

The East York

OBSERVER

CENTENNIAL COLLEGE

Serving our community since 1972

Vol. 42, No. 6

PIN IT FOR SPRING

■ Wear a daffodil pin — to help fight cancer

Page 4



www.torontoobserver.ca

Friday, April 19, 2013



Vida Korhani /// Observer

This lobster cracks me up

Maya Sieciechowicz (left) and Jordan Monaghan enjoy their lobsters at the East York Rotary Club's Lobsterfest on April 5. Along with the lobsters, there was live music by Playback and an auction of Blue Jay items. The club donated all proceeds from the event to charities.

Bowlers bow to condos

By KENYA BRUCE
The Observer

Bowlers are bereaved and some neighbours feel negatively after the April 9 Toronto-East York community council meeting that approved the replacement of the venerable O'Connor Bowl with a controversial condo tower.

So after more than 50 years, strikes and splits at O'Connor Bowl are coming to an end. Council has approved a plan to build a seven-storey condominium building in its place at 1401 O'Connor Dr.

There are mixed feelings about the proposed plans. Westview Boulevard residents and the owners of the Peek Freans cookie factory shared concerns with council at the meeting over increased noise and traffic in the area.

"(There are) approximately 60 parking spots in this site now and (it) will increase to 150 parking spots," resident John Keable said at council.

"All these vehicles will enter through a mechanical garage door that will operate 24/7. This noise will be a dramatic change to the immediate residents on Westview Boulevard."

The original plan was to build a 10-storey condominium. According to

■ See DAVIS, page 2

Bridgepoint hospital moves patients to a new home

Transfer was planned 'with military precision,' CEO says

By TAMAR ATIK
The Observer

The new Bridgepoint hospital near East York's southwest corner is finally a vision come to reality after approximately 600 staff and volunteers worked to move patients on Sunday from the old semi-circular building to the modern tower that now looms over the Don Valley Parkway.

"We've been planning this move for a year, so it's very high energy. There's lots of activity, but it's planned with military precision," said Marian Walsh, president and CEO of Bridgepoint Active Healthcare.

"Everybody has a role. They know what the role is and it's a bit like a relay race," she said. "We've got everybody at designated places around the building. There's somebody in the old hospital who's in charge of sending all 352 patients."

"At the unit level, there are managers and senders there who are ready to check the patients out, make sure that they're well and that

they've all been assessed and they're stable and ready to go. Then the patient is transported to the new hospital. There, they're checked in, they go to their units, they're checked in again and then there's a move-in team that helps them settle into their room and into their beds."

Each patient had his/her own lift team, transport team and care team. The move, which started at 8 a.m., was completed by 4 p.m.

"We're going to move three patients every three minutes, so that's a lot of people moving. It's a big operation, but it's very well-planned," Walsh said.

Most of the patients' beds were also transported from the old hospital to the new one. Upon arrival, they were cleaned and moved into the patients' new rooms.

Donna Dooher, 58, was the first patient checked into the new hospital. She wore a bright red #1 badge to show it.

"I was overwhelmed. I knew for a few days prior to this that I was going to be the first patient in, but I don't think it really hit me until we were coming into the new building and seeing all of the work that's gone into putting this facility together and all the people who've worked



Photo courtesy of Bridgepoint Health

Cheryl Lewis, the final patient to make the move, laughs as she's escorted into the new Bridgepoint hospital by a team of staff and volunteers.

■ See BRIDGEPOINT, page 4

WHAT'S UP IN E.Y.

Get closer to nature at Todmorden

This coming Monday is Earth Day and on the eve of it, Sunday, April 21, the Todmorden Mills Heritage Site is holding another in a series of events to help East Yorkers get closer to nature. This time, from noon until 4 p.m., visitors will have an opportunity to learn everything about owls. You will even be able to dissect a real owl pellet to see what they eat. While you're there, be sure to check out the wildflower preserve to discover more about the Don Valley's natural habitat — and the effect of industrialization.

Swan song street sale on Westview

The Topham Park Homeowners' Association is advertising its 12th "and last" neighbourhood street sale on Saturday, April 27, from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. More than 100 houses on neighbouring streets will be participating in the sale, featuring clothing, furniture, electronics and more. The epicentre will be Westview Boulevard, one block east of O'Connor Drive and one block north of St. Clair Avenue. If it rains on the date of the sale, you'll have another chance to check it out — the rain date is May 4.

Business basics boot camp offered

Want to start up your own small business, but need a little help getting going? Enterprise Toronto is offering free business classes at the East York Civic Centre, April 22 to 25, 6 to 7:30 p.m. The seminars will be led by experienced small business owners and are designed to provide tips for startups.

New, unique art at spring show

This is the Don Valley Art Club's 65th anniversary year, and the self-described "oldest art club in our city" is unveiling new, unique and original artworks at its spring art show and sale. It will take place April 24 to May 5 — with showings taking place from noon until 4 p.m. every day except Monday and Tuesday. Parking and admission are free at the Paper Mill Gallery at the Todmorden Mills Heritage Site.

Calling all canoe enthusiasts

On May 5, the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority is holding its 20th annual Paddle the Don event. So if you're the outdoorsy type — or even just interested in learning more about the Don River — be sure to check out PaddletheDon.ca for more details about this urban canoe trip.

Walk, run or dash for diabetes

The Leaside "Spring into Action" for Diabetes community event will be held on Saturday, May 11, from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. at Sunnybrook Park. This is the eighth annual Leaside walk/run for diabetes and in this year of the community's centennial, it will also feature a 100-yard dash to honour "100 Years of Leaside."

~ Robin Dhanju



Courtesy of Hazlett family

A familiar presence passes

Funeral services for Gord Hazlett were held on March 25 at the Heritage Funeral Centre on Overlea Boulevard. Mr. Hazlett, a longtime East Yorker well-known for his collection of classic cars — and three books that he wrote about antique autos — died on March 20 at Toronto East General Hospital after a long illness. He was 93.

Davis approves condo plan

Cont'd from page 1

Keable, however, the Urban Design Guidelines for this avenue allow a maximum of three-and-a-half-storey buildings.

As a result, developers Guy D'Onofio and Gary Goldman scaled back their plans, and successfully pitched a seven-storey building instead.

Other concerns include the Peek Freans cookie plant, located on O'Connor Drive, which may be a nuisance to future condominium residents.

Paul Johnston, representing Mondelez Canada, spoke on the behalf of the Peek Freans plant.

"There will be windows and balconies that will look down on rooftop equipment, truck unloading activity that occurs there.

"If there are times of the day or night when traffic volumes drop...we recognize that the plant will be audible to people in this condominium being built," he said, "and it really is in that kind of situation where we're concerned about the complaints that might arise."

But Janet Davis, who represents the ward as city councillor for Beaches-East York, joined her fellow councillors in approving the proposal, leaving many residents disappointed.

Local resident Terry Jacobs

Myer felt the wishes of the neighbourhood and community were not considered.

Still, Davis made a few amendments to the proposal, including a construction liaison committee between the developer and neighbourhood, which requires the applicant to participate in an environmental assessment for basement flooding for the area and the site.

"This has been a difficult application in that it is a challenging site," Davis said.

"It is an avenue that has just had completed the avenue study in which we are looking to revitalize the street and to look at additional density on O'Connor Drive."

TTC survey determines commute

By RADINA VENCHEVA
The Observer

Commuters who rely on Pape subway station have a big decision to make.

The TTC is conducting a survey with riders to determine the best and fastest way to complete renovations at the station on the busy Bloor-Danforth line.

Renovations, which have been ongoing since 2009, are behind schedule and the TTC wants to speed things up.

Until April 17, Pape station users will be polled on how to proceed.

Their options include closing the station completely for



● For more on this story, please visit us online at torontoobserver.ca

12 consecutive days during the summer, six consecutive weekends or continue as usual.

The TTC says closing the station will shave three months off the renovations.

Announcements were posted on April 10 throughout the station, urging people to give their opinion through an online survey.

"If we do a closure, we believe we can finish the majority of construction by September 2013," said TTC spokes-

person Devin Horne.

He said the schedule for renovations was disrupted because of unexpected difficulties.

"When they were digging below, they discovered a couple of conditions that resulted in some construction challenges," he said.

"They discovered oil and salt in the soils and that necessitated some separation and removal of the soils."

Police believe shooter shot himself

By BERNARD TONEY
The Observer

Police think they've untangled the circumstances surrounding a Danforth shooting Sunday night that left both the apparent victim and shooter with bullet wounds.

Police say they were called

to Danforth Avenue near Coxwell Avenue at about 8:30 p.m. on Sunday.

They found shell casings and blood on the sidewalk, but no victims.

Further investigation led them to the belief that their suspect shot a man, then shot himself in the hand. The two

then got themselves separately to different hospitals.

At press time, the police had still not released any names, but they say the investigation is near-complete.

Still, they're asking anyone with information about the shooting to contact them, or Crime Stoppers.

POLICE BRIEFS

Local teacher faces sexual assault charge

Police at East York's 53 Division have charged a Leaside High School teacher with sexual assault. Wayne Crooks is accused of sexually assaulting a female student. He has been suspended from his duties with pay and is scheduled in court at College Park on May 27.

Police looking for shooters

Police at 54 Division are seeking the public's assistance with a shooting investigation. On April 13, at about 11 a.m., police responded to calls of shots being fired around the Victoria Park Avenue and O'Connor Drive area. There were no reports of injuries, but two suspects were seen fleeing in a late-model, white, four-door Mazda 3 Sport, with a sunroof and tinted windows. Anyone with information is asked to contact police at 416-808-5406, or Crime Stoppers anonymously at 416-222-8477.

Artillery shells found in E.Y.

Toronto police were called on Wednesday morning after artillery shells were found at a garbage area in East York. The shells, which were not live at the time, were found on Eastmount Avenue near Broadview and Danforth, between two apartment buildings. The area was sealed off and cleared by early morning.

~ Vida Korhani

Don River watershed gets failing grade

By **CHRISTIAN BOYER**
The Observer

Last month, the Toronto Region and Conservation Authority (TRCA) delivered its annual report card on the condition of the Don River watershed and just like last year, it got a failing grade.

Besides delivering a reality check, the report card focuses on three major issues affecting the watershed environment, including the quality of surface water, forest conditions and stormwater management (graded

D, F and F respectively).

Arlen Leeming, project manager of watershed development at the TRCA, spoke about the toughest part of improving conditions in the Don River watershed.

“Stormwater management is a tough one in the Don because we only have 23 per cent of the watershed that actually has stormwater management controls in place,” he said.

“When you have a watershed that is 91-per-cent urbanized, it is a very tough thing to do. There is a lot of

key focus on the areas we need to improve.”

Since Hurricane Hazel in 1954, the City of Toronto has seen several stormwater management plans. Some addressed landscape grading while others focused on controlling stormwater flow, but ultimately, every time a major storm came along, it all ended up in the Don River.

“We definitely need to work on the quality of controls and the amount,” Leeming said.

“Because of the lack of controls in place, we end up with all the rainwater, together with the oil and grit, running directly into storm sewers and then the watercourse itself.

“It can be as simple as switching from asphalt paving to permeable pavement, which is designed to pull the water away from the surface so you don’t have any pollutants bleeding off into the natural watercourse. It is all part of Low Impact Development (LID) systems that help to mitigate the impacts that development has on the natural environment.”

Even though the report card delivered a failing grade, Leeming said that’s a starting point for future goals — and the Don watershed has been improving steadily over time.

“The good news is we’ve come a long way in the Don,” he said. “Between 2007-2012, we’ve planted over 112,000 trees. It goes a long way to help develop the urban tree canopy.

“We’re working with the City of Toronto to restore the mouth of the Don, which is by far a precedent-setting project. It is just on a scale

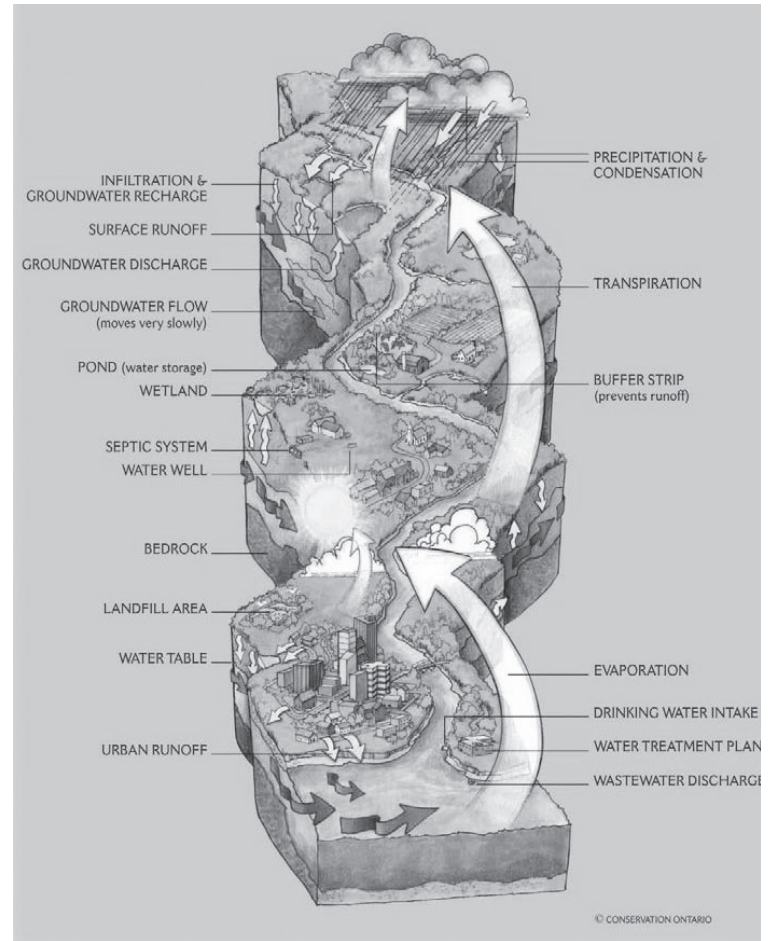


Photo courtesy of Conservation Ontario

A diagram of how water flows through the Don River watershed and its current conditions.

that quite frankly the world hasn’t seen before. In the north part of the watershed, there is a lot of land being secured and sectioned off as green space. We are also helping developers to include environmental safeguards,” Leeming said.

“In the next 20-50 years, which is a long time, you’ll see the mouth of the Don renaturalized. You’ll see the Portlands redeveloped into

urban park space. You’re going to see the lower Don trail finished and become this viable route of transportation for cyclists and pedestrians. You’re going to see further protection of the ravines and further improvement in the water quality.

“You might even see the return of Atlantic salmon, which hasn’t been seen in the Don River for years.”

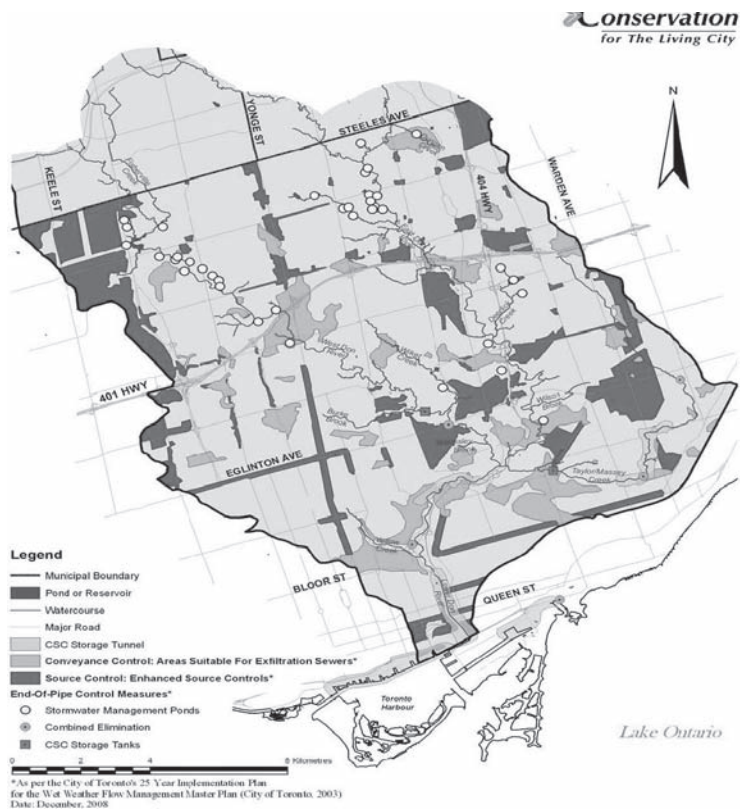


Photo courtesy of Toronto and Region Conservation

A map of priority areas that the TRCA is looking to improve in the Don River watershed.

1954: Hurricane Hazel forces the city to rethink its strategy about floodplains in the Don Valley. New grading standards are drawn up that redirect water into the Don.

1981: City realizes that the previous plans were a bad idea. The environmental assessment at the time gives the Don River Watershed a terrible rating. Improvements follow.

1990s: Oil and grit separators are put in place. Minor retention ponds are also developed.

2008 to now: 23 per cent total storm-water management. 112,000 trees planted to help reduce erosion.

Thorncliffe residents won’t be left in dark about power

John Parker holds meeting to educate residents on outages

By **JAMIE ANDERSON**
The Observer

On April 13 at Thorncliffe Park Public School, Don Valley West Councillor John Parker held a meeting for area residents to ask questions and listen to explanations about a recent power outage.

The two-day outage affected 23 highrise buildings on March 8 and 9.

Representatives from Toronto Hydro, the City of Toronto and Red Cross were present.

Parker, having attended several meetings regarding the outage, said he wanted the public to have access to the same information he did.

“I wanted the community to have the benefit of the debriefing that I had received because I had received a lot of information that was new to me and I thought the community would like to have the same information,” he said.

“So I asked that the presentations that I got be shared with the general community and that was at the core of what we did today.”

Lucas Millmore, director of grid management for Toronto Hydro, explained that the outage occurred when an “underground asset” for Thorncliffe stopped working.

He said this could have been due to the fact that it was submerged under 10 feet of water the previous week, or its lifespan had just run out early.

“On the fourth of December when you experienced an outage, that piece of equipment was inspected,” he said, “and then again



■ Parker



■ Kilgour

on January the 13th that equipment was actually inspected a second time and it was noted that the gauge was low. So it was actually programmed to be replaced in June ... but the gas was not actually below the line of specification.”

Although there was a lot of speculation surrounding why the piece of equipment stopped working, a concrete answer was not released to the public.

Some residents complained that although hydro crews were always outside, they didn’t appear to be doing anything.

Toronto Hydro stressed that if it seemed like crews weren’t busy, it was because most of the work was being done underground to determine the cause of the problem before those waiting around could spring into action.

Thorncliffe Park resident Mahtab Sajid, 38, said that although it was a nice day outside, it was very cold and dark inside the units.

“I was thinking, at my age, I was shivering and cold. What about those kids and seniors and the people who are already sick?” she said.

“There was no communication. I’m not a person who says, ‘No, they didn’t do a good job.’ They might be doing a good job, but the people don’t know.... They could at least (have had) a table there for information so people could go and ask and have more trust in them.”

The lack of communication be-

tween the hydro company, the city and the building managers was a hot topic at the meeting.

One building owner said she felt calling 311 was helpful and allowed her to get enough information to her tenants, but there was no effort on the part of the city to contact her and let her know what was happening.

James Kilgour, manager of emergency management for the City of Toronto, said he agrees communication should be better during such emergency situations.

“High visibility, updating 311, reaching out to the building managers and building owners — that is what we are discussing,” he said.

● For more East York coverage, please visit us online at torontoobserver.ca



Nicolette Mendoza // Observer

(Left to right) Maddy Driscoll, 10, Molly McGouran, 11, and Ella Fraser, 10, were out bright and early on April 5 selling daffodil pins to commuters to fundraise for the Canadian Cancer Society.

Pin me! Daffodils in bloom

By NICOLETTE MENDOZA
The Observer

April is Daffodil Month and the pins are in bloom.

Yes, pins. In previous years, fresh daffodils were sold throughout April to raise funds for the Canadian Cancer Society (CCS). This year, the organization is focusing on its daffodil pin in Toronto, including East York, for its 75th anniversary.

According to Patricia Ganter, Toronto's Daffodil Campaign manager for CCS, Toronto is only one of the cities in transition.

Roughly half the locations in Ontario are offering live flowers, but half have already

moved over to the pins.

This year's decision for an all-pin campaign was based on the logistics and overhead costs involved with the live flowers.

"For Toronto, this year is an all-pin campaign to ensure the funds are put directly to us," Ganter said.

"In order to keep our cost low and ensure that more of the funds raised are put to work directly to support our mission, we aren't offering the flowers."

By using live daffodils for campaigning, there were a lot of factors to keep in mind, such as climate change. The daffodils are grown in British Columbia, and last year it was

too cold for the daffodils to grow in time.

Ganter does not deny that the daffodils were very popular, but she explains that wearing the pin is a great way to show your support all month. The pins are more available, small and a more cost-effective way of fundraising, she said.

It's been three years since the pin was first introduced in Ontario and since then, the campaign has grown.

"It was something that was piloted back then and it just took off so well and people really responded to the positive messaging around it that it really sort of became the next possible step," Ganter said.

On April 5 from 7 to 9 a.m., student volunteers from Holy Name Catholic School were on hand at Broadview Station in East York to sell pins to commuters.

For those who missed the opportunity to donate during that event, daffodil pins are available at several locations in East York.

These include branches of Pharmasave, the LCBO and Sobeys.

By mid-March, the CCS had already sold 10,000 pins in Toronto alone through its workplace programs.

For a complete list of East York's participating locations or to donate online, visit www.fightback.ca

Bridgepoint on the move

Cont'd. from page 1

so hard to make it happen," Dooher said. "It's amazing. I'm feeling very special today."

Dooher, who broke both her legs in a skiing accident five weeks ago, said her goal is to be walking again by July 1. She feels fortunate to be alive.

"It was an accident and we have all kinds of reasons for being here. We're pretty lucky that we have a place like this to go to," she said.

"I had orthopedic surgery on both legs. So, since I've come to Bridgepoint, I've had extensive physiotherapy... and it's

been remarkable how quickly I've been coming along.

"(I) need to take a few more ski lessons I guess," she laughed.

The new hospital building, larger than the old one, also gives patients the opportunity to eat meals together in a dining room instead of alone and from trays in their individual beds.

"We have a whole new hospital that's hugely more capable of providing for the complex healthcare needs of these patients and enabling us to provide much more intensive rehabilitation in a building that's been designed for that," Walsh said.



Tamar Atik // Observer

Donna Dooher, the first patient to check into the new hospital, sits in her new room at the Bridgepoint Health Centre.

Jane Austen era influences modern-day fashion

Workshop leader hosts fashion show featuring Regency-period clothing

By NICOLETTE MENDOZA
The Observer

Fashion is not just a form of individual expression; it can be a form of status. And although fashion has changed from era to era, one thing that hasn't changed is fashion reflecting the world we live in.

"Fashion has an enormous amount to do with what is going on with society," Karen Millyard said. "It has to do with economics. It has to do with topography and climate."

Millyard is workshop leader and director of Jane Austen Dancing, a local group of enthusiasts dedicated to preserving the dancing and other customs of the so-called Regency era of Jane Austen, who was the English author of wildly popular romantic

fiction around the turn of the 19th century.

Millyard hosted "Regency Fashion 101" on March 30 at St. Barnabas Anglican Church on Danforth Avenue — one of Jane Austen Dancing's favourite event venues.

The lecture was about clothing of the Regency era, which also encompassed the War of 1812. It focused on the history of clothes and the progression of fashion due to technology's advancements.

"During this period, there was an enormous amount of affluence, and increasing affluence in certain aspects because of the Industrial Revolution," she said. "So we have the 18th century with things changing quite significantly."

According to Millyard, people wore things that were accessible and available nearby, and it is still the same today. But the Industrial Revolution changed fashion and society through improvements in shipping, safety at sea, navigation and colonization. The industrial revolution changed hierarchy and social class with the

growth of the middle class.

"You could actually be put in jail or fined for wearing clothes beyond your station because it was considered a type of fraud. Your clothes advertised who you were," Millyard said.

The lecture also featured Millyard's handmade modern reproduction gowns, inspired by the Regency era.

The Regency Fashion 101 was only one of the Pride and Prejudice-themed events that Jane Austen Dancing will be hosting as part of the novel's bicentennial anniversary this year.

This weekend, April 19-21, Jane Austen Dancing is hosting "A Weekend with Jane Austen" at St. Barnabas and at the Mackenzie House Print Shop and Museum on Bond Street. Workshops, lectures and a dress-themed ball will commemorate the Regency era for those who want to experience a taste of the past.

Further information is at the website www.danceweavers.ca/janeausten.html



Nicolette Mendoza // Observer

Karen Millyard shows the first reproduction gown she ever made.

Sunnybrook's breast cancer centre opens

By NICOLETTE MENDOZA
The Observer

Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre has just opened the Louise Temerty Breast Cancer Centre — the largest of its kind in Canada, offering women who need specialized breast care direct access to new breast imaging and treatment research.

The 28,000-square-foot facility is located on the sixth floor of the M-Wing at Sunnybrook, which is located near East York's northwest corner.

The centre, for patients in the Ontario Breast Screening and the Ontario High Risk Screening Programs, was named in honour of Louise Temerty and Jim Temerty following their \$10-million donation, which allowed the facility to open sooner than originally planned.



Dr. Eileen Rakovitch, head of Sunnybrook Odette Breast Cancer Care team and director of Louise Temerty Breast Cancer Centre, spoke at a press conference during the April 4 opening.

Wynne

According to Rakovitch, the centre focuses on discovering more effective and innovative cancer treatments that will benefit all women with breast cancer beyond treatments of drug therapies, radiation therapies, surgical techniques and clinical trials.

"We recognize that not all breast cancers are the same," she said. "Many have unique needs. And as the largest breast centre, we have an opportunity to meet these needs."

The new centre has technologies such as the Marion C. Soloway Breast Rapid Diagnostic Unit, providing patients with a rapid assessment and next-day diagnosis. The Immediate Breast Reconstruction program allows patients to consult with the breast cancer surgeon and their plastic surgeon at the same visit. Another program unique to the centre is the Breast Cancer Program for Young Women, Canada's only comprehensive program to meet young women's specific concerns.

Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne also spoke at the press conference, noting the province's revolutionized approaches to treating women with breast cancer.

"I know that having access to a plan quickly will make a world of difference to women and their families," she said.



Happy birthday, Leaside

This coming Tuesday, April 23, is Leaside's 100th birthday — the anniversary of the Ontario legislature's 1913 incorporation of the municipality that then became an East York neighbourhood in 1967. This photo, from the CPR and city archives, depicts the Leaside Canadian Pacific passenger train station in 1946. Several events are planned for the coming days to commemorate the community centennial, and information about them is available at www.leaside100.ca

Spring Fling brings new life to residence

Fundraiser to collect money for new gazebo with wheelchair access

By VIDA KORHANI
The Observer

Betty Tustin first started her journey with True Davidson Acres when her husband needed care.

"My husband was a resident and when he passed away, I knew what the need was," Tustin said. "The facility needed volunteers here to help better the quality of life for the residents. So I came here as a volunteer."

Tustin has now been president of the volunteer association at True Davidson Acres for the past 20 years. Now, as the long-term care facility gets ready to celebrate its 40th anniversary, she and about 125 other volunteers continue to improve

the home-comfort environment for its senior residents.

The facility, on Dawes Road overlooking Taylor Creek Park, provides accommodation with services such as nursing, medicine, food and nutrition, administration and staff education.

Carly Wolf, the volunteer co-ordinator for True Davidson Acres for 10 years, believes the quality provided at the facility is excellent and has been for the past 40 years.

"We provide 24-hour nursing care for our community members who are not able to look after themselves at home and our volunteers provide extra care for our residents," Wolf said.

True Davidson Acres opened in June 1973, through the efforts of former East York mayor Jean Gertrude (True) Davidson. In honour of its ruby anniversary, volunteers are planning a Spring Fling fundraiser for a gazebo with wheelchair-accessible decking.

"The city gives us the budget for the necessities of life," Tustin said. "They're giving (the residents') needs for physiotherapy, keeping them clean, assisting them and all those health care issues, but we are here to raise funds to give them the extras."

According to Tustin, when living in a care facility, the extra touches giving the residence a homey atmosphere are as important as the necessities provided by government.

"Imagine if you were in a facility and you couldn't get out or couldn't go to any outings and listen to live music and have some birthday cake or a birthday party," Tustin said. "I mean, these are all the extra things to make their life more comfortable."

The Spring Fling is tomorrow, April 20, from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. There will be a community barbecue, vendor stations, a bake sale and an art sale, among other activities.



Vida Korhani // Observer

Enjoying the great outdoors

Tour guide Evan McMurtry (left) led parents and children, including Keaton Hawker-Budlovsky (front), through the Todmodern Mills Heritage Site last Sunday for a spring guided walk.

Residents share ideas about Gamble and Livingston parks

Neighbours talk about replacing benches, adding privacy screens

By ERIN CASSIDY
The Observer

The people who live near two local parks have been asked for their input on the redesign and greenery of the parks.

On April 10, neighbours of Gamble and Livingston parks gathered for a consultation meeting at Bethany Baptist Church at the intersection of Pape and Cosburn.

Councillor Mary Fragedakis, Ward 29/Toronto-

Danforth, hosted the event, along with a representative from the city parks department.

Perhaps due to a freezing rain warning, there was a small turnout, but those who did show up were outspoken.

With regard to Livingston Park, located between Woodville and Torrens avenues, the group discussed replacing benches and a possible screen between the park and the backyards of the neighbouring houses.

Screening options included climbing hydrangeas and a living willow fence.

Gamble Park, located between Torrens and Gamble avenues, was the bigger subject of the evening.

Concerns revolved around its splash pad area, putting new benches in and memorials suffering from vandalism. These will be moved to the park's southwest end.

New bylaw-specific signs restricting smoking and dogs are being installed and trees planted to expand the parks' canopies for increased shade during the summer.

Livingston will receive 10 new trees and Gamble will get 13.



For more stories about East York, please visit us online at torontoobserver.ca

■ EDITORIALS

Safe in the city?

East York is surrounded by the megacity Toronto that we're a part of. And yet, there's reassuring evidence that when it comes to a significant urban ill, we're still an island, somehow apart from the city around us.

But while still safe as major cities go, Toronto has its share of fatal violence, like the recent, highly publicized shooting at Yorkdale Mall that claimed the life of 24-year-old Michael Nguyen. Last June, another shooting took place at the Eaton Centre, leaving two men dead and many shaken by the brazen act of violence. Then came the mass shooting at a block party in Scarborough, killing two and wounding two dozen.

Our collective concern around city crime — especially fatal violence — is such that the CBC has created an online map that depicts homicide statistics by neighbourhoods. It's at <http://www.cbc.ca/toronto/features/homicide2012/>. However, we East Yorkers can take considerable comfort in what it shows.

For instance, out of a total of 46 "markers" that represent the 46 homicides that occurred in 2012, East York's boundaries accounted for only one, taking place in Leaside. (Lisa Lebitka, 45, was murdered by her boyfriend in their upscale home.)

The fact is that East York has seen a low rate of crime over the years, unlike its geographic neighbours.

With such a disparity between the violence in East York and the violence just outside our borders, it begs the question: What sets East York apart?

Granted, East York is a relatively small community — the smallest, in fact, of all the former municipalities that now make up the amalgamated city, both in area and population. And there are interesting demographic differences, too. East York has more working age (25-64) residents than the Toronto average and a lower proportion of youth (15-24 — as per Toronto.ca/demographics). Perhaps more working people and fewer youth also contribute to a lower crime rate.

Whatever the reason, let's acknowledge — and be grateful for — this "East York difference."

~ Robin Dhanju

Looking for a spot

Danforth Avenue is one of the busiest streets in the GTA. A vibrant mix of commercial and residential runs along the Danforth strip. People flock to the restaurants, bars and other businesses.

It's one of the real assets of this community. But parking along or around Danforth is one of the real challenges.

In the fall of 2010, city councillors Rocco Rossi and Jennifer Wood met with residents along the Danforth to further discuss the issue of too little — and too expensive — parking. But about two and a half years later, things have barely changed.

People love to go shopping and out to bars and restaurants. Checking out the businesses along the Danforth is supposed to be a fun experience. So imagine the annoyance of driving back and forth along the street to try to find a parking spot... and once you do, going back and forth to that spot to make sure you don't exceed your parking time limit.

You can't blame some for their impatience with the "green hornets" who ticket their cars for expired parking.

And for the sense that parking generally in that neighbourhood is one big municipal money-grab.

Add to that some other issues, like the one-way streets running adjacent to the Danforth that sometimes force drivers to make wide circles through the neighbourhood. Confusing signage that allows you to park on one side of the street certain days, but not others. Prohibitions on overnight parking unless you have a special permit (heaven forbid you have overnight guests). Restrictions around front-lawn parking pads. Etc., etc.

It may be time to revive the community consultations that we had in 2010 — and to see through some significant changes to the parking protocols on and around the Danforth — so that business can continue to flourish and customers and residents can enjoy at least a little low-cost convenience.

~ Hawwii Gudeta

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the final edition of the East York Observer for the 2012-2013 school year. The Observer is produced by journalism students at Centennial College's 951 Carlaw Ave. campus — where the academic year is now winding down. But we'll reopen the newsroom in mid-September, and resume publication around the end of that month. Enjoy the summer, and see you in the fall!

■ COLUMNS

April brings hope

We're reminded of bereavement during April — when the scourge of cancer and its prevention come to the fore, just like the daffodils that Cancer Society volunteers sell.

I'm finding this especially true this month — the one-year anniversary of a significant bereavement for me, even though my uncle did not succumb to cancer.

My uncle lived in the Philippines. One day while at work, he suddenly collapsed. He fell into a coma after he was brought to the closest hospital. As his condition worsened, my family learned that he would have to be transported to a more advanced hospital. We were told he might not survive the two-hour trip. But my uncle was strong and he made it.

Things didn't get better. My family did not have the finances to keep him in the hospital. He had to be brought to my aunt's.

My uncle may have been an ocean away, but knowing how serious his condition was weighed on me here. He was my Tito, my Uncle Grumpy — an ironic nickname that I had given him when I was

little. (Since my childhood, he was always happy.)

My family Facetimed with one another for updates. I still remember an image of my uncle being rolled around, captured through a cellphone camera. He was lying almost lifeless, with an oxygen mask on his face. He could not breathe on his own.

I still remember watching my cousins taking turns, manually pumping oxygen into his lungs so that he could breathe. They didn't have an oxygen tank for him. His life was literally in their hands.

And I remember having no regrets sending him a thousand dollars of my own money to buy him an oxygen tank. My parents and I helped with the money for his medical care as much as we

could.

But he still passed away. His heart fought to keep beating even after his brain and his lungs had failed him. Eventually, his heart gave up too.

The heartbreaking thing was that I kept hearing from my family over there that if they had the finances or if they lived here, in Canada, he would have had the chance to survive.

Of course, no one can ever guarantee that. But having access to the right medical care is something that most Canadians do not have to worry about. When it comes to life and death, we can rely on doctors to do their best with the superior technology they have. And money isn't a priority. In Third World countries, it's a different story.

So that's what I think of during April's campaign against cancer: how lucky Canadians are to have real hope in the fight against life-threatening illness. Unfortunately, not everyone realizes how privileged we are to be living in a country that gives us that gift of hope.



Nicolette Mendoza

Break the 'Toronto curse'

The Toronto Blue Jays season is in full swing, and expectations for a championship have rarely seemed higher. A new and improved roster has some calling the Blue Jays as the favourites to win the World Series, a championship the team last held in 1993. Toronto is abuzz with pro-Jays chatter on sports radio, and Jays merchandise is flying off the shelves at sports merchandise stores.

But I can't help but feel that this buzz is a simple cry of desperation — a reflection of the lack of success that Toronto sports teams have had in the last 15 years.

Discounting the Toronto Argonauts, it's my opinion that most Toronto sports teams are somehow cursed

— somehow trapped behind invisible but impenetrable barriers to becoming dominant forces on the sports landscape. It seems like no matter what Toronto teams do to get better players, those players seem to always want to leave eventually.

They say something along the lines of, 'It's Canada, I won't get any exposure, and it's too cold in winter.' So you see, no matter what Toronto teams do, no matter how much money they throw at a player, the long-term prospects just aren't there.

Granted, the off-season recruiting that the Blue Jays did was really quite extraordinary. And expectations have surged right alongside. But I can't help but feel in my gut that something will go wrong and the "Toronto curse" will hold.

Maybe

I'm wrong, maybe I'm irrational, but before you write me off, consider the history of Toronto sports teams.

Consider, in particular, sorry episodes like the one around Toronto Raptors' draft Damon Stoudamire. Going into the 1995 NBA draft, he kept repeating how he really, really didn't want to play in Toronto. The frown on his face when his name was called on NBA draft night told the whole story.

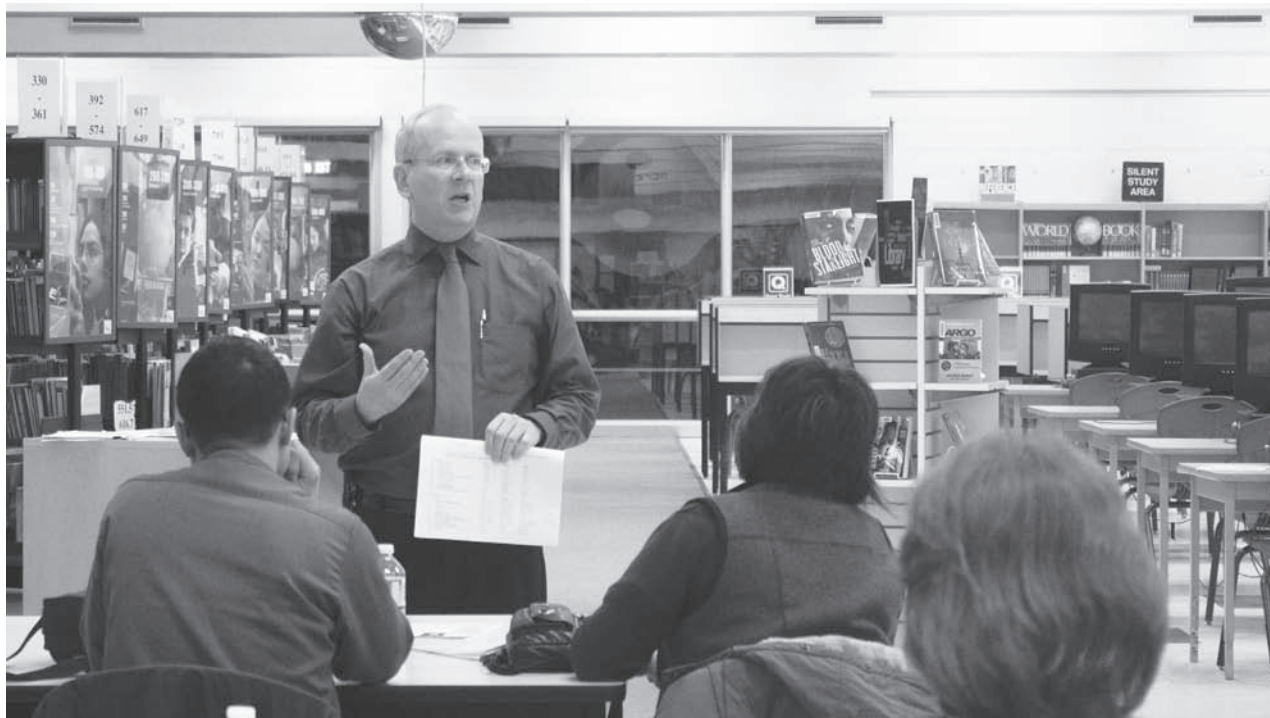
And let's not forget about Vince Carter. No less a basketball authority than the great Kobe Bryant once said that if the Raptors were able to keep Vince Carter, they would one day be able to win three or so NBA titles with ease.

What happened? The Toronto curse.

Fast forward to now. The Jays are the odds-on favourites to win the World Series for many fans. I also have hope. So I'll just say a little prayer that the Toronto curse is finally broken.



Josh Genereux



Jamie Anderson/// Observer

Author Ron Morrish spoke at a workshop held in East York Collegiate's library about parenting tips and how to discipline children effectively with proactive techniques.

Hard talk on tough parenting

By JAMIE ANDERSON
The Observer

A visiting expert reminded parents and teachers that common sense is their most powerful tool when dealing with children.

Ron Morrish, who spoke at East York Collegiate Institute on April 18, is the author of *Secrets of Discipline, With all Due Respect* and *Flip Tips*. He's a behavioural therapist, parent and former teacher and he talked about how to deal with difficult children and teens — and why they often react the way they do.

Anna Roussakis, chair of EYCI's parent-school council and event organizer, said the points Morrish raised help remind parents and teachers that when dealing with children, there needs to be mutual respect.

"What it comes back to is a lot of this stuff is just common sense and it doesn't all have to be that penal stuff," she said.

Morrish said he decided to write his first book, *Secrets of Discipline*, when he realized that the teachers he admired most in school didn't follow the textbook guidelines he was learning about as a behavioural consultant.

"When I looked at what they were doing, I had trouble figuring it out and they

couldn't explain it," he said. "What I now understand is that good people become intuitive. They just do it. Then I tried to simply write down what the good teachers do and that became the book."

Discipline

Morrish said inappropriate discipline is the cause of a lot of the rebellion and negative attitude that children show, because adults do not understand the proper meaning of the word — which is derived from the Latin word "commitment."

"Meaning, to take whatever time is necessary to teach your children how to behave appropriately," he said.

Morrish goes to almost 90 schools per year to talk to parents, teachers and students about the practices in his books. While speaking at one school, he said, he learned that because of the system they have been raised in, many children do not understand what discipline is really for.

"I was talking to an assembly of students about this and I asked them what discipline meant to them," he said. "Out of 300 students, two of them said it was about learning responsibility. The rest said it was about being grounded and having your privileges taken away."

Penalties

Morrish explained that children will re-

spond better when they understand what is expected of them, rather than when they're simply trying to avoid penalties. This happens through consistency.

"Good disciplinarians get a reputation for meaning what they say," he said.

"That's because, unlike punitive people that follow through on their consequences and punishments, good disciplinarians follow through on their directions and expectations."

Plan for success

So rather than coming up with penalties, Morrish suggests planning for success rather than threatening for failure. He described contrasting scenarios:

"In the store, you'll see a parent raising her voice, communicating the penalties for doing things wrong: 'If you don't get back here right now there's no treat today and I'm warning you, if you keep disobeying me, when we get home you'll be in your room and there will be no TV either!'"

"You want to see real discipline?" Morrish asked. "Go to the parking lot and not the store. Watch as a parent gets their kid out of the car and while walking across the parking lot, reviews the expectations of how we conduct ourselves in a store."

Extracurriculars back, but still a 'delicate' issue

By HAWWII GUDETA
The Observer

As extracurriculars trickle back into East York public schools, the reaction among staff and parents is mixed.

Both the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) and the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) have told their members that they can return to supervising clubs and other activities outside of class.

"I think the teachers make a lot of money," said Shona Borecky, a mother of two in East York. "They get paid summer breaks and paid holidays. They should not get paid for extracurricular activities. Volunteering an hour or two before and after school shouldn't be a big deal to them."



■Dandy

But Cathy Dandy, the Toronto District School Board trustee for Ward 15/Toronto-Danforth, said the situation remains delicate.

"The union has signaled to its membership that they're having positive conversations with the provincial government and that they want their members to restore extracurricular activities," she said.

"We certainly know that the majority of teachers didn't like withdrawing the activities because they very much like to support students."

Public school teachers withdrew their supervision of extracurriculars to protest the provincial government's Bill 115, which imposed a contract that included clawbacks.

But there have been signs of reconciliation between the teachers and the government since Kathleen Wynne replaced Dalton McGuinty as premier. And the Ontario Labour Relations Board ruled last week that ETFO's actions last fall amounted to an illegal strike, when it recommended the withdrawal of extracurriculars in the first place.

Still, while some teachers have returned to extracurriculars, others have not — and Dandy said that nothing can force a resumption.

"The teachers voluntarily offer their time for things like sports clubs and art activities," she said. "If they choose to withdraw them, we can't make anything happen."

You don't need to 'get' poetry to like it, writer says

By RADINA VENCHEVA
The Observer

In a way, poetry is like the Bible, the Qur'an or any religious book — it can be interpreted in different ways. Many people don't understand poetry and feel intimidated reading it, but that's normal.

In honour of Poetry Month this April, Canadian publisher of fine books and notes Biblioasis launched two books by Canadian authors; Robert Melançon's *For As Far As The Eye Can See* and Jessica Hiemstra's *Self-Portrait Without a Bicycle* at the Dora Keogh Irish Pub, 141 Danforth Ave.

East Yorkers and poetry fans enjoyed the writers' latest volumes during an elegant evening

at the pub, amid its very authentic and Irish-looking vintage interior.

Hiemstra, whose front cover book design is her own creation, is both a visual artist and lyric-contemporary poet. Her drawings are featured throughout the book, which is her fourth.

"I think people feel intimidated by poetry, but they shouldn't," she said.

"We don't have to understand something to enjoy it, so you can look at something and love it. You don't need to understand why you love it or what's it doing and poetry is the same way — some of it will resonate with you and some of it won't — but you don't need to get it."

As a visual artist, Hiemstra

expresses her writing style differently and "figures it out on the page" through drawing.

Judith Cowan translated Melançon's new collection for the first time in English from French. Melançon is one of Quebec's most original poets and a long-time translator himself.

The Biblioasis International Translation Series editor Stephen Henighan was at the launch, and talked about how translation in Canada has become a challenging and expensive process.

"At three levels — publishing rights, translator costs and just not getting a grant for the book — it's unbelievably difficult to get a translations series going in Canada that includes books that are international," he said.



Radina Vencheva /// Observer

Jessica Hiemstra reads from her book, *Self-Portrait Without a Bicycle*, at the Dora Keogh Irish Pub.



Whitney Reyes // Observer

Ring in the Bengali new year

The Young Bangladeshi Torontonians — with a little help from former Beaches-East York MP Maria Minna (centre-right) — celebrated the start of a new year on the Bengali calendar Sunday with a rally at Danforth and Victoria Park avenues in East York.

No 'DNA testing' for pet owners

By TARAH BLEIER
The Observer

With the warmer weather, more and more East York pet owners are taking their dogs out for a walk.

While it's good exercise for both owner and pet, it's what can be left behind that's the real issue. Picking up after your pet should be common practice for most pet owners, but there are those who choose to ignore city bylaws and simply leave it for some unlucky pedestrian.

A superintendent of a building complex in Houston, Texas recently took the poop problem to a whole new level. He enlisted a DNA service to narrow down which dogs (and which owners) were spoiling the grounds. And it worked.

Here in East York, bylaw officers may

not be going so far as to hire DNA detectives, but we do have rules administered by the City of Toronto. But Mary Fragedakis, the councillor for Ward 29/Toronto-Danforth, says more needs to be done.

"Pets are an important and wonderful part of many people's lives," she said in an e-mail interview. "As our city becomes more dense and pet ownership increases, this can have some challenges."

Her take on DNA testing?

"I do not think some sort of city-wide DNA testing is the way to go," she said. "For one, something like that would only work in a space with somewhat restricted access. Yes, we have a problem, but most pet-owners are very responsible. So, yes we are constantly on the lookout for solutions to Toronto's problems — big and small. I suspect that the solution to this

problem, as with many problems, will be a series of small steps, not quite so dramatic as DNA testing."

The Toronto Municipal Code says "every owner of a dog shall immediately remove excrement left by the dog on property anywhere within the city."

Bruce Hawkins handles media relations for Toronto Animal Services.

"Our goal is to get compliance with all bylaws," he said.

"In 2012, (we) received 351 complainants for owners failing to remove dog excrement. This number represents complaints for failing to remove excrement on public property and private property (e.g. dog-owners' property)."

Unfortunately, many choose to ignore the rules and leave the mess for city workers to clean up.

COMMUNITY

Sisters move to new home in East York

By THERESA SPOHN
The Observer

Moving is never easy, but it can be particularly difficult if you decide on a new home based not only on practicality — but also on some key values.

That, however, is exactly what the Sisters of St. Joseph decided to do when they sold their main residence of more than 50 years in North York and moved to 2 O'Connor Dr. on March 12.

The move was 10 years in the making and Sister Therese Meunier, the congregational leader, explained it was done with a specific green mandate in mind.

"We saw the opportunity here to put into action what we really believed about our care and respect for the Earth," she said.



■ Iredale

At the heart of the new building is the chapel. Instead of stained glass windows, there are large, floor-to-ceiling windows with a view of the Don Valley ravine. Sister Marcella Iredale, a resident, noted the new design required some adjustment.

"I love the chapel. I didn't think I would. We have some sisters, and one sister in particular, who just couldn't believe you could have it without stained glass windows," she said.

But the new sacred place has its own rewards, according to Iredale.

"I was sitting in there Friday afternoon for Good Friday services and I was looking up at that window behind the altar, with the clouds scudding across the sky. You couldn't make a stained glass window like that," she said.

Meunier explained that this type of construction helps to reflect the sisters' deeply held religious beliefs.

"It brings the inside out and the outside in. It makes for that closeness to nature and that was part of the design, to be close to nature that is God's creation," she said.

Iredale described the four large windows in her room facing the street side of the building as the perfect setting for an afternoon nap as the sun streams into warm her room.

Today, 58 sisters live at the residence, with most in their 80s and 90s. The second and third floors have dining areas to accommodate those who cannot make it down to the main dining room.

The chapel has no pews in order to accommodate walkers and wheelchairs. There is also a balcony in the chapel for those who need to be close to their rooms. Each room has its own three-piece bathroom with a shower and walk-in closet.

Centre offers help finding affordable housing

By JABBARI WEEKES
The Observer

Looking for a new house? Meet Elis Ziegler.

The manager of housing services for the East York Housing Help Centre, Ziegler and her team help customers find affordable housing in the area.

"Our customers drive the service," Ziegler said, "so we find out what kind of housing they want, can afford, area you're interested in

and a housing help worker will find something that fits."

Funded by the City of Toronto and charitable donations, Housing Help is a branch of the East York East Toronto Family Resources social service agency, headquartered on Queen Street East. It operates several housing centres in East York, including on the Danforth and in Thorncliffe Park.

Created in 1998, the centre sets up customers with tenancy workers to create service plans that factor

in the clients' wants and needs. For example, if someone needs health care or wants to live close to work, he or she will find a house that meets one or all of these conditions.

"We start with what people want," Ziegler said, "so let's say they need to have walking distance to a food bank or that kind of

thing that becomes a part of planning and lets me know where, how much, and what size."

With sites like Kijiji listing vacant houses, tenancy workers hone in on areas that meet clients' interests.

According to Ziegler, the most important work after placement is "house stabilization," which helps clients after they've moved in by assisting them in making their monthly payments

In particular, this program helps tenants who are behind on rent

with a payment plan that they can sustain until they get back on their feet. The financial assistance plan is looked over by both the housing help and the landlord.

This means that if someone is behind on rent, housing help will work out a payment plan with the tenant and landlord to find something sustainable — as well as provide financial assistance through a plan that can range over the course of a couple months to a year, until people are on their feet.



■ Ziegler