



Sian Davies /// Observer

### Claus for celebration

Santa asks Ward 29/Toronto-Danforth councillor Mary Fragedakis (right) and her Ward 30 colleague Paula Fletcher whether Mayor Rob Ford has been “naughty or nice” this year. St. Nick and his politicos-turned-elves were at Saturday’s second annual “Toast to the Holidays” event held on the Danforth.

### Layton protégé seeks NDP gig

By BETH FORD  
The Observer

While some people might feel intimidated at the thought of following in Jack Layton’s footsteps, Claire Prashaw is “humbled.”

Prashaw, Layton’s former constituency assistant, announced last week that she is seeking the federal NDP nomination for Toronto-Danforth. She worked alongside the late MP in his Broadview Avenue constituency office for a year and a half before he died of cancer last summer.



■ Prashaw

“It was inspiring and rewarding to work with Jack. He wasn’t just my boss, but my mentor and friend,” she said. “I saw the love he had for his community and I am going to continue that.”

Since the death of the charismatic NDP leader in August, the riding has been without a Member of Parliament. According to Elections Canada, Prime Minister Stephen Harper has until Feb. 26 to set a date for a byelection.

During her time as Layton’s assistant, Prashaw says she advocated for constituents and helped them cut through red tape on such issues as pensions and reuniting new immigrants with their families. She recently took a leave of absence to focus on her campaign.

Born and raised in Collingwood, Ont., Prashaw completed an undergraduate degree at Trent University in Peterborough and went on to obtain a BA at York University. She moved to Toronto in 2005 with her three-year-old son.

She says she is passionate about education.

“Through the outreach work I’ve done, I’ve dealt

■ See PRASHAW, page 3

### Happy Holidays, East York

This is the final edition of the East York Observer for 2011. The paper is published by journalism students at the East York campus of Centennial College, where the semester is about to conclude.

After the Christmas break, the staff is heading out on internships in the GTA and beyond. But in mid-January, the newsroom will re-open with a brand new staff, and publication will resume soon after that.

■ POLITICS

## City’s axe to fall in E.Y.?

By MATILDA MIRANDA and JANET PIERCEY  
The Observer

More than 200 parents and children are expected to rally at city hall today, Dec. 9, in the hope that their recreation centres will be spared from city budget cuts.

East York’s Earl Beatty Recreation Centre and 11 others across the city are in danger of being shut down if Mayor Rob Ford’s budget is approved.

Liza Ordubegian, who lives near the local centre, has been petitioning to keep sports programs and activities running for the community.

“I want them to see who they’re actually affecting by making these kinds of cuts,” she said. “I want (them) to see who these kids are, how they play, how they interact, how they move within their own community. They know each other; they’ve worked together and they’ve played together as they grow.”

There’s been a heated debate about the Toronto budget since Ford proposed cuts. They include a TTC fare hike and cut-



Matilda Miranda /// Observer

Liza Ordubegian created a petition protesting the possible closure of Earl Beatty Recreation Centre in East York.

ting the number of buses on each route, eliminating city recreation programming for some Toronto schools, cutting 58 student nutrition programs and axing 138 art programs.

Opponents say the proposed cuts will

not only affect the city, but will have a huge impact on smaller communities.

Mary Fragedakis, Toronto-Danforth councillor, said the city actually could

■ See CENTRE, page 3

**POLICE BRIEFS**

**Medication missing**

Toronto police are warning the public not to handle a large quantity of medication that was reported missing last week. Police say a bag containing three bottles of Suboxone (methadone) was lost in the Greenwood and Danforth avenues area around Nov. 30.

The medication could be harmful or fatal if ingested, especially by children. Anyone with information on the missing medication is asked to call 54 Division at 416-808-5400.

**Precious video stolen**

Police are still looking for stolen video equipment with precious contents, taken during a theft from a vehicle two weeks ago.

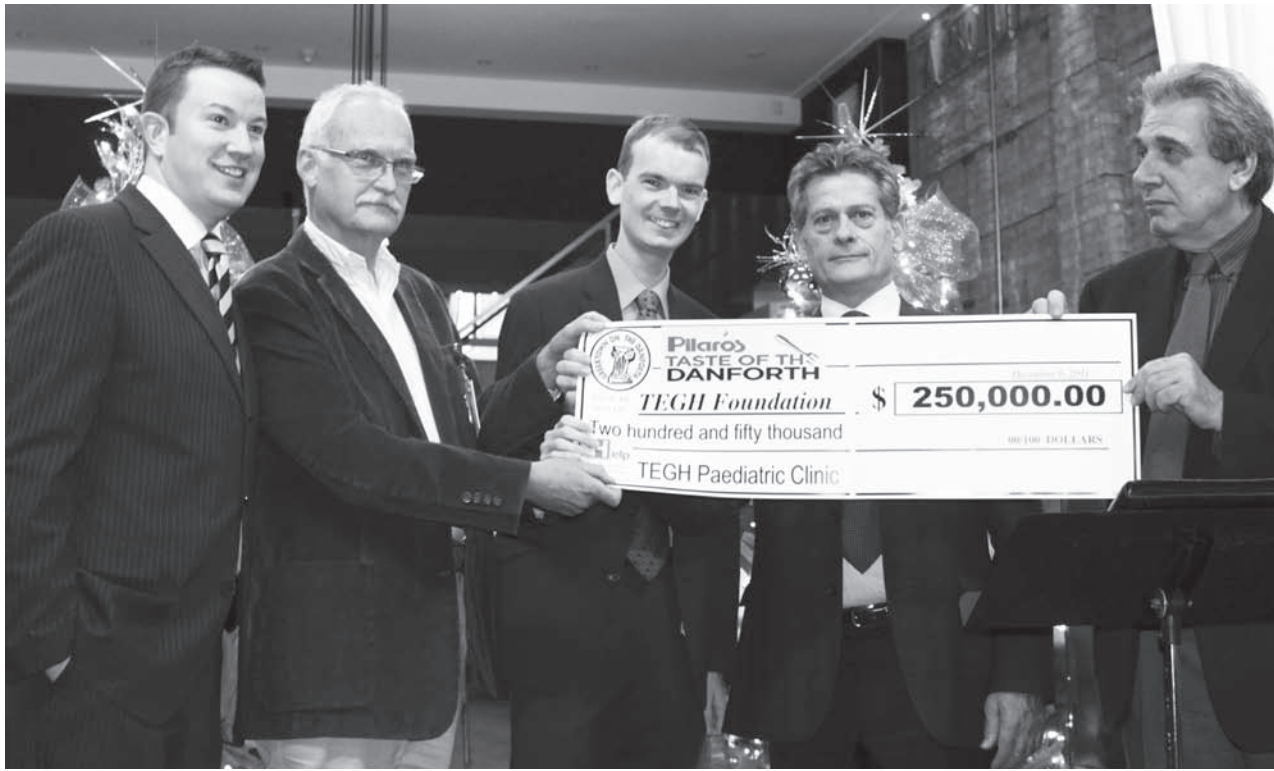
Between 10 p.m. Nov. 26 and 8 a.m. the next day, someone broke into a vehicle parked on Millwood Road. A grey/silver Sony MiniDV camcorder in a blue case and an InFocus video projection machine were taken from the vehicle.

The camcorder contains a tape with footage that belonged to the owner of the vehicle. It is the original and only footage showing Jenna Morrison dancing with her son. Ms. Morrison was the bicyclist killed in a collision with a truck in Toronto's west end on Nov. 7.

Anyone with information is asked to call police at 416-808-5300.

~Janet Piercey

**HOSPITAL DONATION**



Melanie Schawill // Observer

**Left to right: Ken Reid from Rogers Sportsnet, Dr. Anthony Duke and Justin Van Dette from Toronto East General Hospital, Constantine Voidonikolas, chair of the Greektown on the Danforth BIA, and Miltiadis Antypas from Pilaros show off a \$250,000 cheque donated to Toronto East General Hospital.**

**Clinic gets a booster shot**

**East General's pediatric project given \$250,000**

By MELANIE SCHAWILL  
The Observer

Members of the Greektown on the Danforth BIA and organizers of the Pilaros Taste of the Danforth festival gathered at The Local Company restaurant and lounge on Tuesday to announce a donation to Toronto East General Hospital.

Howard Lichtman, spokesman for Pilaros Taste of the Danforth, said they have supported TEGH for years — and plan to continue.

“Today is all about recom-



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mitment. It's like getting married again,” he said. Referring to Dinos Voidonikolas, chairman of the Greektown on the Danforth BIA, he added, “We're renewing our vows and making a commitment to Dinos and pledging \$250,000 towards the hospital's new pediatric clinic.”

Dr. Anthony Duke, who has worked at TEGH as a pediatrician for 30 years, said he's happy about the donation and excited that the hospital will finally be getting a pediatric clinic.

“What we hope to do is use the space for a general pediatric clinic to take all the patients

that have been discharged from the hospital, so that we can hope to send them home a little sooner,” he said.

Duke explained during the celebration that it would be advantageous to finally have all of the specialty pediatricians together.

“They are scattered all over the hospital,” he said. “So when this new structure is finished in the New Year, we'll have everybody under one roof and it will be a very family-friendly, children-friendly setup.”

TEGH is hoping that the expansion will even bring in new doctors.

“We have had some problems attracting new pediatricians at East General because they haven't had at all a house to work in — a pediatric-based clinic,” he said, “and the fact that this is happening has already allowed us to attract a few new pediatricians, so a lot has come from this.”

The clinic is scheduled to be finished next year, and is part of a \$210 million redevelopment project for the hospital, which was approved by the government of Ontario a few months ago. The expansion includes a nine-storey patient care centre, 280 more hospital beds and site improvements.

TEGH is currently trying to raise \$60 million as part of a private sector campaign. To date, it has raised \$45 million.



Alissa Randall // Observer

**Putting it in writing**

**Left to right: Patrick O'Rourke, Scott Holtpy, Corey Ruth and Yemi Ifegbuyi, all students at Centennial College's East York campus, sign a White Ribbon campaign banner on Monday to signify their personal opposition to violence against women. The White Ribbon campaign is tied to observances for the anniversary of the 1989 Montreal massacre of women engineering students.**

**Opinions divided on TTC cutbacks**

**Councillors debate impact of service cuts on E.Y. area**

By MATILDA MIRANDA  
The Observer

Two local councillors have differing views on how proposed bus service reductions to the TTC in 2012 could affect East York residents.

John Parker, councillor for Don Valley West, believes there would only be a modest reduction to bus services for his constituents, but says there will be a practical impact.

“The buses that have been full before, will be fuller. If people were able to find a seat before, they probably won't find one,” he said. “But the cuts will not stop them from getting to where they're going.”

Last month, the TTC announced it would be returning to pre-2004 “loading” levels. It plans to reduce bus and streetcar lines in an effort to balance its budget. But there have also been proposals for fare hikes that could mitigate the cuts.

Passengers on 52 bus routes could face longer wait times during rush hour. Thirty-six routes could see services cut during their off-peak hours.

But Parker says there's actually one line in his ward that would see an increase in service.

While he is optimistic about the changes, Mary Fragedakis, city councillor for Toronto-Danforth, is not. She says she had been getting calls non-stop about the TTC even before the announcement of cuts.

“We shouldn't be cutting services. Since we have so many people coming in (to the city), we need to be improving services and investing,” she said.

Fragedakis says many residents live in apartments and have no other means of transportation, including almost 20,000 people living in the Pape-Cosburn corridor.

“It's a huge population being served,” Fragedakis said.

Parker says the lines that serve residents in the Thorncliffe area will not be affected by the changes.

“I'm finding that the constituents breathe a sigh of relief when I tell them it won't have that big of an impact,” he said.

However, Fragedakis says buses that pass through Thorncliffe will see a reduction in services, such as the 25 Don Mills and the 81 Thorncliffe buses.

## Prashaw 'will fight' for E.Y.

Cont'd. from page 1

with young people who may not have had the opportunity to graduate from high school, but they have to pay rent and are struggling to get by," she said. "I will be working with community organizations as well as the party to discuss what would be the best ways to get people back in school or back in training."

Prashaw, 32, says she knows first-hand the struggles of the average middle-class Canadian citizen, especially when it comes to the cost of living and the widening income gap. She says the HST needs to be taken off home heating bills and that it's an injustice when seniors on fixed income and people on disability are unable to pay it.

As a single parent, she also understands the struggles faced by those seeking daycare subsidies.

"I understand the need for daycare from a personal perspective. You put your name on a spot, and you run the risk of losing that spot if your subsidy doesn't come through," she said.

"Jack fought so hard to make Canada a better place for the next generation. I will fight for a national daycare strategy, to keep the gun registry, to create green jobs, to keep manufacturing jobs in Canada and build bridges from this community to Ottawa."

The NDP riding association is expected to hold a nomination meeting soon. Meanwhile, Prashaw will hold an official campaign kickoff and holiday party on Dec. 20 at 7 p.m. at the Dora Keogh pub on Danforth Avenue.



Courtesy of Margaret McRae

Former East York mayor Alan Redway carried the borough's flag through the streets on Canada Day in years past.

## Flying the local flag

By NICOLE PULSINELLI  
The Observer

Get ready to see a familiar emblem fluttering on neighbourhood flagpoles.

The East York flag is back in circulation, thanks to the East York Historical Society, and anyone who wants one just has to place an order and hand over a bit of cash.

The flag, which flew over the community prior to Toronto's amalgamation in 1998, was the brainchild of onetime mayor Alan Redway.

"(The flag) represents the terrific community spirit of East York, but unfortunately now it's under some pressure," he said.

Redway came up with the idea of an East York flag in the mid-1980s, shortly after being elected mayor.

"The (flag's) design was so

unique," he said.

Redway and others cite research suggesting that the original European settlers in what is now East York were from the United Kingdom — and since the colours of the Union Jack are red, white and blue, it's appropriate that those be the colours of the East York flag too. Redway said it represents the uniqueness of East York, although it hasn't flown officially since the amalgamation.

"The amalgamated city of Toronto seems to be intent on wiping out all of the community spirit of the past and trying to create one overall Toronto community spirit, which is hard to do," he said.

Jane Pitfield, the former city politician who is succeeding the retiring Margaret McRae as president of the historical

society, said that since amalgamation, the identities of the former six municipalities have been muted. This means no resources have gone into the East York flag, which has been replaced by the blue and white Toronto flag.

But now, the society is selling small East York flags for \$10 and large ones for \$95, with all proceeds going to its plaque program. This recognizes buildings of historical significance in East York with a plaque, which ensures their protection. It also helps East York residents "become aware of where the historical buildings are," Pitfield said.

Both Pitfield and Redway say they'd like to see the flags flown all around East York.

"In my mind, (that would) signal the rebirth of the community spirit," Redway said.

## Rec centre has allies

Cont'd. from page 1

afford to keep those programs and services running.

"At the end of the second quarter this year, we have a budget surplus of \$139 million," she said. "We can't go out and cut programs that contribute to the prosperity and ability of the people of this city."

Ordubegian's two children regularly attend activities such as ballet, swimming and ball hockey at Earl Beatty.

"I can't understand what this administration is doing, punishing the children of our city and making our city less of a civic place and more of a hard place," she said. "I haven't talked to a single person who thought this was a good idea."

John Parker, Don Valley West councillor, said although the budget will affect most communities, it would better the city.

"This is a painful and difficult exercise. Nobody is happy with being part of decisions that relate to jobs being lost and services being reduced," he said. "Most Toronto residents recognize that it is a necessary step. Most residents will criticize us at city hall if we didn't get serious about getting our costs under control and about our spending in line with our revenues."

Ordubegian believes the city does not have to close any of the programs for kids. She hopes the budget will be looked at

once more before it is set in stone.

"Getting revenues from somewhere else to keep these programs open is something that they should look at more clearly," she said. "It seems very short-sighted — keeping kids off the street, keeping them busy, keeping them active, learning new skills, learning to be mentors, playing on a real team, it's a long-term thing."

Diana Symonds, 47, and her three kids make use of Earl Beatty's programs and in learning about the possibility of it closing, said it affects her family.

"My family and I go there every day. It's really upsetting and we're devastated," she said. "My husband wrote a letter to Rob Ford expressing his distress."

Symonds said three other centres in her area are also on the list of proposed cuts.

"We can't afford to go to other clubs. Once they close the centre, where are we supposed to go?" she asked.

Fragedakis is determined to keep these programs open for the east end of the city. She said she is prepared to defend the programs and the recreation centres.

"The kids are our priority. I don't think there is anybody on this council for whom children are not a priority. What are we doing here if we aren't building a city for our children and our grandchildren?" she asked.

## That's the way the ball ban bounces

By MATILDA MIRANDA  
The Observer

A local school that made international headlines for "banning balls" in its playground is making progress toward finding a solution.

A meeting was held at Earl Beatty Public School last week for parents to voice their concerns and consider possible changes to the way things run in the cramped schoolyard.

Earl Beatty, which accommodates about 350 children and a daycare, has a small yard, approximately a quarter of a hectare in size.

Last month, after a parent re-

ceived a concussion from a soccer ball that struck her in the head, a letter was sent home to parents stating that hard balls, including soccer balls and baseballs, would no longer be permitted at the school.

Last week's meeting was held to deal with the backlash that arose.

"There were a lot of questions, but once people got their answers, they brainstormed as to what it is that would make a better playground space

for everyone," said Pam Koch, whose son attends the school, and who is co-chair of the Earl Beatty School Advisory Council.

One of the suggestions coming out of the meeting was to have respective recess and dismissal times for younger and older children.

The other was a complete reconfiguration of the playground, including a distinct waiting area for parents, Koch said.

Currently, hockey nets are very close to the school door and benches are placed beneath the basketball nets.

Toronto District School Board trustee Sheila Carey-

Meagher, whose ward encompasses the school, agreed that the yard is not set up strategically.

"There's a problem with some unfortunate design elements that have grown up over time," she said.

Koch said it's a fundamental issue that has always been there.

"There was work done to try and create a space for everybody, but that takes money," she said. "Parents fundraise, but they can't raise enough funds to cover the cost of changing the whole playground."

While some media attention that the school received was critical,

Koch thinks it can be used to its advantage, providing incentive to get the playground changed.

Earl Beatty has always had a rule restricting the use of hard balls during recess and lunchtime, so Carey-Meagher said she was surprised by the recent media firestorm.

"It's completely amazing. They just went nuts and it got a bit out of control," she said of the media — and its gravitation toward off-colour puns around the story.

"A little bit had to do with saying, 'You can't play with your balls in public.' There's a naughtiness about it."



■ Angela Kennedy

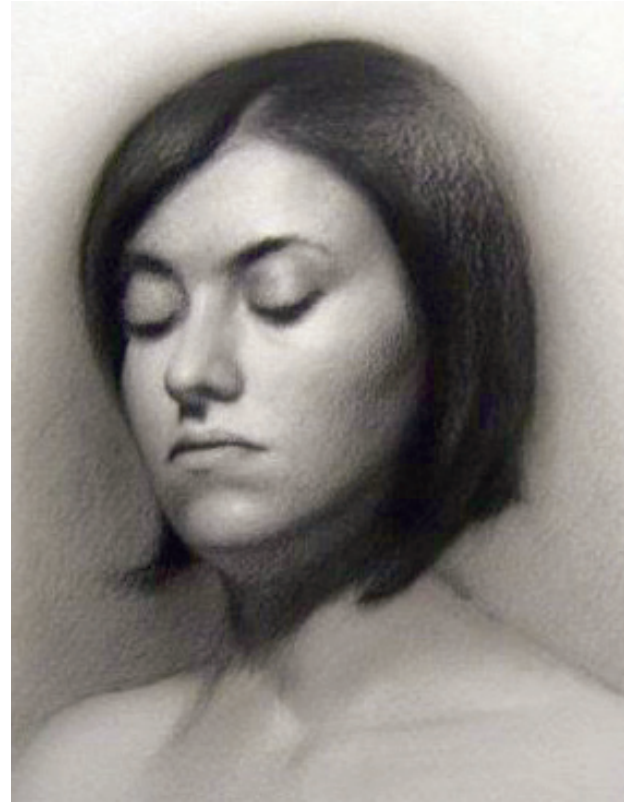


Courtesy of Lidia Yurkina



Alima Hotakie // Observer

**Bryan Savory (above), a student in Centennial College's art and design program, works on his drawings of art model Lidia Yurkina (at left and at right). Yurkina is a regular subject for the artists training at the college's East York campus, located on Carlaw Avenue.**



Courtesy of Lidia Yurkina

# THE NAKED TRUTH ABOUT MODELING

It isn't easy being nude, Centennial model confesses

By **ALIMA HOTAKIE**  
The Observer

Sitting still is hard. Sitting still naked is even harder. Now imagine sitting still and naked for 20 minutes to an hour in front of a class of strangers: unfathomable.

But this is what 25-year-old art model Lidia Yurkina does for a living.

She's a regular nude model for Centennial College's fine

arts program, located at the school's East York campus on Carlaw Avenue.

She admits posing bare for an extended period isn't always easy.

Sometimes her arms and feet fall asleep from staying in the same position for too long. Or the poses can take their toll on her muscles and joints.

Still, she believes live modeling has transformed her into a titan of a model.

"I sometimes wait it out," she said. "You learn to tolerate it ... it takes practice."

During modeling sessions, Yurkina draws atten-



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tion away from the pain by focusing on something else. Consequently, she feels she's developed greater self-discipline and control over her emotions.

Although nude, Yurkina said there's nothing sexual about her job. Discreetness is her mantra.

"When I pose, I make sure my poses aren't provocative," she said. "I don't spread my legs too far be-

cause you don't want students to focus too much on that part of your body."

Besides modeling for adults at colleges and universities, Yurkina also poses for art students in both public and Catholic schools.

Despite the flood of wild hormones found in the hallways and classrooms of high schools, she said she's often surprised at the level of composure the teenagers display,

especially the boys.

"They're pretty mature about it," she said.

Usually, one doesn't associate nude models with suffering from a lack of positive body image, but Yurkina admits she works hard to stay in shape.

"I'm extremely self-conscious about my body," she said. "Most of the time when I'm not working I'm at the gym."

But unlike fashion modeling, art modeling is all about keeping it natural. Most artists prefer their models make-up free and curvy.

While mainstream me-

dia obsesses over stick-thin bodies, this form of art uses different shapes and sizes. But the most popular shape among artists is a curvy woman.

"It's about accuracy and realism rather than fantasy and what you find in magazines," Yurkina said.

The most awkward part of her job is not the nudity, but running into clients outside of work.

But she said the key to success is remaining professional. That means avoiding relationships with clients, including friendships and romances.

# Writer has a few yo-yo tricks up her sleeve

Protagonist of new book for teens uses his yo-yo to help predict the future

By **BRITNEY BRADY-MAGINLEY**  
The Observer

After two years of dedication, novelist Karen Krossing can add *The Yo-Yo Prophet* to her list of published books for teens and boast some fancy yo-yo tricks too.

The novel is about 15-year-old Calvin, who believes he can predict the future when yo-yoing on the street.

While the teen hones his skill as a yo-yo performer, he has many other things going on in his life, like the death of his mother, the absence of his father, and a grandmother too ill to take care of her dry-cleaning shop makes him feel he has no control over his life.

"When (Calvin) yo-yos, he feels that's when he can manage things. He can master this one trick and it gives him that feeling of control over his life," Krossing said.

In this novel, she wanted to explore the theme of control over life and combine it with yo-yoing.

"There is an underground subculture of modern yo-yoing where the tricks are complex and I wanted to include that in this novel," she said.

These days, yo-yo tricks are not just simple ups and downs, around the world or a walk the dog anymore.

"I wouldn't say that I'm a yo-yo expert, but I started to research about it in order to write the book," she said. "In order to get into the protagonist's frame of mind I was certainly learning about it and practicing the tricks that I could."

Krossing said the book might appeal to young readers not usually interested in fiction, because it deals with the trials and tribulations of becoming a teen.

"It's meant for 12 to 15 year-olds. It's quirky, fun and odd because I combined yo-yoing with Calvin's ability to see the future," she said.

"You feel sorry for him, but it's amusing at the same time."

Krossing keeps a

notepad at her bedside to write down ideas that come to her at night.

"The time before you go to bed and the time you wake up is when your mind is rich with ideas. And when you do mindless things such as walking your dog or driving is also a good time for pondering," she said.

The East York resident calls the writing process a ponderous one. It takes two to four years from the idea until the novel is printed and out.

"It's about the process. It's about having fun writing your book. You need to enjoy the act of writing. I'm always looking for new ideas."

■ **Karen Krossing**



## SEASON'S GREETINGS!

Counter-clockwise from top....

Michael Hadad and Sali Mutamara pose with Santa Claus. On Saturday, St. Nick dropped by Milk Mart Convenience on Pape Avenue to brighten everyone's day....

Kam and Timara pose for a photo in front of a Christmas tree at Bethany Baptist Church on Pape Avenue. The church was the location of a winter fair on Saturday, which included arts and crafts for the kids, music and other family fun activities....

Neither the season's first snow, nor sleet, nor recycling bins shall stay this cyclist from his appointed rounds....

Antonio adjusts to the new reality of actual winter by brushing the snow from his car.



Nick Pescod /// Observer



Nick Pescod /// Observer



Melanie Schawill /// Observer



Octavian Lacatusu /// Observer

## EDITORIAL

# Post-Occupied

One recent fall day, motorists and pedestrians along the Bloor Viaduct turned their heads to watch a young man in a business suit crossing the bridge that connects East York to downtown Toronto. What made him a head-turner was the way he marched along the sidewalk, staring straight ahead, holding a hand-drawn sign over his head that urged passersby to “Honk for Peace.”

Some motorists blared back. Other drivers and pedestrians just watched as this very earnest young man kept walking — never averting his gaze, never speaking to the people looking at him, simply disappearing amidst the towers of downtown... in the direction of St. James Park and the Occupy Toronto encampment.

The Occupy movement has received its share of criticism, mainly from the mainstream media trying to paint every demonstrator with the same “slacker” brush. But instead of living up to the media prophecy, the occupiers have gained enough momentum to morph into a global movement.

And although it’s true that the Occupy movement has been lacking in a specific focus, we should consider the proposition that the spectrum of issues is broad enough to impact the lives of most Canadians. Now that “we are the 99 per cent” has become the official slogan of occupiers, let’s reiterate that the “top one per cent” is traditional economic/academic jargon used to distinguish how wealth is distributed. In an article written by sociology professor G. William Domhoff for the University of California at Santa Cruz, he demonstrates how wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few.

He points out that during the “Great Recession” since 2007, there has been a 36.1 per cent drop in the “wealth” of the average U.S. household. This compares with an 11.1 per cent drop in wealth among the top one per cent of America’s rich. Domhoff cites the U.S. Centre for Economic Policy Research and says the first decade of the millennium (2000-2010) was a “lost decade” for most Americans. He points to the following gruelling statistics as evidence: since the peak of the recession in 2007, the top one per cent of households accounted for 34.6 per cent of all privately held wealth. Professionals and small businesses held 50.5 per cent; along with the very rich, this adds up to 85 per cent. That leaves a mere 15 per cent to be scattered among wage/salary earners — while 20 per cent of the population controls a disproportionate 85 per cent of the wealth.

To a lesser extent, this dynamic is echoed here in Canada. The banks, multinational companies and others among our own “one per cent” are continuing to divide the rich and the poor by creating a global market that enables outsourcing, child slavery abroad, unfair interest rates and other predatory practices.

This doesn’t sound like democracy to most people. They sense something is wrong. So some, like that earnest young man marching from East York to downtown, have been exercising their social responsibility in explicit protest. That kind of overt demonstration may not be your cup of tea, but then the important thing is to find another avenue that leads in the direction of social justice.

~ Beth Ford

## Let them eat cake

Budget cuts are the talk of the town. Mayor Rob Ford’s chopping block is freighted with an array of controversial cuts. They range from closing homeless shelters, skating arenas and swimming pools to less frequent street cleaning. But perhaps one of the most disgraceful cuts is taking toast out of the mouths of less fortunate children.

One of Ford’s proposed cuts is dropping funding for 58 of Toronto’s 685 breakfast programs.

It isn’t the first time the city has tried to cut support for breakfast programs. In fact, previous cuts have already hit quite close to home. East York houses Secord Elementary School at 101 Barrington Ave. Its breakfast program is sponsored by the realty office of Remax Hallmark near Pape and Danforth avenues. They decided to help when the school was losing its breakfast program funding in 2006. According to the school’s newsletter, the program would be impossible to run without sponsors.

It seems Ford is taking from society’s most vulnerable members, whose voices are typically soft-spoken. That demands the question as to why Ford can’t instead delve into the city’s apparent \$139 million surplus.

Perhaps Ford wouldn’t mind if these children ate the spillover that will be caused when he pulls the “gravy train” to a screeching halt.

There has been no word yet on what Ford’s next step would be to mend the hole that the proposed cut could make. However, with generous neighbours, as in the case of Secord Elementary, schools affected may not have to lose a program essential to many students citywide.

Ford often likes to remind the public that he was elected to bring change to Toronto. That may be true, but Toronto didn’t elect him to steal from the poor. Where’s Robin Hood when you need him?

~ Nicole Pulsinelli



Neil Ward /// Observer

The 2011 Observer staff say goodbye and thanks to the East York community.

## Goodnight, and good luck

By MELANIE SCHAWILL  
and NICOLE PULSINELLI  
The Observer

Diane Sawyer must have had the East York Observer crew in mind when she said, “If you’re curious, you’ll probably be a good journalist, because we follow our curiosity like cats.”

And that’s what we’re doing, East York. We’re curiously moving on and moving forward. We first entered our newsroom as students; now we leave as journalists, curious to observe and explore what’s happening in the world — whether it’s international news or the worldliness that encompasses a community such as East York.

In the past year, our staff has been working on the paper and we have made this publication a part of ourselves. Doesn’t that sound like a cliché? Well, it’s true. Octavian Lacatusu loves to pitch us a good car story. Geoff Mosher loves politics. Alexandra Ward is a brilliant photographer. Michelle Grace has a passion for writing about animals. Something you may have noticed is how much we all love to write about Pottery Road and our beloved veteran crossing guard, Jack Aldred. Though there never seems to be a shortage of recurring characters in the East York Observer, it just happens to be what we’re most proud of. We want our time here to be reflective of the community and celebrate the people and places that illuminate it. As it turns out, this was a case of quid pro quo. East York has illuminated us.

Thanks to this community, we’re not only seasoned, we’re confident in what we do. Our insecurities, giant-like at first, were eventually slain in our own David and Goliath story. Example: our colleague Beth Ford says she used to be nervous she wasn’t asking the best questions.

“I’m more confident now,” she says. “I just learned a lot more about East York since working on the Observer.”

Ford says there’s something special about East York.

“It’s a tightly knit community and there aren’t a lot of those left in Toronto,” she says. “I like that they have the East York Historical Society, the Rotary Club, the East York Civic Centre, skating and farmers markets.”

That may sound like a mouthful, but these are the things we’ve learned that make East York great and diverse.

Our fellow Observer reporter, Nicholas Pescod, has an appreciation for this corner of the world he otherwise may have not known much about.

“It’s a really cool community,” he says. “It’s been a lot of fun covering East York. It’s really prepared me look at things from a community perspective.”

That’s what we’ve loved about East York. In its expanse, we’ve learned to dig a little deeper and look a little bit closer. All we can hope is that you’ve enjoyed reading what we find interesting about you. Perhaps you read our paper on a bench in one of your parks, maybe in a café on the Danforth, on a bus en route to the Ontario Science Centre or at home. Wherever you took us, we want to thank you for letting us explore the reaches of your community.

While we’re thanking people, our editors — Steve Cogan, Lindy Oughtred, Dave Johnny, Louie Piacentini and Andrew Mair — not only deserve to be hailed as our mentors and East York stars, but so much more. They are patient, because every day there is a lineup of six semesters’ worth of journalism students outside their doors with handfuls of questions. They are generous because they share their years of knowledge with us. And finally they are heroic because they have given us legs to stand on by teaching us how to crawl, then to walk and now to run on our own in a sometimes uncertain world.

It’s been an eventful journey, East York. We came back from our summer hiatus not only to a new and improved newsroom, but also to a marvellous redesign of our paper, which we have embraced. Getting used to it was a challenge at first. We like to think we paved the road for your new fleet of East York Observer staff, who we know you will treat as warmly as you have treated us.

With their new beginnings, so come ours. We will each be starting internships in January. Janet Piercey was one of the first of us to get her internship at Durham Radio News. Jesse Mirsky, Ross Johnston and Kristin Annable will be at the National Post. Shannon Keller will be at Ontario Power Generation public affairs.

So as we say goodbye to you, East York, we also say goodbye to each other. We have faced many challenges together, such as long evenings assembling the paper and diving into the newsroom with last-minute copy. As we go off to our placements, we pass on the Observer torch.

Ani Hajderaj is a name you can anticipate seeing more of in the near future. He is one of the new East York Observer staff, kick-starting his run in January. He says he’s excited and anxious to get on board.

“I really don’t know what to expect,” he says. “I’m looking forward to speaking with the businesses around the area, as well as local politicians to see how their opinion might differ from other areas in the city.”

We wish the upcoming staff the best of luck and hope they enjoy exploring East York as we have. We also wish them many an election. (Wink!)

Says Hajderaj: “I hope I make it out alive.”

■ COLUMN

# Poor sports illustrated

A fortnight ago, the Canadian Football League proved that there actually *is* such thing as bad publicity.

The 99<sup>th</sup> Grey Cup, the CFL's marquee game of the year, was overshadowed happenings at an alumni luncheon in Vancouver a day prior to the hometown B.C. Lions being crowned champions over the hated Winnipeg Blue Bombers. Two CFL legends, Angelo Mosca and Joe Kapp, took their on-field feud into the dining room and brawled with cameras rolling.

Footage of the fight made its way worldwide, even being featured on the notorious American gossip website, TMZ.com. What was so compelling? Mosca is 74, Kapp 73 and the melee occurred over a grudge stemming from 1963. The CFL got the mainstream publicity that it so coveted for the Grey Cup, but only because of a septuagenarian smackdown.

If senior citizens were the only transgressors of common decency in the sports world right now, it would be one thing, but subsequent generations have done an admirable job in keeping up with their forefathers' nonsense.

Look no further than Ndamukong Suh, the monstrous Detroit Lions defensive tackle. In front of an audience of millions on American Thanksgiving, Suh

**Mike Beauvais**



took it upon himself to not only slam the head of the Packers' Evan Dietrich-Smith into the ground three times (you know, because the third time's the charm), he decided to stomp on Dietrich-Smith's arm for good measure to add injury to injury.

If that weren't ridiculous enough, Suh came up with a half-baked justification for his inane actions for reporters after the game, calling them "accidental." I suppose, then, that NFL commissioner Roger Goodell "accidentally" suspended Suh for two

subsequent games.

Don't worry, though. Senselessness isn't contained solely to the gridiron. Max Pacioretty proved that hockey players can be just as dumb as their pigskin brethren.

You might remember Pacioretty as the victim of a brutal hit from Boston Bruins' captain Zdeno Chara last March. Pacioretty's head was driven into the stanchion and the young Montreal Canadiens forward suffered fractured vertebrae and a serious concussion.

Not only did Pacioretty miss the rest of the season and the playoffs, there was legitimate concern that he would never play again.

Fortunately, the Habs winger recovered in time to start the season in October and provide a cautionary tale on how *not* to learn from the mistakes of others: on Nov. 26, Pacioretty took a healthy run at Pittsburgh defenseman Kris Letang and viciously broke his nose.

Pacioretty showed us that almost having your livelihood taken away is no reason to pass up the opportunity to try to take away somebody else's.

These three instances are only a few of several in the sports world attesting to the fact that too many of those who partake in professional sports are the most unprofessional of athletes. Give your own heads a shake instead of somebody else's.

# Thorncliffe has toys for all girls and boys

By **MICHELLE GRACE**  
The Observer

The Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office is holding its first-ever toy drive this holiday season in hopes of providing less fortunate families with presents under the tree this Christmas.

Razia Dawood, supervisor of the Early Years Centre at TNO, is excited to participate in the toy drive.

"Our goal when we started this was to help support the Thorncliffe community. There is a large number of families and many children in this community who may not be able to purchase toys for their children," Dawood said. "It's a time for us to give back to the community and to those who are less fortunate."

There are no criteria

for eligibility for families to receive a present. Dawood said. The drive will operate on the honour system. All people have to do is simply show up and pick one out for themselves.

"This is all about making the holiday season special for a child and putting a smile on their face when they receive a toy," she said. "They are so grateful and it's wonderful to see the children and parents happy."

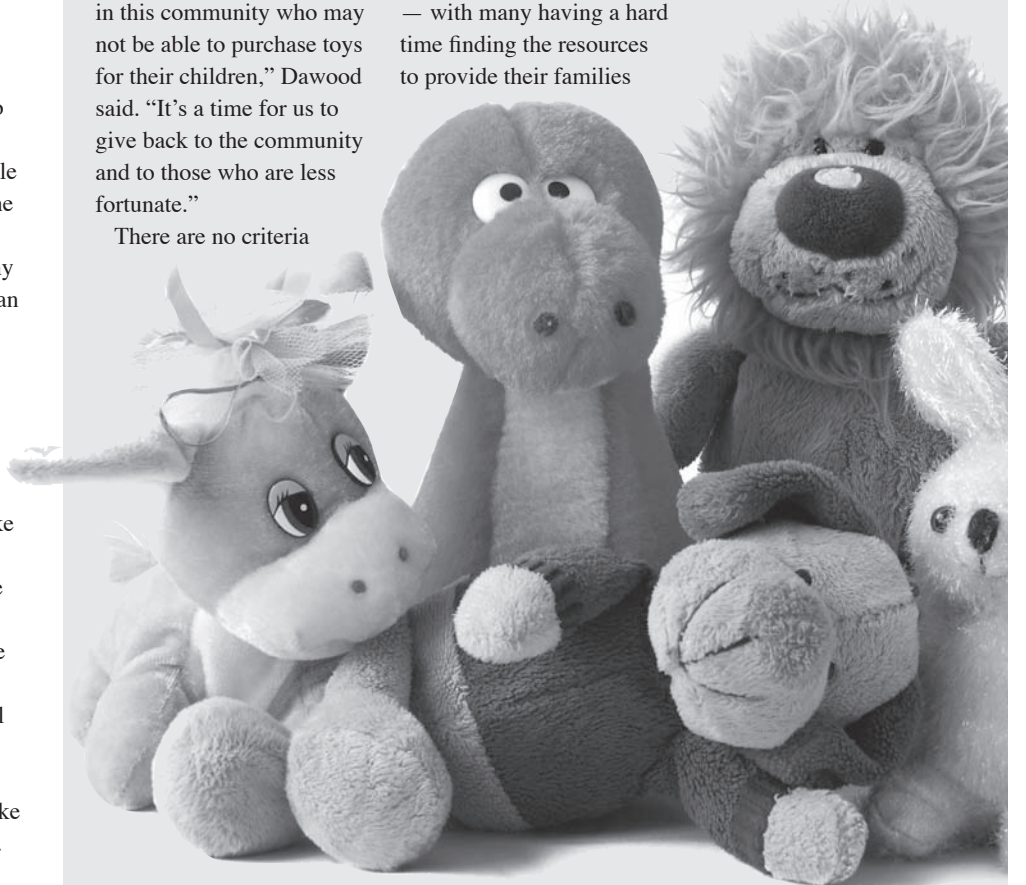
Thorncliffe Park is home to almost 30,000 people, including many young families and new Canadians — with many having a hard time finding the resources to provide their families

with gifts this year.

"Many of the families may not have the disposable income for toys," Dawood said. "It's very much a luxury for these children."

The TNO is also hosting a food drive, with the office now accepting non-perishable food items.

Donations can be dropped off Monday-Friday between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. at the TNO-Ontario Early Years Centre, located at 45 Overlea Blvd. Unit #108A (on the south side of East York Town Centre).



# Discipline guru preaches against punishment



Kris Ali-Trotman /// Observer

**Ronald Morrish says teen discipline is all about teaching, not about consequences. He tells the crowd, "It's easier than you think. Trust me."**

## Consequences don't work on many teens, expert says

By **KRIS ALI-TROTMAN**  
The Observer

Ronald Morrish writes the words "Make It Right" on the top left-hand corner of his blackboard — to teach students the art of proper discipline.

He has been a teacher and discipline consultant for over 20 years, and on Nov. 21, he held a seminar at St. Patrick Catholic Secondary School on Felstead Avenue to talk with parents about teen discipline.

He followed with a question-and-answer segment,

where parents could voice concerns.

Morrish doesn't believe in only using consequences to discipline teens, preferring to teach them how to deal with scenarios in a calm, resolving way.

"When you're disciplining a child, it's about training them in the right way of doing certain things, not punishment. Supervising and working on it while raising your expectations will lead to proper discipline," he said.

"Although consequences are useful, they only work on the kids who actually care about consequences. What you'll find is that with a large number of teens, if you give them consequences they just respond by shrugging, giving attitude."

Morrish explained that in some cases, maturity doesn't necessarily mean older kids

will act better because of their age.

"In most elementary schools I've been to, the Grade 1s behave better than the Grade 8s," Morrish said.

"It's all about effective discipline, which requires a lot of hard work and dedication."

He believes many parents fail at disciplining children because they expect too much out of instructors at daycares and schools. Morrish also opposes detention as a punishment, believing it only makes a child's behaviour worse.

"A punitive school sets up a detention room and a grade school sets up a study hall," he said.

"The questions we have to ask are 'Are we gonna give you the support you need for success or the punishment you deserve for failure?'"

COMMUNITY



Lloyd Quansah // Observer

# Food bank shows its Christmas spirit

Eastview Community Centre focuses on feeding the hungry

By LLOYD QUANSAH  
The Observer

As Charles Dickens observed in *A Christmas Carol*, this is the season “when want is keenly felt and abundance rejoices.”

At the southwest corner of East York, Eastview Community Centre offers locals an array of activities, including a boys and girls club and dance classes. With Christmas around the corner, however, it will be focusing on feeding hungry residents of

the area.

Clare Giovannetti, a family, nutrition and support worker at the Blake Street community centre, has noted a steady increase in clients since she started. She isn’t worried about helping them, provided the community continues donating and volunteering at its current rate.

“One thing that I like to focus on and we try and do here is (supporting) other community food projects,” she said.

Eastview currently serves about 100 families a week. It’s a Daily Bread Food Bank affiliate and receives most of its supplies, including fresh fruit, vegetables and non-perishable items, from that organization.

Members have planted some gardens at the building and initiated

a staples program, giving clients a chance to cook food from scratch.

Giovannetti, an East York resident, has been at Eastview for six months. In this short time, she’s become thankful for volunteers’ hard work to help less fortunate residents.

“I think that they are all so dedicated,” she said. “They’re here four days a week, sometimes each of them 20 hours or more a week, preparing for the food bank.”

Though she is grateful for all of their efforts, one volunteer stands out to her.

“His name is Doug. He was a client when I started here and then he started volunteering. Through the volunteering I noticed he had some special skills,” she said.

“With him, I found he would help

clients by telling them how to cook with certain things they were getting. So if someone didn’t know how to use quinoa or some kind of grain, he would give them recommendations.”

Another volunteer she feels deserves recognition is Myrtle Smith. Smith has volunteered at the community centre for close to 20 years. She decided to do so because she was tired of “staying home and doing nothing.” Throughout the ups and downs of volunteering, including occasionally being called names, Smith still “really enjoys it, helping the people.”

One experience she will never forget was when a woman couldn’t contain her emotions after receiving food.

“She cried when we gave her the stuff. It made me feel good that we gave her something,” she said.

**Volunteer Myrtle Smith (above, left) packs boxes of food for Blake Street residents. (Above right) Volunteer James Wilkie, left, gives resident Kenny Dykens a box of food at the Eastview Neighbourhood Community Centre.**

# Bridgepoint Hospital’s ‘operation’ is on track

By MELANIE SCHAWILL  
The Observer

Construction at the new Bridgepoint Hospital at East York’s southwest corner is on schedule and on budget. According to Tony Khouri,

the hospital’s chief facilities planning and redevelopment officer, the completion date is set for March 3, 2013.

On Oct. 26, concrete work was completed and a topping-off ceremony was held. A steel beam was signed by a group of people, which included volunteers, patients and hospital staff, and was then lifted up to be part of the new building that towers over the Don Valley Parkway from its perch on St. Matthews Road.

Work is now progressing on outside curtain walls that contain pop-out windows.

“We will continue to work

on it until February of next year,” Khouri said. “Meanwhile, there will be some continuation in the work inside the hospital.”

Work on the building’s interior will be the focus during the winter, according to Khouri, including drywalling and rough-ins for the electrical and mechanical rooms.

“Now that the building is enclosed, the majority of the floors up to the eighth floor will be concentrated on the inside,” he said.

The old Don Jail, which is part of the site, is also being focused on as workers gut the interior to accommodate the hospital’s new administrative office. At the same time, they are restoring the exterior.

Khouri added that the plan is to move out of the old, semi-circular building, once known as the Riverdale Hospital, which has been a familiar presence alongside the DVP since 1963.

Then that building will be demolished — despite the efforts of activists who mounted a failed campaign to preserve it for its unique architecture.



Photo courtesy of Bridgepoint Hospital

**Construction of the Bridgepoint Hospital is set for completion in March 2013. The corporation has set up a virtual tour for people to see what the hospital will look like upon completion.**