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THE EAST TORONTO OBSERVER

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Child hit in school zone

EMILY HUNTER
The Observer

A 10-year-old girl hit by a car while trying to cross the street last week is one of 16 pedestrians struck in the city in a span of two days.

Police say the girl was crossing in a school zone at Coronation Drive and Galloway Road at 8 a.m. on Nov. 18. The mirror of the vehicle clipped the girl, causing minor injuries with a cut to her head.

"She was walking with her dad and struck by a passing vehicle," Sgt. Murray Campbell said.

The driver was a 62-year-old woman who was unaware the incident even took place and continued to drive, he said.

"The owner of the vehicle continued on for some distance until another citizen alerted her to the fact that she had hit the child," Campbell said.

Unsafe driving

Officials say pedestrian-vehicle collisions are common, especially in November when there is usually a spike in this type of incident. Last year around this time, 18 pedestrians were struck by vehicles. In 2008 during the same period, 16 were hit. There have been 16 pedestrian fatalities this year.

Police blame shorter days with fewer hours of sunlight and colder weather for the rise in collisions, as pedestrians dress in darker clothing making them difficult to spot.

Toronto Police recently concluded a week-long pedestrian safety campaign

More than 7,000 tickets were handed out to motorists and cyclists who endangered pedestrians to curb collisions, while nearly 1,200 tickets were given to pedestrians for jaywalking.



ALINA SMIRNOVA/The Observer

Yuanling Yuan, 16, the top female chess player in Canada and a member of the Scarborough Chess Club, plays a game at the Birkdale community centre. Yuan started her own chess club at Brookbanks Library last year to challenge stereotypes about the male-dominated game.

Local teen chess champ hopes to bring greater exposure to age-old game in Canada

QUEEN of the BOARD

ALINA SMIRNOVA
The Observer

Although the Scarborough Chess Club is composed mostly of men, its top player is a 16-year-old girl.

Yuanling Yuan, who recently returned from the biennial Chess Olympiad, is the top-rated female chess player in Canada and also holds the distinction of being the youngest Canadian female to hold the title of international master.

Although Yuan admits she may have to look at the men's game for challenge and inspiration, now that she's the top female player, she never thought chess was limited to a particular gender.

"It's a stereotype," Yuan said. "People think that chess is a game for boys because it's kind of based on war."

The grade 11 Victoria Park Collegiate Institute student has been working to get more people



All I want to do is promote chess in Canada
— Yuanling Yuan

interested in chess. Last summer, at the age of 15, she started a Chess in the Library club at Brookbanks Library.

"All I want to do is promote chess in Canada, because in Canada all they care about is hockey," Yuan joked.

At this year's Chess Olympiad, where she played the world's best female players and took

the 27th spot out of 564, many of the national teams had uniforms showing team spirit while Canada's didn't, she points out on her blog.

In just two months, her chess club became the most successful one at the library, attracting about 30 participants, Yuan said. Adopting her model, 14 branches in Toronto, two in Ottawa and one in Victoria now host chess clubs.

Chess is a fascinating game that teaches skills beyond the board, Yuan said. Because it requires a lot of logic, visualization and planning ahead, she said it directly helps with academic subjects and languages.

Yuan enjoys math and logic and said she hopes to go to an Ivy League university in the United States for business.

"And when I have the ability to help kids who play chess even more, then I'll probably do something more than just chess in the library," Yuan said.

Bluffs base-jumper snagged

Dangerous stunt leaves Guildwood residents angry

JOSEF JACOBSON
The Observer

Daredevils on the Scarborough Bluffs don't get much sympathy from residents or politicians.

On Nov. 13 a man tried to base-jump off the Bluffs, only to be left hanging 60 metres up after getting snagged on the cliffs. Firefighters spent more than an hour rescuing the man, who escaped the ordeal without serious injuries.

"These things happen almost regularly," said outgoing Ward 36 councillor Brian Ashton. "There's always an idiot who wants access to the Bluffs."

He said the best way to discourage daredevils from endangering themselves is to charge them for the cost of rescuing them.

"It's not an accident and it costs the taxpayers," Ashton said. "Perhaps this will make them think twice."

Ashton said he hopes incoming councillor Gary Crawford will bring these concerns to city hall. There are warning signs notifying the public of dangerous cliffs, Ashton said, adding people should be reasonable and responsible when exploring the Bluffs.

"The only way of protecting people by the edge of the Bluffs is with warning signs," he said. "And that will always be spotty at best."

Setting up barriers along the cliff's edge can be dangerous, said Timo Puhakka, president of the Guildwood Village Community Association.

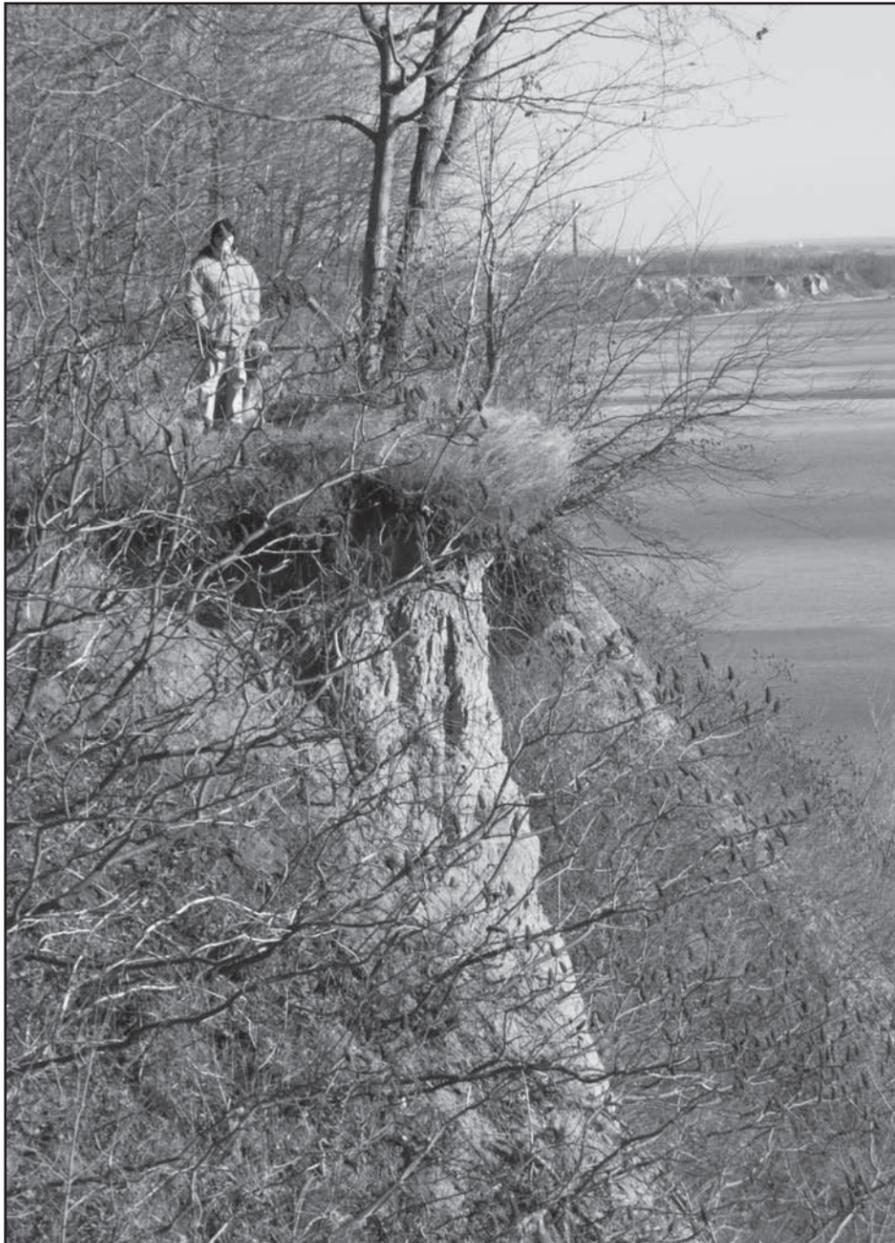
"The problem with fences and barriers is that to erect these, you must dig post holes, but that weakens the bluff and causes rapid erosion," he said.

Puhakka said the city once tried and failed to install a barrier on the Bluffs' edge.

"I remember when the city sunk a row of post holes and installed posts on the Bluffs' edge at Greyabbey Park," he said. "Before they could string cables between the posts, the entire row slid to the bottom, along with 15 feet of park."

Ashton said those who do try dangerous stunts are not thought of highly by taxpayers, who see their money spent on building barriers and cliffside rescues.

"I prefer people to just be careful [on the Bluffs] and respect nature, but it seems that folks would prefer to protect idiots from themselves," Puhakka said.



BRADLEY FEATHERSTONE /The Observer

Ross Armitage walks his dog along the unguarded edges of the Scarborough Bluffs.

Students say no to bottled water

EMILY HUNTER
The Observer

Scarborough high schools have begun an anti-water bottle campaign this month.

Water should be a basic human right, said local high school students, and not just for those who can afford bottled water.

Three Scarborough catholic high schools, including Pope John Paul Catholic Secondary School, plan to create "bottle water free-zones" in their cafeteria, ending the selling of water in vending machines to promote the use of drinking fountains instead.

"It will be like having no baseball caps worn at schools, there will be no water bottles at school," said Nicole Scarlet Costa, a grade 12 student from Pope John Paul II Secondary School.

The anti-bottle water campaigns were initiated in schools across the Toronto Catholic District School Board after students took part in a seminar Nov. 17 by the Catholic charity, Development and Peace.

"The students were really engaged and excited about what we were teaching them," said Luke Stocking, executive director for Development and Peace.

He says the point of the seminar was not necessarily teaching students to be against water bottles, but turning water into a commodity.

"We live in a culture that thinks its normal to pay for our drinking water and purchase it from vending machines, as opposed to having access to safe, clean, free water coming out of our taps," he said.

Critics argue that this issue affects Canadians and people abroad.

"There are communities in Indonesia that are being denied access to spring water because bottled water companies like Coca-Cola are buying up their streams," Stocking said.

That is why these local high school students are trying to make a difference.

"We grew up thinking that drinking from water bottles everyday was normal," Costa said. "If we change this now, then the next group of young people can go, bottle free."

See torontoobserver.ca for more on this story

Centennial College student remembered

Twenty-year-old Ying Tang killed in blaze sparked by cigarette on Oct. 30

FIONA PERSAUD
The Observer

The mother of international student Ying Tang will never walk the halls of Centennial College alongside her daughter as she once dreamed.

Tang, 20, was one of two women killed in the mid-day fire on Oct. 30 at her Kimbermount Drive home in the Kennedy Road and Finch Avenue area.

"She often talked about her school, teachers and friends," Xiyuan Fang said Nov. 17 at a memorial for her daughter.

Fang travelled from China with her husband to make funeral arrangements and close their daughter's affairs

in Canada.

The blaze, which officials say was likely caused by a cigarette, also took the life of another woman, whose name has not been officially released, and sent 22-year-old Yuanjie Guan to hospital.

"Her friends in China will never see her or hear her stories about Toronto," said Fang, who, along with her husband was presented with an honorary diploma from the college.

Students, faculty and staff took part in a ceremony at Centennial's Residence and Conference Centre on Progress Avenue.

The memorial was held in both Chinese and English.

Tang, known as Gloria to friends, was an international



FIONA PERSAUD /The Observer

Xiyuan Fang mourns the loss of her daughter Ying at the memorial held on Nov. 17

student from China who had been in Canada since 2009 in Centennial College's hospitality and tourism program. She was described as kind, shy and beautiful by her peers.

"She was the kind of friend that would stand by me," said Tiffany Ling, a close friend and classmate who com-

forted her beloved friend's mother during the service.

Ling said the last time they spoke was in their wellness class. Tang expressed her excitement to go home for Christmas and her plans of being engaged to her boyfriend.

"I thought she was going to have a wonderful life,"

Ling said.

Tang was in the last year of her program, and starting to apply for her internship.

Friend Haijin Gao said although he only knew Gloria for a year, they shared their dreams of bringing their families to Canada to live a happy life. He said he will never forget her.



BRADLEY FEATHERSTONE/The Observer

Environmental service worker Dave Rennie looks over the decontamination efforts at Little Rouge Creek on Nov. 25 after fuel seeped into water.

BILLY COURTICE
The Observer

Local drinking water safe: Environment ministry

The oil spilling into Little Rouge Creek contains no gasoline or other chemicals, according to workers on the site.

Their conclusion contradicts speculation by Ontario's environment ministry.

"Originally people said they were smelling gasoline," said Dave Rennie, a Direct Line environmental service worker. "But they're drain-

ing gasoline just up the hill [at Standard Auto Wreckers] all the time, so of course you're going to smell gasoline."

"If there was gasoline or other chemicals we'd have to dig this whole creek up," Rennie said. "It doesn't rise to the surface like oil does."

Dykes have been built in the creek near Steeles Avenue East and Sewells Road to try

to isolate the spill, which originated from Standard Auto Wreckers, a car-crushing company sitting adjacent to the creek. The company created a stronghold with rows of booms and vacuum trucks to keep the spill from flowing into the Rouge River.

Environment ministry spokesperson Kate Jordan said the time of year may

aid their work in protecting the creek's ecosystem. Fish spawning season is over, and so wildlife around the creek may be sparser than in summer months.

The ministry is still working, however, to analyze what impacts the spill will have on vegetation and animal habitat downstream.

This is not the first time

Standard Auto Wreckers has been under the ministry's watch.

"We have had dealings with the company in the past," Jordan said. The ministry has put the company under an order, which extends further than just a simple clean up. The company will be forced to find the root of the problem.

Jordan said municipal drinking water will not be affected, as the spill will not travel as far as Lake Ontario.

Local manufacturer to be sun-powered

SARAH MOORE
The Observer

Scarborough manufacturer Samco is investing in a greener, more renewable form of energy, creating more local jobs in the process.

The company is looking to expand its plant at Kennedy Road And Ellesmere Road, as it becomes a bigger player in the solar energy market.

"So far we've hired about 30 people and as we ramp up and slowly build toward next spring, we'll probably be up to about 60 people," CEO and founder Joe Repovs said.

The company's first solar racking rolled off the line in July. It is used to attach solar panels either to the roofs of homes and businesses or in the ground for larger solar farms. The racking also ensures that the panels are angled properly to attract maximum sunlight.

When the provincial government passed the Green

Energy Act last May, a tariff program was also created to subsidize renewable energy projects in Ontario.

"There was a big incentive for local manufactures like Samco," said David Pichard, Vice President of Business Development with Samco Solar. "The feed-in tariff coupled with the domestic content rule

made our quality and wide range of services relevant to the industry."

While Repovs said that creating jobs is a very important part of the company's mission, embracing renewable energy sources is an important step for them as well.

"We are ensuring clean air for our children and our grandchildren and that's part of our bottom line."

"This is a great success story and a great partnership," energy minister Brad Duguid said. "The plant will manufacture the parts needed to produce new solar energy and create jobs in the community."



JOE REPOVS



ALICE HOANG/The Observer

Hospital vice-chair Steve Smith said at a Nov. 16 meeting he's improving wait times.

Hospital to cure service ills

ALICE HOANG
The Observer

For John Dakin, being at the hospital was like being at home, but with "better drugs."

He even requested to stay longer at the Scarborough Hospital after having knee surgery because of the treatment he received, he says.

"The nurse that was on duty at the time was so helpful, whatever you wanted: a pillow or a drink," Dakin said.

"I wrote a note after I got out of the hospital to thank them. Every single staff seemed to enjoy being there and [understood] how important their attitude was to the

patients."

While the Scarborough Hospital board works to improve equipment, facilities and services, the hospital is also focused on the patient experience. This is part of a "culture shift" that's underway, hospital vice-chair Steve Smith said at a town hall meeting Nov. 16.

That experience includes where the patient goes, how quickly they're seen, the ease of getting around and how they're treated. It's a new concept that's not practised at many hospitals, he said.

"[People] want to be treated with respect," Smith said. "They want high-quality care,

which is almost a given, but it doesn't have to be the latest, best, most expensive."

The meeting, held at the hospital's Birchmount campus, was meant to update the public on the progress of the board's recent initiatives.

"Some of them share that they don't have the culture to communicate with the medical professionals," Ng said.

Anne Marie Males, Scarborough Hospital's patient experience vice-president said the hospital used to rely on volunteer interpreters, but it now has two full-time interpreters who speak Mandarin, Cantonese and Tamil, bridging the communication gap.

News Briefs

Pacific Mall to face new rival

Pacific Mall is expecting new neighbours and new rivals. The Landmark and Splendid China 2, two separate condominium-style malls, are expected to open in 2012 beside Pacific Mall on Steeles Avenue. The malls are said to be multi-cultural friendly and easily accessible by non-Asian visitors.

Women look to relieve stress

The Scarborough Women's Centre plans to host a full-day workshop on how to recovering from emotional and financial trials. Stepping Stones to Personal Resilience is to be held at the centre on Nov. 27 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Auction to send kids to camp

A silent auction of arts and crafts is to be held at Cedar Ridge Creative Centre. The event, Gifts that Give, will take place on Dec. 2 from 6:30 to 9 p.m. All proceeds are to help send children living in the Kingston-Galloway/Orton Park and Scarborough Village areas to fine art camps.

Lions host holiday sale

The West Hill-Highland Creek Lions Clubs is hosting its annual holiday gift and craft sale on Dec. 4 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Fifty vendors are expected to sell a variety of goods at Heron Community Centre. Admission and parking is free.

Library reopens in December

Cedarbrae Library is to reopen to the public on Dec. 6 at 4 p.m. After a three-year, \$4.76-million renovation, the library plans to unveil its modernized transformation. The library has been redesigned to create more accessibility, improve customer service and provide more access to technology and collections.

FEATURE

THE BIG REVEAL

Scarborough Town Centre unveils long-awaited new look and stores, and the redesigned Walk of Fame featuring local heroes

**SARAH MOORE
ANGELA ROTUNDO**
The Observer

Two years and \$62 million later, the newly revamped Scarborough Town Centre is ready for business and aims to make Scarborough residents proud to call the suburbs home.

On Nov. 17, the mall unveiled its new look in a large public display, showcasing its updated appearance, new stores, extravagant Santa's Workshop and the redesigned Scarborough Walk of Fame.

The event drew residents from across the city, local councillors and even some celebrity guests, including Scarborough resident and comedian Colin Mochrie.

"When you have celebrities endorse a product, it does reach the customer base much faster," said Jai Lee, director of marketing for the Scarborough Town Centre. "Not only Colin Mochrie, but also Deb McGrath, who is a Scarborough native, and Councillor Glenn De Baeremaeker, who is a real champ, came out to speak on our behalf."

The mall, which has not been renovated since the 1980s, had been desperately in need of a facelift.

"If you walk through a shabby, sloppy house you aren't going to have a lot of pride in your home," said De Baeremaeker. "Investing over \$60 million to repaint the building, put in new lights, to create a new Santa village just makes this place that much more beautiful and makes us that much more proud."

The renewal of the centre was not focused on just the addition of new stores. It also aimed to improve the community's shopping experience.



Nicolette Bryan (left) wins \$5,000 for creating a video documenting why she loves Scarborough. Glenn De Baeremaeker (centre) and Scarborough Town Centre general manager Kathy Meyers (right) awarded her the cheque on Nov. 12 at the event.

"When we started the campaign, we really wanted to celebrate Scarborough," Lee said.

Lee also said the mall is known as not only a regional shopping centre but a community one as well.

The reopening was a complete community event, featuring a rocking performance by the Wexford Heights Gleeks, a \$5,000 prize awarded to Live It Up contest winner Nicolette

Bryan, and the unveiling of the redesigned stars on the Walk of Fame. Bryan submitted a video describing why she loved the mall. That day, a large crowd filled the mall's centre court.

"This is such a great community deserving of this centre," said centre general manager Kathy Meyers. "We've created a more comfortable shopping environment, so we're excited."

The reveal was strategically planned to take

place as the Christmas shopping season began. New stores, including Pink by Victoria's Secret and Brown's, are expected to bring in a new wave of customers while still catering to Scarborough Town Centre veterans.

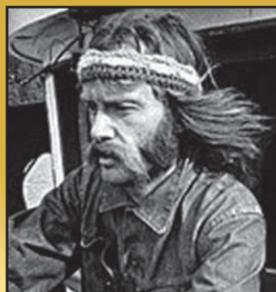
"Scarborough Town Centre is really tied in and such an integral part of the Scarborough community," Meyers said, "This reveal isn't the end it's just the beginning."

Meet four of your local stars



Dr. Ming-Tat Cheung
Inducted 2007

Chair and president of Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto, head of Panda Acquisition Task Force



Bob Hunter
Inducted 2007

Founding member of Greenpeace, ecologist, author, journalist.



Deborah Cox
Inducted 2008

Multiple Juno-award winning singer and actor, active member in the Broadway in South Africa charity.



Debra McGrath
Inducted 2009

Comedian, writer, actor, partner in Toronto production company Canadian Accents.



Famous Neighbours

The inductees on the Scarborough Walk of Fame:

2009

- Marilyn Denis
- Dwayne De Rosario
- Gordon Deval
- Lois James
- Debra McGrath
- Don Montgomery

2008

- Deborah Cox
- Rick Middleton
- John Wimbs
- Earl Campbell
- Ben Heppner
- Dr. Sheela Basrur

2007

- James Bamford
- Johnny Cowell
- Bob Hunter
- Des McAnuff
- Dr. Ming-Tat Cheung
- Cindy Nicholas
- Anson Taylor

2006

- Jamaal Magloire
- Vicky Sunohara
- Doris McCarthy
- David Onley
- Dr. Joseph Y. K. Wong
- Dr. Lloyd N. Carlsen
- Wes Williams
- Dr. R. H. King
- David Thomson
- Dr. Charles C. Macklin

Above: Scarborough Town Centre general manager Kathy Meyers and other dignitaries participate in the unveiling.

Right: The Wexford Heights Gleeks serenade the audience at the event. They sang popular hits like Journey's 'Don't Stop Believin'.

Bottom Left: Ward 38 councillor Glenn De Baeremaeker shows his support for Scarborough.

Bottom Right: Comedian and Scarborough resident Colin Mochrie hosts the reopening ceremony. His wife Debra McGrath was inducted into the Scarborough Walk of Fame this year.



Photos by: Sarah Moore

Christmas gift for all

Santa Claus is coming to town. But that's old news. Really old news. Christmas decorations have been in stores since before Halloween.

It feels like the Christmas season starts earlier every year. And that's a very good thing.

Along with ringing cash registers, the holidays also bring toy and food drives, fundraising, and a higher than usual levels of generosity and good will.

Nowhere is that more true than here in Scarborough.

At this time of year, people seem to be more willing to give their time and money to help others.

Toys collected during the 16th annual Auxiliary Police Toy Drive, which kicked off earlier this month, will be delivered to kids in neighbourhoods and shelters across Scarborough.

On the weekend, the 2nd Highland Creek and 11th Bendale Scout groups began their 27th annual food drive. Thousands of kilograms of food have been collected over the past few years to help local families during the holidays.

Farther east, Durham Regional Police have started a program where people can pay their tickets in toy donations rather than cash. There's no such program in Scarborough, but maybe we should have one. At this time of year, there is no shortage of worthy causes to donate to.

The run-up to the holidays is a time when people's thoughts turn to giving, to family and friends, and to the community. Christmas shoppers who may feel guilty about splurging have plenty of options to help someone out and ease their conscience.

So the earlier the Christmas season comes, the earlier people start giving.

And the earlier people start giving, the more those in need benefit.

There is no better way to welcome Santa to town.

—Megan Harris

Big money, little change at STC

Scarborough Town Centre recently unveiled its \$62-million transformation at an official ceremony on Nov. 17. But it looks like very little changed.

The shopping hub, which also serves as a station for more than 20 bus routes, definitely needed the facelift.

But after visiting the mall, it's difficult to tell what was done.

According to Kathy Meyers, central manager of the Scarborough Town Centre, the biggest things consumers will notice are the ceilings and skylights — changes that were made years ago. The renovation included a new home for Santa, which is nice, but will be gone after the holidays. Apart from the skylight replacement, the project included new escalators and elevators, renovated entrances and improvements to both the food court areas.

It's great that the renovations are also green and environmentally friendly. But people are going there to shop — something that is difficult in a mall that has few options when compared to other malls of a similar size, like Fairview mall. Scarborough residents have to travel all the way to Yorkdale if they want higher-end stores with more options and availability.

It seems as though the mall is a dumping ground for products that Yorkdale patrons don't want. For example, a sweater you could find at a particular store in Yorkdale is typically not available at the same store in Scarborough Town Centre.

Of course the value of homes in an area has an effect on the commercial property but people in Scarborough deserve high-end stores and quality shopping as well. It seems we will always have to go west if we want the goods.

The \$62 million dollars spent on revamping Scarborough Town Centre should have been spent on attracting better retailers, as Fairview did years ago when they added an Apple store, LCBO, Forever XXI, BCBG Max Azria, Aritzia among other stores to their outdated property.

Scarborough Town Centre will have to do better than that to impress people who live in the city, yet always shop elsewhere.

—Courtney Roberts



BRADLEY FEATHERSTONE/The Observer

Shopping centres over leisure is city hall's urban village idiocy

Scarborough: It's time to bring in the fun.

Seriously—this town needs more entertainment. Glenn De Baeremaeker et al can elaborate all they want about “urban villages” in progress. But these urban villages are just artificial little shopping villas that give us nothing we didn't already have.

We're all really impressed with the money spent on benches and windows at Scarborough Town Centre. But what happens when 9 p.m. strikes and residents are finished spending their money at the mall? When I'm thinking about a date place, or a place to hang out with buddies, I don't think Scarborough. As a matter of fact, I probably don't consider a spot within 20 kilometers of Scarborough.

There is a stigma that goes along with children growing up in small towns. They get older and they struggle to find anything to entertain themselves with. They turn to vandalism, drugs, weapons—and whatever else they can get their hands on, to replace the entertainment they can't get.

Our local councillors seem to be hooked on the notion that Scarborough needs to be a gargantuan residential zone. But if it's to be a more desirable place to live, it first needs to be a



Billy COURTICE

What happens when 9 p.m. strikes and residents are finished spending their money at the mall?

more desirable place to hang out. Bring in the strip clubs bring in the theatres, the dance halls, the posh night clubs, and the glitzy restaurants.

It's getting to be a little much to ask people from the northeast reaches of Scarborough to travel 40 km downtown for a little entertainment. And gang violence may actually fall if teens on the street had something better to occupy their time with.

I'm not suggesting we keep duplicating the neon mess that is Eglinton Avenue East all over our east end. Areas like that were sleazy in the '70s when they

were conceived and they will continue to be sleazy until they're finally knocked down and replaced with mediocre condo buildings.

But if some of the effort and funding that goes into the upscale shopping centres around Scarborough's “urban villages” was put into creating some nightlife, we may see some authentic urban development.

Why are we kidding ourselves with these overblown shopping circuses? Nobody sees Scarborough as a shopping destination. The city may attract some weekend shopping commuters from the east, but it will lose out every time to more posh locations like Yorkdale, Eaton Centre and Vaughan Mills. What we need is to rebuild Scarborough as something separate and unique from Toronto.

Take Etobicoke, for example: it maintained proper urban centres, which include nightlife destinations. Etobicoke residents can be self-sustained while the downtown core awaits them if they should feel the need to explore. Scarborough residents have no equivalent. There are a million places to shop but nowhere to kick loose. It's a city to sleep in and nothing more.

Rob Ford is cutting Scarborough loose with transit, and why wouldn't he? There's no reason to be here anyway.

THE EAST TORONTO OBSERVER

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Scarborough raccoon leads Santa's way

Annual city parade has local feel

PATRYCJA KLUCZNIK
The Observer

Santa Claus has come to town — and with a helper from Scarborough.

Mike Plumton, a Scarborough resident and self-proclaimed “parader” from the small town of Norwood, has taken part in the Santa Claus Parade for the last three years.

This year he was dressed as a raccoon with a skipping rope as part of the Tim Hortons float, but last year he got the ultimate honour: being a part of Santa's float.

“It's the event that makes Toronto feel like it's a really small community,” Plumton said.

The annual Santa Claus parade entertained young and old for the 106th year this past Sunday. Children and parents packed sidewalks along the five-kilometre parade route to get a glimpse of various

floats, clowns, marching bands and, of course, the big man himself.

Raised in a small town in central Ontario and now a Scarborough resident, Plumton describes the parade as a feeling of being part of something massive and historical in a large urban city.

“That's why I do it. [Toronto] is just so big, everyone's in it for themselves. But this day, so many people come together and so many people come to watch. Everyone's just excited to see it and to be there, and people kind of forget about everything else. It's a nice slowdown.”

The parade is the longest-running children's parade in the world. With 31 floats, 24 marching bands, and hundreds of clowns, elves, and other creatures. Another Scarborough resident, Kayla Grey, 20, was a first-time live parade watcher this year.

“I've never ventured down here to see it live before. I can't

“

I feel like a kid again
— Kayla Grey



PATRYCJA KLUCZNIK/The Observer

Scarborough residents Mike Plumton (left), 27, and Derrick Fournier, 28, wave in the Santa Claus parade.

believe the thought put into it by some of these families. I actually saw one with a little barbecue, grilling hot dogs!”

The weather was a bit of an issue this year, as temperatures dropped below freezing. It didn't stop the crowds though, and Grey said that

she's glad she and her friends came out to watch.

“Yeah, it's really, really cold, but it's actually starting to feel like Christmas being here,” Grey said. “I feel like a kid again.”

With the parade running since 1905, many have child-

hood memories of watching it on TV or coming down and seeing it live. Plumton described his memories of watching the parade from his small-town home.

“We used to watch it on TV, and we always made this terrible popcorn, and it was

always something we would do during that time. We would always watch it as a family, but I had never seen it live until I was part of it.”

To view a photo gallery of the parade, visit torontoobserver.ca

Board shares art with AGO

Trustee seeks to bring back paintings for school loan program

KIMBERLEE NANCEKIVELL
The Observer

Pieces of the Toronto District School Board's multi-million-dollar art collection are leaving home, but at least one trustee hopes they'll be back for a visit.

“The [Art Gallery of Ontario] is a wonderful environment for us to have the artwork in, but it would be even nicer if we can actually have some of these artworks in the schools,” said Gary Crawford, Scarborough Southwest trustee and Ward 36 councillor-elect. “One of the things we're looking at is a loan program where we would actually be able to loan some of these paintings out to schools.”

Any artwork valued over \$10,000 was removed from Toronto schools and placed in a vault two years ago over security concerns.

“We realized we had some very expensive paintings that could easily disappear,” Crawford said.

There were also conservation concerns with paintings that were not hanging in the proper environment.



KIMBERLEE NANCEKIVELL/The Observer

Trustee and councillor-elect Gary Crawford, with his own artwork in his home, wants to ensure students have easy access to the school board's art collection.

Though Crawford's plan to return some of the pricier art to the schools remain wishful thinking for the moment, the school board and the AGO are moving ahead with their new partnership.

“We've been to see the collection and we have our

curatorial team making a selection that will come on display,” said Kelly McKinley, director of education and public programming for the AGO.

The paintings will be displayed in the new Weston Family Learning Centre,

scheduled to open next fall.

“This is an absolutely one-of-a-kind arrangement to bring a school board with an art collection together with a major art museum,” McKinley said. “It's a wonderful opportunity to provide access to learning for students.”

Chinatown hits big screen

NADIA PERSAUD
The Observer

A young man, larger than life on the silver screen, points out his favourite parts of Toronto's downtown Chinatown before looking straight into the camera and declaring, “I'm Vietnamese.”

“The idea of Chinatown is very unifying in that everybody knows what it is,” said Aram Siu Wai Collier, project director of the movie, Suite Suite Chinatown, part of the 14th Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival.

The project asked seven Chinese-Canadian filmmakers a personal question: What's your version of Chinatown?

“It was a good idea that could go in a lot of different areas and we were all brought together by an ethnic thread,” Collier said.

At the Nov. 17 screening, the front atrium of the Scar-

borough Civic Centre was turned into a packed theatre.

“I noticed there was a lot of young Chinese artists and filmmakers, and I thought it would be great to get everyone in a room together and see what we can put together,” Collier said.

Director Heather Keung used old home video footage for her segment of Suite Suite Chinatown.

“My work was inspired by the idea of creating our own histories and our own memories through home archival movies,” Keung

said. Her part of the film focused on her family gathering for a huge feast.

“I grew up in Mississauga but going into Chinatown as a kid always meant big family gatherings,” Keung said.

The half-hour film was accompanied by live music and Angie Molina and Arthur Yeung a duo known as the Exercisers.

The film festival ran from Nov. 9 to 15.

“

The idea of Chinatown is very unifying
— Aram Siu Wai Collier

SPORTS

Brothers check into the NHL

BRADLEY FEATHERSTONE
The Observer

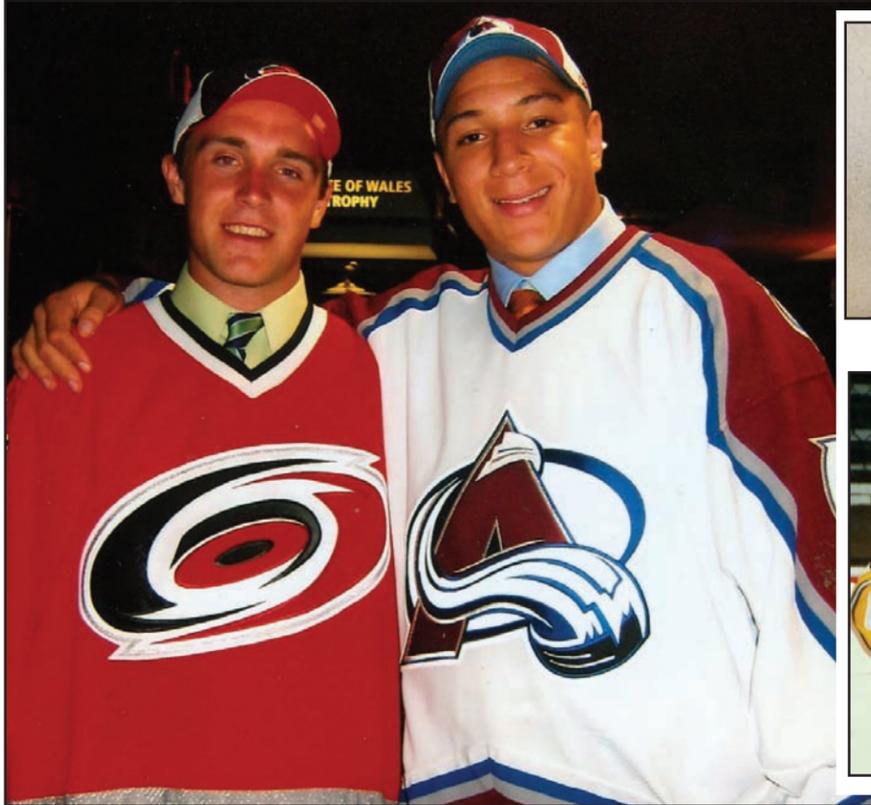
Now that they are rising stars in the NHL, making millions of dollars to play the game they love, it's easy to forget things weren't always this way for Chris and Anthony Stewart.

The Stewart brothers grew up poor around Galloway and Orton Park, a notoriously rough Scarborough neighbourhood known for broken homes, gangs and drugs. The Stewart family, including the two boys and five younger sisters, struggled and often jumped from one residence to another.

The boys did have one thing in common with lots of others kids in Canada: they dreamed of making it big in the NHL.

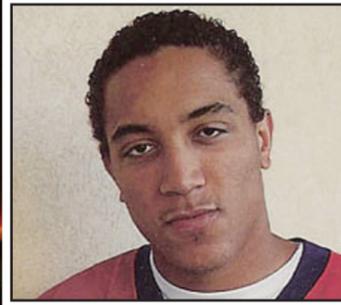
"When teachers asked you what you wanted to be when you're grown up, I'd always say, 'Hockey player,'" older brother Anthony recalled. "The teacher would always say, 'Pick something else.' I'd end up making something up, like cop or something."

Anthony was born in La-Salle, Que. in 1985 and moved to Toronto the following year. Chris was born in Toronto in 1987. They each laced up their first pair



BRADLEY FEATHERSTONE/The Observer

Chris Stewart (Colorado) celebrates being 18th overall draft pick in 2003 with OHL teammate Bobby Hughes. Anthony Stewart (upper right) poses for his hockey trading card with the Florida Panthers. A young Chris (lower right) at age 9, holds the championship trophy for the Scarborough Young Bruins in a Buffalo tournament.



of skates at the age of 4 and started playing hockey at 5.

Anthony and his dad used to take the bus to the rink, or walk if they lived near by. One cold winter morning, 6-year-old Anthony and his dad were walking through a snowstorm at 5:30 a.m. on their way to a practice at Her-

on Park Arena on Lawrence Avenue.

As they trekked down the icy road, a car flew by and suddenly stopped and reversed back to them. The man inside the car was Bob Ziemendorf, a local Scarborough hockey dad. He was driving his own son to

practice when he decided to give the Stewart's a lift. Bob asked what time they finished and when the Stewart's walked out, he was there to drive them home.

The Ziemendorfs started driving the Stewart's to hockey on a regular basis and the two families formed a

close bond. The Ziemendorfs would go on to help the Stewart's through their toughest moments and even helped pay for the boys to play hockey.

"If it wasn't for [the Ziemendorfs] I wouldn't have been able to get where I am today," Anthony said.

Anthony was drafted 25th overall in the 2003 entry draft by the Florida Panthers. Chris would follow in his footsteps two years later, drafted 18th in 2005 by the Colorado Avalanche, a moment Anthony recalls as one his proudest.

Chris quickly found success in the NHL. At 23, he led the Avalanche with 28 goals and 64 points in the 2009-2010 season. He recently inked a two-year, \$5.75 million contract with the team and is posting big numbers this season with 24 points in 20 games.

Anthony, however, has had a tough time since draft day and has spent most of his time in the minors. He's scored only eight goals in over 100 games in the NHL, but four of those goals have come in the current season.

"The hard part isn't getting there, it's staying there," Anthony said, sharing advice once told to him. "It's all about timing and opportunity. Right now I'm getting a chance to play with some great players and I'm just going to try my best to run with it."

Anthony scored his first career NHL hat trick earlier this season and has 11 points in 21 games with the Atlanta Thrashers.

Sports Briefs

David and Mary win OFSAA match

David and Mary Thompson Collegiate Institute's girls basketball team won the OFSAA challenge match 64-18 on Nov. 17 against Northern Secondary School.

RH King boys volleyball win

RH King Academy's boys volleyball team won the OFSAA challenge match against York Mills Collegiate Institute 3-1 on Nov. 18.

Birchmount upset by Etobicoke

Birchmount Park Collegiate Institute's girls basketball team lost the OFSAA challenge match to Etobicoke Collegiate Institute 53-45 on Nov. 17.

Downsview wins TDSB city championship



KAITLYNN FORD/The Observer

Birchmount's Riann Grant, #15, charges down the court to steal the ball from Downsview's breaking Cassandra Nofuente, #24, who didn't see her coming from behind.

KAITLYNN FORD
The Observer

Birchmount Park Collegiate Institute played Downsview Secondary School in the Senior Girls Tier 1 City Championship in the Toronto District School Board's second largest division, 3A.

North Region's Downsview beat East Region's Birchmount Park for the City Championship title in a close game at the University of Toronto St. George's Sports Gym on Nov. 16.

Though Birchmount Park won the tip-off and was first on the scoreboard, Downsview won the game 39-34.

Birchmount started the game playing well defensively, pouncing on rebounds, boxing out and keeping Downsview off the scoreboard even though most of the play was kept in it's end of the court.

The first quarter ended 12-5 in favour of Birchmount.

However, Birchmount's zone defence wasn't able to hold up to Downsview's full-court man-to-man press throughout the duration of the game.

Birchmount Park poked holes in Downsview's press by using their speed and throwing Hail Mary passes down the court.

The second quarter saw Downsview take the lead for the first time, which it kept for the rest of the game.

In the last quarter, emotions were high and the game got a little rough. Picks were set with dropped shoulders, ball carriers were tripped and outright shoved, and neither team's players offered or accepted a hand to get up from the floor. Fans got in on the action, jeering at the other team and trying to disrupt players at the free-throw line as the game winded down.

Downsview finished first in the North region with an undefeated record of 6-0. Birchmount Park finished second with a record of 4-1.

Downsview finished season play with 397 points for and only 72 points scored against. Birchmount Park's record was 205 for and 144 against.

Birchmount Park finished second in the Tier 1 finals, while Downsview finished first for their respective regions.