



■ AGA KHAN MUSEUM



Tanya Debi /// Observer

Celebrating Islamic arts and culture

Prime Minister Stephen Harper joined the Aga Khan, spiritual leader to 15 million Shia Ismaili Muslims around the world, at the pre-opening of the Aga Khan Museum on Sept. 12. The \$300 million, 10,000 square metre museum, an architectural and cultural showpiece, is located at 77 Wynford Dr., and opened its doors to members of the public yesterday.

Mayoral debate hits E.Y.

By KIMBERLY AGLIPAY
The Observer

The Evergreen Brick Works was the stage on Sunday for a scene in the drama surrounding the Toronto mayoral campaign.

Two days after Rob Ford's exit from the race for what has turned out to be cancer and brother Doug Ford's entry, the Brick Works on Bayview Avenue played host to a long-scheduled mayoral debate. Doug Ford did not attend, but the other main candidates did, and a fringe rival.

Over 600 people gathered at the event to listen to John Tory, Olivia Chow and Ari Goldkind talk about youth, homelessness, transit and taxes.

"Mr. Tory, you have gone from faith-based school funding to faith-based transit funding scheme," Chow said, to numerous boos from the crowd.

Chow reaffirmed her stance against Tory's SmartTrack plan, stating, "I do not support building the Scarborough subway, and therefore, there's a billion dollars we can invest for immediate improvement."

■ See CHOW, page 8

Slow down, drivers told, for the sake of the children

Death of Georgia Walsh, 7, last summer prompts community-run 'Kids at Play' campaign for safer roads in Leaside and beyond

From tragedy to action

■ Georgia Walsh, 7, was hit by a minivan at the intersection of Millwood Road and McRae Drive on July 16 and was later pronounced dead after being rushed to hospital.

■ The 'Kids at Play' campaign was launched shortly after Georgia's death. Free lawn signs were distributed in the Leaside community.

■ Toronto City Council approved a motion Aug. 26 to ban right turns at the Millwood and McRae intersection.

■ A 'No Turn On Red' sign was set up at the East York intersection following the approval of the motion.

By XUETING ZHAO
The Observer

The municipal election is in full swing, but many of the signs dotting Leaside lawns this fall are not there to promote a candidate.

Instead, they're a reminder to drivers to proceed with caution.

The signs feature the silhouette of a child and a slogan saying, 'Slow down, Kids at Play' and are part of a public safety campaign launched after the tragic death of seven-year-old Georgia Walsh earlier this summer. She was struck by a minivan on July 16 at the intersection of Millwood Road and McRae Drive and rushed to the Hospital for Sick Children, where she was pronounced dead.

Georgia was the only daughter of Conservative Party president John Walsh and his wife Jillian, who also have three sons.

"Traffic and responsible driving is something that is very important to all people living in the city," said Roger Cattell, one of

■ See CAMPAIGN, page 5



Xueting Zhao /// Observer

Grayson, 5, puts up a sign at the second-round pickup window event held by the 'Kids at Play' campaign at Leaside High School earlier this month.

POLICE & FIRE

Cab driver sought in sexual assault

Toronto police are asking for the public's help after a woman reported being sexually assaulted by a taxi driver in the area of Donlands and Mortimer avenues on Sept. 8 after 11 p.m.

After she was driven to her home, she went inside her house to get money to pay the driver. She said the driver followed her inside and sexually assaulted her.

Police describe the suspect as "brown, short hair, clean-shaven, with full lips."

Teen attacked in elevator

Police are asking for the public's help after a 16-year-old girl was allegedly sexually assaulted in an elevator near her home in the area of Don Mills Road and Overlea Boulevard on Sept. 4 at around 4:30 p.m.

The suspect is described as a brown 50-year-old man with a heavy build.

~ Will Alcopra

Police seek third stabbing suspect

Two men have been arrested and a Canada-wide warrant has been issued for a third suspect after a double-stabbing on Danforth Avenue Sept. 8. One of the victims, Dwayne Goodwin, 22, died from his injuries while the other man survived.

Vaughn Shears, 19, and a 16-year-old male have been arrested and charged with second-degree murder and attempted murder.

~ Will Koblensky

Biggest issue is traffic, Papadakis says

By HENRY CHANG LI
The Observer

George Papadakis says that since the day he set foot in Canada, the outward appearance of East York has remained the same, but its problems are coming to a boil.

"Things are getting worse," he said in an interview. "The population is growing, but our infrastructures are still last-century."

Papadakis came to Canada to visit friends and family, but stayed as a landed immigrant and eventually became a Canadian citizen.

He started life in Canada living along Pape Avenue while delivering film reels to theatres.

He later studied refrigeration and heating at George Brown College, where he earned a T.S.S.A. certificate as a refrigerator operator and mechanic.

Papadakis joined the campaign on Aug. 25, running for city council in Ward 31/Beaches-East York.

"I'm happy to have stayed in Canada

and I want to give back to the community that supported me," he said.

"I want to contribute by adding my professional and civic experience to the council."

Although Papadakis has little political experience, he is heavily involved in the Greek community and various charitable organizations.

For the past three years, he has been the president of the Thessalonikean Society of Toronto, as well as holding various positions in the federal and provincial Hellenic Congress, an umbrella organization of all Greek groups in Canada.

Papadakis said the biggest issue in Beaches-East York is traffic.

He wants permanent solutions for local problems like potholes and road maintenance rather than quick patch-jobs. In the LRT vs. subway debate, he openly supports subway extension or the creation of new lines.

"The LRT takes up space from cars and parking space," he said. "Subways won't affect the outdoor environment and traffic."

For the past four years, Papadakis said, a dysfunctional city council has failed to serve Torontonians and incumbent Janet Davis has not been around for the people she serves.

"I have people complaining to me that they have never seen her in the years she's been elected," he said.

"You can only learn so much from the news. You have to be there to listen to people talk about the problems and solutions."

Senior issues have largely been left out of the campaign, Papadakis said, so he wants to help seniors with simple tasks like snow shovelling or lawn mowing.

"They contributed (to society) for some a -

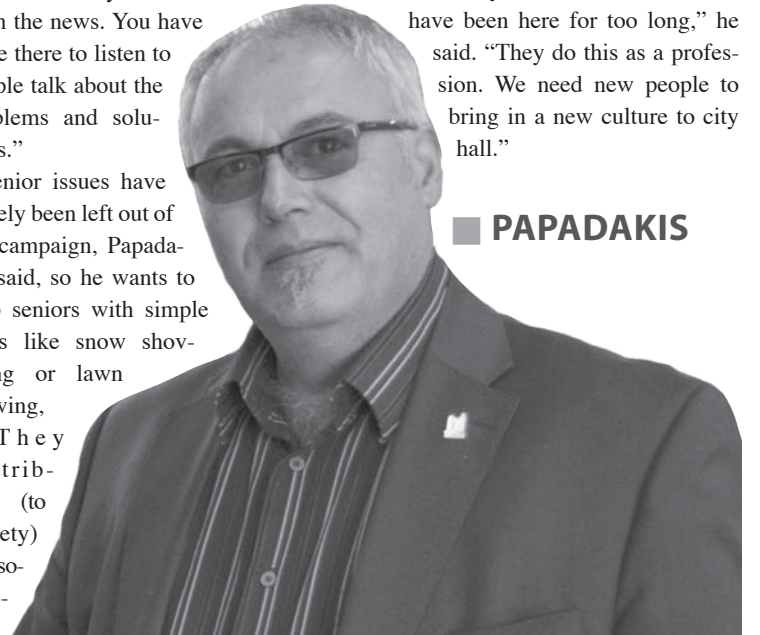
ny years," he said. "We shouldn't leave them on the side."

Mayoral candidates can expect no endorsement from Papadakis.

He said he wants to work with everyone on council. Ideally, Papadakis hopes to see new faces after the election.

"Too many of them (councillors) have been here for too long," he said. "They do this as a profession. We need new people to bring in a new culture to city hall."

PAPADAKIS



Trustee-hopeful wants better use of TDSB funds

By SAMANTHA BRIDGES
The Observer

As a mother of two, Jennifer Story knows what it's like to be a working mom and an active member of the community. Balancing work and relationships, she prides herself on being one of those people on whom others can rely for support and a response to the issues of the community.

A decade later, with some political experience already under her belt, she's running for public school board trustee in Toronto-Danforth because, she says, the issues at hand need addressing now.

"What concerns me the most is the leadership and direction of our education system," Story says.

"I feel like the board is divided into cliques, so I'm interested in seeing how decisions can become closer to unanimous."

The well-being of children and their education has always been Story's number one priority.

One of the issues that she says the TDSB is facing is the level of revenue that is coming in and whether it's matching the best interests of the community.

"People need to know what's involved," she said in an interview. "What I'm finding is that there is a lot



Samantha Bridges // The Observer

Jennifer Story (right) speaks to an East York resident about some of the issues facing public schools.

of desire to bring in revenue, but people aren't asking enough questions as to what strings are attached to this money and whether it's in the best interest of the children and community."

Along with help from supporters in the East York area, Story still looks to one of her mentors and

inspirations — Jack Layton. She worked alongside Layton for many years when he was the New Democrat MP for Toronto-Danforth — and federal party leader — and their time together fueled her passion to one day run in a campaign of her own.

Story said that helped her learn to touch base with different communities throughout the city, proving that you can communicate and reach out to people from across the aisle.

"(Layton) was really one of a kind. He was the true example of someone who could bring different communities together despite any differences," she said. "He had that way of talking to people that brought everyone together."

Story isn't the only one who believes the TDSB has hit a crisis point. Dr. Charles Pascal, a University of Toronto professor and former deputy minister of education, says that Story has the integrity to tackle the job of trustee.

"You need to look for a candidate that is experienced, has high integrity and can ultimately play nice in the sandbox," Pascal said.

"Jennifer has these qualities because she has both the skills and the judgment that is needed to urgently make the change in the school board."

ARTS

Poet laureate performs for adoring crowd

By PRESTON DOZSA
The Observer

It's a cold and wet Saturday afternoon, a stark contrast to the atmosphere at the Children's Peace Theatre. Inside, the crowd listens intently as Toronto's poet laureate, George Elliot Clarke, takes the stage and begins to read through several of his poems.

Except it's not the reading of poetry that the crowd is here for. It's the performance of it. With a booming voice and forceful movements to emphasize each line, Clarke makes his performance captivating.

"Poetry is often read silently in classrooms or in private," he said. "But poetry has to be recited and performed in order to truly appreciate it."

Clarke is one of the many poets who performed at the second Annual East End Poetry Festival on Saturday. In addition to the performances, the festival also showcased music from the Emily Steinwall Trio and a poetry workshop for children. According to East End Arts communications co-ordinator Tanya Olek-

suik, the festival originated from a desire to showcase the work of poets not just in East York, but also Toronto as a whole.

"We want to help expose Toronto poets and poetry to the mainstream," she said, "and there's a wide variety of poetry being performed at the festival this year."

Besides Clarke, who also performed at the first East End Poetry Festival, the poets included the BAM Toronto Youth Poetry Slam Team, Randall Adjei, Dwayne Morgan and Rosemary Sullivan.

Councillors Mary Fragedakis and Janet Davis were in attendance to show support to East York's artistic community. Both councillors pushed the city for additional funding to East End Arts in order to make the festival possible.

"We were not represented by a local arts

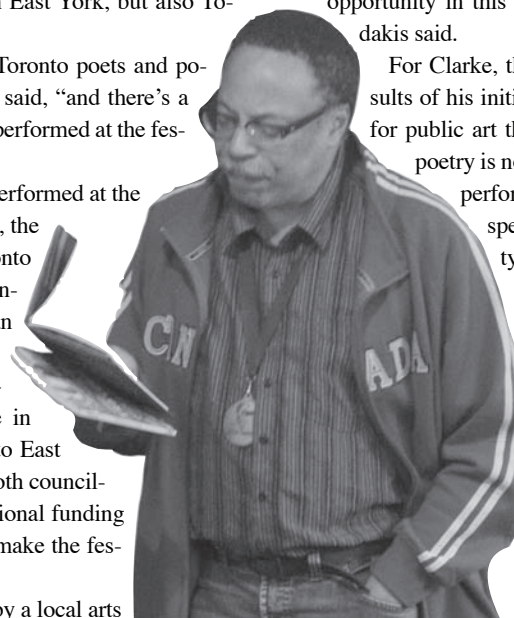
service organization in East York, and so it was our opportunity in this council to fix that," Fragedakis said.

For Clarke, the festival is one of the results of his initiative to create more spaces for public art throughout the city. To him,

poetry is not just a personal creation or performance, but an art form that speaks to the wider community as well.

"Poetry is about speaking personal thoughts and questions to one's community," he said, "but it also speaks truths to the issues that are present within a community, whether it's ethnically or geographically."

CLARKE



Nationalist Party wants Canadian flag displayed

By NOEL RANSOME
The Observer

The far right wing is once again staking a claim in an East York election.

Bob Smith and the Nationalist Party of Canada will be on the municipal ballot again in Ward 31/Beaches-East York.

Smith ran for councillor in Ward 31 in 2003, and came in fourth place in a four-candidate field — with 414 votes.

But he's trying again because, as he's written in his "Bob's Beat" blog, he considers incumbent councillor Janet Davis to be a "commie feminist." Since 1972, Smith has run for school trustee, city councillor, mayor, MPP and MP, but he's never finished anywhere other than near or at the bottom of the voting heap.



■ SMITH

Between elections, he helps maintain the Nationalist Party of Canada, an unregistered party with a Coxwell Avenue postal address that has marketed itself on the basis of promoting European heritage and white power in Canada.

Smith and the party's founder, Don Andrews, were convicted in the 1980s under Canada's laws against "hate propaganda," and their party website remains strident in its position on Canadian culture and race.

"We're concerned about Canadian affairs and nationalism," Smith said.

In 1991, when East York was still an independent municipality, the Nationalist Party surprised many in the borough and beyond by drawing 18 per cent of the votes in that year's election for borough mayor. Afterward, a white supremacist group called the Heritage Front operated an office on Laird Drive and began holding meetings in the community, saying East York was "fertile ground" for them. But that 1991 mayoral election was the high-water mark for far-right politicians in East York — a community that generally votes left-of-centre. For instance, Smith's draw of the Ward 31 vote in 2003 was 2.5 per cent.

This time around, he said, he's campaigning on a platform that includes improving property standards along the eastern stretch of Danforth Avenue. He said he's been particularly frustrated with the lack of response to potholes and to poorly kept neighbourhood roads generally.

But beyond that, "the neighbourhoods are looking scruffier, with stores closed down, and there's an absence of Canadian flags on houses and businesses."

Smith has been the chairman of his party's "Canadian Flag Perpetual Pride Campaign," founded in 2010. Its aim is to encourage local businesses and schools to display the Canadian flag and replace those that have become tattered.



Ramon Lafée /// The Observer

Pushpa Mathanalingam has been an East York resident since she immigrated to Canada in 1997. She says building a network with parents, principals and teachers is important.

Trustee candidate says safety is a key priority

By RAMON LAFÉE
The Observer

Pushpa Mathanalingam is a single immigrant mother raising two kids and running her own business.

With so many responsibilities, you might think there's no time or energy left to think of other demanding tasks — like running in a municipal election campaign.

But that's not the case for Mathanalingam, a health and safety consultant, who is running in the upcoming election against incumbent Gerri Gershon as a candidate for public school trustee in Don Valley West.

"I want to do something for this community. I have the strength to do it. When I have a dream, I fight for it. That's how I got my own business," she said, referring to her health and safety business.

Mathanalingam was born in Sri Lanka and arrived in Canada in 1997, alone with her two young kids — and a willingness to succeed. After many difficult years, she was finally able to attend university and pursue her dreams.

"Education is the best thing for us. When I arrived, I didn't have anything," she said.

Mathanalingam has lived in the East York area since her arrival in Canada, and she said she considers all of the people in her community to be her family. As a result, she has dedicated a lot of time working in the community that she lives in, volunteering her time for more than 10 years now.

In this way, she sees her run for trustee as a natural development.

"I think a trustee must concentrate on the budget and the province's services,

especially all related to the safety of the kids, and be aware of violations, bullying, harassment, etc.," Mathanalingam said, "My first action as a trustee will be to go to every school in our community and speak to the principals, the teachers, and then do the same with the parents' committee. We will work together, maintaining this key network."

The Toronto District School Board was in the news recently for voting against a motion that would have pressured the city to enforce public nudity laws during the city's gay Pride Parade. Mathanalingam isn't sure the trustees made the right decision.

"I accept gays and lesbians and their right to express themselves in the parade, but this kind of stuff.... The board needed to think more

about it, because of the kids," she said. "As a mother, you can't explain to them (your children) why people are nude or wearing certain garments."

The TDSB is also considering requiring mandatory criminal background checks for all parent-volunteers at schools.

"If the volunteers have direct contact with the kids, then yes, everybody is doing it, from big companies to small business, so it's fine," Mathanalingam said. "The kids' safety is the most important issue."

Mathanalingam also has a proposal of her own for TDSB schools.

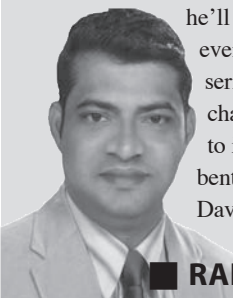
"I would like to add meditation and yoga classes to schools," she said, "not from a religious point of view, of course, but in order to build the kids' inner strength."

Ward 31 hopeful wants to banish bedbugs

By ERIN SANDEL
The Observer

This isn't Russell Rahman's first time running for city councillor in Ward 31/Beaches-East York.

But this time, he thinks he'll pose an even more serious challenge to incumbent Janet Davis.



■ RAHMAN

Also known as Rasal Rahman, the community newspaper publisher and candidate for the Oct. 27 election is an immigrant from Bangladesh who moved to Canada in 2003. He said in an interview that he's been living in East York ever since, and that he has a love for the community and all of the different people who live here.

"It's a multicultural community," Rahman said. "It's really awesome."

Rahman ran against Davis for the same councillor's

position in 2010. He came in fifth out of seven candidates on the ballot, collecting just over 1,000 votes and six per cent of the total cast.

He says now that he did not expect to win then, but he hopes this time around people will see his determination and passion for the community.

Rahman has a few local issues that he hopes to target if elected. The first is adding more community centres to Ward 31. The second is improving public safety in

the area.

"People are still a little scared to come out at night," he said. "We have so many dark alleys and crimes happening in the community. For the business owners, there is still a lot of shoplifting going on."

Another plank in his campaign platform is to target what he says is an ongoing epidemic in many apartment buildings within the community.

"All of the apartments in East York have bed bugs,"

Rahman said. "People living there with kids, they are suffering. No one is doing anything about it."

If elected, he said he hopes to facilitate decisive action to solve the problem before it gets worse.

Rahman publishes the East Yorker community newspaper, which is online and comes out twice a month in newsprint.

He said that newspaper publishing was something that he did back in Bangladesh, and he thought

East York could use another local news medium.

"The East Yorker, it was my dream," he said. "East York is between two big cities, Scarborough and Toronto.... We need a voice of our own."

Rahman, who describes himself as "a hard-working guy," says his youth and charisma would benefit the community.

"Even if I don't get elected," he said, "I will continue, because I love East York."



Paulina Pestryakov /// The Observer

LEFT: Jon Burnside, co-creator of the new Leaside lapel pin, stands with the former Leaside municipal chain of office showcased at the Leaside public library branch. RIGHT: Leaside's Trace Manes Park, where the Leaside coat of arms and motto is displayed on the banner.

'Pinning' down Leaside's history

By **PAULINA PESTRYAKOV**
The Observer

A house, a sunrise and two hands are among the elements gracing the coat of arms of one of East York's most distinguished neighbourhoods — a coat of arms featured on a recently pressed line of lapel pins.

The design and the pin are meant as patriotic representations of Leaside, which has been celebrating its centennial since last year. According to their creators, Renee Jacoby and Jon Burnside, the design and pin are helping to take Leaside "to the next century."

"We have a deep sense of pride in Leaside," said Burnside — who is also running in the Oct. 27 municipal election for city councillor from Don Valley West. "When we were creating it, we really thought it would be nice to have a

sense of community or bring a focal point to the community. Every sports team, government and successful organization has its own mascot as its focal point."

One pressing of the pin sold out in about six weeks, raising \$3,000 for the Leaside Property Owners' Association (LPOA).

The pin features a rising sun, a house, a tree canopy and two hands in co-operation, celebrating the "multiculturalism, collaboration and future" of the community.

"We did pay attention to detail. The community has changed so much in its racial make-up and we wanted to celebrate the positive change," Burnside said.

"It took us a long time, especially when we are creating something of this size on metal, to get the colours right, and you can see the combination of various communities, especial-

ly through the colour difference of the joining arms," he added.

Extensive research using the Toronto archives and local historian Jane Pitfield's book on Leaside also helped Burnside and Jacoby's creation. Burnside said the cover of Pitfield's book, which features the original Lea family home — the name behind Leaside — had "inspired one of the elements of the coat of arms."

"Pitfield has been the storykeeper of our community and we needed to show respect to her," Jacoby said. "We are now paving the way and we want to take it to the next century."

Jacoby and Burnside, who met at Leaside United Church, have maintained a friendship for 30 years. After LPOA director and local historian Geoff Kettel announced a project that would represent the community in celebration of its 100th anniversary last year, the

two thought it would be fitting to create the coat of arms together on the lapel pin.

However, public awareness was more important than sales of the lapel pin for Jacoby and Burnside after its creation.

In fact, news of the brass and enamel glazed metal pin spread through garden clubs and open houses at schools, rather than conventional advertising. The "intimate sales" represented the "true spirit" of the community, especially to those who did not know it well.

"I don't want our voice to be lost," Jacoby said. "There are ways to restore and preserve our past and take us to a new voice and I don't want our voice to be forgotten, not just at the community level, but at the city level."

The remaining Leaside lapel pins sell for \$5 each and can be purchased by contacting Jon Burnside at 416-625-1415.

Owner of first aid service says workers need to be trained

By **PAULINA PESTRYAKOV**
The Observer

According to one of the people who teaches it, first aid, as serious as it sounds, has not been taken seriously enough in the workplace.

Bill Yager, owner and instructor for First Aid Service Teams, or FAST, has had 30 years of experience in professional emergency and sports medical services and training. His classes cater to all members of the community, including students, parents, children or professionals in any work environment. However, his experience and research have led him to take the view that Toronto is "not well-prepared when it comes to first aid, especially in any workplace."

Yager explained that "usually an employer will have only one person who is trained in first aid in a particular work environment." But that still leaves the employer largely unprepared, "because if the person (trained) is not there at the moment, there will not be anyone who will be able to handle or respond to an emergency situation," he said. "In a job site, there needs to be more people trained in first aid, if not the whole team."

Yager said he went door-to-door among businesses along the Danforth between Broadview and Woodbine avenues, and almost nobody had

first aid training.

He also said that "day-care workers are being inadequately trained when it comes to first aid/CPR."

Last year, he said, 175 daycare workers were trained through FAST — and not one of them had a prior first aid certification.

But his organization isn't only training those in the workforce. Aside from students in schools or those who need the certification for work purposes, FAST caters to families, specifically children.

"We have a free program that focuses on what to do until the ambulance comes," says Franziska Ruegger, co-owner of FAST. "The program is good for families and younger children, teaching people how to call 911, and it's also offered in many different languages. The more you know, the easier it is to deal with."

Programs for first aid are usually held once a month, but due to the small number of people attending, there are times when the sessions have to be cancelled.

"Many people do not see the importance of first aid classes and learning it, not only for work sites, but also for personal knowledge," Ruegger said.

The Royal Canadian Legion, 1240 Wood-



Paulina Pestryakov /// The Observer

Bill Yager instructs his students on proper first aid and CPR techniques at the Royal Canadian Legion in East York.

bine Ave. at Cosburn Avenue, hosts first aid classes instructed by FAST. They're especially geared to people such as employees of taxi and limousine companies, bakeries and dental

clinics.

"First aid training is like insurance," Yager said. "You only realize you had done it once you see that you need it."

Sagar ready to listen to the community

First-time school board candidate says she wants to 'be there for the people'

By **TANYA DEBI**
The Observer

Jen Sagar realized that as a real estate agent, she has skills that help her form strong relationships with the people in her community.

"In real estate you deal with people," she explained. "You listen to what they need and what they are looking for and you do a lot of identifying and problem-solving. I am a professional negotiator; bringing two sides together is important."

Now Sagar hopes to use that experience on the Toronto District School Board.

"A priority of mine is that I will be available to people when they need it.

I want them to have a dialogue with me," she said. "You take the information that they give you and you roll up your sleeves, get to work and start finding answers for them."

So Sagar is running for TDSB trustee in Ward 16, Beaches-East York. She is currently the school council chair at Glen Ames



SAGAR

Senior Public School. This is her first time running for school board.

"I saw a need for someone who is relevant in the system, who really understands, who can be there for people, someone who really listens," she said.

Sagar said she is passionate about her community, and she wants to be someone people can feel comfortable bringing their issues to.

"With everyone I speak to, I need a way to follow up with them. I need to have a way to document the conversation," she said.

"So I will get a form and every person I speak with, I ask what they are reaching out to me about. I would ask who they have spoken to, whether it be a teacher, principal or the superintendent, and help them have these conversations."

This way, she added, "we can really start pulling the data of what is going on in the community and see, 'We have had this many calls with this issue, or this many people reaching out because they want to see a certain program.' Then we can bring them together and have an information session."

Sagar's family lives in East York and she has three children who have gone through schools in the TDSB system. She said she learns from her children every day and believes the board should do more to get students' opinions.

"I would ask, 'Do you want this in your school? How does it make you feel?' If the students say no and feel horrible about it, then why would we put it in their schools?" she said.

Christine Roberts is a member of the "Team Jen" campaign. She said she supports Sagar because she is a remarkable candidate.

"Personally, Jen's integrity and honesty are impressive. She truly cares about people and is enthusiastic about making our schools a better place, for children and their families."

Commenting on the current controversy over TDSB trustee spending habits, Sagar said, "It's a no-brainer. If I'm using taxpayers' money, they should know what it's being spent on."

Overall, she said, "we want to make sure that in our schools are kids are safe and healthy and have a great environment to learn and the tools they need to thrive."



Xueting Zhao// The Observer

A memorial has been established at the intersection of Millwood Road and McRae Drive, where Georgia Walsh was fatally hit on July 16.

Campaign moves beyond Leaside

Cont'd. from page 1

the founding members of the campaign. "We need to talk about it and we need to address it."

"The sign is a pledge from everybody who has a sign on their lawn that says, 'I'm going to be a better driver and I am going to drive more responsibly and traffic is important to me,'" he added. "Hopefully this helps change behaviour."

On Sept. 4, members of the campaign held the second round of the pickup-window event at Leaside High School. Local communities showed tremendous support for the campaign by giving generous donations and volunteering.

Carl-Ann Munns, who represents the Starbucks business community in the Leaside

area, collaborated with Olivia Thomas, owner of The Olde Yorke Fish and Chips restaurant, to set up in-store donation boxes for the campaign.

"It's been a great success so far," Munns said. "The customers are coming from across the GTA and are very supportive."

Leaside resident Jennifer Avveduto is a mother of four who volunteers with the campaign.

"The tragic death of Georgia Walsh really hit home for all of us," she said. "As a community, we would like to come together and try to make it a safer environment for everybody, for drivers and for pedestrians."

What started as a neighbourhood event trying to raise awareness of responsible driving and protect the safety

of children has now attracted interest from across the city.

"We are very interested in getting signs because we worried about traffic in our neighbourhood, too," said Rachel Nelson, a mother of three from Bennington Heights.

"We want to have signs in our area in the hopes of people will pay attention and slow down and avoid any other terrible fatalities."

Andrei Sherwin, co-founder of the campaign and designer of the lawn signs, explained that this is not a "Leaside-specific" initiative.

"It's meant to be for any community that wants to and needs to let drivers know there are kids around and that safe streets are priority," he said. "We'd love it to be everywhere — every neighbourhood and every city."

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Pick up a sign, put it on your lawn and make a commitment to driving more responsibly

- Like the 'Kids at Play' Facebook page and follow the progress of the campaign

- Donations can be given at all Starbucks stores in the Leaside area and at The Olde Yorke Fish and Chips at 96 Laird Dr.

- Anyone can now place an order to get their own 'Kids at Play' sign by emailing jbyronweese@icloud.com



Xuyun Zeng// The Observer

Bells on Danforth

Hundreds of cyclists rode through East York on Sunday during the Bells on Danforth mass cycling ride. The event started at East Lynn Park and finished at Toronto City Hall.

EDITORIALS

For richer or for poorer

This fall's municipal election might distract from the social quandary in Don Valley West, but after voters in Ward 26 choose their representative next month, an unfortunate truth will remain: the people of Thorncliffe Park and Flemingdon Park are among the most impoverished in Toronto.

Low-income housing, substandard living conditions and unemployment plague especially the many immigrants who settle in the area. Most are South Asian. According to a report released last month by a group of social service agencies and activists, the neighbourhood of Leaside — next door to Thorncliffe — boasts a child poverty rate under five per cent (tied for the best rate in the city); Thorncliffe Park's child poverty rate is reported at being over 50 per cent. Worse yet, many of the parents of these children have professional degrees, yet lack the opportunity to apply them. This is more than troubling; it is flat-out embarrassing.

City council is trying to ease poverty across Toronto. In April, it voted to draft a Poverty Reduction Strategy, focused on implementable actions it could take. For whoever is elected on Oct. 27, the first priority — and the second through 10th — should be to push this initiative forward. The Alliance for a Poverty Free Toronto has been asking city councillors to assist the effort by pledging to address poverty in the city. In Ward 26, the representative will need to do far more.

Most observers think that representative will either be the incumbent, John Parker, or his main rival, Jon Burnside. Whether it's one of these two frontrunners, or one of the dark horses in the race, whoever prevails needs to change the approach to poverty in Ward 26. With such high poverty rates, linked to Thorncliffe Park's status as a community largely for low-income immigrants, decisive action is needed immediately. Wheels need to be set in motion. And considering that Parker has been in office for eight years, maybe it's time for someone new at city hall who will better represent the people who live in what one of this city's daily newspapers once called "high-rise ghettos."

But ultimately, candidates don't matter at this point; people living in destitution, perpetually struggling to scrape by on food and shelter, do. When the average household income of a neighborhood is \$26,000 lower than the city average, they matter. When the vast majority are shovelled into rented apartments, unable to break out of a perpetual cycle of poverty, they matter. When more than one of every two children in Thorncliffe Park is living without adequate food or shelter, they matter.

Whoever polls highest in October will need to put the communities of Thorncliffe Park and Flemingdon Park on their shoulders. Any less would be doing their community a devastating injustice.

~ Louis Pin

Health is in our hands

East Yorkers can be forgiven for turning an apprehensive gaze to West Africa and the terrible outbreak of Ebola there. We remember the dark days of 2003, when East York — and especially Toronto East General Hospital — was at the epicentre of the public health crisis around Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) that originated in China.

This week we were told that Ebola constitutes another health crisis, and that this one is "unparalleled in modern times." The U.S. is stepping up to confront it 'over there' before it lands over here. Canada needs to step up as well. But at the same time, the people who should know tell us that, for now, we shouldn't be overly worried.

"Canadians are at less of a risk for an Ebola outbreak because there have been no confirmed cases in Canada to date," said Dr. James Downey, the head of the infectious diseases division at TEGH. "Here at Toronto East General Hospital, we continue to speak to colleagues at public health agencies to keep abreast of any developments."

Downey added that TEGH recently hosted a hands-on, interactive workshop for staff who might have to deal with patients with Ebola symptoms. It included donning and doffing protective equipment, proper disposal of biohazardous materials and utilizing special kits to handle patients with these symptoms.

But let's not let the current media attention around Ebola distract us from some other less dramatic public health concerns.

For instance, East York veterinarian Dr. Jonathan Mitelman warns of another disease that he says poses more of a clear and present danger for Canadians.

"It's already here, and there have already been an increasing number of cases in the Ottawa Valley," Mitelman warns. "Young children, as well as pets, have been bitten by ticks carrying the Lyme disease. At least 38 kids have been infected. It's a bigger risk than Ebola."

Lyme disease is an illness that originates from the bite of infected blacklegged ticks. They can bite and infect both people and house pets, and the health effects can be serious and long-lasting. It's enough of a threat that a centre of Lyme disease research and treatment is scheduled to open at the Humber River Hospital next year. But there are easy steps that we can all take to prevent it. And generally, Dr. Mitelman says, we can stave off a host of maladies with simple hygiene.

"Being aware, having hand sanitizer and building up your immune system by eating and sleeping well will pay great dividends."

Now that's a public health policy that we can all embrace.

~ Jeremy Hon

COLUMNS

Live a life of laughter

I don't usually take the deaths of celebrities to heart, but this summer, someone I thought of as a legend died. It's unfathomable how someone with such frenetic energy and such a great sense of humour could be in so much pain. When Robin Williams died, I took it a little more personally than I had expected. Truthfully, it surprised me how the death of someone I'd only ever seen on TV could remotely upset me. I mean, I know the characters he played were fictional and he wasn't really Mrs. Doubtfire.

To me, Williams wasn't just an actor or a comedian. He was human and an artist in his own right. His death made me see what I've always heard — that no one is immune to suffering.

Whether you're an actor or comedian, student or engineer, it doesn't matter... because depression doesn't discriminate.

Depression is a serious condition that needs to be taken more seriously. It affects many people in many places regardless of their lifestyles.

But unlike other illnesses, depression deserves consistent attention — meaning it should be talked about even

when celebrities or public figures aren't succumbing to it.

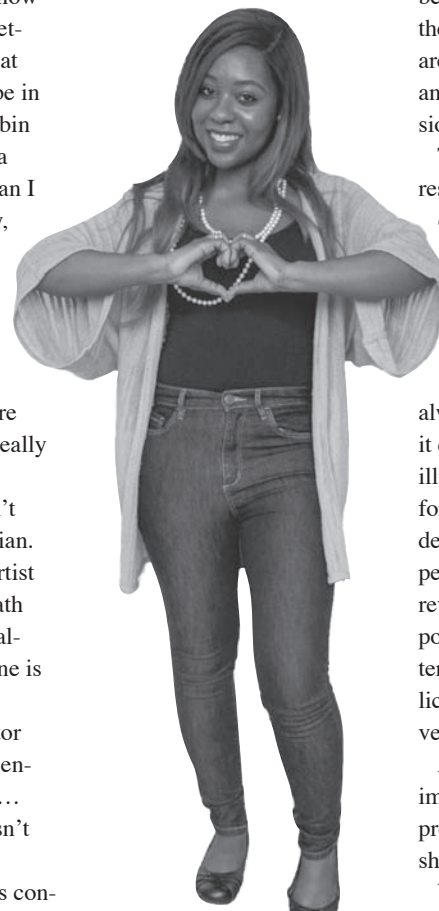
A more intense discussion on this issue needs to happen because people need to know the facts, and know that there are resources out there to help anyone coping with depression.

Throughout the years, many research studies have been conducted to find cures for different illnesses, but depression isn't often at the top of the list. This needs to change.

Just because we can't always see it doesn't mean it doesn't exist. Like other illnesses, the symptoms for people who suffer from depression can vary. Many people close to Williams revealed that he could be the polar opposite of the characters he played. He was publicly delightful, but privately very shy.

At the end of the day, it's important to realize that as precious as life is, it is also short.

While you may never know the inner demons people are facing, it's important to love one another and be there for each other.



Virginia Mashingaidze

Equations and elections

Any teacher will tell you that math is an important aspect of a child's education. However, ask any child what they think and you'll get answers along the lines of 'When will I ever use trigonometry?'

To a degree, they're right. I haven't done trigonometry in years. But knowing how to apply mathematical concepts in real life can let you do certain things — like winning elections.

Allow me to explain, in the case of Olivia Chow and how I think she now has an advantage in her campaign to become mayor of Toronto.

Not because of the dubious reputations of ex-candidate Rob Ford and current candidate Doug Ford (although that's part of it), but because of simple math. There is a political spectrum of voters. Or in this case, the more appropriate metaphor may be political pie. And each candidate tries to carve out the biggest slice of that pie to win.

But the more candidates there are, the more potential slices of the pie there are — and therefore the less total votes that any

one candidate needs to win. But you need to keep in mind that "spectrum" that I mentioned earlier, because it's not necessarily divided evenly.

Objectively speaking, Chow is the only serious left-wing contender, while John Tory and Doug Ford must split the right-wing vote. So, in a gross oversimplification: Chow stands to get everyone sitting on the left, while Doug Ford and John Tory will have to split their right-of-centre voters. Advantage Chow.

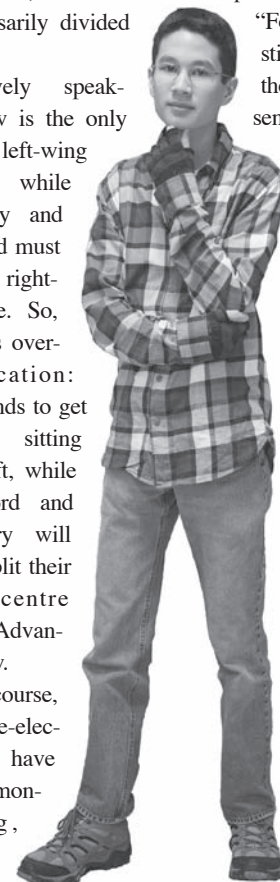
Of course, as the pre-election polls have been demonstrating, it's more complicated than

that. And looking ahead, it seems likely that Doug Ford will inherit at least some support from his ailing brother's "Ford Nation." But the substitution of Doug for Rob in the mayor's race may also send some Ford Nation voters to John Tory.

Meanwhile, for the most part, Olivia Chow will keep all of her left-leaning voters, so long as she doesn't scare them off.

Of course, even with a theoretical mathematical advantage it's not in the bag. Remember, there is a middle-of-the-road vote that doesn't identify with left or right. That means the election could turn in either Chow's or Tory's favour.

So if Chow can draw in these voters, her odds are improved. Then, of course, the results on election night will depend on how well she and her rivals can "get out the vote."



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Photos courtesy of City of Toronto Archives

Behold, the East York of old

As the Observer resumes this season, we continue our series of photos portraying East York as it once was — as drawn from the archives of the City of Toronto. These two pictures show Mortimer Avenue a half-century ago: On the left is Mortimer, looking east from Monarch Park Avenue; the photo on the right is facing west.

■ MUNICIPAL ELECTION

Velshi vows to improve constituents' lives



'Everyone deserves a voice,' Ward 26 candidate believes

By XUYUN ZENG
The Observer

Ishrath Velshi walks door-to-door, greeting the residents of a Flemingdon Park apartment complex and asking for their support for her Ward 26 councillor candidacy come election day, Oct. 27.

She receives various responses. Some talk to her with the door only slightly ajar. Some do not reply at all. Some react cantankerously. One man comes out shout-

ing, "Why you f***ing knocking so hard for, man?"

But Velshi also meets residents who say they're behind her all the way, like the man who said that he has 18 voters in his family.

"We will vote for you," he said.

In an interview, Velshi said she wants to run for council because she wants to better the lives of people in Ward 26/Don Valley West, which encompasses a very diverse demographic with different needs — from people in affluent Leaside to residents of the disadvantaged Thorncliffe and Flemingdon neighbourhoods.

Her campaign slogan reads, "Everyone deserves a voice" and exemplifies her belief in inclu-

siveness as a means of solving issues in a cosmopolitan community, rather than "divide-and-rule," as she puts it.

"There isn't an aversion to talking to people in Thorncliffe and Leaside, and bringing them together at the table. But it hasn't been done," Velshi said.

"It's not opposite sides of the track. We're all one people. Yes, we do have differences of opinion; that's why there needs to be an open forum."

If elected, it will be Velshi's first time as a councillor. However, she thinks that her experience serving two provincial cabinet ministers at Queen's Park, and as an executive assistant for two

councillors at city hall will help her immensely.

"I returned the phone calls, I dealt with the issues and I took something from 'A' to 'Z,'" Velshi said.

"(Councillors) attend the meetings, but they pass the work that has to be done down to the staff. I was the staff that did it, so I can hit the ground running."

Now, she wants to enact change at the forefront of city politics.

"As a councillor, I can bring the full force of resources at city hall to the community in order to facilitate change or meet the needs of the different areas in the community that have neglected," Velshi said.

■ VELSHI

Every child deserves 'first-rate' education: Gershon

By XUETING ZHAO
The Observer

If she's re-elected in October, school trustee Gerri Gershon will celebrate her 30th anniversary in local politics next year. Yet the willingness of the incumbent for Ward 13/Don Valley West to set out on another journey with the TDSB still seems strong today.

"I feel as fresh as I did for the first day I started," Gershon said. "I have a lot of passion for the children in my community and their parents. It's been extremely interesting and a tremendous honour to represent them."

The three essential issues Gershon hopes to address if re-elected are raising capital funds for the maintenance of school buildings in the community, starting a cashless school system and using technology to enhance communication with parents.

Gershon admitted limited funding has been available for refurbishing and reorganizing school buildings in the past several years.

She said she hopes to collaborate with the municipal government to deal with this issue.

As a school trustee who represents neighbourhoods as diverse as Leaside and Thorncliffe Park, Gershon wants to reconcile the education gap between communities, despite their economic differences.

"We can't change the society, but we certainly can make sure that our schools offer a first-rate education system to every student," she said. "That means sometimes we have to fund some schools more than others."

In terms of her current tenure — when she has been in the news for topping the list of trustees when it comes to conference expenses — Gershon said there have been new points of pride, like the building of the 700-student Fraser Mustard Early Learning Academy in Thorncliffe Park.

As a strong supporter of the all-day kindergarten program, she believes the school will continue to be a centre of excellence.

Gershon also expressed her concern about

the safety of students who commute to schools on foot, especially after the death of seven-year-old Georgia Walsh last summer.

Considering the increasingly busy traffic in the community, Gershon has asked the superintendent of schools to ensure that teachers emphasize street safety to the children.

"Traffic is a very big issue to the community and children's safety.... Anything we can do to keep our children safe is very important," she said.

Gershon is also concerned about mental health issues among young children in schools. This requires focusing on professional development of teachers and better programming at schools, she said.

"It is devastating to some kids. Children also suffer mental health problems and they and their family need support," she said.

Gershon's three decades in politics started when she was elected to the North York Board of Education as a public school trustee. Since that time, she has been involved



■ GERSHON

with the Metropolitan Toronto School Board, the Toronto District School Board and the Ontario Public School Board Association, among other organizations.

Founder, father and fun at Fox run

By LOUIS PIN
The Observer

It began at Wilket Creek Park, 34 years ago. Isadore Sharp, CEO of Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, told Terry Fox's family that he would be organizing a run in Terry's name. Almost three and a half decades later, Sharp still oversees the Terry Fox Run at Wilket Creek Park, along East York's northern border.

"When (we) started here, it was just a bench with two people sitting at it," Sharp said. "If you look at it now... it's grown naturally."

"Naturally" is an understatement. Last Sunday, there were more than 5,000 people at the Wilket Creek Run, along with food trucks, facepainting, balloon castles and live entertainment. The entrance to the run was lined with memorabilia, something Sharp's volunteers first put together a few years ago.

"We started (the memorabilia walk) for the 30th anniversary," Sharp said. "People liked it so much... we've done it every year since."



Louis Pin // Observer

(L-R) Sophie Spangler, Kaia Baugh, Cara Spangler and Zoe Baugh were all smiles (or something) after having their faces painted at the Terry Fox Run.

Some longtime supporters, like Steve Bodsworth, were at Wilket Creek Park for the first time.

"I've been running for 34

years," he said. "Well, I used to run. I got a knee replacement, so I'm only walking it (this year)."

In the run's inaugural year,

Bodsworth was in Calgary. Though he's since moved to Peace River, Brampton, and Wasaga Beach, he has always found somewhere to run with

his family.

"The same kids we were pushing in strollers 34 years ago are pushing their kids here today," he said.

Also present was Rolly Fox, Terry's father. Fox sat by the finish line, shaking hands with volunteers and speaking with people who were there to support the foundation.

It was Fox's first time coming to Toronto for the run, something he thinks should have happened earlier.

"Toronto's done so much for Terry," Fox said. "I should have been here a long time ago.... It was long overdue."

Before this year, Wilket Creek had raised over \$9 million over 34 years to fight cancer in Terry's name. The Terry Fox Foundation has raised \$650 million worldwide since it began.

For Sharp, the Canadian icon was, and still is, a symbol of determination and inspiration. Next year, for the run's 35th anniversary, Wilket Creek is planning an even bigger event.

"My son died (of cancer) a few years before Terry began his run," Sharp said. "For someone to set their goals so high... you were just taken in by him."

Chow and Tory go head-to-head at Evergreen Brick Works

Cont'd. from page 1

Chow added that Tory's plan does not provide service to a part of northwest Toronto.

But instead of countering Chow, Tory chose to go after the Fords.

"They've talked a lot about increased accountability in the government. They've talked a lot about finding ways to take better care of the money that was already brought in, but they've done very little about it," he said.

Chow also said she would implement a faster approval service for those waiting for affordable housing, while also repairing existing housing and asking developers to des-

ignate 20 per cent of buildings as affordable housing.

But Chow's other plans did not go unopposed. She proposed a land transfer tax on homebuyers purchasing homes valued at \$2 million and over, which Goldkind was quick to shoot down.

"When Ms. Chow says a land-transfer tax, you know how many people are affected by that? Five hundred. Should only 500 people be making a collective decision that our city is worth investing in?" he asked.

Instead, Goldkind hopes to implement a land-transfer tax for people buying homes worth \$1.1 million, not \$2 million as per Chow's proposal.

Tory was visibly frustrated twice in the debate when he was unable to counter his opponents' attacks after the moderator cut him off due to time constraints.

Instead, he discussed plans to make the development process in Toronto more transparent to ensure that public spaces such as parks would be considered as buildings and condos continue to be built.

Tory added that stronger ties with the provincial and federal governments would help secure more funding for the city, and discussions between various people from different parts of Toronto on issues such as homelessness would help City Council make decisions.

"Amalgamation, for right or for wrong, happened a long time ago. We've still been fermented by the Ford era, fighting these battles about downtown versus the suburbs. We are not going to achieve the level of greatness this city is capable of if we don't all pull together," Tory said in his closing statement, receiving applause and cheers from the audience.

After the debate, Chow was asked if she thinks Doug Ford is qualified to lead the city.

"I think his past record, his voting record to cut TTC funding, to cut funding for kids so they could use their community centres, is not what this city is all about," she responded.

Kennedy calls for stronger Catholic values in community

By BRITTANY CAMPBELL
The Observer

She is a familiar face within the Catholic education community, and no stranger to election campaigns for the Toronto Catholic District School Board. Angela Kennedy is the four-term incumbent school trustee for Ward 11, known officially as East York-Toronto.

Representing Ward 11 for over a decade, Kennedy has served in numerous capacities within the board, including chair of the board, director of the Ontario Catholic School Trustees Association and chair of the Human Resources Program and Religious Affairs.

She's campaigning on her track record as an advocate for Catholic values and parental involvement within schools.

"Parents feel that I am approachable and that I get the job done," Kennedy said in an interview. "If they come to me with a problem or an issue, then I am determined to solve that problem. And I do keep the best interest of their child in mind, and I know that they appreciate that."

Her platform calls for strengthening Catholic values, high academic standards for students, parental rights, and maintaining a safe and healthy working environ-

ment for students and staff.

Kennedy was first elected as trustee for the TCDSB in November 2000. Most recently, she was re-elected to her fourth term in 2010.

She said she has demonstrated her sense of board accountability. In particular, when another trustee vacated a seat, she said she was at the forefront of a motion to call a byelection, instead of merely appointing a new trustee — proving to her constituents, she said, that her main responsibility has always been to represent the community.

"We are members of the community, we represent the community and we are in the

community," she said.

Kennedy added that she has focused on issues regarding developing stronger relationships between local schools and their local parishes — as well as assuring school administrations are functioning properly and in accordance with parental

concerns.

"Ultimately, parents do have a right to have certain information," she said. "They also have the right to provide some advice to a principal on matters that effect a local school."

Her personal engagement in education was important to her while raising her seven sons. Between volunteering within the schools and serving as chair of the PTA school council, Kennedy said she's

learned the importance of grassroots work and representation at higher levels of governance.

As for the contentious issue of public funding for Catholic schools, Kennedy is adamant.

"I believe in publicly funded Catholic education because I graduated from Notre Dame and I graduated from Corpus Christi," she said.

"I had a very good education in both elementary and secondary level and I think that in our Catholic board we do an excellent job of educating our students."



■ KENNEDY