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# THE EAST TORONTO OBSERVER

• Friday • February 18 • 2011 •

• PUBLISHED BY UTSC/CENTENNIAL COLLEGE JOURNALISM STUDENTS AND SERVING SCARBOROUGH •

•TORONTOOBSERVER.CA•



CHANELLE HENRIQUES/The Observer

## Winter is fun with art

Performers from the Jumblies Theatre Group pose with their ghostly masks which were handmade. Their masks will be showcased in a performance of *A Winter's Tale* at the end of this year.

## Local reps divided over pay freeze

JAMES WATTIE  
The Observer

With only one holdout in Scarborough, Toronto councilors have voted to freeze their pay for the year, completing another campaign promise for Mayor Rob Ford.

Scarborough Southwest councillor Gary Crawford voted yes on the freeze, which keeps salaries at just under \$100,000 and the mayor's pay at just under \$167,000.



DEL GRANDE

"We're looking at a lot of restraint over the next year and I think it's important that we lead by example," he said.

The motion was introduced by Mike Del Grande, Scarborough-Agincourt councillor and city budget chief.

"One leads by example," he said, a common statement amongst yay-voting councillors.

The vote of 39-3, on Feb. 8, showed that not all councillors are on side with Ford.

Willowdale councillor John Filion, along with Scarborough East's Ron Moeser and St. Paul's West's Joe Mihevc were the three lone nay votes.

"I think basically it was councillors slapping themselves in the head," Filion said.

Crawford defended the vote.

"I don't see it as a slap in the head at all," he said. "I think it has more to do with we do have to set an example moving forward in where we are going in the next couple of years."

A motion that would see the savings from the freeze go to the student nutrition program was sent to the budget committee for deliberation. The savings are estimated at \$110,000.

Filion called the motion self-degrading.

Had the student nutrition option been included, Filion said his vote would have changed.

# TTC worker faces charges

Scarborough man reports being shoved on bus, witnessed by 10-year-old son

MERSIHA GADZO  
The Observer

After their shocking experience on a TTC bus last month Isaac Gould says his son no longer feels safe commuting with transit and has asked his dad to get his driver's licence so they could avoid it altogether.

Gould was the victim of an alleged altercation with a TTC employee on a Scarborough bus.



ISAAC GOULD

Jan. 8 at 10 a.m.

The accused TTC employee boarded the same bus at McCowan Road to get to his designated route to start his shift.

Gould said the employee seemed upset before boarding the bus because it was behind schedule.

Once inside, he started shouting at the passengers on the bus to move back, but no one complied because it was already full.

"Shortly after that he freaked out, and swore at me," Gould said.

The employee told Gould to get out of the way, but the bus was already crowded.

"He grabbed me from be-

hind and slammed me into a pole in front of my son."

Gould asked the bus driver to stop the bus and call the police, but was ignored.

"I told him I was assaulted by one of his coworkers, and it didn't seem to faze him," Gould said.

Gould called 42 Division police and asked the bus driver for the employee's name.

Gould had heard the driver call the employee "Fred" when he had boarded the bus, but the driver denied any knowledge of his name when asked, Gould said.

Soon enough 42 Division contacted the TTC, who in turn called the bus driver and told him to stop, Gould said.

The charged TTC employee left the bus and boarded a northbound bus, before the police arrived.

"He didn't even stay, knowing that I was calling the po-

lice," Gould said.

"It was like he was trying to run and hide."

### Alleged assaults

■ June 1, 2009 : A 54-year-old woman reports sexual assault by a TTC driver.

■ Apr. 14, 2010 : TTC driver charged with assault over fare dispute.

■ Nov. 30, 2010 : A 28-year-old man allegedly beaten for smoking by TTC Special Constables.

"These are allegations that have been made and charges have now been laid," TTC spokesperson Brad Ross said.

"There's not much that I can say other than these are serious allegations and we as an organization are taking it very seriously."

The assault is the latest in a slew of TTC reports which include texting while driving, drinking while driving, and hitting and dragging pedestrians.

"I think that they [TTC] should be doing a better job," Gould said.

"There are a lot more things that are going on that I don't think they're aware about and I think their inspectors aren't catching all of the things that are going on."

The charged employee, Frederick Tulk, 59, from Pickering is scheduled to appear in court on March 17.

The employee recently surrendered to police on Tuesday and was charged with assault.

Gould and his 10-year-old son got on a westbound bus at Sheppard Avenue East on

## NEWS

# A welcome helping hand

## Islamic breakfast program aided by Jewish congregation

NATALIE SEQUEIRA

The Observer

Second Base Youth Shelter's prayers have been answered in the form of new funding that will help it keep its breakfast program running.

The Islamic Foundation of Toronto, with support from Darchei Noam — a Jewish congregation — is set to launch the new Feeding Faithfully program Feb. 27.

The breakfast program it replaces feeds 50 youth every morning and was in danger of being scaled back because of the shelter's budget concerns.

"It's a great example to the world that people from different faiths, cultures and nationalities ... come together for a common good," said Waris Malik, executive director of the Islamic Foundation. "Although people might think it's unheard of that something jointly has been done by Jews

and Muslims, I think the relationship we have developed can be a learning experience."

Myer Siemiatycki, Darchei Noam's congregation president, added that both the Jewish and Muslim communities place great value on helping

the less fortunate.

The synagogue, which has partnered with the Islamic Foundation in the past, has agreed to contribute volunteers on launch day and hopes to give money to support Feeding Faithfully

once its own budget allows,

Siemiatycki said.

The Feeding Faithfully program is expected to need nearly \$6,900 in funding for the year.

The Islamic Foundation has secured half that amount so far, and both it and the shelter are hopeful the city and pri-



NATALIE SEQUEIRA/The Observer

Roshan Mohammed (left) and his team of volunteers at the Islamic Foundation of Toronto prepare meals every Sunday for the foundation's Hot Soup days, which the new Feeding Faithfully program was modelled on.

vate donors will step forward.

Second Base is the only youth shelter in Scarborough, providing meals, shelter and learning programs to youth across the city.

A tightly stretched budget had the shelter looking to make needed cuts, and the breakfast program was high on that list.

"I don't want to say it

was on the verge of closing because we would never do that," said Jacqueline Manji, manager of fund development and communications at the shelter. "All our programs were in jeopardy of being either cut or seriously reduced, including the healthy breakfast program [which] was a huge drain on our financial resources."

Paul Taylor, executive director of the shelter, approached the Islamic Foundation after seeing Malik in a CBC feature, *Champions of Change*.

Malik told Taylor his foundation would not let the breakfast program falter.

"There was a tear in the corner of my eye," Taylor said. "I've seen the incred-

ible effects of young people being able to focus in school [after having breakfast]."

Manji attributes the Muslim-Jewish partnership to Canadian culture.

"It can only happen in the city of Toronto and in ... Canada," she said. "I think it's a positive reflection of the larger community we belong to."

# Would you eat a green cookie?

## Dad's Cookies now more eco-friendly with sustainable energy

ERICA TIANGCO

The Observer

You've heard about organic foods but would you eat green cookies?

On Feb. 1, Scarborough-baked Dad's Cookies became the latest product to jump on the environmentally friendly bandwagon. Food company

Kraft Canada has teamed up with Bullfrog Power, Canada's green electricity provider, to produce low-carbon cookies out of Dad's Toronto bakeries.

The new partnership will allow Kraft Canada to reduce energy-related carbon dioxide emissions produced by the making of Dad's Cookies, as

well as support the development of renewable power in Canada. By doing so, Dad's Cookies' carbon footprint will decrease significantly.

Green natural gas is a net-zero emissions energy source. It is created by releasing the same carbon dioxide created through the decay of organic waste. This natural, green gas does not increase the levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere as it is the same as the organic gas required to sustain animal and plant life.

"Through the pilot program, Bullfrog Power's generators inject 100 per cent green natural gas — as well as 100 per cent green electricity — into the respective natural gas and electricity systems to match the amount of gas and electricity used by the baking and packaging processes at Dad's Cookies' manufacturing facilities," Bullfrog public relations manager William Pointon said.

Each bakery location has

### Energy saved through green cookies

■ Energy-related carbon dioxide emissions reduced by 25 per cent

■ Water consumption reduced by 15 per cent

■ Solid waste reduced by 15 per cent

■ 150 million pounds of packaging eliminated

Source: Bullfrog Power



COURTESY OF WILLIAM POINTON/Bullfrog Power

Tom Heintzman (left), Bullfrog Power president, and Chris Bell, Kraft Canada's VP are all smiles at the Kraft Canada Scarborough Bakery.

now launched energy reduction projects, including upgrading to oven optimization and lighting conservation.

According to the official press release, "The decision to bullfrogpower the Dad's Cookies line complements Kraft Canada's environmental strategy, which aims to reduce Kraft Canada's energy use and energy-related carbon dioxide emissions by 25 per cent, water consumption by 15 per cent and solid waste by

15 per cent, and eliminate 150 million pounds of packaging material by 2011 based on 2005 levels."

Cookie lovers will have to wait until April 2011 for the newly packaged low-carbon cookies to hit stores.

Bullfrog's green natural gas service will be introduced to the public later this year. For more information on how you can lower your carbon footprint, visit [bullfrogpower.com](http://bullfrogpower.com).

## News Briefs

### Man shot, dies

A man in his 20s was found with gunshot wounds near Lawrence Avenue and Markham Road on Feb. 11. He was rushed to hospital with no vital signs and died on the way.

### UTSC on alert

Police have released a sketch of a young man who asked for potassium cyanide at the University of Toronto's Scarborough campus. The man visited the campus twice asking for the lethal chemical. See the sketch at: [torontoobserver.ca](http://torontoobserver.ca)

### Highrise blaze

A 91-year-old woman suffered serious burns after a fire in a Scarborough tower. Crews were called to the scene on Ellesmere Road on Feb. 12. Damages are reported to be \$400,000.

# Kingston Road to get facelift

## Project to start next year but no source of funding yet

AAKANKSHA TANGRI

The Observer

Redevelopment on parts of Kingston Road should start next year, Ward 36 councillor Gary Crawford says.

The project aims to beautify the area by putting planters alongside the light stands and cleaning it up to make it attractive to the community, Crawford said.

In 2009, the City of Toronto approved the Kingston Road "Avenue" study that included a plan to revive Kingston Road between Danforth Avenue and east of Midland Avenue.

The Birch Cliff and Cliffside communities were recognized by the city as avenues: areas that can be developed to keep pace with development in Toronto.

The study was meant to formulate a vision and implementation program for future development in the area.

Crawford said he is unsure of the cost of the entire project but estimates it could take 10 to 20 years to complete due to lack of funding.

"We're working on one small section ... Birch Cliff, which is only a couple kilometres," Crawford said. "Even though we're doing the planning, the funding isn't in place yet."

"There's place for small bits of it like the Birch Cliff study but we don't really have the long-term funding for this," he continued. "This is



AAKANKSHA TANGRI/The Observer

Newly elected Ward 36 councillor Gary Crawford (inset) hopes redevelopment on parts of Kingston Road will start next year. In 2009, the City of Toronto approved the Kingston Road "Avenue" study that included recommendations and an execution strategy to revive Kingston Road from Danforth Avenue to east of Midland Avenue.

something that could cost tens of millions, if not hundreds of millions of dollars over a long period of time."

The plan proposes to add commercial-residential zones, outdoor and indoor spaces for private and public recreational activities, bicycle parking spaces, landscaping, outdoor patios and townhouses.

Residents and business owners have mixed reactions to the plan.

Local resident Douglas Chadwick said the city should focus on getting rid of car dealerships.

"I'd like to see housing and

parks in the area," he said.

According to Crawford, one of the key issues of the plan is getting the participation of business owners in creating combined residential and commercial areas.

"If a business owner

doesn't want to do that, then it is very difficult to entice them to want to sort of tear down their plaza and redo it, which is why it takes a long time," he said.

Expropriation is an option but not a realistic one, Crawford said.

"We're looking at other incentives to encourage businesses to do that," he said.

The incentives include increased land value that Crawford said may encourage landowners to sell.

New business owner Ian Town said he isn't in favour of a Business Improvement Area.

"I just spent a bunch of money opening this office, so now what?" he asked. "I'm not going to support the office I'm in and try to build the business I have? I have to think bigger and join another conglomerate to do that?"

The University of Toronto Scarborough is one of the venues for the 2015 Pan Am Games.

Though Crawford says the revitalization plan is not directly linked to the games.

"We're starting to look at Scarborough as a whole and really starting to do a lot of investment in Scarborough," he said.

## Hospital opens talk on care for seniors

ERICA TIANGCO

The Observer

Scarborough Hospital hosted the first It's Time to Talk event on Feb. 9 to educate the community about options available for eldercare.

"We pulled this event together because we really feel it's important that people advocate for themselves," said Debbie Driver, nurse practitioner for the hospital. "They need to communicate what's important to them and their wishes so that they can think about planning for their future."

"As the hospital, it's our role to help our community and advocate for them," she continued. "The whole purpose of this evening is to get people thinking about what's important to them and communicating that to the people who are important to them."

With 40 per cent of seniors in Canada living in Ontario, it's vital that secure plans are formed for their health and safety. According to Chan, these plans can differ depending on one's culture, personality and family dynamics.

Not only did the event welcome a variety of speakers, but guests were given the opportunity to visit a wide selection of information booths. Each booth offered extensive knowledge on eldercare ranging from orthopaedic assistance to senior care facilities.

### Education, the key

Janise Smith, spokesperson from Home Instead senior care, says she believes in educating seniors and their families.

"If we keep our seniors safe and independent and give them all of their resources, it will help with everyone," she said. "It will help family members who take care of them and it will help the hospital keep down numbers."

The sold-out event featured a diverse group of guests including adult children and their parents, grandchildren and grandparents and elderly couples.

Sam Christensen, 24, attended the event with his parents and grandmother in hopes of creating a proactive plan.

"We decided to come tonight as a family," he said. "We all want to be on the same page and make this plan together."

Senior care plans are available to members of various economic statuses. Subsidies are available for lower income households, however, wait lists do apply.

# Goat milk? Oxfam does

## Students raise money for international development

ALEX KOZOVSKI

The Observer

What do donkeys, bees, bicycles and a flock of chickens have in common?

These gifts are up for grabs in Oxfam's annual Unwrapped event at the University of Toronto.

Oxfam Canada was one of the few organizations featured at the second annual International Development and Cultural Week last week on U of T's Scarborough Campus. Open to the public, the event aims to raise awareness of international issues in Scarborough, says organizer Katie Boomgard.

"We wanted to give students an opportunity to learn more about how UTSC is involved in international

### Price of gifts

- Safe water: \$22
- Girls in school: \$50
- Organic Gardening: \$50
- Goat: \$58
- Flock of chickens: \$90
- Beehive: \$100

development and culture," Boomgard said. "We also invite people from the community to see what UTSC is doing in the community."

The three-day exhibition featured clubs and societies that are raising awareness of global development issues. There was also a photography contest, with pictures taken by participants from all

over the world, covering international problems.

Oxfam was promoting its Unwrapped event, planned for March 8. The coffee house event, hosted at UTSC's Rex's Den, will feature food, music and the chance to donate exotic gifts to people in over 20 countries around the world.

"One [gift] that really stands out is a goat, which you can purchase for \$58," Oxfam representative Abe Ku Park said. "It does a lot — it can go a long way."

The "live" gifts are not about food security, but about "ensuring communities have access to marketable products, like milk, wool or eggs," said Ku Park. "We try to spread awareness for equal powers, land rights, health



ALEX KOZOVSKI/The Observer

Philip Skoczkowski shows one of his various photos from Cambodia during International Development and Cultural Week at UTSC.

care for all, social justice and what not," Ku Park said.

The photography at IDCW week was a major part of the event, revealing first-eye accounts of what is happening around the world.

"My booth is focused

on Mu Sochua's activities in Cambodia," said Philip Skoczkowski, a second-year media student.

"Not many people know about (Cambodia) — and I was there. It's an interesting story."

## NEWS

# The Guild is back Inn business

## Centennial College teams up with City of Toronto to revive First World War-era landmark

**JESSICA LEE**  
The Observer

What was once an artist colony on the edge of Scarborough is now a recreational park with run-down, vacant buildings.

Centennial College is about to sign a lease to revitalize the Guild Inn and restore it to its former glory. The city also plans to put in \$4.2 million over the next three years for projects around the inn, according to Ward 43 councillor Paul Ainslie.

Centennial College plans to use the property as an addition to a new hospitality and tourism program. It has been reported it will build a hotel and open a restaurant on the site.

The Guild Inn was built in 1914 for Col. Harold C. Bickford, a retired American soldier. In 1932, it was turned into an artists' colony by arts supporters Rosa and Spencer Clark.

Over the years, the inn has changed roles. During the second World War, it became a naval base and a hospital for soldiers.

The inn has hosted weddings

and other social events. It has also been a hotel with a restaurant.

The buildings are closed to the public and the park is used for recreational hobbies.

David and Jane Wells come down to the park about once a month. They were at the park on Sunday with their children for recreational geocaching: modern-day treasure hunting using a GPS.

"We've found some other geocaches here before, but we can't seem to find the one we're looking for today," Wells said. "We live about a kilometre away so it's a great place to come with the kids and just get some fresh air."

Jane said she would like to see the Bickford building brought back to life again, as well as some more garbage cans added around the park.

"I think the buildings need to be restored because they're falling apart so I think they really need to preserve the architecture to make sure it doesn't get completely destroyed," she said.

David recalls dining at



JESSICA LEE/The Observer

The Guild Inn area may soon get revitalized with a \$4.2-million budget. Centennial College plans to open a restaurant and hotel there as part of its new hospitality and tourism program.

the inn.

"I'd like to see them open up a café or restaurant or something — they used to have a pretty good restaurant here," he said. "It was great, especially in the summer."

Carole M. Lidgold, the author of the book *The History of*

*the Guild Inn*, agrees with him.

"I want to see a bit of a restaurant back there," she said. "They're talking about bringing back some of the artisans, they're going to add on to that space, they're going to have a bit of a thought café sort of thing, and they want some

glasswork and sculptures. I think that would be a wonderful change to the Guild."

She would also like to see some of the artists back in the Guild.

"I think if they bring back the artisans, then it will be sort of keeping up with what the

Clarks started in 1932 because it started as an artists' colony. It was called the Guild of All Arts."

There is no shortage of artists in the area. Peter Yung, a local photographer, frequently visits the Guild for its scenic views and beautiful architecture.

## CBC host follows unexpected path

**KAYLA KREUTZBERG**  
The Observer

TV personality Dwight Drummond once had a dream he would be the next Michael Jordan.

Throughout his basketball years, he noticed his teammates, who were better than him, not making it to the NBA.

He realized he needed a backup plan.

Drummond shared this realization with youth at the Malvern Library last Thursday to help kick off Black History Month.

The story of his childhood in Toronto's neighbourhood of Jane and Finch and becoming a host for *CBC News Toronto* captured the attention of the students from Grades 7 to 12 at three Scarborough schools.

"The important message I think [...] is just using education as a means to achieve your goals in life," Drummond said.

Between his jokes, he talked about growing up with people who got in trouble with the law and later ended up in jail.

"I think that when you hear about the dropout rate, especially with, you know, young men that look like me, it's very disconcerting,"



KAYLA KREUTZBERG/The Observer

CBC host Dwight Drummond shares his advice at the Malvern Library last Thursday during a Black History Month event.

“

***It doesn't mean  
you're not going to  
make it***  
—Dwight Drummond

Drummond said.

He spoke of the need to do whatever it takes to motivate students and explain to them how important education is and the disadvantage of dropping out.

"It is tougher. It doesn't mean you're not going to make it, but it

is much harder."

When Drummond was young, his desire to be a professional basketball player meant he felt no need to worry about his marks, he said.

But he did have a plan B.

Masood Binawa, a Grade 11 ESL student at

Lester B. Pearson High School, said that Drummond's speech taught the students how important it is to be educated.

Adele Lamphier, a youth services specialist at the Malvern Library, said she thought the most important message students will take away from the speech is to remember to be themselves.

Drummond ended the speech on a motivating note, echoing Lamphier's thoughts.

"Education is there, it's available, let's take advantage of it, because you can use it to succeed," he said.

## Family Day is coming

**CHRISTINA CHENG**  
The Observer

Feb. 21 marks Family Day. It's observed as a statutory holiday in Ontario. What do you and your family have planned?

Much of the province will be closed for business. Banks, schools, public libraries, shopping malls not designated as tourist attractions, liquor stores, most grocery stores and pharmacies, and the Toronto Stock Exchange will be closed for Family Day.

There are a few spots that will remain open, including all of Toronto's family-friendly attractions.

Federal government offices the Eaton Centre, Pacific Mall, Woodbine Centre, some supermarkets and convenience stores, most restaurants, and most of Toronto's tourist attractions and museums, including the Ontario Science Centre, Art Gallery of Ontario, CN

Tower, Royal Ontario Museum, Hockey Hall of Fame and Casa Loma will be open for Family Day. Movie theatres and some ice rinks and arenas will also be open to the public.

The city is also inviting families to come out to four free events across the city on Feb. 21 from noon to 4 p.m.

Music, dance, crafts, storytelling, street theatre, tasty treats, skating and free hot chocolate is also included.

The TTC will be operating on a holiday schedule. This means buses, subways and streetcars will be running as if it was a Sunday. Services will begin at 6 a.m. As for other forms of public transit, GO Transit will also be available on a holiday schedule, similar to a Saturday service.

Whatever you choose to do this Family Day, have a safe and happy long weekend with your family!

### Feb. 21 events

- Mel Lastman Square-North York Civic Centre
- Downtown at 250 Fort York Boulevard

- Albert Campbell Square-Scarborough Civic Centre
- Colonel Samuel Smith Park in Etobicoke

## FEATURE



YEAMROT TADDESE/The Observer

Scarborough's bestselling Valentine's Day toy was the Canadian designed We-Vibe II, a rechargeable vibrator made from medical-grade silicon, according to a local sex shop.

## We-Vibe together

YEAMROT TADDESE

The Observer

A Canadian-designed couple's sex toy is a bestseller for Valentine's Day, according to a Scarborough sex shop.

"It is super quiet, very discreet and comes in three colours," said Amanda Bradley, manager of Stag Shop on Progress Avenue.

"It's definitely the go-to toy right now for Valentine's Day."

Bradley said the toy is so popular that people don't complain about its higher-than-average \$100 cost.

How couples can use the wireless toy, though, can be a mystery at first glance.

We-Vibe II is about 8.25 centimetres long and 2.5 centimetres wide. Its flexible C-shape bends into an L-shape, with both ends vibrating simultaneously

“

**We go a little more romantic around Valentine's Day**  
— Chayene Dane

when turned on.

It works on parts of the female anatomy while leaving room for male, uh, input at the same time.

It was invented when Ottawa engineer Bruce Murison "wondered why there wasn't a massager that could just slide in between a couple while they made love," the We-Vibe II website says.

Murison and his wife Melody then took it upon themselves to make the eco-friendly toy a reality,

the story goes.

Other popular items in stores for the Valentine's season are massage oils, edible lubricants, couple's games and rose petals.

"We go a little more romantic around Valentine's Day," said Chayene Dane, an employee at Cupid Boutique on Kingston Road at Lawrence Avenue. "The rest of the year is kinky."

At Cupid Boutique, a remote-controlled underwear vibrator is also one of the rec-

ommended items for Valentine's Day.

Employees at adult boutiques said men visit their stores more often than women.

"We keep track," Dane said.

But the age demographic of customers varies from newly-weds to retired couples, she added.

While some customers know exactly what they're looking for, employees say most ask for suggestions.

"If somebody is intimidated, you give them their space and try to lighten the mood by cracking a joke," Dane said.

Bradley, who describes her job as "absolutely fantastic," asks customers not to be shy when they visit.

"Gone are the days you had to duck your head in when you walk into an adult boutique," she said.

## Valentine's Day swings both ways

MARYAM SHAH

The Observer

A boy and a girl hold hands, about to kiss, tiny hearts flying in the background like sparks

We're used to being bombarded by these images as early as mid-January.

But what if you are gay? Or lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, transsexual or queer? What do you make of these images then?

Valentine's Day for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) community in Scarborough seems to be almost non-existent.

The University of Toronto in Scarborough has an LGBTQ group called SC(OUT). Stephen Cacilhas met his boyfriend Vincent Li at their lounge on campus last year.

They've been dating ever since. They both agree that Feb. 14 just never makes it to their list of required celebrations.

"Personally I don't care much about Valentine's Day," Cacilhas said. "I don't know if Vincent does."

"Me neither," Li chimed in.

SC(OUT) is not jumping on the roses-and-candy

bandwagon, citing a stronger focus on upcoming advocacy campaigns as a reason.

Victoria Ovando, political coordinator SC(OUT), finds that Valentine's Day preparation falls short every year in terms of cards targeting the gay community.

"They're very limited because there's a lot of different forms of love," she said.

"Most of what you see is very heterosexual."

Cacilhas said the LGBTQ lounge on campus displayed a number of gay Valentine's Day cards last year.

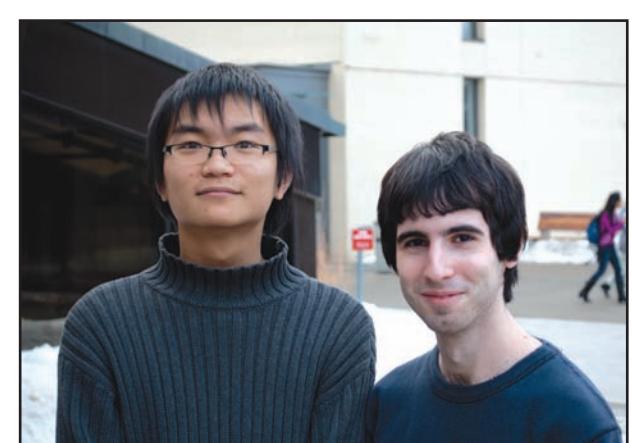
However, walking into the greeting card store at Scarborough Town Centre doesn't turn up any cards targeted towards the gay community on the Valentine's Day shelves.

"The most obvious example everyone talks about is the cards," Cacilhas continued.

"Wherever you go you'll see a card not only heterosexual but usually white man, white woman together."

A gay student activist, who wish to remain unnamed, said he doesn't care if it's straight love or gay love.

"I just want love," he said.



MARYAM SHAH/The Observer

Stephan Cacilhas and Vincent Li have an unorthodox approach to Valentine's Day — in more ways than one.

## Fish are friends not food, Toronto Zoo teaches children



KAYLA KREUTZBERG/The Observer

Young visitors to the Toronto Zoo learn there are plenty of fish in the sea to choose a suitable mate for Valentine's Day. Zoo-goers can also visit the Great Barrier Reef exhibit, a seven metre-long tank filled with sharks and Australian sea horses.

KAYLA KREUTZBERG

The Observer

The Toronto Zoo called on children from 12 years of age and under to bring their favourite fish a valentine, get in free of charge and celebrate Valentine's Day on Feb. 12 and 13.

The For the Love of Fish event included a fun-fact booklet that let children scope out the zoo's four fish pavilions and fill out interesting facts about their fishy friends.

Amanda Chambers, a spokesperson for the zoo, said the inaugural event had a great turn-out thanks to the mild weather.

"You see [the children] hur-

rying around looking for their pens, whipping out their little booklet, and then following the sign and answering the questions," Chambers said.

In the Conservation Connection Centre, there was a setup of baby sea horses children could interact with.

These animals are not on exhibit throughout the zoo and available only in the health unit.

There was also a chance for children to fill out a ballot and win a behind-the-scenes tour of the Great Barrier Reef pavilion for four people.

The Conservation Connection Centre has "been a hub definitely; the children love colouring and creating valen-

tines [here] and it teaches the children some great conservation initiatives," Chambers said.

In each fish pavilion there were interactive stations where the children could learn more about fish.

On both days, Toronto Zoo keeper Tim McCaskie held a special fish talk.

"It's all about fun and educating children on things they might not know," Chambers said about the event.

To end the day, every child went home with a special Valentine's Hershey's treat. But the benefit for parents was they left knowing their children learned many interesting facts about fish.

# Family daze: Meaning lost in a holiday

For the month with the fewest days, February really has a lot to offer: several Black History Month events, speeches and workshops across the city; countless, traditional Chinese New Year celebrations almost everywhere you turn; endless amounts of red decorations, roses and chocolates lining the shopping centres in anticipation of Valentine's Day.

Feb. 21, however, is Family Day.

It's still a relatively new holiday — having only been around since 2008.

In its three short years, the statutory holiday hasn't made much of a dent in Ontario culture.

This is expected. It's just another day off after all, right?

Not if you decide to call it "Family Day."

The term "family" carries with it a lot of weight. Your family is your blood. Your family is your support. Your family is who you are.

When Premier Dalton McGuinty proposed the idea, he did so with the intent that the holiday would put into perspective where our priorities should be as a society.

That we should all look past our work commitments, stresses and the daily clutter of things to appreciate the power of family.

As a society, we haven't lost track of the holiday's meaning. There simply hasn't been any meaning instilled into us.

Don't get me wrong.

Taking a Monday in February and trying to make it something of value in the eyes of society does not happen overnight — but it is something that can happen.

Family, after all, is a concept that is more universal than any religious, governmental or national holiday.

According to the Government of Canada, 70 per cent of Canadian residences are classified as being family households. That's about 21 million Canadians who are living in homes with relatives.

There are many Family Day activities in the city planned for Feb. 21 — and I encourage you to participate in them — but why limit appreciation for your family to a Monday in February?

If the holiday doesn't carry any meaning for you now, look at it as a reminder.

Let it be a reminder to value the relationships that you have with your relatives.

Let it be a reminder to give thanks for all they have done for you.

Let Feb. 21 be a reminder that every day is family day.

—André Thurairatnam

## Kingston Road goes under the knife

**C**hange is inevitable. The only way to move this city forward is to bulldoze the old and build up the new.

Talks of redeveloping Kingston Road may become a reality, according to Ward 36 councillor Gary Crawford.

In getting rid of the unappealing buildings and concrete, Crawford wants to make this area a lot greener — and I couldn't agree more. In the mid 20th Century, this was the hotspot where tourists stayed travelling from Kingston to Toronto.

Decades later, the community has changed and currently consists of car dealerships, rusty motels and abandoned businesses.

It seems the land was also being used for families on welfare who started to live in the motels with no recreational activities nearby.

To make it a place where families can go and enjoy the bike lanes and beautiful residential areas will definitely be an improvement to the overall feel of the area.

Businesses aren't too keen on the idea, but if they can work with the redevelopment, they could potentially attract more customers with bigger and better workspaces.

If the timing and funds go smoothly (especially with the Pan Am Games coming up), I truly believe the reconstruction will work wonders for the Kingston Road community.

—Jessica Moy

## Toys for impoverished youth, generously donated by the City of Toronto



JESSICA LEE/The Observer

## Issue with Black History Month: February festivities not enough

**W**hen you think of the history of black people in Canada, what names pop into your mind?

Most of us think of Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, Malcolm X and other iconic African-American figures.

February marks the 15th anniversary of Black History Month in Canada. Although we've been celebrating black history since 1996, most of us don't know how black people have shaped this country.

The triumphs and struggles of blacks in Canada is a hushed topic, and February doesn't do much to reverse that.

This year, the Canadian government is honouring four black people in Canadian history — Carrie Best, John Ware, Ferguson Jenkins and Jerome Iginla.

A historical plaque in honour of Mary Ann Shadd Cary has also been erected at 143 King St. E., where Shadd Cary started publishing a newspaper in 1853 to denounce exploitation of freed slaves.

But for many, Black History Month is more than reciting history. Rosemary Sadlier, president of the Ontario Black History Society, says Black History Month has to exist for many reasons.

"African-Canadian students need to feel affirmed, need to be aware of the contributions made by other blacks in



**Yeamrot Taddese**

Canada [and they] need to have role models," she wrote on the OBHS website.

"[They] need to understand the social forces which have shaped and influenced their community and their identities as a means of feeling connected to the educational experience and their life experience in various regions in Canada."

But can one month of celebrations every year affirm African-Canadian youth and teach them about their history?

### Systemic change is needed

Black History Month may provide an opportunity to reflect on the legacy of blacks in this country, but it cannot fill the void in a system that waits for February of every year to empower black youth.

With an alarming dropout rate for male students, and students of African

and Aboriginal backgrounds, it is clear more needs to be done, year-round, to make sure young people in this country are inspired to do more.

In 2008, the TDSB approved the Africentric Alternative School. While the effort to bridge the gap is laudable, African-Canadian students should not have to go to special schools to get culture-sensitive education. And black history lessons should not just be for black children.

We need a systemic change to make sure every child has the support and guidance they need to make their own history. This means improving living conditions, helping create better self-images and stopping the drop-out trend.

The history of black people in Canada dates to 1605, when the first black person, Mathieu Da Costa, arrived.

Black history is part of Canadian history, and empowered African-Canadian youth are empowered Canadian citizens.

Understanding their history and realizing their significance in Canada should be a part of everyday life.

February festivities should not mask the inequality, racism and lack of leadership faced by black people. Real solutions are needed and standing on street corners handing out black history flyers isn't going to do the job.

## The East Toronto OBSERVER

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**The East Toronto Observer Serving Scarborough** is published by University of Toronto/Centennial College journalism students under faculty supervision. We are located at the Centennial HP Science and Technology Centre. Please address correspondence to **The East Toronto Observer**, c/o Centennial College, 755 Morningside Ave., Toronto, ON M1C 5J9, 416-289-5000, ext. 8306, fax 416-289-5168. Email: [HPOobserver@centennialcollege.ca](mailto:HPOobserver@centennialcollege.ca) The opinions expressed in The Observer do not necessarily reflect the views of the college. A companion website is at [torontoobserver.com](http://torontoobserver.com).

## Sports Briefs

### Grizzlies paw crown

After three appearances, Georgian-Barrie won, emerging from the U of T Scarborough campus men's soccer team, The United, faced off against downtown's Chestnut B squad Saturday afternoon at Varsity Field.

**COLE CARRUTHERS**  
The Observer

The University of Toronto's Scarborough campus men's soccer team, The United, faced off against downtown's Chestnut B squad Saturday afternoon at Varsity Field.

Chestnut defence Rob Liddell sent a corner kick into The United's net to seal the fate for the final 2-2 draw.

"It was a good game, everyone did really well, we gave 110 per cent and it was really fun," said Liddell, who was happy with his team's overall performance.

The United were hungry for another win while the Chestnuts were thirsty for redemption.

United centre midfielder Nav Chahal felt loose and confident before the match. Fun was the main objective of the game.

"With our intense practices, I feel we'll do well," Chahal said.

Sami Elsebae, third-year head coach of the United, wanted to see a repeat of the scoresheet the team wrote against Chestnut's A squad.

"Last week we beat them 1-0. We're more focused on our speed and counter attacking," Elsebae said.

United defender Meisam Rahemi-Pour was also positive going into the match.

"Right now what I see is that everyone is ready and we're going to have fun,"



COLE CARRUTHERS/The Observer

UTSC United player Abdullah Tahir (right) battled it out on the turf at Varsity Field on Saturday night. The game between The United and The Chestnut clubs ended in a 2-2 draw.

Rahemi-Pour said.

Chestnut goalkeeper Mikhael Lamont showed his true sportsmanship by offering praise to the Scarborough team.

"We respect them, we have to play our best defence," he said. "It's football, everyday anything can happen."

Chestnut club secretary Bassem Baddour said he felt confident about what the team learned from the previous week's loss.

"We have a good team, it's going to be a tough game but we have a good game plan," Baddour said.

He went on to agree that the Chestnuts are known for their physicality, while the United are known for speed.

The game plan turned out to be a matchup in speed to equalize the playing field.

Chestnut struck fast and

hard seizing the first goal.

The United were able to gain some focus and sent two accurate kicks reaching their target with Rahemi-Pour's shot sneaking past Chestnut's goalkeeper.

By the time the first half

came to an end, coach Elsebae was ready to remind the United of some fundamentals.

"Put the pressure on, offensively we need more shots," he said.

"Let's focus on accuracy, we want to be on target, that's what puts goals in the net!"

The United took their coach's words to heart and were able to launch into high gear.

Christian Dima scored a fast strike, gaining the United another point on the way to the draw.

**We want to be on target, that's what puts goals in the net**  
— Coach Elsebae

### Shulman at Centennial

On Feb. 16 ESPN sports commentator Dan Shulman made an appearance at the HP campus. The veteran journalist spoke to students about his career. His words encouraged students and gave them an inside look at the world of sports broadcasting.

## Scarborough chess players race against time

### Canada's largest club continues annual tournament, reaches sixth round out of seven

**COLE CARRUTHERS**  
The Observer

Thirty-seven chess matches took place simultaneously last Thursday night for the Scarborough Chess Club's Jack Swiss Tournament.

The only sound heard at the Birkdale Community Centre was of each player hitting the tournament clock

after completing a move in the 90-minute games.

It's not only a match against one's opponent but also a race against time. Tournament players were stressed and anxious while they were up against the clock.

The tournament was the sixth out of seven rounds, with the final round taking place on Feb. 17th.

74 players battle against their opponents and the clock to gain top points to tally into their overall combined play for the entire tournament. Five tournaments take place each year.

The Chess Federation of Canada tracks club member points.

Every so often, the shuffling of a player's chair can be heard over the droning of the time clocks, as the players crane their necks over their boards to get a better view of what their opponents are up to.

By late evening, some of the younger players had wrapped up their matches.

"They tend to play at a faster pace compared to older, experienced players," club president Maurice Strong said.

Timekeepers and parents stroll the aisles to take in the intensity that hangs over each chessboard like a low hanging thundercloud bookended by pressure and anxiety.

Chess is normally an unbiased sport in which young



COLE CARRUTHERS/The Observer

Michael Song (right) and Yuanchen Zhang have a practice warm-up game before the Scarborough Chess Club's Jack Swiss Tournament last Thursday.

people play against mature players and women play against men. The only factor that counts is skill.

Yuanchen Zhang, 10, has been playing with the club for a year and came away from his match victorious.

"I'll try to be back for next week for the final match," Zhang said as he looked at his father.

Many club members are

still in grade school, with homework a constant challenge for the younger players.

According to Strong, "one of the highest rated women in Canada is Yuanling Yuan, 16, and belongs to the club."

"She played first board at the Olympiad tournament for Team Canada," Strong said.

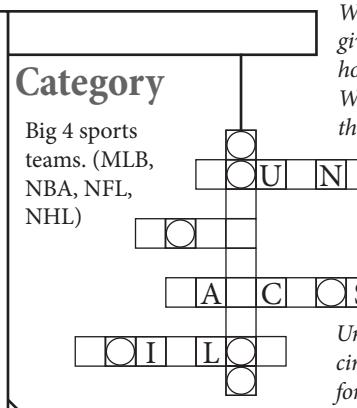
By the end of the tournament a group of spectators

gathered around a match: Michael Song, 12, against Josh Guo, 30. The two are ranked sixth and fourth respectively at the club.

"I technically won, but it was due to time constraints also," Guo said.

"Sometimes a match will go for three hours when skilled players will face off against each other," Guo said.

## LINGUISTIC LARKS



With the letters given, guess the horizontal clues. Work your way to the vertical clue.

Unscramble the circled letters to form the final answer.

By Kyle Larkin

## ARTS &amp; LIFE

# Four hands are better than two

## Piano duo makes magic

**NATALIE SEQUEIRA**

The Observer

Twenty fingers race across the piano keys, coming so close together, they threaten to entangle. This is the beauty and risk of the duet One Piano Four Hands.

The Scarborough Bluffs United Church hosted two renowned pianists on Saturday in a feature concert.

Robert Kortgaard and Peter Tiefenbach alternated between slow, haunting melodies and fast-paced crescendos as they performed a classical ensemble.

They shared the piano, sitting side by side, reading from separate sheets of music.

The audience listened to the tunes of Mozart's 'Allegro' and Schumann's "Garden Melody," the cacophony of Stravinsky's "Piano-Rag-Music" and the emotion of Ravel's fairy tales in "Ma Mère l'Oye." The pianists performed a

**You get to make twice as much sound...it's like a conversation**

- Robert Kortgaard

in. The form, however, is uncommon.

"People just don't do this anymore," Kortgaard said. "There's a lot of music writ-

few solos amid the duets.

Kortgaard and Tiefenbach describe One Piano Four Hands as a cross between negotiations and "territorial skirmishes" for space.

"It's like a real collaboration," Kortgaard said. "We have to respond to someone else's sounds."

"It can be a lot of fun," Tiefenbach added. "You get to make twice as much sound ... It becomes like a conversation."

One Piano Four Hands is a piano duet that is a sort of chamber music.

While the pianists won't ever need to play a note at the same time, they may need to play it in quick succession.

That's where the meticulous collaboration comes



NATALIE SEQUEIRA/The Observer

Robert Kortgaard, left, and Peter Tiefenbach perform at the One Piano Four Hands concert held at the Scarborough Bluffs United Church last Saturday.

ten for four-hand piano."

According to Tiefenbach, One Piano Four Hands was popular as a form of home entertainment decades ago.

"Before the radio, the only way to get music at home would be to play it yourself ... It's kind of a shame that we don't do this [anymore]."

Kortgaard and Tiefenbach have been playing the piano since they were young children, and have been playing together for

15 years.

Koortgard is a Juilliard graduate who plays in recitals across the world both solo and in collaboration with other performers.

Tiefenbach is a performer, composer, writer and broadcaster. The Juno Award-nominated pianist also coaches singers and teaches a graduate orchestral-literature course.

This concert was the eighth the church has held since it purchased a new

organ and piano and renovated the building.

The self-appointed four-person concert committee organizes the events to draw people from the community, regardless of whether they belong to the congregation.

"It's a way of reaching out to the community and bringing people in through music," Bruce Galbraith, one of organizers, said.

"It's important to be able to offer good music to people in the east end ... so

[they] don't think they have to go downtown to get a good quality concert."

Koortgard and Tiefenbach have known Galbraith for about 15 years. They had played a concert for him before at another church. He approached them when the committee wanted to find a way to showcase their two-year-old piano.

Money raised at all concerts goes to the church's music school, music activities and other church needs.

# Winter art attack

**CHANELLE HENRIQUES**

The Observer

A small theatre group is bringing big-time fun to Scarborough this winter.

The Jumblies Theatre Group is participating in the Winter Arts festival at the Cedar Ridge Creative Centre until March 1.

During the festival, children and adults have the

chance to make masks, try their hand at pottery, watch puppet shows and participate in a variety of performances.

Jumblies helps with the festival every week. While it is the theatre group's 10th year holding Winter Arts, this is only the third year the festivities have come to Scarborough.

Jumblies artistic director

Ruth Howard says exploring Scarborough is something working with the group has allowed her to do.

"I like meeting people who I'd never meet otherwise, and going to places, including parts of Toronto that I've never actually been to," Howard said.

Participants create various art projects, including clay pots and cloth lanterns.

Every individual project will be compiled into one larger piece of art by the Jumblies group.

"It's all part of a big picture," Howard said. "What I like best is how it all fits together. It's all going to be part of one big story and one big performance in less than a year from now."

Winter Arts is free and includes meals for everyone. Last week featured fava beans, rice and flatbread.

While there is no charge for the meal, all participants must contribute to help serve food.

Right before dinner,



CHANELLE HENRIQUES/The Observer

The Jumblies Theatre Group practises their facial expressions at the Cedar Ridge Centre in Scarborough last Tuesday before rehearsing for their performance of Shakespeare's A Winter's Tale.

every member dresses up in costume, breaks out into a song with a guitar and heads out into the cold.

They sing a song they call "a dinner song" and trek to the kitchen to pick up their food.

Many first-time visitors become regulars.

"I love all the people and the different types of people and seeing them over and over again, says Katherine

Fleitas, a Jumblies group member.

"And the fact that they even come back is exciting."

Parents are encouraged to participate along with their young ones.

Adults can take movement classes and work on their dramatic skills.

This year the Jumblies group is putting on an adaptation of Shakespeare's A



CHANELLE HENRIQUES/The Observer

Nyla and Egypt brave the cold weather to take part in a pre-dinner ceremony with costume and song.

Winter's Tale but they have put their own spin on the story.

Participants created ghostly blue and white papier maché masks that the actors will wear on stage. They have been rehearsing mini-performances that will be added to the big finale.

Winter Arts runs every Tuesday from 2:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Cedar Ridge Creative Centre.