



Hospital spreads its wings

By NINO MESSE-TAMURI
The Observer

“We have come home,” said Gov. Gen. David Johnston during a visit to Sunnybrook hospital on Friday.

Johnston, who lived in the area with his wife for many years, officially opened two brand new wings expanding research space at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre by 150,000 square feet.

“This is a great day for health care in Canada,” he said. “This state-of-the-art research centre has such magnificent potential to advance health care and change lives for the better. It just makes you feel so good to see this great Canadian contribution to the world.”

The new \$160-million Centre for Research in Image-Guided Therapeutics will house more than 300 research and clinical teams working with 30 biotechnology companies to develop new treatment methods for cancer, brain diseases such as Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s, muscular skeletal ailments, cardiac care and trauma.

“Putting this centre in one of the busiest hospitals in the country provides our scientists and clinical teams with a constant reminder and motivation for their work,” said Sunnybrook’s president and CEO, Dr. Barry McLellan. “You do not have to look far here to find someone who will benefit.”

Sunnybrook also used the opening ceremony to express thankfulness for its successful partnership with East York’s Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute by awarding its first \$1,000 Sunnybrook Award of Excellence.

“By working with students, we are investing in the future of research and health care,” McLellan said. “(The prize) is really just a way to better engage with students.”

Supervisor Dr. Kullervo Hynynen gave the Award of Excellence to Sharon Yeung, 18, for her outstanding help with his research on the new ultrasound surgery helmet during the summer.

“I am very excited,” said Yeung, who has since graduated and is now in the Health Sciences program at McMaster University. “This summer has been a great learning experience. It’s one thing to learn about science in a classroom. It’s another to see it in action.”

■ WILL IT BE A WYNNE-WIN SITUATION?



Matthew Wocks /// Observer

Kathleen Wynne, the representative for Don Valley West in the Ontario legislature, celebrates with family and friends after announcing her candidacy for the leadership of the Ontario Liberals.

Wynne vies for leadership

Don Valley West MPP highlights need for diversity, transparency

By MATTHEW WOCKS
The Observer

Kathleen Wynne has made true the rumours, confirming that she’s seeking the Ontario Liberal Party leadership.

The Nov. 5 announcement took place before a packed house, including her parents, at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre at 6 Garamond Court. The announcement came three days af-

ter an early reveal by outgoing Premier Dalton McGuinty.

Wynne, MPP for Don Valley West since 2003, stepped down as the minister responsible for Municipal Affairs, Housing and Aboriginal Affairs on Nov. 2.

If she wins, Wynne would become the first female premier of Ontario — but first, she said, she wants to address controversies like the one surrounding her party and the Ornge Air ambulance service.

“I have been proud to be part of this government,” she said. “We have made huge advances and I want to make sure there is transparency.”

In her nomination speech, the mother of three highlighted the need for diversity in Ontario.

“We are firefighters and social workers and Aboriginal people and we have been in Ontario for nine generations,” she said.

Wynne has been a diversity advocate in the past, helping found MAD for dancing, a group supporting gay and lesbian youth. As an openly gay woman, she said everyone should be free from discrimination.

“What I want to see in Ontario is for everyone to feel safe,” she said. “They can go to work and not be discriminated against because of their age, sexuality or

colour.”

Sheila Ward is a trustee with the Toronto District School Board and worked closely with Wynne when she was also a board member in 2000-2001.

“Her work ethic is probably one of the best of anybody I know,” she said. “I don’t know anyone that is smarter or works harder than Kathleen.”

Michael Prue, NDP MPP for Beaches-East York, has also known Wynne for years, but had qualified praise.

“I hope she renounces her party,” he said. “I wish her good luck, but now it’s time to get back to work.”



**East York pays homage to our veterans:
E.Y. Civic Centre, Sunday, 10:45 a.m.**



POLICE BRIEFS

Robber with knife at large

Police are searching for a suspect in connection with a convenience store robbery. The 46-year-old owner of Matin Convenience, at 719 Cosburn Ave., reported a man entered the store around 12:44 p.m. on Oct. 30. He pulled out a knife and demanded cash and cigarettes. The victim complied and the suspect fled northbound on Coxwell Avenue. No one was injured during the robbery. The suspect is described as male, 15-25 years old, 5'-5" to 5'-6" tall.

Sexual assault reported

Police are seeking the public's help in locating a suspect after a 46-year-old woman was sexually assaulted. The incident took place in the area of O'Connor Drive and St. Clair Avenue East at around 1:55 p.m. on Oct. 31. Police describe the suspect as male, 35-50 years old, 5'-10" with short grey hair and a medium build.

~ Jaclyn Dunham



Nick Tragianis // Observer

Toronto's Greeks take to the streets for Oxi Day

Sunday, Oct. 28, marked the 72nd anniversary of Oxi Day, when Greece stood up to the Axis in the Second World War by refusing an ultimatum from Italian dictator Benito Mussolini. Braving the rainy and chilly weather, Toronto's Greek community marked the day with music, food, and a parade along Danforth Avenue.

East York adults invest in improving reading skills

By ANI HAJDERAJ
The Observer

Having just celebrated its silver anniversary and with a fundraiser planned for later this month, the East York Learning Experience is spreading the word about its mission to improve literacy.

The non-profit agency, with headquarters at 266 Donlands Ave., considers west Scarborough and some of east Toronto — along with East York — as its catchment area.

The program's goal is simple: to help adults improve their literacy at their own pace.

Director Gail McCullough has been an agency administrator for more than 20 years.

"They are here for a variety

of reasons," she said. "Some need to start right back at the alphabet and others are just trying to get writing skills to get into a college program."

The program offers daytime and evening programming to accommodate those who have jobs and other obligations.

"For someone who has been through the school system and who hasn't gained these skills in a classroom environment, working on a one-on-one basis allows the tutor to focus on the needs of a student," McCullough said.

"You are not wasting time reviewing things they already know."

The East York Learning Experience first focuses on assessing where the students are at before they begin in-

struction.

This allows the instructor to gauge what they need work on, so they end up making a goal-based training plan for getting the goals achieved.

Pat Anweiler, 54, has been teaching English in the program for about six years.

"I was immediately interested because I love the English language, grammar and I'm a stickler for punctuation," she said.

Anweiler works with students on an individualized basis, at their pace.

"The best thing about this is there is no pressure. It's about having fun, learning at their own pace and not getting stressed out," she said.

The centre has a number of resources to help students

learn, including books on a variety of topics — from spelling to cooking.

"Nothing has to be done tomorrow or today," Anweiler said. "It's really all about the student's pace."

The East York Learning Experience celebrated its 25th anniversary in the spring, and on Nov. 22, a fundraiser will be held for it — organized by a group of corporate communications students from Centennial College's East York campus.

It's a "Revenge of the Nerds" costume pub night at Eton House, 710 Danforth Ave. near Pape, and it will run 7-11 p.m. Tickets are \$7 at the door and \$5 in advance from inforevengeofthenerds@gmail.com.

WHAT'S UP IN E.Y.

St. Luke's hosts big fundraiser

On Saturday, Nov. 17 from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., St. Luke's Anglican Church will be holding its biggest fundraising event of the year. The Holly Berry Fair will include a tearoom, crafts, knitted goods, baking, a quilt raffle, books, Christmas gifts and other attic treasures. For more information, call 416-421-6878, ext. 21.

Celebrate the season with Christmas fair

St. Barnabas Anglican Church will be holding an event this weekend entitled "Remembering," a concert of secular and sacred music to honour our veterans and those who did not return home from war. The concert, to be held this Sunday, Nov. 11, at 4 p.m., will include performances by the choir and soloists. Special guest, piper Rob Crabtree, will also be in attendance. Tickets are \$8 in advance or \$10 at the door. A sherry reception will follow the concert.

~ Arielle Quigley

Cutting it short: Languages lost in translation

Some question if the new short form census reflects the diversity in Toronto

By MATTHEW WOCKS
The Observer

To understand the diversity of languages spoken in East York, follow the statistics, but be forewarned; stats are not all cut from the same cloth.

Statistics Canada released the language data portion of the 2011 census on Oct. 24, with a disclaimer on its website that data users "exerc-

ise caution" when evaluating trends of mother tongue and home language.

The reason, according to Stats Canada's language program chief specialist Jean Pierre Corbiel, is that there is no longer a long-form census.

He said in the past there were seven language-specific questions asked on the long-form census and one on the short-form. Now there are only three language questions on the short-form census.

"What we know is when we have a full set of language questions, we get more precise information," he said. "It doesn't mean the information is not valid. It is just not as precise."

Jolly Yang is the program manager for ele-



For more about East York, please check out the Toronto Observer website at torontoobserver.ca.

mentary-level international language initiatives with the Toronto District School Board. After school programs are available for kindergarten to Grade 8 students to either learn a new language or maintain their first.

"We teach 53 languages and have about 30,000 students participating within a school year," she said.

Yang said Mandarin, taught at East York's Second Elementary School, is one of the most popular languages studied. She has already ex-

amined the 2011 language census data.

"I thought the census data was quite reflective of the language program that we offer," she said.

According to the 2006 census, the top language spoken at home in East York was English. The 2011 census data released so far reflects Toronto as a whole, still listing English as the language that is most spoken in households.

Rosemary Sostaric is the education director at the Oxford Learning Centre at 784 Broadview Ave. in East York, where after-school support is provided for Grade 1-12 students.

She said the majority of its students speak English at home.

OUR ANNIVERSARY: 1972-2012

Looking back in time

40 years on, the Observer reflects... with pride

EDITOR'S NOTE

Since September, we've been marking the 40th anniversary of the East York Observer with a bit of history and a retrospective of pages drawn from the newspaper over the years since 1972, when Centennial College founded the publication — both as a form of community outreach and as a way to give journalism students real-world experience.

We must be doing something right, because the Observer has won its share of awards over its four decades.

Earlier this year, our web companion — www.torontoobserver.ca — was cited by the Ontario Community Newspapers Association as one of the top three student newspapers on the web in the entire province. Prior to that, in 2009, 2010 and 2011, the hard-copy, newsprint edition was cited for excellence by the OCNA in various categories.

We're proud of those industry prizes, but we're just as proud of our community awards, from a plaque presented by the former Borough of East York for our coverage of activities under its parks and recreation department to a citation from the Canadian Red Cross and Oxfam for our reporting of East York relief efforts following the Indian Ocean tsunami. (And with another round of OCNA awards approaching, our fingers are crossed that we'll soon be filling more space in the hall display case!)

For now, we'll leave you with this look back — the first of two front pages from the 1990s.

In this instalment of our retrospective series, we go back in time to 21 years ago this very week, when we covered — among other things — a royal visit to East York.

For full election coverage, see pages 5 to 8

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ROLE OF THE DI: Diana, Princess of Wales, visited the Hugh MacMillan Rehabilitation Centre in East York Oct. 25 as part of the recent royal tour. Photos by Peggy O'Neil (above) and John Andrews (right).



Princess Di receives 'royal' welcome in EY

By RON BROWN and JOHN ANDREWS

For 600 people who gathered in East York on Oct. 25, it was a chance to step into another time and place, to be part of a fairy tale.

Those who waited outside the Hugh MacMillan Rehabilitation Centre for the Princess of Wales' arrival may have been disappointed. But those who were there for Diana's departure were thrilled to be part of a walkabout of regal dimensions.

The princess visited the children's centre, at 350 Rumsey Rd., as part of the week-long Royal tour of Ontario.

The crowd and the excitement grew for more than an hour before she arrived. All they wanted was a look, to see a princess, not on TV, not in a magazine and not in their

imaginations.

"I want to see her," said Minnie Morris, 52, of East York. "I saw her on TV but never in person."

Dennis Madigan, 56, also of East York, said he feels like he's "known (the Royal family) practically since childhood," and that the chance to see a princess only happens "once in a lifetime."

But the excitement of royalty didn't touch everyone in the crowd.

Jordan Hartorn, 6, said she would rather be in school.

"I'm mad because I'm not with my friends," she said.

Jessica Fife, 4, was feeling the strain of a royal visit.

"I'm scared to see a real princess," she said.

One boy argued with his sis-

ter that Diana wasn't a real princess because she wasn't wearing a crown.

The biggest fans were the older members of the crowd. But when the motorcade finally pulled up, they too became children. They swarmed and cheered, standing on their toes or bouncing up and down to get a better look.

And about 10 seconds after she stepped out of her car, Diana disappeared into the building. The lucky ones caught a glimpse of her pink jacket and black skirt before she was gone.

"I didn't see her," Elena MacDuffee said as she walked away. "I'm disappointed but thrilled."

Whether they felt dejected, happy or downright giddy, for a see FAIRY, page 2

Dodds retires, board startled

By JANET FARROW

Trustees were literally speechless at the Oct. 28 school board meeting when education director Dick Dodds announced his resignation.

Dodds first presented the trustees and staff of the East York Board of Education with a large hand-carved wooden plaque of the board's logo, which he had paid for himself. He then surprised all those present by reading aloud his letter of resignation.

Although many trustees were startled because they had not been forewarned of his actions, rumors that he would retire in the near future had been floating around for some time.

Dodds, 55, said he had good reasons for the timing and the way in which he announced his resignation.

"Making the announcement now before the municipal elections will avoid any possible speculation of the resignation being linked to the results, as well as providing ample time to find a replacement," Dodds said in a press release.

Dodds, who has been with the board for 12 years, will continue working as director and secretary-treasurer until next Aug. 31.

He added in an interview that he wanted to make the announcement in public to be fair to all those concerned, including trustees and

staff, and the Oct. 28 meeting was the last opportunity before the Nov. 12 election.

"This (retirement) was a hard decision for me to make," Dodds said, "I just think it's time."

Trustees, obviously startled, said nothing in response to Dodds' announcement at the meeting. They also took no formal action, choosing instead to refer the matter to a private meeting at a later date. Dodds, however, made it clear in an interview that his decision is not negotiable.

Dodds said he has no definite plans for his retirement. For now, he said, he will continue to concentrate on his board job and his new role as president of the Canadian Education Association. But he also made it clear that he is unlikely to stay idle for long.

"Dodds retire? Never," said Ward 1 Trustee Gail Nyberg.

Nyberg mirrors the opinions of many people who have been associated with Dodds.

"I don't see him retiring and just sitting in a rocking chair," said Janet see DODDS, page 2



DICK DODDS

Suspect denied bail

By VALERIE HILL

The East York man charged with beating and sexually assaulting an Oakville woman on a GO train has been denied bail.

Terry Michael Elkins, 28, of Parkview Hill Cres. attended his bail hearing last Thursday when he was refused bail and remanded in custody.

Peel Region police arrested the man after two GO security officers spotted him riding an eastbound

train from Oakville.

The brutal attack took place Oct. 22 on a GO train travelling east from Oakville. A 17-year-old woman was on her way to Toronto when she was beaten and choked into unconsciousness before being sexually assaulted.

Elkins has been charged with aggravated sexual assault, choking, forcible confinement and aggravated assault. His next court date is Nov. 5.

Lest we forget... Remembrance Day still has meaning

By JODY IRELAND

Since the end of the First World War, on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918, Canadians have found reason to honor their war heroes.

They have held Remembrance Day ceremonies across the country, pinned poppies on their lapels, observed a minute of silence every Nov. 11 at 11 a.m.

But in recent years some Canadians have been questioning these ceremonies, asking themselves if Remembrance Day glorifies war, or alienates those who were the enemy during both world wars.

Rev. Edith Von Shantz, now in her sixth year at Don Mills United Church, has found that the Remembrance Day service there has changed from one that invited members of the local Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 10,

to relate their experiences during the war to this year's service, which focuses on peace and features the Don Valley Peace Team.

"It seems the legionnaires sometimes carry a mixed message," she said — a message that to fight for your country is as honorable as seeking peaceful resolutions.

But Jim Alexander, vice-president of Branch 10, disagrees. Their services are "not glorifying war in any way, definitely not," he said. "The service is strictly a memorial service to honor East York veterans."

East York school board trustee Gail Nyberg says that since Remembrance Day services have been brought into the schools (students used to have the day off), they have become "more reverent."

In relation to accommodating the multiculturalism in East York schools, Nyberg

says that services are "more sensitive, recognizing that everybody suffers in a war, all nations, the aggressors and the defenders."

She says she has been at school services where both Canadian veterans and Japanese people who experienced Hiroshima were invited to speak.

Von Shantz says the purpose of her Remembrance Day service is to "develop a bridge" between a "strong allegiance to the Legion" among the congregation and the question of "how to go about peace in 1991."

"The function of the service is to pray for peace," she said. The memorial service at Branch 10 has been held annually for 63 years, according to Alexander. It's the oldest service in the country, and despite Canada's involvement in the Gulf War it will continue, as always, to con-

centrate on the veterans of the First and Second World Wars.

At Don Mills United Church, Von Shantz said the Gulf War has made people "aware that we're not fighting with conventional weapons anymore."

"It's the type of warfare that's scaring people to death. People are afraid," she said.

Since the United Church of Canada did not support the war and sought to achieve a just peace through sanctions, "it's more difficult to deal with," she said.

Nyberg said the Gulf War will make war "more prominent" in students' minds. "They will know what war is," she said. "They will be more able to understand, more horrified by the concept of war."

"It will have more meaning for them, and that's good," she said.



Theresa Spohn // Observer

Jack Aldred (left) and George McKeil reminisce about their lives during the Second World War.

Veterans recall war's bittersweetness

By **THERESA SPOHN**
The Observer

For Canadian naval veteran Jack Aldred, getting aboard his warship in Naples harbour during the Second World War might have been his toughest assignment.

"We'd come down to the end of the jetty and I fell off into the glorious waters of Naples," he said. "I couldn't swim, but the water was lovely."

The 89-year-old East York resident was an able seaman between 1942 and 1945 aboard HMSC Prince Robert, a Royal Canadian Navy anti-aircraft cruiser stationed in the Mediterranean.

The cruiser was too large to dock in the port, so crewmen returning to Prince Robert had to use a motorboat.

"I was (in the water) between the jetty and the motorboat," Aldred said. "It could have squashed me... and I wouldn't have cared."

His fellow sailors fished him out of the water before Aldred was hurt. He came through the war safely and came home to Toronto.

Among his friends at the Todmorden branch of the Royal Canadian Legion is George McKiel. Like Aldred,

McKiel likes to recall amusing moments while serving with Canadian Forces overseas.

McKiel, 83, was a corporal in the Royal Canadian Engineers.

He served overseas for 16 years after the Second World War, including a posting in 1961-'62 at Rafah, Egypt. He recalled relaxing one afternoon on the patio of the engineers' wet canteen.

McKiel said some members of the Service Corps showed up along with their donkey, Zubric. They tied up the animal while they went in for a drink.

McKiel felt Zubric needed to cool down too.

"It was 110 degrees," McKiel said. "I took a case of beer and poured it in the bucket (and) Zubric... drank the whole damned thing... They didn't find out until later, but I didn't care since I was half shot too."

Like Aldred, McKiel values his time in the service.

"If I had to do it all over again, I'd do it," McKiel said. "Only I wouldn't get out after 16 years. I'd stay in the service."

He just wanted to defend his country

By **MARK CADIZ**
The Observer

He wanted to serve his country during the Second World War, but they turned Frank Moritsugu down.

"Even when the war started in 1939, none of us were allowed to serve in any of the Canadian Forces," he said.

After the bombing at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, 22,000 Japanese Canadians were uprooted from their homes by the federal government and forced into internment camps across the country. Despite the treatment, some of the young Japanese-Canadian men still wanted to fulfill their duty as Canadians and serve in the army.

Frank Moritsugu, now 89, was one of those men.

"The irony is the Chinese Canadians, who were also banned, (were from) an Allied country against Germany, Italy and Japan," said Moritsugu, who retired in 1989 from teaching in Centennial College's journalism program, now based at the East York campus. "In other words, it was a white Canada approach."

Eventually, nearing the end of the

Second World War, the Canadian Army secretly recruited Japanese-Canadian interpreters and translators. Moritsugu wanted to be among them.

"One day in Ontario, two enlistment officers and a couple of Japanese Canadians came to our farm," he recalled. "I told my father I wanted to join the army and my father asked me in Japanese, 'Why would you go and fight for a country that treats us like this?'"

Against his parents' wishes, Frank Moritsugu and 22 others enlisted

and were deployed overseas as interpreters to aid the Allied countries in Southeast Asia.

At the time, Moritsugu felt his decision to go overseas in the Canadian Army might alter the treatment he and his family were receiving in Canada.

"If I join up and have the Canadian flag across my uniform," Moritsugu remembered telling his father, "then all of this is going to stop and it will be better for my brothers and my sisters."

Some 40 years after the internments of the Second World War, former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney gave a formal apology in the House of Commons on Sept. 22, 1988.



Mark Cadiz // Observer

WREN recalls 'growing up navy'

By **LUCY ONEKA**
The Observer

As a child, Rodine Doris Mary Buckley-Beevers Egan remembers growing up navy.

"I never knew it as a floor, as a child. I knew it as a deck," she said. "I knew all the time as 13:00, and 14:00 hours (not 1 o'clock or 2 o'clock). I knew navy talk."

Ronnie Egan, 89, served Canada as a chief petty officer with the Women's Royal Naval Service during the Second World War. She became one of four WRENS chosen to run the Mechanical

Training Establishment at the navy base in Halifax.

Egan, who is scheduled to take part in a Remembrance Day observance at the East York campus of Centennial College today, Nov. 9, remembers her childhood as a busy time. Her father served in the Royal Navy, so the navy life seemed natural to her. At 19, she enlisted with the WRENS.

As a WREN, she worked in the Halifax barracks, filing, tracking ratings and keeping track of other junior WRENS. She also drilled the WRENS on the parade square so that

they would look orderly when they attended the launching of navy ships at the Halifax shipyards.

"I loved it," she said. "It was war, yes, but I was doing something for the war."

In her off-duty hours, she would go to Bedford Basin to get away from it all.

"The basin was a beautiful place... It was just like a big horseshoe of water. I would go down... and watch all the ships all lined up (in a convoy preparing to cross the Atlantic to Britain)," she said. "Some would come back, and others wouldn't."



Jack Aldred (left) and friends during the Second World War.



East York's
REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE
will take place on Sunday, Nov. 11...



EVEN IN WAR, LOVE ENDURES

By PAULA LAST
The Observer

Immediately after their wedding, Marjorie and Winston Rogers went their separate ways.

It wasn't that their love had died. The impulsive pair needed to go home and ask for forgiveness, since they didn't bother to ask for permission.

The first time Marjorie and Winston met was during the Second World War, when they nearly bumped into each other on the street. The second time, at a soldiers' canteen, Winston recognized Marjorie and chatted her up. After that, they saw each other regularly, meeting in Brighton on the south coast of England. It was during one of those trips they decided to get married.

At the time, Winston was a Canadian soldier in the 48th Highlanders of Toronto. Marjorie was a secretary living with her parents in Little Hampton, England.

When they arrived at their respective homes after their wedding, they both had some explaining to do.

Today Marjorie, 90, still lives in the East York war bungalow she and Winston bought in September 1949, paid for by Winston's POW disbursement. She and three of their six children, Blake, 65, Terry, 63, and Keith, 66, recalled a particularly perilous moment from those days in England involving their elder brother John, 68.

"A plane came down out of the sky and shot up the street with machine guns," Keith Rogers said. "My mother is walking my older brother down the street, a baby and a carriage. This lone German 'hero' came out of the sky and tried to kill her."

"Just shooting all the way and I had no place to go," Marjorie added. The baby was harnessed into the carriage, so the mother

struggled to get her baby loose.

"There was just a hedge there.... So I put John here (in her arms) and turned my back to the plane (and tucked up against the hedge). That's all I could do."

Marjorie also remembered the time her husband went missing in action, the day after her first child was born.

"We'd been up all night having this baby and I just got into bed to rest," she said.

"There was a... 'rat-tat-tat' at the door. You knew it was the postman; it was a Sunday. Granddad went to answer the door and he was handed this telegram that said that my husband was missing in action - could be dead, could be anything."

"It was a matter of months before we knew anything," she added.

Winston eventually came home to start a life with his bride in Canada. He died in 2000.



FOLLOWING THE LEAD

By ALEXANDRA GATER
The Observer

In a kitchen in Scottsburg, Indiana, a woman cooked pot roast for a stranger as she grieved over the loss of her son. Canadian Chris Jones listened to her story.

"I defy anyone to sit at a kitchen table and talk to a mother who's lost her son in war and not feel something," Jones said.

Jones writes stories for Esquire magazine and wrote *The Things That Carried Him*, published in the magazine in 2008. The story follows the return of the body of Joey Montgomery, an American soldier killed in Iraq to his hometown.

Jones offered insights to assembling the story in a seminar for students during Remembrance Day week at Centennial College's East York campus. *The Things That Carried Him* took eight months and 101 interviews to complete. The story begins with the man who dug Montgomery's grave and ends with the soldiers who witnessed the explosion of the IED that killed him. In between are the stories of his family members - mother Gail, wife Missie and their three children. Jones listened to their words and was touched by them.

"For me that's just part of the deal," he said. "I don't want to not feel it."

The Things That Carried Him received the National Magazine Award for feature writing in 2009. But Jones said he had a hard time writing another story after it. He said he was weighed down by the sadness of the many people he interviewed.

Four years have passed and Jones still sits at that kitchen table with Gail. Many of the people he wrote about in *The Things That Carried Him* are still important in his life today. He acknowledged the closeness to his sources was not always easy.

"There is a cost to that. At the end of *The Things That Carried Him* I was in a pretty dark spot, for quite a while," Jones said. "No other story seemed as important."



Matthew Wocks // Observer

A handmade desk to remember

By TAMAR ATIK
The Observer

Every time Ian Cairney looks at the desk in his sunroom, it's Remembrance Day.

"I built that desk with my dad looking over me and there's not one nail in that desk - no nails at all," he said.

Cairney's grandfather served in the First World War, and his dad in the Second World War.

"We didn't see our dad often. We only saw him when he came home. But he told me all his stories. He only did England and Holland, but it was bad," said Cairney, 78. "I wanted to follow in his footsteps."

Eventually he did. He served for nine months on an anti-tank gun in the Korean War between 1952 and 1953.

"We kept the border safe while the Americans and South Koreans were fighting the communists in the city," Cairney said.

But before he left for overseas in 1952, his father taught him some useful carpentry.

"Dad showed me how to do it," he said. "It's interlocked by the wood. I wouldn't know how to do it, but Dad knew how to do it.... I even put the varnish on it and everything."

The veteran, who joined the Royal Canadian Legion's Todmorden Branch six years ago, said he wished he had the knowledge his father did.

"Dad was really amazing. I've never seen anybody like him," he said - as he once again admired his sunroom desk.



Tamar Atik // Observer



...at the
EAST YORK CIVIC CENTRE
Memorial Gardens, beginning at 10:45



EDITORIALS

Ditch the plastic?

East York small business owners react to potential ban on plastic bags after local councillors vote against it

Toronto is only two months away from becoming a single-use, plastic shopping bag-free city. Unless the measure is reversed, Torontonians will welcome in 2013 by (among other things) carrying their own bags when purchasing goods at stores.

The plastic bag ban was put in place in June by the city and prohibits stores from offering single usage plastic bags. In October, an Etobicoke city councillor put forward a motion to reconsider the plastic bag ban. But the motion failed to pass, with East York councillors Janet Davis and Mary Fragedakis among those voting against it.

Plastic is harmful to the environment. Everybody gets that. However, going ahead and banning plastic bags before providing equally cheap and convenient substitutes may create problems.

Farzad Yousefi, the owner of a small food store located in the Cosburn and Pape area, said he is not a supporter of the ban.

"I think there are different ways we can help the environment," he said. But a bag ban? "Not convenient for customers."

Yousefi said that, as a shopper rather than a shopkeeper, it's inconvenient for him to carry a bag when going to different places to shop. And as a storeowner, he cares about customers' overall shopping experience.

"When you are selling something to the customers you need to offer them a way to carry that," he said. "I like to offer (free plastic bags, but unfortunately I might not be able to offer them."

Emil Shehien, owner of a convenience store located in the same area, said he has no problem with the ban — but he agreed that it's going to cause problems for customers.

"Especially for seniors," he said.

Without alternatives having been adequately explored, perhaps council needs to revisit the bag ban after all.

~ Jennifer Pang

Enforcing respect

Parking enforcement officers don't deserve the unfair treatment they receive simply for doing their jobs

Perhaps you've been one of those unfortunate enough to emerge from a brief errand into a business along a busy street like Danforth Avenue... only to find a parking ticket taunting you from under your wiper blade. Even worse, there's the chance that a parking enforcement officer was in the act of writing out the damn thing as you flailed about between the storefront and your car, yelling excuses or even obscenities in a futile attempt to evade the fine.

For those who have experienced the aforementioned scenario, it's important to keep in mind that the parking enforcement officer writing your ticket is just that: an officer.

Toronto's parking enforcement is a unit of the Toronto Police Service. Officers, under the direction of the police chief, provide a service to the public by implementing traffic safety priorities outlined by the Toronto Police Service. This, according to the division's website, includes "assisting with the safe and orderly flow of traffic, stolen vehicle recovery, crime management, assisting at special events," and yes, regulating parking.

And yet, despite the fact that their vehicles and uniforms resemble the usual Toronto police accoutrements, parking enforcement officers are not always treated with the respect that a regular officer would garner.

According to Wendy Drummond of the Toronto Police Service, there have been 104 reported assaults against parking enforcement officers over the last three years.

As frustrating as receiving a parking ticket may be, assaults on officers are simply inexcusable and so are volatile words and generally rude conduct.

Like anyone, parking enforcement officers are simply doing their job. A job, in fact, that exists in the interests of protecting the safety and ensuring the convenience of citizens. Illegally parked vehicles are a source of traffic disruption and obstruction, as well as a safety hazard and an obstacle for emergency response vehicles, as stated on the parking enforcement website. If you made the decision to park in a no-parking zone or to opt out of paying for parking for a few minutes' stop, you took the conscious risk of a parking enforcement officer with better timing than your own ticketing or towing your car.

Parking enforcement officers may be perceived as a sort of annoyance or even a necessary evil, but the fact is that they are much less evil and much more necessary than the community may acknowledge. Keep in mind that one thing worse than being issued a parking ticket is someone else's parking adding to the city's gridlock.

~ Becky Robertson

COLUMNS

Looking back on Frankenstorm

When I first saw Hurricane Sandy surging in the news, my initial thoughts were along the lines of, 'Oh great, here's another event that the American media are going to overhype. It's only a Category 1 hurricane; how bad can it be?'

Very, very bad. Like everyone else, I've seen the pictures and read about the toll that this "perfect storm" took on the northeastern United States — and, to a far lesser extent, East York and the rest of southeastern Ontario.

At least 170 people have been confirmed dead by the storm between the Caribbean and Canada, with the United States being worst-hit, suffering 98 fatalities. In Ontario, the death toll was one woman killed by a piece of flying debris in Toronto's west end and a Hydro worker killed while working on restoring power in Sarnia.

Despite this, I think it is fair to say that those of us living in Toronto are, for the most part, safe from natural disasters. The city's geographical location is key.

We don't live on an earthquake fault line, for instance, but rather far from the edge of

a tectonic plate. And although we are situated along a body of water, Lake Ontario does not have the potential to create a tsunami.

However, this is not to say that we are immune from natural disasters.

Just over a year ago, the southwestern Ontario town of Goderich was devastated by an F3 scale tornado that flattened much of the picturesque community and killed one person.

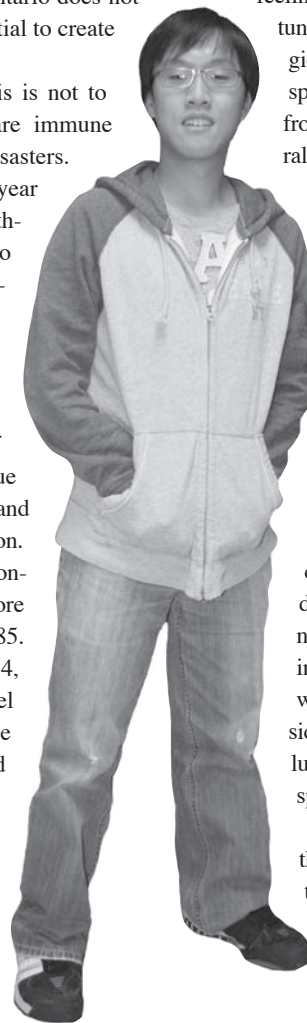
An even stronger twister tore up Barrie in 1985. And in 1954, Hurricane Hazel killed 81 people in Toronto and the surrounding area — largely due to antiquated forecasting and a lack of preparation.

Still, while Mother Nature

can be unpredictable and often cruel, I can't help but have a feeling that we are fortunate to live in a region that, relatively speaking, is spared from the worst natural calamities.

So just to be clear, I'm not belittling the losses that have been experienced locally, from Sandy last week to Hazel almost 60 years ago. What I am saying is that compared to the destruction that nature has wrought in other parts of the world, we can consider ourselves very lucky, relatively speaking.

But a nagging thought persists: that's probably what the residents of Staten Island and Atlantic City once assumed too.



Dennis Wu

Apple reboots old products

With all of the commotion around the iPhone 5 finally calming down, it seems to be the perfect time for Apple to bring out its next product: the iPad mini. It is said to be a duplicate of the iPad, but much smaller.

When it comes to the iPad, I don't know whether a smaller size is even advisable... because a lot of the functions the device is used for are more practical on a bigger screen. People use iPads for presentations, to watch movies, read books, view photo galleries, etc. If I wanted to do those on a smaller screen,

Rebecca Raveendran

I could just use my phone. Which brings me to the new iPhone 5.

I have the iPhone 4, which I bought last summer. Now, along comes the 5. I watch the commercials like everyone else and follow the news as each new product becomes the topic du jour. However, I haven't felt the need to switch my phone. There's no extraordinary change or upgrade that has caught my attention. When it comes to the iPhone 5, one of the big innovations that they're promoting is

the size of the display. They're also pushing the thinness and lightness of the phone.

Some people will change their phones when a new look is offered, but not me, not when the difference is so minimal.

(Besides, if you do a software upgrade on your current iPhone to the iOS 6, a lot of the new features will be accessible to you.)

Apple has benefited tremendously from the buzz around each new product introduction.

But if it releases a new item every single time it has the ability to fix a glitch, change the appearance of the phone or discover a new feature, I think the hype is gradually going to decrease.

If the company isn't careful, we might eventually see a situation where the release of a new Apple product garners about as much public and media attention as when McDonald's unveils a new hamburger.



Becky Robertson /// Observer

Virtual Man Hugs generate laughs at the Black Swan Comedy club on Oct. 22. Shows has been running at the club since January 2011.

Monday is fun day at E.Y. comedy club

By BECKY ROBERTSON
The Observer

A variety show on a Monday night?

It sounds counterintuitive, but for the audience at the Monday Night Variety Show at the Black Swan Tavern, the regular feature helps ease the tension as the work-week ramps up.

Black Swan Comedy has been running shows and lessons on the second floor at 154 Danforth Ave. since January 2011, stepping in as East York's comedy mecca after the demise of Bad Dog Theatre.

Gord Oxley, an improv performer who does technical work and odd jobs for Black Swan, said it's been delightful watching the club evolve.

"People in the area were just so enamoured by having something like an improv theatre in the neighbourhood. When (Bad Dog Theatre) vacated, Black Swan Comedy came along," Oxley said. "It's a lot of the same folks, and there's certainly experience and integrity behind what we're trying to do here. We want people to have fun."

Ralph McLeod founded Bad Dog and is currently artistic director at the Black Swan. He runs drop-in improv classes every Monday and Saturday, and plays host to the club's various events. He praises what comedy has to offer the public.

"As a teacher, I see my role (as) tearing

down the layers of doubt and fear regarding self-expression and helping people tap into their creativity without being self-conscious," McLeod said. "Improv teaches skills that are helpful for self-improvement and professional development; the power of being positive, how to work together as a group and probably most importantly, reminds adults how to play again."

The Monday Night Variety Show offers an array of entertainers in a cozy, laid-back atmosphere, bar included. The Oct. 22 event included the improv troop Dog's Hind Leg, performers Virtual Man Hugs and stand-up acts Alex Groepper, Graham Scofield, and the UK's Mark Simmons, all co-hosted by comedian Adam Ward.

The night was also notable for the support shown by the audience and other performers for all acts. McLeod said that encouraging air is a defining feature of the club.

"Black Swan really builds and fosters a sense of community and a place to express yourself without judgement," he said.

For those looking for something new to do on any night of the week, Oxley stresses the club's open-door policy.

"Black Swan Comedy is a multi-headed beast of humour and goodwill that wants to give a bright spot to East York and to anybody who likes comedy and wants to venture over here and check it out," Oxley said.

'Pop-up shop' owner wants kids to be kids

'Mrs. Darling's Imaginarium for Girls and Boys' debuts on Danforth

By JENNIFER PANG
The Observer

The idea of building a space for children to play and for reminding adults of their childhood has been turning over in East Yorker Melissa Peretti's mind for two years.

Now, with help from the East Danforth Community Association (DECA), Peretti may finally make her dream come true. She's tested "Mrs. Darling's Imaginarium for Girls and Boys" in an empty storefront at 1948 Danforth Ave. E.

It's not luck that brought the empty space to Peretti. DECA has been working to bring life to empty storefronts along Danforth East — a stretch of the avenue that some see as being in decline.

"We know that there are businesses who want to be in there who can't afford it and we are trying to get to the root of what is really the problem," said Natasha Granatstein, DECA's founding and past chair. "So we started doing research about empty storefronts and one of the things we found was a model that has been used in Newcastle, Australia."

Inspired by strategies used by the Australian group Renew Newcastle, DECA decided to fill the empty spaces with people and activity.

"Now we're trying to get landlords who would be interested in letting us use their space on a rolling basis. So the basic idea is landlords,

which hand over their space for a month at a time; we, the DECA, would facilitate getting tenants in there," said Granatstein. "(Tenants) can be artists, entrepreneurs... community groups. It could be any sort of enterprise."

After competing with over 50 proposals submitted to DECA's "Pop-Up Shops" initiative, Peretti and Osvaldo Sales, the owner of downtown retail store Birthia, were each granted an opportunity to try their businesses at an empty Danforth East store during one weekend.

The opportunity gave Peretti a chance to test her concept, in anticipation of opening a store next spring and launching a new career.

So on Oct. 27-28, Peretti finally presented her alter ego, Mrs. Darling, a character in the novel Peter Pan, in a play for children and their families.

"Mrs. Darling sees who Peter is and lets him be. She doesn't try to capture him or tell him he must grow up," Peretti said. "I wanted to be the person to encourage children to play."

On Oct. 20-21, Sales used his opportunity to see whether the east end is a suitable place to open an additional Birthia store.

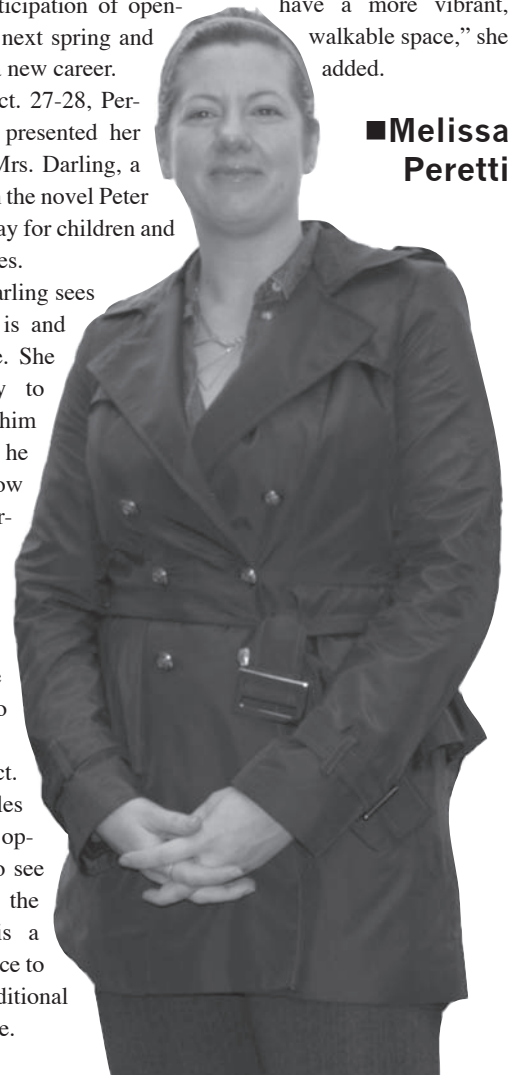
"Especially for small businesses like us, it has been really helpful to get a chance to try it out, to get real time feedback. I think it is tremendously amazing," Sales said.

Tenants are not the only beneficiaries of the project.

"So what the landlord gets out of it is a little bit of labour," Granatstein said, referring to Sales' and Peretti's test locations. "We helped clean it up, and painted it. And they get someone in their space, which makes it much more attractive in terms of getting a paying tenant."

"For us, the community, what we get out of it is we have a more vibrant, walkable space," she added.

■ Melissa Peretti



City golf course stuck in the rough



Ali Dar/// Observer

With continued losses showing in its balance sheet, Dentonia Park Golf Course may be a target on the city's financial agenda.

By ALI DAR
The Observer

Regulars at Dentonia Park's public golf course are swinging their clubs under a fiscal cloud — as East York's nearest municipal course continues to lose money.

The course on Victoria Park Avenue, just north of Danforth Avenue, has lost approximately \$822,000 since 2007.

A municipal audit of management of Toronto's municipal golf courses says the city must create a long-term business plan that accounts for ongoing losses at Dentonia Park.

Losses there have in-

creased as 2011 saw a \$242,300 deficit, a significant increase from \$160,100 the year before.

The deficit at Dentonia Park coincides with 2011 profits sliding to \$521,000 overall for all five of Toronto's municipal golf courses.

Three years prior to that, profits had been near \$1 million.

The report states that while "there may be valid reasons to continue to operate Dentonia Park, the reasons for doing so should be reviewed, articulated, documented and specifically approved."

Rob Andrusevich, manager of public relations and issues management for To-

ronto's parks and recreation division, said the city has accepted the report's recommendations.

He also said 2012 profits for all municipal courses are projected to bounce back to \$1 million.

"Dentonia is a great par-3 course for beginner and junior golfers to learn the game," Andrusevich said. "To encourage young golfers to try the sport and grow that next generation of golfers, the green fees have been set lower than other city courses."

Rates at Dentonia Park start from \$10 to \$27, whereas other courses vary from \$13 to \$63.

FALL FAIR



Jennifer Pang // Observer

Funding fun

Keena Allison (front), 7, enjoys herself at R.H. McGregor Elementary School's fall fair on Oct. 27. It was one of several events held over the year to raise money for extracurricular activities.

Theatre offers youth a chance

Program engages adolescents in the arts to encourage self-expression

By REBECCA RAVEENDRAN
The Observer

The Massey Goulding Estate located in Taylor Creek Park is home to the Children's Peace Theatre (CPT), an organization committed to creating a culture of peace by engaging children and youth through art and theatre.

A free theatre and leadership program has been initiated for youth aged 14-24 every Thursday night until Dec. 13.

Its mission statement is "act up, speak out and make peace."

Karen Emerson, artistic director at CPT, outlined three key objectives of the program.

- Get youth aware of conflict in their own lives.
- Learn life skills, better tools for expressing their self and communicating.
- Get them to be in a group of diverse people and recognize common ground.

On the first night last month, 17 youth attended.

Elvis Aidoo, program co-ordinator at CPT, was content with the turnout.

"The feedback for the day was great. We had a spoken-word artist that came out and they really enjoyed it," he said.

There will be performances from professional theatres and visual artists through-

JUST THE FACTS

■ Free theatre and leadership program

■ Aimed at youth aged 14-24

■ Runs Thursdays from 4:30 to 8 p.m.

■ Located at 305 Dawes Rd.

■ For information, call 416-752-1550, email elvis@childrenspeacetheatre.org or visit the website at www.childrenspeacetheatre.org

out the program. The youth are working toward a December showcase exploring conflict and violence.

Dustin Kelley has been involved in the theatre for two years. He explained the

initiative helps kids from different walks of life connect with other youth and face their challenges together.

"Instead of turning to violence or drugs or gangs, they turn to a meaningful practice and they act that out and send that message to the community," Kelley said.

Current funding from the city is being discontinued.

"No matter how successful it was, the expectation is that we will have found other funding for it," Emerson explained.

"If we do not find more funding for this program, it won't be run next year and that would be tragic."

Plant species draws crowd

By CARLEIGH O'CONNELL
The Observer

Many East York Garden Club members "oohed" and "ahhed" at beautiful gesneriad photos that guest speaker Vincent Woo, former president of the Toronto Gesneriad Society, presented at the club's October meeting.

No, gesneriad is not a typographical error.

"Gesneriads for me are the most exciting plant family to study and grow," Woo said.

Woo was born in Edmonton, where his grandmothers were both avid gardeners. He became interested in plants as a teenager, and was especially drawn to the gesneriad family. He studied botany in New Zealand for a year, and returned to Toronto where he joined the Toronto Gesneriad Society.

Gesneriad is the familiar term used for all plants in the Gesneriaceae family, which includes over 3,000 species. These plants are commonly found in moist or humid environments such as rainforests in Brazil, Ecuador, Africa and Asia, though some rare species are found in New Zealand and Australia.

Gesneriads are appealing to horticulturalists because of their brightly coloured flowers, fruit and seeds. The most recognizable gesneriads include the African Violet, Cape Primrose, Lipstick Plant and Goldfish Plant.

"Unfortunately... we don't have the advantage of seeing them grow here in a natural environment," Woo said.

However, gesneriads like African Violets can easily grow inside the warmth of a home or greenhouse, making them the perfect plant to enjoy during the cold Canadian winter.

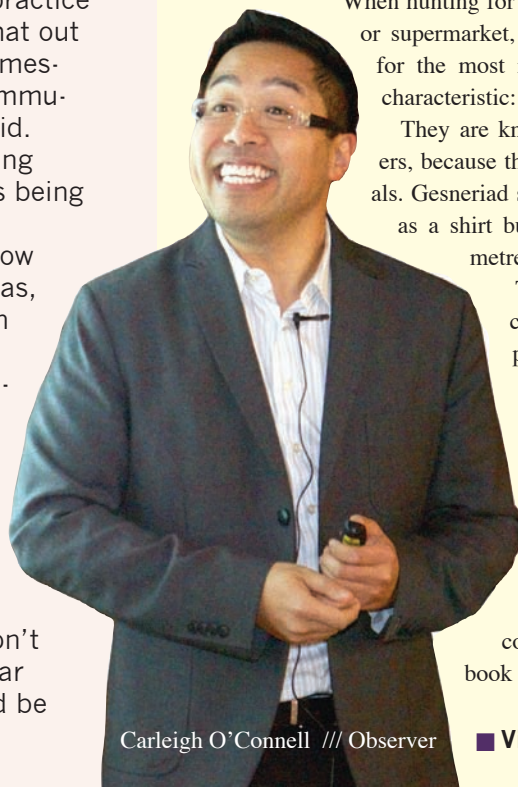
"Being from frozen Edmonton, I used to grow (gesneriads) on a windowsill or on a lamp stand," Woo said. "It really helped sustain me as a plant person during the wintertime."

When hunting for gesneriads at a nursery or supermarket, Woo suggests looking for the most recognizable gesneriad characteristic: hairy leaves.

They are known as five-part flowers, because they often have five petals. Gesneriad species can be as small as a shirt button or as tall as five metres.

They often come in colours such as purple, pink and crimson.

The next East York Garden Club meeting is this coming Thursday, Nov. 15. It will feature a potluck supper, award presentation and a "People's Choice Photo" contest for the next year-book cover.



Carleigh O'Connell // Observer

■ Vincent Woo

E.Y. Barbershoppers honing their harmony for holiday season

By ANI HAJDERAJ
The Observer

The East York Barbershoppers are back from Belleville, having won two awards at last month's provincial competition there. But they're not resting on their vocal laurels; every Tuesday, they're back in rehearsal at the aptly named Harmony Hall on Gower Street.

The barbershoppers brought back the Jack Haughie trophy from the Oct. 12-14 competition. It was part of the Ontario

district fall convention of the Barbershop Harmony Society that attracted more than 700 registrants from across the province.

Ironically, the Jack Haughie trophy is named after one of the founding members of the East York Barbershoppers — which was established in 1950.

The Haughie trophy represents a fourth-place finish in the competition.

"I made my best effort to blend in, because teamwork is the highest priority in this,"

said Schien Dong, who joined the chorus in May. Although Dong is a relative latecomer, he said he has been interested in barbershop quartets and choruses since he was very young.

"It's not foreign to me. I have heard barbershop before," he said.

This year, chorus director Pat Hannon has been focusing on improving the stage presence of the chorus, since judges at competitions like Belleville's are starting to judge that aspect more heav-

ily. "I have an excellent music coach and a great presentation coach," Dong said. "They really put in the extra effort in to really improve singing and presentation by helping the singers individually, to focus on developing good habits."

Director George Shields said that the Belleville results prove that the chorus has also improved in their singing. The East Yorkers' second award was for most improved chapter in the entire province of Ontario.



Ani Hajderaj // Observer

Pat Hannon, 34, directs the chorus every week at Harmony Hall. This year he has been focusing on strengthening stage presence.