



Nino Meese-Tamuri // Observer

### Imagining life in space

The Ontario Science Centre opened its new exhibit, **Beyond Planet Earth: The Future of Space Exploration**, on Oct. 3. Grade 6 students from Forest Manor Public School were among the opening-day visitors — posing in the exhibit's Mars environment with a life-size model of NASA's Mars rover, Curiosity.

## Community bonding attracts families

By **ARIELLE QUIGLEY**  
The Observer

Those who live there say it's the strong sense of community and belonging that attracts young families to Thorncliffe Park.

In fact, it's a combination that's proven to be so attractive that Thorncliffe now has more children under the age of 14 than any other area in Toronto, according to the 2011 census. The results, released earlier this year, show that approximately 34 per cent of Thorncliffe's population is made up of children, and the number is growing.

According to Jihad Aliweiwi, executive director of the Thorncliffe Park Neighbourhood Office, the area has a large immigrant population. He believes part of the attraction to the

community is the ability for families to recognize themselves in their neighbours.

"It is a community of support, faith (and) shared experiences and that is important," he said.

The physical layout of Thorncliffe Park is only two square kilometres, which Aliweiwi views as an advantage. Most of the community's needs, including the school, community centre, religious centre and parks, are within walking distance.

"It is fairly concentrated. It's a horseshoe; the buildings are dotted along that horseshoe (and) the school is situated in the middle," Aliweiwi said. "Families like to see their kids walking to school, if they are not walking with them themselves."

Fareese Fatima immigrated to Canada from India with her family eight years ago and has been living

in Thorncliffe Park ever since. She thinks it is a good place to raise her two-year-old son Hassaan Mohammed.

"People from my country and my community (keep me here)," she said. "It feels like home."

John Parker, councillor for Ward 26, which includes Thorncliffe Park, said having a large number of young children can make for a lively neighbourhood. However, there are some challenges that come with it.

"It puts some pressure on the limited resources that we have," he said. "It shows up in schools; it shows up in the recreational spaces and programs, the parks."

Improvements have already been made to both R.V. Burgess and Leaside parks. Parker said the recreational centre was doubled in size a few years ago; however, he still does

not think this is enough.

"A lot of my attention is put towards doing the best we can in Thorncliffe to meet the needs of the community there," he said.

"We've made progress and I hope to make more progress in the future."

■ **Hassaan Mohammed**



Arielle Quigley // Observer

## Recall boosts local beef

By **AKIHIKO TSE**  
The Observer

Despite the ongoing E. coli contamination crisis, which has seen more than 1,700 beef products recalled from across the country and beyond, some East York butchers say the incident has prompted "a renewed sense of faith" in locally grown beef produce.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency announced on Sept. 16 that XL Foods Inc. was recalling certain beef products after traces of E. coli were found in specific brands originating from the processing plant in Brooks, Alta.

The agency continues warning the public, distributors and food service establishments to refrain from consuming, selling or serving the blacklisted beef products. Eleven people across four provinces have become sick from the beef. The cause of the contamination is still under investigation.

Carmen Estrela, owner of Royal Beef on Woodbine Ave., said while she still considers Canadian beef "the best in the world," the largest recall in Canadian history has done little to strengthen the public's confidence in mass processed beef.

According to Estrela, customers trust independent butchers because they deal with meat that has been cultivated differently than in large processing plants, in smaller quantities. She added that while she has received inquiries from customers as to the safety of her beef, there has been no impact on sales.

"It's business as usual," she said, noting that Royal Beef, which has been in operation for 25 years, cultivates its beef locally and from P.E.I.

According to Tim Schmucker, owner of Fresh From The Farm on Donlands Avenue, the recall has reinforced the notion of "local production for local consumption."

Schmucker said he only deals with small Ontario family farms.

"It confirms for us and customers an alternative to factory farmers who produce our food," he said.

### Thorncliffe Park Public School enrolment facts:

<b>1,917</b>	Number of students at school	<b>24%</b>	Percentage of students in grades 4-5
<b>76%</b>	Percentage of students in kindergarten-Grade 3	<b>97%</b>	Percentage of students whose primary language is not English

## POLICE BRIEFS

### Men charged after chase

A police drama gripped the area around Victoria Park and Sunrise avenues on Oct. 3 when a pair of men being searched by officers fled. A third suspect then joined the other two. One of the suspects climbed through a fence, where police found a loaded handgun. The suspect ran into a community centre, the Emergency Task Force was rushed in and three men were eventually apprehended. They face a total of 15 charges.

### Seniors assaulted

Police are looking for the men who violently robbed three older victims in two separate incidents on Oct. 5 and 6. A 61-year-old woman was pepper-sprayed for her purse at Sammon and Pape avenues, and on St. Dennis Drive, a 68-year-old male was pepper-sprayed and his 73-year-old female companion was pistol-whipped for jewelry and cash.

~ Leslie Emmons



Photo courtesy of Jeff Jedras

**Deborah Coyne was the first candidate to declare her intention to seek the leadership of the federal Liberal party. The constitutional lawyer wants to run on a campaign of transparency and accountability.**

# Coyne vies for leadership

## Former E.Y. politician a long shot to head Liberals

By **GEORGIA WILLIAMS**  
The Observer

Justin Trudeau's announcement that he's seeking the leadership of the federal Liberal Party is making waves, but former East York politician Deborah Coyne plans to give her relation a run for his money.

Coyne is the mother of former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's daughter (and Justin's half-sister), Sarah. Coyne is a constitutional lawyer, was a key opponent of the Meech Lake accord, and ran unsuccessfully for M.P. in Toronto-Danforth in 2006 and Don Valley West

in 2008. In June, she announced her plans to pursue the Liberal leadership.

In an interview, she outlined her platform, including a re-engagement with Canadian voters, and denounced the Harper government.

"I would like to lead the party back to being a party of strong national government and one Canada," Coyne said.

In the last election the Liberals lost seats, reducing them to third-party status and making the New Democratic Party the official Opposition.

"What has happened over the years is Canadians don't see the Liberal Party as having a strong narrative that resonates with them," Coyne said.

She wants to unify Canada, combat voter apathy and implement electoral reform. Her platform also includes reducing the power of the Prime Minister's Office, ensuring respect for Parliament and elected representatives, and increased transparency.

Coyne is also concerned about healthcare for the aging population.

"The provincial governments are struggling to get in place much more long term care that's regulated," she said.

"We need much more community-based care, more help for families that are caring for elderly parents. The national government is responsible for what I call national health care standards."

Coyne proposes the federal government meeting with individual provinces to create a discourse about health-care issues and programs.

Nelson Wiseman, professor of political science at the University of Toronto, says the race for the Liberal leadership will be "anti-climactic" since Trudeau threw his hat in the ring.

"I don't think she (Coyne) has a chance. In fact, I don't think anyone has a chance against Trudeau. I think it's already been decided he's leader," he said.

Wiseman also commented on the media buzz around the Liberal Party leadership.

"The Liberals were the dominant party since 1896, so there's no doubt it's still a shock people are trying to come to terms with, the fact that the party is not only in government but it's been blown out of the water. It's in third place," Wiseman said.



■ For more about all things East York, please check out the Toronto Observer website at [torontoobserver.ca](http://torontoobserver.ca).

## WHAT'S UP IN E.Y.

### Calling all fans of royal history

The East York Historical Society will be hosting Garry Toffoli at its meeting this coming Wednesday, Oct. 17, at 2 p.m. Toffoli is the executive director of the Canadian Royal Heritage Trust and has extensive knowledge about the history of royalty. The presentation will be held at the S. Walter Stewart library branch, 170 Memorial Park Ave. Light refreshments will be available.

### 'My Boy Jack' comes to E.Y.

The East Side Players are presenting a tale of family conflict with the play *My Boy Jack* — about Rudyard Kipling sending his myopic son to war. It premieres Oct. 25 and runs until Nov. 10 at the Papermill Theatre, 67 Pottery Rd. The show starts at 8 p.m. Wednesdays-Saturdays, and at 2 p.m. on Sundays. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$15 for students. They're available for purchase online at [www.eastsideplayers.ca](http://www.eastsideplayers.ca), or by phone at 416-425-0917.

~ Diana Faria

# East York pumpkin parade hits a rough patch

By **ALICIA FERRORO**  
The Observer

The city is refusing to help clean up after the East York Pumpkin Parade on Nov. 1 at East Lynn Park this year.

Officials have put their permit policy in place for the parade, making event organizers responsible for their own cleanup.

"The size of this event and others across the city have grown to the point where we need assistance from participants to clean up," said Toronto parks manager Ray Stukas.

Under section 608-11 of the Municipal Code, organizers must obtain a permit for all

organized gatherings, special events, festivals or picnics with over 25 participants in city parks.

The Danforth East Community Association (DECA) organizes the parade every year.

"When we discovered that the city could not assist us with cleanup after the parade, we were quite dismayed, as this is one of the key components of the event," said Sarah Kiriliuk, a public relations representative for DECA. "Neighbours could bring their pumpkins to the park for the parade, knowing that they would be disposed of afterwards."

Organizers worried their small group of volunteers wouldn't be able to clean up so many

pumpkins.

"We knew that we couldn't ask people to bring their pumpkins home with them, since this would diffuse the magic of hundreds of pumpkins brightly lit through the evening," Kiriliuk said. "It was quite frustrating to discover that our

free event could potentially turn into a large expense for our non-profit organization due to bureaucratic red tape."

In the end, officials decided to provide bins for pumpkin disposal.

"The city is helping with the cleanup by providing bins free of charge in East Lynn Park and other parks with known parades for participants to dispose of their pumpkins," Stukas said.

Last year, there were at least 700 pumpkins at the park.



Photo by Fotolia

OUR ANNIVERSARY: 1972-2012

# A flashback to the '80s

## Observer celebrates 40 years of covering East York

**EDITOR'S NOTE**  
(OBSERVER HISTORY, PART II)

In our last edition, we began a retrospective on the Observer and its coverage of the community over the years — as we mark the 40th anniversary of this newspaper.

Since 1972, the Observer has been published by the journalism students of Centennial College. But as noted last time, our coverage of East York was awkward from the old newsroom, which wasn't in East York at all; it was at the college's original (and long-gone) campus on Warden Avenue in Scarborough.

It wasn't until 1994 that the hub of our reporting finally shifted to a new newsroom in a refurbished

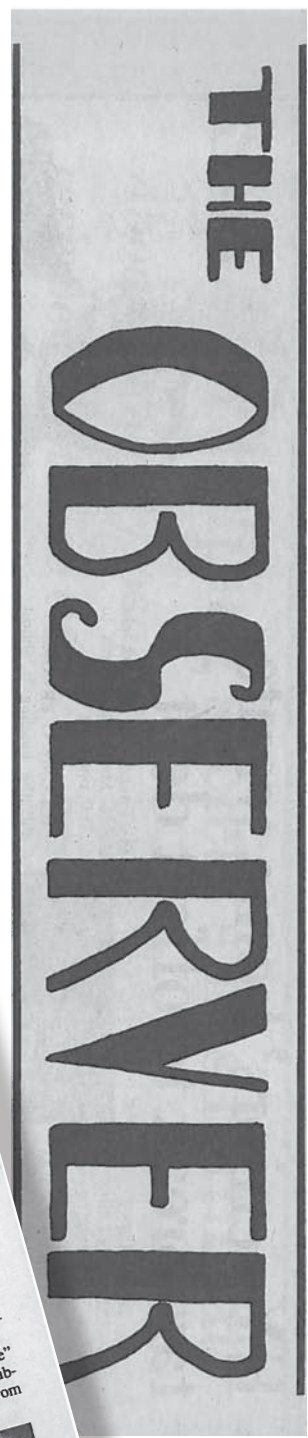
campus of the college at 951 Carlaw Avenue.

By that time, the Observer was already online — one of the first student newspapers in the entire country to make the leap to the Internet. Our web companion is at [www.torontoobserver.ca](http://www.torontoobserver.ca) and over its two decades, it has evolved into a feature news website for the entire GTA.

The traditional newsprint edition that you're looking at remains focused on East York — and fresh copies are available for free pickup at 50 locations

scattered throughout the community every other Friday during the school year.

But what goes around comes around... and earlier this year, the journalism program inaugurated a new, separate feature magazine for Scarborough, also under the Observer brand.



6--The Observer, December 17, 1989

### EAST YORK IN THE EIGHTIES

## A decade of change — and stability

By **ROB BLACKSTIEN**

Battles raged and buildings crumbled and were built again, but a sense of pride and accomplishment persevered.

The Middle East? Central America? Eastern Europe? No, this all occurred over the last 10 years, right under our noses here in East York.

And as we sit perched on the edge of the millennium's final decade, it's time for one last glance over the shoulder at the 1980s.

It was a decade in which East York underwent major changes: re-alignment of the four wards; a new municipal structure to house the municipal government (due to be finished next spring); a facelift for ancient East York Collegiate; a new wing for Toronto East General Hospital—a

satisfying development for an institution plagued with administration problems earlier in the decade; the advent of a recycling program that became the envy of the city; and the long-awaited demolition of the infamous Bayview Ghost.

East York's borough status was even challenged. Early in the '80s there was much debate over whether East York should remain a borough or become a city. And when at last East York decided to remain Canada's only borough, even this decision was snatched away, albeit briefly in a false alarm, when it was announced that two new boroughs were to be created in Northern Ontario. This, however, turned out to be nothing more than an unfounded rumor.

If there was a constant, it could be found in the mayoralty itself. East York experienced but one changing of the guard — Alan Redway to Dave Johnson — in 1982. Johnson is now in his third term.

For East York, the 1980s was a decade streaked with controversial issues: front-yard parking, lifts apartments, monster gas bars, over the hours for 24-hour gas bars, video arcades (to have or not).

More recently, shelters for the unfortunate youth shelter, Victor Touchstone youth shelter, Home for young single mothers, the battered women's shelter.

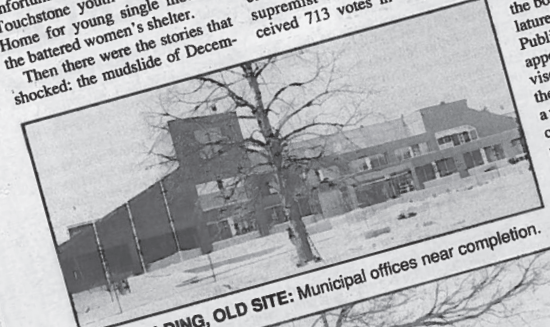
Then there were the stories that shocked: the mudslide of Decem-



**MUDSLIDE CUTS COMMUNICATIONS:** About 15,000 Leaside residents were without telephone service late in 1985 as a result of the Millwood Road mudslide, which damaged 4,800 telephone lines and required 60,000 splices to fix.

### 1980

In the early '80s East York had to deal with the distribution of Ku Klux Klan literature to its high school students. While the borough prided itself on its multicultural initiatives, there were isolated blots on this record. Teacher Ken Johnson fought the school board in a racism complaint that lasted much of the decade, and in the 1988 municipal election self-proclaimed white supremacist Robert Ruminski received 713 votes in the race for



**NEW BUILDING, OLD SITE:** Municipal offices near completion.

**EAST YORK COLLEGIATE:** School underwent a major expansion but retained its trademark centrepiece — the old entrance.

### 1981

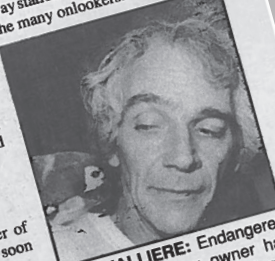
The provincial government took over Toronto East General Hospital because of poor management practices suspected to be endangering patients' lives. The hospital was under investigation for five months by a three-man committee which report said complaints of poor medical diagnosis and treatment rested with the administration and the board of governors. The Legislature passed an amendment to the Public Hospitals Act to allow the appointment of a provincial supervisor to give advice and guidance to the board of governors. After about a year, the hospital returned to local control. October marked the announcement of a new community



**RICK HANSEN:** The Man in Motion rolled into East York's Lyndhurst Hospital in 1986. Residents raised \$1,550 for spinal cord research.

### 1982

This year brought a number of incidents that wouldn't be soon forgotten. Highlights included the exit of Mayor Alan Redway, the entrance of Dave Johnson and the march of termites into the borough. In early 1982, East York's recycling program was scrapped because of a "sagging economy." The 1982 also saw a growing army of residents demanding that council allow them to park their cars in their front yards — an issue that would drag on for much of the decade. Johnson won the Nov. 11 election in a landslide and has never been seriously threatened on election day. In November, the first "bendable" TTC bus rolled into the Pape subway station with curious stares from the many onlookers.



**BILL VALLIERE:** Endangered Animal Sanctuary owner has been in hot water over alleged violations of bylaws prohibiting exotic animals. Valliere's moving plans keep falling through.



**ALAN REDWAY:** Former East York mayor moved into federal politics and earned a post as housing minister in the Cabinet.

In this instalment of our retrospective, we look back on the first page of a two-page spread that appeared in the Dec. 17, 1989 Observer... reflecting on East York over the decade of the 1980s. To its right, the hand-drawn Observer logo along the edge of the page actually served as our front-page "flag" for a time in the mid-'80s.

**@** In our next issue, we'll feature the second part of this look back on the '80s that we originally carried in our end-of-decade edition....

# New arts group set to beautify East York

Only in its first year, the North York Arts Council has already established itself across Flemingdon Park and Leaside



Louise Andre // Observer

By **LOUISE ANDRE**  
The Observer

A fledgling arts organization is flexing its creative muscles in East York's north end.

The year-old North York Arts Council includes East York neighbourhoods in Ward 26/Don Valley West in its catchment area. Already it's established ties with Flemingdon Park and Leaside's Centennial Celebration.

It has even helped host Toronto-wide events like the Tennessee Project — which involved productions of one-act plays by Tennessee Williams in non-theatrical, community venues around the Danforth and elsewhere.

Claire Hopkinson, executive director for the Toronto Arts Foundation (TAF), and

Lila Karim, managing director for North York Arts, presented plans for the arts council's expansion to North York community council in September.

Their vision includes a hub, currently undergoing renovations at 52 Hillcrest Ave., to increase arts engagement. The facility will house office space, gallery areas and a recording studio.

"Toronto Arts Foundation's next major venture is the designing and incubation of a new arts service organization," Hopkinson said.

The North York Arts Council plans to transition into an independent, non-profit organization over the next five years, with Hopkinson saying there is a strong desire that more attention be given to the

arts locally.

"There is tremendous hunger to develop arts and to increase activities," she said.

To finance the project, the TAF submitted a Local Arts Service Organization funding application to the city for 2013 on behalf of Arts North York. It has already received a sizable donation from condominium developer Minto Group Inc. to subsidize the hub.

The council is comprised of business specialists, artists, residents and partners, including the Canadian Film Centre and North York Community House.

Karim said area residents will also have a say in its decision-making process.

"They're (the residents) involved in the arts community, in the

corporate community, but they also live in the region, and that is very important to us," Karim said. She added that the council's collaboration with the Toronto Arts Foundation can only help increase arts exposure in North York.

Hopkinson added that TAF will continue working with other stakeholders and councillors to encourage establishing more satellite art hubs in other city wards.

James Pasternak, Ward 10/York Centre councillor, said the gravitational pull of arts activity to Toronto's downtown has left surrounding communities with inadequate arts resourcing.

"These are major problems we have to address," Pasternak told Hopkinson and Karim.

**Claire Hopkinson, executive director of the Toronto Arts Foundation, spoke to the North York Community Council last month.**

## Tintype shutterbug embraces history

By **RYAN ENGLISH**  
The Observer

Horst Herget has worked for more than 20 years as a professional photographer, but what sets the East York-area artist apart from his contemporaries is his use of tintype photography, a scarcely used method dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

"I start with a black piece of metal and pour some collodion and then it goes into a bath of silver nitrate," he explains. "The silver nitrate gets absorbed into the collodion and it's a chemical reaction that makes it light-sensitive. I take the picture, bring it back into the darkroom and develop it. I take it outside and fix it, and at that point

the image reveals itself."

Tintype photography utilizes natural light exposure and due to the long steps and chemical processes involved, only two to three portraits can be completed within an hour. Herget says this type of photography creates a unique intimacy between the artist and the subject.

"The participant has to really be involved in the process," he says.

Herget's studio is near Broadview and Danforth avenues, and he was one of the artists participating in last month's Danforth East Arts Fair. Katie MacDonald, a longtime East York resident and owner of 100 Mile Child at 348

Danforth Ave., participated in a tintype portrait session. She says the experience gave her a sense of camaraderie with the community.

■ **Horst Herget**

Ryan English // Observer



## Propelled from pixels to painting

Nigerian artist inspired by digital animation

By **DILEEN SIMMS**  
The Observer

Jude Ifesieh wants his paintings to leap from the canvas.

"My intention was to make those lines begin to live, be alive," the 41-year-old artist said, referring to recent pieces. "I'm putting more movement in the works."

Ifesieh, who mostly uses acrylic and mixed media technique on canvas or paper, was showcased last month at the Toronto Public Library branch on Orchard View Boulevard near Yonge Street and Eglinton Avenue.

But the artist also has strong roots in East York — at the Carlaw Avenue campus of Centennial College, where he's broadening his horizons in the digital animation program.

Ifesieh previously studied fine arts in Nigeria, and his 16-piece library exhibition was his first showing of paintings incorporating a new style that's emerging after a year at Centennial.

"I'm looking at putting in a bit of animation when it comes to making the works more flu-



Dileen Simms // Observer

**At a recent solo exhibition, Jude Ifesieh showed 'Green Light', one of his latest paintings at the Toronto Public Library.**

id," Ifesieh said.

Beverly Ransom teaches a course called Life Drawing for Animation at the college, and she said she understands what Ifesieh is aiming for.

"He's working more freely and you can see that he's being somewhat liberated in expressing movement in his paintings," she said.

Ifesieh cites post-impressionist Vincent van Gogh as one of his major influences. Like the famous artist, Ifesieh's brush strokes express emotion and his new computer

skills to bring drama to the canvas.

"You can't actually animate on a two-dimensional surface," he said. "There's really going to be an effect... more theatrical."

Ransom said special effects are not the only important aspects of the work; story counts as well and applies to painting.

"I think he's just inspired to keep going in that direction, to emphasize movement," she said.

Dirce Ramirez, 19, visited the library exhibition and said

she found it interesting. She was particularly drawn to a painting of horses.

"It's more about freedom," she said. "The horse is trying to escape from somewhere."

Ifesieh said that while van Gogh is still his influence where color and impact are concerned, *Green Light*, the painting that captured Ramirez's attention, reflects his new style.

Though not a man of many words, he offered: "There's more beauty and creativity yet to be born."

# Plaque unveiled for Macphail

By JACLYN DUNHAM  
The Observer

The East York home of one of Canada's most revered politicians, Agnes Macphail, has finally received recognition for its significance with the installation of a plaque.

The ceremony took place on Sept. 30 in front of Macphail's former residence at 2 Donegall Dr. in East York's Leaside neighbourhood. Members of the East York Historical Society, the Agnes Macphail Recognition Committee, local politicians and residents of the community gathered outside to witness the unveiling.

Councillor Mary Fragedakis attended the ceremony and said the plaque had special significance for her as a female politician in East York.

"[Macphail] fought for issues of social justice in much the same way I do. She's a hero of mine and it's a pleasure to be here," Fragedakis said.

Macphail was the first female elected to Canada's House of Commons in 1921, served as one of the first two female MPPs for the area then known as York East and was a strong advocate for social reform. She moved to Leaside in



Jaclyn Dunham // Observer

**East York dignitaries gather around to unveil the commemorative plaque outside Agnes Macphail's former home in Leaside.**

1943, where she represented York East in the provincial legislature.

She lived in the house at 2 Donegall Dr. from 1948 until her death in 1954.

Lorna Krawchuk, chair of the Agnes Macphail Recognition Committee, said getting the plaque and historical designation for the home was a long time coming. It was supposed to receive a plaque more than a decade ago.

After years of delay, the

East York Historical Society took action.

"Councillor Fragedakis and Councillor Davis did some marvellous political work to get it through and so the house is a designated property for its historical references," Krawchuk said.

Jane Pitfield, president of the East York Historical Society, said the plaque on the edge of the property will make the home more accessible to community residents who may

not know about Macphail.

The plaque cost \$1,400 and was paid for by 10 donors, including the current homeowners, Laura and David Simons, who donated \$500 for the installation.

"I think that Agnes Macphail was a remarkable woman," Pitfield said. "Although her life was lived in different places and she was originally from Grey Bruce County, she spent the last years of her life in Leaside."

# Dispelling food bank stereotypes

By DILEEN SIMMS  
The Observer

The stereotype of a food bank client as visibly down-and-out is out-of-date.

Nowadays, the workers at East York's food banks will tell you, clients often appear very "mainstream." And a new study confirms that perception: increasingly, food bank users are well-educated, and have jobs, homes and families. It's just that there's no money left over at the end of the month for food.

Sarah Anderson, the communications manager at Toronto's umbrella food bank, Daily Bread, says many people simply aren't earning enough to provide the necessities of life for themselves and their families.

"People end up at a food bank if they cannot afford to pay rent and also buy food," Anderson said.

A new study commissioned by Daily Bread looks at the changing demograph-

ics of clients of food banks across the GTA, based on client visits in Toronto's federal ridings over a one-year period, from April 2011 to March 2012.

In East York, the report says that the number of food bank visits has increased in Toronto-Danforth by somewhere between 25 and 50 per cent. In Beaches-East York, there was a small decline. Statistics for Don Valley West were unavailable.

The food bank at Woodbine Heights Baptist Church has been serving its neighbourhood for more than six years. The staff there distribute an average of 105 hampers to households each week. The WHBC food bank coordinator, Bob Paterson-Watt, says that his agency is among those who have experienced an increase in usage:

"There has probably been about a five per cent (difference) in the last 18 months."

"We have a consistent base of people on welfare and On-

tario Disability Support Program."

According to the report, people visiting the food bank are older, increasingly better-educated and often new immigrants to Canada.

"I would say we have had five or six men just like that in the last 18 months. Men in their 50s who are losing jobs," Paterson-Watt said.

Paterson-Watt emphasized, however, that the most noticeable trend is the increased use of his food bank by recent arrivals to Canada. He said the last two years have seen a pronounced shift to

non-English speaking Canadians, more young families and more children.

The Daily Bread Fall Food Drive continues until this Sunday, Oct. 14.

You can download the full *Who's Hungry: Faces of Hunger* report at [www.dailybread.ca](http://www.dailybread.ca)

**Pastor Bob Paterson-Watt**



Dileen Simms // Observer

## Hunger by the numbers

- Beaches-East York foodbanks: **18,568** visits per year
- Toronto-Danforth foodbanks: **56,313** visits per year
- Beaches-East York: **23%** of clients regularly use a foodbank for one to two years
- Toronto-Danforth: **18%** of clients regularly use foodbank for one to two years



Matthew Wocks // Observer

**Toronto artist Viktor Mitic's installation at Todmorden Mills was in four parts, which included paintings shot with guns.**

# Nuit Blanche exhibit opens fire on guns

By MATTHEW WOCKS  
The Observer

A heritage paper mill-turned-rental space recently showcased an art installation with a mission dramatically different from the creation of paper: the destructive force of guns.

The seventh edition of Scotiabank Nuit Blanche took place in Toronto on Sept. 29 from 7 p.m. until sunrise the next morning. The celebration of contemporary arts saw 150 exhibitions spread out across the core of the city.

One of those installations – at Todmorden Mills on Pottery Road in East York – was called *Wounded Icons* and was created by Serbian-born Toronto artist Viktor Mitic.

Mitic's installation was presented in four parts. It included a looping eight-minute video and numerous paintings, but it was a broken-down school bus sitting just outside the main building that attracted all the attention.

"The yellow school bus was shot about 6,000 times and its title is called *Incident*," the artist said. "It took 12 hours of constant shooting."

Mitic, who studied art history at the University of Toronto before taking up fine arts at Sheridan College, wanted people to experience the effects of gun violence first-hand.

"When they see it on television, they can just switch the channel," he said. "This is a tactile representation of what an actual gun can do."

The school bus was not the only bullet-riddled vehicle at the event. At the front of the building sat a Swiss cheese-like Volkswagen Golf representing what Mitic refers to as a "gas-guzzling" animal that must be destroyed.

But with all of the destruction and spent cartridges, Mitic did not mince his words when it came to his thoughts on guns.

"I don't own guns. I rent them," he said. "I hate guns and think they should be banned because they are made for one thing only, and that is to kill."

Samantha Beaton works for the City of Toronto and is stationed at Todmorden Mills as a historical interpreter. She worked the first shift of the night of Nuit Blanche and said she was taken aback by the powerful imagery.

"I think it's amazing and really interesting. It's something I have never seen before," she said.

Once Beaton's shift finished at 1 a.m., she planned on heading downtown to take in the rest of the installations.

Julian Sleath, the program manager for special events, said with the number of projects at this year's Nuit Blanche, he was sure there would be something to suit everyone.

"The city itself is commissioning 64 projects," he said, "and in the independent program there are another 96 projects."

As midnight rolled around back at Todmorden Mills, Mitic said he had not seen a lot of people and did not expect to, considering the distance from the downtown core. That did not diminish his resolve, however.

"I am stuck here (at Todmorden!)" he said, "but I am here until the very end."

EDITORIALS

## Calling the casino bluff

The talk about where to put a Toronto casino — and whether to have one at all — has been front and centre for months now. It's clear that some big "gaming" (translation: gambling) interests have their sights set on the city and that's caused some Torontonians to express concern about the effect on the community as a whole... and especially the neighbourhoods unlucky enough to be situated around any casino.

One of the things that is troubling for people who are against this proposal is that if the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG) approves Toronto as a site for a casino and the provincial government backs it, the city will be able to do nothing to stop it from happening. The province has the power to implement what is called a ministerial zoning order, which would override local bylaws.

A lot of the talk around the idea of a casino has taken place at Toronto-East York community council. But that's misleading, because nobody has seriously suggested a casino for East York; it's big-brother Toronto (and especially certain sites downtown or along the waterfront) that has piqued the interest of Caesars Entertainment and others.

But according to city planning reports, zoning in Toronto and in East York does not allow for casinos. And it would be unfair for the OLG and the province to ignore that and put one in anyway — especially when so many residents and community leaders have profound concerns about the effect of a casino.

The OLG claims that it will not put a casino into a municipality that does not want one. It would be nice if we could leave it at that. But there are enough advocates of a casino and enough differing ways to read the balance between support and opposition, that the anti-casino campaign must continue.

There are many who are concerned about the negative economic, social and environmental impact that a casino could have. That's why the zoning bylaws are there in the first place. These rules state what property can be used for and what it cannot be used for. There is good justification behind the anti-casino portions of our zoning bylaws and if they are overridden, it will undermine the municipality's precious system of self-governance.

~ Katie Wright

## Counselling for change

Spearheaded by the Canadian Alliance of Mental Awareness and Mental Health, Oct. 1 to 7 marked Mental Illness Awareness Week. MIAW carries on where Mental Health Week, in May, left off.

The week brings awareness and focus to the signs and symptoms of mental illnesses and disorders, how to get help, the stigma of having a mental disorder and the impact on the families of persons with a mental disorder.

These disorders are not talked about often enough, because people are embarrassed about having them. Mental illnesses can include anything from autism to depression to ADHD. And it isn't always obvious when someone has a mental illness.

East York resident Mary-Katherine Dooher is the mother of two sons — both with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

The sons have been going to Kinark, a provincial mental health organization for children, and have received counselling for several years now. One is in the day therapy program, which helps him with his coping skills. He has a hard time expressing his emotions, and instead of voicing his feelings, he would act out.

"With Kinark, we were able to teach him to use his words to describe his feelings," Dooher said. "Aside from Kinark, we had (him) involved in Resources for Exceptional Children, Durham Behaviour Management, Grandview and the Reach Ahead program in school."

"Medication is only a small part of the solution. There has to be behaviour therapy, IEPs with the schools and modified schedules to ensure a person with ADHD is successful," Dooher said.

Kinark has facilities located in Markham and Richmond Hill, but the organization offers its counselling services to children in East York and York and Durham regions as well.

Dooher's boys are often deemed as "unintelligent" because of their inattentiveness. This stigma infuriates Dooher.

"ADHD kids are known to be brilliant, but they learn faster and differently from what is taught in school," Dooher said. "They are often bored and act out."

Her words serve as a reminder to the rest of us — especially those of us in settings like schools, etc. — that we need to be supportive. That includes being informed, and retaining our sense of perspective... like Dooher:

"I can tell you this.... There's never a dull moment at home. Their minds are phenomenal and I wouldn't change them for anything."

~ Carleigh O'Connell

COLUMNS

## What's Halloween's gender?

It's only two and a half weeks until Halloween and I'm sure we can all already picture the children running rampant on sugar and happiness highs, the shamelessly cheesy decorations dating back to the early '90s — and the equally shameless portrayal of socialized gender roles.

I was fortunate enough in my youth to have rather liberal parents who encouraged creative thinking when it came to Halloween costumes. Although I did go trick or treating as Sailor Moon one year (the short skirt was compensated for with some white leggings), my extensive costume history includes the likes of lumberjack, dinosaur, and blue M&M... all of which were paraded with surprising confidence among a group of friends dressed as pretty princesses and angels.

Halloweens as a teenage girl proved more difficult to soldier through, as buying an off-the-shelf adult costume meant a choice between hardly-appropriate-to-wear-in-public and I-may-be-mistaken-for-a-sex-trade-

worker. Oh, how I longed to be able to dress as the fully-clothed 1920s mobster that went with the "mobster's wife" costume (the latter crafted from a quarter of the amount of fabric).

In hindsight, I believe that perhaps I was yearning less for the extra cloth, and more for a character whose existence wasn't dependent exclusively on her male counterpart. At least "Mobster's Wife" was one of the few costumes available that lacked the word "sexy" as a descriptor on the package.

Looking at my younger cousin this Halloween, being forced by her mother to dress as something "pretty," I'm still trying to wrap my head around the blatant sexism and perpetuation of dated gender roles

that this holiday entails. This is especially important to note on a day that is so focused on young, impressionable minds.

So, before buying your child the "diva devil light up girl" costume or "special forces commando boy" costume (both found at spirithalloween.com), take

a moment to consider what kind of gender roles and relationships you're teaching your children. Try to keep the same thing in mind when contemplating your own "Swiss hottie" or "inflatable sumo wrestler" costume.

If your daughter wants to be a zombie or if your son wants to be a cat, what are you demonstrating by suggesting instead that she go as a fairy or he as a cowboy?

If all else fails, there's always the delicious option for anyone of either gender to dress up as a cheeseburger.



Becky Robertson

## Books: To ban or not to ban?

Sept. 30 kicked off the American Library Association's 30th annual Banned Book Week. Like its Canadian counterpart, Freedom to Read Week in February, the goal of Banned Book Week is to draw national attention to books that are or have been challenged, censored, or banned in schools, public libraries or countries altogether.

A book is challenged, censored or banned because someone thought it unsuitable for reading and took steps to restrict access or remove it from shelves.

Sex, violence, drugs, language, homosexuality and racism come up again and again as reasons to attempt limiting literature. Incest, prostitution and anti-family themes are also common reasons for a potential ban.

It's no secret

that many great works of literature, both classic and modern, have been on the chopping block. To Kill A Mockingbird, The Lord of The Flies, Fahrenheit 451 (ironically), The Diary of Anne Frank and The Catcher in the Rye have all been on the list repeatedly.

According to the Canadian Library Association, famous Canadian works like Margaret Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale and Margaret Lawrence's The Stone Angel have also been challenged.

The most recent memorable challenge in many minds is likely that of J.K. Rowling's bestselling Harry Potter series. Novels like these, however, can often be of great

literary worth, precisely because of their controversial content. By introducing concepts that are often taboo or difficult, they engage readers to think critically and form their own views on contentious topics.

That's why our school system has books like To Kill a Mockingbird and The Stone Angel in its curriculum. If issues of race, sex, violence and substance abuse aren't introduced and studied in a safe forum, how are our youth supposed to comprehend controversy outside the classroom?

Moreover, who gets to decide which books stock our shelves? Who has that right? How is the appropriateness of these books measured, and when does it stop? We are not sheep. Should we not have the right to choose what we read? We always have the ability to put it down.

Besides, you can challenge and censor books all you want. If people really want to read them, they'll find them on the Internet.



Morgaine Craven

## Walking to help speech institute

By **REBECCA RAVEENDRAN**  
The Observer

A performance by 13-year-old rapper Jake Zeldin, aka Lil JaXe, put people in an enthusiastic mood just in time for the first annual stuttering awareness walk, held in East York on Sept. 23.

Zeldin, the walk ambassador, has coped with stuttering since he began to speak. Dozens present had speech and stuttering difficulties, but supported by friends and family, the walk was a success.

The walk aimed to raise funds supporting speech therapy, education and research programs at the Speech and Stuttering Institute. It wound through Taylor Creek Park, off Dawes Road north of Danforth.

"I am pleased with the turnout," said Greg O'Grady, the walk founder and a graduate of the Speech and Stuttering Institute's Precision Fluency Shaping program. "This is our first one, so I wasn't sure how many would be turning up. But the most important thing is the fundraising and awareness of stuttering."

Paul L'Heureux, chair of the institute, stressed the importance of acknowledging stuttering in society.

"It is approximately one in 100 children who have a speech or stuttering challenge, so it's a rather large issue," he said. "It's about self-esteem and your own feelings about yourself."

More than 300,000 Canadians stutter, and the walk provided many with an opportunity to express themselves freely.

"The first time I ever met people that stutter was a little over a year ago. Since then I've gone down the road to accept my stuttering a lot more and being more open about it," said Samuel Dunsiger, a volunteer who stutters.



Courtesy of John Wilson

East York's southern edge, depicted with all of the watersheds not usually included on a standard map.

# Shedding light on lost waterways

## Environmentalist looks at history of East York's creeks

By **BECKY ROBINSON**  
The Observer

The concept of watersheds — let alone running watersheds that are "lost" — may be a difficult one to grasp.

But as John Wilson explained to the East York Historical Society at its September meeting, the East York area hosts many waterways and unique landforms that exist either unseen or ignored and are therefore lost.

In particular, he said, some creeks in East York have been deliberately buried to accommodate development.

Wilson, the former chair of the community environmental group Bring Back The Don and a current member of the Lost Rivers Association, showed the group gathered at the S. Walter Stewart library branch just how the presence of these environ-

mental features can still be felt.

"These rivers really define and create the civic space in the city, and help us understand how the city was formed," Wilson said to the group.

As examples, he cited the deviations of streets like Kingston Road and Mortimer Avenue, whose shapes reflect creeks in the area.

He added that intersections like Dawes Road and Victoria Park Avenue were built over rivers that still flow underground — but still make brief appearances on the surface throughout the community.

"Every place on the face of the earth drains water and frequently there are streams that have never been identified, or are only identifiable by the people who live there," he said.

Ferris Creek is the reason Dawes Road does not fit the typical street grid of the city, he said, although the creek has been buried.

Other key lost environmental features discussed included the Lake Iroquois shore cliffs and sandbars, which are the result of a prehistoric glacial lake.

These landforms have left notable hills around the top of the Bayview extension, along Sammon Avenue, as well as on Donlands Avenue and Don Mills Road.

"Understanding the natural features provides explanations for current conditions like how the roads are, where we have water issues and flooded basements, or high water tables that complicate construction," said Janet Davis of the EYHS. "It's very good to understand what's beneath the ground to understand what's happening above the ground."

Wilson's speech not only addressed the history and presence of these lost rivers and landforms, but also current issues that involve them.

"We can see some of the problems we have from burying these streams," Wilson said to the audience. "The water is not pooled, it isn't slowed down... so it just blasts out into a poor

little trashed ravine, which is so desperately eroded."

He also touched on the Coxwell Sanitary Trunk Sewer, a huge old sewer main that is currently being reconstructed around a site near the intersection of Coxwell Boulevard and O'Connor Drive.

The line serves 750,000 households and is routed through natural ravines.

As East York's sanitary sewers run under all of the branches of the Don River, the construction on the trunk sewer has been delayed a few times as water is found underneath it.

"The historical knowledge is all we have to go on for some of these problems," Davis said. "We have to make sure we have the best information possible to maintain the infrastructure and protect the environment."

Wilson leads lost rivers tours in the area several times a month. For more information, go to [www.lostrivers.ca](http://www.lostrivers.ca)



● For more East York stories, please check out [torontoobserver.ca](http://torontoobserver.ca)

# Night school back in business after blaze

By **GEORGIA WILLIAMS**  
The Observer

The hallways of Danforth Tech are once again buzzing with activity on Wednesday and Thursday evenings.

Night classes held by the Toronto District School Board for continuing education are in the fourth week of the fall term after a fire closed the school down for about five months earlier this year.

Evening classes were forced to shut down halfway through the semester.

Now, local residents are once again filling the classrooms to partake in some of the 44 general interest courses

offered there, from metal work to tai chi.

The school is one of the only continuing education sites to offer metal and wood working, which are always popular on registration day.

Jass Poblacion has attended the metal shop classes at Danforth Tech for over a decade.

"I've made long dividers, a coffee table, window bars," he said. "I'm retired, so I like to come."

Poblacion, like many of his fellow students, was in the final stages of a project last spring when the fire ended his semester early.

And while all continuing education students were of-



■ **Peter Ronan**

ferred a full refund, Angela Milana, office administrator for continuing education for Danforth Tech, recognized the personal loss students felt.

"I was shocked and saddened to hear about the fire," she said. "My clients are im-

portant to me and being an artist myself, it was just as disappointing to see that they couldn't finish their projects."

Despite the school's closure in the spring, enrolment remained high for fall programming. This was no surprise to staff.

"Approximately 600 people registered for fall 2012 programming at Danforth Tech and we expect 400 for next spring," said Liz De'Andrea, program manager of adult and continuing education for the TDSB.

The classes don't just facilitate continued learning, she said, but connect area residents as well.

"It's great to have the community come into the school... the evening classes are probably 34 per cent seniors," De'Andrea said.

The variety and affordability of evening classes are the main draw for registrants, she said.

The continuing education refund policy is also attractive to people who may be hesitant to commit to a course.

"We have probably the best refund policy around," De'Andrea said. "You can attend two classes and still request a refund if you find it wasn't a fit for you."

Enrolment for the winter term begins on Nov. 19.



Shantal Otchere // Observer

## Home for the holidays?

Wag On The Danforth, a pet supplies store, partnered up with Toronto Animal Services to host a cat adopt-a-thon on Thanksgiving weekend.

# There's strength in numbers for nursing mothers

## East York Civic Centre hosts breastfeeding challenge

By MAYA AKBAY  
The Observer

The Toronto Breastfeeding Challenge promotes breastfeeding and provides support for nursing moms.

On Sept. 29, 62 moms, accompanied by their families, friends and the media, breastfed their babies at the East York Civic Centre. The event allowed these women to get together with other breastfeeding moms, showing strength in numbers.

Michelle Branco, a volunteer for the organization and private lactation consultant, said it is important that the community supports breastfeeding mothers.

"It gives us an opportunity to remind mothers of their rights so that they know they're entitled to breastfeed and not worry, because all these organizations are behind them," she said.

Monica Ferneyhough works at Toronto East General Hospital's (TEGH) Breastfeeding Resource Centre. She said the event gives mothers an opportunity to share



Photo courtesy of FourBees Photography

## The Toronto Breast Feeding Network supports nursing mothers and their right to breastfeed in public.

their experiences with one another.

"The Toronto Breastfeeding Challenge is an excellent way to present breastfeeding as a cultural norm," Ferneyhough said.

The event, sponsored by programs including Scarborough Hospital and Mt. Sinai Hospital, hosted a speech by So-Yan Seto from Toronto Public Health.

Seto talked about the 12 new breastfeeding initiatives from Toronto Public Health that started in the past year.

A speaker from Toronto East General's nursing staff stressed the impor-

ance of mothers supporting each other.

The event closed with a fashion show of maternity and nursing clothes, raffles, a free lunch and a walk around the grounds.

"East York provides us such a great space, it's a fantastic location," Branco said.

"We've done it in East York for the past two years."

The goal was to beat last year's record — but that didn't happen this time.

Branco is hopeful that increasing media awareness will help give some exposure to the event.

# Abused dog inspires hope

## Local family never thought finding a pet would change their lives

By KATIE WRIGHT  
The Observer

Janet and Shane Smith found a dog whom they later named Hope. She was so badly beaten that she succumbed to her injuries just 19 days after she was rescued.

A teenager was arrested for tying Hope to a tree out in the woods with an electrical cord. The cord nearly decapitated her.

After the death of Hope, Shane Smith formed the organization called Paws for Hope and Faith in memory of the dog.

The organization's goal is to spread awareness of animal cruelty and the importance of helping animals.

As a practical matter, Smith said, Paws for Hope and Faith advocates for no-kill shelters and the prevention of animal abuse.

He'd even like people to consider the week of Oct. 11-17 as a special week of remembrance for Hope and of resolve to prevent animal abuse.

Starting Oct.

13, a group of dedicated allies are putting on the second annual Paws for Hope and Faith benefit, taking place at Whistler's Grille in East York.

Siggie Eini, the event's organizer, has dedicated a lot of her time to

creating this event. She has been working in the field of animal rescue for 20 years.

"I came across Hope's story and it went from there," Eini said. "A whole bunch of people just bonded over this story and created Paws for Hope and Faith The Movement."

She believes it is important to raise awareness about animal cruelty and how brutal it can be.

"We're supposed to be civilized. This is not civilized behavior," Eini said — including euthanasia of animals in her indictment.

"These animals are very important and because of our overbreeding, there's all this disease and neglect and death. So there are many reasons why I'm involved."

Julia Savazzi, a dog groomer and animal lover, runs a blog called Little Pet House. She is advertising the event and plans to attend for the first time.

"I think that any event that raises awareness about that organization (Paws for Hope and Faith) and helps support that organization and will be collecting a lot of donations of food and blankets and that kind of stuff is important," Savazzi said.

The event starts at 7 p.m. at Whistler's Grille, 995 Broadview Ave. at the corner of Mortimer.

The donations and funds collected from the event will go toward the Toronto Humane Society.

It will cost \$20 for admission. Donations of blankets, leashes, toys and food items are accepted and there will be live music, psychic readings, a raffle and a live caricature artist at the event for the attendees' entertainment.

Prior to the event, there have been donation boxes set up at some veterinary clinics.

There is also an online art auction which will close the event, and can already be accessed on Facebook.

Savazzi said many volunteers offer their time to the animal rights movement.

"Everybody knows about the Toronto Humane Society, but we forget, so it's good to remind people about those animals that need our help," Savazzi said.

Smith said that even though Hope is no longer with us, her legacy lives on and she will remain a symbol for neglected, abused and abandoned animals.

For more information about the organization, event or other ways to help, contact Siggie Eini at 416-712-2116 or siggie5@hotmail.com

Photo by Fotolia



For more stories, go to [www.torontoobserver.ca](http://www.torontoobserver.ca)