



REC CENTRE HITS MILESTONE
Port Union residents celebrate
25 years - See page 2

GIVING BACK
Student journeys to Africa
to help build school - See page 5



THE EAST TORONTO OBSERVER

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\$373,000 windfall for city

After six-year search, local councillor
finds hidden treasure in buried account

IRINA LYCHAK
The Observer

More than a third of a million dollars has been found by Councillor Glenn De Baeremaeker in a dormant Scarborough bank account.

The councillor announced the revelation to city council on Sept. 15, saying he had uncovered \$373,000 that had been sitting in the account for 21 years.

It wasn't just a lucky find, though: De Baeremaeker said he has spent the last six years looking for this money, asking the city's staff to go through financial statements that were more than two decades old.

"I thought there was money out there that we didn't spend properly," De Baeremaeker said.

The City of Toronto initially put this money away in 1988 for a fund intended to pay for child-care in the Scarborough Centre area, he said.

"This money was meant to be spent on the children in our area, to make our parks more enjoyable for them," he said.

The surprise finding was a hot topic at Scarborough Community Council. Other councillors proposed projects the money could be put towards in their wards instead, such as building condos and installing new traffic signals.

"I felt like one of those people that win the lottery

and all of their unemployed relatives show up for their chunk of the money," De Baeremaeker said. "It wasn't fair of them."

De Baeremaeker noted prices have changed since the 1980s and using this money to build a \$5-million daycare centre would not be realistic. He still insists the money should be spent on local kids.

"I do think that [the children] is what it should still be used for today," he said. "For park beautification or adding more equipment to playgrounds, and planting more trees."

I felt like one of those people that win the lottery and all of their unemployed relatives show up for their chunk of the money.

- Glenn De Baeremaeker

Principal Azza Hamid of Bellmere Junior Public School said she thought De Baeremaeker's proposal to put the money toward the children in Ward 38 is a fantastic idea.

"I know for a fact that at our school here, we would really benefit from having a cricket pitch out in the back," said Hamid. "That is something the whole community here is just waiting for and we've been speaking with Glenn De Baeremaeker for a while now."

She also said areas in Scarborough have playgrounds that are not up to standard.

"Playgrounds are something that could channel the children's energy positively so I agree with [De Baeremaeker] 100 per cent," she said.

They will decide how to spend it at the next meeting.



KATRINA ROZAL/The Observer

Rooftop drama unfolds

A man refused to get off the rooftops of townhouses on Red Fox Place on Sept. 17. Police and paramedics remained on the scene for a 24-hour standoff. For more info, visit torontoobserver.ca

Student 'pipe bomb' only hydrogen

MATTHEW ALLEYNE
The Observer

"It is better to be safe than sorry in situations like these," said Const. Tony Vella of Toronto Police.

The evacuation of 50,000 people from Scarborough on Sept. 14 turned out to be the result of a modification that 27-year-old Shaun Morris made to his red Chevrolet Astro van.

No bomb was found.

"You do not want to not take situations like this seriously when it can affect as many people as it could have," added Vella. "With the information we had, the potential for an explosion was very real."

Morris's vehicle was towed for a parking violation from Centennial College's Ashtonbee campus located near Eglinton Avenue East and Warden Avenue, where he is a student.

The vehicle was brought to the Williams Towing compound on Markham Road north of Finch Avenue, where the discovery of the unknown apparatus was later made.

The modified device in the van led to the bomb squad being called in to secure the vehicle and the surrounding area.

On-scene officers compared the device to a pipe bomb due to the size and shape and the visible wires coming from a cylindrical

object, said Const. Wendy Drummond.

"As a result of the vehicle's proximity to a nearby industrial-size propane tank on the towing compound, a 1.6-kilometre area surrounding the vehicle was evacuated as a precaution due to the potential for an explosion," Drummond said.

The evacuated area spanned from Steeles Avenue to Finch Avenue and from Morningside Drive to Middlefield Road.

Morris was the one who contacted Toronto Police in search of his missing van, saying he was concerned about the possible danger of the modifications.

Morris was taken into

custody where he told the bomb squad how to remove it.

Although police determined the device wasn't created for the purpose of being used as a weapon, it was still treated as an explosive due to the volatile nature of hydrogen in a liquid form.

After five hours, the all-clear was given for residents to return to the area.

Drummond attributed the smooth response in handling the situation by the various emergency services to the lessons learnt from the Sunrise propane explosion.

Police held Morris overnight and did not charge him, but was asked to submit to a mental assessment in hospital.

NEWS

Community centre celebrates 25 years

Port Union facility commemorates anniversary with art show and hike

GESILAYEFA AZORBO
The Observer

When the Port Union Community Centre opened in 1984, there wasn't much in terms of development south of Lawrence Avenue East, or along Port Union Road. Twenty-five years later, there is a lot more community for this centre to serve.

In fact, according to Zephine Wailoo, community recreation programmer at the centre, the population of the area has almost doubled in the past 25 years.

The community centre has responded accordingly, with programs and events aimed at various segments of the Port Union community.

"We run the gamut from pre-school to seniors' programs," Wailoo said.

Wailoo, who has been working at the Port Union centre since 1994, has seen a lot of change and growth in her time there.

"The population has almost doubled," she said. "I've seen the young ones grow up and I've seen a whole new group of young ones coming up and getting into our programs."

The complexion of the community has changed, agrees Jeff Forsyth, current

president of the Centennial Community and Recreation Association. He was also present at the opening ceremony for the centre's 25th anniversary.

"The housing and development in the area is absolutely phenomenal," he said. "I believe we're actually now bursting at the seams."

It's also a more diverse population, Forsyth said. Younger people have been moving into the community from other areas and making this their home.

He credits the schools and parklands in the area for drawing younger families.

He said the centre is an integral part of the Port Union community.

"Much of what we do in the community with regards to events are held in this centre," he said. "Whenever we have an event in the community we always think of having it right here."

Wailoo added the community centre, in collaboration with Sir Oliver Mowat Collegiate Institute, provides community service hours for students of the school through volunteering at the various programs and events that go on throughout the year at the community centre.

The population has almost doubled. I've seen the young ones grown up and I've seen a whole new group of young ones.
- Zephine Wailoo



GESILAYEFA AZORBO/The Observer

CCRA president Jeff Forsyth talks with community members at Port Union Community Recreation Centre's 25th anniversary celebration on Monday.

"A lot of students need their community service hours ... and we reward them with a number of hours depending on the activity," she said.

It should come as no surprise that, on the 25th anniversary of its opening, there are calls for an expansion of the centre.

"We absolutely need a new community centre. It's too small, the community has outgrown it," said Wailoo.

"We did do a feasibility study [which] did show that we deserve a centre about twice the size of what we have now."

A larger fitness centre, an indoor running track for running enthusiasts to use in the winter, and a swimming pool are among other sought developments.

Dan McTeague, MP for Pickering-Scarborough East, agrees both the centre and the area could benefit from more development.

"I think vision [for the future] would include improvement in the area, listening to the community as it talks about the need for strategic investment," McTeague said. "There's talk of a community arena, it's been on the plans for some time."

He also acknowledged the importance of the community centre 25 years after its inception.

"It's one of the most vibrant community centres in this region," McTeague said. "It's really a common place where people can ... share ideas and share the great neighbourhood they've been blessed with."

The celebration of the centre's first quarter-century runs from Sept. 21 to 26, with events including author visits, a community hike along the Waterfront Trail, and an art show and sale on Friday and Saturday.

Repairs a GO at Rouge Hill

STEPHANIE LEUNG
The Observer

After many complaints, GO passengers at Rouge Hill can soon worry less about getting a parking space at the station, as more spaces will be added in the next few months.

The Rouge Hill GO station's parking lot is expanding by adding 300 new spots for passengers who drive and park at the station.

"We've had local community complaints about the lack of parking space before," says Ward 44 councillor Ron Moeser.

"The new expansion will certainly make everyone very happy."

Construction for the parking lot, taking place next summer, is scheduled to be completed by October 2010.

There are 1000 parking spaces available at Rouge Hill, but most of the time cars can be seen parked off the parking spots, creating a hassle for drivers in the lot.

"Every morning I arrive at the parking lot around 8:30 a.m. and it's almost full already," said Barbra Hoffman, a GO passenger.

"Because of this, cars are parked off the parking lines and as a result it's hard for me as a driver in the parking lot to drive through."

Approximately \$5 million will be spent on new parking spaces.

Moeser thinks this investment will not only benefit local residents who use the GO parking lots, but also a bonus for the people near the Waterfront Trail so they can use the new parking lot too.

Trails Festival a walk in the park at the Bluffs

KAREEN AWADALLA
The Observer

More than 100 people took in beautiful scenery while getting a little cardiovascular exercise at the launch of the seventh annual Toronto Trails Festival on Sept. 21.

The event began its six-week journey at the Scarborough Bluffs on a bright Sunday morning in Guildwood Park.

"Basically this program empowers people to get up off the couch, move, get their blood going," said event director and founder Tom Fiore.

The festival continues until the end of October, taking place on the weekends. Three themed walks are included: The Tour of Toronto, Yoga

Walks and Rhythm Walks.

A list of upcoming walks and events is on torontotrails-festival.com which also provides the level of difficulty by terrain, speed, and length.

First time festival walker Carolyn Cote had missed the group's departure from Guildwood, but decided to do the walk anyway.

"I found this place where I'd never been — because I'm not [originally] from Scarborough — and it's beautiful," she said. "I want to come back and bring my camera."

The goal of the trail walks is to promote a healthy lifestyle while embracing the city's inspiring landscape that, amid the hustle and bustle of everyday responsibilities, may get overlooked.

Fiore says there is a growing demand in the community for the type of program that challenges people while making it easier alongside their peers.

"You can tell by the expression on their face," he said. "They're happy and they feel fulfilled and that's the important thing."

For Cote, her favourite part was to just be walking along the water, seeing the seagulls, smelling the wildflowers and just breathing it all in.

"When I'm around the water and trees, it's really healing for me, so I'm just enjoying being out and just feeling that again," she said.

The next hike will be on Sept. 27 beginning at 10 a.m. at Grenadier Restaurant in High Park.



KAREEN AWADALLA/The Observer

Toronto Trails Festival founder Tom Fiore stretches with walkers following the kickoff walk for festival the at Guildwood Park on Monday.

Wires still hanging around

Excess cables are unsightly:
Markham-Ellesmere residents

KAREEN AWADALLA
The Observer

Residents near Markham Road and Ellesmere Avenue have long complained about too many ugly overhead wires in the area — which may be why city workers have been out on the street figuring out where they can bury the wires.

One worker spraying fluorescent orange paint on the sidewalk last week said his job is to find out where pipes and cables are located underground by using a metal detector-like instrument to guide contractors when they

dig up the earth to place the wires underground.

The worker, who wouldn't give his name, told an *Observer* reporter he would probably have to come back and re-mark the area five more times before the project finally gets under way.

"Nothing gets done in this area because the lower income people live in this area," he said.

Pointing north, he said areas around Finch Avenue have already put wires that line the streets underground, especially in residential areas. "They hardly have wires

like this anymore," he said.

Ward 38 councillor Glenn De Baeremaeker was not available for comment, and his executive assistant, Gurjeet Dhillon, said he could neither confirm nor deny construction plans: "We will need more information about this."

Overhead wires are not only a problem aesthetically but may also be dangerous. A source from Toronto Hydro's streetlight division said problems often arise when trees are knocked down on the wires as a result of bad weather. Hazardous situations, such as loose cables or hanging street lamps, are placed in high priority and must be fixed within a 24-hour deadline.

Burying wires can be costly, however, and can also



KAREEN AWADALLA/The Observer

Overhead wires at Markham Road and Ellesmere Avenue make the area appear behind the times.

bring its own dangers. Toronto maintenance standards require that wires, connections, switch, fuses, grounding, and disconnected poles must be inspected annually. The cost to inspect and maintain underground cable can be high.

One of Hydro's stray

voltage incidents last winter proved fatal when two dogs were electrocuted while on a walk with their owners. One of the deaths was blamed on an electrically charged metal grate. In January, an east-end child was shocked by a metal handwell.

Centennial checks into Guild Inn

SELENA MANN
The Observer

The Guild Inn is closer to becoming home to Centennial College's hospitality school after the college and the City of Toronto reached a tentative agreement.

On Aug. 5, city council created the terms of a letter of intent with the college on Centennial's plans to use the former inn and area landmark.

"It may be finalized as early as this December, up to five years," said Mark Toljagic, Centennial Public Relations.

The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) owns the Guild Inn property. The city has been leasing the property from the TRCA for many years now. Under a sublease from the city, Centennial College will be using the property to create another campus. The lease is expected to last 76 years.

"Our intention is to manage this investment," Toljagic said.

The college plans to renovate the old Bickford Residence, the main building on the 6.8-acre property. It will not be financing this development on their own but expects



SELENA MANN/The Observer

The Guild Inn, located south of Kingston Road, will soon be full of students as the site is planned to host Centennial College's hospitality program.

to get help from hotel developers and operators.

Last year, the Guildwood guesthouse burned down and the inn's tower was demolished. The other buildings on the property, such as the Bickford residence and the artists building, are to remain.

The inn has been left untouched for many years. It is preserved as a historic site

by the TRCA. The college's plans are to make the site into a new hotel and conference centre, in which students will learn how to work in the hospitality industry.

The Bickford Residence, along with the artist colony, will continue to be preserved as historic sites in order to save the city's heritage. Toljagic says there will not

be any drastic changes that would damage the inn in any way.

Redevelopment of the property will be made in two phases. The letter of intent should be finalized by next May at the latest, according to Ward 43 councillor Paul Ainslie. Construction is to start in one to one-and-a-half years.

The city will be putting

about \$4 million into maintaining and bettering the gardens on the property. It usually puts about \$250,000 annually into garden maintenance.

"The city investments will be to the park, not to the project," Ainslie said.

The college will be running the inn and the city will be in charge of staffing and taking care of the grounds.

Scarborough streets get an upgrade

STEPHANIE LEUNG
The Observer

Residents of East Scarborough should see upgrades along Lawrence Avenue East by the end of 2009.

Ward 44 Councillor Ron Moeser has initiated a rebuild on the street, improving and upgrading road infrastructure

in the city of Scarborough.

Phase one of the project includes new pipes and some bicycle lanes being added along Beechgrove Drive over to Bennett Road. After that, the second phase will include upgrades from Bennet Road to Kingston Road starting next year.

The improvements to the

roads will "benefit and serve as a convenience to drivers and cyclists in the future", says Moeser.

"It's a relief to hear that bike lanes are being built on the road," says Jennifer Pyle, who has a daughter who rides her bike along Lawrence Avenue. "My daughter doesn't have to worry about cars

almost hitting her or honking her when she's biking now."

Toronto and Scarborough residents can also see upgrades in infrastructure, sewage systems, and transportation over the next few years.

The City of Toronto and the federal government partnered to fund 500 new infrastructure improvements.

Half a billion dollars have been invested by Toronto and Canada but it is uncertain how much of this money will go towards East Scarborough and what kinds of infrastructure will be improved.

The city-wide upgrade also intends to create jobs for the citizens of the City of Toronto.

Briefs

Teen reports sexual assault

A 14-year-old girl reported she was sexually assaulted on Sept. 16 around 1p.m. The alleged attack happened in the area of Conference Boulevard and D'Arcy Magee Crescent. The suspect is male, black, 18 to 23 years old, around 5-foot-3, with a thin build and brown eyes. Call Crime Stoppers at 416-222-TIPS (8477), or online at 222tips.com.

Man stabbed by cyclist

Police are looking for a knife-wielding cyclist after a 17-year-old man was stabbed on Sept. 15 around 5 p.m. Police said the man was approached by a man on a bicycle in the Morningside Avenue and Lawrence Avenue East area, then the cyclist pulled out a knife and stabbed the victim in the face and body. The victim was treated in hospital. The suspect is described as male, black, 17 to 23 years old, 5-foot-8, and of medium build.

Woman cut in robbery

A 21-year-old woman was robbed by a man who approached her in the Sheppard Avenue East and Neilson Road area on Sept. 17 around 9:30 p.m. The suspect then cut the victim, took her cellphone and purse, and fled. The woman was treated for minor injuries in hospital. The attacker is described as male, black, 40 to 45 years old, 200 lbs., with a muscular build and short black hair.

Demolition set for house

A house that was damaged in a fire almost two years ago in the Markham Road and Lawrence Avenue area is to be demolished, Scarborough Community Council decided last week. The building at 30 Sophia Drive was damaged after a fire in January 2008 and, although it was gutted after the damage, a staff report deemed it unsafe. Toronto Dominion Bank, which owns the lot, was denied a demolition permit earlier because it didn't plan to rebuild the house.

ARTS & LIFE

Local talent shines at Fresh Fair

YOUUnited throws a block party

AMANDA LY
The Observer

Scarborough's Fresh Fair, combined all the best elements of hip hop culture. On Sept. 12, Albert Campbell Square was filled with emcees, singers, break dancers, beat makers and graffiti murals. The fair was organized by local group YOUUnited in partnership with Manifesto, a larger city-wide hip hop festival.

What began as a block party soon became something bigger.

Jacek Otreba, 23, a member of YOUUnited, wants people to know that Scarborough has more to offer than the bluffs, the zoo and crime. There's a movement in Scarborough where youths are getting involved in their community to uplift each other. Their hope is for events like this one to stop being a rarity and become a tradition that future generations can enjoy.

Areeba Masood, 17, is a volunteer coordinator who was mentored by YOUUnited.

People want
to get
involved
- Tim
Wilkinson

Though she started off not knowing anything about putting on a free festival for 3000 people with little funding, she can't wait to organize the next big event.

"I've been provided with a lot of resources and I've heard people complain that there's nothing to do in Scarborough, but I have a lot of ideas," she says. "Once you put it out there, people want to get involved."

Tim Wilkinson, a rapper also known as Karma, 24, is one of six performers who competed to be a part of YOUUnited's Stand Out Series mentorship program. SOS pairs up aspiring musicians with people in the industry to develop their music and a marketing plan to sell it. Wilkinson is of Chinese, English, and Scottish descent and has been embraced by the local hip hop scene. As a life-long Scarborough resident, he credits the area's diversity for teaching people to have an open mind.

"There's negative aspects



AMANDA LY/The Observer

Rated X demonstrates some creative thinking when it comes to dance, Sept. 12 at Albert Campbell Square.

about Scarborough, but there's also a community," he says. "There may be some who may not have the most, but in terms of talent, there's so much in Scarborough and a lot of it has to do with our

multiculturalism."

Another highlight was Battle of the Barbers, where three barbers went head to head for the title of best barber. Though Saturdays are usually the busiest day for

this business, these skilled barbers were offering their services for free.

"I do it for the love of cutting hair. It's priceless to see someone get up from my chair with a big smile on their

face thinking they're confident. That's priceless to me," said Mad One, last year's defending champion.

If hip hop has lost its way, then Scarborough's Fresh Fair has definitely found it.

Fingerprint was first clue for mystery writer

GESILAYEFA AZORBO
The Observer

For Scarborough author Rosemary Aubert, the truth is often more fascinating than fiction and forms the basis for many of her internationally-acclaimed novels.

The popular Ellis Portal mystery series author was present at the 25th anniversary celebration of the Port Union Community Recreation Centre on Sept. 22.

She spoke about her writing craft, and about the joy of translating historical research into gripping fiction.

Aubert shared with the audience how, for her novel *Leave Me By Dying*, set in 1967, she had to forgo her own memories and instead do intense research on events that happened in that year.



AUBERT

"I looked up the Vietnam War, I looked up fashion, I looked up the Beatles. It was amazing," she said.

When writing that book, Aubert said that she relied on the Toronto Public Library branches and magazine files dating back 40 years to give the story an authentic historical background.

She admitted with a laugh

that her research habits have changed since she started using the web.

"It's amazing how quickly you use the Internet and you forget the other techniques."

In her latest book, *The Judge of Orphans*, Aubert's historical research took a personal twist when an old photograph taken by her father in 1959 became the defining image of the novel.

It has a special meaning though — her father's

fingerprints, left on the original negatives from back when he was an amateur photographer developing photos in the family washroom.

"The picture literally fell at my feet," she said of the photograph she found when organizing her father's belongings.

The novel's subject spans generations, but begins with the true story of young children in 19th-century New York, who are forced by

patrons reminiscent of *Oliver Twist*'s Fagin to work as street musicians in order to survive.

"The story is about vulnerable children who are really tough," she said. The photo, showing a young boy running towards ships docked at a harbour, captured this idea of defenselessness wrapped in a layer of bravado, said Aubert. For this reason she chose it as the cover photograph for *The Judge of Orphans*.

Centennial College shows diversity through comedy

ANTHONY GEREMIA
The Observer

Comedy is tough. But as Jason Moseley can attest, planning a comedy show is even harder.

Especially when you're trying to reach every demographic of the local cultural makeup, with comedians chosen for their ethnicity.

"We try to have comedians from across the global spectrum," says Moseley, event organizer for the Centennial College Student Association. "We try to have South Asian

comedians, Africa comedians, European comedians, et cetera. We also try to find comedians that have talked about a variety of issues."

"It's Just A Comedy Show," open to the general public, is in its third year running.

While it's currently a success, according to Moseley, it wasn't always this way.

"Comedy's something

we'd always been trying to run at the college," he says.

"But during my tenure here, it hadn't been successful."

The problem was one of demographics. "With the diverse student population that we have, getting comedians that can connect with our students on the stage is the key to ensuring the show's success," he says.

We try
to have
comedians
from across
the global
spectrum.

- Jason
Moseley

The ethnic comedians are selected by interacting with Yuk Yuk's talent agency.

Then, it's up to a panel of students to decide who will ultimately perform. Either the agency sends a video, or the panel looks up clips on Youtube. Regardless, they have the final say about the lineup.

In the end, it was this focus on diversity that caused the shows to finally take off, even when they started running overly long.

"During the first one, they had a concern over how long

it was. With five comedians, it is a long show," he says.

"Comedy shows usually only run for an hour and a half. Ours actually goes for two and a half hours. But I think because of the diversity of the comedians and the diversity of topics, the show gets to that climax and stays there, until the very last comedian walks off the stage."

This climax led to a success that even the college itself was not prepared for.

"We actually had to turn away people at the door," Moseley says. "So we

decided to host a second show," which happened second semester.

Show info

- Showcases Yuk Yuk's comedians, chosen by students
- Tonight at 7:30 p.m. at Centennial College's Progress campus
- Students get in for \$2, general public for \$5



DAVID CAMPBELL Photos

Clockwise: Ryerson fashion students designed new school uniforms for the kindergarten children; high school students walk into their newly built school; villagers worked with Ryerson students on the construction of the school buildings; kids collecting fallen mango tree fruit; below: Having fun with their donated water bottles.

PT. UNION STUDENT BUILDS HOPE

Elective course turns into a memorable trip to Africa

KATRINA ROZAL
The Observer

David Campbell fondly remembers the sweltering 35-degree summer under the Ghanaian sun, his dirt-caked hands wrapped around a rusted shovel that would pierce the earth for the 100th time since his group started excavating. His forest-green, wide-brim Safari hat flopped about each time he dug, giving the kindergarteners a reason to laugh as they passed by him.

“The kids loved my hat,” said the architect student with a smile. “I think they were making fun of me.”

Five months ago, he boasted about his hat on Twitter. A trip to Ghana has been his preoccupation for the last several months. It’s one of the reasons why last spring you would’ve caught him sleeping soundly on the 86 Sheppard bus at 1 a.m. after a long day at school.

Settling in Ghana

The fourth-year dean’s list student, who lives in the Port Union community has been working with other students in architecture, fashion, interior design and early childhood education (ECE) programs, in a course challenging them to design a kindergarten school they would eventually build themselves.

“Working with David is quite enjoyable,” said Jennifer Yan, a student from David’s group. “He’s friendly, responsible and knows what he’s doing all the time.”

Campbell is one of 30 Ryerson University students who built two classrooms for 50 kindergarten children in Kpedze Todze, a village in a cluster of thirty other villages within a district called Kpedze.

When they arrived in Ghana they had three



days to learn about Ghanaian school buildings before construction began.

“We went in and had no building drawings really until closer to the end because we figured things out with the help of all the villagers,” Campbell said.

The original school rested under a large fruitful mango tree, which allowed the children to eat mangoes right off the ground. They used it as a resting base while they built the new school.

Eventually the group set up tents a littler closer to the site of construction. They

negotiated with villagers, primarily the site supervisor, the chief and the village mother (who represented the village women).

The site was moved three times. The original plotted area proved too low and would’ve flooded the school, the villagers pointed out. The second area was beside a massive anthill. They ended plotting downhill to avoid the ants.

Except on Sundays, there were about 60 villagers helping. The village women would tease the guys of incompetence if the cement they poured too much cement into their buckets.

School was still in session under the mango tree during construction and it became a daily routine for the children to visit and help on site. While their first language is Ewe, they understood English.

His camera became a way of connecting with the kids. He joined in their games, one of which included making a bike tire spin with a stick.

Inside the classroom

Balancing the Ghanaian education system with western education practices culminated in the classrooms’ final shape and set up. It honoured the rectangular teacher-focused Ghanaian classroom, where students face the teacher and the blackboard. At the same time, the clustered desks, made by interior design students, reflect the more interactive and student-oriented western practices.

The school’s opening day included a ceremony by the elders and a song performance from the children. The students received new uniforms designed by the fashion students and school bags from the ECE students.

The project ranged between \$15,000 and \$20,000. Part of the funding came from money they raised in Toronto.

Campbell’s group built the school in modules so the structures can function on their own, even without other rooms.

“The reality is there are a lot of groups going to Africa right now,” Campbell said. “The problem is, I’m not sure about their competence with construction methods and dealing with the culture that’s there.”

“Do we really need to go to Africa to make ourselves feel better?” Campbell asked. “It’s a little scary, I’m sure [they] do it for the right reasons but you have to realize it’s not an amusement park.”

While he admits he grew in ways he is yet to identify, Campbell acknowledges that from a professional standpoint he gained a higher appreciation of the universal basics of construction.

For more photos visit torontoobserver.ca

Magnifying the minute

We all know the swine flu virus is serious and it's coming to our neighbourhood. Every year the schools and hospitals prepare for each fall's influenza sweeps. But with all the media coverage of this particular expected outbreak and with the contagious consumerist appetite for the "new and improved," administrators have taken steps to implement special policies this year pertaining to swine flu. However, most of these precautions are the same as for the usual flu.

We want to know the potential impact of a worldwide pandemic, but at the same time we also need the media to focus on the issues as they affect more narrowly defined regions and demographics. Technology has globalized the transmission of instant news, but journalists should apply their professional principles and standards to meet the growing necessity for hyper-local news.

For instance, even though the old man who sits on the same corner every morning having his coffee is concerned with the possibility of a swine flu outbreak, he is also concerned about the local shop he visits and how it might be doing financially. This same man might also be concerned with crime happening on his street or close to his kids. Without someone reporting more closely on his area, things that are important to him might get tossed aside in favour of stories containing global panic and grandeur.

This is where local outfits, like this one, step in and fill the void. As the scope of news is becoming more intense and personal, so is the scope of our paper. So readers can expect coverage on things that matter to specific streets, associations and maybe even buildings. Swine flu may come to someone who lives on Kingston Road, but until it does, we focus on discussing things like the impact of the Morningside Crossing shopping centre on youth employment in the area — in other words, the things our local readers care about.

— Phillip Smalley

Essentially garbage

With the city of Toronto shelving the idea of labelling garbage disposal as an essential service earlier this month, we beg to ask: What then, if anything, is important enough to be labeled a 100-percent essential service?

The stench left by the summer's garbage strike still lingers in some Scarborough neighbourhoods that have been trying to get rid of the summer's waste in time to prepare for the natural waste produced in the fall.

In fact, had the summer been warmer, Toronto could have faced serious public health and environmental issues as the trash built up. Not only would there have been even more rodents and animals drawn to the garbage, but the number of diseases that these animals routinely carry would be higher as well.

The city had a contingency plan for this, which included spraying pesticides on garbage sites and that some protesting communities claimed as trading one hazard with another. Our public safety should be reason enough to consider garbage disposal as an essential service.

In 2008, Toronto collected 494,539 tonnes of waste. This doesn't include the 388,188 tonnes of diverted waste (that is, recyclables). That means the city relied on our waste management workers to deal with 882,727 tonnes of waste last year.

But the strike did happen, and Scarborough residents dealt with it as best as we could. Trash built up in our homes, as well as on the streets, putting large-scale functions at risk of cancellation. Though the need for Caribana alone is not great enough to justify waste disposal as an essential service, it does prove a very strong and basic point that the ramifications of a garbage strike, should it last more than five weeks, have the potential to be detrimental to our economy.

And what of the future? Much of our trash ends up in the Carlton Farms Landfill in Michigan. This has been a great arrangement for Torontonians since we don't have to deal with a large portion of the waste we produce each year. But there is a catch: Toronto's waste disposal contract with Michigan expires at the end of 2010.

After that, worrying about who is going to pick up our trash won't be our only concern. We'll also be worrying about where to put it.

— Maxx Smith



GESILAYEFA AZORBO/The Observer

When GOing gets tough

Until a recent daunting experience, I had never taken the GO train. Three weeks ago, when I had to take the GO train from Scarborough to Mississauga, I felt like a kid about to go on a rollercoaster, excited and nervous.

I'm used to getting around using the trustworthy TTC and I'd never crossed the city's boundaries.

The GO was foreign territory for me.

That morning, I arrived at the station and purchased my two-way ticket.

When the train arrived, I got on for an uneventful first trip.

But on my way back later that evening, the train stopped at Mimico station and a young man walked down the aisle asking for tickets.

So this was the GO's famous random ticket check I had heard about.

I wasn't worried though. I had my ticket in my purse, so there wouldn't be a problem, right?

But when I showed him my ticket, he took a hard, long look at it and leaned in closer to me.

"OK, this is the situation you're in," he started. "Why didn't you validate your ticket when you boarded the train?"

I had no idea what he was talking about and I told him so.

He then asked me for a piece of



Rima RAMOUL

identification and I handed over my driver's licence.

By this point I was worried and missing the good old TTC.

He proceeded to lecture me with a run-down of the things that distinguish GO transit from the TTC but all I really wanted to know was what would happen to me as a result of this mishap?

"There's a \$110 fine," he told me.

It had all seemed very simple in the beginning. You buy a ticket, you get on the train, end of story.

Apparently, I was wrong.

He continued by telling me that there are signs everywhere informing passengers to cancel their tickets at the proof of payment machines.

Cancel my ticket? Why on earth would I want to cancel my ticket?

He then explained that if I don't

"cancel my ticket," I could come back 16 years from now and re-use the same ticket again.

After much debate, he finally gave me a warning and decided not to issue a fine — but not before taking my ticket and marking it with the word "VOID" in big, black letters.

Our conversation (also known as "my ordeal") lasted as long as about two more stations after Mimico — so quite a while — and by then I just wanted to get off the train.

Proof of payment

I shared my first-ever GO experience with a few friends and found I wasn't the only one left with a bitter aftertaste from riding the GO train.

Perhaps GO Transit might look into adding a proof of payment machine in the train itself.

This would be easier for the passengers who can't validate their tickets without missing their train, or even for those who, like me, were clueless about this procedure in the first place.

I appreciate the fact that I was lucky enough to encounter a GO train worker who understood my situation and let me off the hook.

If it had been a different person, I could be breaking into my piggy bank for spare change at this very moment to pay off that \$110 fine.

The East Toronto OBSERVER

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Briefs

Wexford
kicks it up

The Wexford United soccer team was crowned Ontario Cup champion after a 5-0 victory over the Welland Wizards in the Under 17 Boys Tier 1 Division final on Sept. 20 in Vaughan. Daniele DeFusco scored the opening goal to take the lead while Danny Lopez and Luke Mollet secured the victory scoring two goals each. A week earlier, the Wexford Heat U16 boys fell just short of their own Ontario Cup provincial championship, losing 4-0 to Ajax Gunners on Sept. 13.

First game for
De Guzman

Scarborough-born soccer player Julian De Guzman picked up a yellow card in his first match with Toronto FC since joining the team two weeks ago. The team lost 2-0 to the Los Angeles Galaxy Sept. 19. The 28-year-old played the last four years in Spain while on the Canadian national team. De Guzman is one of four Scarborough-born players on Toronto FC.

Youth cricket
lessons begin

A new youth indoor instructional cricket program will begin on Oct. 6 at Sir Wilfrid Laurier Secondary School. The hour-long lessons will take place every Thursday for ages 6-9 starting at 6 p.m., and ages 10-12 at 7 p.m. To register or for more information, call 416-338-4386.

Local hockey
finds saviour

The existence of the troubled Scarborough Hockey Association has been ensured for at least one more season by a plan allowing the six remaining minor atom (9-year-olds) and atom (10-year-olds) teams to play alongside Greater Toronto Hockey League teams in its A Division. Although home games are to be played at Don Montgomery Community Recreation Centre or at Commander Park, teams may have to play on weekends due to GTHL rules. A heavy decline in participants has threatened the Scarborough association with extinction, officials say.



TRISTAN CARTER/The Observer

The senior Malvern CI Black Knights (right) face off against Sir John A. Macdonald CI on Sept. 22. The Knights lost their season opener 20-6.

Black Knights drop the ball

Junior and senior football teams lose season openers to Sir John A. Macdonald

TRISTAN CARTER
The Observer

In their first games of the season, neither one of Malvern CI's football teams were able to earn a victory on the road over the home team.

Both the junior and senior teams travelled to Sir John A. Macdonald CI for their season openers on Sept. 22.

Weather conditions were extremely favourable: the sky was overcast with no wind and temperatures were in the mid-20s.

The first game was highlighted by a touchdown by Macdonald's Rakeem Simms as he led the junior team to a 9-0 victory over the Malvern Black Knights.

In the senior game,

Malvern trailed 8-0 after the first half.

The Knights responded in the third quarter with wide receiver Lee Sykes catching a pass and running nearly half the length of the field for a touchdown.

Malvern failed to convert the extra-point, however, and Macdonald quickly answered with a touchdown of their

own to end the third quarter with a 14-6 lead.

Malvern fought hard in the fourth and even recovered the ball after blocking a punt attempt.

Despite the defensive effort, Macdonald was able to score again on a touchdown to put the game out of reach and ended up winning by a score of 20-6.

"Offensively, we didn't move the ball as well as we wanted to," said Rob Salvatore, the coach of Malvern's senior team. "But again, for us it came down to a couple of big mistakes that really cost us."

The Black Knights will try to improve for their next game, to be played at West Hill on Oct. 2 at 2:30 p.m.

From Pan Am to panhandling

Local branch of protest group tries to save Toronto from future financial ruin

ANTHONY GEREMIA
The Observer

For many people, the arrival of the Pan Am games is heralded with the same kind of celebration as the Olympics. However, a local group doesn't think it should be this way.

No Games Toronto is working to ensure Toronto doesn't succeed in its bid for the 2015 Pan Am games. The group made headlines when it staged a protest Aug. 31 outside U of T's Varsity Stadium. But No Games Toronto is an offshoot of a much larger organization, the Olympic Resistance Network.

The organization wants to keep the Pan Am games out of Toronto so the city won't suffer the same fate as Vancouver after the Winter Olympics next year, says Christopher

Shaw, an ophthalmology professor who serves as a contact for the Olympic Resistance Network.

"The city had to take over the financing for the athlete's village," he says. "It's now on the hook for about a billion dollars. It's gone into a deep hole over this. A lot of people here are in really deep shock."

Action plan

The group plans "to resist the games with protests, and make a point about the game," which he calls "a circus that marginalizes people."

Shaw echoes the same sentiments as No Games Toronto's blog: the games will throw the city into deep debt and money will be taken away from important programs like

social housing and education, as occurred with the Olympics in Vancouver.

While his opinion may be an unusual one, Shaw admits this may actually help the organization.

"It's sort of a mixed blessing," he says. "People are curious. This curiosity is essential, because the problems with the games are all economic in nature, and most people find economics boring. A lot of people simply don't want to hear it."

But it's that curiosity about their contrary viewpoint that causes people to pay attention.

"People still want to know why we're against it," he says.

One of his strategies is to ask people: "Do you like the Olympics when it doesn't cost you anything?"

The answer is usually yes. But opinions usually change when he explains the games will typically cost taxpayers more than \$2.4 billion.

"Then it begins to hit people," he says.

Patriotism vs economics

The people he has to convince in the end, though, are games officials themselves. But he says he enjoys dealing with them.

"It's so easy to deflate them," he says. "They go into patriotism and athletics because they can't fight it on economic terms. But what price can you put on patriotism?"

This plea doesn't seem to have members of the media convinced and No Games Toronto's efforts have received negative press.

No Games Toronto's main arguments

- The \$2.4 billion price tag will put Toronto into deep debt.
- The games are a one-time event rather than a long-term investment.
- Money will be taken away from important social programs like housing and education.

NEWS

'It's me and me alone,' says owner

Local restaurateur overwhelmed by red tape, but hopes to receive her liquor licence



RIMA RAMOUL/The Observer

Nadi, top, owner of Nadi's Family Restaurant Bar and Pool Lounge, below, is lost in thought as she thinks of her uncertain future.



RIMA RAMOUL
The Observer

The scene: A few tables and chairs occupy the main room, and the walls are painted with lively shades of yellow and green. In the adjoining room are two pool tables. The place is empty except for the owner, Nadi, her young daughter and two other young women.

Located at 155 Morning-side Ave., Nadi's Family Restaurant Bar and Pool Lounge sits in the middle of a small plaza in Scarborough's east end and is at the center of a conflict involving Nadi and a handful of residents.

She recently applied for a liquor licence to serve alcohol on additional premises of her restaurant, but a few residents have voiced their concerns.

Complaints

Ward 44 councillor Ron Moeser says he has received about six calls and emails from residents complaining the restaurant is the source of noise from music that plays past 2 a.m. and unruly behavior, including people urinating on nearby cars.

"My concern is if we can't control what we have now and we're getting complaints, if it expands, is that going to

expand the problems that we're seeing in the neighbourhood?" Moeser says.

"What I've done is set up a working committee with the owner and we're going to see if we can work some of these issues out."

But Nadi says the councillor hasn't yet visited her restaurant and can't fully understand the situation until he does.

Young adults often pass in front of the plaza very late at night or early in the morning and do make noise, Nadi agrees, but said she is not responsible for them, nor is she the only business owner in the plaza.

Another bar is at the far end of the plaza, but to Nadi's knowledge no complaints have been made against it. She says she has nothing against the other bar but feels that all the problems the residents have are being dumped solely on her shoulders.

Nadi is receiving support from business owners in the plaza, as well as residents, she says. A petition was started and 200 people have so far signed.

Nadi recounted the time she first opened her restaurant. It was a fish and chips shop before she took over and changed it to Caribbean Place. Soon after she changed the name, she found

a letter by her door.

"When I came to work the next morning, there was a letter by my door saying 'It was a fish and chips for 45 years and now you come here and change it to Caribbean Place, I don't think you're welcome in the neighbourhood,'" she said.

Nadi said she still doesn't know who the author of the letter was, but kept it until last year. After receiving the letter, she changed the name back to a fish and

chips bar, but saw that she wasn't making money. She then switched it back to include the word 'Caribbean'.

She says her quest for a liquor licence, along with the number of times she changed her restaurant sign, has cost about \$5,000.

"I'm struggling"

"This is my bread and butter, and I'm a single mom," says Nadi, tears forming in her eyes. "It's me and me alone."

After emigrating from Guyana in 1994, Nadi found work in a bar, which gave her the opportunity to learn about the business. Five years ago,

after much hard work and perseverance, she opened her small restaurant, which she runs single-handedly.

"I have two pool tables over there, all the people who play are like my age, people who have grandchildren, who have a wife and kids to go home to, it's not people who cause trouble," she said. "It's just family people, they play their game of pool and they go home. There's nothing, what noise are they going to make?"

Her 19-year-old daughter, who was sitting at a nearby table, approached and stood beside her mom.

"She put a lot of money into this," says Teena Kungbehari. "She doesn't have the best education in the world, but this is what she knows."

Kungbehari occasionally helps inside the kitchen or stops by the restaurant to check on her mom.

"The people who come in here, they have a lot of respect for my mom, nobody complains," she says. "It's probably like two or three people who are having such an effect on the whole decision whether they should get [the licence] or not."

This is my bread and butter, and I'm a single mom
- Nadi

New diabetes program director has big plans for Rouge Valley

MONICA VALENCIA
The Observer

There's a new doctor in town and he wants to bring to our attention a serious problem that affects many of us in Scarborough.

"Many diabetics go undiagnosed because they ignore the symptoms," says Dr. Farukh Khan, the new medical director of the adult diabetes program at Rouge Valley Hospital.

Khan chose to work in this area because of the high ethnic population and certain groups are at a higher risk of developing diabetes, especially South East Asians, he said.

As a South Asian himself, Dr. Khan said he knows many people coming from this region ignore the symptoms of diabetes.

"I realized this was a community where I can fully utilize my services because there a lot of ethnic groups and they need more diabetic

care," he said.

Since diabetes symptoms are mild, most patients go to the doctor only when they are feeling really sick. Khan plans to encourage local residents to be proactive and take preventive measures.

"We would set up diabetes testing camps in malls where we can check people's sugar levels and also we'll have classes for cooking healthy," he said. "It's about educating people on a good diet and plenty of exercise."

Shortage of doctors

In the three weeks he's been at Rouge Valley, Khan has been seeing about 40 diabetes patients a week. There is a shortage of endocrinologists and local family doctors have asked him to work with their diabetic patients.

"Diabetes is a genetic

disease so it's really important to discuss family history with patients to find out if they have any diabetic relatives," said Khan. "I also make a plan with patients and, if they're overweight, I refer them to a family doctor to make sure they don't have diabetes."



KHAN

A dialysis can cost from \$50,000 to \$80,000 annually. Khan said it makes more sense to invest in preventive measures.

"If the prevalence for diabetes is an average of five per cent, an almost similar number goes undiagnosed. So the population actually has a prevalence of double that number," he said.

To improve the diagnosis system, more staff and sources are needed, Khan added.

He is now studying the patient population so he can start the awareness campaign in about eight months.



LAURA ROSS/The Observer

Shirley Varey, left, and Marlee Thompson show their goods that are made with love.

Farmer's market fine as cream gravy

LAURA ROSS
The Observer

This summer the new Guildwood farmer's market set up shop for the first time at the intersection of Livingston and Kingston Roads. It's currently a small market trying to build ties and gain a foothold in the community. On average the Guildwood farmer's market sees about 200 people pass through per day, whereas the larger markets can see up to 700 people.

The attractions of farmer's markets are the quality of the products and the sense of

being connected to your food and knowing where it comes from. You know the produce was picked fresh that day from the surrounding area, which also supports the local community.

In addition to produce, stalls sell fish, meat, cheese, bread, baked goods, jam, preserves and even jewelry.

"We really want to help create and sustain a walk-in community," says market manager and co-founder Gail Ross.

Unfortunately, since the start of the recession Ross says market sales have gone

down by about 20 per cent, and she has heard questions about price instead of quality or freshness for the first time.

While it's true that prices at the farmer's market can be higher than at the grocery store, the people and the quality make the visit worthwhile.

"We're real people," says produce vendor Theodore Oldsman. "We can do discounts on big orders or throw in some extra and you don't get that at a store."

The market is held Thursdays from 2 to 6 p.m. until Oct. 22.