

'Ruffing' the elements:
Pet safety for winter
Page 16



The Scarborough
OBSERVER

CENTENNIAL
COLLEGE

Magazine

Vol. 2, No. 4 • Winter 2013

**Local girl donates her
hair to charity**

Page 6

**UTSC Quidditch club
hosts winter game**

Page 21

**How to build your
own backyard rink**

Page 11

**COUNTDOWN
TO CHRISTMAS**

Pages 12-13



Happy New Year

1

The Stone Cottage Pub (3750 Kingston Rd.) will have an all-you-can-eat buffet starting at 6:00 p.m., appetizers at 7:00 p.m. and complimentary champagne for the midnight countdown! Live music will be provided by City Soul. Pre-sale tickets are available in advance for \$50/person.

The Moose & Barrel (16 Lebovic Ave.) is kicking off New Year's Eve with some karaoke (and prizes!) around 9:00 p.m. Complimentary champagne will be provided at midnight, and food specials are available. Open until 2 a.m.

2

If you are looking to celebrate on the early side, the Toronto Zoo (2000 Meadowvale Rd.) is holding its 11th annual New Year's Eve Family Countdown from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. There will be live entertainment, including a magic show, for everyone to enjoy. General tickets are \$20, and \$12 for children ages 3-12. Parking is free, but the countdown is outside, so make sure to dress warmly!

3

The Harmony Club will be ringing in the New Year at the St. Peter & Paul Banquet Hall (231 Milner Ave.). Enjoy a night of dinner, drinks and dancing with a 6-course meal, 2 bottles of wine and one bottle of champagne (at midnight, of course) per table. Tickets are \$80 per person, and on sale now.

4

Jack Astor's (580 Progress Ave.) will have a DJ and complimentary champagne at midnight in their bar and lounge. Tickets can be purchased in advance or at the door for \$10. Open until 2 a.m.

5

The Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) is hosting its New Year's Eve Dinner and Dance starting at 8:00 p.m. at the Alex Manoogian Cultural Centre (930 Progress Ave.). Prices per person vary from \$40-\$75.

6

If you prefer to be out earlier in the day and stay home for the evening, consider participating in one of Rouge Park's holiday guided walks. Join trail leader Diana, on Dec. 31, starting from 10:00 a.m. for a two-hour 'festive fitness' hike.

7



Managing Editor Bernard Toney
 Production Editor Jamie Anderson
 Photo Editor Christian Boyer
 Graphics Editor Leigh Cavanaugh
 News Editor Radina Vencheva
 Arts & Life Editor Erkia Marucci
 Copy Editors
 Robyn Dhanju
 Joshua Spence
 Thomas Morrison
 Kristin Eliason

EDITORIAL STAFF

Tamar Atik
 Michael Baghel
 Tarah Bleier
 Kenya Bruce
 Erin Cassidy
 Hawwii Gudeta
 Dillon Hiles
 Vida Korhani
 Nicolette Mendoza
 Aaron Niles
 Paulina Pestryakov
 Whitney Reyes
 Theresa Spohn
 Tichaon Tapambwa

Cover Photo by Aaron Niles
 Pictured: Shawn at Scarborough
 Santa Claus Parade

FACULTY EDITORS

Eric McMillan
 Andrew Mair
 Philip Alves

torontoobserver.ca

The Scarborough Observer News Magazine
 published by
 Centennial College journalism
 students at the East York campus,
 951 Carlaw Ave., Room 149,
 P.O. Box 631, Stn. A,
 Scarborough, Ont. M1K 5E9.
 Email: editor@torontoobserver.ca
 Phone: 416-289-5107
 Fax: 416-289-5111

Table of Contents

NEWS

- 4 Aerospace program takes off
- 5 Haircut for a good cause
- 6 New Catholic school opens
- 7 Local hospital wins gold



ARTS & LIFE

- 10 Scarborough boy dominates OHL
- 12-15 It's the holly jolly season
- 16 Protecting pets for the winter
- 17 Barenaked Ladies take stage
- 19 Shakespeare in action



SPORTS

- 20 Charity turns to basketball
- 21 Quidditch invades Scarborough



Business

- 22 Investing in poop
- 23 Here comes a sweet delivery!



Aerospace course flies to a new spot

Centennial College program relocates into Downsview Park

Bernard Toney

The Aerospace program at Centennial College is departing from Scarborough's Ashtonbee location and is set to land at Downsview Park.

Talks about the move started four years ago, says Alan McClelland, dean of the college's school of transportation.

The college is going to work with other schools like the University of Toronto's Institute for Aerospace studies and Ryerson University.

"We looked at what the needs were and how we could better work together," he said. "As the discussion progressed, the concept of an aerospace cluster then came together."

Dean McClelland said they have also teamed up with Bombardier, at Downsview Park, a location that would help the school.

"That became the logical location for this cluster," he said. "It would be a combination of research facilities, as well as a combined college and university campus."

Program

chairperson Traci K. Brittain said the short voyage will help increase student enrolments.

"Currently at the Ashtonbee facility, we are at our maximum capacity," she said. "With the aviation industry growing, there was recognition that we needed to bring in more students, but also the need to service the global aviation community."

Brittain said they would be adding more classes and programs at the future Downsview campus.

"We're going to increase the size of the program for maintenance and avionics," she said. "We're also looking at putting in new programs in the future such as composite structures which will be a brand new program in itself."

The program is also excited about being closer to an active runway, which will make it easier to receive materials for training.

"Here at Ashtonbee, in order to get

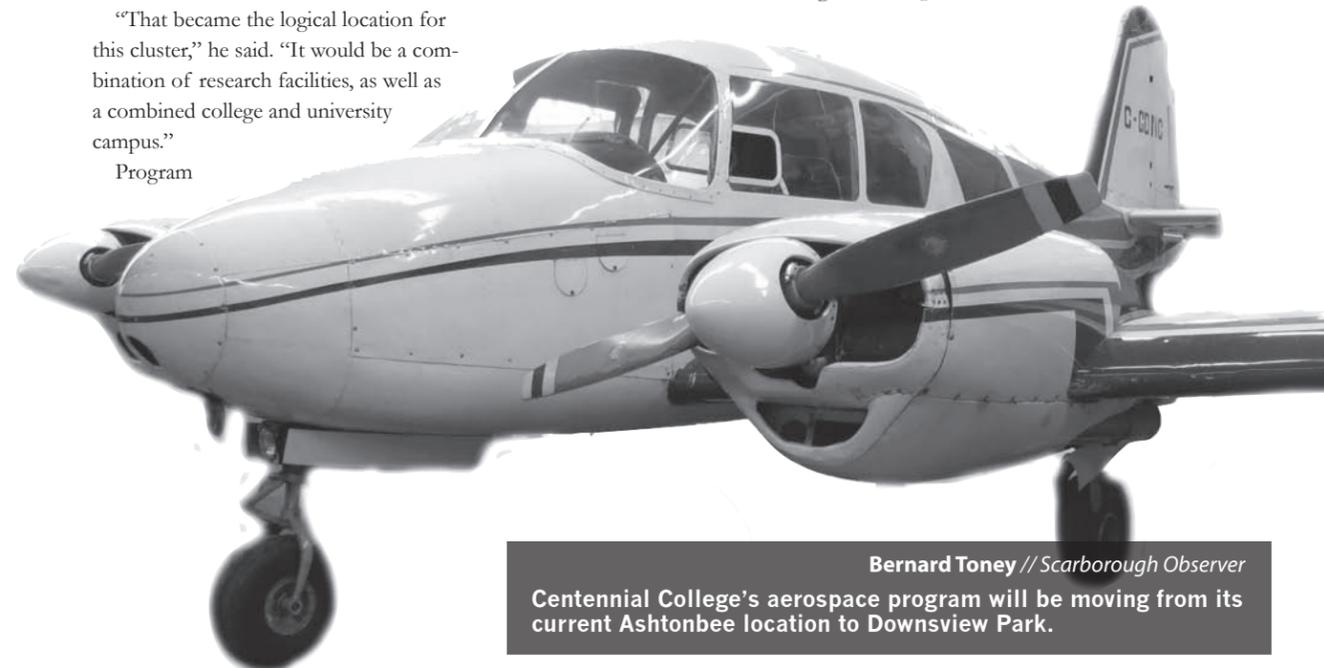
certain kinds of training aids they have to be disassembled and brought through the city," Brittan said. "An airport site ... benefits the students because of the aviation community around them."

All these changes wouldn't have been possible if not for \$26 million the provincial government put toward the aerospace program.

"The government is excited," Dean McClelland said. "If you go to the website and have a look at their press release ... they see the ability to invest in skills that lead to employment."

The exact date of the move is still unknown, but Dean McClelland is targeting 2015 to have the new facility open and functional.

"We're still finalizing our plans," he said. "There are some details we are working out, so as it stands right now we haven't got a firm timeline."



Bernard Toney // Scarborough Observer

Centennial College's aerospace program will be moving from its current Ashtonbee location to Downsview Park.

TDSB welcomes solar power

311 schools are getting solar panels, part of Green Bin Project

Joshua Spence

All things green were discussed at an eco-friendly school forum meeting held at Joseph Howe Senior Public School on Nov. 7.

Richard Christie, Toronto District School Board (TDSB) senior manager of sustainability, spoke to parents about the introduction of solar panels on Scarborough schools.

"The main thing about solar is that there are 311 new schools that are getting solar," Christie said. "We did very well in the province. The Ontario Power Authority only awarded 934 contracts for solar across the whole province and we won 311 of them."

According to Christie, the money earned will be going to schools that require repairs.

"We have a big back log of roofs that need maintenance and need repairing, so under this program the money we earn goes into replacing millions of square feet

of roofing," Christie said

Christie also said TDSB is figuring out ways it can include the topic of solar

What we're saying very strongly to schools is 'don't do the green bin unless you are really prepared for it.'

-Richard Christie

panels into the school's program to help the students learn.

"The staff are working on curriculum connections for the schools so that when the schools get the solar panels they could make full use of it from a curriculum and

program point of view," Christie said.

According to TDSB the project will generate energy equivalent to approximately 4,250 households in the city.

Schools wanting to participate in the Green Bin Project were another area of focus at the meeting.

The Green Bin project first started in the city in 2002. The aim was to collect all organic waste and turn it in to compost. Christie said schools wanting to take part should do so cautiously.

"What we are saying very strongly to schools is 'don't do the green bin unless you are really prepared for it,' because it is a recipe for lots of problems," Christie said.

He believes only schools of a certain level should take part because of their previous knowledge.

"Generally we think if you are a platinum or gold eco-school and you want to do it, you probably have the experience to be successful, if you're not at that level I would just caution you," Christie said.

Social media reacts to Rob Ford

Calls from both sides of city council for his resignation

Christian Boyer

Reaction to Mayor Rob Ford's Nov. 5 bombshell admission to smoking crack cocaine has been fast and wide spread.

A day after Ford admitted using the drug, a protest under a "Save Toronto" banner formed outside City Hall. Several city councillors have released statements expressing a range of reaction from personal concern to outrage.

"This is a difficult time for the city," Coun. Gary Crawford (Ward 36 Scarborough Southwest) said in a statement on his website. "The mayor has stated publicly that he needs to make some changes in his life. I sincerely hope that he takes the time and gets the support he needs."

"Actions speak louder than words. There are 45 members of council and we still have a city to serve."

Coun. Josh Matlow (Ward 22 St. Paul's) issued a strongly worded statement slamming the mayor and his brother, Coun. Doug Ford (Ward 2 Etobicoke North).

"Mayor Ford has been lying to Torontonians for months, if not longer," Matlow said. "He and his brother have unfairly and maliciously attacked anyone who has questioned his behaviour."

"The Mayor should remove himself from office and address his personal issues," Matlow said in his statement, adding he vows to support every effort from City Council to prevent further damage to city credibility.

JerroldWL
@Jerrold

Follow

So (breaking news) I became a first-time dad today, but all the media are too busy covering the Rob Ford crack fallout. #topoli #jokes

12:16 PM - 6 Nov 2013

Rick Smith
@rjcsmith

Follow

I realized last night that my little kids only know what "crack" means cause of Rob Ford. #angry #TOPoli #wtford

12:23 PM - 6 Nov 2013

Dean Blundell
@ItsDeanBlundell

Follow

After the Doug and Rob Ford Circus today I'm officially embarrassed to say that I breathe the same air as those two scumbags. #scum #topoli

12:39 PM - 5 Nov 2013

sijad ghani
@s_ghan07

Follow

The media needs to leave rob ford alone...he's the closest thing we've had to a normal human being like the rest of us

6:58 PM - 5 Nov 2013

Andrew Lampard
@aglampard

Follow

He smoked crack, but he never inhaled. #RobFord

3:23 PM - 5 Nov 2013

← ↻ ★

Watch out, speeders, you have been tweeted

Tarah Bleier

Drivers speeding past a school. It's a serious problem that concerned Scarborough resident Judy Tutchener enough that she decided to take action. She took to Twitter on Nov. 6 to voice her concern to Ward 43 councillor Paul Ainslie and ask for his help.

Ainslie replied the same day asking for more information and pledging to inform police.

According to Tutchener, she was walking to a parked car on Sylvan Avenue when another car passing eastbound zoomed by on the driver's side.

Speed is a particular problem in the area, Tutchener said, because it is a school zone with lots of kids heading to and from Elizabeth Simcoe Junior Public School.

The problem is one of enforcement, said Ashma Patel, Ainslie's constituency assistant.

"What the resident can do is take the license plate number of the speeder and report it to 43 Division," Patel said. "I can also ask (police) to patrol the area frequently."

Tutchener said she was pleased when she heard Ainslie's office would follow up with police.



A Twitter conversation between Tutchener and Councillor Ainslie (Ward 43) about Sylvan Avenue speeding problems.

Scarborough has gone to the dogs

Jamie Anderson

Scarborough dog owners will soon have a few more places for their furry friends to run around.

On Oct. 6, Councillor Glenn De Baeremaeker (Ward 38) announced Scarborough will be gaining three new dog parks.

He says the first will be at the Hand of God Park on Borough Drive and will open to the public in spring.

The second, at 1967 Ellesmere Rd. at the Centennial Recreation Centre, will be open by summer.

"It will be the first dog park in the city that has lights," De Baeremaeker said.

The third park, at 821 Progress Ave., at the Toronto Animal Services building and will also be completed by summer.

According to De Baeremaeker, the Thomson dog park will be renovated as well.

It is currently the largest dog park in the city (three acres), but it will gain another acre, running water, a light installed by the entrance and a picnic shelter.



Erin Cassidy // Scarborough Observer

(From back left) Children from Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati Catholic School join, TCDSB trustee Garry Tanuan, MPP Bas Balkissoon, Bishop Nguyen and Principal Cherrier at the school for the ribbon cutting.

New Catholic school opens

There were blessings, a ribbon-cutting and the creation of a time capsule

Erin Cassidy

Residents in the Brookside neighbourhood of Scarborough can now send their children to a Catholic school.

Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati Catholic School (BPGF), which opened this September, welcomed parents and guests to its school blessing on Nov. 20.

The children, who attend BPGF, led the schools blessing. The new Catholic school at 8 Seasons Dr. houses kindergarten to grade 8 and has 233 students.

Children opened the celebration by singing the national anthem and led guests through the day's blessings with Bible readings.

Father Edwin Gonsalves of St. Barnabas Parish and Bishop Nguyen blessed BPGF with an opening prayer and a reading of the Responsorial Psalm.

The children created a time capsule to be opened in 50 years. They filled it with items to mark the school's creation, including a banner with the school's motto, "We are many faces but just one family." A shovel to mark the completed construction and a photo of Pier Giorgio Frassati were among other symbolic items that were buried.

Principal Paola Cherrier was pleased with how the blessing went.

"It was an amazing event for our students, parents and staff," Cherrier said. "And I think the student involvement made everyone feel that it was our school."

In attendance was Angela Gauthier, Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) Director of Education, Bas Balkissoon, Ontario MPP for Scarborough Rouge River and Garry Tanuan, TCDSB trustee for Ward 8.

Armenian community centre gears up for New Year's Party

The annual event brings 500 together from the Armenian community

Tamar Atik

Walking in through the front doors of the Armenian community centre in Scarborough, it's a common sight to see the atrium buzzing with activities like meetings and fundraisers taking place, young scouts marching about and people relaxing to chat and have a coffee or a small bite to eat at the cafe in the centre of it all.

Today you'd see a table set up advertising the annual New Year's party and perhaps some friendly smiles on the faces of those who've set aside their time to come and sell tickets. Head organizer Koko Masrelian said the event has been going on for about 20 years. For him and many other members of the Armenian community, the community centre also serves as home. And the idea of creating a home to bring in the New Year is where the inspiration for the event stemmed from.

"We bring all the people together, as a family, to spend time together, to get to know each other better," Masrelian said. "Instead of going out (to other venues), you feel more safe. When all those things happen (at parties), like drinking, we can help each other and that's why we feel more safe, like spending (New Year's) at home."

Every year a new group of about six or seven people are selected to be on the planning committee. It meets weekly and designates tasks leading up to the big event, at least two months in advance.

"We all spend time together and we have fun," committee member Tikjian said. "It's important because we Armenians

are everywhere now, so we don't want to be more separated. We like to keep to keep the community all together."

Tikjian was in charge of finding the singers for this year's event; a crucial role which could make or break the night.

"I like to help my community," Tikjian said. "If they ask me, 'Can you do this with us?' I'm going to say yes. For sure, if I have time... We like to help each other. We're a very small community, but we'd like to make it bigger."

Due to Tikjian's assistance, the event will be featuring an Armenian DJ and singer, both based in Toronto and a Greek singer flying in from Israel, Masrelian and Tikjian said.

"By the second week of December, I think we should be sold out," Masrelian said, estimating the committee will sell about 500 tickets total. Tikjian said Armenians come from as far as Cambridge to attend.

He and Tikjian both added that although the event is happening at the Armenian Community Centre with a predominantly Armenian crowd, everyone is welcome.

Our door is open to everybody, whether you're Armenian or not," Masrelian said. Adding that they are open year-round and not only for the event.

"We're going to have lots of fun, I know that," Tikjian said.

The Armenian Community Centre in Scarborough serves as a hub for Armenians all over Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area. The centre, surrounded by the A.R.S. Armenian private school and St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church help to bring members of the community together for events like its upcoming New Year's Eve party.

Everest tackles addiction awareness

Hawwii Gudeta

Addiction issues are on the rise, says Tom Peric, lead instructor in the addictions and community services worker program at Everest College.

"I think a program like this one is important because it can help people," said Peric, who has been with the school for more than three years. "Unfortunately addictions are increasing in several forms so more services are needed."

The college recently held its first Addiction Awareness Week at its campus at 2425 Eglinton Ave. E. in Scarborough.

From Nov. 18 to Nov. 22, Everest College held workshops meant to get people interested in joining the program, which offers courses in psychology, relapse prevention and pharmacology, among others.

"We teach people what it takes to help people help themselves," Peric said. "In this program we put emphasis on addictions, how to treat addictions, how to help people deal with their addictions issues and also how to engage with people in their communities in a helpful way."

The program offers positive ways to properly engage students, including field trips to places like the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, instructor Jeff Goldman said.

"It is a phenomenal hospital where they're de-stigmatizing addictions and mental health," he said.

"The goal is to give our students hands-on experiences so they can be familiar with addiction and social service agencies."

The student experience in the program is a good one, student ambassador Jessica Mullett said.

"I like that we're really involved with the school," she said.

Donation buzz

Scarborough resident gives \$500 and her nearly waist-length hair to fight cancer

Jamie Anderson

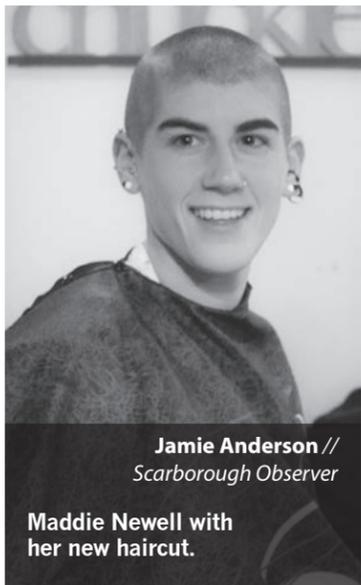
On Halloween, while everyone was out trick-or-treating, 21-year-old Maddie Newell was in a hair salon doing something very different.

A native of Scarborough, Newell made the decision to shave her head and donate her hair to Shave for the Brave, a foundation out of Halifax helping young adults who are going through cancer treatments. According to cancer statistics released by Statistics Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Canadian Cancer Society, in the past five years there have been 11,400 cases of cancer in young adults (ages 15-29).

Having always been known for her long wavy hair, Newell felt shaving her head was the right decision.

"People that go through chemotherapy don't have the option of how short they want their hair, they just lose it," she said. "So I thought of it as a trade situation where they get my hair, and I take on being bald."

She also decided to try and make some money for the cause, initially aiming for \$100 from friends and family, but she soon took her fundraiser to work with her at a pharmacy on Queen St. E.



Jamie Anderson // Scarborough Observer

Maddie Newell with her new haircut.



Jamie Anderson // Scarborough Observer

21-year-old Maddie Newell shaved her head and raised almost \$500 to donate to cancer research.

Newell started baking goods and asked customers for donations. "People like an incentive," she said. So far she has raised over \$400, but she is still hoping to reach \$500.

Although Newell has had lots of support through donations, some people, especially women, didn't agree with her decision to shave her head, preferring that she just get a "bob cut."

Those comments never influenced her decision.

"The concepts of beauty are pretty based around hair for women," Newell said. "I usually get a lot of compliments on my hair. So I thought someone who is struggling with the effects of cancer, they could use my hair, and I could use not having hair."

When the time came, two hairdressers at the Beauty Supply Outlet on Queen St. E., worked to braid Newell's hair into eight strands across her head. Each was well over 10 inches in length and that way, they they could be cut off individually and mailed to the foundation where they can be

made into wigs. As the braids were cut, everyone in the room watched intently at not only the scissors, but also Newell's face as she watched herself in the mirror. Her expression?

Pure excitement. With the braids cut and a new love of short hair discovered, Newell's hair dresser, Gina Edmonds brought out the buzzer.

Edmonds has been cutting Newell's hair for almost seven years and was supportive of her decision. But she did double-check with her customer before she started to buzz.

"I want the one!" replied Newell, adamant that she wanted no guard on the shaver.

Newell's brother Marrick, her boyfriend Jordan Chretien and even Newell herself took a turn with the buzzer before Edmonds finished the job.

I thought someone who is struggling with the effects of cancer, they could use my hair, and I could use not having hair.

-Maddie Newell

"You're enjoying that way too much," a voice in the room said to Newell.

After it was finished, and family and friends had taken their photos, Maddie marvelled at her new look in the mirror, with the phrase of the night being "It feels so weird!"

"I think it's very brave,"

Chretien said. "She has responded with a lot more positive attitude (than I thought). Yeah, she's bopping her head over there like some kind of goofus."

Local alleged illegal dentistry

Canada-wide warrant issued for the arrest of alleged fake dentist from B.C.

Michael Baghel

A British Columbia man has ended three months on the lam by turning himself in to police at Scarborough's 42 Division on Nov. 16.

Tung Sheng (David) Wu, 62, is now back in B.C., where he will serve three months in jail for contempt of court.

The contempt charge stems from an investigation by the College of Dental Surgeons of British Columbia (CDSBC).

According to court docu-

ments, the investigation showed Wu allegedly ignored a 2003 order to cease practising dentistry and continued his practice illegally until earlier this year.

Wu was absent during the legal proceedings against him and was found to be in contempt by the B.C. Supreme Court on Oct. 14. Toronto Police Service Staff Sergeant Paul MacIntyre said he believes Wu was already in Toronto in summer of 2013.

"I spoke to him briefly and it looks like he probably came here in early August, right around the time that the warrant was is-

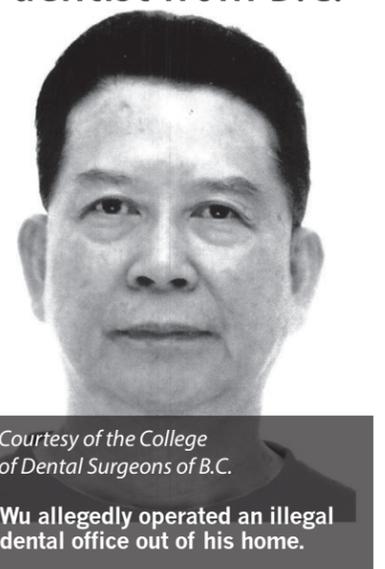
sued" MacIntyre said. "But we're not 100 per cent sure."

A Canada-wide arrest warrant was issued for Wu on Aug. 12 and the CDSBC offered \$2,000 for information leading to his arrest.

Wu appeared in court in Toronto on Nov. 18 and was held until Nov. 21, when B.C. sheriffs brought him back to Vancouver.

In addition to three months in jail, Wu has been ordered to pay investigation costs the CDSBC incurred in prosecuting him.

The total amount of these costs has not yet been decided.



Courtesy of the College of Dental Surgeons of B.C.

Wu allegedly operated an illegal dental office out of his home.

Hospital gets top honours

The Scarborough Hospital is awarded for being a top-quality healthcare workplace

Theresa Spohn

Everyone knows the key to a successful workplace is happy staff, but not every employer is an award-winner.

On Nov. 5, the Scarborough Hospital received a Gold 2013 Quality Healthcare Workplace Award from the Ontario Hospital Association (OHA) and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care after an expert panel reviewed each health centre's efforts to enhance employee and organizational health.

According to Rhonda Lewis, vice-president of human resources and patient relations, the dedication to continuous improvement has had a positive impact on staff.

"It showcases how each and every one of our employees is living the mission, vision and values of our hospital and of our organization," Lewis said. "It is why we have seen employee satisfaction and engagement continually increase over the past five years."

Lewis says the key to positive improvement has been encouraging staff input and ownership in the workplace.

"Our staff has seen the intentional focus on ensuring staff engagement, increased communication, on increased participation of staff in every aspect of strategy and operational decision-



Courtesy of The Scarborough Hospital

Staff from the Scarborough Hospital accept the 2013 Gold Quality Healthcare Workplace Award. In the front row are: Fay Calliste and Lori Irvine. In the back row are: Nurallah Rahim, Shirley Ward, Rhonda Lewis and Karen Dobbie. Rahim, Shirley Ward, Rhonda Lewis and Karen Dobbie.

making," she said.

And the judges have taken notice since the hospital was a silver award winner in 2012, before winning gold this year.

The organization developed a wellness strategy to address the physical, social and environmental health of staff. Lewis said the hospital has long provided affordable fitness centres and an Employee Assistance Program (free counseling service) but now they are all under one roof along with other services, like massage therapy and nutrition counselling.

For Kerrie Manley, a clinical resource

leader in the surgical program, access to fitness facilities and classes on site makes all the difference. When she returned from maternity leave, she wanted to be fit. In fact, she felt a professional obligation to do so.

"It is important if you're telling people (patients)

to do things then you should be able to do them as well," she said. With professional and family demands, Manley found it hard to fit in exercising as well.

She thought she might be able to deal with the time crunch after watching one colleague head off to the on-site gym every lunch hour. Manley began slowly by going on the elliptical machine first and then she started running, eventually reaching 10 kilometres per day.

Three years later, she is still running but she gained another partner along the way.

"It sort of inspired a domino effect," she said. Manley's dedication to her new sport inspired another colleague to attend the staff gym and take up running too. Between the two of them, they have lost 80 pounds. But it didn't stop there.

"She went on and made me look bad; she stole my thunder," Manley said.



Hospitals joining forces in merger

Demographic shift could cause major setbacks

Hawwii Gudeta

Board members of The Scarborough Hospital (TSH) voted Nov. 12 to proceed with the plan to merge TSH with the Rouge Valley Health System (RVHS).

A growing, aging population and funding challenges have been named as reasons for the planned merger, which would roll out over the next three years.

"Today's health care system must now prepare for the demographic shifts that will double the number of seniors living in Ontario over the next 20 years," said Robert Biron, TSH president and CEO.

The RVHS board of directors also voted for the merger plan at a separate meeting on Nov. 12.

In March, the Central East Local Health Integration Network board passed a motion calling for the merger with the goals of providing easy access to care and efficient use of hospital resources.

"The focus was and continues to be to ensure the long-term quality and safety of health care provided to the patients and to the community of Scarborough," TSH board member Steve Smith said. "There's been an awful lot of work that's been done by the medical directors and senior officers, so this decision is not taken lightly."

Doctor to receive lifetime achievement award

Dhun Noria of Scarborough Hospital talks about her experience with battling cancer and finding the determination to continue working in healthcare

Radina Vencheva

It was Friday, but not just any Friday. It was Friday, May 13, 1994 — a day that changed Dr. Dhun Noria's life forever.

"It's forever imprinted in my mind," Dr. Noria said. "For on that day, I was converted from a healthcare provider to a healthcare recipient. From a physician to a patient."

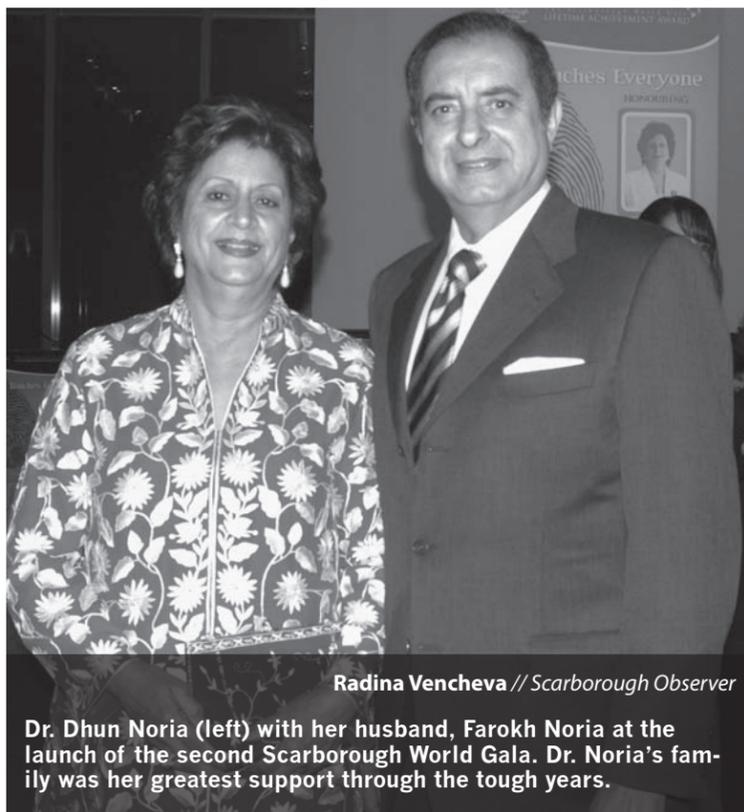
Noria, who was recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award at the recent Scarborough World Gala Foundation organized by the Scarborough Hospital, is the chief of laboratory medicine and medical director of laboratories at the hospital.

She is also a two-time breast cancer survivor.

This was not her first award. She has been the recipient of the University of Toronto's 25-year service award and was named businesswoman of 2004 by the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce — she has her own fashion jewellery business in India.

For Noria herself however, the latest award was a surprise.

"Everything I've done in my life has always been to do my best, whether it's a small or big thing and that's what my parents have taught me: to do my best without looking for rewards," Noria said. "So, for me it was normal because



Radina Vencheva // Scarborough Observer
Dr. Dhun Noria (left) with her husband, Farokh Noria at the launch of the second Scarborough World Gala. Dr. Noria's family was her greatest support through the tough years.

I was just doing my work."

Her cancer journey began in 1994, when her mammogram results came in, after she had discovered a lump the size of a grape in her left breast.

"The radiologist's office was right next to mine. He asked me to come by his office to discuss my health report,"

Noria said. "When I went to his office, he was in tears so I began consoling him. Then, I went back to my office, shut my door and shed my own pots of tears."

Having discovered she had breast cancer, Noria was angry at first, but then she became afraid of what would

happen to her children and husband.

"I'm a very passionate person, I like to do lots of things and cancer was not part of my plan. I still had lots to achieve," she said.

After nine years of isolation and hiding the cancer from her colleagues, in 2003 it returned in the "same dress, about the same size" and this time, she was very afraid.

"After my disectomy, I underwent months and months of chemotherapy and this time having cancer was harder to hide, because chemo had taken its toll on my health," Noria admitted. "My skin was this ash-and-gray hue, my hair had fallen off and I was feeling completely exhausted."

But even during this time, she continued going to work, while treating the cancer at the same time.

"This is a world of its own," Noria said, referring to her work. "Whatever trouble you have, you don't bring it to work, because you're working in a very dynamic environment. I never felt like quitting because I wouldn't know what else to do and I enjoy my work at the Scarborough Hospital."

Gerry Phillips, honorary chair for the 2014 Gala, has also served as MPP for the Scarborough-Agincourt riding for 24 years. He calls Noria's contributions an "example of perseverance, commitment and philanthropy."

Habitat for Humanity Birchmount Road plans opposed by community residents

Meeting hears concerns of local traffic nightmare

Theresa Spohn

On Nov. 7 the community surrounding 375 Birchmount Ave. met with Habitat for Humanity and city officials to find out what the latest plans are for the site. Many concerns focused on one of the issues that plagues the entire city: traffic.

Habitat for Humanity is proposing to build eight semi-detached homes and one single family dwelling on the 0.86-acre site. The lot abuts the CN railway to the north, Birchmount Road to the west, Highview Road to the south and the backyards of Alyesworth Avenue to the east.

"I am worried about safety," said Steven Mark, who lives on Alyesworth Avenue. "I am worried about a kid getting run over and me getting into an accident."

The intersection of Birchmount Avenue and Highview Road is particularly busy. It's the main exit for the neighbourhood as the rail line to the north creates a barrier. The bus stop at the corner services two TTC bus routes. TTC has reviewed the proposed development plans and did not express any concerns according to Habitat's presentation.

Tara Terry who lives on Alyesworth voiced her concerns.

"It is a dangerous corner right now," Terry said. "Having nine homes minimum, four



Theresa Spohn // Scarborough Observer

Steven Mark, Sue Mason and Erica Manaos all of Alyesworth Avenue hold up their paperwork demonstrating their opposition to Habitat's plans.

people per house, that's a lot of people in a little area there. That is going to cause horrendous traffic nightmares."

Another audience member shared her experience of the busy corner of Birchmount Avenue and Highview Road.

"I got off the TTC and almost got killed the other night by a bus because it was dark, it was rainy. We thought the bus stopped for us, we were crossing over the street. Would the city consider a crosswalk or a stop or something there?"

Complicating matters is the proposed service road for the development. It's planned to enter off Highview Road with the driveways behind the proposed homes.

Those in attendance at the meeting preferred the driveways be at the front, similar to the rest of the neighbourhood.

Paul Connor, the city's transportation engineering coordinator explained it's "safer to keep (vehicles) away from the intersection" and have the cars come off a local street like

Highview, versus off a main thoroughfare like Birchmount. This comment was countered by another audience member asking "Safer for who?"

The audience turned to Geoffrey McGrath, manager, Land Acquisition and Planning for Habitat for Humanity, frustrated by everything they had heard.

He was greeted with comments from the crowd of "Did you grow up in the city? Did you?" they asked. McGrath replied he had.

At that point Gary Crawford, Councillor for Ward 30, Scarborough Southwest, the area's representative, stepped in and took over as moderator.

But Crawford's intervention did not sit well with everyone, including Erica Manaos, a resident of Alyesworth Avenue and Steven Mark's partner.

"I guess he was playing moderator but at the same time I wasn't feeling that he was getting our concerns, what the community really feels about it," she said.

\$120K required to fix park bridge

Paulina Pestryakov

The current project, started in late October, is a three-way partnership between the Toronto Region Conservation Area (TRCA), UTSC and the City of Toronto. Patricia Newland, project manager of the TRCA, said the project was initiated to prevent a safety hazard in the future.

"For a couple of years, TRCA mentioned erosion on the Morningside pedestrian bridge located on the North side of the creek, so we decided it would be important to reinstate the trail," Newland said. "The trail is quite dangerous, so this change will reduce risk for people."

The pedestrian bridge is blocked

Crossing closed

off until work starts in 2014.

The TRCA plans to spend \$120,000 on 2,500 tonnes of rock for reconstruction of the retaining wall to clear the path in the north bank, as reported in the *Scarborough Mirror*.

UTSC, one of the participants of the project, is the largest valley owner of the area that is closed off due to the construction. It is keen on also participating in the reconstruction of the park.

"Students studying environmental science at UTSC have been hoping for a chance to work down in the park and also observe the area," said Brent DuGuid, director of partnerships and legal agreements at UTSC.

"This can be very hands on for them."

Mixed reaction to neighbourhood meetings

Value of Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020 events questioned

Tichaon Tapambwa

The latest Strategy 2020 meetings have been gaining mixed reviews.

On one side, some residents believe the meetings are productive and useful. Others deem them useless.

"I don't think it's productive," Councillor Mike Del Grande, (Ward 39-Scarborough Agincourt), said. "I think this just by itself doesn't do justice, you need to have that exposure with the people that deal with everyday social problems in the community."

His vocal approach comes after attending the eighth Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020 public meeting.

On Nov.1, local residents in

the Scarborough region came to Stephen Leacock Collegiate Institute to discuss with the City of Toronto, the improvements needed for the next generation of Torontonians.

Del Grande's vocal dissent is a reaction to the ratio of city staff to Scarborough residents. The residents were outnumbered.

"It probably would have been better to deal with the NGOs and churches ... with the population that they are trying to reach out to," Del Grande said.

But levels of confidence around the successful outcome of these meetings differ among residents

Catherine Dennis, a social service student at Humber

College, came to the public meeting as a skeptic.

"I've come across these flyers many times but, now that I'm actually involved, I think these meetings are useful," she said.

The strategy has meetings taking place for nine nights in and around Toronto. Formerly known as Priority Neighbourhoods, council is hoping talking to residents and business owners in the community will help them understand what changes they need to implement for the next generation.

The changes are being grouped into five sectors: economic opportunities, social development, participation in decision-making, healthy lives, and physical surroundings.

"We are really talking about strengthening what we are doing... Many times we eat ourselves up on the negatives but we need to build on our strengths as well."

- Fencia Lewis-Dowlins

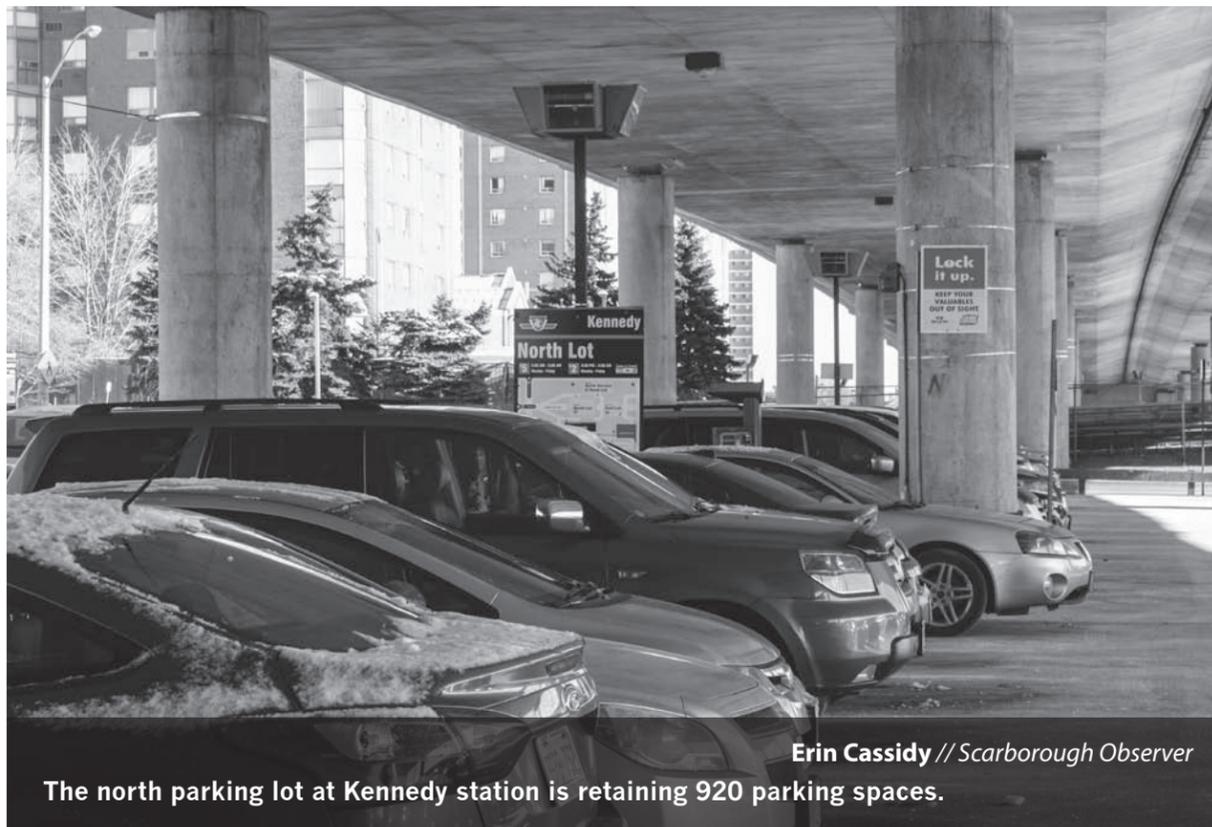
Their campaign slogan is "local impact for citywide change." As a result, the city staff that have been attending

the meetings seem enthusiastic.

"We are really talking about strengthening what we are doing... Many times we eat ourselves up on the negatives but we need to build on our strengths as well," project management team member for the strategy Fencia Lewis-Dowlins, said. "I have to be optimistic because this is about strong neighbourhoods. This is about how what happens in one region affects us all."

The meetings are being held in small groups. Instead of the usual crowded round-table discussions, the high school cafeteria tables held about three to four residents each.

In spring 2014, a staff report will be up for debate for the City Council.



The north parking lot at Kennedy station is retaining 920 parking spaces.

Erin Cassidy // Scarborough Observer

You can still park

920 spaces retained at Kennedy subway station during its construction in 2015 for the Eglinton subway extension

Erin Cassidy

Community councillors have voted to save the majority of the parking spaces at Kennedy subway station.

"We are retaining the north parking lot with 920 spots," Ward 35 councillor Michelle Berardinetti said at council's Nov. 19 meeting. Berardinetti said she was pleased not all spots at the Kennedy parking lot would be demolished during station renovations related to the planned subway extension.

"(With) the vote for the subway, it actually retains half of the spots at Kennedy station, so there will be a renewal at Kennedy station but we're able to retain half of the spots there because of the extension of the subway line," Berardinetti told the council meeting. Because there will be reduced parking spaces, Berardinetti said commuters can go to other stations to use their parking lots. However, Warden and Victoria Park will have a reduced lot spaces. Domenic Garisto, head of Property

Development at the TTC, said there would be a significant impact on the Scarborough subway parking lots during the construction.

"We are working closely with the Metrolinx folks," Garisto said in the meeting. "We are establishing a plan of what to do with Kennedy, Victoria Park and Warden. So as of today, what we are looking at is that Metrolinx has agreed to have at least 500 parking spaces maintained during construction."

Garisto believes there won't be any impact to Kennedy's parking lot until the construction begins in late 2015, early 2016.

"They are all depending upon Metrolinx's schedule though," Garisto said. "The information we have today seems to be the timeline."

Garisto suggests commuters can go to Lawrence and Ellesmere stations on the RT to park their cars.

According to Garisto, another meeting to discuss the matter further will be held in December.

Accomplishments celebrated at first abilities awards

Nicolette Mendoza

Clap. Sing. Cheer. And the award goes to ...

How many people are recognized for the good things that they've done? How many of them are disabled? The spotlight rarely shines on those in wheelchairs, those with stutters and those who have mental disabilities. But on Dec 3, the Abilities Ministries presented the first annual Abilities Appreciation Dinner & Awards in celebration of the International Day of People with Disabilities.

"It's one day when people can come together to celebrate their accomplishments," David Meyers who attended the Abilities Awards said. "And raise awareness of the barriers that get in the way of reaching their potential."

But on this night, over 30 organizations, VIP guests, CEOs and politicians from Toronto, York, Durham, and Peel Halton regions joined together at Morningstar Christian Fellowship Church to recognize the disability sector.

"They really deserved to be acknowledged," Jaime Castro, president of the Abilities Ministry said. "A lot of people in the disabled sector are not acknowledged properly."

Councillor Adam Vaughn, (Ward 20) was one of the award presenters for the event. But before presenting the second award, he announced that Internet voting would be available for people with disabilities at this time next year in the City of Toronto.

"That means their voice [will be heard]," he said. "They're voting in the next election and that will change government policy fundamentally and get everyone participating."

And on this night, the awards ceremony allowed everyone to participate and having their voices heard through awards, speeches, presentations, and singing performances including "Elvis" and "Whitney Houston." Justin Hines, singer and songwriter, was one of the main performers at the show. He also won the Dare to Dream Award, inspiring everyone to break through the mentality that people with disabilities are limited.

Bevlin Nelson, a Scarborough local and member of the church said that having an award ceremony such as this is important to recognize the disabled. "It's great to see our church open up to these people because most of them are left behind," she said. "It's good to see them use their talents." One of her main highlights is that the night showed that people care about the disability sector. Hosting the event is not all that Morningstar Christian Fellowship has done for the disabled. The church has made renovations by adding ramps and washrooms that are more accessible for those in wheelchairs along with other facilities.



Justin Hines

Staying connected to parks with workshop

Toronto Alliance for Better Parks met with residents to talk about social media partnerships

Hawwii Gudeta

A Toronto alliance for better parks met Dec. 7 to establish effective ways to build and restore city parks in the GTA.

The meeting was held by a group called Park People at the Hilltop Community Centre near Warden Avenue and St. Clair Avenue.

Nancy Lowes from the City of Toronto's Park, Forestry and Recreation for the East District, spoke with residents on how to effectively communicate with city council and staff.

"When you want to address an issue that you may have with your community park, your general form of single contact would be with the supervisor of the park," Lowes said.

Each park in Toronto has someone in charge of one park or a group of others. A supervisor is assigned by the city to look after the maintenance of parks; this ensures it meets the required needs of the community. The Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation is split up into three separate branches:

Parks, Urban Forestry and Community Recreation.

"I think the city does a great job considering the different departments they have," said John Mason, president of Guildwood Parks and Gardens. "Right now our group is trying to integrate strategic ways into building a water fountain and restrooms for our park."

The workshops provided information on how to address fundraising and partnerships. Doug Bennet from the City's Partnership Development Unit told residents how to connect with the right contacts.

"You can partner up with the development unit office," Bennet said.

"They can get you in touch with an organization called the Toronto Parks and Trees foundation, which is great because you can get funding for your community park without becoming a charitable project."

The workshops also addressed the importance of maintaining an online presence.

Kyle Baptista, coordinator and communications leader for the Park People, outlined ways to progressively interact with people on the internet.

"Having a website is essential because you will be able to reach several people at once," Baptista said. "Social media groups like Facebook and Twitter will also allow your community to reach a wider range of people."



Hawwii Gudeta // Scarborough Observer

Kyle Baptista, coordinator of park projects and communications with Toronto Alliance for Better Parks, centre, spoke with Scarborough residents about park projects.

During the forum, the Park People showed clips of two communities that took on projects to bring about positive change. The Malvern Action for Community Change was a project managed by local residents. They participated in tasks like water maintenance, community cleanup and gardening in the city's east end.



Courtesy James Tessier

Shawn Tessier, 17, went up the levels of hockey to the OHL in only four years.

Making the OHL

How Scarborough's Shawn Tessier used professionalism and passion to advance four levels of hockey in just four years

Vida Korhani

From a young age, Shawn Tessier maintained a strong work ethic and professional attitude that translated into his passion for hockey.

"It was just really starting to get into my head that this is what I really want to do in my life and I can make that possible," Tessier said. "If this is what I want to do, I have to treat it like a job... it's fun, but I've got to have that professional mindset behind it."

Tessier, 17, was born and raised in Scarborough. He recently signed a three-year contract with the North Bay Battalion OHL team, making him one of the few hockey players to jump four levels of hockey over the last four years.

He played AA as a defenceman and spent six seasons with the Scarborough Young Bruins before moving to AAA for 2011/2012 in the Minor Midget year, to try and get drafted into the OHL. According to Tessier, this was also the start of his professional career.

"Even just getting to that next step in AAA, they teach you little things like showing up to a game in a suit and tie," Tessier said. "It makes you feel that you are starting a professional career."

As he excelled on the last place Markham Majors, Tessier gained recognition from numerous OHL teams leading up to the draft. He waited all day and in the twelfth round, his name came up as a Brampton Battalion draft pick.

The summer that followed, Tessier played through the Brampton Battalion (now the North Bay Battalion) rookie camp and main camp, but was not signed by the team. But at the age of 16, he signed with the Whitby Fury Junior A (2012-2013) in the OJHL.



Shawn Tessier

"I was really ecstatic about it, not a lot of people can say they made junior at the age of 16, but I did," Tessier said. "But then after a couple of months they had to let me go, which was really heartbreaking because I mean that was getting to the next step. That's what I wanted to do and then all of a sudden it was gone."

Tessier was sent back to the Markham Majors Midget team. After awhile, however, Tessier realized he was able to get more ice time in the AAA games, which allowed him to improve his skills.

"We wanted to see him play a lot and we wanted to make sure that he was developing," said Matt Rabideau, the assistant general manager of the North Bay Battalion. "So the best path for boys in that situation is to play Junior because they aren't learning anything when they're sitting in the stands watching and not playing."

After being sent up and down during the season, Tessier became more motivated to reach the OHL. During the summer of 2013, he trained with the help of his older

brother James.

His hard work paid off; the Battalion invited him to play the team's five exhibition games, and he stayed with the team for the first 10 games of the season. The Battalion then sent Tessier to the affiliate Junior A North Bay Trappers, where he was quickly made assistant captain.

Now Tessier is playing Junior A and is frequently called up by the North Bay Battalion when needed.

He also just signed a three-year contract with the Battalion in hopes of being a full-time player next year.

"They always have to continue to push themselves because there's always a new draft coming in," said Rabideau. "That's going to push them even harder."

A genetic disorder that needs OneMatch

National initiative searching for stem cell donors in Scarborough

Aaron Niles

Cristina Di Corte shares something with only a handful of other people across the country.

The 22-year-old Mississauga woman suffers from mitochondrial neurogastrointestinal encephalopathy (MNGIE), a genetic disorder that only 70 people in Canada have.

"I found out that I had MNGIE a little over two years ago," Di Corte said. "I went to a genetic doctor who tested me for the disease I have and (they) explained that a bone marrow transplant would be my best option."

MNGIE is a genetic disorder that causes the digestive tract to no longer be able to move food through the body or absorb nutrients from it. The disease has made it necessary for Di Corte to receive all of her nutrition, fluids, and medications through a central line catheter.

The disease has also caused her to begin losing sensation in her lower limbs.

Di Corte is working with OneMatch, a Canadian Blood Services initiative, to find a bone marrow donor for her.

OneMatch held its annual Scarborough Get Swabbed event at the University of Toronto Scarborough on Nov. 12.

"We have been doing the Get Swabbed university campaign for four years," said Hailu Mulata, OneMatch coordinator for Central Ontario. "The purpose of 'Get Swabbed' is to recruit optimal donors to support the patients that we serve."

There are 1,000 Canadian patients waiting for a donation from someone they don't know, Mulata said.

Nationally, 28 universities participate in Get Swabbed every year.

Despite its relatively small size, UTSC regularly places near the top in stem cell donations, placing third last year. And Scarborough's diverse multicultural population makes an ideal place to receive stem cell donations, Mulata said.

"A lot of the time, but not always, a stem cell match will come from someone with a similar cultural background," Mulata said. "Scarborough presents the perfect place to gather donations because it has a large population of young ethnic males whose stem cells provide a higher survival rate."

"There is a great need for donors from different communities, including Asian, Arab and Indian," she said.

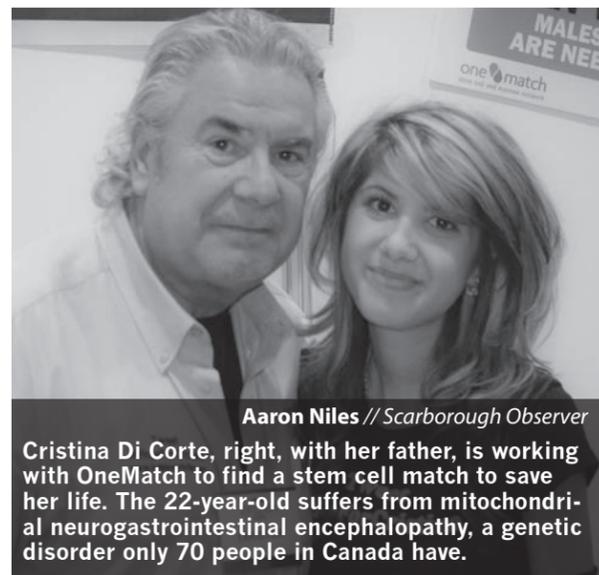
"Across the national level, we have a severe lack of representation from ethnic groups in regards to stem cell donations," said Mulata, adding she believes one cause may be prevailing myths about donating stem cells.

"There is a misconception about the procedure being painful," she said. "Primarily the stem cells are taken from the blood.

"In the rare cases where the stem cells need to be taken from the pelvic bone, the patient is given anaesthesia and

If no match is found, the disease will progress a lot faster, I will suffer and my life will be much shorter than I ever intended it to be.

- Cristina Di Corte



Aaron Niles // Scarborough Observer

Cristina Di Corte, right, with her father, is working with OneMatch to find a stem cell match to save her life. The 22-year-old suffers from mitochondrial neurogastrointestinal encephalopathy, a genetic disorder only 70 people in Canada have.

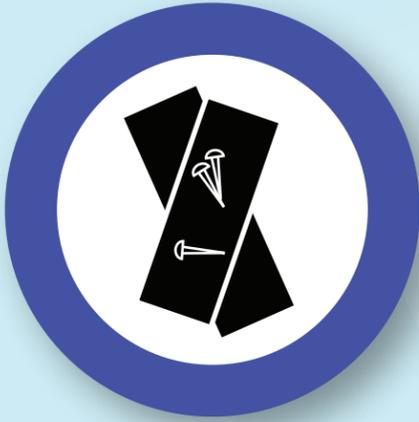
is unconscious during the operation, so the myth of the procedure being painful is unfounded."

Zameer Esmail, a Scarborough resident who was raised in Zambia, didn't let the possibility of pain stop him from donating to OneMatch.

"I think it is important that we donate to OneMatch," he said. "It is key that we work to help others. There may be a time where we need a donation from a stranger."

Di Corte is still waiting for a stem cell donor. Though she remains positive, she knows what's at stake for her if donors like Esmail don't come forward, she said.

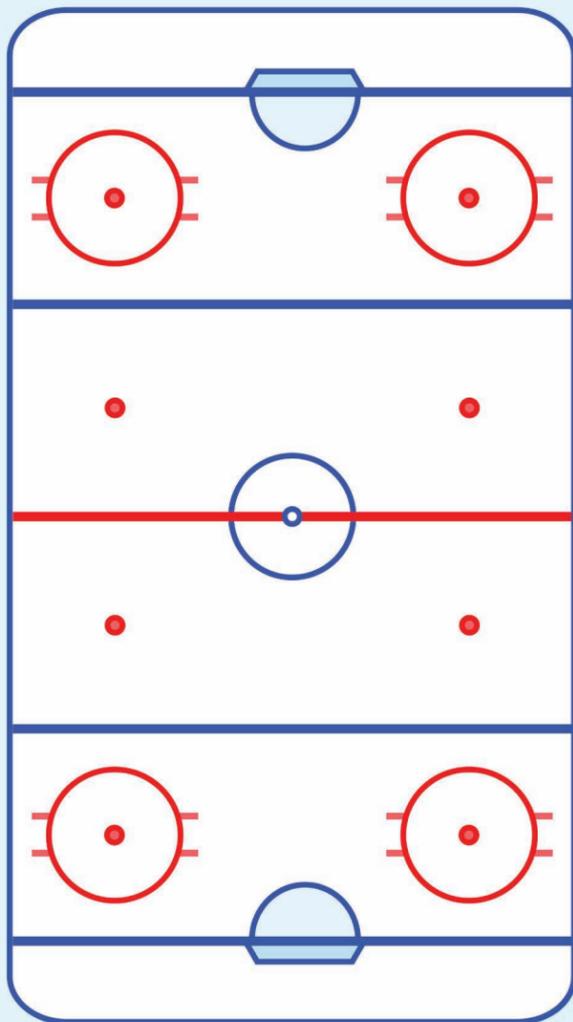
"If no match is found, the disease will progress a lot faster, I will suffer and my life will be much shorter than I ever intended it to be," Di Corte said.



Step 1

Gather the materials

- The basic components you will need will be: brackets/ bracing, boards for the perimeter and a liner.
- Brackets - are used around the perimeter of your rink and will keep the water in to allow it to freeze.
- The important things to note are thickness (thicker is better) and color. Ideally you want white or clear, because anything dark (like those blue tarps) will attract the sun and impact your ice quality.
- You can buy these items at: Nicerink.com, or HockeyShot.com



Step 2

Measure your yard's slope

- Check your slope and know for sure where your water line will be when you fill. This is the single most important step to building a rink.
- To do this you need wooden stakes, string, a line level and a tape measure. Start by staking out the four corners of your would-be rink, visually determining which of these four corners is the high point. This will be the corner of your rink with the least ice thickness — we shoot for 4" at a minimum. With your string tied to this stake 4" off the ground, run the string to a different corner, attaching your line level to the middle of the string. When the string is level, measure how far off the ground the string is at the second stake. If your high corner is 4" and the string is at 10", then you know you have a 6" slope and that your ice will be 10" thick at this corner.
- Repeat this step for the remaining corners



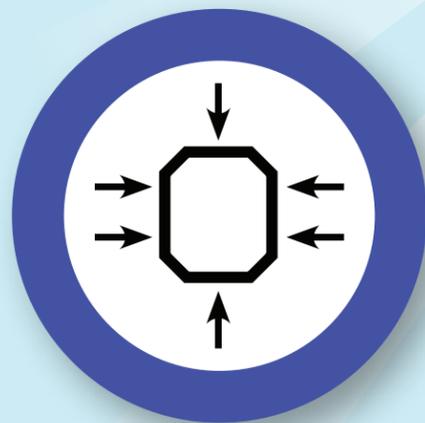
HOW TO BUILD A BACKYARD ICE RINK

SOURCE: howtohockey.com/how-to-build-a-backyard-hockey-rink
Graphic Courtesy: Leigh Cavanaugh

Step 4

Put the liner down

- This step is weather dependent. You'll need to look at the long-range forecast for your area, and target a cold snap.
- When you unroll your liner, make sure it's flush against both your boards and the ground all around the perimeter. If it's not, the water pressure could tear the liner as you fill.
- Order a liner large enough to drape over the outside of your boards, allowing for plenty of slack as you fill.
- Don't EVER staple your liner to your boards before you're completely full.



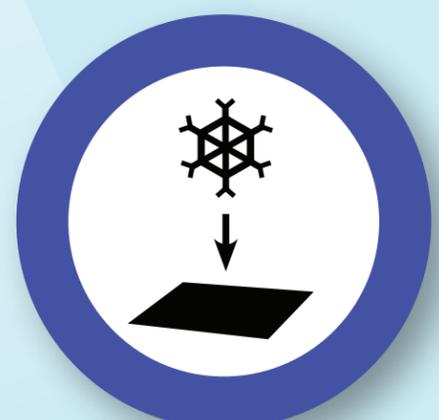
Step 3

Build the frame

- Do before the ground freezes because you'll need to drive the support brackets into the ground.
- A good time is late November, early December.
- Put your bracing every four feet around the perimeter of the rink unless your water is more than a foot deep. If it's deeper, make it every two feet.

TIPS

- LOCATION: try to find a flat spot near the house
- Don't skimp on your bracing
- Don't put your liner down until you're about to fill
- Fill all at once,
- Make sure you have adequate lighting around the rink.
- Snowstorms are inevitable. Do your best to keep the rink clear.
- You won't damage your grass if you get your liner up early.
- As soon as the ice melts in the spring, drain it



Whitney Reyes // Scarborough Observer

Music and merriment came with the arrival of Planet Santa. Samantha Walker, 6, and Mikaela Marroquin, 2, below, wore matching outfits for their picture with St. Nick. Santa's friend the Snow Princess, bottom right, entertained all who waited to tell Santa their Christmas wishes.



1



3



2



Deck the malls for Santa

Scarborough Town Centre hosts jolly Saint Nick

By Whitney Reyes & Robin Dhanju

You better watch out, you better not cry, Scarborough residents, because Santa Claus and his reindeer have already come to Scarborough Town Centre.

Planet Santa arrived at the mall on Nov. 12, bringing with them a host of activities including face painting, arts

and crafts, and music. Planet Santa also provides people an opportunity to take a photo with the jolly fellow and ask him for that something special. Seven-year-old Katlyn Mearandang was one of many children in attendance on Tuesday eager to meet St. Nick.

"I want to take a picture with Santa and I want to ask him, 'Can I have my presents early?'" Mearandang said. "We added she really wants a golden retriever puppy and her sister came to ask Santa for a butterfly.

The pre-Christmas festivities also bring traffic to the

store, helping boost sales and creating a festive atmosphere. "We want people to come in and have a great experience," said Jai Lee, marketing director of Oxford Properties which handles the STC. "If people are happy, they'll be in a great mood and go shop and go to the food court."

Shoppers and members of the public who attend the event tend to return for many years afterwards.

"We have such loyal customers and they come back year after year and, as their kids are growing, it's great to see them taking pictures with the same Santa," Lee said.



Vida Korhani // Scarborough Observer

Christmas bazaars across Scarborough have been packed with eager customers for the holidays. Photo one: shows 10-month-old Riley Green, celebrating his first Christmas shopping day at the Belles of St. Timothy's Ringing in Christmas! at St. Timothy's Anglican Church. Photo two: Viola Mason and Deborah Mason at the Holly Jolly Market at Bendale Acres Long Term Care Home. Photo three: Gerry Kedrosky, Eileen Loftus and Eleanor Meyers begins their holiday shopping at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church.

Jamie Anderson // Scarborough Observer

The 7th annual Santa Claus Parade in west Scarborough began the march along Kingston Rd and finished near Swanwick Ave. and Main St.

Market returns

Seasonal winter sale back after a decade

Tarah Bleier

Bendale Acres Long Term Care Facility brought back its Holly Jolly Market after a 10-year hiatus.

Following a successful summer yard sale this past summer, residents were anxious to hold another sale for the holiday, organizers said.

On Nov. 23, about 80 people attended the market, which ran from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Seven vendors were invited to set up shop with tables costing \$35. Residents also had to set up a booth selling handmade Christmas Cards, holiday pins and candy trees.

Selena Lynch, who has been the volunteer coordinator the past five years, praised the hard work of the volunteers and staff.

“These events are

really about engaging our residents who are living in long-term care and giving them an opportunity to interact with the public despite any disabilities they may have,” she said. “You can really see how happy and engaged they become through participating.”

Lynch noted the number of students who got involved.

“I was really taken aback to see these high school students so eager to get up early on a Saturday to come and volunteer,” she said. “It shows how much they value their relationship with this place, its residents and what they do here.”

Many of the high school students have already met their minimum number of 40 hours volunteer work with many going beyond that, Lynch noted.

Student

volunteer Urja Joshi ran a table with an assortment of glassware, holiday ornaments and costume jewelry for sale.

“The best thing about volunteering here and being a part of something like this is to hear all the stories from the residents and to see how happy they are whenever I come,” she said.

Funds raised from the sale will go towards providing residents with some of their special extras such as an ice cream cart treat and bingo.

Past sales have allowed the volunteer association to purchase a large fish tank, a piano and new furniture for all residents to enjoy.

Tarah Bleier // Scarborough Observer



I will honour Christmas in my heart and try to keep it all the year.

-Charles Dickens



Tichaon Tapambwa // Scarborough Observer

Mandela's legacy honoured

On Dec. 7, the African Canadian Heritage Association held their annual Kwanzaa Show at the Warden Woods Community Centre. The theme for this year is 'nia' or purpose — to make a collective vocation of building and developing community. Former South African leader Nelson Mandela was also honoured.

A personal reflection on Hanukkah

Tarah Bleier

Latkes, lighting of the menorah and dreidels are usually what come to mind when thinking about Hanukkah.

However, there is more to this festival of lights. It's about connecting. It's about tradition. It's about family.

And for those of you living in Scarborough that observe this holiday, this column is dedicated to you.

Growing up, Hanukkah was my favourite holiday — and not just because I got presents for eight days. I got to see family I did not see on a regular basis. And, of course, there was the delicious food.

Early on, my late grandmother would host Hanukkah dinner at her home. As the years passed, my mom and other family members began to take on the tradition of hosting the family dinner.

More recently, my brother and sister-in-law started hosting at their home and

a new Hanukkah family tradition was born. Well, not entirely new.

One of the things my family and I do during the holiday is make latkes. Latkes are essentially potato pancakes ready to be topped with sour cream or apple sauce. They are delicious.

Yet there's still much more to the holiday. Hanukkah is about giving back and performing good deeds, or mitzvahs.

From the age of 4, I have volunteered every year at the Jewish Child and Family Services' annual Hanukkah party. It's become a personal tradition of mine.

Every year I feel the holiday spirit in the air when I see how happy the families and kids are at the party.

My experience of Hanukkah certainly has changed over the years, but the one thing that will never change is how it brings families — not just mine — closer together and the lasting memories it creates.



Tarah Bleier // Observer
Hanukkah Latkes ready to serve.

Christmas Story celebrates 30 years

New book shows Scarborough connection to the 1983 holiday classic film

Tichaon Tapambwa

"It's indescribably beautiful!" This was a joyous "Old Man Parker" describing the classic leg lamp in one of the fondly recalled scenes from the popular film *A Christmas Story*.

But what some may not know, is that the scene was shot in Scarborough at the amalgamated Madger Film Studio.

"The exteriors of the house was filmed in Cleveland, Ohio, but all of the interior scenes of the movie, the kitchen scene, the living room scene — those were all shot on a soundstage at a studio in Scarborough," said Tyler Schwartz, who's written a book on the beloved film. "What most people don't realize is this is a Canadian movie that's gone on to become America's number one Christmas movie."

A *Christmas Story Treasury* is in bookstores now, to celebrate the film's 30th anniversary with featured stories about the props, actors and pull-out

mementos. It also delves into its Canadian roots.

The film studio, near the Pharmacy and Eglinton intersection, closed down in 1996 and currently houses small businesses.

In 2009, Schwartz and his wife documented their journey as they revisited the real life scenes from the movie. In the documentary, *Looking for Ralphie*, audiences saw where the original leg lamp currently resides and what happened to the fire truck that saves Ralphie from the flagpole.

One of the last places they visit is a Chinese restaurant in Riverdale that was used in the film. Today, it's home to a French restaurant, *Batifole*.

Set in the 1940s, the

Midwestern film came out in November, 1983. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios cut its theatre run short, however, due to mixed reviews and average ticket sales.

"The Christmas movie was out of the theatres before Christmas time," said Schwartz.

But the advent of home video and television has expanded this movie's reach.

"It didn't pull any punches about how things were in the family household. The dad is overworked trying to provide and also keep the furnace running. It's kind of funny because I grew up in Hawaii and this is a Midwestern film, but I still relate to it. It's just universal," said Brian Jones, owner of *A Christmas Story House and Museum* in Cleveland.

Selling leg lamp replicas modelled from the movie, he jumped at the opportunity to buy the house when it went on sale on eBay. The museum often has lines around the block and keeps gaining popularity.

"There's something universal about how this movie captured the true Christmas experience and how it is to be a kid," Jones said. "(The museum) is a way for fans to relive their favourite Christmas movie."

Schwartz explains why the film has been able to stand the test of time.

"It doesn't try too hard. These days, people are trying to make the next Christmas classic. This little film was made on a shoestring budget but it had a lot of heart," Schwartz said. "You can relate to a lot of the scenes because they are snippets of childhood and family life."

Get crafty Scarborough!

Erin Cassidy

Are you not impressed with the ornaments that you bought from the shops? Do you find them to all look the same? Well, if you're a crafty person and enjoy creating pieces of art, why not make your own Christmas ornament this year.

Growing up, we all had to make those embarrassing felt Elf version of ourselves in grade school, and then that progressed into those clay triangles that originally started out as an oval. We've all done them!

Nina, an employee from *Creative Yarn*, located at 269 Ellesmere Rd, suggests using yarn when creating an ornament this year.

"You can do pom-poms," she said. "You can choose different colours for them, or the white yarn with the sparkles...you can attach it to your tree as well (like that)."

Here is how you can make a pine tree ornament — coincidentally made of yarn. It's simple and easy to create.

Here's how: All you need is a glue gun, a bit of wire and some yarn.

Start gluing the wire while wrapping the yarn around the wire. Make sure to cover the entire wire! This will take about 10 minutes

Once your wire is completely covered with the yarn, you want to now shape it into a pine tree formation. Bending the wire won't take too long

And ta-da! There you go, you've got yourself a tree! If you want to go further, why not paint some gold onto it to make it seem like there are gold ornaments?



The cover art for Tyler Schwartz, *A Christmas Story Treasury*. The book is honouring the 30th anniversary of the classic film.

Finding deeper meaning in Christmas carols

Christmas Around the World showcases songs of the season and their origins

Thomas Morrison

The sounds of Christmas are in the air.

On Nov. 27, the Salvation Army Scarborough Citadel hosted Christmas Around the World, a sing-along featuring the Gerard family of Oshawa. They sang for more than 100 people, most of whom were women.

The event featured classics such as *Silent Night* and *Carol of the Bells*.

Leading the way on piano was Charles Gerard, who has been teaching piano for almost 30 years.

He feels events like the one held at the citadel are a "thrilling way to administer the message of Christ."

"We go from senior homes to women groups, and it's so easy and apparent through Christmas music to deliver [the message]," he said. Charles has fond memories even in the Citadel, including a choir concert 15 years ago.

"We had a large group of people including the Scarborough Songsters and we made a recording CD called *Holy As He*," Gerard said.

His wife Dara-Lynn and daughters Alexandria, 14 and Julianna, 11 joined him at the event, wowing the audience with their musical talents.

Pat Chambers has been coming to this event for 10 years. She feels it's a great opportunity for people to come together.

"This family comes every year and puts on a great show," she said. "It can be hard for seniors sometimes to meet people. It's especially good for seniors in the apartments above the church to get out at this time of year."

The event was dominated by carol singing, as well as learning the origins and spiritual context behind songs from Canada and Europe, to Africa and Israel. Many

know the lyrics to these songs but its origins are sometimes unknown.

Alexandria and Julianna are both home schooled by their father. Alexandria plays the piano, but would like to add guitar to her list of musical talents.

"I like that many songs can be put to guitar, especially pop songs," she said. "I'd like to be able to play and sing at the same time, it would be fun."

Julianna meanwhile enjoys the familiar surroundings of the church.

"I've known the people here since I was five or six, it's a lot of fun," she said.

Both of the daughters play instruments, a testament to their musical upbringing.

Charles spoke about a family ritual in the home involving music.

"Every Sunday we'll all gather as a family around the piano and sing Christmas music or any songs," he said. "No TV, just music and family."

Events are always happening at the Salvation Army Citadel. Check them out at 2021 Lawrence Ave. E.



@ For more on each story visit us online at torontoobserver.ca

Winter-proof your pet

A look at seasonal dangers that every pet owner should know about

Theresa Spohn

With temperatures dropping and snow expected any day now, it is important to be mindful of our four-legged friends and change pet care routines to match the season.

We have all heard of summer news stories where dogs have been left in cars with disastrous results. Freezing temperatures can be equally hazardous, according to Brad Dewar, communications officer for the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (known as the OSPCA). What can start off as a quick trip to the mall may take longer than expected and time slips away before the owner realizes how long the animal has been left out in freezing temperatures. The best bet is to leave them at home, according to Dr. Craig Etherington, veterinarian at Morningside Pet Hospital. He has direct advice about leaving animals in the car.

"There is not really any good time to leave a dog in the car is the bottom line," he said.

One of the problems that occurs with a dog's prolonged exposure to freezing temperatures is frostbite. Etherington notes the ears are particularly vulnerable and need to be removed if the frostbite is severe.

Cats can also get into trouble with cars during the winter months. Dewar explains they will often climb under the wheel wells or under the hoods to stay warm and can be seriously injured or die.

"Check for small animals hiding by banging around the hood and wheel wells of the car before starting it," he said.

Salt used to reduce ice on walkways, roads and parking lots can irritate pets' paws, according to Derrick Zuber, one of the owners of Muddy Paws in the Guild.

"It dries out their skin and can cause cracked and sore areas," he said.

Dewar suggests the dogs paws be protected to prevent further discomfort.

Etherington suggested using boots to help safeguard your pet from salt and noted balms are also available for dogs who don't tolerate boots.

Zuber sells both items in his store. He has a petroleum-

based balm called Dr. Maggie's that retails for \$21. It hardens in the cold and then can be wiped off once the walk is over. He also sells two types of boots. One is a rubber latex model priced at \$25 and can be worn again unless they are punctured by a dog nail. The other option is to buy the Kozy Paws brand for \$45.

They come with suede soles, fleece lining and a waterproof nylon shell.

Another hazard, according to Dewar is anti-freeze used with salt as a de-icer. It attracts dogs because of its slightly sweet smell. Etherington explains it can cause kidney failure and "it is an emergency if they ingest any anti-freeze."

Some dogs are also more susceptible to the cold, says Etherington, especially short haired ones since they lack an undercoat. He always puts a sweater coat on his short-haired Great Dane mix, Charlie, before going out for a walk when it's freezing outside.

Some owners prefer to leave their pets outside but there are legal requirements to be met. Dewar explained owners are expected to keep their dogs tethered and left in an enclosed area. Owners are also obligated to provide a proper shelter; one that is insulated and is the appropriate size for the pet. Zuber sells heating pads, ranging in price from \$90 to \$150 each, ideal for putting under a blanket or dog bed.

At this time of year, company's coming and it's important to give your pet a little breathing room and preferably not by leaving the animal outside for prolonged periods. The best thing to do, according to Dewar is to keep pets in a separate room away from the guests. It will also prevent pets from getting outside and possibly getting run over, he says.

Zuber echos the OSPCA recommendation, noting pets are "not usually around that many people at one time" and stress can be reduced by having the pet stay with a friend or relative. Etherington says a "quiet place away from any kind of toxins" is best. He suggested a boarding facility as another option to help keep your pet happy and cared for when there's a crush of guests at home.

OSPCA's Dewar notes two popular Christmas decorations can also be problematic, where pets are concerned. One is the poinsettia that can cause gastric upset if ingested and can irritate the skin upon exposure. The other is burning candles since cats, given to climbing and hopping onto differences surfaces, have been known to knock them over and cause house fires.

One of the other pet hazards lurking during the holiday season is food. Chocolate with the compound theobromine is particularly toxic to dogs. He explained symptoms range from vomiting and diarrhea to seizures and even death.



Theresa Spohn // Scarborough Observer
Dr. Etherington with his dog Charlie.



Jamie Anderson // Scarborough Observer
After working with other rescue groups, Helen Antoniou and Chris Ramsay-Heart started their own group, Cause 4 Paws in March 2013.

Rescue group breaks down borders

Jamie Anderson

There are about 120,000 stray dogs in Greece right now.

Cause 4 Paws, located at 300 Borough Dr., is a not for profit that focuses on re-homing animals-mainly dogs so far-that have been abandoned or abused.

They held their first annual fundraising gala on Nov. 9 at the Dogfish Pub at Bluffer's Park Marina.

Helen Antoniou, co-owner of Cause 4 Paws, says because of the economic downturn in Greece, people have "gotten to the point where they're not financially able to take care of them anymore," so they're discarding them.

The group has partners working in Greece who will foster the dogs for up to nine months before they are ready to come to Canada. This gives the dogs a chance to get some training and to get healthy.

"Matching them up with a family becomes really easy because we know whether they're good with kids, are they good with other dogs and cats," Antoniou said. "It's not like getting a dog from a shelter, where we don't have that history."

Rob and Donna Whiting adopted their dog, Gussie, a 1-year-old border collie cross through Cause 4 Paws.

Even though she was found in a swamp, Donna says Gussie has "never put a foot wrong." She has never barked, jumped up or ever tried to get on the furniture. All they had to do was get her used to a couple things in her new home, such as using the stairs and teaching her how to walk on a leash.

Cause 4 Paws was officially started in March by Antoniou and Chris Ramsay-Heart. Prior to that, both of them were involved with other animal rescue groups so they finally decided to start their own.

Since their official start eight months ago, they have re-homed about 30 dogs.

"We're very passionate," Ramsay-Heart said. "It's just one of those things that we've always talked about doing and we've finally been able to do it."

The Whitings said that their devotion to the dogs is very apparent, "We just had the one day at the airport and it was a big, long, inspiring, wonderful, draining and exhausting experience - and they just do it all the time."

About a year ago, Antoniou adopted one of her own dogs, Bebbi, a Prince Charles mix from Greece who had been tied up for two years of her life, so she understands the emotion that comes with rescuing a dog.

"Actually seeing the dog come out of the crate to be welcomed by their forever family and you know, never having to worry about being a stray anymore (is the biggest success story)," she said.

Naughty or Nice?

According to the professionals interviewed for this story you will definitely end up on the naughty side of Santa's ledger if you think a pet would make a suitable Christmas gift for family and friends.

- "It's not a good idea to surprise anyone," Etherington says.
- Often these unexpected gifts end up back at the shelter or store. But having a pet bounce around means an "inconsistent environment for early training" according to Etherington since the animal will lack the routine it needs.
- Zuber suggests that a small animal may be a more affordable and simpler option, especially, if it is a child's first pet. He noted most rodents tend to nip but Chinese dwarf hamsters and rats are friendlier and like to be held. He sells hamsters for \$20 each and guinea pig and rabbits sell for \$30 - \$40 each.

-Theresa Spohn

TRUE PATRIOT LADIES



Scarborough's Barenaked Ladies played at the True Patriot Love Dinner on Nov. 7. At right: Jim Creeggan plays the electric double bass. Above, Ed Robertson sings to the crowd. Some of Canada's top generals were in attendance, as well as Prime Minister Stephen Harper's wife, Laureen Harper.

#DontBFooled online

Event at Scarborough high school aims to keep youth safe

Tarah Bleier

"Pause before you post," RCMP Const. Jennifer George says. "One click and it's out there forever."

It's a message Bimla Govinda says she heeded after hearing George and others speak on Nov. 1 in her school's auditorium

during #DontBFooled, an interactive presentation on the importance of keeping personal information safe online.

"The fact that nothing's safe online... You need to be careful and trust nothing and no one out (there) in our society,"

the Grade 11 West Hill C.I. student said in an interview via Twitter.

In 2009-2010, approximately one in three youths between the ages of 11 and 15 were bullied online at least once, RCMP figures show.

Cyberbullying — including posting mean

messages, creating fake profiles and releasing hurtful pictures, among other unwelcome behaviour online — is rarely reported and that needs to change, Toronto police say.

"We want you to make intelligent decisions," said Det. Sgt. Cameron Field of the financial crimes unit.

"We want you to talk to (police) on social media."

During the event, Bell provided free Wi-Fi and students were encouraged to live tweet using the hashtag #DontBFooled to share their reactions to what was being discussed.

Philippines Relief

Martha Joy concert kicks off GTA series

Nicolette Mendoza

A former Filipino Canadian Idol used her talent to raise money for the Philippines.

On Nov. 22, Martha Joy hosted a fundraising concert in response to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.

Joy, who grew up in Scarborough, decided to bring her talent and family connections together to make a difference.

"I don't have much that I can give, but I do have my voice," Joy said. "This is the only way that I can do something, where I'll be able to help people."

The fundraising concert was held in Rembrandt Banquet Hall and tickets were \$30. All proceeds from the concert are going to designated charities in the Philippines. The concert was one of many Joy will be hosting across the Greater Toronto Area.

The concert started with Joy singing both the Filipino and Canadian national

anthems. Prayers were also said to watch over and give strength to everyone affected by the typhoon, including Filipino-Canadians with family and friends back home.

"They are my 'kababayan' (my fellow countrymen), so it's very hard for me to hear [about] those events," said Irene Ordinaro, a Scarborough local and attendee of the concert. Ordinaro believes the concert will help the victims of the typhoon as well as the Filipinos here in Canada.

Joy reached out to both the Filipino and Canadian community during the concert by singing covers of Filipino and English songs.

Besides hosting fundraising concerts, Joy and her family started the Martha Joy foundation after hearing about the typhoon. She and her family are currently in the process of getting it registered as a non-profit charity.

Artisans sell unique gifts at annual show

Odile Gova, Scott Wilk among vendors at this year's One of a Kind Christmas Sale

Kristin Eliason

It's not often you can pick up a holiday gift — a wristwatch, say — knowing for certain that no one else will buy the same.

Not often, but not impossible.

Scarborough's Scott Wilk makes custom watches. His Wilk Watchworks does not sell retail, but about 110 pieces were available for purchase at this year's One of a Kind Christmas Show and Sale.

"(The watches) are one of a kind things ... (and) they're fully customizable," said Wilk, who's been selling his custom watches at the show since 2011. "It's very different than what you're going to find commercially."

Prices range from

\$250 to \$1750, depending on the design, he said.

Wilk was one of 850 artisans and vendors at this year's One of a Kind Christmas Show and Sale, Nov. 28 to Dec. 8 at the Direct Energy Centre at Exhibition Place.

An estimated 140,000 visitors were expected during the show's 11-day run, show director Patti Stewart said.

Odile Gova of Scarborough has been selling her creations at the One of a Kind Christmas Show for five years.

She is known largely for her brooches and pincushions made of transformed wool turned into felt through a process known as fulling. This treatment gives Gova's

Woolly Fabulous creations an "eclectic, funky" quality, she said.

This year, Gova offered around 500 pieces ranging from \$8 to \$150, she said.

Now in its 39th year, the One of a Kind Christmas Show and Sale draws in both established and fresh talent from all across Canada.

Of the 850 vendors that participated in the 2013 show, about 150 of them were new, Stewart said.

"Visitors that come year after year will get to see a lot of really exciting new people," she said.

Free daycare was offered, as was complimentary gift-wrapping workshops, held daily at 1 p.m.

Fashion shows and

figure skating performances were also scheduled.



Courtesy The One Of a Kind Christmas Show and Sale

Scarborough's Scott Wilk, of Wilk Watchworks, had more than 100 one-of-a-kind watches on sale at the One of a Kind Christmas Show and Sale, which ran from Nov. 28 to Dec. 8 at the Direct Energy Centre. He was one of 850 artisans and vendors selling unique gifts at this year's show.



Joshua Spence // Scarborough Observer
Decorating ginger bread cookies was just one of the festivities at the Charlottetown Winter Fair on Nov. 9.

Annual winter fair raises money for technology in public school

Joshua Spence

Raising money was the main goal of the Charlottetown Junior Public School annual winter fair held on Nov. 9.

Students and their families took part in the event. Activities included face painting and pictures with Santa.

"We are raising money for technology in our school because it's constantly changing,"

principal Pete Sellenkowitz said. "We have also built an area in the fair to support the Free the Children charity."

Fair committee chair Taje Mohabir said the event is easy to put together due to the people he works with.

"This is the 32nd fair but I've only done three so far," he said. "I work with 17 great moms in a great cohesive group."

Staff for the fair

includes students, parents and teachers.

"Most of the volunteers when we are putting everything together are parents with the support of the teachers and principal," he said. "On the day of the event a lot of the volunteers are the teachers, so it's a great community event."

Trying to be creative and fresh is a problem Mohabir faces each year. This year the addition of

ponies, a bouncy castle and several new booths were added to the festivities.

"We try to encourage imagination so every year we come up with different ways to attract the community and people so it's fun and not repetitive," he said. "This is the first year we've had the animals and based on the response it's been very good, so we may bring it back next year."

Decades-old crime remembered at Scarborough library

Kristin Eliason

It happened more than 50 years ago yet the story still elicits gasps.

And Toronto-based author Nate Hendley wrote the book about it.

"Imagine being a 14-year-old boy who takes a classmate on a bike ride one spring evening," he said, reading from his book *Steven Truscott: Decades of Injustice*. "In the days to follow, the classmate is found dead and you stand accused of rape and murder."

Hendley read excerpts from the true crime book and spoke to a crowd of around 20 people at the Kennedy/Eglinton branch of the Toronto Public Library on Nov. 28 as part of the branch's Fall Author Series.

The subject of the book, Steven Truscott, was sentenced to death for the murder of a young girl in Clinton, Ont., in 1959. He was acquitted in 2007.

James Rollingson, an attendee at Hendley's talk, remembered following the trial decades ago, he said.

"I would like to thank you for an excellent presentation," Rollingson said to Hendley during the question-and-answer period following the talk. "What you've just done is to remind me of all the steps that happened in (the Truscott case) and I'm very grateful to you."

Hendley's talk, the third in the three-part series at Kennedy/Eglinton library, was a success, branch

head Marie Belanger said.

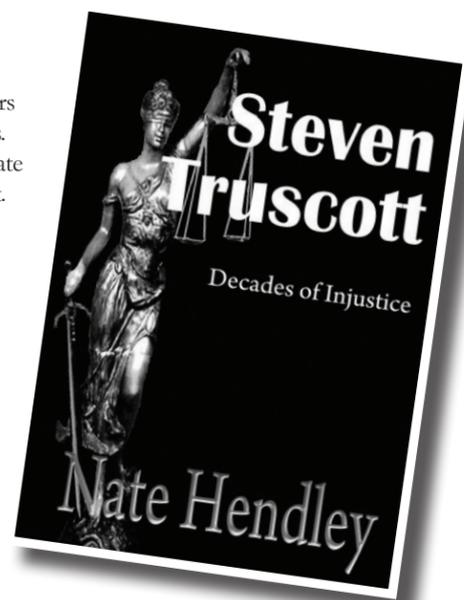
"We had a very good crowd: 20 people," Belanger said. "I was very pleased with that. People came from a wide part of Toronto."

The Fall Author Series was a first for the branch. In September, Sheila Dalton read from *The Girl in the Box* and in October, Rosemary Aubert read from *Terminal Grill*.

Audience members heard the authors read and answer questions. Afterwards, attendees had the opportunity to buy the authors' books.

"It brings people together in a room to hear ideas (and) it exposes an author to a new audience," Belanger said. "The author may be able to sell a couple of his books."

"So we promote a very healthy literary culture in Toronto."



Mini Macbeth

Scarborough children re-enact Shakespearean plays

Vida Korhani

Edward Jung, 9, has been learning Shakespearean classics, attending the winter TD Shakespeare for Kids Library Club at the Highland Creek Public library.

"My favourite part about the program is reading the plays," Jung said. "I think it's different when you're acting the plays out because when you show your emotion, you can tell what the characters are feeling."

Shakespeare in Action (SIA), a literacy program for children ages seven through twelve, has come to Scarborough public libraries. The free program combines the world of theatre and the excitement of reading Shakespeare into a two-hour educational workshop.

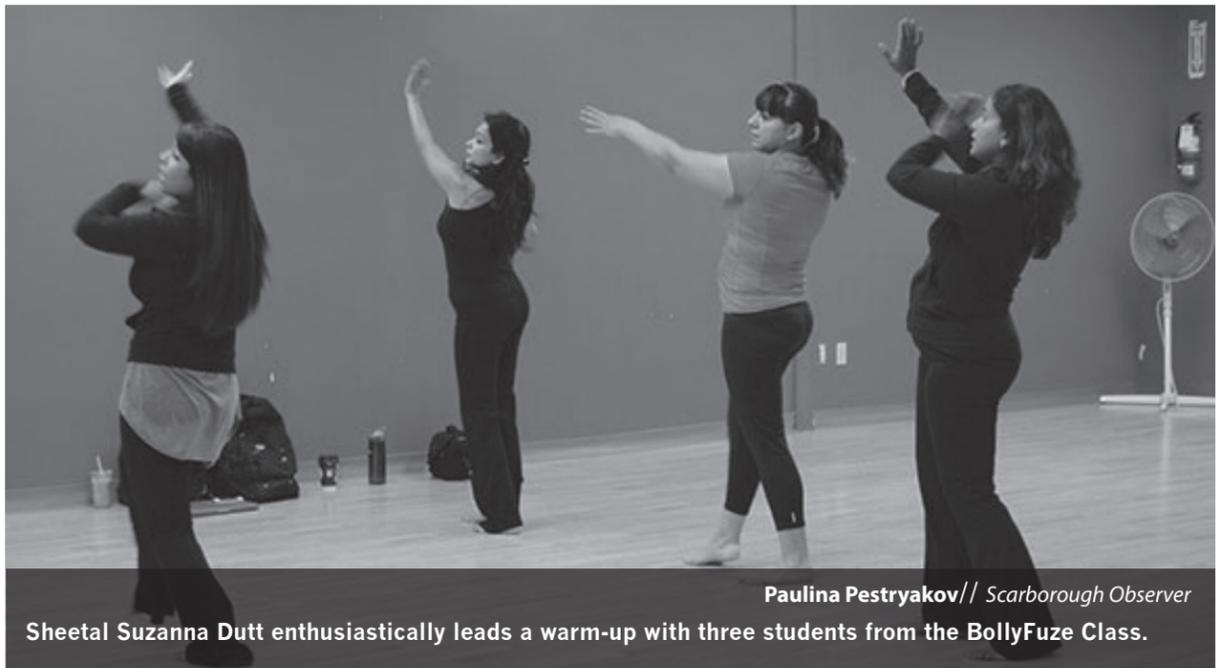
"The point is to get kids interactive, and reading was definitely a selling point, but of course if you just sit around and read the entire time, it won't go over well, so we do acting games," said Alex Benarzi, an educator at the SIA program. "It's all to create the kind of multi-learning environment in order to get them reading and also excited about reading."

The program has already served over 6,000 children. From November 2013 to May 2014, SIA will be holding programs in 30 Toronto Public Libraries across the GTA.

During each workshop, the kids read scripts out loud, perform scenes, and participate in games that allow the children to understand the plays. Each consists of a trained educator or professional actor to help kids understand Shakespeare's poetic language.

For six consecutive Saturdays the club covers Shakespearean plays such as Romeo and Juliet, The Tempest, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Twelfth Night and Macbeth, helping children build the confidence to read.

"The wonderful thing about teaching them so young, in particular with these types of stories, is that because the scripts are so universal, everyone can understand them if they are presented in the right way," Benarzi said. "If you strip away the difficult language and just present the story, they are fantastic stories that the kids love."



Sheetal Suzanna Dutt enthusiastically leads a warm-up with three students from the BollyFuze Class. *Paulina Pestryakov // Scarborough Observer*

Dancing your way to fitness using Bollyfuze

There's a new dance/workout routine in Scarborough, taking Bollywood dance moves and injecting exercise to help keep residents fit

Paulina Pestryakov

Vibrant costumes, intricate jewellery and enthusiastic dance are all pieces of the Bollywood puzzle. It's more than just a style of music and film, it's a culture. A culture that accepts multiculturalism through a new technique called Bollyfuze.

Founder Reshmi Chetram, started Bollyfuze, a division of the Tarana Dance Centre on Middlefield Road in Scarborough.

Bollyfuze, which incorporates Bollywood and fitness, includes all styles and flavours of dance from Latin to Caribbean, aside from classical Indian.

"Bollyfuze came about because I've been dancing Indian classical dance since I was a child since my mom founded the Tarana Dance Centre," Chetram says. "The fitness aspect of it had come about when I came back from India where I had studied classical dance training and I was teaching dance

classes and I found there was a need for a different demographic of people studying dance in fitness."

Clothing, music, food and open nights enable students to take part in the culture.

"As soon as the new students come to our classes, they see that our classes are

full of all kinds of people who are coming to try Indian dancing and they see that there's nothing that stops them from learning the culture," Chetram said.

Confidence is also promoted.

"I try to challenge (the students) every term. I want them to be well-rounded," says student and teacher Sheetal Suzanna Dutt, who has been with the Turana Dance Centre for six years.

"Confidence means that there is nothing you can't do."

Dutt was so inspired by the words "dream it, believe it, create it" that she recently started her own class known as Bolly Boot camp. The one-hour class is

high-intensity, running on a four-point trajectory with a warm-up, choreography, muscle conditioning and a cool down.

"I'm trying to motivate them to be inspired to work out," Dutt says. "When you have someone to do a workout with, you are compelled."

As a condensed class, Bolly Boot camp involves a five-minute workout, 15 minutes of choreography for the heart, as well as 35 minutes of circuit training that gives students "the cardio workout they need."

Dutt is one of the many students-turned-teachers known as "ambassadors" at the school.

As a business, Bollyfuze is expanding, becoming more popular, with classes filling up to 20 to 30 students.

With more women currently in the programs, Bollyfuze is focused on launching workshops catering to men and couples. It also serves three locations in the GTA including Scarborough, Richmond Hill and Toronto.

"After all the films and shows, Bollywood completely blew up," Dutt says. "Everyone wants Bollywood."

I'm trying to motivate them to work out.

- Sheetal Suzanna Dutt

Swingin' with the Canadian Legion this winter

Take a dance class this winter—the first lesson is free

Erin Cassidy

It all starts off with a little promenade, change sides, triple step, triple step, and rock step forward.

That's a taste of the first routine taught during a swing dance lesson on Nov. 14 at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 614. The legion, located at 100 Salome Dr., near Shepard Ave. E., has been holding swing dance lessons on Thursday evenings.

Carolyn Cross, who teaches these lessons, is an avid swing dancer. She has been dancing for the past 13 years. Cross got into it on a whim and has enjoyed it ever since.

"I met someone at a dance, and they started taking swing lessons (then) and he asked me if I wanted to try it, and I did," Cross said. "And I haven't looked back."

Cross, along with her dance partner Tom Trainor, have been teaching swing dance les-

sons at the legion for the past seven years. Over the course of the evening, eight couples were taught a routine that was broken up into four separate stages. Cross and Trainor showed the routine step-by-step, slowly, before going over it again at proper speed.

Sandra Hryhor who has been taking lessons at the Legion for the past two years, said she enjoys these classes a lot.

"With Tom and Carolyn, you're constantly learning new things. If not learning, you're reviewing a large amount of steps," Hryhor said. "It's so much more fun."

Cross has heard only good things from those who have taken lessons. She thinks it's because of the way she and Trainor lead the classes.

"We've had very good feedback from our students. From those who stay, (they) seem to like it, they like us and they seem to like our style of teaching," Cross said. "We like



After they were shown the steps to the first routine, the people taking part in the swing dance lessons, went over it themselves with the help of Cross and Trainor.

Erin Cassidy // Scarborough Observer

to get around to do some one-on-ones with the people, because if you leave them on their own, it could be difficult. One little thing could be missing so we like to work individually with them and I think they appreciate it."

Hryhor got her start with swing dancing at the Lithuanian House over in the High Park area of Toronto.

"I've been doing East Coast Swing for four years," Hryhor said. "I was taking one of the singles dances at The Capitol, and I met two men who took East Coast Swing and (they) got me interested."

Hryhor said her favourite step so far is the sliding doors. "I like doing it... the slide across, kick ball change, slide across, kick ball change."



Tichaon Tapambwa // Scarborough Observer
Coach Daron, third right, and his students try to keep their composure, after finishing one of their boxing session. Taken after a game of tug-of-war, the students, the youth are filling with energy. Scarborough Body Boxing's facility is located near the Sheppard Avenue and McCowan Road intersection.

BODY BOXING: A hit with Scarborough

New gym in Malvern gives youth boost of self-esteem while teaching confidence and stress relief

Tichaon Tapambwa

Three times a week in the Malvern neighbourhood, young people punch, jab, bob, and weave their way to gaining self-confidence and relieving stress.

They're body boxing — an alternative take on traditional boxing.

The participants hit each other only along the body, reducing the long-term effects of hits to the head.

"Part of boxing is sparring, practice fighting, and when we do that they put on these chest gears that lets them hit each other as hard as they want, but only to the body," said Daron Laban, coach and creator of Scarborough Body Boxing. "It's an alternative for youth to learn about boxing without getting injured."

A former amateur boxer with a winning record, Laban has seen the negative effects of boxing once the glorious days are over. With his own two boys involved in the program, he finds body boxing is a kid-friendly way of being physically active.

"I pretty much grew up in a boxing gym, but the boxing community doesn't like to talk too much about the after-effects of taking a lot of head blows and I have a problem with that especially dealing with the youth," Laban said. "We want to give them the skill sets of boxing without the harm."

Boxing in general tends to carry a negative stigma. In 2011,

the Canadian Pediatric Society released a statement asking for a ban on teens and children boxing. They cite head, face, and neck injuries as major reasons.

Laban agrees with the society and believes this program is his compromise to send the safe message to the youth of today.

The group, ages 6 to 13, come into the facility three times a week to work out.

There are five levels to body boxing, each with a new skill-set being earned. The first level is iron, which teaches the basics such as skipping and jabbing, followed by copper, silver, gold and platinum. In the last level, the youth are able to combine many combos to the body.

Another group of teens age 14 and up also meet in the facility.

While the fitness of boxing is important, the coaching staff stress the mentorship of the program.

In its infancy three years ago, Laban ran the program alone.

But with time, the staff grew and the program's mission expanded.

"There's now been an initiative to not just teach the

kids but to mentor them.

The program is now where the kids get physically fit, they stay healthy and learn self-defence so that they can be confident in life, but we also teach them the basic things," coach Raza Mohammed said. "We sometimes have sessions where we just sit in a circle and talk."

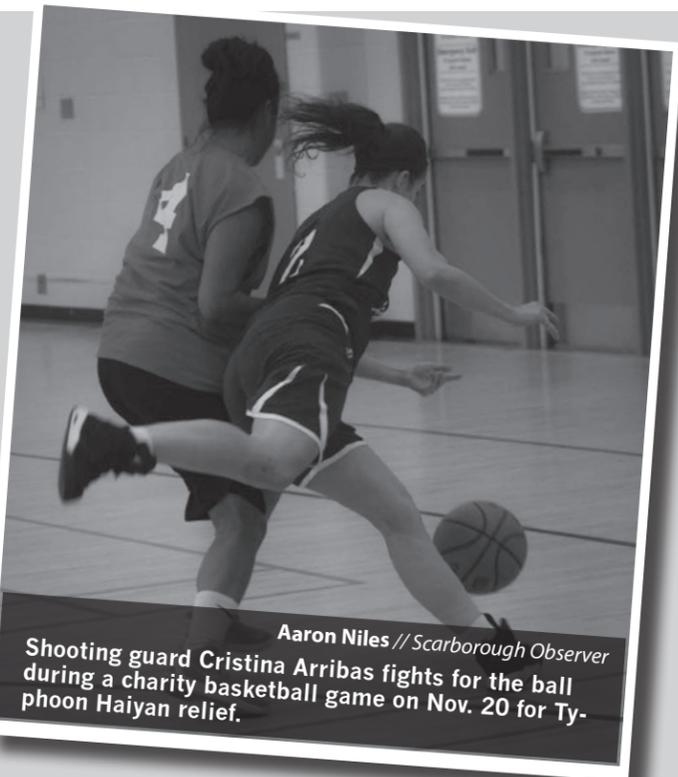
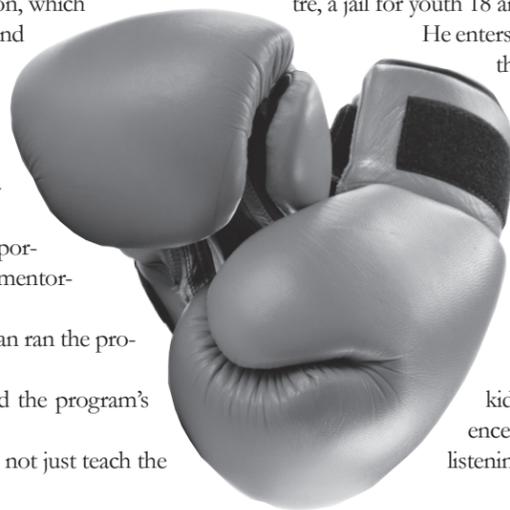
In addition to mentoring the kids in the program, Mohammed has also worked for the Toronto Youth Assessment Centre, a jail for youth 18 and under.

He enters the program with an understanding of the daily issues they face.

"I used to get picked on because of my short height, but after joining this program and learning self-defence, I am now more confident to stand up for myself," two-year participant Mujtaba Fasiullah, 11, said.

"It's about being young in Canada and not having a positive role model," Mohammed said.

"That's what I want to offer to these kids, to be able to share my life experiences so that it shows them that someone is listening and someone really cares."



Aaron Niles // Scarborough Observer
Shooting guard Cristina Arribas fights for the ball during a charity basketball game on Nov. 20 for Typhoon Haiyan relief.

Charity basketball game raises money for Haiyan victims

Give 1NE organized game to raise \$1 million for typhoon relief

Aaron Niles

The game may have ended in a disappointing 52-20 loss for the women's basketball team at the University of Toronto Scarborough but the mood was still positive.

"The loss didn't matter to us," said shooting guard Cristina Arribas.

"The game was for fun and the team that we faced was much more experienced than us, so we got to learn a lot from them."

This wasn't just any game,

after all. Organized by Give 1NE, the Nov. 20 basketball game was co-ordinated to help raise money for the victims of Typhoon Haiyan.

"The purpose of Give 1NE is to raise \$1 million so that we can help those who have been affected by the hurricane in the Philippines," said Marieneth Montenegro, a member of the leadership team for Give 1NE.

Despite being outmatched by a team composed of some of the top Filipina basketball

players in Toronto, the UTSC squad was happy that they were able to raise money for a good cause, Arribas said.

"There are many tragedies that happen around the world and choosing one is very hard sometimes," said Arribas. "It's important however, to help out whenever you can."

The charity basketball game was the first of many.

With seven of the nine original founders of Give 1NE hailing from Scarborough, more games in the area are planned.



The magic of QUIDDITCH

Paulina Pestryakov

Cold weather and snowfall did not stop students at UTSC from participating in a familiar game to Harry Potter fans: Quidditch.

Two teams of the Quidditch club at the University of Toronto Scarborough Campus, the UTSC Phoenix and the community-based Valhalla, faced off on Nov. 30 at the UTSC tennis grounds at Old Kingston Road and Military Trail.

Participants trained for the game by attending three-hour sessions up to five times a week and on weekends. Braving temperatures as low as minus-11 degrees, the team would practise drills and work on their tackling skills.

"This was actually warm weather for Quidditch — we are used to playing in the rain," said Mary Yacoubian, president of both UTSC Quidditch teams. "Quidditch goes on for an entire year. It's a lifestyle choice at this point."

But the Quidditch teams are more serious than simply just an outlet for Harry Potter fans to share their common interest in the books and movies, the UTSC teams are part of a worldwide Quidditch franchise. Started seven years ago, the franchise has 1,000 teams worldwide. UTSC Quidditch, however, just celebrated its second birthday and had an inter-house league that started last year.

"We started off with just a small group of people, just tossing the ball around," said Cody Mulholland, executive of marketing at UTSC, as well as captain of UTSC Phoenix and a seeker and chaser for UTSC's Phoenix team. "Eventually we got some hoops, some brooms and started competing against other teams and going to tournaments."

What makes the sport of Quidditch stand out from the other sports teams

is "the nature of inclusivity," according to Yacoubian. Although there is a heavy Harry Potter fan base among the teammates, there are many players in the team who were interested in playing the sport because of their lifelong commitment to train as athletes, some of whom are involved in other sports, such as rugby.

"There was pattern developing of people showing interest and wanting to meet regularly, so we decided to form a team and with that team we saw people being motivated to continue it and registered it with the International Quidditch Association, which is the governing body of all the Quidditch teams in the world and we started playing many universities," said Lomeharshan Lall, captain of the Valhalla team.

The nature of inclusiveness is also stressed with a two-minimum gender rule where both genders are required to play on the field at one time. Therefore, both females and males are required to play at the same time.

"People are committed, they love the sport," Lall said. "Even the Quidditch community across Canada is so close that all the teams know each other, they're friends with each other."

Both UTSC Quidditch teams contend for the Canada Cup every year, as well as the World Cup in the United States, where they have the opportunity to catch up with friends and opposing teammates.

"Every tournament feels like a family reunion," Yacoubian said. "People you rarely see, people you've bonded with. The community is very accepting. It's just a wonderful environment for people who may have not done sports before."

"Regardless of what happens today, we are all hugging each other at the end of this," he said.

"It's competition and community."



Zoo poo used to renew

Toronto Zoo looks into innovative approach for handling manure to generate sustainable clean energy

Radina Vencheva

It's a touchy subject, not easily tolerated by many. And when thought about or mentioned, the first thing that comes to mind about feces or manure is that it needs to be thrown away and disregarded immediately.

But for Daniel Bida, executive director of ZooShare Biogas, organic waste has a real value.

"It's really a resource that right now is wasted," Bida said.

In partnership with the Toronto Zoo, the non-profit renewable energy co-op is developing a 500 kilowatt biogas plant that will turn animal waste into electricity. In addition to the annual 5,000 tonnes of zoo poo, ZooShare will also take 14,000 tonnes of food waste from local grocery stores, turning it into power, heat and fertilizer.

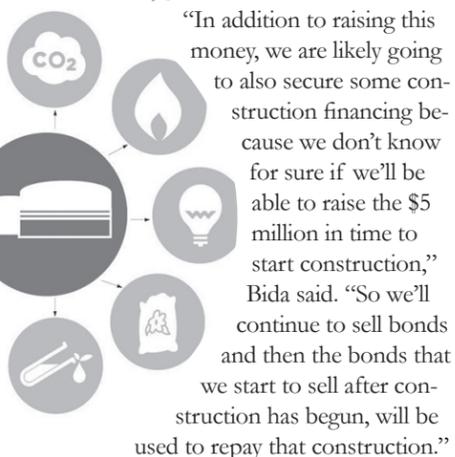
Bida said the process of converting manure into power works "like a big concrete stomach."

"Technically it's called an anaerobic digester," Bida said. "It's really just a big concrete tank and inside this tank there are mixers and it's kept at 38 degrees Celsius which is the same temperature as the cow's stomach."

The manure and food waste will then be put inside, where it'll be constantly stirred. Over a period of 50 days, the organic waste

will produce enough biogas to run the generators which will create electricity.

Estimated to cost \$5.4 million, the first North American zoo biogas facility is to be financed through community bond sales to ZooShare members paying seven per cent annual interest return over a seven year period. Of the total money, \$755,000 has already been raised but, for construction to start, \$2 million is still needed.



"In addition to raising this money, we are likely going to also secure some construction financing because we don't know for sure if we'll be able to raise the \$5 million in time to start construction," Bida said. "So we'll continue to sell bonds and then the bonds that we start to sell after construction has begun, will be used to repay that construction."

Construction is scheduled for July 2014, which could make the biogas plant operational by December of the same year. It'll consist of input and output tanks, an engine room and a classroom taking up one and a half acres of the zoo's land.

"It's going at the current compost facility at the east side of Meadowvale Road as a piece of land where they compost all of their manure," Bida said.

As noted on the ZooShare website, the revenue is to come from three different sources: tipping fees for accepting food waste from GTA-based grocery stores,

power sold to the Ontario Power Authority at 0.17 cents per kilowatt hour for a 20 year contract and through the sale of fertilizer at local garden centres.

The 500-kilowatt plant will provide enough electricity to power over 250 households as well as reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 12,000 tonnes which is the equal of removing 2,100 cars off the road.

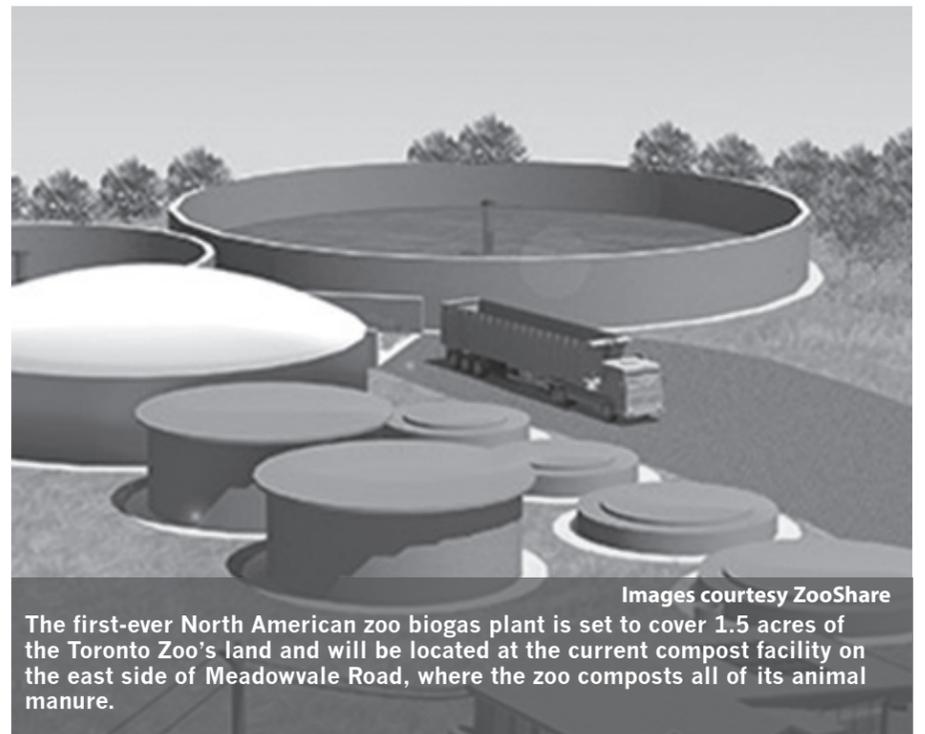
Despite its environmental and community benefits however, biogas plants aren't that common.

"There are probably somewhere around 200 biogas plants up and running around

North America and the primary reason for it not being as popular — with all the organic waste we make — is economics," Bida said. "It doesn't always make economic sense to generate electricity from organic waste unless you have a good jurisdiction that's committed to growing its renewable energy production like here in Ontario."

Each year 10 per cent of the project's earnings are to go into the zoo.

On their collaboration, Bida said it felt natural to work together because the Toronto Zoo has an excellent marketing platform for the community bonds it sells.



Images courtesy ZooShare

The first-ever North American zoo biogas plant is set to cover 1.5 acres of the Toronto Zoo's land and will be located at the current compost facility on the east side of Meadowvale Road, where the zoo composts all of its animal manure.

Cedarbrae Mall renos confuse some

Work to reduce mall's carbon footprint, update aging look expected to wrap by Dec. 15

Nicolette Mendoza & Kenya Bruce

Cedarbrae Mall is undergoing major renovations, leaving some shoppers and store owners scratching their heads.

The renovations have been going on since August, according to Wayne Charters, the mall's operating manager.

"[The renovations are] good, but it takes too much time," area resident Sajin Sultana said.

"Sometimes we are confused ... because that store is not over there or it keeps on moving."

All of the mall's lighting, interior and exterior, is being changed to LED lighting or high efficiency fluorescent lighting.

"We've converted all our lighting ... to reduce our carbon footprint," Charters said.

The washrooms are also being renovated and are getting low-flush fixtures to reduce water consumption.

"Most of it was aesthetics," Charters said. "The mall (was) getting tired."

Shoppers have been left confused and business has been affected because the renovations have left the mall without a clear entrance, said Kelvin Lo, a sales associate at Fido.

"They blocked off that [entrance] so you could either go through this one or the back door," Lo said. "I just want them to finish up so people don't have to find their way in."

Dana Demendonsa, manager at Stitches, said she has dealt with many issues since the start of the renovations, including a leaky ceiling that has damaged about \$600 worth of merchandise.

"The noise, the banging, the dust coming from the ceiling ... and falling on to the customers has affected us," Demendonsa said.

Charters disagreed.



"The renovation doesn't affect the shopping at all," Charters said.

The renovations are to be completed by Dec. 15, and new franchises are set to open, including the Bank of Montreal and Real Fruit Bubble Tea.

Despite the inconvenience of the renovations on her store, an improved mall will mean improved business, Demendonsa said.

"Better retail stores will create competition but it will also attract more customers," she said.

"Better retail stores will create competition but it will also attract more customers," Demendonsa said.



Nicolette Mendoza // Scarborough Observer



Here Comes Sweet Delivery!

It starts with one click to get these goodies into your stomach. Bakeries have new competition with a wave of online pastry websites that deliver to your front step.

Erika Marucci

When Laura Lee's grandmother suffered a stroke six and a half years ago, she and her family decided to thank the nurses and the doctors for their services in a sweet way.

"We decided to make something special, so my family came up with the idea of making cupcakes," Lee said. "Cupcakes are the best way to please everybody."

Lee is the creator of Cake Heavenly, an online pastry shop she manages with her team of four family members on Facebook.

"We combine our ideas to make the pastries tasty, fresh and fluffy," Lee said. "We actually combined our secret ingredient with my grandmother's, because she's a baker too."

The idea to open an online business came to her a year ago. Friends kept tell-

ing Lee to sell her pastries.

"I did it as a fun thing, something like a 'thank you' and it took off just like that," she said. "I knew baking was my calling card."

Having an online business has its pros and cons, just like having an offline one does. Eileen Fischer, a marketing professor at York University, said online businesses can reach a wider audience, but it's difficult to provide them with the same level of service.

Physical stores also have strengths and weaknesses as well.

"Having a physical business means you can interact with customers, learn about their tastes and deal personally with complaints when they do happen," Fischer said. "The cons are that it's hard to offer a wide range of products, and the reach of a physical location is limited geographically."

Lee is currently planning the next upgrade to her pastry busi-

ness and says she is hoping to open a physical shop in a year, but it's a very risky move.

"Right now the online business is doing so well, it's booming. We want to see how well it's going to take in about a year from now," Lee said. "Opening a store may be good for three weeks, but then you don't know what can happen. For now we are discussing it."

It's difficult to determine which is better: the online shopping experience or the brick and mortar one, since much depends on what the consumer prefers.

"Some people really like to shop online to save time or to maximize choice, others prefer to touch merchandise, and there are those who shop online and offline equally," Fischer said. "So I don't think you can draw a generalization that people in general are more drawn to online shops."

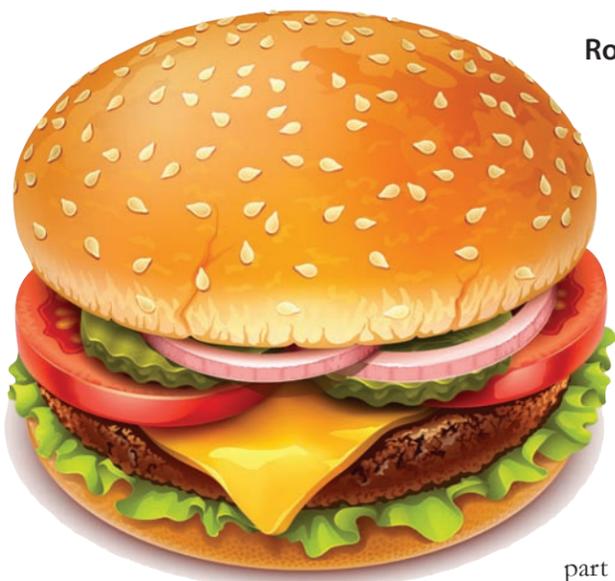


At top: Cupcakes made by Laura Lee, which are sold online on the Cake Heavenly website.

Above: Pink and purple cakepops being prepared.

Courtesy Cake Heavenly

Shamrock Burgers takes a bite into competitive eating



Courtesy// Fotolia

Robin Dhanju

Some people have difficulty eating two Big Mac burgers from McDonalds. A Scarborough man competing in the World Monster Sham contest ate 60 oz. of burger, roughly 15 Big Macs. The competition, held earlier this year, was hosted by Shamrock Burgers' Scarborough and Brooklin, Ont. locations to see who could eat the most Monster Sham burgers.

With nine contestants taking part in the challenge at the Scarborough location, eight finished the first burger, two were able to finish

their second and Brian (the winner) was able to almost finish his third.

Brian, who could not be reached for comment, topped his burgers with only ketchup and mayonnaise in order to assist with swallowing, according to Joel Friedman, the Vice President of Shamrock Burgers.

Friedman noted that Brian had been coming into the restaurant once a week leading up to the challenge to consume the Monster Sham to prepare.

The Monster Sham is a featured burger on each store's menu which provides a nice incentive for anyone who braves the challenge.

"We have a unique product called the Monster Sham. It's a 20-ounce burger and we wanted to promote that. If you eat a 20-ounce burger ...

then you get a \$5 gift card," said Joel Friedman, vice president of Shamrock Burgers.

Shamrock Burgers aims to use this competition to begin a tradition. Starting off small, Friedman sees the World Monster Sham challenge as a friendly competition between the two stores and a launching point for better things to come.

"The goal this year was to experiment and then to turn it into a charity fund," Friedman said while enjoying the Rockstar burger at the Scarborough location.

"When we do it again [in February], depending on who the winner is, we'll probably have three different charities and the store that wins will have the money going to [that store's] charity."

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