



54 Division's future yet to be decided

By **MATTHEW WOCKS**
The Observer

The reports of 54 Division's death are greatly exaggerated, says a Toronto police spokesperson.

Mark Pugash, director of corporate communications for the Toronto Police Service, said the future of the division and its headquarters at 41 Cranfield Rd. has yet to be decided, in spite of media reports to the contrary.

The rumours began on Oct. 11, when police Chief Bill Blair met with residents of Thorncliffe Park at Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute. He discussed, among other things, the future of the headquarters, located near O'Connor Drive and St. Clair Avenue, and the projected \$35-million cost of replacing it. Media reports the next day focused on speculation that 54 Division could be closing, but Pugash said that emphasis is misleading.

"There has been no decision," he said. "Any suggestion otherwise is wrong."

Blair is currently gathering information and will present his findings to the board and to the city, Pugash explained.

"This is the beginning of a process to look at what is most effective way to deal with the aging building," he said.

The three options being discussed are:

- Maintain the current boundaries and construct a new building at a new location
- Amalgamate 54 and 55 divisions and build a new headquarters
- Realign divisional boundaries

The division is bordered by the Don River to the west, Victoria Park to the east, Eglinton Avenue to the north and Danforth Avenue to the south.

Ward 29/Toronto-Danforth councillor Mary Fragedakis, who spoke to residents of her ward about the options, said she fears that closing down or changing the division could make the community less safe.

"My community is interested in maintaining the existing boundaries and rebuilding the new station," she said, "and I want what my community wants."

While Pugash said the cost of rebuilding would be a significant financial expenditure, Fragedakis said the funding has been in the capital budget for the last 10 years.

"The money has already been set aside," she said.

Regardless of the decision, Pugash wants residents of East York to know that every effort will be made to preserve the front-line police presence.

FALLING FOR FALL



Nick Tragianis /// Observer

Crossing into autumn

Summer is a fading memory as the days become shorter and cooler, but that isn't stopping cyclists from taking in the colours along Pottery Road and Bayview Avenue.

Thorncliffe Park school is first of its kind

By **ARIELLE QUIGLEY**
The Observer

Help wanted: A principal willing to manage an all-kindergarten school of 700 children in Thorncliffe Park. Principal Catherine Ure has answered the call and is ready for the task.

"One of the biggest challenges will be really just keeping up with them," she said.

This new all-kindergarten school is a first for Canada, and it will be opening its doors in September. The building, being constructed on a site between Thorncliffe Park Public School

and the East York Town Centre, has been designed to specifically meet the needs of young children.

Ure, who has been a part of Toronto's public education system for 23 years, has spent the last year planning its programming. She has been focusing on inquiry- and play-based learning and a considerable amount of outdoor education opportunities.

"Rather than doing the same-old, same-old for 10 years, we're really pushing each other to explore new avenues," she said.

Ideally, Ure would like the teachers in the school to act also as research-

ers. That means the teachers will continuously explore different practices and opportunities that will challenge the children in new ways, she said.

John Parker, the city councillor for Ward 26/Don Valley West — which includes Thorncliffe Park — was involved in the concept and planning stages of this new school. He said keeping the younger children together was important to the community.

"Various community members and leaders were consulted and I think we all came to the conclusion that it would be better to divide it by grade rather than drawing a line on a map,"

he said.

According to Gerri Gershon, the Toronto District School Board trustee who represents the area, the school has been built to accommodate very young children. There are ramps the children can use to get to higher floors, washrooms in each classroom and before- and after-school programs.

"Having very young children in one school and working with people who are experts in teaching very young children is a concept that was very attractive," she said.



Arielle Quigley /// Observer

POLICE BRIEFS

Two arrested, one at large

Two men have been arrested in connection with a shooting on Oct. 13. A man was shot three times outside a bar on O'Connor Drive. Police have also issued a warrant for Tyler James Bennett, 20, described as white, 200 lbs., 5'9", with tattoos on both arms and short brown hair. Police believe he may be armed and should be considered dangerous.

Police seek tips on assaults

Police are asking for help as they seek two men in the East York area in separate cases. In the first, Matthew Down, 35, is wanted on charges of assault with a weapon, failure to comply with probation and threatening death. In the second, Jeffrey Van-Wylick, 22, is wanted on assault, attempting to resist arrest, theft and failure to comply with recognizance counts. Pictures of the men are available on the Toronto police website.

~ Morgaine Craven



Matthew Wocks /// Observer

Blowing off glass

James Wardhaugh, a glassblower, spins a piece of molten glass at the Jeff Goodman glass studio, located at 51 Cranfield Rd. in East York.

Burglary rate soars in E.Y.

Auto theft and robberies down, break-ins on the rise in 54 Division

By ALI DAR
The Observer

Police in East York's 54 Division have curbed vandalism considerably compared to last year, but containing burglaries continues to be a struggle.

Police spokesperson Const. Tony Vella says that stopping the rising incidence of break-and-enters can only be accomplished through co-operation between the public and the police.

"Homeowners can play a part in stopping things like breaking and entering using simple tricks to keep criminals from choosing their property," Vella said.

He said that floodlights with sensors are one of the best things that can be used to deter

Crime stats in 54 Division			
	2012	2011	Change
Murder	0	1	-100%
Sexual Assault	58	56	3.6%
Assault	701	762	-8.0%
Robbery	110	123	-10.6%
B and E	226	186	21.5%
Auto Theft	69	83	-16.9%
Theft Over	22	23	-4.3%
Total	1186	1234	-3.9%

criminals. "When a floodlight comes on, a criminal doesn't know if someone's home or if it came on automatically. Most times, criminals will decide to skip the house," Vella said. "They are looking for the easiest house to get into." He also suggests that homeowners consider purchasing a monitoring system for their property, which could scare off some criminals and limit

the 'working time' of others. According to the latest Toronto police crime statistics for 54 Division, which covers most of East York, crime in the area is down 3.9 per cent compared to last year. The biggest decrease in crime came in the categories of auto theft and robbery. But breaking and entering is up 21.5 per cent in the division, which covers all but the eastern third or so of the com-

munity. That's a huge jump from last year — and it's more startling when compared to a 5.6-per cent decline in burglaries across all of Toronto.

The only other crime to see an increase in 54 Division is sexual assault, which is up 3.6 per cent, amidst a decline across the rest of Toronto.

Manjeet Singh, a professional security system installer, suggests another trick to ward off potential criminals. "Make them think you have security cameras. They don't need to be real just look real. Most people won't try a property that can potentially record them," he said.

Singh recalls a particular house at which he installed a security system and a few dummy cameras.

"To this day, their house hasn't been broken into again. I don't even think people throw garbage on their property because they're scared to get caught on-camera," he said.

WHAT'S UP IN E.Y.

Remembering soldiers of war

St. Barnabas' Anglican Church will be holding an event next month entitled Remembering. It will feature a concert of secular and sacred music to honour veterans and those who did not return home from war. The concert, on Sunday, Nov. 11 at 4 p.m., will include performances by the choir and soloists, including special guest piper Rob Crabtree. Tickets are \$8 in advance or \$10 at the door. A reception will follow.

Celebrate the season with Christmas fair

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

~ Arielle Quigley

Hudak, Leasiders talking about subway again

By NICK TRAGIANIS
The Observer

On the heels of Dalton McGuinty's resignation as premier of Ontario, provincial PC leader Tim Hudak has reopened the controversial light-rail transit (LRT) versus subway debate.

Hudak announced on Oct. 12 that if elected premier, he will scrap light-rail transit (LRT) along four prospective LRT lines, including the Eglinton-Crosstown route, and direct as much as he can of the \$8.4 billion reserved for public transit expansion toward subways.

Eglinton Avenue businesswoman Joanna Drum, manager of Pier 1 Imports, supports Hudak's bid for subways but is concerned about

looming construction delays. "It's going to have a disruptive effect on your business if they have to shut down for any length of time," she said. "If they're talking years, it could put people out of business in the process. It's the reality of putting in a system like that."

Drum, however, is willing to put up with the inevitable construction pains in the name of better transportation.

"If it's a necessary evil that takes 10 to 15 years to build and you rip it off like a Band-Aid and you got a better transportation system, then so be it," she said.

Bob and Miriam Gindi, owners of Vision Aids, are concerned about construction for dif-

ferent reasons. The store, located on Eglinton Avenue just west of Laird Drive, caters to visually impaired clients.

"(Most of our clients) use public transportation and it's going to affect us," Miriam Gindi said. "It's going to be hard for them. We'll have to find a way to help them cross the street and remain safe."

Bob Gindi says subways are best suited to his business and that his clients would face fewer hazards.

"They prefer subways," he claims. "It's better than buses or LRT. If we have a subway that comes here, the customer would come straight from the station to the store."

Kathy (who requested her surname not be

published) has lived in the Laird Drive and Eglinton Avenue East neighbourhood for the past 20 years and sides with Hudak's subway bid.

"I would be OK with it because subways are the way to go," she said. "As a person that travels via TTC on a regular basis, I strongly feel that we should build subways to accommodate the growing population."

Recalling traffic earlier this summer as Eglinton underwent soil testing for the proposed LRT line, she called the gridlock during that two-week period "beyond awful."

"I'm not looking forward to when they have to do the construction of the new transit line, whether it's LRT or subway," she said. "But you got to have short-term pain for long-term gain."

OUR ANNIVERSARY: 1972-2012

A blast from the past

Observer celebrates 40 years of covering East York

The Observer, December 17, 1989 -- 7

EDITOR'S NOTE

In our previous two editions, we've traced the history of this newspaper since 1972, when the Observer was founded to provide real-world experience to Centennial College journalism students — and to provide informative, entertaining coverage of both East York and Scarborough to readers in both communities.

We've recapped some of the significant changes over our 40 years, including the shift to East York exclusively — first in coverage and then in physical location, with the move of our newsroom to Centennial's Carlaw Avenue campus. Of course, there have been changes within the newsroom too: from typewriters to laptops, from a wet darkroom to digital imaging. And there have been changes at the delivery end of our operation as well, from strictly newsprint over the first half of the Observer's lifetime to online alongside print over the second half.

Just shortly before we first appeared on the Internet, the Observer looked back on the decade of the 1980s in East York with a two-page spread highlighting the top stories over those 10 years. The spread ran on Dec. 17, 1989, and in our last issue, we reproduced the first page of it; here's the second.

In our next edition, another page from our scrapbook — from the '90s.

In this instalment of our retrospective, we look back on the second page of a two-page spread that appeared in the Dec. 17, 1989 Observer... reflecting on East York over the decade of the 1980s.

EAST YORK IN THE EIGHTIES

1983

Toronto East General opened its in vitro fertilization clinic on Feb. 1.

The issue of Paul Haygarth's video arcade came to a boil. Haygarth opened his Coxwell Avenue arcade on Jan. 31, only to have it closed down the next day by borough officials. By March, Justice Robert Reid had upheld East York's injunction, therefore forcing Haygarth to close down the arcade and remove all the video games.

Captain Walter Burnett of the Cosburn Avenue firehall defied his union and refused to retire despite a mandatory retirement age of 60.

1984

This was a year of celebration for East York. The borough commemorated its 60th year, while the venerable recreation guru Stan Wadlow celebrated his 80th year by receiving the Bulldog award, East York's highest honor.

Shawn O'Sullivan made East Yorkers proud by winning the silver medal for the light-middle-weight class in the Los Angeles Olympic games.

East York Collegiate industrial arts teacher Ken Johnson began his racism fight against the board of education. His story continued through 1989 (see story, page 1).

1985

About 15,000 Leaside residents won't soon forget December of this year. Their telephone service was cut off for about a week in December after a section of Millwood Road collapsed because of a mudslide.

Another disruption happened at Valley Park Junior High: a minor PCB spill. No one was harmed.

Mayor Dave Johnson reached out and touched the public with his first weekly phone-in talk on local cable TV.



VICTORY LAUGHTER: Mayor Dave Johnson, flanked by hydro commissioners Stan Wadlow and Frank Johnson, celebrate 1985 election triumphs.

1986

This was a year of change for the York East provincial riding. Christine Hart won a by-election to become the first Liberal to hold the seat since 1905.

After running for three years, the borough's recycling program was shut down because of lack of funding by the provincial government. But the shutdown was to be short-lived. By late October, works commissioner Paul Cockburn was already making plans for recycling to begin again in 1987.

Ken Johnson's battle to prove racism charges against a fellow teacher reached yet another impasse when his union refused to pay his legal fees for a hearing before the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

After two years of dispute over extended hours for the Petro-Canada gas bar on the corner of Gamble and Pape Avenues, council approved the application, causing a public outcry.

Phase 1 of the \$9.9-million plan to renovate East York Collegiate Institute was due to be completed by mid-August. But when construction of the north wing was incomplete by the beginning of the school year, about 2,000 students got an extra week of summer vacation.

Police believed the driver, David Wilkinson, fell asleep and his car crashed head-on into a truck, killing himself and passenger Rodney Snider.

Ken Johnson told his Ontario Human Rights Commission inquiry that the hearings are "biased against

Compiled by John Dujay, Glenn Fraser, Laurene Hilderley, Tanja Nowotny and Jeff Wilson

1987

Centennial College's plans to develop part of the East York campus, possibly to accommodate stores, housing and a community centre, was announced by college president Bev McCauley.

East York elementary teachers walked the picket lines in a strike that would last almost four weeks. The settlement gave teachers 100 minutes of weekly preparation time starting in 1988.

The week of Oct. 19-23 found the public getting its first glimpse of space paraphernalia on display at the re-named Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute. Canada's first astronaut, Marc Garneau, attended the official opening ceremonies on Oct. 16.

Mayor Dave Johnson was alone in his opposition to plans to construct a \$7-million municipal building. Johnson argued that the money could be better spent on roads, sewers and other projects, while Ward 2 Alderman Bill Buckingham suggested that a new building would help promote civic pride.

1988

East York couple Bob and Alison Jung were awarded \$38,000 for termite damage in their recently-purchased Gamble Avenue home.

Bill Valliere says he'll relocate his endangered animal sanctuary to Bowmanville, rather than upgrade the Millwood Road facility. The sanctuary's registration was suspended for failing to meet requirements of the Animals for Research Act.

Two "inseparable" schoolmates at East York Collegiate were killed on their way to Florida for the March

cases of racism" and twice refused to take the stand in his own defence.

Operators of the Victor Home for unwed mothers appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board in an attempt to win approval of their preferred expansion plans to the Hillside Drive facility.

Mayor Dave Johnson dons green garbageman coveralls and a fluorescent vest to deliver the borough's first blue box recycling containers. Nov. 14 was the first collection day and the start of a program which led to a whopping 89 per cent participation rate — tops in all of Metro.

1989

Stan Wadlow, one of East York's best-known and best-loved citizens, died. The long-time recreation director and volunteer extraordinaire was 85.

"Monster homes" became a common metaphor for residents opposing the construction of homes occupying up to 60 per cent of the lot size. The debate focussed on Parkview Hills, south of O'Connor Drive, but the word quickly applied to other neighborhoods across the borough.

East York's works department met stiff opposition when it proposed a reduction in garbage collection from twice to once a week. Ward 1 councillor Case Ootes said the reduction would save the borough \$450,000 annually, but others were concerned about stockpiling garbage and reducing services.

A spectacular natural gas explosion instantly levelled one Coxwell Avenue house and trapped a woman in her burning home next door. Damage to the neighborhood was estimated at \$800,000 and left the area littered with debris.



SCHOOL'S NAMESAKE: Astronaut Marc Garneau discusses his space voyage with student Svetlana Sreckovic during 1987 ceremonies to rename Overlea Secondary School. Besides adopting Garneau's name, school launched new high-tech programs.



MONSTER HOMES: The phenomenon alarmed some East Yorkers, who saw newcomers buying small homes on big lots and replacing them with the so-called "monsters." Parkview Hills residents hotly debated the formula in public meetings early in 1989.



PITCHING IN: The blue box recycling program came to the borough this year, and East Yorkers pitched in with a passion. At year's end, the program was expanding to apartments and schools.



Alicia Ferrero /// Observer

Bob Lister (left) and George Hurst are the organizers of the Awesome Fall Sale at Leaside United Church.

In a word, it's 'Awesome'

Annual fall bazaar a welcome tradition at Leaside United Church

By **ALICIA FERRERO**
The Observer

'Tis the season... for church sales, as Christmas looms, now less than two months away.

But on Millwood Road, one of the area's biggest seasonal bazaars maintains a distinctively fall air — right down to its name.

The "Awesome Fall Sale," which was held at Leaside United Church on Oct. 12 and 13 this year, is a two-decade tradition and companion to the church's May spring sale. Both consist of 13 depart-

ments, including glassware, household items, jewelry, furniture and clothing.

The proceeds from the sale go to outreach programs, maintaining the church and supporting groups within it. Since the sale began in 1993, the church has donated \$125,000 to these programs.

"Ladies from the church had a rummage sale once a year," said George Hurst, founder of the event.

"They were getting tired, so they asked if I would take over."

The church accepts donations for the sale all year.

About three months before the big weekend, "rag pickers" — a group of church seniors — begin sorting the donations and washing the linens and clothes so that

they are in top condition. On the days of the sales there are 70 staff members, 20 of whom are not even church members.

"They really believe in what we do," Hurst said.

After the sale, the church continues to informally sell what is left. It eventually donates the rest to a Goodwill outlet in Thorncliffe Park.

"Ninety per cent of the stuff sold would have ended up in a landfill," Hurst said. "It is a good thing for the environment."

And a good thing for the organizers, who have formed a fellowship through the years of participating in the sale.

"We have developed strong backs, a good sense of humour and good friendships," said helper Bob Lister.

Yoga stretching out the masses

Therapeutic postures, exercises said to boost strength and flexibility

By **REBECCA RAVEENDRAN**
The Observer

In the heart of East York, hearts are beating a little more steadily, thanks to a 90-minute moving meditation class. Its purpose is to relieve stress and anxiety.

In its second year of business, Bikram Yoga East York (BYEY), located at 1 Thorncliffe Park Dr., is attracting new participants every day.

The centre's therapeutic series of 26 yoga postures and two breathing exercises, performed in a heated room, is believed to increase flexibility and strength and to assist in recovery from injury, improved health and stress relief.

Andrew Moniz, the studio owner, explained what he said is the power of Bikram Yoga. He believes it helps individuals find calm through an invigorating, challenging and vibrant yoga experience that will, ironically, cause the participant to sweat.

"Bikram Yoga East York is providing the East York community with a place where my students can come and forget about your daily trials and tribulations.

It is a place where they can discover a new self," Moniz said. "There is no judgment and no expectations; my students come in as they are and watch themselves grow physically, mentally and spiritually."

Advocates of this practice of yoga say it

is medically proven to heal the body.

"It has been backed up by the American Health Association and the University of Tokyo, Japan," Moniz said. "When you offer such a great product, it is hard to not get people's attention."

A regular yoga practice is said to have health benefits too. It can help detoxify the body, relieve muscle and ligament tension, alleviate stress and anxiety and regulate the systems of the body.

"Thousands of years of yoga science, backed by scientists at Tokyo University, means Bikram Yoga is unparalleled in its ability to restore health and balance to the mind and body," Moniz said.

The studio offers a schedule that includes 27 classes a week and a 'hot room' that can hold up to 73 people.

Christine De Slatto, an instructor at BYEY, said clients come from all over the GTA to take part in classes.

"Dedicated Bikram Yogis are willing to travel to practise at an amazing studio, so some students come from as far as Newmarket," she said.

De Slatto claims that students who practise at BYEY are the strongest in the city.

"The studio is hotter than other Bikram Yoga studios and the students love it," she said.

Students who participate at the centre agree that they're passionate about the practice and committed to their studio.

Lena Yang, a student at BYEY, believes it is a practice to be enjoyed and embraced.

"The practice can be challenging because of the hot temperature, but it is all in our mind," she said. "Don't blame anyone or anything for the outcome of the practice. Embrace it."



Jaclyn Dunham /// Observer

Danuta Weizenbluth teaches classes Thursday nights at The Potter's Studio. She demonstrates how to properly throw a pot on the wheel.

Local potters all fired up about community

By **JACLYN DUNHAM**
The Observer

A not-for-profit pottery cooperative in East York is demonstrating that a desire to help others extends beyond the studio and into the surrounding neighbourhood.

The Potter's Studio, at 2 Thorncliffe Park Dr., was established by a dozen enthusiasts in 1972.

They wanted to create a sustainable place where non-professional potters could work.

Forty years later, the studio remains as popular as ever with 50 members and waitlists for classes.

Danuta Weizenbluth teaches classes once a week at the studio. She says that its nurturing environment makes it a perfect place to learn how

to pot.

"It's a delightful thing for everyone here because we sort of look after each other," she said. "We share tips with each other. It's wonderful in that sense, to have that bonding."

This attitude is also apparent in the way the studio gives back to the community.

Every year, the co-operative holds two four-day sales, in the fall and spring. At these sales, a table with donated pieces is organized with 100 per cent of the proceeds going to a local charity of the studio's choosing.

Studio members are still deciding which charity will receive the donation from their upcoming November sale.

Lynda Smith became a member in 1985 after visiting

one of the sales. She says the studio also donates bowls for an event called Empty Bowls in the spring, benefitting Toronto's homeless.

"I like the sense of community. I like sense of community in my community," she said. "That's what life's about isn't it?"

Milyda Scott has been a member for three years and says there are so many people in need in the Thorncliffe-Flemingdon area that it's hard to choose which charity to help every year.

"A lot of people are new to Canada or have disabilities so it's nice to give them a cheque all of a sudden and they're really excited. They really are," she said.

The fall sale begins Nov. 22, and it will feature 4,000 to 5,000 pots.



● For more stories about the East York community, please visit us online at torontoobserver.ca

REVIEW



Louise Andre // Observer

Actor Daryn Dewalt prepares to go on stage as Rudyard Kipling in *My Boy Jack*, the East Side Players' latest production. The play opened last night and runs until Nov. 10.

History brought to life

By LOUISE ANDRE
The Observer

In their latest production, the East Side Players grab onto the hearts of their audience members and toss them from hand to hand, from sad to happy and then back again.

My Boy Jack opened last night at the Papermill Theatre on Pottery Road, and is based on the true story of the severely shortsighted John "Jack" Kipling (Joshua Mott), pressured into enlisting in the First World War by his father, the writer Rudyard Kipling (Daryn Dewalt). Despite Jack Kipling's vision and pleas for him to stay from his mother, Carrie Kipling (Kelly Morrison), and sister, Elsie "Bird" Kipling (Hannah Drew), he enlists in the war and ultimately sacrifices his life.

In an interview, actor Daryn Dewalt said his character, Rudyard Kipling, was raised in a military school and so he feels it is his patriotic duty to encourage his son to enlist.

"You've got these two extremes, so the challenge playing this role is to make sure that people see me as a loving father, as well as someone who was loyal to the Empire," he said.

Kelly Morrison shines as the worried and heartbroken mother. From her anguished look to the short breaths she takes when she finds out her son has died, audience members will be able to tell that Morrison is a mother in real life.

Morrison said the play has many sad moments, but there is ultimately more to take away from it.

"I hope that people walk away not just feeling sad, but with a greater understanding of that period in our history and what people actually...experienced," she said.

Director Julian Mulock, who has been with the East Side Players for 25 years, said *My Boy Jack* is an exciting but challenging show to put on.

"We have to go from the living room of the Kipling family to the place transforming into First World War trenches," he said.

Although small, the Papermill Theatre still manages to accommodate set changes. Through the help of stagehands and actors, scenes change and moods change. The floors of the Kipling household are turned up and covered with mesh and adorned with ladders to create

a battlefield trench.

When Jack Kipling goes missing, his heartbroken family spends years conducting countless interviews to find out where their loved one is.

Dewalt said before he got this role, he knew very little about the First World War.

"I think the generation today doesn't really know much about the war, so I had a lot of insights into why it was called the Great War," he said. "For the people that sacrificed, I had much more respect and understanding the families."

The play runs until Nov. 10, the eve of Remembrance Day. The Papermill Theatre is at 67 Pottery Rd. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$15 for students. They're available for purchase online at www.eastsideplayers.ca or by calling 416-425-0917.



Leslie Emmons // Observer

Frank Calandrino, stylist and owner of Bob and Paige salon, finishes cutting Sara Lynn Cauchon's hair during the 15th annual Mane Event, held on Sunday.

Snip, clip and a big tip

Salons cut hair to raise funds for children affected by HIV/AIDS

By LESLIE EMMONS
The Observer

Bob and Paige salon was buzzing on Sunday, and it wasn't just the sound of clippers.

Hair was being cut, styled and dyed in conjunction with the Teresa Group's 15th annual Mane Event fundraiser. The salon, located at Danforth Avenue and Playter Boulevard, donated its time and expertise for a good cause.

Constance Nobes is the event co-ordinator and volunteer manager for the Teresa Group, an organization offering programs and services for children and families affected by HIV and AIDS.

"Affected meaning the child might not be infected, but someone in their household is," she said.

Four salons participated in the Mane Event this year, Nobes said, with proceeds going to Teresa Group programming.

"We provide practical assistance and emotional support to children up until the age of 18," Nobes said. "We have a kids' lunch pack program, where we help families to provide snacks for their child's lunch. We also provide diapers for infants and toddlers up until the child's third birthday."

Frank Calandrino is a stylist and an owner of Bob and Paige salon. This is his first year participating in the event. He said he got involved to "pay it forward."

"We've been really fortunate, because our business is doing well," he said. "We're doing a lot of our regular clients. We're just making a point of booking for that day. I think this will be extra special because they're getting pampered and they're donating at the same time."

Salon regular Sara Lynn Cauchon called for an appointment, was told about the event, and decided to participate.

"I was excited to come," she said. "I got a cut done and it's great that not only do I get an amazing haircut, but I also get to help out for a great cause."

Nobes said that in addition to beautiful hair, she hopes participants left the salons with a greater understanding of the organization and challenges encountered by youth affected by HIV and AIDS.

"These kids still face discrimination," she said, "and the discrimination and stigma leads them to feeling shameful."

TUM: Tasty treats and quick eats

Foodies flock to Brick Works to sample popular market's fares

By DILEEN SIMMS
The Observer

The Toronto Underground Market (TUM) is not a secret anymore.

In fact, it seems as if all of the city's foodies were at the Evergreen Brick Works Saturday night for the group's monthly event.

"It was amazing," said TUM's co-founder Kate Clegg. "We sold 2,200 tickets."

Rain did not dampen the atmosphere at the outdoor event, held at the East York venue on Bayview Avenue, as food-lovers streamed into the courtyard.

"I think we got as many people as we could through

those doors," Clegg said.

While the organizers were no doubt happy with the turnout, some patrons, like David Ross, thought it was a little congested.

"It's very crowded, very busy," he said. "I think they might have sold too many tickets."

Despite this, he and his friends endured long lineups to sample delicious treats.

"I would recommend the chinotto braised short ribs sandwiches," Ross said with a smile. "They are very good."

The sandwich, one of the offerings from The Slow Room, was a popular item, but not one of the major hits of the night.

That honour went to the soft shell crab sandwich, which was making its second appearance at a TUM event.

"Oh my goodness — I can't believe it. I sold out of everything,"

said Sandra Mandarino, who manages the College Street café with her husband Robert.

It's validating that people recommend the sandwiches, Mandarino said, since vendors must submit their creations to win a spot at the underground market.

"It's a nice feeling because you have to come to the table with something different every time," she said.

Deborah Tanaka, a newbie to the food event, was also rewarded for her patience in the line.

"I'm really impressed," Tanaka said. "Crispy and

rich — a nice way to feature a delicate crab shell in a bite-size meal."

She had sampled a number of new foods and was enjoying her night out.

"(It's) definitely something that's overdue," she said. "It's great to see that Toronto has such a strong and vibrant food culture."

The organizers say that they wanted to give budding food entrepreneurs and home chefs an audience; to give them the ability to test their products on a willing group of people in a casual environment at an accessible price point.



Dileen Simms // Observer

EDITORIALS

Licensing cyclists

People have been talking about licensing bicycles in Toronto since the practice stopped in the city 55 years ago. It's an issue that's discussed so frequently that the City of Toronto has dedicated a whole page on its website to outline the history of bike licensing.

It dates back to 1935, when the city first implemented a bylaw to "license residents owning and using bicycles." But the bylaw was repealed just 22 years later, on Feb. 4, 1957, because, according to the city's webpage, so many youngsters were unconsciously breaking the law that it was leading to "poor public relations between police officers and children."

Nowadays, Cycle Toronto (formerly known as the Toronto Cyclists Union) remains opposed to bike licensing. These bicycling advocates say "it creates a disincentive to cycling and creates unnecessary administrative burdens and costs to taxpayers, while not providing any discernible benefit."

But let's consider the other side of the coin. Just last month, the East York Observer reported on a police crackdown on cyclists on the Danforth. The police handed out over 55 tickets to cyclists who didn't have any horns or bells, rode on the sidewalk and disobeyed red lights. That's a pretty phenomenal number of cyclists disregarding rules meant for their and others' safety.

Compare this situation to those who have licences to drive motor vehicles. If a driver is stopped by police for an infraction (such as running a red light), he can be ticketed, fined and even have his licence suspended.

So what would be wrong with a system where bike licensing and cyclist registration could mean police checking riders' history by simply scanning their licence tags? By checking their records, they could know if those people have disobeyed traffic signals in the past. This could help them determine the extent of the penalty they enforce.

We could even take this further than licensing and enforce a "cycling insurance policy." No one can legally drive a vehicle without insurance in case of a collision. What about the risk of collision involving cyclists? If an accident between a car and a bicycle does occur, the fault — believe it or not — does not always rest with the car driver. Witnessing a cyclist coast through a red light, or almost collide with a pedestrian, is a common occurrence in East York and the rest of Toronto.

~ Diana Faria

Short reports get a big fat F

Being a teacher can be a difficult job. They need to equip children with knowledge and encourage students to grow as individuals. That can't be easy, but surely, writing insightful comments on their students' report cards isn't that big a deal for them.

Nevertheless, the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario has urged its members to write minimal commentary on the upcoming report cards, due in November. Clearly the move is a protest against the contract that the province has imposed on them. However, the students, not Dalton McGuinty, are the ones who will be affected the most by this. As Ontario's education minister, Laurel Broten, put it: "The bare minimum is not good enough for the students of this province."

Yes, it does take effort to write comments about every student, but in the end, it is part of a teacher's job. Although the letter grades are all that matter to a few, the comments allow both students and their parents to know the story behind that grade and how the children can improve.

This instruction from the teachers' union is only a "suggestion." They aren't imposing it. So nobody knows how many teachers will act upon this directive, but it is certain that those students who do receive one-sentence comments will be at a loss.

Yes, there's blame to go around here. Sheila Cary-Meagher, Toronto District School Board trustee for East York, says she's disgusted with the way the ministry of education is handling relations with the teachers.

"It seems to me that the government is spending a lot of time doing things other than running the ministry of education," Cary-Meagher said.

But Broten is right to take this bull by the horns. ETFO's report card idea will leave many Ontario students without a true sense of their standing. The union should stop toying with children in this dispute with the province.

~ Dennis Wu

Letter: Grinding gears over bike safety

There seems to be something amiss either in the well-written story about the "Police crackdown on cyclists..." (Sept. 28) or its sidebar, as the latter adds up to 49 tickets issued to cyclists during the police enforcement blitz from Sept. 10 to 14 on the Danforth, while the story says there were 59 issued. I wondered whether it was a typo, or was there some other category missing from the sidebar list?

Given the current discussion about licensing bicycles in the face of most cyclists flaunting the rules of the road (they're covered by the On-

tario Highway Act too), I think those cyclists who do make an effort to obey the law and rules of the road should try to convince their fellow cyclists to get with the program, for safety's sake if for no other reason. Maybe if a shouted-out "Stop sign!" comes from a fellow rider, the offending cyclist won't just give back the finger in return (which is what I get nine times out of 10 when walking or driving).

~Bernard Katz
Eglinton Avenue East

COLUMNS

What Amanda Todd taught

The death of Amanda Todd shed new light on the fact that everyone deserves some protection from bullying. The 15-year-old B.C. teen committed suicide on Oct. 10 after experiencing a series of vicious Internet threats. Her chilling online video — Amanda flipping through flashcards detailing the abuse she received because of a youthful indiscretion — turned her death into worldwide news and sparked important discussions.

Amanda's mental torture started after she exposed her breasts to an unidentified man through her webcam. The man took those images and digitally ran with them, spreading them around the web where others exploited the pictures and the opportunity to pile on with their own abuse.

But while many people have seen this tragedy in simple terms — shallow, mean-spirited people driving an innocent girl to her death — others have taken a step back to rethink one of the basic ideas of the Internet.

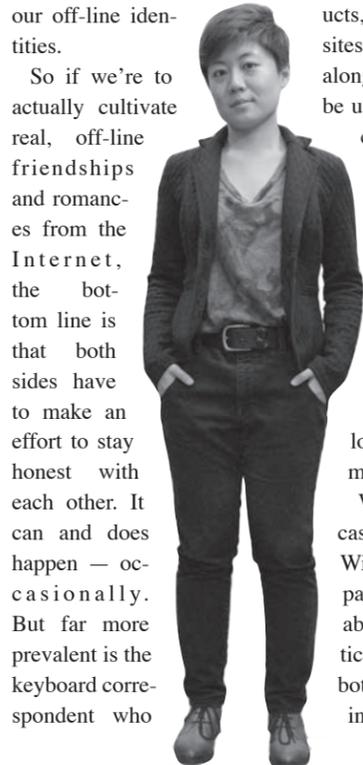
When connecting with unknown people in cyberspace, we, in many cases, appreciate the feeling of ease and security brought about by supposed anonymity. But we should recognize that this is incompatible with wanting to establish a real rapport with people at the other end of the net. Any apparent rapport between us and our cyber-friends will remain surreal and meaningless, unless both sides are willing to narrow the gap between our online personas and our off-line identities.

So if we're to actually cultivate real, off-line friendships and romances from the Internet, the bottom line is that both sides have to make an effort to stay honest with each other. It can and does happen — occasionally. But far more prevalent is the keyboard correspondent who

hides behind a made-up name and the display picture of a puppy or a movie star. And, as we've seen, that can be potentially dangerous.

This is not to say that the Internet itself deserves the blame for its anonymity. And I'm neither supporting nor opposing the Internet or its byproducts, like social media websites. There's a Chinese saying along the lines of, 'A knife can be used to cook a meal, but it can also be used to murder someone.' The saying perfectly explains the nature of the Internet — and other technologies. They themselves are amoral, and at the end of the day, it all depends on whether the person with the technological knife is a cook or a murderer.

We can even see this in the case of Amanda Todd. Now Wikipedia and Facebook pages have been created about her. Some include tactics for self-protection from both online and offline bullying. Ironically, the Internet that not only acted as a catalyst for her death is now acting as a catalyst to protect others from similar harm.



Jennifer Pang

Putting a price on donations

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and many people are proactively bringing that awareness to bear on this disease that marks so many lives.

People are donating to charities that help pay for research and treatment, they're 'running for the cure,' and even football players are donning pink.

Of course, supporting this cause is a good idea. But I do have a quibble: I have trouble with prizes being awarded to people for donating.

For example, on the website for the Dress For The Cause campaign, it says three supporters will win a Caribbean cruise for two. I know the possibility of winning might excite some people into donating... but there's something about the contest that's unsettling.

And Dress For The Cause is just one example.

Charity is defined, according to the Oxford dictionary, as "the voluntary giving of help."

If donating to charity truly is "the voluntary giving of help" then why are charities giving people the opportunity to be rewarded for donating?

I believe if people truly want to give to a cause, they will whether or not there is a chance of winning a prize. Isn't helping people, in this case with breast cancer, enough?

But it seems to be the norm when it comes to fundraising for

charities that there's some type of reward. Whether it's gift cards or a cruise, it depends on the charity (and, sometimes, on how much you donate). Some charities, such as the CIBC Run For The Cure, give people the option to donate the value of their prize back to the cause. Good idea. Every penny counts when we're raising money to save lives.

I'd even go so far as to say that the same applies when charities give people tax receipts for donating money. It is a form of a reward. It's like saying "donate to us and feel good about yourself, but don't worry... you'll get your money back at the end of the year!"

What does that accomplish? It is not really about giving away your money; it's giving to get something in return.

The way to fix this would be if everyone who donates refuses the reward. Possible? Yes. Probable? No. But next time you donate to a charity, take a step back and think, "Why am I doing this?" and not "What will I be getting in return?"



Alicia Ferrero

Finding a home far away from home

Homeless youth records life through donated lens

By JENNIFER PANG
The Observer

Not the experience of leaving his family at a young age. Not serving time in jail. Not living on the streets and being misjudged and stereotyped. None of it stopped Cody Caplette, a 24 year-old youth living at East York's Touchstone Youth Centre, from appreciating and capturing the beauty of life.

Using the disposable cameras donated by the youth helpline Hearing Every Youth Through Youth (HEYY), Caplette and other youth from Touchstone contributed photography to "Your life, OUR LIFE: A Day in the Life of a Sheltered Youth" — a photography exhibit held at Beit Zatoun House in the Bloor-Bathurst area.

It was Caplette's first experiment in recording the world through a camera. And he vividly recounted the circumstances around his photography.

"It was about 5:30 in the morning, down at Pape and Danforth. It's quiet, it's peaceful and surprisingly

enough there were quite a few vehicles," he said, "and I snapped the perfect photo of that corner... and you can see how the sun was just coming up. It was absolutely beautiful."

Another picture he submitted captures a dusky morning scene in which steam is coming out from the top of a building.

But contrary to the peacefulness in his photos, Caplette has had to deal with chaotic and tough situations in his life.

He has been travelling since he was 13 years old, because he and his family did not get along.

At the age of 15, his friend brought Caplette to Touchstone on Pape Avenue.

He's lived in different shelters and said Touchstone is one of the most agreeable.

Caplette was arrested and put in jail during the G20 event. He said he got angry, succumbed to a mob mentality and jumped on a police car after a couple of physical encounters with police earlier in the day.

When he was in jail, he said, he was bullied by the guards and by other prisoners. A friend's relative bailed him out and he is currently on probation.

As a shelter resident, Caplette said that he feels stereotyped, and that other youth from the shelter face the same problem.

"A lot of the stereotypes think that everybody who lives in the shelter is either a thief, a drug addict or has been abandoned by their fami-

lies," Caplette said, "but not everybody has that situation. I guess a lot of people have been put in a lot of bad situations, but not all of us are drug addicts or bad people."

"I might have tattoos all over my body, but I'm not a bad person," he continued. "I try to treat everybody with a lot of respect. That's what I wanted the community to understand."

Kihana Mitchell, a Grade 12 student from St. Michael's Choir School, has volunteered at both Touchstone and HEYY and has had a chance to learn what homeless youth are really like — from the inside.

"First time I came in as a volunteer I didn't know what I was walking into.... I came in with all the stereotypes (Caplette) was talking about, because I wasn't educated on it," Mitchell said, "and then, when I walked into here... I was like, 'Hey wait a second, this isn't like what they show in the movies or what everyone says homeless people are like.' They are just regular people and they don't have the best luck."

According to Khalvin Herbert, the manager of volunteer administration at Touchstone, there are many reasons for homelessness.

Some youth suffer from abuse and addiction.

"There also are youth who are dealing with gaining income through illegal means, (including) street prostitution, and that's one of the main ones we have been working on," Hebert said. That involves "getting them off the streets and getting them back into society."

"Every story is very different because there is not one reason for homelessness," he added. "Anything can lead to homelessness."

■Cody Caplette



Dennis Wu // Observer

Scary warehouse

Cameron Dunlop stands inside the 'zombie apocalypse warehouse' that he built in his backyard. The 54 Virginia Ave. attraction will be open tomorrow, Oct. 27, 7-11 p.m., and on Halloween Wednesday, 6-10 p.m.

Making trick-or-treaters feel safe while still having fun

By KATIE WRIGHT
The Observer

Halloween is fast approaching and party stores have costumes from Batman to scary witches flying off the racks. While kids are thinking about their alter egos, parents are thinking about their children's safety on Halloween night.

Rogers Pumpkin Patrol is an organization helping ensure the safety of trick-or-treaters. Over 1,000 Rogers volunteers patrol the streets on Halloween in their red company vans, so parents know there are extra sets of eyes looking out for their kids. This annual tradition started in 1984.

While the Pumpkin Patrol is out roaming the streets, police presence will be heightened across the GTA. Community relations officer Const. Joanna Theriault from 54 Division has some safety tips for trick-or-treaters.

"Buy a costume that fits

properly. Don't wait and take it out of the package on Halloween, only to realize it's too long and can be tripped on," she said. "Wear face paint rather than masks, so vision is not obstructed."

Jennifer Tracey has two young children who trick-or-treat in a group of other kids aged 11 and 12.

"We grab all the kids before they go out and give them a pep talk and lay down the ground rules," she said. "We start out with them and if they get ahead of us, we meet at each stop sign."

Tracey also emphasizes that her kids have been taught what to look for when going through their candy at the end of the night.

Alicia Shaw, the mother of three young boys aged, four, six and 10, is accompanying her kids trick-or-treating this year. Like Tracey, her biggest concern

is harmful candy being given to her kids.

"Some people put things into Halloween candy that can harm children," Shaw said. "I don't like homemade treats, so we always throw those ones out and I look over all the candy to see if anything doesn't look right."

Const. Theriault expressed confidence in the safety of East York's streets, but advised that adults should accompany younger kids.

If older children are going by themselves, their route should be known to parents and a designated curfew should be set.

"We just want everyone to have a fun and safe night," she said.

Both Rogers Pumpkin Patrol (<http://pumpkinpatrol.ca/safety>) and police at 54 Division (<http://www.torontopolice.on.ca/>) have an extensive list of Halloween safety tips on their websites.

Scary tales told by Toronto librarians spook kids

By MOHAMMAD ARSHAD
The Observer

Nothing brings out Halloween spirit faster than a good scare that leads to screams and shrieks.

That's exactly what the children attending the "Scary Stories in the Dark" event at the Pape/Danforth Toronto Public Library location discovered on Oct. 19.

The event, which was orga-

nized by the Toronto Public Library, featured four librarians from various libraries around the city who each told stories to the 20 children in attendance.

While all the stories were different, each of them had one thing in common.

"They were all scary," said Jason MacDonald, 9, who was at the library with his mother. "The storytellers all acted really scary as well."

The session took place in a darkened room, the only source of light a few lit candles in the corner.

The storytellers took advantage of the atmosphere, whispering at times. They were even shrieking in order to startle the listeners.

"I think it is just fun for the kids to get a little scare before Halloween," said storyteller Delcey Gomez, who came from the St. Lawrence branch.

Gomez's story was one of the scarier ones.

It was about a pair of children who got tricked by a mysterious girl with a drum into committing wrongful deeds that eventually caused them to lose their mother.

Gomez even brought along a drum with her and struck it ominously as she told parts of her story.

Besides the drum story, other tales also provided

plenty of scares.

There was a story about a sailor finding a ship of bones that was filled with moving and talking skeletons.

Another story told of a man who was cursed into becoming a goat as punishment for his greed.

Gomez said all of the stories told during the event and others similar to them can be found in books available at the library.

"My favourite was the ship of bones story because it sounded so gross," said Jessica Morgan, 10, who was at the event with a group of her friends.

"But I liked all the other stories too because they were really scary."

The kids were rewarded with candy at the end of the event, which quickly replaced the gasps of fear with gasps of delight.

Author honoured during jubilee

East York college professor awarded for bringing the stories of forgotten Canadian war veterans to life

By AKIHIKO TSE
The Observer

Described by people who know him as someone whom veterans can open up to, and someone who “brings history to life,” Ted Barris, a professor of journalism at Centennial College’s Carlaw Avenue campus and an author of numerous books documenting the lives and experiences of war veterans, received the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee medal on Oct. 14.

The award, which was presented by Sen. Joseph Day at the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum in Hamilton, serves “to honour significant contributions and achievements by Canadians.”

In total, 60,000 Canadians will receive the award this year.

“I’m thrilled. I’m very happy,” said Barris, who

has interviewed over 4,000 veterans and written 15 non-fiction books, including national bestsellers *Victory at Vimy* and *Juno*, over the course of his career.

The award was given after the Air Force Association of Canada (AFAC), in partnership with the Governor General’s office, was tasked with conferring 80 medals on its most deserving nominated members. Barris has been an AFAC member for over 20 years.

In acknowledging his work in *Behind the Glory*, which chronicles Canada’s role in training and supplying a quarter of a million pilots for the British Commonwealth during the Second World War, Dean Black, national executive director of AFAC, said Barris found the disregard of the common experiences of those that were “all but ignored for their entire lives ... unacceptable.”



Akihiko Tse // Observer

Ted Barris, whose lapel was decorated with the Canada 125 medal in 1993 (on left) and the Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation pin in 2011 (at top), shows off his Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee medal.

“When we are able to put people together who had similar experiences and they get a chance to share those experiences,

we know in our hearts that people come away with a much better understanding of what it is they did, what their life contributions were

and how important they were,” Black said.

“When you get someone like Ted Barris to come along, you have to be thankful for someone who has the skills to write so eloquently and meaningfully about all that.”

Wayne Johnston, a former repatriation officer for the Canadian Forces and founder and fundraising chair for the non-profit organization Wounded Warriors, likened Barris to the late Pierre Berton, a prolific writer on Canadian history.

“Pierre Berton made history fun,” Johnston said. “It’s not about this division or that division, but it was about this guy and that guy, and that’s what Ted is. He brings history to life.”

Barris’s father, Alex, served as a field medic while writing for U.S. army newspapers and was made a member of the Order of Canada in 1999.

Barris described his father as a conscientious objector, but said, “It wasn’t the military that drew me. It was the people that drew me, and their untold stories. It is the most intense experience one can imagine, that thin line between life and death.”

While events like the upcoming Remembrance Day show respect and acknowledgement of loss, Barris said important individual experiences can sometimes be overlooked in those moments of silence.

“What makes it happen is we bother to ask and if we don’t, they’ll assume that we don’t care or we’re not interested,” he said.

“Sometimes we have to break through that and say what (they) did, any of the people I’ve talked to, is worth knowing and if you’re willing to give it, I’m willing to listen and share.”

Eid bazaar unites Asian community

By GEORGIA WILLIAMS
The Observer

The Jenner Jean-Marie Community Centre on Thorncliffe Park Drive was filled with the sweet smells of South Asian cuisine Sunday evening as the Thorncliffe Park Women’s Committee hosted their annual Eid Bazaar. The bazaar is the latest activity for the committee to unify the community.

“We’re a group of women from the area that came together to access community space,” said Sabina Ali, project co-ordinator for the Thorncliffe Park Women’s Committee.

The group helped revitalize R.V. Burgess Park, so Thorncliffe Park-area children have a safe playground.

“In 2008, we started having evening gatherings in the park. We invited local performers to entertain and have a market that goes till the late hours of the night,” Ali said.

The Eid Bazaar is one of two events held in the fall marking Islamic holidays, and is especially dear to Ali’s heart.

“It’s for the women entrepreneurs in the com-

munity,” she said. “It brings out women who are hesitant because their English is weak, and it helps them build self-confidence.”

Of the 140 vendors, the majority are women selling a wide array of goods, from food to jewelry with exotic gems.

Aamna Ikram has participated in the markets and bazaars since 2009, selling salwar kameez, a traditional dress worn by men and women in South and Central Asia.

“It’s very nice here. I like talking to the people that come,” Ikram said.

The women’s committee charges a small fee for vendors to help pay for the space rental.

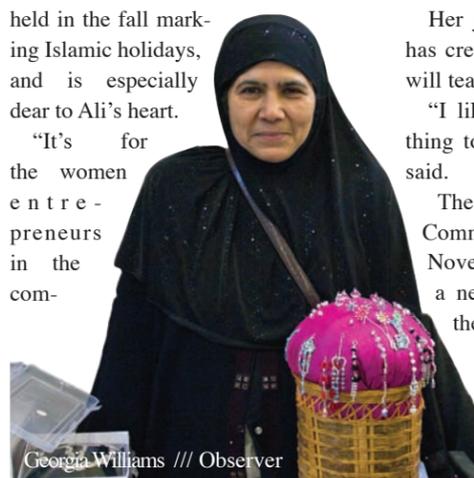
Razia Amla used to live in northern Scarborough and relocated to Thorncliffe Park so she could be part of the close-knit south Asian community. Amla sells handcrafted jewelry featuring gems sent from her sister in India where they both ran a small local business.

Her jewels are so popular that Ali has created a jewelry class that Amla will teach.

“I like making jewelry; it’s something to do in my spare time,” Alma said.

The Thorncliffe Park Women’s Committee looks forward to mid-November, when they hope to unveil a new Tandoori oven in the park they have grown to call home.

“As immigrants, we are trying to provide opportunities to come together,” Ali said.



Georgia Williams // Observer

■ Razia Amla

Historian sits for ‘royal tea’

By KAITLIN CLUBLEY
The Observer

Garry Toffoli always associated East York with medical procedures. When he was 16 years old, he had leg surgery at Toronto East General Hospital.

“I hated coming to East York, because I had to visit doctors and get a checkup, or all that medical stuff,” he said. “I always associated it in that way.”

Now Toffoli visits East York regularly, and the community has made a new impression on the writer.

“I come back and do lectures. A seniors’ historical group invited me to come and talk to them,” he said. “I’ve gone to them five or six times over the last couple years. That’s much happier than where you come to get operated on.”

With his historian background, including specializations in government, the military and royalty, Toffoli agreed to be the speaker at this month’s meeting of the East York Historical Society — about the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee.

The meeting was held at the S. Walter Stewart library branch on Oct. 17.

“I received the Queen’s Golden Jubilee medal. I was on the lieutenant-governor’s list at that time in 2002,” Toffoli said. “This year I received the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee medal. I was on the Canadian Royal Heritage Trust list for that.”

Approximately 30 people were in attendance with their appropriately royal big hats and headpieces for the presentation. Guests were able to enjoy tea and cookies that were served afterward.

Toffoli has co-authored, co-edited and published 15 books. He says his love for Canadian history is the reason behind his work in political science.

“As a teenager I had other things on my mind,” he said. “By the time I got to university, I was writing papers on constitutional significance of monarchies.”

Panchetta Barnett, the vice-president of the East York Historical Society, said she has been interested in the Royal Family since she was a little girl.

“My mother was a lover of the monarchy, and I



Kaitlin Clubley // Observer

Panchetta Barnett, historical society vice-president, in jubilee headgear.

remembered as a little girl, Queen Elizabeth came to Jamaica on her first voyage and I was put on my brother’s shoulders to see her in the parade in downtown Kingston,” she said.

Barnett said she learned something new from Toffoli’s presentation about the Jubilee.

“I learned that... they’re celebrating this year as the Jubilee, but it goes until next year,” she said, “because really it was in 1953 that she officially took the throne. I didn’t understand why this year why they were doing all the celebrations and awards.”

Toffoli still enjoys speaking about both the social and political side of Canada’s ties to the monarchy.

“It’s sort of funny — one week I’ll give a lecture on the royal origins in the history of nursery rhymes and the next week I’m giving a talk on how to change the rules of succession back to the throne or what the role of the Governor General is on, dealing with political issues that sort of bounce around,” he said.

“Royal history covers so many topics, so I enjoy the social history as well as the hard political history.”