



## Pollution solution sought for creek

Ongoing issues in need of tangible answers, say concerned residents

By **ANDRE WIDJAJA**  
The Observer

A few years ago, during her daily walk along the banks of Taylor Massey Creek, Margerite Pilger was struck by examples of environmental concerns plaguing the park.

“We’d cross the river and see the fish flopping there because of the flooding,” she said.

Some parts of the creek have problems with severe flooding caused by heavy rainfalls. According to Alan Lee of Toronto Water, sewer overflows have also been polluting the creek.

So on Nov. 2, Pilger, Lee and others converged on the Stan Wadlow Clubhouse on Cedarvale Avenue for a meeting convened by Janet Davis, the councillor for Ward 31/Beaches-East York.

The meeting was billed as another public consultation about potential solutions to the ongoing problems.

Taylor Massey Creek runs in a westerly direction through East York, from about Crescent Town Road and Victoria Park Avenue in the east to the Don River near Don Mills Road and the Don Valley Parkway in the west.

■ See A NEW AGE, page 3

## WATERFRONT PROJECT

- Would eliminate the sewage that gets into waterways
- Improve the water quality of the Don River
- Reduce levels of algae-producing phosphorus and nitrogen
- Create a better recreational experience along Taylor Massey Creek
- Reduce the amount of pathogens, oils and pesticides in the waterways

## REMEMBRANCE DAY



Arielle Quigley /// Observer

Seven-year-olds Noah Lee, Anna-Sofia Pinellis and Adriana Drakopoulos (l-r) proudly display a Remembrance Day wreath made up of poppies and hand cutouts from the children in their class. For more Remembrance Day stories and photos, see pages 4 and 5.

# Kids craft a hands-on honour

An East York class gets creative as it salutes our veterans

By **ARIELLE QUIGLEY**  
The Observer

Construction paper, scissors and glue litter the desks of Maureen McCullough’s Grade 2 class at R.H. McGregor Elementary School on Mortimer Avenue.

Excited chatter fills the room as the children carefully trace their hands on green construction paper and then cut replica poppies from red construction paper for their Remembrance Day wreath.

“This wreath represents all of us together,” McCullough said. “It shows that we are all involved and contributing to Remembrance Day.”

The wreath that McCullough’s class has crafted is one of many class interpretations of Remembrance Day at the school.

McCullough’s class and others from R.H. McGregor are presenting their wreaths to the school and the community at today’s Remembrance Day ceremonies at the East York Civic Centre and R.H. McGregor.

McCullough said the wreath offers the students a tangible way of understanding that they have contributed to something important. It symbolizes unity.

“Because the children are able to recognize their hands in the wreath, they can see their own

creation as part of the ceremony,” she said.

In creating this wreath, McCullough said the children learn about war and the people who fought for Canada.

“We use it to remember the people that died in the war,” said Anna-Sofia Pinellis, one of the students in McCullough’s class.

The class wreaths will be displayed in the school office, as well as in front of the cenotaph at the entrance of R.H. McGregor for the coming week.

**FIRE & CRIME**

**Trio charged in teenager's murder**

Police have charged three teenagers with the murder of 19-year-old Bradley Matheson. Matheson's body was found at 90 Eastdale Ave. on Oct. 14. He had been shot to death.

On Nov. 3, two 16-year-old boys and one 15-year-old boy, all of Toronto, were charged with second-degree murder.

Their names cannot be released under the Youth Criminal Justice Act. The three are scheduled to appear in court again today (Nov. 11).

**Highrise blaze sends 3 to hospital**

Three people were sent to hospital for smoke inhalation after a fire broke out on the 20th floor of an apartment building at Don Mills Road and Overlea Boulevard on the afternoon of Oct. 30.

About 20 fire trucks were at the scene. Crews contained the blaze to one apartment, but the building was evacuated and traffic in the neighbourhood slowed while a thick plume of smoke curled up from the apartment balcony.

A police officer was among those treated for smoke inhalation.

**Police seek missing man, 44**

Toronto Police are requesting the public's assistance in locating a 44-year-old missing man.

Koloman Simonic was last seen on Nov. 2 in the area of Deauville Lane and St. Dennis Drive.

He is described as 5 feet 4 inches tall, 145 lbs. and clean-shaven. He was last seen wearing a black leather jacket, a red shirt, grey pants and black Adidas running shoes.

Anyone with information is asked to contact police at 416-808-5400, Crime Stoppers anonymously at 416-222-TIPS (8477), or online at [www.222tips.com](http://www.222tips.com). You can also text TOR and your message to CRIMES (274637) or go to Leave A Tip on Facebook.

**Dangerous drugs stolen**

On Oct. 26, 11 delivery bags containing a variety of medication, including a quantity of narcotics, were stolen from a vehicle in the area of O'Connor Drive and St. Clair Avenue East.

The medication could be harmful or fatal if ingested, especially to children.

Anyone with information is asked to contact police at 416-808-5400, Crime Stoppers anonymously at 416-222-TIPS (8477), or online at [www.222tips.com](http://www.222tips.com). You can also text TOR and your message to CRIMES (274637) or go to Leave A Tip on Facebook.

~ Jilan Nasher

**FOR THE LOVE OF DOG**



Michelle Grace /// Observer

(L-R) Shelby, Cooper and Sage sport their jacket and booties for the winter season. Owner Sharon Jarvis adopted her dogs from Pomeranian and Small Breed Rescue.

**Is your pooch protected?**

**Warm coats and booties can help your pet fend off the winter weather**

By MICHELLE GRACE  
The Observer

As colder weather approaches, East York pet owners are preparing to protect their furry friends from the chill. Marilyn Murray, owner of For The Love of Animals on Pape Avenue, says it's crucial to understand the risks to pets over the winter season.

"Let's face it, not many of us like Canada's cold winters — and pets are no exception," Murray said.

"A pet with short hair or low to the ground needs greater protection from the cold, snow and salt. Older dogs can have such ailments as arthritis, which can become aggravated with the cold weather."

For a mature pooch, Murray recommends shorter walks on very cold days. In addition, a hot water bottle or heated rice/oat bag can be wrapped in a towel or placed under the animal's bed to help keep them more comfortable.

While we have all seen dogs walking around in winter coats and booties, this is no fashion statement.

To get your dog used to its new winter

outfit, Murray suggests test-driving the attire indoors first.

"Thankfully most dogs tolerate wearing a coat or sweater better than they tolerate wearing boots," Murray said.

"Start by putting the boots on your dog for short periods of time several times a day, increasing the time as he/she adjusts. Make it a positive experience by praising your dog and offering treats."

Cats also need special care during colder months, especially if your cat enjoys being outside.

"Ideally, cats should be kept indoors, but if that isn't possible, shelter from the cold and wind should be provided," Murray said.

"For cats, a doubled large plastic storage tub with the lid on, and a hole cut into the side for easy entry, lined with a blanket or heavy towels will help keep the cat warmer and provide protection from the wind."

As well as under-

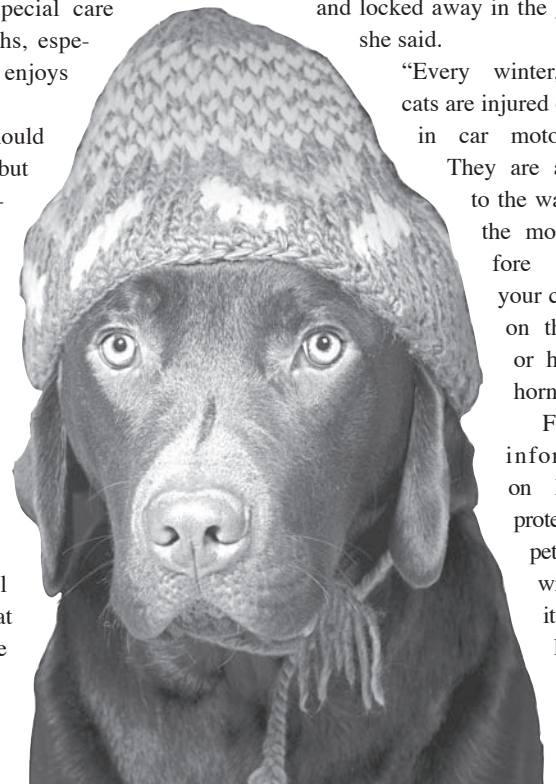
standing how to "winterize" their four-legged companions, Murray says pet owners should also be aware of toxic and hazardous elements that animals may be exposed to during winter.

"Antifreeze poisoning is a big problem with animals that roam free. The antifreeze has a sweet smell that attracts animals, especially cats and wildlife. Be sure to keep any poisons tightly capped and locked away in the garage," she said.

"Every winter, many cats are injured or killed in car motor fans.

They are attracted to the warmth of the motor. Before starting your car, bang on the hood or honk the horn."

For more information on how to protect your pet this winter visit [www.loveofanimals.ca](http://www.loveofanimals.ca).



**TOP 6 HOLIDAY HAZARDS FOR PETS**

- Holiday foods, including candies, nuts and chocolate.
- Electrical cords and batteries, ribbons and plastic wrapping, Styrofoam packaging, lit candles.
- Unattended alcoholic drinks and guest medications left within reach.
- Floral arrangements and holiday plants, including poinsettias, mistletoe and mistletoe berries.
- Tree ornaments, especially tinsel and glass ornaments, ornament hooks and water from the Christmas tree.
- The Christmas tree itself. Tie it securely to the wall to prevent rambunctious pets from knocking it over.

# A new age of sewage?

Cont'd. from page 1

Pollution of the creek has long been a concern, and at the Nov. 2 meeting, representatives from Toronto's water, parks and forestry outlined a proposal to build two new sewer lines to help reduce sewage overflow.

The initiative, labeled the Don River and Waterfront Project, foresees the creation of a 5.9 km-long, 3.8 metre-wide underground tunnel.



To read more on this story, check out [torontoobserver.ca](http://torontoobserver.ca)

According to city staff, the tunnel would capture overflow from all 12 of the creek's problem areas, and run from St. Clair and Warden avenues to Coxwell Avenue.

An underground dry weather flow storage tank would also be built on the creek to temporarily hold water flows from homes during peak hours. The water would later be periodically treated and emptied.

But with a \$1.3-billion price tag, the city still needs to find a way to fund the plan.

Davis said the improvements require financial support from both the provincial and federal governments.

The ambitious project would be broken down into four phases, spanning up to 25 years.

"It's a really big project and it's going to take some time," Pilger said.



Melanie Schawill /// Observer

## Deadly delicious

Jose Hadad (right), executive chef from the restaurant Frida, tops off a goat milk and caramel churro to tasters at the Evergreen Brick Works on Dias de los Muertos (Day of the Dead). The festival, held Halloween weekend, featured Mexican customs, including a churro ("Spanish doughnut") competition.

# Pantry ponders innovation

By BRAYDON KEDDIE  
The Observer

Flemingdon Park Ministry doesn't want to help the hungry by handing out food alone. The ministry's food bank is considering innovations that will help those in need of food build skills that they can then use to help themselves.

A new report from Food Banks Canada says that the spike in food bank use since the start of the recession is continuing. The umbrella agency for Canadian food banks says that 851,014 people needed a food bank in the benchmark month of March,

and that number is 26-per-cent higher than in 2008, when the recession took hold.

At Flemingdon Park Ministry, the increase has been even more startling.

"In the last four years, we have more than doubled the people coming to the food bank," said Rev. Helena Houldcroft, director of the Flemingdon Park Ministry Food Bank, one of several food banks in the East York area. "These are people who have lost their jobs, or (are) working part-time. The majority of the people are on assistance, because assistance is never enough to live on."

At her agency's pantry, located in the basement of 10 Gateway Blvd., between 235 and 250 families visit every week.

This recent increase has led Houldcroft to join forces with an organization called the Food Access Project. She says their alliance will mean more than just giving families food — but giving clients the skill sets they need to meet their dietary needs.

"The Food Access Project (is) our local initiative," she said, so that hungry people "can make decisions about accessing healthy food."

Among the ideas that Flemingdon Park Ministry is

considering is a community kitchen for food preparation and a "people's restaurant" for low-income diners. But those ideas remain on the drawing board for now, she said, for a very practical reason.

"The absolute biggest challenge in Flemingdon Park is space," she said, "because getting access to a kitchen is very difficult or even getting access to a space to run our own little restaurant or food exchange. There's support for these kinds of projects and there are funding sources for it, but when you don't have the space, that becomes problematic."

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### Toronto police share insights

The Toronto Police Service will be hosting a town hall meeting at D.A. Morrison Middle School on Tuesday, Nov. 22. Deputy Chief Peter Sloly will share his opinions on the issues facing the community. For more information, visit [www.torontopolice.on.ca/d54](http://www.torontopolice.on.ca/d54), or call Cheryl Bremner at 416-808-5419.

### Show-and-tell history talk

The East York Historical Society will hold a show-and-tell discussion at the S. Walter Stewart library branch on Wednesday, Nov. 16.

Joanne Doucette will speak about market gardening in Leslieville and East York. Join the discussion with your own photos, maps and memorabilia. For more information, visit [www.eastyork.org/eyhs.html](http://www.eastyork.org/eyhs.html)

~ Vicken Polatian

# Photographer brings trees into living rooms



Farhana Uddin /// Observer

Maria Drazilov's landscape photography will appear at the Toronto East Rotary Club's Second Annual Arts and Crafts sale on Nov. 19.

By FARHANA UDDIN  
The Observer

As a longtime photographer, Maria Drazilov says that metropolises like Toronto have a certain yearning for landscape art.

"It's sort of a nature deficit we have in the city, being so busy and urban," she says. "And it's the little things — a nice landscape photograph or painting that really helps us feel more connected to nature."

Such is the impression Drazilov hopes to draw from people dropping by her photography table at this month's Toronto East Rotary Club's Second Annual Arts and Crafts Sale, held at Danforth and Jackman avenues.

Drazilov, who has a background in art and film from the Ontario College of Art, has been selling her photographs for the last five years, with a particular

focus on her favourite subject, trees.

"I love trees, especially when I can get them in landscapes where they're struggling to survive," she says.

Having endured all varieties of weather, Drazilov has amassed a photo collection of trees ranging from those isolated in the Mohave Desert to ones hanging from the cliffs of Fundy Shore in New Brunswick, where they've been pounded by sea air and stormy weather.

"Certain places can be difficult to shoot at times," she says. "But it's not impossible and for me that's the fun of it, searching for things. Photography is a tool for me to explore."

Drazilov has indeed become quite the explorer over the years, travelling all across North America, as well as parts of China and Cuba, to photograph landscape

and architecture.

For the time being, however, Drazilov is happy to remain in Toronto and present her work to a local audience.

"I'm looking forward to this sale because I just love the neighbourhood," she says. "It's by the Danforth, so there's always a lot of people walking about that come in and see what's happening."

Drazilov won't be the only creative eye in the house. Standing alongside her at the upcoming Nov. 19 sale are over 45 other artists and crafters.

"All of our vendors have really great quality work," says Toronto East Rotary Club secretary Karen Somerville.

"It's all original and handmade. People seemed to really enjoy it last year and we're hoping they'll feel the same this time around."

## Victims' stories remain relevant

By NICHOLAS PESCOD  
The Observer

November is not only the month when we remember the sacrifices made by veterans; the week ending yesterday, Nov. 10, was dedicated to preserving the memories and stories of victims of the Holocaust.

On Nov. 2, the eve of the 31st annual Holocaust Education Week, the documentary *Paragraph 175* was screened at East York's southwest corner, inside Metropolitan Community Church on Simpson Avenue in Riverdale.

The film was released in 2001 and interviews some of the last known homosexual prisoners of the Nazis about their suffering during the Holocaust.

"It's a very powerful movie," said Douglas Elliot, who was at the screening and describes himself as a gay history student. "It's painful to watch a lot of it. To see the human suffering and to see all other gay people who went through hell."

Justine Apple, executive director of Kulanu Toronto and screening organizer, said it's important to remember the horrors of the Holocaust.

"We as an organization like to screen films because we find that people connect to visuals very well," Apple said. "It makes the history of what happened in the Holocaust much more real."

Kulanu Toronto is a Jewish social and educational group for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people.

According to the documentary, after the concentration camps in Germany were liberated in 1945, most camp survivors were granted freedom. However, some homosexual prisoners were forced to continue serving sentences under the pre-war German law called Paragraph 175, which forbid any man from engaging in any form of homosexual act.

"It was as if the gays deserved it somehow, like they should just shut up about it," Elliot said.



Matthew Wocks /// Observer

L-R: Myer Goobie, 91, a Second World War veteran, Ashley Zedner, 56, a Vietnam veteran, and Duncan Nyberg, 36, a veteran of Afghanistan and still-active serviceman, talk about their service at the Todmorden Branch 10 of the Royal Canadian Legion on Pape Avenue. Nyberg is a lifelong resident of East York.

# Respecting our soldiers

## Veterans see a shift in public perception

By MATTHEW WOCKS  
The Observer

Tucked behind curtains on a stage upstairs at the Todmorden Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion lies a plaque.

It lists the names of deceased servicemen and women from that branch.

The plaque also contains the promise: "Their Name Liveth Forevermore."

For three veterans sitting on that same stage, the promise of having their names immortalized seems muddled given the fickle treatment they've received from the public over the years.

Myer Goobie, 91, was a sergeant with the Devil's Brigade in the Second World War. Ashley Zedner, 59, was a gunnery sergeant in the Vietnam War.

Another one of the veterans, Duncan Nyberg, 36, a lifelong East York resident, has served as a warrant officer with the Queen's York Regiment.

Nyberg, who did a tour of

duty in Afghanistan in 2008-09, remembered questionable treatment he received before the Afghanistan war broke out.

"When I joined in '94 and even when I was in cadets, I got spat on (and) people called me baby killer," he said.

Zedner, a Purple-Heart (medal) recipient, had a similar experience when he returned from Vietnam in 1973.

"We were classified as war mongers," he said. "(People said) 'You're a murderer; you're a killer.'"

For Myer Goobie, who joined the First Special Ser-

vice Force in 1936 and once spent 19 days in the hospital with a stomach wound, the treatment he received when he left the service in 1946 was all positive.

"I had no problem with the public; the people treated me well," he said. "They'd ask me how long I had been in the service and where I was stationed."

Zedner, who was attached to the U.S. 92nd Airborne in Vietnam, said it wasn't until Canadian soldiers were dying in Afghanistan and publicity focused on the Highway of

Heroes that treatment of veterans changed.

"Now they're getting (the) respect from the public," he said.

Duncan Nyberg, whose mother, Gail Nyberg, is the executive director of the Daily Bread Food Bank, said things have definitely changed for the better.

"Nowadays it's different. Our guys are going home in uniforms because they are proud to be in uniform," he said.

"Now in uniform, I (have) people buying me coffee."

# Commanding officer appreciates a job well done

By REBECCA STECKHAM  
The Observer

Veteran George McKiel believes perfection is important.

It's in the perfect command. It's in the perfectly executed manoeuvre. He watches closely as the rifles are raised and the heads are bowed during the ceremony.

But nothing is sweeter than the sound of perfection.

"If they do it properly, all you hear is 'click'... and that will be all four (sets) of feet ...

hitting the ground at the same time," McKiel said.

For the past 19 years, McKiel, 82, has served as a commanding officer of the colour guard for the Todmorden Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion.

This year, as every other, he demands perfection from his personnel during the annual East York Remembrance Day service.

He'll watch and listen closely for perfection as his four flag-bearers march up to the



■ George McKiel

centotaph during the service.

"Oh, it does sound good... Yes it does," he said.

McKiel expects between 1,000 and 2,000 people to attend the East York observance. He said everyone appreciates a job well done, whether it's the perfect command or the perfect execution of that command, even if it's just a rehearsal.

"Last night (during the colour guard practice), I gave them a little blast," McKiel said. "When they put on the colours ... I heard 'click, click, click'... (not in unison). I didn't like that at all."

McKiel strives for perfec-

tion because, he said, after 16 years in the service, there's a grave responsibility that comes with authority in war; there's no room for mistakes.

"You've got all these people doing what you want them to do in a split second, which is what you would have if you were on a firing line," McKiel said.

"You wouldn't want to be history, would you?"

East York's Remembrance Day ceremony is taking place today at the Civic Centre.



East York remembers ...

# Reflecting on a father's rich legacy

By MICHAEL BAGHEL  
The Observer

For 30 years, Hetty Tyrrell's father felt shame. It began when a friend of the family saw pictures of her father, Gerrit van Houten, a member of the Royal Dutch army during the Second World War.

"(The friend) just looked at the picture (of my father) and said, 'Oh, he looks like a Nazi,'" Tyrrell said.

As a consequence,



■ van Houten

Gerrit van Houten hid his photographs and medals. He never even spoke about the knife in his kit that he credited with saving his life while he was held prisoner during the Second World War.

Tyrrell, who is helping to lead the East York Civic Centre Remembrance Day observance, now speaks proudly of her father's war story.

Van Houten joined the Dutch military in 1938, Tyrrell said. He was sent to the East Indies and fought against the Japanese in the Pacific. He was captured early in the war and spent the duration as a prisoner of war.

After leaving the Dutch army in the early 1950s, van Houten moved to Port

Hope, Ont., with his wife and three children.

Tyrrell said she was born a few years after the family arrived in Canada. When she joined the Royal Canadian Legion in the 1990s, she offered her father's medals for display in a cabinet at Branch 22, on Woodbine Avenue.

In addition to Van Houten's medals, Tyrrell also offered her father's wartime knife. She said that as a prisoner, her father

was one of the few allowed to keep his standard issue knife, because he was designated as a cook. She said he found the knife vital in surviving the severe conditions of the camp.

"He would dig out roots with it," Tyrrell said. "They were eating whatever they could."

Van Houten died in 1999. Due to health issues, he was never able to see the Legion's cabinet display of his war memorabilia. Tyrrell believes, however, that he was proud to know those artifacts were there.

"Especially because that knife was in the cabinet... that he knew it would not be lost," she said. "I think that's probably the big thing — that finally he felt appreciated."



File photo // Observer

Bill Ross has been working behind the scenes for 11 years, to ensure that East York's civic Remembrance Day observances — like this one, in 2009 — come off with dignity and grace.

# A tradition observed

Annual ceremony 'very rewarding' for E.Y. Civic Centre

By JODEE BROWN  
The Observer

The East York Civic Centre's facilitator, Bill Ross, had a list of chores for today, starting at 7 a.m.: decorating the Memorial Gardens at the corner of Coxwell and Mortimer avenues with wreaths, arranging the inside lobbies where catering is scheduled to take place today, and ensuring that there would be seating for the elderly.

"It's more so just a comfort issue for older folks," Ross said. "It's too cold outside here many a day."

For Ross, who is taking part in his 11th consecutive ceremony this morning, that's

the typical Remembrance Day procedure.

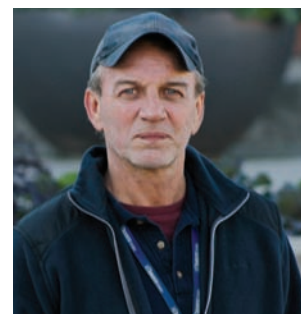
It's his job to ensure that everything behind the scenes goes according to plan.

The Remembrance Day event at the East York Civic Centre traditionally starts at 10:45 a.m. on Nov. 11.

This year is no different. The annual ceremony, one of the largest of its kind in Ontario, honours Canada's armed forces personnel who served in the First and Second World Wars, the Korean War and in NATO and UN operations.

Ross is a member of the Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada Association, a non-profit organization offering financial aid and health care to veterans with disabilities. He spoke about members of the Canadian Forces he's known over the years.

"They amaze me," he said.



■ Ross

"You see the same ones year in and year out and they come here in full uniform. You can see it's a big part of their lives. It really affects them."

Ross said the preparations are inspired by the veterans and the hard-working attitude they display daily.

"They make you tired," he

said. "You see their work ethic (and) they make somebody half their age feel tired."

Nancy MacSween, acting chief of protocol for the East York Remembrance Day ceremony, said the event creates imagery that lasts.

"It makes people remember the sacrifices people have made for our freedom," she said.

"It's very rewarding to be able to bring people together so that can happen."

Some of this year's scheduled features included *The Act of Remembrance* reading by Zone D3 Commander Hetty Tyrrell, as well as the First Light Scout Band's rendition of the tribute song entitled, "Remember Them Well."



● For more on Remembrance Day, please visit us online at [torontoobserver.ca](http://torontoobserver.ca)

# Restaurant says thank you with free meal for vets

By SHANNON KELLER  
The Observer

Appreciation for veterans comes in various forms.

Some proudly display the "Support Our Troops" magnetic ribbons on their vehicle, while others quietly pin a

poppy on the lapels of their jackets.

A select number of Swiss Chalet restaurants are honouring veterans with something else: a free dinner.

East York veteran Jack Aldred, enjoyed the special last year.

He arrived at the restaurant in a 1942 Second World War naval uniform — and hopes to go again this year, proudly wearing his same regimentals.

"I'm very pleased, of course," Aldred said. "I like a free meal, but I think it's good in that it shows that some guys

still think of the job that the veterans did. I think it's marvelous, I'm just sorry that (the restaurant is) not closer."

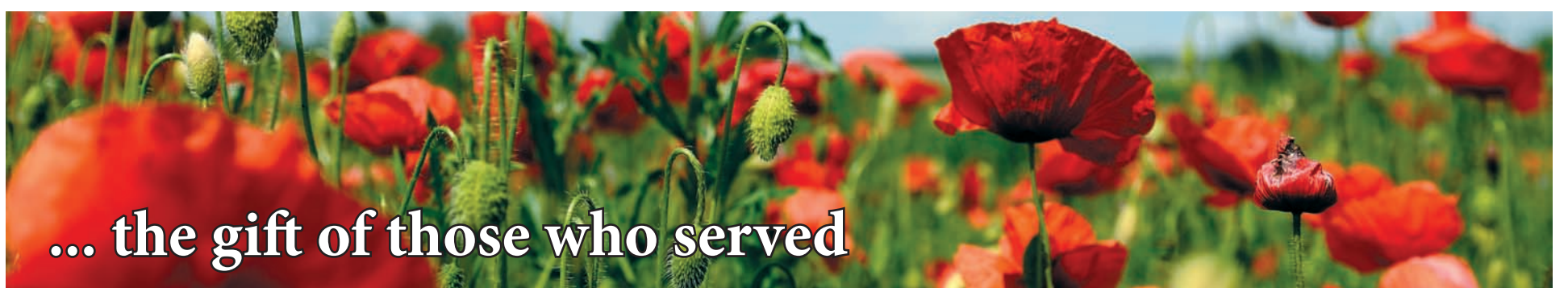
Today, Nov. 11, any veteran can receive a free meal at the Swiss Chalet located on the corner of O'Connor Drive and Bermondsey Road.

This is the second year this location is offering the feature during Remembrance Day. Adnan Suleman, the restaurant's supervisor, explained the motivation behind the special.

"On Remembrance Day we are trying to appreciate

all those veterans that have served during the wars," Suleman said.

"I feel good about it because we are trying to remember those people who have served for our country and for us. It's good because most of them gave their lives for us."



... the gift of those who served

## ■ EDITORIALS

# Soldiering on

Canadian support for our troops must continue, even after their tours of duty are completed

Let us forget. It's a mantra synonymous with a day when we, as Canadians, are asked to reflect on those who gave their lives in service to our country. For the younger generation, this means channeling images of their grandparents' war — a time when the world was a very different place.

At the Royal Canadian Legion's Todmorden Branch 10 on Pape Avenue, veterans from Canada's various military campaigns make a special point of gathering each year at this time to pay their respects to their fallen comrades and collect their thoughts on what it means to serve their country.

However, as we mark another Remembrance Day, there is a lost generation out there that is in dire need of our collective attention.

When it was decided that Canadian troops were to be withdrawn from Afghanistan some months ago, a collective sigh of relief rippled through the political conscience of this country. For many, this was Canada's Vietnam; an exercise where the intention was morally just, but the consequences became too much.

Our nation watched week after week as young men and women were sent home to their families in caskets to be remembered as heroes.

There are some veterans of Afghanistan who view their time there as a success and who are adjusting well outside the combat zone. There are others with physical or mental wounds who need support... their lives immeasurably altered by the experience of war.

And there's another aspect to the service of this new generation of Canadian veterans. For a decade, our televisions have been fed visceral, raw images from the war in Afghanistan. The actions of our soldiers have been dissected by social and political analysts far-removed from the situation. There has been criticism of the war effort and a winding-down of government support for it, culminating with the transition away from combat operations.

As the young Canadians who donned uniforms in Afghanistan take them off and filter back into society, it's the duty of those of us among the civilian community to hear their story. While some may not agree with the political motivations and outcomes surrounding Canada's military campaign in Afghanistan, the fact remains that those who made it home risked their lives in the service of Afghans and Canadians. Now it's Canadians' turn to serve them.

~ Ross Johnston

# Streets behind?

A potential ban on the homeless sleeping on sidewalks creates more problems than it solves

Before talking about enforcing a bylaw that would ban homeless people from sleeping on sidewalks in East York and the rest of Toronto, how about finding them a better place to sleep first?

Recently, the city's public works committee passed a motion that would create the ban. If the full council approves this motion at the end of the month, it would permanently prohibit anyone from living on the streets of Toronto.

While there is already a bylaw in place that allows officers the right to remove anyone from the street who is being obstructive in any way, the backers of the proposed ban say it would "clarify" things. They say it would prevent sleeping bags and the associated accoutrements of homelessness from becoming impediments to construction and other public works activities. But if this motion passes, the true effect will leave many homeless without a place to sleep.

Although the city offers a very limited amount of housing for the homeless, the problem is that people who are abusing alcohol or drugs aren't allowed in — and there is a high incidence of addiction to these substances among the homeless.

Let's hope that council takes a hard look at the recommendation of the public works committee and that councillors don't just rubber-stamp it. If the homeless are forced off the streets without an alternative, it's possible Toronto will once again experience the shame of homeless people found frozen to death in some park or other out-of-the-way place this winter.

The work done by organizations like the East York Housing Help Centre and the Touchstone Youth Centre on Pape Avenue is important and valuable to a city that prides itself on its humaneness. But they can only do so much for the homeless citizens of this city. And they are citizens of this city.

~ Britney Brady-Maginley

## ■ COLUMNS

# Saving calories to binge

The battle to become thin has reached a new domain. When choosing between food and alcohol, alcohol is now the winner for some.

In particular, observers of the campus scene warn, some college students are no longer going out for dinner and drinks.

Apparently, when classes are out and the parties begin, they're opting out of food altogether.

According to a study done by the University of Missouri, one in five students is skipping dinner expressly to save those calories for alcohol.

There are many possible factors that play into this new, disturbing trend. Students know that they'll get drunk quicker on an empty stomach. And in the budget battle between food and booze, you can save money by cutting one of those out.

Besides, at college, where attractive equals popular, and thin equals attractive, some students may be willing to forgo the grocery store in favour of the liquor store.

It's that latter point that may help explain the surprising gender gap in this phenomenon.

One might think that young men would be more likely to

choose booze over food.

After all, who doesn't have an image of frat boys chugging beer and smashing beer cans over their heads at college?

But the research points in another direction: Women are actually three times more likely to engage in this behaviour than men.

The disorder is called "drunkorexia."

*The New York Times* defines it as a self-imposed starvation or bingeing and purging, combined with alcohol abuse.

More than men, women feel the pressure to be slim — especially in the intense social atmosphere of college.

Some watch every calorie they

**Matilda Miranda**



consume on a daily level — and it's a known fact that alcohol is pretty much empty calories.

So, why not skip that delicious dinner, get drunk in a socially acceptable setting, all the while maintaining a low weight?

What a perverse equation.

Alcohol abuse has become such a societal norm. One of the ways to change this is to raise awareness about the ramifications of drunkorexia and binge drinking in general.

Drinking regularly can damage the liver, kidneys and the digestive tract, among other things.

Maybe it's time for colleges and universities to find a way to persuade their students to swallow a little less alcohol — and a little more food.

Post-secondary institutions should create an atmosphere where students can meet up and enjoy one another's company without the influence of alcohol.

Imagine how things could change on campus once young women and men realize that they can still have fun without starving themselves — and waking up the next morning with a massive headache.

# Movember for all genders

'Tis the season to grow a moustache.

Now that Halloween is over and with autumn all around us, it is now time for "Movember." For the entire month of November, we will be seeing men sporting classy (and not-so-classy) moustaches in order to raise awareness around prostate cancer, an important men's

**Janet Piercey**



health issue.

While the cause is admirable, I noticed a controversy as Movember approached — how some men turned to Twitter to express their mixed feelings about the number of women who want to support the cause as well.

They may not be able to grow moustaches, but they can still donate to cancer charities and show support in other ways for Movember. (A few websites suggest some colourful ways of doing this — but they may not be appropriate to repeat in the pages of a family-friendly newspaper....)

Anyway, it really took me a back to read so many men tweeting their view that Movember should only be a guy thing and women should be excluded from showing support.

I beg to differ. I don't see a problem with the fight against cancer getting even more support across the demographic board.

Is it really necessary to use this campaign as a platform for gender exclusivity?

So let's not get distracted with who can and who can't

participate in Movember.

After all, women and girls are also mothers, daughters, wives and girlfriends who care about the men in their lives.

What's the big deal if we want to support you?

Remember that all you 'mo bros' out there have supported us women in our fight against the most common form of cancer afflicting us: breast cancer.

It's only fair that we now get to show you how we care by joining forces with you mo bros as mo sistas.

Not only will men feel even more supported, but it will give the cause a chance to grow — just like the moustaches! — and take us closer to that day when prostate cancer is finally defeated.

Far from dividing us, Movember is a chance to combine our energies and maintain the momentum we've built up in the battle against the scourge that is cancer.

So all you mo bros out there, let your sistas support you. Embrace the encouragement.

But please, as soon as Movember is over, shave it!

## EDUCATION

# College turns 45

Centennial set tone for accessibility, says East York dean

By NICOLE PULSINELLI  
The Observer

East York's public college is blowing out 45 candles this fall for its sapphire anniversary.

In 1966, Centennial College opened its doors. It was named in honour of Canada's impending 100th birthday.

The first campus was housed in the former Canadian Arsenal Ltd. radar manufacturing factory on Warden Avenue in Scarborough. The first students started classes on Oct. 17, 1966. Today, a townhouse development sits on that original site — but other campuses are spread across Toronto's east end.

Centennial came to East York in 1979, moving into the former Ontario Teacher

Education College building at 951 Carlaw Ave. That building — essentially unchanged outside, but thoroughly renovated inside several times — first served as the schools of business and continuing education. It even had a brush with national celebrity in the early '90s — as the set for CBC's *Degrassi High* television series. Now it houses Centennial's communications programs. That includes journalism, academic home to the students who publish the *East York Observer*.

Nate Horowitz, dean at the East York campus, said that one thing to celebrate on the college's anniversary is its history of ensuring everyone has equal opportunity to pursue education.

"Because we were the first college, we really set a tone for accessibility, meaning people whose parents or grandparents may never have gone to a post-secondary institution now have the opportunity that Centennial brought forward," he said.

Horowitz said the college's commitment to this hasn't changed.

Rosanna Cavallaro, vice-president of marketing communications, said she believes the college is built on the commitment of many staff to the students.

"To be successful in one area doesn't make you successful in others, so the success of an organization means to work together," she said.

Cavallaro said there's a good reason for this.

"We make sure we're providing our students with the best possible education so they can go out and make a difference in the world," she said.

But despite its achievements, Horowitz said Centennial faces challenges.

"We've got great growth potential," he said. "However, (we need) more space. We need to think where we're going to get the space to run more programs, at this campus and every other campus."

He also said that due to the growth of the college over the last 45 years, Centennial has blossomed into a role model for other schools.

"In some cases they are emulating us," he said.



Dennis Wu /// Observer

Yes, that's Wayne Gretzky test-driving the da Vinci Surgical System. Toronto East General Hospital still needs \$1 million more to fully fund the robot.

## East General unveils new surgical system

Hospital hopes Gretzky's visit will spur donations

By DENNIS WU  
The Observer

Hockey's 'The Great One' is known for putting a lot of pucks into a lot of nets with his amazing pair of hands. But could he use those same hands to perform surgery?

Wayne Gretzky was at Toronto East General Hospital on Oct. 19 to attend the unveiling of the da Vinci Surgical System.

It's a robotic apparatus that will be used to treat patients with prostate cancer by allowing surgeons to remotely perform minimally invasive procedures. Doctors sit at a console that controls four surgical ports that performs the delicate

interior work.

There are currently 15 of the machines in Canada — but TEGH is the first community hospital in the entire country to own one.

Dr. Rajiv Singal is a urologist at TEGH. He said the surgical robot will change people's views of what a surgeon does.

"In the same way that Wayne Gretzky changed the paradigm in terms of what we thought of hockey players and what records could not be broken, there's also been a revolution in surgery," he said.

Another special feature of the system is that it allows surgeons to see in both high definition and three dimensions.

"It's something that's going to take some time for us to get our program fully implemented," Singal said. "We hope that it will improve our care, minimize blood loss and also minimize recovery times for

our patients."

Rob Devitt, CEO of Toronto East General Hospital, was also at the Oct. 19 event.

"As a hockey player wannabe, one of the things that make teams great is in fact teamwork," he said, "and what we're seeing here in Toronto for probably the first time are two hospitals teaming and actually sharing donations in order to acquire and share a piece of technology. And that's where the system has to go."

Together with Sunnybrook Health Science Centre, TEGH hopes that it will become the training ground for future generations of robotic surgeons.

The hospital has raised \$4 million of the \$5 million needed to pay for the system. TEGH's hope is that Gretzky's appearance will encourage people to donate in order for the hospital to reach what it hopes is a manageable goal.



File photo /// Observer

Centennial College students march on Queen's Park in 1966. The college — with a campus on Carlaw Avenue in East York — is 45 years old this fall.

## ESL students learn to speak their mind

By OCTAVIAN LACATUSU  
The Observer

With a Canadian flag as a background, ESL teacher Natsuke Nakamura looked at her students Gulalay Noor and Serene Guragain as they finished their pumpkin.

Carving jack-o'-lanterns is a familiar experience for many Canadians, but for some people new to the country — like some new ESL

students at D.A. Morrison Middle School on Gledhill Avenue — Halloween last week marked a first-time and memorable experience.

"When the kids have enough language to speak their mind and thoughts, it's just always so surprising," Nakamura said. "It's beautiful."

Nakamura, a teacher for 12 years and an ESL teacher for two years at D.A. Morrison,

explained that ESL students are sometimes looked down upon by other students due to their lingual limitations.

Nakamura lamented that discrimination, saying, "It is sometimes sad when kids come in here with so much from the outside."

Divided by four levels, ESL students start at level one with communication basics such as reading and writing exercises, steadily

moving on to more complex discussions and exercises.

Sometimes, however, progress is difficult.

"We use visuals, resources that have pictures, and at times we use gestures," Nakamura said, adding that the ESL program has expanded into other curricula, such as Canadian history and geography. Social studies and culture classes expose students to Canadian customs and tra-

ditions.

Nakamura said that at times, when a student from an uncommon ethnic background enters her program, she turns to the student body for extra assistance.

"If there is one student in the class that speaks a specific language, then it gets tricky to communicate with them," she said. "Sometimes I call upon other students in the school who have a second language

to help out."

Besides introducing new students to the English that dominates their adopted homeland, Nakamura said the ESL program is also beneficial for older and more experienced ESL students.

"There is a big emotional difference between younger and older students, but I think the older kids feel good taking a leadership role in the class," she said.

## THEATRE

## Director says play a 'challenge' to produce

By DENNIS WU  
The Observer

There's still time to see the play that the East Side Players are presenting to open their 44th season: *Lettice and Lovage*, written by Peter Shaffer.

Shaffer originally penned the script in 1987, and then revised it in 1988. Those familiar with his work know he also authored *Equus* and *Amadeus*.

The play, being performed at Todmorden Mills' Papermill Theatre, follows a flamboyant tour guide, Lettice Douffet, who cannot help but embellish the dull history of Fustian House to increasingly ridiculous lengths. Her theatrical performances captivate the tourists, although what she says is highly fictitious.

Lotte Schoen, owner of the historic estate home and Preservation Trust worker, is furious over Miss Douffet's inaccurate fancies and sacks her. She prefers the truth and nothing besides.

The two ladies could not be more different but they manage to find common ground in their love of history. Lettice introduces Lotte to the world of historical re-enactments when something goes terribly wrong.

Jan Francies is the show's director and says the play was challenging to produce.

"In a community theatre, especially in a space this size, we usually have one set," Francies said. "With this play, we have three sets. It was an enormous challenge."

Despite the difficulties, the scene changes are pleasingly synchronized.

The play itself is very wordy. Lettice's love of theatre is evident through her eloquent speech. Her mother ran a Shakespearean theatre in France, and it rubbed off on her.

Francies says that the theatre rarely tackles Shakespeare. However, in this play, it is referenced many times.

Heather Goodall plays Lettice and she said it was a lot of work.

"I started with the script in June and I gave myself a page to memorize every day for three months and there are 110 pages," Goodall said.

Certain scenes are a little drawn-out, but bursts of hilarity are splashed throughout for an enjoyable experience.

Following its debut two weeks ago and its run since then, the final two performances are tonight and tomorrow, Nov. 11 and 12, at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$20; \$15 for students. The Papermill Theatre is off Pottery Road. For tickets, visit [www.eastsideplayers.ca](http://www.eastsideplayers.ca) or call 416-425-0917.

When the curtain comes down for the final time tomorrow night, the East Side Players begin preparations for two other plays in the coming months, *Rapture* and *The Hypochondriac*. Both will be Canadian premieres.



## Pump(kin)ed up for the fair



Beth Ford /// Observer

East York resident Yuki Azuma (above) is led by her youngest daughter, Emily, through the assortment of pumpkins carved and decorated by students at the R.H. McGregor Elementary School fall fair, held on Oct. 29. At left, Georgia Marsh gives her all at knocking a beanbag pumpkin over to win a prize.

## Skateboarders flying high again



Nicholas Pescod /// Observer

Adam Caide skates on one of the rails at the East York Skate Park. He and other skateboarders are happy to see a recently vandalized rail reinstalled by the city.

### Skatepark users give thumb's up to \$2,800 replacement rail

By NICHOLAS PESCOD  
The Observer

The East York Skatepark is fully functional again after replacement of a key component that had been damaged by vandals last month.

According to the founder of the park — located on Cosburn Avenue near Woodbine — three BMX bike riders abused a rail until it was badly damaged. A rail is a long, thin edge that a skateboarder can slide his board along.

The founder, Nick Pierre, said other users of the park identified the vandals and he gave their names to police.

The trio weren't charged, but they were banned from the park.

In the meantime, the rail was removed, and regulars at the park were left wondering if it would ever be replaced.

"I was actually really upset," Pierre said. "It hurt me. I spent nine years of my life getting that park built."

Adam Caide has been skating at the park for the past six years and was disappointed to

find out the rail was destroyed.

"It was the biggest thing here," he said. "You could put a lot of tricks down on the rail."

But just two weekends ago, a brand new rail was installed, much to the delight of the park's users.

"I am excited," Pierre said. "I skated on it just the other day."

Pierre found out the rail was going to be replaced when he received an e-mail from the city saying that a welder was going to come by to take measurements.

Caide was out skating at the park late last week and was pleased to see the rail reinstalled.

"I'm pretty happy," he said. "It's a bit lower than the old one, but it's great."

The cost of replacing the rail was around \$2,800.

"It has to be custom-made," Pierre explained. "It has to be the right kind of metal for (skateboard tricks)."

While the East York Skatepark allows bikers, rollerbladers and other users, the park was created primarily with skateboarding in mind.

"Everyone is allowed at the park," Pierre said, "but it was designed for skateboarders."

