



E.Y. cleans up when it comes to being green

Gas emissions report looks at carbon footprint

By **JESSE MIRSKY**

East Yorkers can breathe a deep, healthy sigh of contentment following the release of a new report that says the community is producing the least amount of greenhouse gases in the Toronto area — at 1.31 tonnes per capita.

The report, called *Cities and Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Moving Forward*, was published last month in the journal *Environment and Urbanization*. It used data from another study by Prof. Chris Kennedy and Jared R. VandeWeghe, of the University of Toronto's civil engineering school.

The co-author of the report, University of Toronto graduate student Lorraine Sugar, said East York has several advantages.

"East York is a great example," she said.

"It's a dense neighbourhood, it's close to transit, and therefore, per capita, people are producing less greenhouse gas emissions than in other neighbourhoods."

The report may be an eye-opener for those who think that a city's downtown core produces more contaminants than its suburban surroundings.

Other communities that were named in the report include Whitby and Etobicoke.

Whitby, an area with less dense residential areas and a car-dependent population, was rated the greatest producer of emissions, with 13.02 tonnes per capita. Etobicoke was ranked in the middle, with 6.62 tonnes per capita.

The study covered two specific aspects of emissions production: residential and transport.

Co-author Sugar explained what residents of a community can do to help reduce their carbon footprint.

"On the transport side, definitely not using the car and taking transit to work, or even carpooling to work," she said.

"On the building side, things like energy-efficiency in the home — upgrading windows, upgrading insulation, upgrading the furnace. Even being aware of the simple things, like turning off the lights."

Mary Fragedakis, the city councillor for Ward 29/Toronto-Danforth, welcomed the news and said it emphasizes the quality of living in East York.

"This is a very progressive place. There's lots of environmentally friendly people," she said. "I'm very proud. I know that I live in a great community and this is evidence of that fact."

Sugar said the results of the report are consistent with what she expected to find.

"I'm not surprised at all," she said. "It's not a big surprise to me that you have more emissions and you use more energy if you live in a giant house and you drive everywhere."



Observer, Alexandra Ward

STOP-DROP-REPAIR: Emergency workers gather outside of 80 Cosburn Ave. on Wednesday morning, after a fire forced nearly 200 tenants to evacuate. (Another photo on page 2)

Fire displaces tenants

By **ALEXANDRA WARD**

A fire forced residents of 80 Cosburn Ave. to evacuate their high-rise apartment building late Tuesday night.

The fire's cause has yet to be determined. No residents were harmed in the fire.

"I don't have a cause from Toronto Fire," said Rob Andrusевич, senior communication advisor for the City of Toronto.

"I know the electrical system has been impacted."

The building's residents have to find temporary housing for at least a few more nights.

"There is no power to the building right now," Andrusевич said. "Because there is no power to the building, it is unlikely that people can stay (there)."

When residents called 911 on



'It's a place to keep them warm...'
—Bus driver Tracey Pike

sible to the scene so they can go back and forth if they wish. It's a place where they can get some rest, relaxation or sleep."

TTC bus driver Tracey Pike was on-site Wednesday morning with the shelter bus.

"It's a place to keep them warm and comfortable," she said.

The morning after the fire, residents gathered outside the building, waiting for police to let them in one at a time and escort them to their apartments to retrieve medication and pets.

Debra Collins, a 10th-floor resident, arrived on-scene Wednesday morning after spending the evening with a relative.

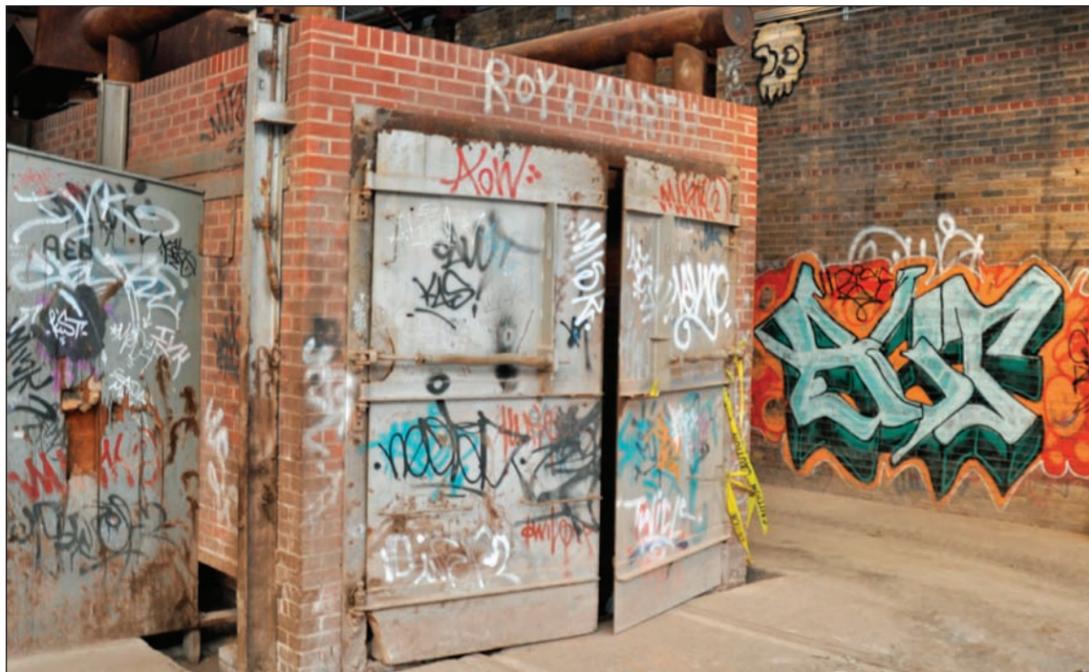
"I've got some pets upstairs that I'm concerned about. That's why I'm here," she said. "I want to get them out. That's my concern — the pets."

Tuesday, they were advised to take refuge on their balconies. Some residents spent over two hours there.

When firefighters gave them the all-clear to leave the building, they emerged to find that the city had dispatched "shelter buses."

"We had a large number of people who required temporary shelter," Andrusевич said. "(The bus) is as close as pos-

Evergreen Brick Works graffiti walls in danger



Observer, Octavian Lacatusu

OVEN-FRESH GRAFFITI: The former brick ovens lie abandoned at the Brick Works. Some people believe the graffiti covering the walls is art that should be saved from a city removal order.

By **SCOTT REID**

The Evergreen Brick Works is one of the most recognizable historic sites in East York. However, a recent notice from the office of Municipal Licensing and Standards (MLS) may ultimately force a new and controversial facelift for the 100-year-old former landmark.

In January, after Mayor Rob Ford promised a cleanup of the city, the MLS presented the Brick Works with a notice demanding that graffiti covering nearly half the site's exterior be removed.

But David Stonehouse believes the graffiti is not only a piece of local culture, but also a unique part of the site's heritage and history. Stonehouse is general manager of Evergreen, a non-profit agency advocating community environmentalism that's been restoring the site.

Besides concern that removal could damage the facades be-

neath the graffiti, Stonehouse said that "the overwhelming response from the public has been to maintain the site as you see it."

There's been graffiti on the site for 20 years or more, and this is the first time Stonehouse can recall action being considered by the city to enforce the removal of what some call "street art."

Councillor Mary Fragedakis, of Ward 29/Toronto-Danforth, said that while graffiti is a concern in East York, some of what is found at the Evergreen site is art and should be maintained.

"People certainly don't want their street covered in graffiti, so of course that is a concern," she said. "However, in this case, we're talking about a heritage site with historical significance."

In hopes of maintaining the Brick Works' present state, Stonehouse immediately sent a request to the MLS asking for **See BEAUTIFYING, page 8**



Observer, Alexandra Ward

SHELTER SANCTUARY: A resident of 80 Cosburn Ave. walks past a TTC shelter bus. Buses were sent to keep displaced tenants warm while the fire damage to their building is being assessed. No one was hurt in the fire, late Tuesday night.

Police briefs

Suspect arrested

Police have arrested a suspect after a 39-year-old man was stabbed multiple times in the back and neck. On Sunday at about 9:10 p.m., police responded to a call about unknown trouble at the apartment building at 390 Dawes Rd., near Gower. The victim was taken to the hospital with serious injuries. Police arrested Glenford Johnson, 25, of Toronto and charged him with attempted murder, two counts of assault with a weapon and aggravated assault. Johnson was scheduled to appear at College Park Court the following day.

Flasher reported

Police arrested a man on Feb. 10 in connection with an indecent act investigation. A 29-year-old woman in the Danforth and Logan area had reported being approached by a man driving a pickup truck. The man reportedly asked the woman for directions and then exposed himself while committing a sexual act. Shortly after, a 48-year-old woman reported a similar incident in the Carlton and Sherbourne area. Donald Tannahill, 43, of Toronto, is charged with two counts of indecency, criminal harassment and with failure to stop at the scene of an accident. Police say there may be more victims.

Gun charges laid

A man has been charged after police responded to a call in the area of Victoria Park and St. Clair Avenue East. On Feb. 3, police found a small safe containing a firearm and ammunition. A 66-year-old Toronto resident has been charged with possessing a prohibited firearm with ammunition, possessing a firearm knowing its possession is unauthorized, unauthorized possession of a firearm, careless storage of a firearm and careless storage of ammunition.

—Natasha Jaferi

Correction

The Dec. 10 edition of the Observer included a photo ("Up close and personal," page 3) that misidentified city council member Fletcher as "Sandra" and "former councillor." In fact, Paula Fletcher is the sitting Toronto councillor for Ward 30. The Observer regrets the errors.

Students get a piece of the pie

By DEEANNA CHARRION

City council voted against giving itself a pay raise earlier this month, saving \$110,000.

Then the councillors asked the city's budget committee to consider applying those savings to school nutrition programs.

Whether or not the committee goes along with it, student nutrition programs are getting at least a piece of the pie for now.

Ward 29 Toronto-Danforth councillor Mary Fragedakis says she's happy with the outcome.

"In the past, some councillors would take the increase and not give back to the community, and others would donate it back to various not-for-profit organizations," she said.

Some \$23,000 will fund increasing food costs for 75 existing student nutrition programs.

"There was a motion on the floor by Councillor Joe Mihevc to take that increase, which in total was \$110,000, and use (a portion of) that money toward the student nutrition programs," Fragedakis said.

For kids who do not have access to cereal and bagels in the morning, St. Patrick Catholic School on Felstead Avenue offers a morning breakfast club to tide over hungry bellies.



PAUL ADAMS
Giving students a boost

Vice-principal Paul Adams said he's happy that the student nutrition program is getting a boost.

"We discovered a few students who sometimes don't show up with lunch too, so our chaplain, Tom Penney, started a small lunchtime club for those he notices are unable to bring food," he said.

The school's culinary program, headed by Denise McMullin, is integral to the effort.

"(McMullin) is really good, and because we don't have any cafeteria service at the moment, she uses her

time and energy and her second-period class as often as possible," Adams said.

With a school population of less than 500, most caterers don't want to set up a cafeteria, because of the small return.

Four or five times per week, McMullin and her class prepare some kind of breakfast and lunch for the kids, with prices starting at \$1.

"Not too many kids go hungry around here if they want to show up," Adams said.

Another program, called "St. Pat's Table," serves as a kind of food bank.

"Members of staff bring in canned and dry goods for kids that we know don't have a lot of food."

"Tom Penney (the chaplain) says 'go shopping' and we let them go in there and take what they need for the family," Adams said.

Adams said he's pleased that the program is so successful. Everyday he sees students take up to 40 cans and 10 boxes of food for their families.

Even though it's informal, Adams added that it's as much a social setting as it is a food setting.

"It's neat because it's students and teachers together. A number of teachers will go up there to have a cup of coffee and sit down and talk to the kids."

Homeowner faces Ontario fire code charges



Observer, Alissa Randall

FATAL FIRE: Debris sits in front of a Broadview Avenue house, where a man died in an upstairs-apartment fire on Feb. 3.

By ALISSA RANDALL

Fire code charges have been laid against the owners of a building, following a fatal fire at an East York house on Feb. 3.

Toronto Fire Services were called to 1260 Broadview Ave. around 9 p.m.

Witnesses living two doors down from the house phoned the police after noticing smoke coming from the window of the second-floor unit.

The fire resulted in the death of a man in his 40s. He was taken to Toronto East General Hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

Firefighters later removed a burned mattress from the second floor of the home.

"The cause of death has been determined to be smoke inhalation," said Mike Strapko, of Toronto Fire Services.

A building inspection after the fire has led to citations for alleged violations of the Ontario Fire Code. The owner and his father are charged with 10 violations of the code, including not having work-

ing smoke alarms and failing to test and maintain fire extinguishers.

"We are looking for a quick court date and prosecution of these charges," Toronto Fire Chief William Stewart said in a news release, adding: "This is another needless death that could have been prevented by residential fire sprinklers."

The building is a house split into apartments. Automatic fire sprinklers are not required by the building code for this type of property.

However, Toronto Fire Services urges landlords to consider installing fire sprinklers when major renovations are being done.

Toronto Fire Services used the occasion to remind property owners that it is their responsibility to ensure that their buildings comply with the fire code.

The Ontario Fire Protection and Prevention Act allows for fines of up to \$50,000 for each violation.

The Office of the Fire Marshal is still investigating the incident and, at press time, had not released the names of the accused or the deceased.

Charity game honours hockey legend

Hockey game pays tribute to local activist

By NICHOLAS PESCOD

The East York Hockey Association (EYHA) did something on Sunday that it has never done before: it hosted a memorial charity hockey game.

It was in honour of the late Lou Lockyer, a fixture on the local youth athletics scene — especially around hockey. He died on April 9, at the age of 54.

A “condolence motion” by Toronto city council in May catalogued Lockyer’s community contributions: an East York resident almost all of his life; a goalie for the East York hockey team as a young man himself; later, a coach for East York hockey, Topham Park baseball and football; proprietor of the East York arena snack bar and a member of the EYHA executive.

“Through his countless hours of volunteer time, practically living at the arena, he became a mentor and friend to hundreds of kids in East York,” the council motion read.

“Lou’s hard work, generous spirit and wonderful humour will be remembered with gratitude by all who were privileged to know him.”

Connie Mitchell co-ordinates special events for the EYHA and was instrumental in organizing Sunday’s memorial charity game.

“When Lou passed away unexpectedly back in April, there was quite an outpouring from the community,” Mitchell said. “He was very important ... and that’s why we are doing this event.”

The game took place at East York Memorial Arena and featured the East York Hockey



Observer, Dennis Wu

HE SHOOTS, HE SCORES: Michael Lockyer of the Toronto firefighters team scores on his brother, Jonathan Lockyer of the East York Hockey Association coaches team. The game, which took place on Sunday, was played in memory of their father, Lou Lockyer, who died last year at the age of 54. The firefighters won the match by 5-4.

Association coaches against a team of local firefighters.

In net for the East York coaches was 25-year-old Jonathan Lockyer, one of Lou’s sons, while the other son, 21-year-old, Michael, played for the local firefighters.

“I have been looking forward to this game for a couple months now,” Jonathan said. “I felt like a kid at Christmas last night waiting for the game.”

People from East York and across Toronto filled the East York Memorial Arena and witnessed a thrilling hockey game — with the firefighters eventually pulling out a 5-4 win.

Jason Bond played on the East York coaches’ side and



LOCKYER



MITCHELL

remembers Lockyer as being a fun-loving individual who cared for everyone.

“He would smile at every single kid that would walk into this place,” Bond said. “He always made everyone feel welcome when they came into this building.”

Connie Mitchell recalls Lockyer playing ‘mini sticks’ in the arena hallway with the kids

and telling them hockey stories.

“All the kids would sit with him and laugh,” Mitchell said. “He was a big kid himself.”

Mike Robbys has been coaching hockey in East York for eight years and often saw Lockyer around the arena.

“The reason I didn’t get to know Lou so well is probably because he was busy,” he said.

Robbys added that he hopes to one day see the East York Memorial Arena renamed in Lockyer’s honour.

Since the passing of Lockyer, one of the hardest things for Mitchell is not seeing him work at the snack bar.

“It’s like coming into Lou’s home and him not being here,”

she said. “Some days it’s hard because he’s not at the snack bar, as he always was.”

The EYHA hopes to raise \$2,200 for a bench commemorating Lockyer that will be located at the front of the arena — while the rest of the money will go to support the Mikey Network, which installs defibrillators in public places.

Mitchell said she’s thrilled with the amount of support the EYHA has been receiving from the community.

“The community has been great in supporting this,” Mitchell said.

“The saddest part about today is that Lou isn’t here to see it.”

Digital revolution: E. Y. students focus on Egypt

By JESSE MIRSKY

As protests in Egypt erupted into celebrations last Friday, a group of East York-based journalism students were hard at work using social media to bring people together who have been affected by the situation.

“ToronToCairo” is a new website created by Centennial College journalism students at their Carlaw Avenue campus. Using Twitter feeds, Facebook and news updates, they have been connecting youth in Toronto and Cairo.

Production editor Sian Davies, 27, explained how the project’s immediacy, due to developments in Egypt, had the group working at full speed last week.

“It was quite stressful. There was a lot of e-mailing between each other and confusion about what was going where,” she said. “It was a tight deadline, that’s for sure.”

The group managed to pull together for an assigned deadline on Friday — the same day the embattled Egyptian president, Hosni Mubarak, stepped down.

The students proposed linking ToronToCairo with the Toronto Star’s website. The Star’s foreign editor, Colin MacKenzie, has shown considerable interest.

“(The Toronto Star) sent a lot of people to Cairo to cover the events there, but they didn’t re-



Observer, Jesse Mirsky

CAIRO CONNECTION: ToronToCairo managing editor Shannon Keller checks on the website at Centennial College’s East York campus. Keller and her classmates have been working around the clock to make sure the site’s news is current and relevant.

ally have an angle here,” Davies said. “So if we were willing to do that, to talk to people, to go to these rallies, they were willing to link to our site.”

Centennial College professor and senior editor of ToronToCairo, Jeffrey Dvorkin, said the objective of the ongoing site isn’t necessarily to cover breaking news.

“I don’t think covering the story has any particular value from the perspective of Centennial. Everybody else is covering the story,” Dvorkin said.

“What I thought the class could do would be to create a ... new media connection between young people in Toronto and people who are in the middle of

the events in Egypt.”

Dvorkin explained how the website will benefit its student creators.

“The Star is very enthusiastic about the idea,” Dvorkin said. “A really good Centennial project gets wider circulation and it gives the students the exposure to the mainstream media they’re

going to need shortly anyway.”

ToronToCairo managing editor Shannon Keller says Centennial College has been a positive influence on the project.

“Students and faculty have both been very supportive,” she said. “They’re really enthusiastic. They’re all for the project.”

ToronToCairo.com

Quick facts

- New visitors: 62%
- Since Feb. 10, the site has had over 1,200 page views.
- Visitors spent an average time of eight minutes on the site.

Hits from...

- Bolivia
- Egypt
- Italy
- Philippines
- Switzerland
- United Kingdom
- United States

~Google Analytics

Last updated: Feb. 16

Activist's generosity benefits students



Observer, Deeanna Charrion

ONE BIG HEART: Sarah Pickering, a local activist, holds a greeting card with art created by a child in Kampot, Cambodia.

By DEEANNA CHARRION

Journeying to the other side of the world, an East Yorker fell in love with the colours of Cambodia.

Three years later, Sarah Pickering's heart was immersed in the culture of the country.

A volunteer English teacher in the small town of Kampot, the 43-year-old has enriched the lives of many at the Chumkriel Language School (CLS) for the past few years. She returns with beautiful crafts made by those she's met overseas.

"All the profit from the sale of these fair-trade products goes directly to the Chumkriel Language School," Pickering said during a Saturday Valentine's Art Market at 1390 Danforth Ave.

The English school caters to a poor community, without any funding from government or other organizations. On average, Cambodian residents make \$60 - \$70 per month and stop going to school because they can't afford it.

"A lot of them drop out in Grade 9 to work with their

families so it's about staying in school, have fun and enjoy learning," Pickering said.

Tourism is big in Cambodia, so learning English is a skill that comes in handy.

For a year and a half, Pickering helped promote projects with two-fold results

'A lot of them drop out in Grade 9 to work with their families, so it's about staying in school, have fun and enjoy learning.'

—Sarah Pickering

for students.

Daughters of Cambodia is a program providing girls and women with a safe exit from sex trafficking, something that many are forced to do to support their families.

"It's an organization that trains them and gives them better jobs," Pickering said.

She asked them to make

bags by sewing together recycled materials. The profit goes toward the CLS and Chumkriel Learning Centre, funding projects to keep people motivated.

Rice bags were made into shopping bags and purses and earrings made from colourful paper were embroidered by the schoolchildren.

"Some of the kids who are 11 and 12 are into sewing and they're good at it," she said. "The boys wear bright pink T-shirts and they don't care!"

It's a stark contrast to Western civilization, especially when crayons are not an everyday item in Cambodia.

"The kids did the art and then we made them into cards," Pickering said, while proudly holding up her favourite: an elephant done by a 14-year-old student.

"It amazes me how clever they are and they didn't grow up like we grew up," she said.

"These kids don't get access to crayons and those things. Yet they can create these beautiful drawings and they'd ask if they can draw once a week."

Pitfield is set to turn a new page

By DENNIS WU

Jane Pitfield was all ears on Wednesday as members of the East York Historical Society shared some of their knowledge at a meeting held at the S. Walter Stewart library branch.

Pitfield, the former city politician and now vice-president of the historical society, is gathering information to write another book on East York's heritage.

Already the author of two books, including one on Leaside, Pitfield says the new book will cover topics such as the things people did in their leisure time, the churches and schools they attended, and the issues that East York faced.

"East York has always been a feisty municipality," she said. "We still have continued many of our traditions like the Agnes Macphail award and Canada Day parade. But there are some other things that have been lost."

Melanie Milanich, a member of the EYHS and an avid researcher of East York's history, is trying to collect some of those missing pieces. She has compiled a thick binder full of maps, notes and articles about the community — some dating back to the late 1700s.

"I've lived in East York for 30 years," Milanich said. "It all started when I found out that the house I live in was actually built on a massive farm."

Pitfield predicts that the book will be released sometime next year.

Taking heart



'It's a global thing. Or at least it has become one.'

—Manuel Rico

Observer, Aneta Tasheva

FEAST OF LOVE: Lucia Rivera and Manuel Rico celebrate Valentine's Day at Mr. Greek Mediterranean Grill on Danforth Avenue. Rivera and Rico hail from Mexico and El Salvador, respectively. They said that Valentine's Day is celebrated in both countries. "It's a global thing," Rico said, "or at least it has become one."

Police on the lookout for distracted drivers

By NATASHA JAFERI

Toronto police have launched a one-week campaign against distracted driving to remind drivers of the dangers of using hand-held devices while behind the wheel.

The effort, which started on Monday, ends this Sunday. Officers have been setting up checkpoints at random locations throughout East York and the rest of Toronto.

They're particularly interested in drivers found talking, tex-

ting, dialing or e-mailing while driving.

Sgt. Jack West is a traffic sergeant for 54 Division, covering East York, and has been policing in Toronto for 37 years.

"There have been several studies to indicate this is as dangerous as being impaired by drugs or alcohol," West said.

"Most offences due to communicating on a cellphone while driving are rear-end collisions."

West believes that the rise in

cost associated with distracted drivers should be an issue all drivers should take an interest in.

"Higher costs to society is a direct result," he said. "This is due to property and personal-injury collisions. Medical and insurance costs are an increased concern to all of us."

West said that people caught using a cellphone, hand-held communication device or hand-held entertainment device can be fined \$155, under legislation

that came into effect in 2009.

There are no penalizing points, but the infraction stays on a driver's record, which insurance companies have access to.

West said that he sees people on hand-held devices several times a day.

"I can tell you, in 54 Division, there are approximately 15 offenders per day. I have plans for the future to increase this enforcement."

West said that the law hasn't

changed, and it is still a privilege to have an Ontario driver's licence.

"Take responsibility that goes with this and our roads will be a safer place. While driving, have an ear for safety, not the phone," West said.

Drivers are only allowed to use wireless devices that can be used hands-free. West also thinks all drivers have the ability to chip in.

"Being safe requires everyone's co-operation," he said.

The sound comes first for producer

By KRIS ALI-TROTMAN

With today's popular music, artists seem to get more recognition than the actual music. Singers such as Justin Bieber, Rihanna and Beyonce are all recognized for their vocal talent, but not many people ask about the talent behind the lyrics.

Andrew Blackman, 24, is a music producer who has been living in East York for almost eight years. Blackman's specialty is hip hop production, but he also produces reggae, pop and dance music.

He has been producing for about two years and still considers himself to be learning.

Blackman explained that most producers have 10 or more years of production experience, so his peers considered him to be an amateur.

"When we hit up the studio, they usually refer to me as the rookie producer because I'm not where they're at yet," he said.

"It's all good though, because I'm still good at what I do and I believe that when I get more experience I'll be laughing at them."

The young producer said East York has had a significant impact on his production skills.

"A lot of my friends in high school influenced me to start really listening to hip hop and that's where my love for the music began," he said.

"I was one of the only black kids in my high school so I wasn't really expecting them to be listening to hip hop as much as I was, but it seemed like they loved it more than I did."

Blackman wants to eventually move to New York or California and get signed to a major label.

"I love Toronto and I love East York, but the U.S. is where you gotta go in order to make a name for yourself," he said. "I have seen a lot of talented musicians and performers who were born up here and just didn't make it big because they never travelled outside of Ontario."

His initial career goal was to become a lawyer, but Blackman's true love is for hip hop and its original sound.

"I always liked the paralegal field and wanted to defend people ever since I was young," Blackman said. "Once I heard how hip hop sounded I had a drastic change of mind and did not want to do anything but listen to it and make beats for my favourite rappers."

Blackman is currently working on his mixtape, scheduled for release online this May.



Observer, Deeanna Charrion

THEY'RE OFF: Earl Beatty Public School students sprint to the finish line of their race at the Monarch Park skating rink, making the most of the wild weather. The community's annual skate party was held on Sunday.

Locals find skate date great

By DEEANNA CHARRION

Sheila Boudreau says her neighbourhood is a tight-knit community within East York.

She's reminded of that every time she walks the sidewalks with her children.

"Every 10 houses they know who lives there. It has such a great community feel," she said. "It's like a small town."

The Halton Hills-born parent-volunteer agrees with the idea that "it takes a village to raise a child." For her family, one of the epicenters of that village is Earl Beatty Public School and its attached community centre — on Woodington Avenue near Danforth and Coxwell.

"Being involved with the community helps give your kids a chance to develop a strong sense of self-worth and identity," Boudreau said.

So coming to the Earl Beatty Community Advisory Council's 10th annual skate party on Sunday was another way to connect with other families in the neighbourhood.

"A lot of us help each other out with the kids. They make friends and get to know all the parents, which makes it safe," she said.

Parents and the Earl Beatty council provided home-baked goods and hot chocolate with marshmallows at the party, held at the Monarch Park Rink. About 150 people were in attendance.

"We have really built up (a rapport) over the year with these community traditions, and this is one of them," Boudreau said.



Observer, Deeanna Charrion

ON YOUR MARK: Liza Ordubegian (right) kept the parents and their children busy with plenty of games and music on ice, much to the amusement of Ward 31/Beaches-East York councillor Janet Davis.

Liza Ordubegian, a 13-year veteran of the advisory council, said the turnout was impressive.

"We want to help our local people too, as well as provide a fun avenue (for everyone)," she said.

Ordubegian organized games for the children on the ice pad and handed out hockey prizes courtesy of Street Buds, an NHL skills development program.

Ward 31 councillor Janet Davis joined in the skate.

"It's a great opportunity to be active with the community and to have fun," she said.

Boudreau, a landscape architect, is participating in a greening project with Ordubegian at Earl Beatty to make it an even more communal facility.

"We've been working at the front of the school to make it safer, to make it a nicer place for families," Boudreau said. "The kids and teachers can teach in the gardens as well."

New exhibit aims to rock the Science Centre



Observer, Octavian Lacatusu

SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL: Ontario Science Centre CEO Lesley Lewis gave a brief introduction at the opening of the new OSC exhibition Nature Unleashed: Inside Natural Disasters.

By JILAN NASHER

The Ontario Science Centre's latest exhibition, Nature Unleashed: Inside Natural Disasters, opened Feb. 11. The exhibition is designed to educate visitors about the calamities of nature.

The chief executive officer of the science centre, Lesley Lewis, said the exhibit is relevant to people's lives because of its educational videos and interesting artifacts.

"It's a temporary exhibition that was developed by the Field Museum in Chicago," Lewis said. "With Nature Unleashed, we knew that the content was really relevant for our visitors. That's what we're all about: bringing in experiences that will have relevance to the daily lives of our visitors. They see that science isn't just something you study in the classroom, it's actually something that has relevance to their daily lives and

this fit the bill."

The exhibition itself is filled with various displays of items destroyed in natural disasters, videos of disasters recorded by different people and other artifacts of disasters that visitors can even handle.

Mark Robinson, a Weather Network meteorologist, has been chasing storms for about a decade. He was at the Science Centre on Feb. 9 for the media preview and called the exhibit "amazing."

"The exhibit's great. I've been through it once and the artifacts from Greensburg are really quite amazing," Robinson said, referring to the Force 5 tornado that levelled Greensburg, Kansas in 2007. "What's actually really neat about the exhibit for me is that... some of the videos were shot by friends of mine that are in there so it's actually very funny to see it."

Robinson says that the exhibit

is somewhat sentimental to him, because he's been through almost all of the featured storms. The exhibit brings back memories of when he was chasing them.

"This exhibit hits home a little bit for me, because I've been through Greensburg. I know Greensburg. I've talked to people directly there who were affected by that tornado, so to see some of that debris actually in there is a little bit emotional," Robinson said. "But this is a great learning experience for the kids. It's hard to bring a real tornado... to show them, but what's in there comes pretty close."

Talha Sadiq, 16, a student at the Ontario Science Centre Science School, was at the media release with his classmates.

"I think this exhibit is quite cool. I haven't seen the whole exhibit yet, but from what I've seen, it's really interesting," Sadiq said.

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'Ring, Ring' go away

When Katie Gougeon tried to call Telehealth Ontario from her Logan Avenue apartment last month, the last thing she expected to hear was the drone of a pre-recorded telemarketer.

Gougeon suffers from a mild peanut allergy. She noticed a tingling in her throat after eating a cupcake and felt she had better give Telehealth a call just to be on the safe side.

But coincidentally, some company's telemarketing computer connected at the moment she picked up the handset and started playing its commercial.

"I tried to hang up and dial again," Gougeon said. "But after several attempts, the telemarketer just kept rambling on. I had to wait for the whole message to play out before I was able to make the call."

When the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission started their National Do Not Call List two years ago, Gougeon quickly signed up.

The idea of the list was simple: no longer would we have to endure the barrage of calls from telemarketers interrupting our dinner or family time. The government-sponsored program managed to fend off those lawless telemarketing bandits and all was right with the world. Then one day, those calls started again.

It appears as if the CRTC was well-equipped to protect us from telemarketing villains on our home soil, but companies began outsourcing their call centre operations to the United States.

Gougeon remembers getting a call from a telemarketer with a Southern drawl. He informed her that her car insurance plan was too expensive — and he had a solution. But she's never owned a car.

When she contacted the CRTC, Gougeon was told that the commission can't control calls from the U.S. She was even told that her contact information could be passed on from company to company to bypass the list. By setting up subsidiaries and registering them under different business names, telemarketing companies have seemingly created one giant loophole.

You would think that a program set up by the Canadian government to protect individual privacy could work. In lieu of that, ordinary Canadians have shown their own commendable resolve in dismissing telemarketing calls. But when someone can't even call Telehealth without being intercepted by a telemarketer, something's wrong — and Ottawa needs to take more aggressive action.

—Ross Johnston

Flushing out a policy

Here's a potential head-turner: Some very male-looking individuals may soon be legally allowed to enter and use public women's washrooms. On top of that, if someone were to try to stop one of these individuals from entering, that someone could be charged under the Criminal Code of Canada.

Bill C-389, which aims to protect the rights of transgendered and transsexual citizens, cleared the House of Commons last week in a 143-135 vote. East York's three MPs, Jack Layton, Rob Oliphant and Maria Minna, all voted in favour.

The bill tries to address issues of "gender identity" and "gender expression." One might assume that "gender identity" means one's biological sex, given at birth, and "gender expression" means one's sense of self, gender-wise. (One has to assume, because the bill does not clearly define these two terms.) The important point is that, under this bill, if an individual with male features has an innate feeling of being female, that person can freely go in and out of female-specific areas. (And vice-versa.)

One of the implied rights is the right to enter washrooms of choice. And this allowance extends to change rooms and public showers.

Bill Siksay, a British Columbia MP who put the bill forward, says that the issue of public bathrooms is nothing to be concerned about. He said in the House that the bill won't allow peeping Toms to harass females in washrooms. But even if that's the case, we still need to consider the comfort level of, say, a woman bathing with her daughter in the public shower at a local pool... when a person with male features enters. That person's sincere sense of self notwithstanding, it's hard to imagine the woman and her daughter not being made to feel very uncomfortable.

Rob Oliphant, the MP for Don Valley West, said that his vote in the House was to "protect the very smallest of minority groups from discrimination." But there's a legitimate question here about whether Bill C-389 gets the balancing act right.

Although it's passed the Conservative-minority House, the bill faces a more serious challenge in the Conservative-majority Senate. And with an election possible soon, it might die anyway.

Perhaps it should.

—Dennis Wu

Looking on the bright side of riding the TTC

On any given weekday, particularly in frigid winter temperatures, somewhere on the TTC there is a disgruntled and embittered commuter. Whether it's the elderly woman trying desperately to climb the mountainous side-street snowdrifts to get onto a bus that will not stop anywhere but the designated area... or the peacoat-clad executive types stacked one on top of the other on a subway seat, shooting dirty looks at the nanny with the eight-ton stroller who decided that the morning rush hour was a good time to take out the toddler troops.

All in all, the general atmosphere of the 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. bus and subway commute is defeated misery. But it doesn't get me down. There is no better place to people-watch than on the TTC and see people at their most glorious and strange.

The nighttime commute is of particular interest to me. Maybe it's just because I suffer from minute amounts of paranoia, but I could never sleep on a subway packed with people. I could never just lean my head against the window and begin drooling and snoring — like I might on my couch in front of the television.

Example: The other night I was sitting, reading, on my

**Courtney
Kraik**



way home from my internship (which is a treat I rarely get at 5:20 p.m.) and there was a couple sitting in the seats kitty-corner to mine.

At first I tried to block out their petty bickering, something about grocery shopping at a particular store when the same produce could be bought for much cheaper at a local market (which wasn't entirely untrue). But I was drawn in by the way they spoke to one another. Uninhibited, although hushed, the man curtly told the woman she was being stupid and he didn't want to "waste his life talking about it for another second." From the corner of my not-reading-at-all eye, she gave him a sharp jab, which he seemed to ignore.

It occurred to me that had they known I was listening, they might not have acted this way toward one another. As a journalist-in-training, it's rare to see people in a public situation act as they would in a private one. People just seem to lose all self-consciousness

while riding on the subway, despite their close proximity to strangers.

This point was further illuminated by the fact that three or four stops into the journey, the bickering couple fell asleep, leaning on one another, snoring loudly, while the man's headphones, slung lazily around his neck, thumped along to an inaudible beat. I found it oddly calming to have this couple, devoid of any public shame, snoozing soundly beside me.

Don't get me wrong, there are times when I am tempted to scream, kick, scratch, spit and curse at my fellow commuters. For instance, I was once treated as a leaning post by a woman in a jacket so puffy that it could have suffocated me. And it seemed the further I tried to inch away from her in this sardine can/car, the steeper the angle of her lean.

I've been pushed, stepped on, glared at, coughed on and been stuck beside the smelliest people. But I love it, even when I hate it. You just can't get the same kind of sensory stimulation while driving on the Bayview extension and experiencing bouts of road rage.

But that's another adventure for another day and night.

In the meantime, happy travels wherever your destination.

A lesson in parking courtesy

Trying to find a parking space on a Saturday is not how I like to spend my day off.

It turns a short and simple task into something tedious and time-consuming.

During the holiday season that just passed, I managed to do the bulk of my Christmas shopping online. (I tried to avoid big shopping malls by any means necessary. Who would want to be haunted by an obnoxious parade of car horns?)

Drivers seem to throw their courtesy out their car window the second they enter a parking lot.

Last weekend, I had to make a quick trip to Wal-Mart to pick up some photos. But, it turned out, this trip was not going to be as quick as I anticipated.

As I pulled into the parking lot, I was greeted by a symphony of car horns, pedestrians mindlessly walking like zombies and a lack of parking spaces. I knew it was going to be an uphill battle.

I cranked up my J Dilla album. I dozed off into the music and ignored the chaos and frustration happening around me.

After 20 minutes of hunting for a space and stalking outgoing shoppers, I found a spot and quickly parked before anyone noticed.

I walked to the entrance, trying not to get run over by

**Andre
Widjaja**



impatient drivers desperately looking for a parking spot.

As I got closer to the entrance, there were two cars violently honking at each other. The two drivers had been eyeing the same parking spot and one of them decided to take it. This didn't go over well with the other driver.

The two male drivers rolled down their windows and began yelling obscenities at each other.

People began to notice the commotion and looked on as two grown men argued over a parking space.

The man who lost the spot got out of his Camry and began approaching the Jeep. They began threatening to hit each other.

As the altercation escalated, I noticed there were children in the backseats of the cars belonging to the two men.

These kids looked scared and uncomfortable. Why would these two men put them through that?

I remember being in a similar situation when I was younger. I remember feeling really embarrassed. I wanted to sink into my seat and disappear.

I hated how my dad put me through that feeling. The same feeling that these kids were probably going through.

All for what? A parking spot?

I couldn't understand why these grown men couldn't swallow their pride and principles for the sake of being a positive adult figure to these kids.

(It was an overreaction on both parties involved. It would have been, even if there weren't any children witnessing it.)

I admit, that I have a short fuse for incompetent drivers as well.

Sometimes I wonder how some people manage to obtain a driver's license. But I digress...

In addition to determining an individual's driving skills, the Ontario government should perform psychological tests as well. Just to make sure your temper is fit to get behind the wheel.

At the least, a crash course in some common courtesy is necessary. It seems to be a skill-set many drivers are lacking. These two men clearly required it and more. Maybe some anger management would have done the trick.

Maybe they didn't have any music on. It could have prevented the whole situation from happening. Learn to let it go. There are more parking spaces in the lot.

We welcome your input

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Observer, Ross Johnston

KLUNDER CREATES: “The Funky Queen of Queen West” was on hand at Centennial’s East York campus on Wednesday to discuss the scope of her artistic career. Klunder has developed artwork for the Rolling Stones and has had a line of sweaters sold at Saks Fifth Avenue in New York.

Meet the Rolling Stones’ Queen St. ‘Voodoo’ Doll

By ROSS JOHNSTON

When Barbara Klunder was pulled over by airport security, she knew the jig was up.

Klunder had just arrived at JFK airport with a suitcase full of her hand-woven sweaters that she had sold to Saks Fifth Avenue. Unfortunately, she hadn’t filled out the proper customs forms, because she simply forgot.

“That was the ’80s,” Klunder told a packed room at Centennial College’s East York campus on Wednesday, “and I’m a child of the ’60s. We just don’t think of those things.”

The “Funky Queen of Queen West” was on hand to give students and faculty a glimpse into a life devoted to art. From textiles to typography, Klunder has amassed a portfolio that runs the gamut of the art world.

“I have a simple philosophy when it comes to my art,” she

said. “If you don’t get it in one second, it’s time to go back to the drawing board.”

Klunder has been credited with developing the spontaneous, chaotic iconography associated with the image of Toronto’s fashion district in the ’90s. She designed several pieces of art for the famous Bamboo nightclub that shaped its look and sound for over a decade.

When the Rolling Stones were looking for somebody to design the artwork for their *Voodoo Lounge* tour in 1994, they approached Klunder.

“I got paid nothing for that job,” she said. “What I did get was a chance to say I met and worked with Mick Jagger. That’s pretty cool.”

Klunder also has a passion for language. She is the creator of two type-fonts and has plans to develop more in the future.

“Visually, language is a

system of symbols that is both instantaneous and direct,” she said. “Everybody should try to develop their own alphabet. It’s a very rewarding experience.”

At home on Toronto’s Algonquin Island, Klunder has found a tight-knit community where the spirit of the ’60s is alive and well.

“Everybody looks after each other,” she said. “It’s truly an inspirational place where serenity is everything and inspiration is everywhere.”

The idea of beauty is something that Klunder believes is the catalyst for artistic individuality.

“Everybody has a personal concept of beauty,” she said. “It’s up to you to tune yours up and see where it takes you.”

Klunder’s work will next be on display this November at the David Kaye Gallery, located at 1092 Queen St. W.

Area artist tries to coin new style

By KRIS ALI-TROTMAN

Many artists portray their work in distinctive ways.

Micah Lexier is an artist who uses objects such as coins, ladders and books to convey different messages. He visited Centennial College’s East York campus on Feb. 9 to discuss his work with students.

Lexier has an unusual piece titled “I am the Coin.” It’s comprised of over 10,000 coins, with letters on each of them conveying a message.

He explained that the idea is based on his love for coins and puzzles.

“I’ve been a coin collector forever, so this is really special to me and is definitely one of my favourites,” Lexier said.

“This piece has a combination of puzzles and riddles. It really describes who I am as a person, because most of my work sends

a hidden message.”

Lexier describes himself as an independent individual. He said self-employment is critical to how his work turns out.

“One of the perks about being an artist is that you really get an opportunity to express yourself in a creative way,” he said.

He said he uses materials, rather than creating drawings or paintings, because he was never good at drawing.

“I was just naturally interested in turning simple things, like coins, into something amazing that speaks for itself,” Lexier said.

“I don’t feel the need to just throw something out because it served its purpose. Every object is meaningful.”

Some of Lexier’s public art includes a mural at the Leslie subway station and a piece at the entrance of city hall.



Observer, Nicholas Pescod

BUZZER-BEATERS: St. John’s Mosana Abraha tries a two-pointer against St. Alphonsus. The teams were participating in the Toronto Catholic District School Board’s elementary basketball tournament, held at St. Patrick Catholic Secondary School on Felstead Avenue.

St. Pat’s students putting man hours into robot



Observer, Alima Hotakie

SHORT CIRCUIT: Technology teacher Joe Saponara (centre) and engineering students Argus Manur (right) and Adebowale Adams (left) build a robot for the AEM Construction Challenge.

By ALIMA HOTAKIE

It’s late afternoon and a drill press sends echoes through the design and technology classroom at St. Patrick Catholic Secondary School on Felstead Avenue, where the engineering team works on their robot.

Team member Adebowale Adams, 17, tries to complete most of his homework during class.

“I spend around 10 hours a week after school working on the robot,” he said.

In January, the team qualified for the international finals of the Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM) Construction Challenge.

The finals will be held in Las Vegas from March 21 to 25. Twenty-four teams will participate in the finals and only three are from Canada; the rest are American.

Team leader Argus Manur, 17, never thought he’d be heading to

Vegas.

“We didn’t expect we’d come this far, because at the competition we saw some really good structural projects,” he said.

“We didn’t really expect to win the challenge.”

For the finals, the team will build a robot that can move and carry boxes through different types of terrain. The team welcomes the challenge, because they’ve succeeded under pressure before.

Technology teacher Joe Saponara founded the team last September. Prior to the team qualifying for the Vegas finals, the club was one of the least popular activities at the school. Saponara admits that the team’s success has sparked interest in his courses.

“My classes are full now. This semester I’m at capacity,” he said.

“Last semester I had five

students in a class of 12, so the interest is developing.”

For 16-year-old Daniel Espina, it was his love for disassembling computers and radios that led him to join the team.

“I like to discover new stuff. I like making things work,” he said.

Cesar Mikko Bathan, 16, on the other hand, says the prizes influenced his decision to join.

“The Vegas trip, the Xbox, the iPod were all reasons to join. But even if we don’t win, at least we had free food and free T-shirts,” he said.

Aside from prizes — ranging from scholarships to Xboxes and gift cards — the students will gain life-enriching skills, Saponara said.

“I want them to work in teams. I want them to work cooperatively and to appreciate each other’s ideas, because in the real world that is how they work,” he said.

A smooth review for a rough play

By OCTAVIAN LACATUSU

Their play may be called *Rough Justice*, but it's a smooth production that the East Side Players opened last night at the Papermill Theatre.

Set in modern-day Britain, *Rough Justice* revolves around the character of James Highwood, a well-known TV presenter who is charged with the murder of his severely handicapped infant son. Written by Terence Frisby, the story is created to give audiences the sense that they are the jury. On occasion, the actors will point and seemingly interact with the audience.

The set, designed by director Julian Mulock, is meant to give the feeling of the Old Bailey courthouse in London, a somewhat cold and grey place. Highwood is a modern man going up against an old judicial system.

"At the back of the set you see those big banners, which are kind of decayed and ancient, which is sort of representing the old school of law," Mulock said. "In a way, I wanted the set to represent the new system that (Highwood would) like it to be and the old system, what it really is."

Highwood, played by Stephen Carrette, is a man whose ambitions are to keep fighting the system and hold true to his de-



Observer, Octavian Lacatusu

LOOKING FOR JUSTICE: Jean (Val Abels) and James (Stephen Carrette) Highwood frantically discuss their next move. *Rough Justice* is the story of a man whose actions lead him into a head-on clash with the judicial system — and his own morals.

fence. Sparks start flying once prosecutor Margaret Casely steps in. Played by Kelly Morrison, Casely is straight to the point, uncompromisingly hell-bent on taking down Highwood. In time, Highwood's composure disintegrates, leading to heated

arguments between the two.

Several scenes are performed during the trial's breaks, when Highwood meets his wife Jean (played by Val Abels) and his friend, Jeremy Ackroyd (David Barber), to discuss new strategies for his defence. During

one of these hiatuses in the proceedings, Jeremy learns a terrible truth from Jean, which may startle the audience as well. Panic-stricken, Highwood returns to court and to his crusade, but the trial nearly derails and the judge (Paddy Cardarelli)

struggles to maintain decorum. Filled with clever interactions between characters, the play succeeds in keeping the audience on its toes and engaged in the story. The performance by the cast is heartfelt and even when they're playing for sarcasm or humour, they express it in a believable manner.

The play puts the issue of euthanasia in the spotlight, along with the many arguments around it; just weeks after its resurfacing in the news, after the parole of Saskatchewan farmer Robert Latimer, following his 10-year imprisonment for killing his severely disabled daughter.

Writer Frisby's play is challenging material and when the curtain falls, the audience is left with its own moral wrestling to do.

Rough Justice opened last night and will run until March 5 at the Papermill Theatre, part of the Todmorden Mills complex on Pottery Road.

Evening performances are at 8 p.m. tonight (Friday) and Saturday, and Wednesday through Saturday for the next two weeks. There are also 2 p.m. Sunday matinees this Sunday and next. Tickets are \$20, or \$15 for students. For tickets, call 416-425-0917 or go to www.eastsideplayers.ca and click on "tickets."

Beautifying vandalism

Cont'd. from page 1

an exemption from Toronto's graffiti bylaw.

In order to remain as is, the Brick Works would have to meet certain exemption criteria, including determining whether the art is a mural.

Not all of the graffiti at the site has been wholesome. Over the 20 years that Evergreen has been associated with the Brick Works, efforts have been made to remove vulgar or less artistic offerings.

Work has also been done to repair sections that have succumbed to both the elements and vandalism. However, Stonehouse said that there is a place for much of what remains.

"Certainly not all of the art is beautiful, complex or even interesting," he said. "However, I think what's important is the overall impact that the layers of graffiti have as a whole and the sense you get of being in a place that's so authentic and raw and historical."

Regardless of what the city's decision will ultimately be, Fragedakis says any decision will likely not be finalized until 2012, or even as late as 2013.

"There won't be an immediate decision," she said. "The process will be handled politically and will go through city council, so it will certainly take some time before a final decision is made."



Model students:

Maryfran Vance-Dunk sketches an image of a live model at the public "Open Life Drawing Studio" at Centennial College's East York campus. This is the third year that she and her husband, Robert Dunk (beside her), have taken part in the class.

Observer, Cheronne Thurab

Femme fatale exhibit celebrates a woman's worth



Observer, Octavian Lacatusu

BLOWING BUBBLES: FEMME's creator, Caroline Kings, stands by her favourite painting. The artist's aim was to create a visual contradiction.

By OCTAVIAN LACATUSU

Caroline Kings' work lay toward the end of the gallery hall: a story that was told through three paintings called simply Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

The paintings showed an example of a negative transition in a girl's daily life. Today (Monday) she looks in the mirror and sees herself as a glittering star. The following day she sees herself as mundane, as not-so-special. On the third day, the mirror is shattered, her hair is in disarray and her face is blurred.

"It's all those varying stages of waking up every day and thinking something completely different about yourself and all your self-esteem," Kings said.

The works were part of FEMME, an art show that concluded this week and was mounted by the students in the fine arts program at Centennial College's East York campus. The participating artists tried to create a visual glimpse of some of the troubles that women endure in society.

Kings, the show's curator, set

the idea in motion because, she said, it's a subject many can relate to.

"My work is a visual memoir — telling my story, my experiences and what I know best about being a woman," she said. "It's all a description of what it is to be a woman in today's society and about modern femininity."

Kings' favourite piece is one of a woman's face blowing away bubbles. In one of those bubbles, however, is a fetus. The artist's aim is to create a visual contradiction. In Kings' words, it's a woman considering whether to give away her child through abortion, when she knows that there are women struggling to conceive a child in the first place.

"You're left with the question: Is she going to blow the bubble, is it going to pop, or will she reconsider?" Kings said.

Visitors could also take a look at the mirror in the gallery's interactive section and write about stereotypes. Its purpose was to inspire thoughts on modern femininity.

"You can look at the mirror and see all those things no one

else would think about," Kings said. "It was really fun to bring people here to raise awareness and at the same time have fun with it."

The works of Neil Tavares were among the many displays. He was the only man who had paintings in the show. His work, titled *The Bigger Picture*, features famous women being overshadowed by their male counterparts, such as Wonder Woman by Superman and Eleanor Roosevelt by Franklin.

"Very strong, powerful women, throughout their lives, they had a talent, a spark," Kings said. "But at the time, it was about their husbands or spouses. They were the more important ones."

As inequality issues linger on for women even today, Kings hopes the gallery will continue to bring people together to face the real problem.

"It doesn't only take a woman to realize what's going on out there. Anyone can see what's out there," she said.

"Anyone can change the life of someone else, just recognizing the problem."