



Jeremy Hon /// Observer

Music in the air

Julian Nalli (left) and Nic Ladouceur staked out the Danforth on Wednesday to celebrate spring with some jazz. The duo — Nalli is originally from Langley, B.C. and Ladouceur is from Yellowknife, N.W.T. — say they came to Toronto because “there are more opportunities to be creative.”

Who will lead the Liberals?

Candidates line up to represent the Liberals in Beaches-East York riding

By **NOLAN WHITE**
The Observer

The competition is heating up in Beaches-East York to carry the Liberal banner into the next federal election.

Businessman Tom McGee is already holding events in the riding to promote his run at the local riding association's nomination. Meanwhile, lawyer Jeff Rybak — also the vice-president of the Harmony Hall Centre for Seniors — has launched a website for his campaign to become the Liberals' candidate in the riding.

And now fellow lawyer Nathaniel Erskine-Smith is promoting his intent to capture the riding association's nod.

All with the federal election still a year and a half away. But the local Liberals are laying groundwork now in the hope that next year they'll recapture Beaches-East York from New Democrat MP Matthew Kellway, who beat incumbent Liberal Maria Minna in 2011.

For his part, Smith, 29, says he has had a nearly life-long interest in politics — since his years on student council, back when he attended high school at Malvern Collegiate. He has been a lawyer since 2011, practicing in commercial litigation, but he said he also tries to maintain involvement in public interest matters of the community.

In an interview, Smith said that he was born and raised in Beaches-East York. He went on to study politics at Queen's University, constitutional law in law school at Queen's and political theory at the University of Oxford.

While a 23-year-old student at Queen's, Smith ran for Kingston city council. Though unsuccessful, he said it was a great learning experience.

As for his politics today, he said, “I'm tired of the way Harper has governed our country and I want to do something about it — and [Justin] Trudeau has called for open nominations and generational change within the Liberal

■ See **CANDIDATES**, page 8

He wasn't afraid to die, but wanted it to be on his own terms

Dr. Donald Low didn't get the death he'd hoped for. Now his widow has taken up the fight for Canadians' right to die with dignity

By **DAVID KENNEDY**
The Observer

In the spring of 2003, it felt like Toronto was coming apart at the seams.

Ordinary people walked the streets in surgical masks and staff at Toronto East General Hospital wore hazmat suits. The emergency room at Scarborough Grace Hospital was shut down and the World Health Organization issued a travel advisory for Toronto.

SARS was in full swing.

Amid the chaos, Maureen Taylor, a health reporter for the CBC, and Dr. Donald Low, a

microbiologist who would become one of the public faces of SARS in Toronto, developed a working relationship that would eventually transition into marriage.

“For Don and I,” Taylor recently told a class of Centennial College journalism students at their East York campus, “SARS was the beginning of a wonderful romance and relationship that brought two families together.”

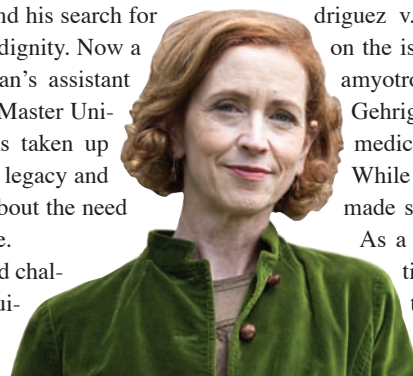
The couple was married for 10 happy years before Low was diagnosed with a rare, untreatable brain-stem tumour in February 2013. He died that September after eight months of deteriorating health.

Several days before his death, Low released a video outlining his attempt to cope with his terminal illness, and his search for a way to die with dignity. Now a registered physician's assistant and teacher at McMaster University, Taylor has taken up her late husband's legacy and speaks at events about the need for assisted suicide.

Despite continued challenges, assisted sui-

cide remains illegal in Canada. The Supreme Court cites the 20-year old ruling in *Sue Rodriguez v. British Columbia* as authoritative on the issue. Rodriguez, who struggled with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), or “Lou Gehrig's disease,” was not allowed to seek medical assistance to end her own life. While several legal challenges have been made since, none has set a new precedent.

As a microbiologist and doctor of infectious disease, Donald Low understood that there was no treatment or cure



■ **TAYLOR**

■ See **KEEPING**, page 2

POLICE & FIRE

Witnesses sought after teen shot

An 18-year-old man admitted himself to hospital with gunshot wounds on April 12. This followed reports that shots had been fired in the vicinity of Dawes Road and Victoria Park Avenue. Police say that the victim is not cooperating, but they believe there were witnesses to the shooting and are asking the public for assistance. Anyone with information is asked to call police at 416-808-5400 or Crime Stoppers anonymously at 416-222-8477.

Man arrested in luring case

Police arrested a man on April 15 following reports that someone was trying to lure young girls into a car in East York. On April 7, a 13-year-old girl was walking along the sidewalk near Danforth and Coxwell avenues when a man drove up and tried to convince her to get into his car. Five days later, a second girl, 16, was similarly approached near Coxwell and Gerard Street. Fidai Nasir has been charged with two counts of criminal harassment. Anyone with additional information is asked to contact police at 416-808-5400 or Crime stoppers anonymously at 416-222-8477.

~ Peder Myhr

So long 'til September

The East York Observer — a publication of the journalism students at Centennial College's East York campus — will be on hiatus for the summer and will return in September. Thank you for reading, and have a great summer.



Xuyun Zeng // The Observer

The 'Shadow' knows...

Maureen Mann, adoption counsellor for the Toronto Cat Rescue agency, gives Shadow some love. Shadow was up for adoption at the "adopt-a-thon" held recently at Wag on the Danforth.

Weaving stories out of war

By BETH JARRELL
The Observer

Unless we learn from our past, it is often said, history will repeat itself. This was the attitude at the Danforth-Coxwell library branch on April 16, when a crowd of about 40 gathered to see author Ray Robertson moderate a discussion panel on writing about war in fiction.

Authors Antanis Sileika, Nicole Lundrigan and Karen Connelly were present to debate the merits of writing about war, the challenges they face and why writing about violent history is important.

"All of us are affected by war. Our planet is deeply affected by the succession of war," Connelly said when asked why she writes about such a difficult topic. "We carry the marks of war in our DNA."

Connelly said that telling people's stories is what makes her work so interesting, but unlike a journalist, writers don't feel the need to be objective with their storytelling.

"People will tell stories as if telling them will bring them some relief from the pain they have experienced," Sileika said. "When you're collecting these stories, it feels like you're doing something."

Like many who write about war, Sileika has a personal connection with some elements of his work. His son served as a soldier in Afghanistan. He said that writing about war allows us to examine our values.

"War brings great questions of moral high ground," he said. "We like to imagine ourselves as making these great moral decisions."

But, when asked to sum up why he believes people are inclined to read war fiction, Sileika said he thinks it's the same reason why he writes it.

"War is very exciting. It's horrible and bloody, but it's exciting," he said. "It's about

extraordinary moments of decision-making where in seconds everything hangs in the balance."

The authors agreed there is one element that keeps them coming back to what they do: the human aspect. They surmised that it is the human connection that makes them keep going.

"When people were talking [during interviews], I would pull out the human bits and weave them into my story," Lundrigan said.

Lundrigan, who recently published her fifth book, added that humour will even occasionally surface.

Keeping debate alive is Low's 'legacy'

Cont'd. from page 1

for his illness.

"When I realized I had a disease that was terminal... I looked into alternatives, Low said in the video, which was released on YouTube. "What surprised me the most was the objection to it. There is no place in Canada where you can have support to [die] with dignity."

Later in the video, Low pleaded for opponents of doctor-assisted suicide to reconsider.

"Why make people suffer for no reason when there's an alternative?" he asked

"I just don't understand it. There's a lot of opposition to it — a lot of clinicians have opposition to dying with dig-

nity. I wish they could live in my body for 24 hours and I think they would change that opinion."

Low also talked about how envious he was of certain American states, as well as several European countries where assisted suicide has been legalized.

Low was never granted the type of death he wanted.

Taylor points out that as the baby boomer generation gets older, more and more people will begin to ask themselves questions about ending their lives.

"Medicine can keep people alive," she said, "but it can't make you young again. I think we're coming to the realization that maybe I want to

choose how I go."

Opponents of assisted suicide argue that allowing doctors to help people end their lives is a slippery slope. They claim that assisted suicide could lead to the forced euthanasia of the elderly or people with disabilities.

Taylor is quick to reject these assertions. She points to examples such as the Netherlands and Belgium where assisted suicide is legal, yet used sparingly. Still, she emphasizes that measures should be taken to ensure the death is in the best interests of both the patient and the doctor.

"I would want safeguards in place to make sure that the slippery slope doesn't happen," she said, "to make sure

that it's not abused. No physician should have to provide this — only the ones who want to."

Taylor is confident that when the Supreme Court revisits the issue of assisted suicide, it will find that our current laws are unconstitutional.

Although she acknowledges that speaking about the issue may not be the best way to move past her husband's death, she intends to keep making presentations, to keep talking about assisted suicide and to keep advocating for a person's right to die with dignity.

"It's the one thing that maybe I can do as a legacy to him," she said. "I think he'd be happy that I'm still working on it."

WHAT'S UP IN E.Y.

Harmonize at Harmony Hall

The East York Barbershoppers host their annual charity auction on Friday May 2, at Harmony Hall Centre for Seniors on 2 Gower St. Proceeds go toward Harmonize for Speech and Harmony Hall. Tickets are \$5 at the door. For more information contact George at 416-751-6456.

Dancers step out tomorrow

Trade School Toronto is running dance classes open to everyone tomorrow, April 26, at the Ralph Thornton Centre, 765 Queen St. E. They start at 11 a.m. and run until 7 p.m. Teachers and students can learn more and register at tradeschool.coop/Toronto/

Students make beautiful music

An ensemble of music students from Centennial College's East York campus is performing tomorrow, April 26, at the Toronto Centre for the Arts, 5040 Yonge St. Tickets are \$15 at the box office or on Ticketmaster. The show begins at 7 p.m.

Get a head start on your garden

Visit the Trace Manes Community Centre at 110 Rumsey Rd. on May 10 for a plant sale hosted by the Leaside Garden Society. Both annuals and perennials will be on sale. The sale begins at 9 a.m. and ends at noon. Visit leasidegardensociety.org for more information.

~ Beth Jarrell

War-displaced families make beautiful music

By VERA EL-TIMANY
The Observer

An East York organization serving war-displaced families now in Canada showed off its art and play program at a spring open house.

Families from multinational backgrounds gathered recently at Forest Manor Public School in the Don Mills Road-Sheppard Avenue East area for a celebration of the Turtle House Art/Play Centre.

Turtle House is headquartered at 305 Dawes Rd. in East York and describes itself as a special arts program specifically for children and their parents who have come to Canada from regions of conflict in other parts of the world. Representatives visit schools across Toronto, holding activities that include painting, clay work, and music.

"We meet with settlement workers in different schools if they have a high percentage of newcomers (to the country)," said Tamam McCallum, executive director of Turtle House.

The agency has been running as a non-profit organization since 2005 and says it strives to provide a positive and supportive environment for participants. They have run their program at venues in East York, the rest of Toronto, and most recently in Markham.

They celebrate diversity, with people coming from various countries — including Iraq, Libya, Egypt and North Korea.

Ellahe Tamaddon, a Turtle House participant who is originally from Iran, said the agency has had a significant impact on her life.

"It was just like going into a big family. We had no one; we knew nobody; we knew nowhere. I mean, everything was new. So imagine a family of four coming into a city that doesn't know anybody," Tamaddon said. "Then you come into a community — a family — that has everyone look at you in a very friendly way. They have big smiles, a wonderful atmosphere, food and activities. Everything was so wonderful.... It was so relaxing. It was much-needed."



Virginia Mashingaidze // The Observer

Joanne Pais uses a projected "Smart Board" display every day. But while technology creates opportunities, she says some students need to learn how to sift through the torrent of information.

Teacher advocates for technology

By VIRGINIA MASHINGAIDZE
The Observer

Today's students are growing up in the digital media age. But even with new devices constantly being created, East York's Holy Cross Catholic School is finding ways to incorporate technology into its classrooms.

Joanne Pais teaches grades 7 and 8 at the school, on Donlands Avenue. She said she thinks technology is an important tool for her students.

"I currently use the smart

board every day. I can show students information on the Internet (and) I can use virtual manipulatives, for instance, when I'm teaching math," she said. "By using those types of visuals when I'm teaching, it'll help them interpret the visuals they're seeing."

While technology has created many learning opportunities for students, Pais said, it's also led to some problems.

"I think the problem with technology is that a lot of (students) don't know how to sift through the information," she said.

Kurtis Evans, who teaches grades 3 and 4 at Holy Cross, said that using technology all the time at school isn't ideal.

"I think you need a balance of both," he said. "You can't critically and heavily just depend on one teaching technique, and part of the reason is every student learns differently."

Holy Cross has 25 to 30 computers for 400 students. It also has netbooks, which it's in the process of trading in for iPad minis.

"I've read studies that show that being exposed to too much technology can actually inhibit

certain brain growth, especially when it comes to emotional growth," Evans said.

The bottom line, he added, is that technology shouldn't be the only means by which students acquire information.

"It can't be something you just entirely depend on," he said. "There are other aspects of school besides the way they access information. A lot of school is social-based as well.... (Technology) is good and it's something that I would advocate for, but I would advocate that it's used responsibly."



Paolo Maquiraya // The Observer

He's not fooling around

Matt O'Brien headlined a bill of seven comedians who performed at Fools for a Cause at Eton House on Danforth Avenue on April Fool's Day. Students from Centennial College's East York campus organized the charity event to benefit the Friends for Life Foundation.

■ POLITICS

Dandy up for re-election

By JENNA REID
The Observer

Cathy Dandy is hoping it's not only bad things that happen in threes.

The public school trustee for Ward 15/Toronto-Danforth declared her candidacy for a third term on the Toronto District School Board by filing her nomination papers with the city last month.

So far, she's the only candidate in the ward. Other contenders have until September to declare. In 2010, she piled up more than 22,094 votes — more than triple the votes cast for the runner-up.

She was first elected in 2006, and made a name for herself that first term with a move to postpone the daily start time at Eastern Commerce Collegiate Institute until 10 a.m. — to give sleepy teenagers more rest before their first class.

More recently, between 2010 and 2011, she has served as vice-chair of the board.

"I like the idea of education because it touches the lives of children and youth,"



■ DANDY

Dandy said in an interview. "Although it's a large system, it is very much a local issue. It's where people move and experience their local community." As a mother of three children who have gone through TDSB schools, Dandy said that she has the ability to relate to the struggles that come with helping a child navigate through the system.

Dandy has a BA from York, and is a candidate for a master's degree from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. She said activism is in her blood.

"My mother and father were very politically involved," she said.

"They were very involved in the community. I became very much focused on social justice. Having grown up in a family like that, those were the things we talked about."

Now, as a school trustee, she hopes to continue to find ways to put her ideals into action.

"We live in a world where it's complex," Dandy said. "It's really important to me that schools are placed where people, parents and students feel welcome and where they feel like their needs are being met."

Local crossing guard takes a walk down memory lane

Salmond hopes to give R.H. McGregor school the recognition it deserves

By **JENNA REID**
The Observer

“It’s not given to them,” says Christopher Salmond. “Community isn’t talked about to them.”

Salmond is a crossing guard at R.H. McGregor Elementary School, on Mortimer Avenue at Coxwell, and he’s talking about the heritage of the school and what he sees as a lack of awareness about it.

But he’s not just complaining. He’s doing something about it.

“It was proposed at the East York Historical Society, when the principal of the school suggested that I aid in the uncovering of the history,” Salmond said in an interview.

So he and a small group of amateur historians are canvassing neighbours and alumni for their reminiscences of the school.

R.H. McGregor was established in the 1920s and named after Canadian parliamentarian Robert Henry McGregor. It was largely rebuilt in the 1970s and today educates about 700 students in both English and French programs.

“I helped re-establish the 115th [scouting group] at McGregor around the late ‘60s and it has been successfully going” since, Salmond said.

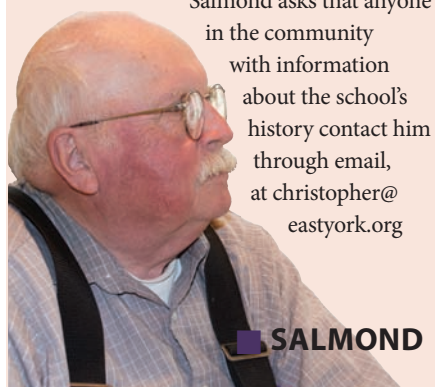
As the school’s crossing guard, he said he has watched two generations of students graduate from the school, and so when it was proposed that he aid in conducting historical research, Salmond said he was more than willing to help facilitate this special endeavour.

With the results of their research, “we are going to bring it all together and have the kids go and look at some places and design some sort of program. They are going to try and work it into the Grade 4 or Grade 5 curriculums,” Salmond said.

For instance, he said, a social studies unit could be created. But he added that, thanks to the interest of the East York Historical Society, increased awareness of R.H. McGregor won’t stop at the school-house door.

“You’re starting to implant an interest in the community and what’s around them,” Salmond said. “A lot of people don’t realize that what stands in front of us today wasn’t always like that.”

Salmond asks that anyone in the community with information about the school’s history contact him through email, at christopher@eastyork.org



SALMOND



Andrea Preciado /// The Observer

Dr. Karyn Gordon speaks about her book, “Dr. Karyn’s Guide to the Teen Years,” as parents approach her to ask her questions and get some tips in the auditorium at Leaside High School on April 7.

Teaching parents to say ‘no’

By **ANDREA PRECIADO**
The Observer

There’s a difference between spoiling your children and overindulging them, and Karyn Gordon tried to explain it during a talk at Leaside High School on April 7.

Gordon, a motivational speaker and founder of the Danforth-based relationship consulting firm “dk Leadership,” spoke to parents about “Raising Kids in an Age of Overindulgence.”

Parents from in and around the Leaside neighbourhood attended the event, which was organized by a school committee. Gordon, who is also an author and a media commentator, encouraged families to pursue balance by following a set of parent-children relationship

principles.

“Here is what spoiling means,” Gordon told her audience. “You are my six-year-old and you’re freaking out about something and I give that something to keep you quiet.... Overindulging is different. If you’re freaking out, then I am going to give you something that is too much, is too big and inappropriate for your age.”

Gordon described what she said are the trio of symptoms of overindulgence: that lead parents to fall into the trap of overindulging their children.

“The three that I find most prevalent: We are over-scheduling, we are over-eating and we are spending. Those are big barriers,” she said.

She added that a lack of time,

overuse of media and overwork are ultimately causes of kids having unhealthy lifestyles — which ultimately lead to plenty of difficulties in adulthood.

“In the work field you can find insecure youth, afraid of failing and with no self-confidence or organization skills,” she said.

Gordon mentioned the importance of teaching children from Grade 1 on about how to maintain their bank accounts.

“We are paying for everything. Paying for it does not teach money-management,” she said. “That is also one of the reasons why couples divorce. It’s not how much money you make, but how money is managed.”

Audience member Estefania Gomez is the mother of a 10-year-

old boy. She said she wants her “children to value all the things we give them. Parents tend to spoil their kids without knowing the future consequences. I include myself.”

At the end of the event, parents had the opportunity to raise questions and to speak with Gordon. Patricia McDonald is a mother of two children and was concerned about learning how to say “no” to her kids.

“I find it funny how a couple of seconds can change a parent’s mindset,” McDonald said. “I am going home ready to apply some rules and give all the love and respect that they deserve. Dr. Gordon is very inspiring. I am very thankful I missed a date with my girlfriend and came here instead.”

East Yorkers rise and run three times a week

By **SAMANTHA TURCHAN**
The Observer

Every Saturday morning, Jim Clayton wakes up before the sun has risen to start his weekend off with a morning jog and a trip to a Starbucks on the Danforth at Jones Avenue — a second home to the East York-Toronto Runners.

Clayton is the co-founder of the local running group. It began in 2009 when it was created on meet-up.com as a local group.

Since then, the group has grown to 260 members currently registered.

“People just started showing up,” Clayton said in an interview. “Once you get the community feeling in a group is when it begins to really grow. Sometimes we have people commuting all the way from Oshawa to take part in our runs.”

The group runs three times a week: Tuesday and Wednesday



Jenna Reid /// The Observer

The East York-Toronto Runners are transitioning from a winter to spring routine.

mornings at 6 a.m. and Saturdays at 8 a.m. You can usually find the group scattered across the patio of Starbucks after a run, to grab a coffee and chat with other runners.

“I love getting new runners,”

Clayton said. “I love helping people progress and learn how to run and it’s a great opportunity to get to know people in your area.”

The group is free to join and is welcoming to people of all ages and

running levels — whether they’re experienced or they’ve never run in their life.

For more information visit their website at www.eastyorkrunners.com.

■ BEACHES-EAST YORK SCHOOL BOARD RACE

Incumbent wants another shot

By JENNIFER LEE
The Observer

A quarter-century... and counting.

One of East York's longest-standing politicians at any level has declared her intention to carry on.

Sheila Cary-Meagher, who was first elected as a trustee to what was then the Toronto Board of Education in 1973, has filed her candidacy papers for the municipal election on Oct. 27. She'll be running again in Ward 16/Beaches-East York.

Cary-Meagher was an elementary school teacher herself from 1958 until 1961. During her nine elected terms on the Toronto and Toronto District boards she has served on assorted committees, and was vice-chair from 1979-1980.

All in all, she has sat as a trustee for 27 years, when a 14-year hiatus between 1986 and 2000 is accounted for.

In an interview, she said that despite her long tenure, there is still work that she wants to do.

One of the main issues that she said the board faces is the ongoing effect of the merger of formerly independent Metro school boards — including the former East York Board of Education — in 1998.

"With amalgamation,

the programs that provided opportunities for the inner-city children vanished," she said, "and when I came back on the board, because I had been a trustee in the '70-'80s, I was just flabbergasted at the complete lack of concern that we didn't have programs that balanced income and opportunity."

As a result, Cary-Meagher said, she is strongly involved with Model Schools for Inner Cities. This program works to give all children the same opportunities and access to education.

"It isn't yet getting the results it should be delivering and I just can't let go until we've squeezed every bit of goodness out of the program that we possibly can," she said. "Just because you're poor it doesn't mean you're dumb. It means that you have things working against you that better-off kids don't."

The program uses the Learning Opportunities Index, which ranks schools based on "measures of external challenges affecting student success," to determine which schools need more access to resources to ensure its students have equal chances to learn and succeed.

It then gives those students the tools and resources they need to fully participate in schools and their communities.



Observer file photo

Sheila Cary-Meagher, trustee for 27 years, hopes to be re-elected to continue working on initiatives unique to urban schooling.

Cary-Meagher has also created My School Review, which will give elementary schools in Ward 16 the opportunity to design what they want their schools to look like in the next 10-15 years.

Schools will have a chance to implement programs they want and shape the overall experience their students have while attending them.

Cary-Meagher said if she is re-elected, she will continue with the work she is doing such as Model Schools and My School Review.

She added that she thinks there are many areas of education that still need to be improved upon by someone with maturity and experience to give children the best education possible.

"It's very exciting to be responsible for the education of the next generation. The future of the country is based on the children who are coming along now," she said.

"And if they are not well-educated, they are not creative, if they are not exposed to important and wonderful things as well as the basics then we're cheating them."

More French programs needed

By XUETING ZHAO
The Observer

As the father of three school-aged children, Navarius Mombo says he understands the frustrations that many East York families face when it comes to French immersion programs. Because of this, he says, he has decided to run for trustee in Ward 16/Beaches-East York in this fall's municipal election.

"I want to advocate for the voiceless," he said in an interview. "I am not running as an individual. I am running on issues."



Of the dozen high schools in East York or on its borders, Leaside is the only one that offers a French immersion program, Mombo said.

"It is too far away for families who live in other parts of the community and is overcrowded," he said.

If elected, Mombo hopes to create new classes at East York Collegiate to accommodate students graduating from Cosburn Middle School's French immersion program.

Apart from the overcrowding in classes, he also plans to work on mental health issues and getting parents and students involved in helping schools excel.

"The parental engagement on the educational consequences of students is necessary," Mombo said. "Teachers could work more meritoriously with parents to smooth healthy early youthful growth."

Mombo has worked as an office services administrator at the Ontario Pension Board and a data entry operator at the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants.

He is also a former board member of Access Alliance Multicultural Health Services in Toronto.

Montessori teacher turns trustee hopeful

By KIMBERLY AGLIPAY
The Observer

Marietta Fox was inspired to pursue her next role in education after watching a TED talk called "The Antidote to Apathy," by Dave Meslin.

"[The talk] is about people in the community doing more, and pushing yourself personally," she said.

"Because this is new to me, I'm moving into a new learning zone. When I researched who can run for trustee, it said you have to be a Canadian citizen, over 18, with some background knowledge and a willingness to learn. And I am so open to learning."

Fox is a first-time candidate for public school trustee in Ward 16/Beaches-East York.

"I sensed that there was a need for change. I thought I could provide a fresh perspective, and a kind of a new energy and enthusiasm to the role," said Fox, who has been living in Beach Hill for 26 years and is a community activist.

Learning and education have always been both a passion and constant in Fox's



Kimberly Aglipay /// The Observer

Marietta Fox has entered the race for public school trustee in Beaches-East York. She has 30 years of experience as a Montessori teacher.

life. She has been a Montessori teacher for 30 years. Her three sons, 14, 22 and 26, have attended and graduated from TDSB schools.

"I have so much confidence in the public school system that I send all three children there," she said.

Fox has sat on the parent council for eight schools, including Danforth Collegiate and Technical Institute. But

she knows the challenges that can prevent a parent from being involved with his or her child's school.

"What I do find is sometimes I talk to parents who have a sense of guilt that they're not involved as much in their parent council because, say, they're a single parent or they're working," said Fox, a single mother herself.

"In Ward 16 it's not all about

our Beach schools. We go right up into East York and the demographic changes. English as a Second Language, and both parents working. What I really want is for all of those parents to feel they have a voice as well," she added.

Fox said there is always room for more community engagement.

"The trustee is an advocate for the parent — for either

an active parent in their own school, or a parent for whatever reason that is not as active — that they get equal attention," she said.

Fox is starting to build her platform by meeting with small groups of parents to introduce herself and discuss their hopes and concerns.

"As a trustee, you're that bridge. You're listening and hearing what parents want, but you're actively going out to hear what they want, not just waiting for them to come to you," she said.

If Fox gets elected as trustee, she doesn't want her role in education to stop there.

"I've been that teacher for so many years, and I'm still loving it. I love it so much that I don't want to step away from it," she said.

"One of the difficulties is that if you're a teacher with the TDSB you can't run as a trustee so you have to step away from that. That's why I think it's wonderful to have a teacher in that position. Because you do know exactly what's happening in the classroom. So I feel like I have a lot to bring to the role."

EDITORIALS

A transit fix-ation

Toronto's mayor and city council — including the East York delegation — have been at war over the TTC's future since last fall. Recent reports indicate that the subway system will finally be unable to handle Toronto's population by 2031 (never mind its intermittent inability to handle Toronto's population now).

But some steps are being taken. People living in East York's north end will be among the beneficiaries when a Light Rail Transit line is built across the top of the city, along Eglinton Avenue. But that won't be finished until 2020, and until then, all we can do is hope that motorists will stop yelling at those poor bus drivers plying route 34.

Meanwhile, someone suggested another LRT along Sheppard for some reason, so that's going through too. And this funny "John Tory" character is making the proposal for a Yonge Street Relief Line a major part of his platform. That would be a benefit to East York as well — connecting the Danforth with downtown via a new subway line. Scheduled completion date: 2031.

For perspective, 2031 is as far away from us as 1997. In 1997, the Hartford Whalers still existed. Barbara Hall was Toronto's mayor. And East York was still an autonomous municipality.

East York is in a difficult situation. While the Eglinton LRT and Yonge relief line will help move more East Yorkers more efficiently, there is still the prospect that they'll be bottlenecking in other areas of the city. For instance, the relief line may just end up funneling more people into the Bloor station mess, and from there, getting down to, say, Queen Street East without a car will remain no easy feat. In other words, going downtown from East York is not going to get much easier in the near future.

Then again, more people using these coming alternatives will reduce pressure on subway stops like Greenwood, Donlands, and Pape. That means that getting on the morning subway may no longer involve an intermediate step of waiting on the platform as a full train rolls away. And when the subways are working, let's remember that it still takes less than a half-hour to get to the heart of downtown.

In short, the TTC is improving. At non-peak times, buses and subways are still fast forms of transit. And the provincial government has said that it will throw money into Ontario transit projects — to the tune of \$15 billion. There's considerable potential for improvements to Toronto transit in that.

But even now, put it this way: At the end of the day, when waiting five minutes for a bus is something to complain about, maybe complaining isn't really necessary.

~ Louis Pin

Doors a-knockin'

Spring has arrived, and with that comes door-knocking galore. East Yorkers can expect visits from the usual Girl Guides selling cookies, teenage lawn-mowers — not to mention reminders to remember a man named Jesus. But with the Toronto municipal election on Oct. 27, East Yorkers can also expect candidates running for mayor, city council and school trustee to be canvassing in the neighbourhood over the summer.

East Yorkers may even find mayoral wannabes on their front stoop, or hosting neighbourhood rallies. But even if candidates Ford, Stintz, Tory, Chow and Soknacki don't show up on the doorstep or around the corner, there's a good chance that candidates for council and school board will. And some of them may be surprising. Most reasonably informed citizens of Toronto-Danforth would probably recognize their incumbent councillor Mary Fragedakis, for instance. But how about Al Gore?

Yes, a man named Al Gore who lives near Danforth and Woodbine is running for mayor. Chances are you've heard the name. But no, this would-be mayor is not that Al Gore.

Matt Mernagh, 40, is another candidate whose name will appear on your ballot for mayor. You may have heard of his marijuana activism; now you can send him to city hall.

Mainstream news media tend to concentrate their attention on established front-runners (often the incumbents) but that doesn't mean candidates are going to willingly stay in the dark.

In Toronto-Danforth, newcomer Dave Andre is seeking to oust Fragedakis as councillor, and he kicked off his campaign with a flourish, in the auditorium of the S. Walter Stewart library. Meanwhile, Mernagh's campaign manager, Tracy Lamourie, is a former East Yorker who says their campaign will be coming full-force into East York and the rest of Toronto.

"Matt is looking to engage youths and people who haven't previously been engaged (in politics) and wants to give them a chance to engage in a campaign and show them how politic works," Lamourie says.

But political engagement is a two-way street — and being informed is not just a civic right, but a responsibility shared by all voters.

In Harper v. Canada, the Supreme Court interpreted the right of meaningful participation to include the right to be informed when it ruled that spending limits on third-party political advertisements are constitutional.

Politicians must engage citizens if they want their support. But citizens must learn about the candidates to expand their options. There's no excuse for complaints of 'same-old-same-old' among voters when it comes to the field vying for council and school board.

~ Henry Chang Li

COLUMNS

Don't spread the bug

By now, you've probably heard of the "Heartbleed" bug. It compromises the encryption of supposedly private information such as usernames and passwords. It is estimated that the bug has affected two-thirds of the Internet.

Initially, the bug sent people frantically checking to see if they'd sent their information on a website that was affected; then they'd scramble to change their passwords. There was a lot of confusion around this — including confusion around what websites had been affected in the first place. And for the ones that were affected, users were unsure if a patch had been applied to repair the problem. (If not, changing passwords wouldn't matter.)

Then, when the Canada Revenue Agency was applying a patch of its own, it discovered that 900 social insurance numbers were stolen through Heartbleed.

I can imagine the worry that will go through the minds of those 900 people when the CRA writes to advise them of the breach. I myself have had experience with my personal information potentially falling into the wrong hands. And it

wasn't through the Internet, either. It was through regular old snail-mail.

I remember that sinking feeling when I received a letter from a service informing me they had accidentally sent mail with my personal information to someone else. I was also sent that person's information by mistake. I promptly sent it back, thinking nothing of it. But I panicked when I followed up with the company and they told me they hadn't received my letter back from the other person yet.

I know other people whose personal information has been exposed through the fault of the companies they gave it to. It's a messy, time-consuming ordeal involving back-and-forth updates.

We are told to be vigilant when it comes to sharing personal

information, but the discovery of the Heartbleed bug has once again underlined the importance of maintaining healthy skepticism about the security measures of agencies and organizations. And I hope the incident has prompted those

agencies and organizations to re-evaluate their policies in the event that their users and customers are one day affected.

As technology advances, there will inevitably be bugs that no one can control.

But this incident has reminded us that as much as we need to protect ourselves, companies are also expected to keep our information secure.

The Heartbleed bug isn't the first bug to put everyone's information at risk. But after its discovery I expect that everyone, companies and users alike, will be even more cautious.



Kimberly Agilpay

In defence of the sequel

There's a lot to be said about movie sequels. Unfortunately, not much of it is good. I'm sure that most of us can agree that we should have stopped after the first Matrix. Still, it seems that the custodians of every successful movie franchise have decided to drag out adaptations with movies parts two and three ad infinitum, even before our favourite British wizard decided to bisect his Deathly Hallows. (Cough, cough-the-Hobbit, cough...)

Sequels are usually characterized by the same characters — but rehashed and now as one-dimensional as wooden boards... and about as interesting.

But, once in a blue moon, a sparkling dia-

mond shines out in the sea of homogenous sludge churned out by the movie industry.

That would be something like The Incredibles.

Even though it has been a decade, fans of this film have always pined for a sequel. And although the original was very well-received, it never got that chance at bat again. Until now, that is.

With the announcement that The Incredibles 2 is actually going to happen, hope springs eternal that this will actually be a sequel worth watching. In fact, with a fan-base this strong and the original producer back at the helm,

it would almost take a concerted effort to screw this up.

It seems that old favourites like Finding Nemo and The Incredibles are getting a second chance at life after the failure of studios to produce anything but grizzled, grey post-apocalyptic futures and formulaic romantic comedies. And we should be glad. I'll draw a parallel to architecture. No, really, bear with me for a second:

In the old days of classical architecture, there were flying buttresses and gargoyles galore. Then came modernism... which seemed so clean. But what you really got was something soulless, formulaic. Architects became tired of what they called "the box." In order to revitalize their craft, to make "post-modern" and "neo-classical" architecture, they had to look to the past.

And filmmakers are at the stage where they need to, too. So don't fear the sequels of these shining gems of the past. See them for what they are, a necessary return to our roots.



Christopher Lum



Courtesy of City of Toronto Archives

Turning back the clock

We continue our series of photos portraying East York as it once was — drawn from the City of Toronto Archives. Textual information on these two pictures is scant; one is described simply as a plowing match in East York township, post-1900. And the other's caption just refers to the stables at Sunnybrook Farm post-1900. That would put it near the corner of what is now Bayview and Eglinton avenues.

Are two subway exits better than one?

The TTC says yes, but Chester station's neighbours worry about construction noise, parking

By XUYUN ZENG
The Observer

The TTC will build a second exit at Chester subway station at East York's southwest corner, and so TTC staff met with the public at Jackman Avenue Junior Public School last month to explain the need for it and to form a working group.

The representatives of the transit commission said in their presentation that having a second exit will improve customer convenience and provide an additional exit in case of emergency.

But some residents in attendance replied that it will disrupt their

quality of life as they deal with construction noise, crime, parking issues and expropriation of property. Another resident offered a counterpoint, saying that he appreciates the TTC improving accessibility by doing this, and his comments were received with applause by others.

"Right now, there is one entrance to Chester station. By providing another some distance away, for some people it will be closer to their business, closer to their home, to use that exit," said the TTC's head of property development, Anna Pace.

She added that a second exit can enhance safety — and provided a scenario to illustrate her point.

"As recently as 10 years ago, there was a fire in Greenwood station.... In a situation like that, we may have the train stop at Chester and a full train has to (be evacuated) before the smoke comes down the tunnel.

At the same meeting, people were urged to participate in the "local working group" that will discuss the details. Ward 29/Toronto-Danforth Councillor Mary Fragedakis said this will help establish the particular concerns of her constituents.

"I think that if you start to come to the process, to hear what people's concerns are, it will be revealed there. Tonight, people are

wondering if people's opinion's will be respected," Fragedakis said, "and I am going to make sure that the neighbours' opinions are going to be respected."

The TTC stepped up its efforts to consult the public after a fracas between residents, the city's ombudsman and the TTC about second exits at Greenwood and Donlands stations. According to a press release from the ombudsman, the TTC fared poorly in community consultations.

Bill Wyman, who lives near Donlands station, understands that the TTC wants to maximize public benefit, but he fears that his community might get increasingly busy

and might start to feel less like a residential area. Parking issues, no more street ball-hockey and pressure for rezoning were among his and his wife's fears.

"People like us don't want to have a whole lot of people suddenly," Wyman said. "A quiet little street corner suddenly becomes a major thoroughfare."

"I'm hopeful that people are happy that there is a process in place versus what happened the last time we had this discussion in this ward around second exits," Fragedakis said, "where the TTC came and presented locations and wanted to discuss the landscaping around the building."

Honouring her brother

Tazeen Alam, younger sister of Moeen Alam, gave a speech during the Moeen Centre's annual fundraising dinner on April 12 at Leaside Gardens. Moeen Centre is a non-profit organization that offers services for young adults who are physically disabled and developmentally challenged. The centre was built in memory of Moeen Alam, who was physically and developmentally challenged and lost his life at the age of 18 in a house fire. His family then decided to open a place to help families that may face the same frustrations. The centre is run completely based on private donations. Tazeen Alam said the services from Moeen Centre have a huge impact on not only the young adults, but also their families. She said if the centre can help even only one family to improve their quality of life, it is worthwhile.



Xueting Zhao /// The Observer



Paul Hantiuk // The Observer

Skaters at the second annual GTA Rollergirls community day at the Ted Reeve Arena pick themselves up after a four-way spill.

Derby girls roll through Main Street

By PAUL HANTIUK
The Observer

If you remember watching roller derby on television, you might put it somewhere in the athletic pantheon next to something like professional wrestling. However, here in the East York area, the GTA Rollergirls do their best to make the punk styling and brash alter egos associated with the sport the topper to an inclusive community-minded event.

On April 19, the “G-sTARS” played the Derby Debutants (the “Debs”) at the Ted Reeve Arena on Main Street, in their second-annual community game in support of the Beaches Lions Club.

The G-sTARS won 287-13 after a two periods of rough and tumble mayhem. Still, the mood was unmistakably one of camaraderie. And the next day,

Easter Sunday, the derby crew was also out in force to skate in the Beaches Easter parade.

“GTA Rollergirls have been around for a number of years,” said “Disgrace Jones” (Nikki Tremblay) — who has played for the “Debs” but who can also be found on the sidelines running the merchandise table.

“Girls of every shape and colour and size getting together to have fun and be themselves. Derby is about bringing the best out in everyone. And who knew that hitting could bring that out in people?”

In addition to helping the Lions Club and other community-minded groups, GTA Rollergirls founder Splat Benatar (Cynthia Brooks) was recognized on Saturday with a 2014 Governor General’s Caring Canadian Award. The league and its teams are not-for-profit.

It’s a rough sport and injuries happen, but even with the fast-pace and stiff hits, the players all react with equanimity when they get bowled over. It’s the kind of mutual respect you often miss in professional sports. The league prides itself on being inclusive to all, but there are preparations and training required to keep up.

“There’s a lot of commitment,” said CAT the Conqueror (Cat Kaddie) of the Debs. “First, when you start, you have to go through a 10-week module, and then you have to pass a minimum skill test which probably takes about four hours where you learn everything from hitting to stopping and falling and the rules of the game.”

She added: “You hear a lot about derby community and I didn’t really understand what that meant but it’s amazing.”

The game operates within a circuit similar to speed skating. On the track, each team has a “jammer.” The jammer is tasked with breaking through blockers from each team and then scoring points by doing laps around the track. The game is divided into two-minute intervals known as jams.

Derby is its own subculture. Its promoters see it as an uplifting release of tension and a self-confidence booster.

“We’re not a league you have to audition for, try out for; that’s what we want to put out there — the ‘hug’ of derby,” said Jones. “I would love to see more bringing kids to derby. My little girl — she’s five — I would love to have her strive to be a derby girl.”

The Ted Reeve Arena will next see Rollergirl action on Saturday, May 17, at 7 p.m., when the G-sTARS will take on the RDD Striking Vikings.

Candidates lining up for Liberal nomination

Cont’d. from page 1

Party of Canada. And I think I can carry that banner incredibly well and I want to be involved.”

Smith said that if he is chosen by local Liberals to represent the party in next year’s general election, he’ll campaign on a platform of better environmental protection and carbon regulation, democratic reform for fairer elections, affordable education, and evidence-based scientific decision-making in government.

“I think we see very little of it right now,” he said. “We have a government who has a terrible track record on the environment, a government who is implementing reforms to our election laws under the argument of fairness, when those reforms are incredibly unfair in fact and we have a government that cancelled the long-form census, and generally ignores experts in different policy fields in implementing their policies.”

Ultimately, he said, if he’s eventually elected to the House of Commons from Beaches-East York, “I will work hard to raise these issue in the House of Commons.”

Also vying to be the Liberal candidate in Beaches-East York is another lawyer, 39-year-old Jeff Rybak. Besides his work for Harmony Hall, Rybak’s website resume also includes committee work for YouthLink, an east-end organization advocating for disadvantaged young people.

The nomination will be decided by the riding association at a meeting that is yet to be scheduled.

In the meantime, the association executive is inviting all Liberals to its upcoming executive meeting, on Wednesday, April 30 at 7 p.m. in the second-floor Alex Christie Room of Community Centre 55, 97 Main St.

COMMUNITY

Artifacts provide clues to East York’s history

By TANYA DEBI
The Observer

The spotlight shone on the Danforth during a “field trip” by the East York Historical Society on April 16.

The organization held a social at the Nisbet Lodge on Pape Avenue just north of Danforth to share memories of the storied thoroughfare that runs along East York’s southern boundary.

Glen Moorhouse, the executive director of Nisbet, a Christian seniors’ residence, spoke to the audience first on the history of his facility and its sister buildings: McClintock Manor and Calvary Church.

Calvary Church has been serving East York since 1928 and its members founded Nisbet Lodge. Nisbet Lodge is part of the “Continuum of Care Model,” alongside McClintock Manor, an apartment building for seniors.

Rev. Billy Nisbet was originally the pastor of St. John’s Presbyterian Church, but he left the church over

theological differences. He went on to form St. John’s Evangelical Church, which later changed to Calvary Church and joined the Gospel Churches of Canada.

“It eventually became the largest church in its denomination,” Moorhouse said.

Former East York politician and historical society vice-president Alan



■ REDWAY

Redway was also in attendance, and he remembered the early stages of the church.

“My grandfather used to say that as he walked along the Danforth in those days, Billy Nisbet would be there with a coffee pot collecting money to build the church,” Redway said.

Moorhouse had with him a collection of items from old East York including an advertisement from the Don Valley Brick Company, dating back to the 1950s, and original

vintage bricks from two different brickyards from the mid-1900s. One was from the Logan company and the other from the J. Price company.

Moorhouse also displayed another East York treasure that he found nowhere near East York.

“I was at a garage sale up in Grey County and this fellow had a pair of ice tongs and I kept looking at them,” Moorhouse said, “and I saw the initials for the Lake Simcoe Ice Company, so that’s where those came from.”

The Lake Simcoe Ice Company was located in East York and supplied residents across the city with ice, in a time when food was kept cool with ice boxes, before the use of refrigerators. It lasted for over 60 years. What was the head office is now loft townhomes.

Moorhouse also talked proudly

about the publishing of Our Danforth: One Hundred Years of Memories.

The book’s content and photos mostly came from local residents. It has sold a thousand copies, which, Moorhouse said, “I’m told is quite an accomplishment for a Canadian book.”

The Toronto Star reviewed the book, which helped it cross the Canada-U.S. border.

“I had got a phone call from a lady in Texas, and she had grown up in the Danforth area, but lived in Texas for many years,” Moorhouse said. “She kept in touch by reading the Toronto Star online and she read the book review and then she ordered six copies on the spot!”

Redway chimed in with another memory about how things have really changed.

“My dad took me to Jack Fraser’s right around the corner here. At that time I got two complete new suits, for \$50,” he said, “and that was a lot of money back then.”



■ MOORHOUSE