at the age of six when she lived in England and has spent the last 35 years tending her garden in Toronto. This is her 18th year participating in Canada Blooms.

"I think it's an obsession, not a passion," she said in a phone interview.

According to Blanchard, every year the level of difficulty increases at Canada Blooms. It was particularly challenging for the team this year.

"(Horses) don't have a whole lot to do with plants, and it was quite obscure what 'Horsepower' meant," she said. "The design has to co-ordinate with the surroundings and the team didn't know anything about equestrian."

The team faced another challenge when they had to source plant material that is in perfect condition when building the piece in February.

"The main challenge is access," Blanchard said. "To see what is available at that time of the year and place it onto the design."

According to Ursula Eley, who sits on the judging panel of Canada Blooms, judges not only consider the design of the piece, but also its culture perception. Leaside Garden Society excelled in both criteria, she said.

"It's quite a stunning design," Eley said. "We take into consideration how well the exhibitors have used the different components to come up with a beautiful design, which Leaside Garden Society has definitely done in this case. It's definitely very eye-catching."

The piece that Blanchard and her team created not only won first place in the exhibit, but also the prestigious Garden Clubs of Ontario Award for Best Exhibit in Class 36.

Blanchard said her team originally tried building a far more complicated structure, and then realized that perhaps less is more.

"It was a long and complicated process," she said. "It took a lot of thought, a lot of effort and a lot of trial and error."

To Blanchard, teamwork is what won the competition.

"I love the camaraderie," she said. "I love working in groups. There is nothing in it for us, except for the fun of doing it."



Courtesy of Joanna Blanchard

The "Horsepower" exhibit was created for Canada Blooms in mid-March by Joanna Blanchard and her team from the Leaside Garden Society. The piece was awarded first place in the Open Design category.



Alex Kamakaris // The Observer

Works by the Willowdale Group of Artists took over the Papermill Gallery in East York earlier this month. The exhibition ran April 1-12 in the gallery, at the Todmorden Mills Heritage Site on Pottery Road.

## 'Pancake Day' hits sweet spot

By **ANUSSA NITHIYANANTHAN**  
The Observer

Pancake Day was extra sweet this year at Jackman Avenue Public School, thanks to the homemade maple syrup from the school's own sugar maple trees.

Grade 2 and 3 students at the East York school collected sap in late March from six of the eight trees that had been planted by the school's parent council members 15 years ago. It was then made into syrup by parent Angus McGrath, whose daughter Maeve is in Grade 3.

On Pancake Day, held April 8, every student at the school had an opportunity to enjoy

pancakes made by their teachers and adorned with the special syrup.

Paul Cressman is a Grade 3 teacher at the school and a representative of EcoSchools, a school greening program for elementary and secondary schools. He encouraged the school to start the sap-collecting program after he realized the trees were sugar maples, just like the one in his backyard.

"I thought it would be a great idea for my own kids to tap the tree and give them that experience," he said. "Then I thought wouldn't be good for the Jackman kids to collect sap from the sugar maple trees too?"

Cressman started talking about it to his students' parents after discovering the similarity between his trees and the school's.

"I was conferencing with them and we found out that they were indeed sugar maple trees that were planted here a good 15 years ago, maybe in hopes that some day something like this could happen," he said. "So it's interesting that I had the idea but in somebody's mind, 15, 20 years ago people were thinking we could do something like this."

Retrieving the sap morphed into a friendly competition between the Grade 2 and 3 classes. Each class spent about 15 minutes a day collecting

and checking on the sap, with Cressman's students gathering the most.

"Our class collected about three buckets of sap," said Jasper Hughes-Choi, 9.

In total, 100 litres of sap was collected.

Last week, the Grade 3 students started making the sap into maple syrup. That's when Maeve's father, Angus McGrath, took some sap home to test out his syrup-making skills. That ended up becoming the syrup served on Pancake Day.

"If you go too far with the sap, you end up with maple sugar," he said. "If you do not stir it enough, it could become maple butter."

## Shop helps everyone go to the prom

By **NASRA OSMAN**  
The Observer

Prom season is right around the corner, and an East York thrift shop is trying to make sure that all students will be dressed to the nines for their big occasion.

In This Closet is a resale fashion boutique located on the Danforth and owned by local resident Colleen McDonald. Up to this weekend, she has been opening her store up as a drop-off location for New Circles Community's city-wide "Prom Boutique" initiative

The program was created to ensure that graduating students who can't afford the costs of prom due to financial constraints can still pick up something to wear at no cost. McDonald said it's important for her to participate because she believes that all youth should be able to attend prom, regardless of their economic situation.

"For this initiative, we just felt that it would be such a shame for students not to go to prom for financial reasons. So anything we could do to help, we'd be glad to," she said.

In This Closet has been partnering with New Circles for two years, since the initiative was created. East York residents can donate gently used or new formal wear for young men and women in sizes 10 to 22. In addition, they can also drop off shoes, makeup and toiletries, which are greatly needed. McDonald said the response to the program has been enthusiastic.

"People have been very generous. They come in every day with not only one but two dresses, some shoes and a slew of makeup. We've

collected about 20 dresses so far," she said.

New Circles' annual Prom Boutique is expected to dress about 500 youth in Toronto for their proms this year. They have set up eight drop off locations around the city for residents to contribute to.

But program manager Nita Saini said despite people's generosity, there is still a huge need for donations.

"We're very limited by the amount of donations we receive, so basically the more donations we receive, the more students we can help," she said.



EDITORIALS

# Unfair testing?

What it takes to become a Canadian citizen is a question that has been fueling a few conversations in recent weeks — both inside and outside neighbourhoods with strong immigrant constituencies, like Crescent Town, Thorncliffe and Flemingdon Park.

There have been suggestions that fewer immigrants are choosing to officially become Canadian due to the rigours of the citizenship test — and that’s left some to wonder: Is something wrong with that test?

Well, for starters, we’re asking the wrong questions. Or asking them in the wrong way.

For instance, even someone born and raised in Canada who has spoken English all of his or her life could have trouble processing double negatives in a sentence. Mentally translating two negatives into a positive is a bit of an intellectual flourish that confuses some. A journalist who has taken some practice tests might not go so far as to accuse the test makers of trickery — but there are surely some linguistic gymnastics afoot.

Immigrants less exposed to English in their home countries are at a disadvantage. The way the questions and answers are framed show a bias toward a high-level proficiency in English that favours immigrants from one part of the world over another. It’s also a fundamentally difficult framework for people who just don’t do well in traditional test situations.

The difficulty of the test and the mark required for passing was increased five years ago, and many have said that’s a good thing.... After all, they say, becoming a Canadian shouldn’t be easy. But, of course, there’s a flaw in that argument. It was easy for so many of us. We were simply born here.

Perhaps the time has come to shift the onus from becoming a Canadian to being a Canadian.

Immigration Minister Chris Alexander has said that “citizenship is not a right; it’s a privilege,” but it’s also Canada’s privilege to have immigrants call it home. They bring expertise, ingenuity, tenacity and diversity to our Canadian landscape. If only the citizenship process could take account of that.

Isn’t it better to measure a citizen not by how well they remember the past but how they conceive the future?

Last year, there were published reports indicating that the longer an immigrant waits to take the test, the less likely they are to pass. If a person who’s lived in Canada for five years fails the test, we have to wonder: What part of their life is most valuable to Canada?

If more permanent residents are opting out of becoming citizens because of systemic barriers, we are poorer for it. That means fewer Canadians invested in making this country’s future and engaged in the daily rigours to make it better.

~ Bria John

# Take-out beer is in

Leaside’s Amsterdam Brewing Company and other Ontario craft brewers have a stake in a Canadian restaurant association’s recent proposal that Ontario bars and restaurants should be allowed to offer “off sales” of beer. (In effect: take-out.)

For the moment, let’s just put aside the fact that some places are already legally doing it because they’re eateries with on-site breweries. And the fact that off sales are a reality in other provinces and other countries. Even with those realities, beer-to-go is a debatable proposition in Ontario — like almost anything to do with alcohol sales and consumption in this province.

But a more universal system of off sales is long overdue. Customers can purchase a beer while sitting in a restaurant or bar, so why should this be any different? In some provinces, including Ontario, people are able to take home a bottle of wine they did not finish drinking, as long as it can be re-corked.

Part of the problem is that The Beer Store has traditionally enjoyed a very sweet deal with the provincial government. There are signs that this is about to change — but for the moment, The Beer Store is the only place in Ontario where you can buy beer in bulk. So it owns roughly 80 per cent of the beer market — while the LCBO gets a big chunk of what’s left... leaving craft brewers with only about four per cent. The Beer Store is made up of three shareholders: Labatt’s owners are from Belgium; Molson is now owned by Americans, and Sleeman was bought by Japan’s Sapporo.

Queen’s Park has been making noises about allowing beer sales at big supermarkets, and about charging The Beer Store a “franchise fee” for its quasi-monopoly. In part to defuse that, The Beer Store has offered craft brewers more of a stake in its operations. But that’s too little, too late. It’s time to loosen Ontario’s system for selling beer, and that should include off sales.

Considering the growing profile of Amsterdam Brewing in her own home riding of Don Valley West, it may be that Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne has been sensitized to the need for modernity in Ontario’s alcohol policies. But her steps continue to be very measured. Wynne has spoken on the topic of off sales and has neither ruled them in nor out. But she should consider the boost to craft brewers across Ontario if off sales were more widely allowed.

~ Lataevia-Ceiana Kemp

EDITORIAL CARTOON

# Observations...



Rob Catherwood for the Observer

**NEWS ITEM: Kathleen Wynne’s critics say that the Ontario premier — and Don Valley West MPP — has increased provincial spending faster than inflation and faster than growth in population and economy.... But when it comes to contract negotiations with high school teachers, Premier Wynne tells them ‘no raises’ because of ‘constrained finances....’**

COLUMN

# Loving yourself is a gift

Everyone has a role model. But what happens when you take that admiration too far?

A 13-year-old girl whom I’ll simply call Ishika knows.

She was imitating her favourite celebrity, Ariana Grande, and ended up with an eating disorder.

Last summer, Ishika and her friends spent most of their time watching YouTube videos on how to mimic celebrities.

Now Ishika knew she couldn’t change her natural brown skin tone, or her dark eyes — and she was pretty sure that her mother would never let her dye her hair. So she decided to change her body.

Not a good choice. But the pressure on young women to conform to certain standards of attractiveness is intense. Consider this, from a journalist who also happens to be very much in the public eye: CP24 reporter Pooja Handa.

“I am constantly scrutinized for what I wear,” she said in an interview.

“How I do my hair and whether or not I look fat on TV” is what seems to matter

to some people, “rather than what I’m saying or who I’m interviewing.”

In a world of hair extensions, fake eyelashes, fake nails and whitened teeth, Handa thinks it’s very easy to get sucked in to all of it.

“I’ve made a conscious choice not to participate in these enhancements. It would be a misrepresentation of the real me,” she said.

When I spoke with Ishika, she was slightly nervous, but very honest.

“Most famous people are thin. My friends and I made a pact to drop a few pounds by following a strict diet,” Ishika said.

However, as much as you try to hide your problems from your parents, they often figure it out.

Ishika’s mother knew something

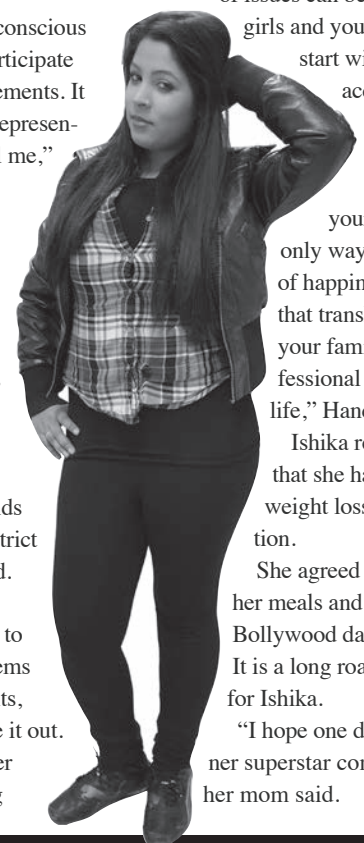
was wrong when the lunches she had packed for her daughter would come back home untouched.

Handa may not be an expert on self-image and eating disorders, but she thinks that a lot of issues can be avoided if girls and young women start with just accepting who they are.

“Loving yourself is the only way to a path of happiness, and that translates into your family, professional and love life,” Handa said.

Ishika realized that she had a weight loss addiction. She agreed to monitor her meals and enrol in a Bollywood dance class. It is a long road ahead for Ishika.

“I hope one day her inner superstar comes out,” her mom said.



Suzanna Sheetal-Dutt





Courtesy of City of Toronto Archives

## A walk down memory lane

The Observer continues its look back on East York history through photographs from the City of Toronto Archives. These two pictures were taken a century ago: the one on the left depicts a still-familiar presence on Danforth Avenue... Allen's Danforth Theatre, now the Danforth Music Hall, just east of Broadview Avenue. The photo was taken in 1919, when the Allen brothers, early Canadian theatre moguls, had just opened what they promoted as "Canada's First Super-Suburban Photoplay Palace." (Besides silent movies, it also hosted live vaudeville performances.) Eight years earlier, in 1911, the picture on the right was snapped at the corner of Pape Avenue and the now-disappeared "Bee Street," in what was then the Village of Todmorden Mills (near what is now the intersection of Bayview Avenue and Pottery Road).

# Project aims to keep seniors smiling

Cont'd. from page 1

(CCEL) and the National Initiative for Elderly Care (NICE). Laura Tamblyn Watts, a senior fellow at CCEL, represents the legal side of the project.

"It became very clear, very early on, that dental elder abuse and neglect, and particularly neglect, was probably the most prevalent form of abuse and neglect in Canada," she said.

DEAR's research shows that almost one in three senior dental cases involves abuse or neglect, and yet it is the only project of its kind.

"What we wanted to do with the project," Watts said, "was (to) connect with older adults, their families and caregivers, as well as dentists, to bring the conversation about the legal aspects and the responsibility aspects together."

Archer explained that as people age, they tend to have a dismissive attitude about dental problems. This can present real problems if the attitude is shared by a caregiver.

"If you think about it, everything you eat, everything that goes in, the bacteria, who you kiss, it's all focused on the mouth," she said. "Everybody has the right to a healthy mouth, and everybody has the right to a pain-free mouth."

Canadians are used to having relatively easy access to dental care. When patients need a toothache attended to or a teeth cleaning, they can walk into a dentist's office and remedy the



Marwa Mohkam Sheikh /// The Observer

**Dr. Natalie Archer, the driving force behind the Dental Elderly Abuse Response (DEAR) Project, taps away at her keyboard at her dental practice, Archer Dental.**

situation. However, some older patients may face mobility issues. Others may lose contact with a regular dentist. In short, they are no longer in control of how to care for their teeth. The DEAR Project strives to change that.

Archer said her greatest concern is when

"somebody's making decisions on (an older patient's) behalf that I truly don't think are those patient's wishes." She can immediately tell when a patient, who used to be regular with his or her dental care, has suddenly been abandoned.

"There's a disparity there and so I have to be the advocate for the patient and look after the situation," she said.

Watts blames a general neglect and ignorance of such elder dental issues for the problem.

"People don't know about the issues of capacity. They don't know about the issues of advanced care planning. And they don't know the effect really on geriatric dental health," she said.

"Older adults are being abused and neglected either on purpose or through lack of understanding and lack of knowledge and we're really trying to do something about it."

So a fundamental objective of the DEAR Project is to educate people about the issues of capacity and consent. The project has delivered several knowledge mobilization tools so far, and has made advanced care planning tools available on its platforms online.

"I think our approach is educative. It's definitely not punitive," Archer said.

She said she has fears about the way the DEAR Project will be received, in particular that people will feel judged, whether they are caregivers or seniors themselves.

"I definitely don't want people to feel that way," she said. "We're here to help. We're here to educate and I think we're making some great headway here, getting people smiling. Everybody should be smiling."

# East York PR students have a way with words

By JELICIA SAULTER  
The Observer

At a pub on East York's southern edge, public relations student Rachel Kellogg was helping to raise the public profile of literacy.

"It's all the stuff I'm very passionate about," she said.

At the Fox and Fiddle on Danforth Avenue, corporate communications and public relations students from Centennial College's East York campus organized a March fundraiser for the "Literature for Life" charity.

"They're a very small charity," Kellogg said. "There's two or three employees and 45 volunteers.... They host reading circles with at-risk

young moms from shelters around the city and help them build literacy skills, build confidence, build creativity skills."

The "Women with Words" Reading Circle helps young mothers improve on their literacy skills through reading a book with other young mothers, or to their children. Helping to organize the fundraiser seemed the perfect choice for fellow student Viv Snead.

"It speaks to me because I used to work for a literacy organization... that dealt with adults who had literacy issues," she said.

Jo Altia is the former executive director of Literature for Life, a charity she inaugurated 15 years ago.

"I really believe in the power of words," Al-

tia said. "As a former teacher... I saw a lot of kids in school who were not going to be successful because circumstances in their lives didn't allow their parents to become as invested in education."

Altia went on to explain that libraries can be intimidating, with a culture around reading that some consider elitist.

"I felt that it was really important to start working with families," she said.

"I just have a place in my heart for young moms who have children and all those stresses that they have to manage and their education is interrupted or the school system doesn't work with them because it doesn't deal with social issues."

At the fundraiser, Teneile Warren, current executive director of Literature for Life, offered heart-felt gratitude to the students.

"To have a room of people gathered who don't know who we are... just to share a moment," Warren said, "is sometimes amazing for us to embrace."

The event raised \$800, about \$200 shy of the goal for the night. Still, the host, Centennial student Alessandra Seca, considered the night a success.

"You don't realize how many women don't know how to read and the literacy rate is really low; it's actually really sad," Seca said. "The charity and the things that they promote and the type of help they give these women is amazing."



## Parting shot(s) from 'CLIX' contest



Xueting Xhao



Nicole Dawe



November Chernick

The Observer closes out publication for the school year with this selection of winners from "CLIX," a photo contest staged at the East York campus of Centennial College. Students in the various communications programs on Carlaw Avenue were invited to submit entries in categories ranging from "news" to "portrait." The winners were unveiled on April 9 and displayed in the campus' Corridor Gallery over this past week. The Observer thanks the photographers for sharing their winning contributions for this, our last edition of the newspaper until the fall.

The Observer is produced by journalism students who work from that same East York campus — where the academic year is now winding down. But we'll re-open our newsroom in mid-September, and resume publication around the end of that month. Enjoy the summer, and see you in the fall!



Bayan Nahle



Sayada Nabi



Jeffrey Sze



Cameron Lee



Leigh Cavanaugh