



His tour of duty included a teddy bear

By **SAMIRA MOHYEDDIN**
The Observer

During his tour of duty in Afghanistan, Reservist Oscar Trachmann transported more than fuel, troops, supplies and ammunition. He also carried a new member of his regiment - a foot-long furry friend named Teddy.

"Teddy would come with me on every patrol," Trachmann said, "and I would send pictures of him with me in the tank and on the airfield back to the class."

The teddy bear was a gift from his Grade 6 pen pals at Mother Teresa Catholic School in London, Ont.

Trachmann began the pen pal program during his second operational tour in Afghanistan. He first deployed in 2006 and volunteered again in 2008, returning to Canada in 2009.

"When I landed in London, the whole Grade 6 class was there to greet me," he said.

Trachmann, who will speak at a 10:30 Remembrance Day observance at the Carlaw Avenue campus of Centennial College, first joined the Royal Canadian Regiment (RCR) as an infantryman in 1994. Because he wasn't 18 yet, his mother had to sign his enlistment papers.

■ See **TEDDY**, page 5

East York election wrapup

Full coverage of all wards

By **OBSERVER STAFF**
The Observer

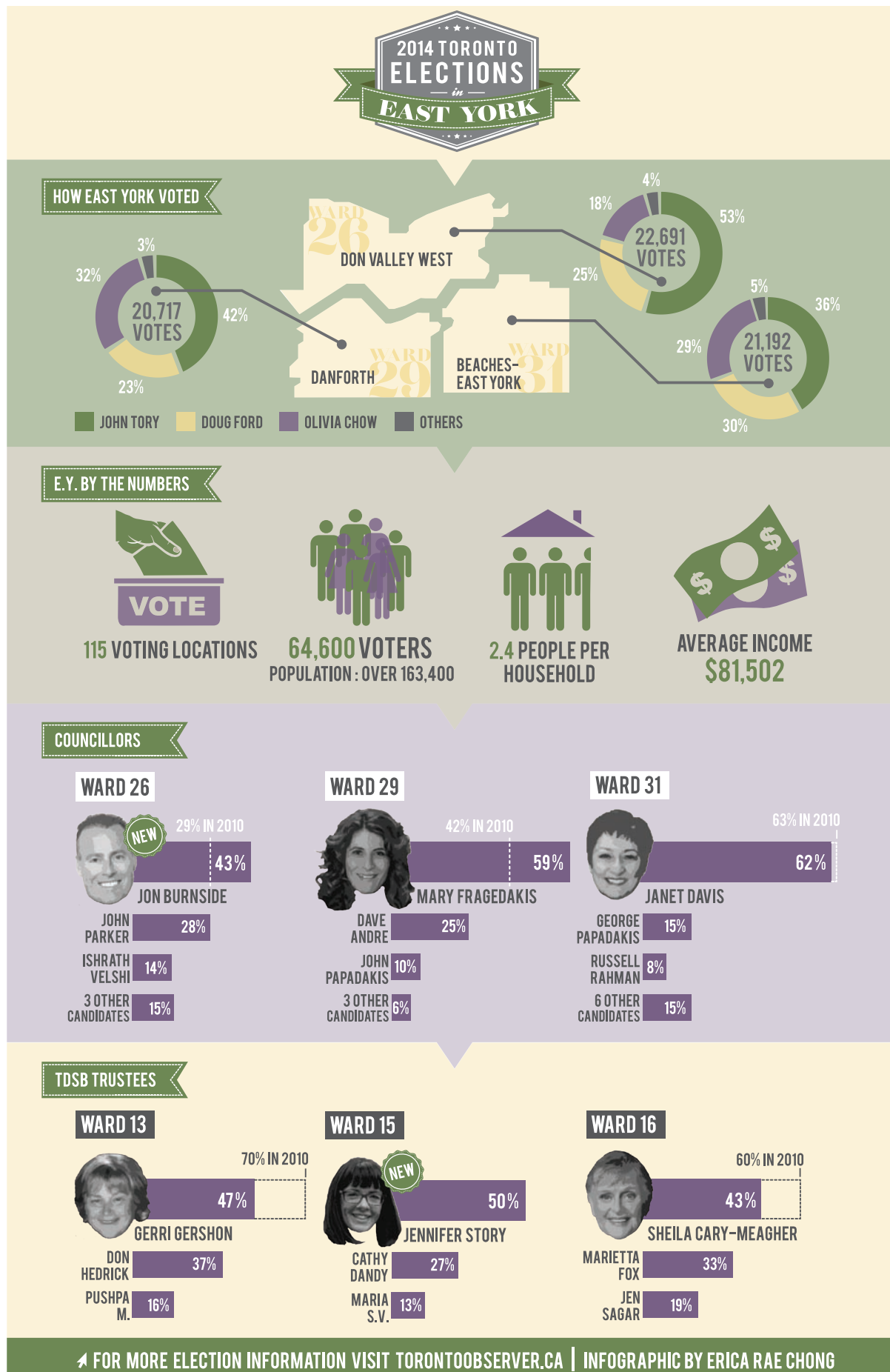
Last week's election in East York provided some drama, with two high-profile upsets.

In Don Valley West, the rematch between incumbent councillor John Parker and community activist Jon Burnside played out to a reversal of 2010 — when Parker won over Burnside. This time, it was Burnside's turn. And he won handily, by more than 3,000 votes.

In Toronto-Danforth, Cathy Dandy was ousted from the public school board by newcomer Jennifer Story. It was widely reported that the local NDP establishment had shifted its support from Dandy to Story, and in the land of the late Jack Layton, that may have made the difference. When the votes were counted, Story had almost twice as many as Dandy.

Otherwise, East York opted to return incumbents — including Don Valley West public school trustee Gerri Gershon, Toronto-Danforth councillor Mary Fragedakis, Beaches-East York councillor Janet Davis, Beaches-East York public school trustee Sheila Cary-Meagher and East York Catholic school trustee Angela Kennedy.

Full coverage of the election results is on pages 2-4 and 6.



Grieving parents, classmates seek student's lost backpack

By **JENNIFER LEE**
and **ERIN SANDEL**
The Observer

In the spring of 2014, the editors of Freshly Pressed magazine were scrambling to find photos for their upcoming issue. Like the East York Observer, Freshly Pressed is published by the journalism students of Centennial College at their campus in East York. Faced with this particular production problem back in the spring, editor Dennis Gonzales found the answer in contributing photographer Jasun Singh.

"A lot of photography is almost about exploitation — and his was the complete

opposite," Gonzales said. "It was about showing the best of people."

Jasun Singh was a student in the joint journalism program run by the University of Toronto and Centennial College at the college's Carlaw Avenue campus. He was 21 and in his graduating year. He occasionally contributed to this newspaper, and to our online sister publication, the Toronto Observer.

On Oct. 30, he took his own life. He was last seen alive on the Leaside Bridge at around 1 p.m. His backpack was left sitting on the bridge but was found and taken by someone shortly afterward.

Singh's parents say they want nothing more than to find it.

"It would be great if Jasun's backpack could be retrieved," his father Gulshan Singh said. "There could be a valuable parting message from him to us. We would love to see it."

The backpack that went missing was black and large in size. Anyone with information about its whereabouts is encouraged to contact the East York Observer at 416-289-5000, ext. 8824, or by email at scogan@centennialcollege.ca.

"We will make it our mission to help save other lives," said his father. "We will work towards that objective to honour Jasun's memory."

■ See **BEHIND THE LENS**, page 2



Jasun Singh was a talented photographer who captured 'the best of people' in his pictures.

WHAT'S
UP IN E.Y.Remembering
with music

St. Barnabas Church invites East Yorkers to the church's Remembrance Day concert this Sunday, Nov. 9, at 4 p.m. Tickets are \$15. Youth under 16 are free. The proceeds will go toward the ongoing organ refurbishment project. Call Neil Houlton at 416-410-1504 for more details.

Police chief
in the house

Police from East York's 54 Division are hosting a town hall meeting on Monday, Nov. 10, at Estonian House, 958 Broadview Ave., beginning at 6:40 p.m. Speakers will discuss trends in neighbourhood crime, and Chief Bill Blair will be present to speak about community policing. Members of the public are welcome to attend and to ask questions.

Behind the lens:
Jasun's photos

An exhibit featuring the work of the late photojournalist Jasun Singh will be held at the East York campus of Centennial College, 951 Carlaw Ave., beginning Nov. 17 and running through Dec. 1. The show will be called *The Eye of the Beholder* and will be in the Corridor Gallery. Anyone who is interested in seeing the world through the lens of our late colleague and friend is welcome to attend. The gallery is open seven days a week and admission is free.

~ Donston Wilson

Don Valley West vote recap

By SAM TURCHAN
The Observer

It's out with John and in with Jon in Don Valley West.

Jon Burnside was the only candidate across Toronto's 44 council wards to successfully challenge an incumbent — in this case, John Parker.

It was one of the most closely watched races in the city,

considering that, when the pair faced off in 2010, Parker won by just 415 votes.

This time, perhaps with the help of John Tory's endorsement, Burnside's winning margin was 3,248 votes.

On election night, Burnside tweeted that he's "honoured and humbled."

Meanwhile in the Don Valley West public school board

race, long-time trustee Gerri Gershon was once again re-elected. Gershon has held her spot since 1997 as trustee for Toronto District School Board Ward 13.

Some had wondered if Gershon might be vulnerable at the polls this time, considering some recent, unflattering publicity about Gershon's use of her trustee expense account,

but it proved to not be a deciding factor when the votes were counted: Gershon took almost half the votes, totaling 16,196, ahead of Don Hedrick who got just over a third and Pushpa Mathanalingam who garnered the rest.

The final numbers:

Don Valley West/Ward 26 councillor: Jon Burnside — 9,415 (42 per cent); John Parker

— 6,167 (27 per cent); Ishrath Velshi — 3,055 (13 per cent); David Sparrow — 1,786 (eight per cent); Wasim Vania — 1,033 (four per cent); Dimitre Popov — 578 (two per cent).

Don Valley West/TDSB Ward 13 trustee: Gerri Gershon — 16,196 (47 per cent); Don Hedrick — 12,523 (36 per cent); Pushpa Mathanalingam — 5,522 (16 per cent).

Gerison wants to restore public trust

By SONYA NOV-SAN
The Observer

Some candidates watched last week's municipal election results in bars or restaurants, but Gerri Gershon chose a quieter option. The incumbent for the public school trustee race in Don Valley West celebrated her re-election privately, with just a few friends.

"I'm thrilled I get four more years to serve my ward. But I am sad because many of the candidates that I admire lost the election," she said. "The board will have about 50-per cent new members."

When the final results were counted on Monday night, Gershon ended up with 16,196 votes, winning 47 per cent

of the field over opponents Don Hedrick and Pushpa Mathanalingam. Hedrick was in second with 37 per cent of the vote and Mathanalingam had 16 per cent.

Gershon is one of several trustees who faced scrutiny about the board's spending, following reports that she charged a tour of Israel to taxpayers. She said the trip was meant to promote interfaith relations after concerns were raised regarding Muslim prayer within one of her schools.

"We've had some bad press," she acknowledged. "The most important thing that needs to be done now is reinstating the trust between the public and the board's trustees."

Patricia Parulekar, a market researcher, has supported Gershon for many years and is happy with her re-election.

"I give her my best wishes. (She is) a leader that belongs in many places. I'm glad she chose education," Parulekar said. "Toronto badly needs her sanity. I've known her for many years and have seen her grace under pressure."

Over the next four years, Gershon hopes to address the issues she pointed out in her platform, including collaborating with the city and the province to refurbish and build new schools that preserve green space. She also plans on bringing greater fiscal accountability through improved communications.



File photo///The Observer

Gerri Gershon has been re-elected public school trustee in Don Valley West.

Mathanalingam remains hopeful for next time

By CATHERINE MAGPILE
The Observer

Pushpa Mathanalingam is already thinking about next time.

As CEO of Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Consultants Corporation, she is back to her routine. But Mathanalingam maintains pride in her failed campaign for public school board in Don Valley West — and she hints at trying again.

"This was my first time and people didn't know about me, so maybe I'll have better luck next time."

In her first campaign, she managed to earn 5,522 votes, or about 16 per cent of the total.

"I'm very positive about the amount of votes I managed to get," Mathanalingam said.

Despite some controversy surrounding her trustee spending, Gerri Gershon

easily won a fourth term, with 47 per cent of the votes.

So she'll keep the school board seat that she's held since 2006. Don Hedrick was runner-up, with 37 per cent of the vote.

Referring to Gershon, Mathanalingam said, "She's a very experienced person for this position so I'm sure she'll do her best to help the system."

Mathanalingam said she

wanted to implement change in the relationships between board members and the community. Mathanalingam feels there is a lack of communication between the TDSB and the community, which she had hoped to improve.

She was the first candidate to file papers for the race, shortly after she finished school in early April.

"I noticed my daughter had the same school board trustee" as years ago, Mathanalin-

gam said, "yet I've never met or heard from her."

She added that she's still hopeful for the future of the school board.

And even outside elective office, Mathanalingam said she will continue to work with the Toronto school system.

"I think I'm a role model for not only my kids, but for other kids also," she said. "I can do it. I can make some changes for the future."

Parker praises team after losing seat in Ward 26

By BRITTANY ROGERS
The Observer

Last week's municipal election results placed John Parker in a unique position — but not one that he wanted.

Parker was the only incumbent Toronto city councillor to lose his seat. After two terms on council, he was defeated by Jon Burnside, the challenger who nipped at his heels, just 400 votes behind him, in 2010.

Ward 26 hosted six candidates, also including Ishrath Velshi — who won the Toronto Star's endorsement — and David Sparrow, Wasim Vania

and Dimitre Popov.

Incumbent Parker received 6,167 votes, putting him in second place with 28 per cent of the vote. Burnside won with 9,415 votes, 53.1 per cent of the total.

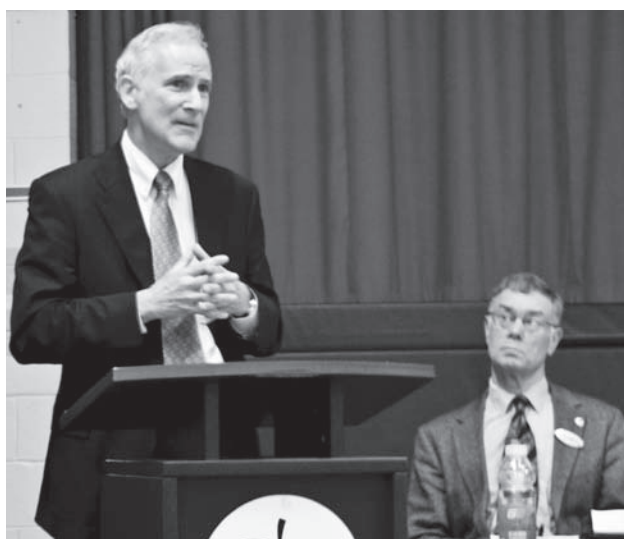
When asked about the race, Parker said "there were two clearly distinctive products offered in Ward 26 in this election and the voters decided that they wanted the other product."

Hal Spradling, owner of All Canadian Self-Storage and one of Parker's main supporters, believed Parker's flaw was a lack of aggression in this year's election.

"(John) almost lost last time, and this time, I think, had he been more aggressive and gotten his message out to people and they saw what he had done..."

At the party, Parker addressed his team and supporters saying, "you couldn't have done anything more or different." Then he added: "If the election results were determined by the quality of people that associated themselves with the particular candidates, I have no doubt at all who would have won."

Parker said he has not decided if he is going to run in the 2018 municipal elections.



File photo /// The Observer

John Parker (left) has lost his seat on council to challenger Jon Burnside.

Fragedakis rolls over her rivals

Incumbent nabs 59 per cent of the votes in Ward 29 — more than double that of closest competitor

By ERIN SANDEL and JENNIFER LEE
The Observer

The landslide landed at 535 Danforth Avenue — the Fox and Fiddle restaurant, where Mary Fragedakis and her supporters gathered for the results of last week's municipal election.

It wasn't until 8 p.m., when the polls closed, that the restaurant began to fill up. But then more than 100 anxious voters piled into the pub, staring at the televisions, waiting for the results for Ward 29.

The entire restaurant erupted with excitement when Mary Fragedakis was declared elected Toronto-Danforth councillor for a second time.

"I want to thank everyone who has believed in me these last four years," Fragedakis said, with tears welling in her

eyes, "who had confidence in me and re-elected me to represent them for another four."

Despite having five rivals, Fragedakis took an actual plurality of votes: 59 per cent, more than double her nearest rival, Dave Andre.

The other candidates were John Papadakis, Ricardo Francis, Jimmy Vlachos and Hank Martyn.

"They were closer in line with their campaigns," said Fragedakis campaign worker Dale Kowcenuk, referring to Fragedakis and Andre. "The other candidates were quite right-wing."

Fragedakis said she wouldn't be taking any time off after the campaign, and that she's already begun working toward improvements for Ward 29.

"We're going to continue to build a more livable,

green, family friendly Ward 29," Fragedakis said. "I look forward to it. It's going to be exciting."

Some of the issues that she plans on tackling include increasing park spaces, growing and maintaining the tree canopy and improving the lives of the residents in the area. Senior safety is one of her top priorities, especially considering that her own parents live in Ward 29. Fragedakis even got emotional when she thanked her family for all of the work they put into her re-election campaign.

"I couldn't have done it without them," she said. "My mom, who has knocked on doors with me for the last two months, my sister who has worked on my campaign from the beginning and everyone in my family who has been by my side."



Jennifer Lee // The Observer

Mary Fragedakis congratulated John Tory in her victory speech.

Fragedakis was also pleased with the change at the top of city council.

"The people have decided and they've decided it's John Tory," Fragedakis said of the

mayoral race. "So congratulations to John Tory and I look forward to working with him."

Fragedakis, who is known to be generally left-of-centre and to enjoy the support of the local

NDP establishment, said she has high hopes for the future of the city and the new mayor.

"Hopefully it won't be as tumultuous as the last four years," she said.

Despite the loss, Andre keeps his head up

Defeated candidate encouraged by number of votes

By VERA EL-TIMANY and DOUA HREICHE
The Observer

Dave Andre says he's not going away, even though his high-profile campaign was laid low last week.

Andre ran hard for Toronto-Danforth councillor starting in January, and he gathered some significant endorsements — including nods from former

Liberal MP Maria Minna and from Case Ootes, the long-time East York politician who is now leading Mayor John Tory's transition team.



■ ANDRE

But on election night, Andre was runner-up, and a poor second at that, with less than half the votes of incumbent Mary Fragedakis.

Andre described his experience as "challenging." In an interview with the Observer,

however, he said "my desire and my passion to serve the community does not end here. I will continue to find ways to contribute."

He promised to eventually help build a transit system that is the envy of New York and Chicago.

Andre also promised Ward 29 that he would create supporting programs for families who need a little extra help and to help youth find meaningful employment.

His team still cheered for him as soon as he entered the Factory Girl restaurant located

on Danforth Avenue on election night.

One of his team members, Norma Churchill, said she supported Andre because she "believes in him."

"Andre ran a very positive campaign," she said. "He keeps a very positive attitude. It's refreshing to know there are people in politics like this."

"Roughly 5,000 people voted for us, so obviously there's a lot of people in the ward that resonated with the message I put forward," Andre said, "and that's really encouraging."

Tale of Toronto-Danforth: Recap of ward vote tallies

One incumbent out while another coasts to victory

By JENNA REID
The Observer

What a difference four years makes.

In 2010, Cathy Dandy won the race for Toronto District School Board trustee with 75 per cent of the vote.

In last week's municipal election, Dandy was outpaced by newcomer Jennifer Story, approximately two-to-one. In the end, Story had 18,019 votes, a near-plurality among the five candidates, and Dandy had 9,893, or 27 per cent.

Another Toronto-Danforth incumbent had a much easier time of it; councillor Mary Fragedakis coasted to re-election, almost 7,000 votes ahead

of her main competition, Dave Andre.

Fragedakis won a total of 59 per cent of the votes cast, actually improving her margin from the 2010 election, when she won with 42 per cent of the vote.

The numerical results: Toronto-Danforth TDSB trustee: Jennifer Story — 18,019 (49 per cent); Cathy Dandy — 9,893 (27 per cent); Maria Saras-Voutsinas — 4,984 (13 per cent); Robert Johnston — 2,527 (six per cent); Sergio Otoy — 933 (two per cent).

Toronto-Danforth councillor: Mary Fragedakis — 11,904 (59 per cent); Dave Andre — 4,950 (24 per cent) John Papadakis — 2,000 (nine per cent); Ricardo Francis — 528 (two per cent); Jimmy Vlachos — 428 (two per cent); Hank Martyn — 249 (one per cent).

This is one election 'Story' with happy ending

By VERNON AYIKU
The Observer

Incoming Toronto-Danforth school trustee Jennifer Story says that her first priority is to return stability to the Toronto District School Board.

Backed by local political stalwarts Peter Tabuns and Paula Fletcher, Story prevailed over

a field of five candidates for the ward's school board seat, soundly defeating incumbent trustee Cathy Dandy.

It was one of the more interesting Toronto school board races this election, as the local New Democratic establishment's support shifted from Dandy to Story in the heavily NDP-influenced ward.

In the end, Story won with 49 per cent of the vote, or 18,019 votes. Dandy had just over half that — 9,893 votes, or 27 per cent of the total.

"We have some incredibly



■ STORY

hard work to do at the TDSB," Story told her election-night gathering, after being introduced by Fletcher to the roaring approval of the crowd.

With Tabuns at her side, she said she believes his endorsement helped her a great deal because of how well-respected he is by voters in the area.

'It was a challenging campaign,' says disappointed Dandy

Public school trustee's 8-year run comes to end

By BRANDON BERNARD
The Observer

Last week's defeat of incumbent public school trustee Cathy Dandy was greeted with a disappointed hush, murmurs and even some tears

at the candidate's election-night gathering, held at Sarah's Café and Bar on Danforth Avenue.

"It was a challenging campaign," Dandy said — moistness forming in her eyes. "Horrible things were said about me, things that were untrue, but we decided to take the high route."

The results for the five school

board candidates coalesced shortly after 9 p.m., spelling a decisive defeat and the end of Dandy's eight-year run as public school trustee for Toronto-Danforth.

Dandy said she will not run again for trustee. Her campaign manager, Mandy Pipher, blamed old-fashioned politics for the defeat.

"It's not about her record, it's not

about her as a human being," Pipher said. "We know that she didn't lose for those reasons."

During her time as trustee, Dandy has helped create the late-start high school program to accom-



■ DANDY

modate teenage "biorhythms," as well as three new French immersion sites.

"It is an end of an education chapter," Dandy told her supporters. "I don't know where I'll go next. I guess this is goodbye, thank you to all of you, you've all been fabulous, and we will all meet again — but just not in education."

Incumbent wins Beaches-East York

Councillor Janet Davis re-elected to her seat for fourth term in southeastern ward

By **DEIDRA BARTON**
The Observer

Janet Davis says she's "thrilled" that voters in Ward 31/Beaches-East York have returned her to council for a fourth term.

"We had four serious candidates who were running against me," she said on election night at her victory celebration at Hirut Café and Restaurant on Danforth Avenue, adding that she's "really just so excited" about earning over 60 per cent of the ballots cast.

Davis ended up with

12,697 votes — 9,674 more than closest contender George Papadakis, who had 3,023, or 14 per cent of the total.

"I didn't really know who would be in second place," said Davis about her competitor Papadakis. "There's a large Greek community here and he ran a hard-fought campaign. There was still a 7,300-vote margin, but I do obviously congratulate all the other candidates. They worked hard and that is what the democratic process is all about."

At the celebration, Davis

thanked her staff for all their hard work.

"The win is a testament to the amazing work that my staff do every single day to provide good customer service," she said. "I heard about that every day on the doorstep.... So working hard, working together with communities and building the kind of city we want is what I want to continue to do."

Davis said her first order of business this term is to focus on the younger generation.

"I know there's compensation on the way

on childcare," she said. "That's my area of specialty for several decades. I've been a childcare activist. I heard loudly and clearly on the doorsteps of Ward 31 that we need more affordable childcare."

The demographics for Ward 31 have shifted in the last 10 years from one of the oldest wards in the city to one of the youngest. With this change, Davis said there are a lot of young families in need of childcare.

Another order of business would be her program for safe lead pipes for the



■ **DAVIS**

community.

"I pushed that for the last five years and we will be seeing programs that provide financial support," she said. "There are still thousands of families that have lead pipes leading into their homes."

Beaches-E.Y. 'untouched' by results

Veterans back for another four years in Ward 31

By **ERICA RAE-CHONG**
The Observer

There were upsets in two of East York's three municipal wards last week. But in Beaches-East York, voters opted to stay the course and maintain the political status quo.

In both the city council contest and the race for public school trustee, incumbents were returned to office with healthy margins of victory.

When it came to the competition for city councillor, Janet Davis easily prevailed over her eight rivals. And in the public school board race, incumbent Sheila Cary-Meagher also ran well ahead of her opponents.

Davis garnered 12,697 of the 20,546 votes cast. She finished almost 10,000 votes ahead of runner-up George Papadakis, who got only 3,023 votes, or about 15 per cent of the total.

This will be Davis's fourth term as city councillor for Ward 31.

Meanwhile, Sheila Cary-Meagher will return yet again as trustee for Toronto District School Board's Ward 16.

Cary-Meagher garnered 15,245 of 35,410 votes, or 43 per cent of the total. That's 11 per cent more than her nearest competitor, Marietta Fox.

Cary-Meagher, a self-professed "passionate advocate of the TDSB Model Schools for Inner Cities program," is one of East York's longest-standing politicians, serving her ward as a trustee for the last 27 years.

The final tally: Beaches-East York/Ward 31 councillor: Janet Davis — 12,697 votes (62 per cent); George Papadakis — 3,023 votes (15 per cent); Russell Rahman — 1,652 votes (eight per cent); Brenda MacDonald — 1,291 votes (six per cent); Janet Sherbanowski — 858 votes (four per cent); Mark Turnbull — 462 votes (two per cent); Michael Sokovnin — 174 votes (0.8 per cent); Stephen Prince — 133 votes (0.6 per cent).

Beaches-East York/Ward 16 TDSB trustee: Sheila Cary-Meagher — 15,245 votes (43 per cent); Marietta Fox — 11,552 votes (33 per cent); Jen Sagar — 6,705 votes (19 per cent); Navarius Mombo — 1,908 votes (5 per cent).

■ CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD

Recap of TCDSB vote

Kennedy remains on track with a clear victory

By **ERIC PEMBER**
The Observer

Last week's election returns quickly drained whatever drama had built up in the race for Catholic school trustee from East York.

Once tabulators started counting the votes after 8 p.m., it was quickly apparent that Angela Kennedy would be East York's representative at the Toronto Catholic District School Board for another four years. Kennedy won the seat for the TCDSB's Ward 11, covering all of East York, in a landslide.

It marks another chapter in what has been a remarkable political story.

Kennedy was accused of a conflict-of-

interest prior to the 2010 election. But despite opposition from both the Catholic archdiocese and the teachers' union, she won re-election and was ultimately cleared of the allegations.

This time around, she enjoyed an actual plurality of votes, despite having three competitors. She garnered almost 54 per cent of ballots cast.

Her closest competitor, Kevin Morrison, got around 26 per cent of the votes. So Kennedy's margin of victory was even wider than four years ago, when she got 47 per cent and Morrison got 33 per cent.

The other two candidates were even further back: Desmond Alvares got 14 per cent of the vote, and Christmas Sy got six per cent.



Andrea Preciado // The Observer

Brenda MacDonald, a Ward 31 council candidate who finished in the middle of the pack, watches the election returns with supporters.

Kennedy eager to make changes after re-election

Landslide victory for Catholic trustee after raking in double her opponent's vote

By **LEANDRO DIAZ-MATUS**
The Observer

Angela Kennedy is back for a fifth consecutive term as East York trustee on the Toronto Catholic District School Board.

Kennedy, who was first elected to the position in November 2000, captured 53 per cent of the votes in TCDSB Ward 11 last week. That translated into 9,045 votes — over twice the number earned by of second-place finisher Kevin Morrison, who came in at 4,452.

At her election night gathering, held at Kennedy's home, volunteers and assistants gathered around the living room TV, cheering as news came in of the win.

"Elected!" Kennedy and volunteer Michelle Andreoli



Brittany Campbell // The Observer

Angela Kennedy canvasses in the run-up to her re-election as East York trustee for Toronto Catholic District School Board.

declared in unison as the final results were announced.

Raising a glass to the victor, Marlene D'Silva,

Kennedy's assistant, said, "I'm so proud of you!"

As those attending the gathering hugged and praised

each other, volunteer Ilda Nako expressed her gratitude to the voters.

"I love hearing people

saying, 'I always voted for her (Kennedy). You don't need to convince me,'" she said. "She clearly deserves winning."

As the chair of the Catholic School Advisory Council, Kennedy "sees the issues in the school board," Andreoli said. "Some things need to be changed. She is there for the job. She is there to do the job she was elected to do. Not to do the job that will get her elected."

Kennedy said she was thrilled with the win.

"I am really happy to have the ratepayers and taxpayers reaffirm that they want me as a person to represent them," she said. "It's nice to get a large percentage of the vote to know that I have a mandate on behalf of the people I represent."

Teddy helped veteran feel close to home

Webcam conversations with partner also eased separation during his tour of duty

Cont'd. from page 1

Trachmann's father had served in the Polish military before the family moved to Canada and that Polish background helped Oscar during his first tour as a machine-gunner in Bosnia in 1997.

"I was often called upon for my language skills because Polish is similar to Bosnian," he said.

Trachmann celebrated his 20th birthday there.

Today, he lives in London with his common-law partner, Tracy, in the house they bought between his first and second tours in Afghanistan.

Despite the distance, it was during his overseas service that Trachmann felt closest to Tracy, and he credits technology for making that possible.

"She brought me to Christmas dinner with the family and would put the laptop on the table," he said.

The occasions shared via webcam were not always joyous.

Trachmann recalled sitting in his tent talking to Tracy via a webcam when explosions began and the tent began shaking.

"I calmly told her I had to go back to work and I came back on the webcam two hours later," he said.

On his way back to the tent, back to the webcam, Trachmann stopped.

"I told her I would have come back sooner, but I had to stop and get some pie," he said. "She got very angry with me. Sometimes I think the tour was much harder on her than it was for me."

Trachmann continues to be a reservist, while working full-time at Ontario Power Generation in Pickering.

"I miss the camaraderie (of military service) and focusing on taking care of everyone around me," he said.



Photo courtesy of Oscar Trachmann

Oscar Trachmann and Teddy at Kandahar Air Field in Afghanistan.



Dennis Gonzales // The Observer

Jim Jenkins holds an April, 1945 picture of himself and his crew after his half-track was destroyed by an anti-tank mine in Germany.

Canadian recalls Juno Beach

'We're going to be on the coast of France in the morning,' his senior officer said

By **DAKODA SANNEN**
The Observer

Jim Jenkins remembers boarding a barge on the English Channel early on June 6, 1944. But until he was aboard, no one explained to the Oakwood, Ont. native where he was going.

His senior officer, Capt. Elmer D. Bell, made the situation a little clearer.

"Boys, there's no more training," Bell said. "We're going to be on the coast of

France in the morning."

Artillery Gunner Jenkins, then 19, knew that he and the rest of the 19th Field Regiment of the Royal Canadian Artillery, would be landing in Normandy on Juno Beach as part of D-Day, the greatest amphibious landing ever attempted.

Jenkins, now 90 years old, is one of the featured speakers for Tuesday's Remembrance Day observance at the East York campus of Centennial College. That observance will take place in the campus library at 951 Carlaw Avenue beginning at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday.

Jenkins remembers the not-so-graceful landing he made as the invasion of Northwestern Europe began that morn-

ing.

"When we first hit the beach, we had six feet of water (in front of us); it was just too deep to get (our equipment) off," he said.

They had to pull the ramp up and try again. On the second try, with more velocity, they faced another problem.

"We hit a sandbar this time," Jenkins said. "It swung the boat right into another empty ship."

Jenkins' crew improvised, using acetylene torches to cut away enough metal to lower their ramp and get ashore. All the while, they were attacked by German mortar shells and enemy aircraft.

"The sky was black with our own (fighter aircraft)," Jen-

kins said. "I didn't see a single (German) plane get away."

On the beach now, Jenkins drove his trusty half-track armoured vehicle past barbed wire and signs warning of land-mines. He said his experience on the farm gave him the ability to drive anything and everything. That half-track took him from the shores of Juno Beach as far as Germany.

And it got Jenkins to within weeks of the end of the war in Europe.

On April 12, 1945, however, Jenkins ran over two big box mines that exploded beneath the half-track vehicle and rendered it useless.

(More on this story at www.torontoobserver.ca)

Celebrating sisterhood during the war

Member of the WRENS has fond memories of her time in the navy

By **NINA RAYNARS**
The Observer

For Alison Carter, the Second World War was an experience and an escape.

"I was only 18 when I joined the Navy. I had never been away from home," she said. "Part of me knew it was the war effort, but I thought it would be an adventure."

Originally from East York, Carter enlisted in the Royal Canadian Navy with the WRENS (Women's Royal Canadian Navy Service) in 1943, but she wasn't called to serve until 1944.

For six months, she took her basic training at Saint-Hyacinthe, Que., and in Galt, Ont. Then she was posted as

a telegrapher at the Gordon Head Navy radio station near Victoria, B.C.

"My father encouraged me; he was a veteran of the First World War. He thought it would be an experience for me," she said. "I was kind of scared, but excited about this new experience."

During her training in Galt, Carter said she entered a kind of sisterhood she had never experienced.

She learned how to get along with others. In return, she learned about other people from different parts of the country.

"I liked being with other girls," she said. "The process of getting used to living with a lot of other girls in upper



■ **CARTER**

and lower bunks was fun."

During Carter's time off, she joined other WRENS on weekend getaways to Montreal.

"They had a hostel for servicewomen. We walked

around a lot and we went to a couple of dances," she said. "We usually went with girls. We didn't go with the boys. ... Not us, anyway."

In 2012, Carter joined the WREN Association of Toronto hoping to reconnect with some of the veterans with whom she'd served during the war. She said she found solace in paying homage to fallen soldiers.

"We would go the (East York) Civic Centre in our freshly pressed, smart blue uniforms. And we would swing in style as we marched around the cenotaph," Carter said.

"The cheering crowd made us feel (proud) because we were being celebrated."



■ REMEMBRANCE DAY CEREMONY

Tuesday, Nov. 11, 10:45 a.m.
East York Civic Centre
Memorial Gardens (850
Coxwell Ave.)

EDITORIALS

Tory on right track

But new mayor's transit plan raises questions

It's hard to see the results of the mayoral election as anything but a win-win. A win for Toronto. A win for East York.

Olivia Chow may have been the sentimental favourite of many East Yorkers — especially those living in the southern end of the community. But East York overall — from hardcore New Democratic Toronto-Danforth to left-tilting Beaches-East York to centrist Don Valley West — saw the sense in casting its vote for the candidate most likely to close the book on the dysfunction of the last four years.

Unlike 2010, when Beaches-East York and Don Valley west voted for Rob Ford and Toronto-Danforth voted for George Smitherman, this time it was a clean sweep in East York's three municipal wards: John Tory's conservative sensibilities may not align with East York's left-of-centre inclination, but voters here saw him as intelligent, dignified and hardworking... the right combination to lead the city.

It's encouraging that Tory already seems to be seizing the reins. And a top priority for him and for the new city council will have to be transportation — especially transit.

Poll after poll showed that this is the number one issue, in East York and across Toronto. During his campaign, Tory campaigned vigorously for his ambitious "SmartTrack" plan.

But his rivals, and some objective onlookers, have raised serious questions about the plan. How will it improve service and how much time and money will it really require? And, speaking of money, just who is going to pay for it? We are, after all, talking about \$8 billion. (And that may well be an underestimate.)

The good news is that the province has already committed to shouldering much of the burden. But there are aspects to SmartTrack that just aren't funded yet.

Let's hope that Tory goes for a combination of sources to make up this shortfall, and that he carefully considers the impact on East Yorkers and Torontonians generally if the burden is borne primarily by taxpayers. There are, after all, other options that Tory should exploit for funding SmartTrack.

For instance, Tory has a good working relationship with the province of Ontario and Premier Kathleen Wynne, so provincial support should be one area of focus.

As already mentioned, Queen's Park is already an important source of funding for Toronto transit improvements. But there's still more money there.

And considering the importance of this city and its economy to the rest of the province, it's only reasonable that we should get more support from the provincial government.

It's inevitable that taxes on East Yorkers and Torontonians generally will come into play here at some point. But our new mayor should, when it comes to SmartTrack, listen to his conservative inner voice, and tax very carefully.

~ Ali Naqvi

Fairytale ending for Story

The NDP casts its shadow, but maybe for good

It seems like election night was full of surprises when it came to the Toronto District School Board.

Half of the 22 trustees across the city are fresh faces, and that could usher in a new era. And one of those fresh faces belongs to Jennifer Story, who scored an upset in Toronto-Danforth over incumbent Cathy Dandy.

It had been widely reported that the local (and powerful) NDP establishment had abandoned Dandy for Story, but it was still a surprise to see Dandy's support go from three-quarters of the electorate in 2010 to one-quarter in 2014. Especially since she was generally seen as a hard-working and innovative trustee... and she even got a solid election-eve endorsement from Toronto's most widely read newspaper. The Star said she was a reasonable person amidst some quarrelsome colleagues, and she was supportive of students with mental health issues or biorhythms suited to the late-start high school that she helped start.

Story explained that Dandy didn't make enough of an effort to talk to the parents of the ward. Maybe there was some overconfidence in the Dandy camp. Or maybe this ambitious newcomer just did a better job in her "ground campaign."

But whatever the reasons, it may be that Story and the other newcomers who will soon be sitting around the board table at 5050 Yonge St. are a positive development.

The TDSB has seemed gridlocked lately, and it's even had its share of scandals. Now these fresh faces can bring some fresh air with them. They'll have a chance to set a new agenda and a new tone.

~Deidra Barton

COLUMNS

The culture of catcalling

Let me preface this by saying that I will never know what it's like to be an attractive woman in a male-dominated world. But for some reason, I once thought I could tell them how they should feel.

Just last month, a heated argument took place in the Observer newsroom about a YouTube video that has reached 10 million views.

The setup of the video was simple: a woman walks along Manhattan's busy streets alone, with a hidden cameraman following behind her.

It doesn't take long until you start to hear the familiar catcalls that men like myself have all used at one point. The video concludes with a message about the wrongs of harassment towards women.

What struck a nerve with me was the idea that these rather tame and hostile "compliments" were used as examples to prove a point about harassment being bad. Do we now live in a world where an honest compliment can be seen as legitimate harassment?

I remember others along with myself voicing this question in our own ways, but it was something said in the middle of this firestorm that spoke to me:

"It's not about you."

I remember saying this same statement to a white friend of mine several months back about the anger that took place in Ferguson, Missouri, over the shooting of Michael Brown. I said "It's not about you." I said it because one can never tell someone whose life experiences have been influenced by race how to feel about a situation regarding that very issue.

Before my fellow men rise up in protest, it's important to understand what's defined as harassment in the first place: 'Harassment covers a wide range of behaviours of an offensive nature. It is commonly understood as behaviour intended to disturb or upset, and it is characteristically repetitive.'

Do you think women choose how they look? No one can really control this, yet each and every day some receive comments based on their appearance

alone — by strangers whom they may feel no attraction for.

They are undressed by the eyes of people they don't know and it isn't always subtle.

It's an invasion of privacy. The reality for some woman is that strangers can touch her body without actually making physical contact.

What many men like myself have failed to understand in this debate is that discomfort is an emotion unique to the individual.

My lack of experience on the subject of living as a woman removes my right to say whether something should be considered harassment or not.

Much in the same way a non-minority person can hardly tell me how to feel about perceived racism. It's all about perspectives, people, and one thing to be learned from this is to respect them.



Noel Ransome

Not so 'Marvel'-lous times?

A wave of excitement hit the Internet last week as Marvel Studios announced their lineup of films through 2019.

The announcement came as a counterpunch to DC's big revelation just a few weeks prior. In total, there are now 33 major comic book films set to be released from the end of 2014 until 2020 from Marvel, DC, Sony and 20th Century Fox.

On top of that, there are another six comic book films yet to receive release dates. This has led to many fans calling the next seven years the "Golden Age" of comic book films.

How could they not? For every geek hoping to see their favourite comic book character hit the big screen this is a dream come true. Characters like Deadpool, Wonder Woman, Dr. Strange, Black Panther, Flash, Captain Marvel, Aquaman, Shazam, Cyborg and Green Lantern are going to have their own solo films, while major groups like DC's Suicide Squad and Marvel's Inhumans are also slated to hit the big screen.

Throw in the numerous sequels for established franchises and this should be about the most exciting time

ever for comic fandom.

So why am I left a little uneasy about it all?

Through all of this excitement, I can't help but wonder: Is this too much? Is there a threat of over-saturating Hollywood with all these comic book films?

Well, in my opinion, yes.

No matter the critical success of each film, I have to wonder how these films will make money, considering that they will all, more than likely, feature budgets of at least \$100 million.

Make no mistake, as much as these movies are being made for fans, they're being made to make money. And in my estimation, at least \$3 billion is being invested in them.

That's one heck of a gamble.

Let's hope it turns out to be justified.



Paolo Maquiraya



Nicholas Misketi /// The Observer

Music teacher Ian Speck rehearses a performance with Grade 8 students at Glen Ames Senior Public School. Each class will share its reflections on remembrance through a performance at the school's Remembrance Day ceremony Nov. 11.

Honouring veterans a leaf at a time

By NICHOLAS MISKETI
The Observer

A story about a child's desire to preserve the memory of fallen soldiers will help students at Glen Ames Senior Public School learn the significance of Nov. 11.

In the story, called "Memorial," the boy fears the town's decision to remove a tree planted by his great-grandfather as a memorial to fallen comrades might also remove their memory.

"That don't mean they'll forget," the old veteran says. "It's the fight in you they'll remember. That memory won't

die — not like my old bones.... Memories, they're ever-livin' things."

On Remembrance Day, students will assemble in the school's gymnasium in front of a recreation of the "Memorial" tree on the gymnasium wall. Each class will contribute a branch to the tree and each student will add a leaf to the class's branch containing written expressions of remembrance.

When the tree is completed, each class will respond with its own performance piece. Through this performance piece before their peers, each class will share how they remember.

"Two students will read a poem and

the rest of our class will act it out and make sound effects to it," one Grade 8 student said.

This combination of poetry and drama will represent what the act of remembrance means to them.

Teacher Laura Kingelin helps organize the assembly. She explained the importance of the students sharing a connection to remembrance at the ceremony.

"If the students make that connection, it's something that will stay with them and they will pass on," Kingelin said. "It's how they will keep the memory alive."

Music teacher Ian Speck also helps organize the ceremony. He will sing the words to "In Flanders Fields," the traditional Remembrance Day poem written by Canadian John McCrae. As he sings, students will act out the lyrics in dramatic performance. "It's designed to give them a deeper understanding of what remembering is all about," Speck said.

In preparation for the ceremony, the students will have read the Memorial story. Kingelin said the tree shows students that they all share in this experience together.

"It brings it home to them that they are all connected," Kingelin said.

Officer says he'll always have time for cadets

By SANA FATANI
The Observer

He has next to no spare time in his life. Jonathan Johnson is a fourth-year biology major at the University of Toronto. He works at a retail and logistics company.

And despite all that, he dedicates 12 hours a week to a group of military cadets.

"Anything that is a positive thing in my life, I can definitely contribute to the cadet program," he said.

At 24, Johnson serves as a commanding officer of the 330th Danforth Tech Squadron of cadets, based in East York.

The cadet program teaches life skills such as leadership, time management and public

speaking to youth.

Johnson spent six years as a cadet before moving to a staff position that he's held for eight years now. Today he leads 16 staff members and seven parents' committee board members.

"The program is very enriching," he said. "I care because I'm able to impact someone's life."

Johnson gets paid \$70 for administering the cadet program once a week for three hours. In reality, he logs at least triple the number of working hours on the books.

Johnson explained that he's in charge of almost 100 cadets at the moment.

He said the most rewarding aspect of his work is seeing cadets come back after they've

graduated from the program.

"One cadet who joined the military program is now a fire chief of one of the biggest military fire halls in the country," he said.

For Johnson, it appears there will always be room in his life for the cadet program.

"It (has) helped me become the person...I am today," he said.

Remembering the 'sailors that weren't saved'

By KATHERINE FORTE
The Observer

There were supposed to be three ships.

Each day, in the lead-up to D-Day, the HMCS Huron, Haida and Athabaskan would leave port and sail into the English Channel off Plymouth, England.

"We'd see those three destroyers going out at dusk just when it's getting dark," said Second World War veteran Jack Aldred.

"They had to go clear the (English) Channel of German ships and then... we'd see them come back the next morning with shell holes in the

ship."

But one morning in November 1943 was different: only two ships made port. The Athabaskan didn't return.

"We were there to see the ships come in," Aldred said. "Right away you're fearful of how many of the guys went down with the ship... how many were saved. Some did escape in the captain's motorboat; others were captured by the Germans."

In his poem *Sailor's Lament*, Aldred remembered the Athabaskan and her crew.

"...neath the unforgiving waves / Are many unmarked sailors' graves. / So let the little poppy represent our

/ Memories of those young lives so heroically spent."

For the past three years at the East York Remembrance Day ceremony, Aldred has recited *In Flanders Fields*, followed by a personal writing inspired by what he witnessed while serving aboard HMCS Prince Robert during the Second World War.

This year, Aldred plans to read *Sailor's Lament*.

"This is what I'm thinking of: sailors that weren't saved," he said. "They died in the English Channel and they're in unmarked graves. They're just down there with the ship."



■ ALDRED

Creating a sense of law and order

By EVAN PANG
The Observer

Derrick Gaudet's job in Afghanistan was generating respect where there was none.

"You can't get older people to respect the police (in Afghanistan)," he said. "They are already set in their ways."

On Dec. 31, 2014, Canada's combat operations in Afghanistan will end. Following 13 years of war, Canadian Forces are trying to leave behind law and order in the country.

Sgt. Gaudet is a dog handler at Toronto Police Services in East York. In 2012, he volunteered to go overseas to work with the other police officers of the European Union training the Afghan police force. It requires more than just building a law enforcement unit.

"The (police) officers over there were like military," he said. "If someone did something wrong, they would just hit you over the back of the head, put you into a truck and take you away.... The people might never see you again."

While in Afghanistan, Gaudet was stationed at a German forces base, just outside of Fayzabad, the capital and largest city in the northern province of Badakhshan. Each morning he would leave the base in an armoured vehicle and drive straight to the police headquarters in the heart of the city.

"There's military people everywhere, evidence of buildings being blown up," Gaudet said.

"But there are (also) flowers growing, people doing their business. There're people going on with their lives even though there's a war going on around them."

Gaudet spent his time training the police chief and his staff to develop respect among the people, to give them a sense of security in a war-torn country.

■ COMMUNITY



East York flag a reminder of 'what we were'

Head of flag program says it's still a symbol of E.Y.'s history and community

By JEREMY HON
The Observer

The East York Historical Society is hoping that a new wave of those distinctive East York flags will soon be waving in the former borough.

Alan Redway is one of the driving forces behind the society. And for five years starting in 1977, he was mayor of East York — when it was politically autonomous, prior to amalgamation. He now remembers how he couldn't help but notice that of all the municipalities making up what was then called "Metropolitan Toronto," his was the only one missing a flag.

So after approval from East York council, he organized a contest that would encourage the design for the new flag. This contest not only received hundreds of submissions but also donations from companies and businesses such as Peak Freans, Coca Cola, Canada Wire and Cable.

"The flags are a symbol of uniqueness," Redway said. "It sets East York apart from other cities and municipalities."

The winning flag is composed of the initials of the borough, EY, along with a maple leaf. Many believe the 'Y' symbolizes the two branches of the Don River.

A board director of the East York Historical Society, Margaret McRae, heads the flag program. She is in charge of ordering and selling the flags.

"We started by ordering 200 desktop 4x6 inch flags on a stand which we sold for \$10," McRae explained. "Then we ordered and sold 25 flags, three feet by six feet, and later 15 flags, 27 by 54 inches."

McRae stated that "all the larger flags have been sold, but there are still lots of desktop flags remaining." So the society is advertising them for sale.

She said that even in the era of the "mega-city," the flags remain a symbol of the history and community that is East York.

"I feel a very deep loyalty to East York. It's been my home since 1980," McRae said. "It's a well-run municipality with a great spirit. The flags help represent and remind what we were.... Especially with new residents, it is important for us to show them the history."

For more information on the East York flags, visit www.eastyork.org or visit the East York Historical Society's own website at www.eastyork.org/eyhs.



■ REDWAY



Henry Chang Li // The Observer

FoodShare volunteer Carolynne Fairweather checks the produce to ensure freshness. Each week, she helps set up a mobile market and Dawes Road and Gower Street in East York.

This grocery store comes to you

By HENRY CHANG LI
The Observer

Every Wednesday at 4 p.m., rain or shine, FoodShare Toronto brings its mobile grocery store to East York.

When it's 'shine,' customers browse the selection of fruits and vegetables on stands set up in the parking lot of Harmony Hall on Gower Street. And when it's 'rain' — or snow or too cold for comfort — the market moves inside an apartment building at Gower and Dawes Road.

Aimed at seniors and low-income families, the store is both convenient and inexpensive, customers say.

It's one of five mobile markets run in Toronto by Foodshare, a non-profit organization.

"The selection isn't that great at the nearest store," said East York resident Judy Appleby, who visits the market every week. "I find the selection here pretty good."

Fresh fruits and vegetables are inaccessible to many people across Toronto. For low-income families, food can be expensive and the nearest store may be miles away, said Foodshare volunteer Deborah Kirkland.

While this isn't the case for people living near Dawes and Gower, even a 10-minute journey can be daunting

if there are mobility issues or health concerns. So FoodShare brings the store to the people.

They start by collecting produce from suppliers across Ontario in a building near Dufferin and Bloor. Then volunteers like Kirkland sort out and divide the produce among five different mobile markets.

"We pack things that are high in nutrients and vitamins," she said. "We buy whatever is in season."

FoodShare volunteer and East York resident Carolynne Fairweather helps set up the mobile market at Dawes and Gower. She said it offers convenience and

choice for seniors.

"An elderly man came and bought three (pieces of) banana and sweet potato," she said. "We sell things individually. We don't tell them they have to buy a whole bunch. They aren't pressured to buy a whole bunch for a cheaper price when they can't finish it before it expires."

Fairweather said the market teaches children how to make healthy life choices.

"There's mothers at home with little people," she said. "They bring their little people with them and it's an education for them. They learn about shopping and how to buy the right things."

Mastering the fine art of 'horse ballet'

Local rider and her horse compete in Quebec after only 3 weeks of practice

By BETH JARRELL
The Observer

When East York horseback rider Tori Pittman stepped into the dressage arena in Blainville, Quebec last month for her first-ever out-of-province competition, she wasn't quite sure what to expect.

At the time of the show, Pittman had only been riding her 18-year-old Westphalian cross for three weeks, an incredible feat in a sport where the bond between horse and rider is paramount.

"That bond, that relationship and mutual trust takes time to develop, so it's incredible that I was able to work with this amazing horse," Pittman said. "I could



Photo courtesy of Ed Pittman

Tori Pittman and her 18-year-old Westphalian cross are partners in dressage.

not have asked for a better partner."

Dressage, although a French term itself, is one of the main events for English-style riders. It is also called "horse ballet," as riders must do a series of movements with their horse that mimics the famous dance style.

"There was something about dressage that stuck with me," Pittman said. "I loved dance when I took it as a kid, and the higher you get, the more you have to make it look like you're just sitting there when you're actually doing a million things."

For Pittman, riding is a

family affair. She credits her parents with her success and says they were the driving force behind both her and her younger sister, who also rides and competes.

"They're the best supporters, and they have been there for me their entire lives," she said.

"My mom is my biggest supporter. She knows how I work and I can trust her with anything."

Although she did not place in the Quebec show, Pittman hopes the experience will help her grow as a rider as she moves on to the national stage. Currently, Pittman spends her time riding, training horses for people and teaching dressage lessons twice weekly.

"I would not be the person I am without riding, and I don't think I would be happy without it," she said. "I love the thrill of competing, and would love to keep doing it my entire life."