

The South Etobicoke News

Email: thesouthetobicokenews@gmail.com Number 37

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Optimism in the air for Christmas and New Year

Santa may be virtual again this year, but it doesn't stop area residents from shopping for loved ones this Christmas. Most local merchants are ordering stock and are optimistic this holiday season that they can recoup some of their losses due to COVID-19 and Omicron virus restrictions. They have high hopes. The merchants say shoppers are starting to return as many have been vaccinated and there is talk by public health officials to phase out anti-virus guidelines as deemed fit in the early new year.

"People are social and they are coming back slowly," says Judith Maya, owner of MJ Hair Design, in Long Branch. "I have my regular customers but it has been slow."



PEOPLE ARE ALIVE. Santa has been busy in the community in Alderwood, left, or greeting little children as they get items for Christmas; or like Long Branch sytlist Judith (right) as she shows her line of natural teas. **Staff and courtesy photos.**

Ray, owner of The Kebab House, at 2977 Lake Shore Blvd. W., says he is seeing new customers. "I have been able to keep my prices down and more affordable," he explains. "People also know we serve good quality food."

Many of the New Toronto sports bars have their good nights with sports games. "We are still not back to normal," says a co-owner of Dakota Sports Bar and Grill. "It will take some time until we get back to pre-COVID days."

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) said small businesses are hit hard by the virus. "Despite the economy reopening, many businesses are continuing to struggle or shutter without better relief from the federal government," the CFIB said in a release. They said 61 per cent of small businesses have under-average sales and only 78 per cent are fully open.

Christmas Issue
20 Pages

Giving back to help others at Christmastime

Real estate in the area is now the hottest in decades, a 60-year realtor says. One of the longest-serving realty firms in the area has raised thousands of pounds of food to help the needy and at-risk in the community. There were line-ups of cars on Twenty Eighth Street on November 13 as residents dropped off bags and boxes of food items curbside for collection by volunteers of Royal LePage Porritt Real Estate, at 3385 Lake Shore Blvd. W. A record-setting almost 1,700 pounds of food items gathered from residents were placed in a trailer and taken to The Daily Bread Food Bank to help families this Christmas season.

Royal LePage Porritt Real Estate is one of the earlier realty firms in the community. It began as Porritt Real Estate in 1955 and agents have been selling homes for 66 years.



GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY as Liz and Carl Porritt, centre, of Royal LePage Porritt Real Estate, host a food donation drive in which they collected 1,700 pounds of food items for The Daily Bread Food Bank. **Photos by Tom Godfrey.**

"We are one of the few third-generation businesses left in the area," says Carl Porritt, now 81, who with wife, Liz, operate the firm with daughter, Shelley, the broker of record. The Porritts have seen many changes in the area. Few things surprise Carl these days, but he is still stunned by the asking price of \$1 million plus for the average

property in the area, which he describes as 'hot and non-stop.' "We have had real estate cycles like this before," he explains. "It comes and goes every certain amount of years." "We are an area with older people. We have many seniors passing and new young families moving in. It goes in cycles." "It is becoming much harder for families to afford a home," he says. "It is more

difficult for young people to purchase these days." He has been in the business for five decades and advises aspiring homeowners to get into the market as soon as they can. Carl suggests they start off with a condo or town home and work their way up in the market. "Things (home prices) are not going to get any better," he warns. "Get in while you can since prices are not going to go down."

The Porritts have been very active in the community for decades and Liz was one of the founders of the popular Lake Shore Santa Claus Parade. Instead of a parade, on December 11 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., there will be a Story and Skate event with Santa at Colonel Samuel Smith Park's Powerhouse Skating Trail, at Kipling Avenue and Lake Shore Blvd. W.

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Wishing you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Community at loss after popular pizzeria parlour badly damaged by smoky roof fire

Many Long Branch residents are stunned to hear that their favourite pizzeria has been destroyed by a two-alarm fire. A fundraiser has been launched on Go Fund Me to help rebuild Adriano's Pizza and Pasta, at 3329 Lake Shore Blvd. W. at Twenty-Seventh Street. So far more than \$7,000 has been raised by pizza lovers of a \$7,500 goal that has been set. Members of the community are saddened by the loss and are rallying online to help Adriano Stolley, the well-loved and respected owner of the parlour, get back on his feet. Adriano, dubbed a "pizza maker with a heart of dough," is very generous and is known to gladly feed with a slice those homeless, hungry or donate his tasty pies to area charities. Organizers of the fundraiser, Jackie Goodman and Lisa Davis, said Adrian is "ensuring no one goes hungry because they can't afford a slice, and offering lollipops to every child who enters his pizzeria, there isn't a single person who walks out of Adriano's without a smile on their face." "Adriano and his family need our help to get back to business," they wrote. "Let's show Adriano what he means to this



A SMOKY ROOF FIRE had firefighters (below) at bay at Adriano's Pizza and Pasta in Long Branch. Staff photo.

community and show our appreciation for all that he has given to us." The family-owned and operated pizza parlour suffered major damage in what seems to have been a roof fire about 2 a.m. on December 2. The business was closed and no one was there at that time. There were no reported injuries. Toronto Fire arrived at the scene at 2:21 a.m. to put out the fire, which was upgraded to a two-alarm after firefighters arrived. "It was a bit of a stubborn fire. It took a little while to knock down," a Platoon Chief said. He said the fire was contained to the roof, but nearby buildings may have smoke damage.



You can make a donation to help with the return of the parlour on Go Fund Me. Pizza lovers took to social media to vent their frustration and loss of a good pizza place. "Yes that is true Adriano has a heart of gold. This is heartbreaking, I'm hoping he can rebuild it fast," wrote Monika Tabak. "We just ordered from him last night," Sue Clevely said. "Our go to pizza place. So sorry to hear."

Mimico prowler tried to grab screaming woman in shower



POLICE SCOUR the area in search of clues that will hopefully lead to an arrest.

Women are being warned of a night prowler lurking in the Mimico area. Police have stepped up patrols in the area as they search for a brazen attacker. A suspect is on the lam after he tried to grab a woman through her bathroom window in her home on December 1, police said.

Detectives in a release said they responded to a call for a break-and-enter in the Melrose Street and Grand Avenue area just after 12 a.m. It is reported that "a man opened the window to a basement apartment," according to police. "He reached in and tried to grab a woman in the washroom taking a shower," police said. "She screamed and he fled." The suspect is described as white and aged between 18 and 35 years old. Investigators are aware of other suspicious behaviour including prowling by night in the area. Police said officers continue to patrol the area and would encourage anyone who sees anything suspicious to report it to police. Anyone with information is asked to contact police at 416-808-1100, Crime Stoppers anonymously at 416-222-TIPS (8477), at www.222tips.com, text TOR and your message to CRIMES (274637), or Leave A Tip on Facebook.



Condo heisted of millions in costly jewellery



Time is a factor as police try to find a thief who stole an expensive array of

jewellery and prized heirlooms from a condo at Humber Bay Shores. Officers were called on October 27 at 7:30 a.m. to a condo in the Marine Parade Drive and Lake Shore Blvd. W. area.

Between December 2020 and October 2021 someone broke into a residence and stole the valuable pieces, police said. "Some of the pieces of jewellery are family heirlooms and have immense value to the victims."

Officials are not sure if it was an inside job and are going through security camera footage. If you



have info call police at 416-808-2222.

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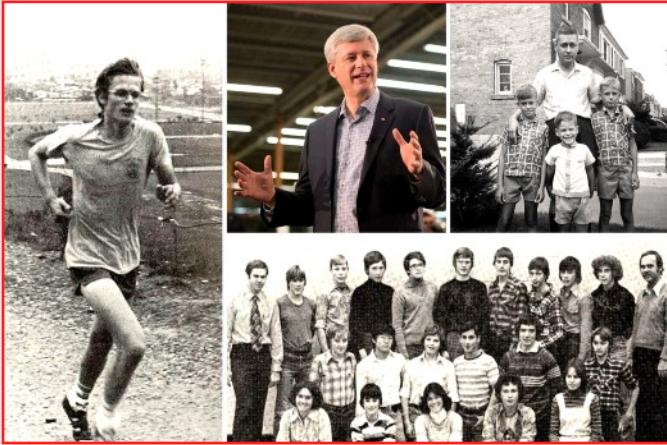
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PM Harper grew up here and attended Richview C.I.



FORMER PM Stephen Harper and at top family and high school reunion friends. Harper was quite a runner then.

A young Stephen Harper was a skinny kid whose classmates at Richview Collegiate Institute would never have imagined he would someday end up as the 22nd Prime Minister of Canada.

Harper was born to a well-to-do family in Leaside and attended Northlea Public School, John G. Althouse Middle School and then Richview Collegiate, on Islington Ave., which helped form his political beliefs.

He is believed to be the only prime minister to have grown up in the Etobicoke area.

A good runner, he graduated from high school in 1978, and was a member of Richview's team on *Reach for the Top*, a televised academic quiz show for bright high school students. Years later he was at the 30th reunion of fellow students at Richview, and attended a party at the

Crooked Cue, a pool hall near Bloor St. W. and Royal York Rd. Many who were at the reunion for graduates of '78 said they could hardly remember the skinny teenager who grew up to become Prime Minister.

He was the first of three sons of Margaret and Joseph Harris Harper, an accountant at Imperial Oil, a great job even by today's standards. Harper studied at the University of Toronto's Trinity College before moving to Edmonton, where he worked in the mail room at Imperial Oil. He went to the University of Calgary to earn a master's degree in economics in 1991.

A trained economist, he is reported to be the first prime minister to have an economics degree.

Harper became involved in politics as a member of his high school's Young Liberals Club. He later changed his political allegiance because he disagreed with the National Energy Program (NEP) of Pierre Trudeau's Liberal government.

The politician became chief aide to Progressive Conservative MP Jim Hawkes in 1985, but later became disillusioned with the party and the government of Brian Mulroney.

He was then recommended by the University of Calgary's economist Bob Mansell to Preston Manning, the



FORMER PM Harper

founder and leader of the right-wing populist Reform Party of Canada. Manning invited him to participate in the party, and Harper gave a speech at Reform's 1987 founding convention in Winnipeg. The future PM ran for the House of Commons in the 1988 federal election, and lost by a wide margin to Hawkes, his former boss. After Reform candidate Deborah Grey was elected as the party's first MP in a 1989 by-election, He became Grey's executive assistant, and was her chief adviser and speechwriter until 1993.

Harper stood for office again in the 1993 federal election, and defeated Hawkes in a significant Reform breakthrough in Western Canada. He served as Prime Minister from 2006 to 2015 after winning three mandates in a nearly

10-year tenure. The leader was respected on the international stage and at home as well. He came to the attention of *Time Magazine*, who named him as Canada's Newsmaker of the Year in 2006.

He was the first Canadian to be awarded the Presidential Gold Medallion for Humanitarianism by B'nai B'rith International in 2008, to be honoured in 2011 by Alberta's Blood tribe. Harper was made Honorary Chief of the Kainai Nation and recognized for an official apology on behalf of the Government of Canada for the residential schools abuse.

In 2012, he received the World Statesman of the Year award from a U.S. faith group. The President of Ukraine gave him their highest award Order of Liberty and at home he received a Companion of the Order of Canada in 2019.



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Canadian POW dug tunnels in Great Escape bid

By TOM GODFREY



MASTER Tunneller Walter Floody

Canadian pilot Walter Floody, who once lived in Toronto, built escape tunnels featured in the Great Escape movie that helped dozens of Allied troops flee German jails. Chatham's Walter Chant Floody was a fighter pilot and prisoner of war in the Second World War, who was instru-

mental in the Hollywood movie for his cave-digging skills and temperament. Floody, who died in September 1989 at the age of 71, portrayed the fictional 'Tunnel King,' Danny Velinski,



played by Charles Bronson in the blockbuster hit. The pilot acted as the technical adviser of the 1963 award-winning feature film. He didn't mind the dark and damp caves since he at one time worked in a mine in Timmins as a mucker, shovelling the rock and mud into carts to



FLOODY WAS HIRED to work on The Great Escape, with film actors (bottom left), Charles Bronson and James Coburn (top), Steve McQueen (top right) and Bronson digging (bottom right). Courtesy photos.

France. Two German soldiers were waiting for him as his plane crashed to the ground. He was imprisoned at the prisoner of war camp Stalag Luft III at Sagan, now Żagań, Poland. There, he joined the "X-Organization," headed by Roger Bushell (code-named "Big-X"), who put Floody in charge of digging tunnels and their camouflage, for the upcoming daring escape attempts. By March 1944, suspicious German guards found the tell-tale sign of sand being dropped by one of the 'penguins' out of the bottom of his pant legs and immediately rounded up Floody and 19 others then transferred them to another camp in Belaria. The escape of 76 men went ahead on the moonless night of March 24 and 25, 1944. Eventually the Germans caught all but three prisoners, and to make an example of them to all the other prisoners, Nazi leader Hitler or-

be hauled up to the surface. Floody was living in Toronto when he applied to join the military. The process took a long time, and in 1940 he was sent to a Royal Canadian Air Force station in Manitoba and became an operational pilot with No. 401 Squadron. The pilot was dispatched to Germany where his Spitfire was shot down in October 1941 over

dered the execution of 50 of the recaptured Allied officers under the pretext that they were shot while attempting escape. Floody at the end of the war gave evidence about conditions in prisoner of war camps at the Nuremberg Trials. He was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire in September 1946 by King George VI, two days after his first son, Brian, was born. The veteran was asked to work as a technical adviser in the high-profile 1963 film based on a book by Paul Brickhill, an Australian flyer and writer who, like Floody, had spent time at Stalag Luft III. Returning to civilian life, Floody became a businessman and co-founder of the Royal Canadian Air Force Prisoners of War Association, to help fellow flyers. The iconic film starred top actors including Steve McQueen, James Garner, James Coburn, Charles Bronson, Richard Attenborough, Donald Pleasence and others.



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Lidia (right) with son, Giovanni, and Jane.

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The South Etobicoke News is a free, independent hometown monthly newspaper that serves Humber Bay Shores, Mimico, Lake Shore Village, Long Branch and Alderwood areas.

We live in the community and cover local news, amateur sports, business and civic life while honouring those who gave so much of themselves so we can have the lives we enjoy today.

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A Guelph pilot shot Rommel to change the war



WWII VETERAN Charles William Fox is celebrated for strafing German Field Marshall Erwin Rommel.

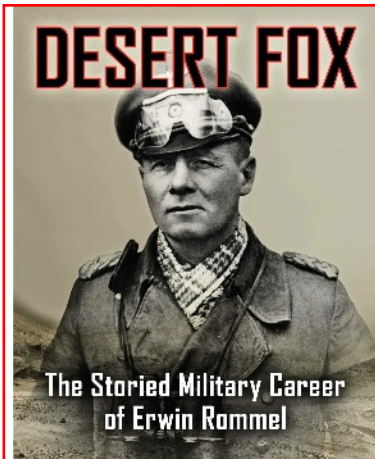
This valiant Canadian veteran may have helped changed the outcome of World War II.

It was 13 years last October since the death of Second World War veteran Charles William 'Charley' Fox, who is best known for shooting legendary German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel and taking him out of the war. Born in Guelph in 1920, Flight-Lieutenant Fox became a fighter pilot in an all-Canadian squadron of Spitfires that had attacked a large formation of German Focke-Wulf and Messerschmitts fighter planes. The Canadians shot down two enemy Luftwaffe aircraft and damaged several others before the Germans disengaged and withdrew. Fox was reportedly in the thick of the fight, "badly damaging at least one of the enemy aircraft himself and assisting others of his squadron to rout the enemy." The Canadian pilot had struck a serious blow to Nazi Germany. In a strafing attack, he had wounded Rommel, known as the Desert Fox because of his South Africa campaign. He was one of the senior German commanders, who was considered Germany's most capable and feared general.

Fox enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in March 1940. He earned his wings and his officer's commission in July 1941 at Dunnville, Ont., graduating near the top of his class. He worked at first training pilots for two years in Dunnville, where he married his high school sweetheart, Hel-

en Doughty. By the time Fox shipped out for England in 1943, they were expecting their first child. Fox was serving with 412 Fighter Squadron, patrolling the skies over England, the Channel, and the North Sea. On one occasion he was in the officers' mess at an air-base when it came under attack by German bombers. In the spring of 1944, Fox took part in operations over France in preparation for the Allied invasion of Nazi leader Adolf Hitler's "Fortress Europe." On D-Day, he flew three patrols over the French coast. Once the Allies had secured a foothold in Normandy and established airbases, fighter squadrons were sent up to clear the Luftwaffe from the sky and seek "targets of opportunity."

They would attack trains, military convoys and artillery emplacements. Many Canadian pilots considered strafing men on the ground repugnant, but a German officer's staff car was fair game.



ROMMEL aka Desert Fox

With him were his driver, two other officers and a guard. Suddenly they were under attack by Allied fighter planes. The driver raced toward a place where they could pull over and take cover. Before he could reach it, a Spitfire strafed the car. The driver lost control and the car went into a ditch. The only casualties were the driver, who soon died; and



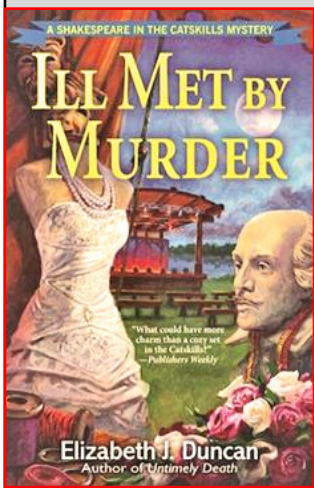
GUELPH NATIVE Charles Fox's fighter strafed Rommel's (above) car, wounding him and killing a driver.

Rommel, who had serious head injuries and was taken out of action. One day earlier, the British Special Air Service had decided to send a commando team behind German lines to assassinate or kidnap Rommel. Three days after the strafing, German military conspirators tried to kill Hitler with a bomb. Rommel was eventually implicated in the plot, and committed suicide with poison on Oct. 14. The Nazi government told the German people he had died from his wounds.

It took years before historians ruled Fox was probably the guy that fired at Rommel's car." The flyer was in the air at the time and place to have attacked Rommel's car. After ending his tour of duty in January 1945, the recipient of a Distinguished Flying Cross — with bar — served back in Canada in the 420 Reserve until 1956. He worked in a shoe factory until retiring in 1998. Six years later, 412 Squadron in Ottawa made him an honorary colonel.

Fox founded Torch Bearers, a non-profit organization that educated youths about Canadian military activities, was a guest speaker championing veterans and lobbied for schools to hold annual Remembrance Day ceremonies. He died in a car crash in Tillsonburg in 2008.

Win a Book by a Local Author



Local mystery writer Elizabeth J. Duncan, who lives in New Toronto, has given for fans four copies of her third and latest novel in the award-winning Penny Brannigan mystery series, called *A Killer's Christmas in Wales*, where her mysteries are set.

"This year's best Yule mystery is by Torontonion Duncan," praised *The Globe and Mail* in a review.

The first book in the series, *A Cold Light of Mourning*, was nominated for the Agatha Award and Arthur Ellis Award in 2009. Free copies of Duncan's latest will go to the first four readers who reply by e-mail to this question. What is the capital city of Wales and how do you spell it.

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Province dishes out \$1 billion to expand Mississauga Hospital and Queensway H.C.

Distraught woman gets two more bunnies after pair killed by angry dog



PREMIER FORD (below) announces \$1 billion for Queensway Health Centre and Mississauga Hospital. File photo.

The Ontario government is making the largest single hospital infrastructure investment in the province's history by spending more than \$1 billion dollars to renovate and expand the Mississauga Hospital and Queensway Health Centre in South Etobicoke.

As Etobicoke and Peel continue to grow, and over the next 20 years, the demand for health care services offered by Trillium Health Partners is expected to increase by nearly seven fold.

The province said the funds will add more than 150 new beds and a new inpatient care tower to centralize continuing care and rehabilitation services for patients. The investment will be used to build a "new, state-of-the-art Mississauga Hospital" and expand Queensway Health Centre, according to the Ontario government. "This is the single largest hospital infrastructure plan in Canadian history," Premier Doug Ford said.

"Investments in Ontario's health care reaffirms the government's commitment to put people first," said Christine Hogarth, MPP for Etobicoke-Lakeshore. "This un-

precedented funding will support our communities by increasing health care capacity and addressing growth demands and future needs."

The redevelopment of the Queensway Health Centre will help meet the health care needs of patients and families in Etobicoke-Lakeshore by reducing wait times and providing a safe and comfortable environment for patients to receive high-quality care, according to officials. "We are working hard to ensure all Ontarians have access to the high-quality services and supports they need most in their daily lives," said Kinga Surma, Minister of Infrastructure.

Suma said Ontario is investing \$30.2 billion over the next 10 years to build, expand and enhance hospitals. The 2021 Budget outlined \$1.8 billion in investments for hospitals in 2021-22, bringing the additional investment in hospitals since the start of the pandemic to more than \$5.1 billion.

"The redevelopment and expansion projects at Trillium Health Partners (THP) will ensure we have the modern facilities and much-needed capacity to deliver high quality, exceptional care to this community for generations to come," said Karli Farrow, President of Trillium. THP is one of the largest community hospitals in Canada, serving over 1.7 million patients yearly in its three sites: Credit Valley Hospital, the Mississauga Hospital and the Queensway Health Centre.



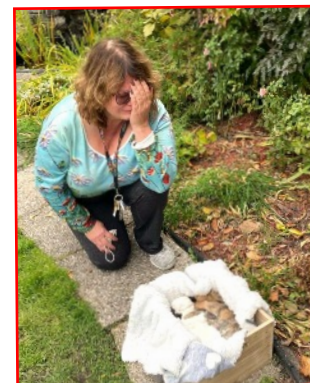
Christina Murie is wishing for a better Christmas as she grieves the loss of her two beloved bunnies, which were killed in a brutal attack by a suspected pit bull. Murie, a local business person, has gone out and purchased from a local teenage breeder Sugar and Spice to replace Leo and Ruby, which were bitten to death last month by a dog that was allowed entry in the Birmingham Business Centre, at 80 Birmingham Street, where the bunnies lived. The dog managed to gain entry



CHRISTINA loves her new bunnies Sugar and Spice (top, centre). Photos supplied by Christina Murie.



due to a worker on the property. The rabbits, which were adopted from Toronto Animal Services, were chased by the large dog and bitten to death in minutes. The cherished Leo and Ruby, who were loved by children, were buried in a service conducted under a magnolia tree by a pastor. "I hope these two new bunnies, Sugar and Spice, will help cheer everyone up for Christmas," Murie says. "I am still heartbroken and I cry every time I pass by their area. There are clients in this building who misses them." She noted that local children often came over to play with the rabbits after school. "The new ones are indoor rabbits," Murie explains. "They are pampered rabbits in that they have never been outside." They will be loved and petted by area children in an area that is now a dog-free zone. The bunnies have a beautiful indoor space and are placed outside during the day, she said. An investigation is underway into the deaths of Leo and Ruby.



CHRISTINA weeps for the late bunnies Leo and Ruby.

IN THE KNOW IN MIMICO



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Councillors want a pause for all new pot shop licenses



Some say enough is enough.

A number of area residents are complaining about the large number of marijuana stores popping up in the community.

There are about 15 stores that sell cannabis or related products in our area from Mimico west to Long Branch, according to a recent survey by *South Etobicoke News*.

Now city councillors Kristyn Wong-Tam and Paula Fletcher are seeking a one-year moratorium on the issuing of new licenses for cannabis retail stores in Toronto. They have tabled a bill before city council requesting the Ford government pause the issuing of new licenses for one year or until a private members bill which would give municipalities more say over the location of pot shops is passed.

Bill 29 has already passed first reading in the legislature. "There's a lot of cannabis stores but the problem is they're clustered in certain areas," Fletcher, who represents the east-end riding of Toronto-Danforth, told



SOME CITY Councillors want to regulate the number of cannabis stores that can set up shop in certain communities. Here are some in our area. Photos by South Etobicoke News.

CP24. "I don't want to give the wrong impression. I'm all in favor of the legalization of marijuana but the over concentration of stores is becoming a problem in parts of Toronto."

When cannabis was first legalized in 2018, the Ontario government allowed municipalities to opt in or out of having brick-and-mortar retail stores in their communities.

But it did not give municipalities that did opt in any say over the location of cannabis stores or even the number



of them that can be located in any single neighbourhood. Fletcher called it a "wild wild west" environment where some main streets are being increasingly taken over by cannabis retailers.

In downtown Toronto there were 163 cannabis retail outlets as of last summer, according to one report. The motion, which will be considered by council, says that municipalities already have the ability to weigh in on the location of other businesses that sell controlled substances, such as LCBO storefronts, and that the same process should apply to cannabis retail outlets.



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Sisters bring an exotic taste of Bahamas cuisine to area



SISTERS TERRELL (left) and Jamonique are the owners of the new Bahamian and Caribbean restaurant Da JunkAnuu Shak, at 2878 Lake Shore Blvd. W. Here they are showing off some of their dishes. Photos by Tom Godfrey.

Food lovers now have a taste of fabulous cuisine from Bahamas, or the 'Island nation,' without taking a three-hour flight to Nassau. Two enterprising sisters have opened Da JunkAnuu Shak, at 2878 Lake Shore Blvd. W., which caters to the many Bahamians and Caribbean expats longing for a little bit of home. Terrell Finley and her younger sister, Jamonique Leathen, arrived here years ago from the Bahamas as students to study at Cape Breton University, in Nova Scotia. They moved to Toronto and were longing for back home food and culture. "We aspire to give our customers that tropical vibe of paradise when entering our doors and to create an amazing atmosphere for all to enjoy," Finley says. "Our aim is to entice you with a diverse atmosphere of relaxation, entertainment and socializing."

The sisters are working to make Da JunkAnuu Shak "a leading establishment that provides a Tropical cultural experience for every customer."

Their dishes include many favourites from back home like crack or lobster fritters, crack chicken, salmon, peas and rice, baked macaroni and an assortment of exotic drinks, like the 'Miami Vice daiquiri.'

"When we came to Toronto we found there was no place for us to celebrate our food, music and culture," says Finley. "We realized that we had to start our own

place for authentic food and drinks."

She notes that customers have been driving from Windsor and across the Toronto area to visit their Lakeshore Village eatery and lounge to enjoy the Caribbean vibes.

"There are a lot of Bahamians out there and they are crazy for the food," she says. "They have been coming from Scarborough, Niagara Falls and other areas."

Leathen says they were searching for about a year to find a suitable spot for their restaurant. She said it was not a smooth or easy ride to get here. "People want fresh and natural food that is authentic," she adds. "I think people come here for the genuine Bahamian food."

They are in the process of completing a lounge, which will feature lively music, two billiard tables and coconut palms so people can have a truly tropical experience.

"This community has been good to us," Leathen agreed. "Word has gotten around fast and people are coming in for the experience."

Local barber Andy Dinner says the lobster and fritters are second to none and some of the best that he's tasted.

"The food is great," Dinner tells a customer. "I am from the East Coast and have tasted a lot of lobster but this has got to be one of the best that I have had."

The restaurant has been getting good reviews and area residents seem to like the food. Da JunkAnuu Shak can be reached at 416-251-5721 or by email at admin@dajunkanuuushak.com



TERRELL and Jamonique with cocktail as they show their delicious dishes, also at the bottom.



THERE ARE NOT many Bahamian restaurants in the Toronto area. We have one right here and the food (above) is good. The JunkAnuu Shak is located at 2878 Lake Shore Blvd.W. Aside from the food, there is a lounge with two pool tables.

Happy Holidays Stay Safe

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Local group on way to serving 10,000 meals to feed the poor and hungry in our community says need for food dire

Some South Etobicoke residents have banded together to provide 10,000 meals to those who are homeless and in dire need in our community. Project Good Karma was founded in January 2021 and has so far provided about 7,000 meals to feed the hungry in Toronto shelters, St. Felix Centre, Horizons 4 Youth and Etobicoke's Youth Without Shelter.



FEEDING the needy at Project Good Karma are founders Richard and Dayna.

"We are a grassroots volunteer run group and many of the meals are funded by ourselves or through donations from family and friends," says Richard Ramsuchit, who with girlfriend, Dayna, founded the non-profit charity, which was supposed to run for a year and has been extended due to the demands for food.

"Project Good Karma is looking to help decrease the scarcity around food in this city," Ramsuchit says. "The pandemic has dramatically increased the levels of food insecurity among our community members and has impacted the donations normally received by shelters."

He said many shelters had to stop volunteer programs that would normally have people come in and help cook meals for clients at shelters.

"With our program we are hoping that we can help decrease this anxiety around food that shelters may experience by even a little," he says.

Due to COVID-19, the number of people relying on meal programs and services has increased due to job losses caused by the pandemic, according to Ramsuchit.

Group members say there seems to be more people homeless and in need of food in South Etobicoke than ever before. They plan to continue feeding the hungry as long as there is a need.

"Many more people are now relying on meals provided by shelters to help them," he explains.

They are seeking volunteers who can cook, or sponsor a meal. The group is also working with restaurants to obtain meals.

They have created a Go Fund Me page for those who want to donate to a worthy cause this Christmas.

So far more than \$6,000 has been donated to help the group purchase food and other badly needed items.

According to City statistics, from 850 to 2,000 youths are homeless on any given night in Toronto. Many more are experiencing hidden homelessness. Some 3,300 to 10,000 youth experience homelessness over the course of a year in the city, or about one in a 100. The statistics show that 20% of the Canadian homelessness population are youths between the ages of 13 and 24.



VOLUNTEERS helping to cook another batch of food for the needy. Courtesy photos.

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Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Lakeshore Village BIA



Lakeshore Village BIA is excited to launch a new storefront art initiative **Remembering the Past as We Look to the Future**. This project animates storefront windows and utility poles along Lake Shore Blvd. W. with colourful murals from talented artists and illustrators including: *Angel Carrillo, Asli Alin, Natalie Very B, Ray Vidal and Vashti King*.

- Christmas Carol Sing-along with Santa Claus and the Salvation Army on December 3 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in front of Job Start at 2930 Lake Shore Blvd.. W.



Thank you to our businesses for decorating the trees! There will be prizes awarded to businesses for first, second and third place for the best decorated Christmas trees judged on Dec. 3.

See Santa on December 11th

Santa will be appearing in a Story-time and visit at **Colonel Samuel Smith Park**, at Lakeshore Blvd. W. and Kipling Ave. on December 11th from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Powerhouse Skating Trail. Come meet Santa and those on hand can also take a close up look at some of Santa's favourite floats.



Hogarth tables Polish Heritage Month bill



POLITICIANS and members of the Polish community have long sought a Polish Heritage Month, which can start as early as May 2021.

MPP Christine Hogarth has tabled legislation at Queen's Park which, if passed, would bring long-overdue recognition of the Polish-Ontario community's historic contribution to building our province. Polish Heritage Month would be celebrated each May, commemorating Constitution Day in Poland, the advent of their supreme law in 1791, said Hogarth.

"One of the reasons why I got into public life was to safeguard Ontario's democratic spirit," Hogarth said, in tabling an act to proclaim the month of May as Polish Heritage Month.

"To me, there's no better way to do that than to celebrate the ways in which our immigrant communities have enriched our province."

"This applies especially to Polish-Ontarians, whose ancestors fought for freedom and to achieve liberty against centuries of invasion and aggression including Nazi and Soviet occupation."

Some 524,000 Polish Canadians call Ontario home. That is far more than any other province. Nearly 12,000 live in the Etobicoke-Lakeshore riding alone, according to a 2016 census.

"The Polish community has contributed significantly to Ontario, its development and culture ever since the first major wave of Kashubians immigrated in 1858.

"The recognition of the Polish community's contributions by the Province of Ontario through Bill 18, Polish Heritage Month in May, honours this historic bond." said Magdalena Pszczolkowska, Consul General of The Re-

public of Poland in Toronto.

An important aspect of fostering Ontario's rich and diverse cultural mosaic is recognizing the achievements of the communities that have come to call our province home, officials said. With this Bill, we are ensuring that the place of Poles in Ontario is recognized and celebrated." said Natalia Kusendova, the MPP for Mississauga Centre..

"As the organization representing over 1.2 million Polish Canadians across Canada, with as many as half of whom live in Ontario," said John Tomczak, President of the Canadian Polish Congress. "We are happy the many contributions of Ontarians of Polish descent will be officially recognized and celebrated each May." The month will join others like Black History Month.



MPPs **CHRISTINE** Hogarth and Natalia Kusendova with Polish consulate official at event.

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Jean Augustine Centre Legacy Corner

The Jean Augustine Centre for Young Women's Empowerment (JAC) is a South Etobicoke Charity that runs programming for young women and girls ages 7-17. JAC also runs a variety of Community Programs to support the South Etobicoke Community.



#GivingTuesday Donate to JAC on Tuesday, November 29th!



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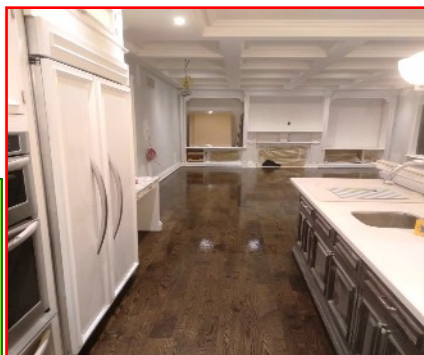
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Veterans robbed on Remembrance Day in theft of poppy donation boxes



Ripping off veterans on Remembrance Day after they gave their lives for this country is heartless. A second person is being sought after being caught on security cameras stealing a poppy box from a popular Long Branch bar.

It is the second poppy box containing donations stolen from a Long Branch business in about a week.

Meagan Larman, bar manager of T.J. O'Shea's Irish Snug, at 3481 Lake Shore Blvd. W., said a man entered their bar on November 10, a day before Remembrance Day, and stole their poppy

donation box.

"They came in asking if they could take a poppy then proceeded to grab the entire box and jumped in a car and took off," an outraged Larman posted on social media. Photographs of a man wearing a baseball cap, whose face is not clear, can be seen near the box inside the bar.

"Keep your boxes in a safe place," she wrote. "Super disgusted that this happened."

Earlier this month another poppy donation box was stolen from the counter of a famed pizza parlour a block away.

The owner of the store said he had turned his back for a minute when a woman grabbed the box, which contained some cash, and bolted.

Another area resident posted online that another suspected thief tried to steal a third collection box from a local coffee shop but was stopped by a customer.

"I hope the thief gets caught," Theresa MacLean wrote. "It's disgusting that he stole from heroes that risked and gave their lives for his freedom."

"What's wrong with people," Midge Mac asked. "It's for the veterans for God's sake!"

"Someone knows who that is and needs to step up please," another concerned resident wrote.



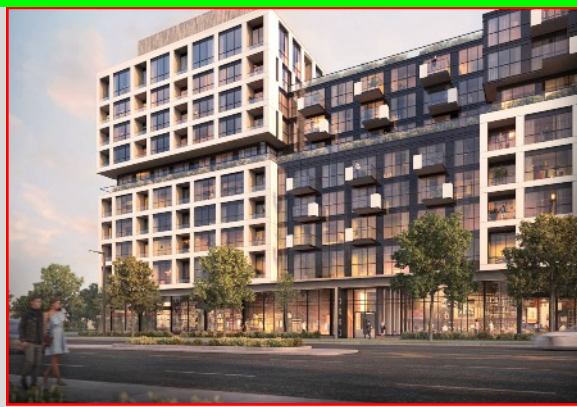
REMEMBRANCE DAY at Royal Canadian Legion Branch 101. Staff photo.



Follow us on Facebook and/or Instagram for updates on the Grand Opening and Events

Some new condos coming to our community

VERGE CONDOS at CINEPLEX SITE



The market is hot. As one new condo community is proposed for Mimico Village, another is planned for down the street, with yet another complex taking shape at the Cineplex Cinemas Queensway site, near Islington Ave.

There is also a 40-storey highrise proposed at the former Dundas Street Grille, 5238 Dundas St. W., and eight towers west at Dundas St. W. and Shorncliffe Road. Verge Condos plans to build two towers, one 17 storey and another

10 storeys, with a total of 545 units, at 1001 The Queensway, on the northern section of the Cineplex property.

A Scotia bank, bar and Montana restaurant, will be closed if not shut already, to make room for Verge Condos, a development by RioCan Living.

Verge will have more than 12,000 square feet of indoor amenities and 12,500 square feet of outdoor amenities including a fitness facility, outdoor terrace with games area, kid's play area, outdoor dining and lounge seating, according to the company.



MIMICO VILLAGE CONDO PLANNED

The units will start selling at more than \$500,000 each and one free parking spot is included, according to a Verge website.

"Verge is in a vibrant neighbourhood full of local restaurants, cafés, parks, and entertainment options," according to its sales materials.

The condo is promoting public transit options, top-of-the-line Sherway Gardens shopping experience, easy access to highways, surrounded by shopping, dining and entertainment.

Another 10-storey condo redevelopment is planned across from San Remo Bakery, on Royal York Road, which will see eight homes levelled to build a 282 unit mixed-use building. That project is going through the hearings process. See Page 14 for more details on the Mimico proposal.



40-STORY-GRILLE SITE

Nearby, Mayor John Tory and Deputy Mayor Stephen Holiday opened the Six Points Interchange last month and it looks and works great.

The entire Six Points area is changing fast near the Kipling Subway Station with a new Civic Centre, public square, daycare and community centre planned.

A proposal for the Shorncliffe and Dundas St. W. area calls for an eight tower development which was adopted with amendments on November 22 by Etobicoke York Community Council.

SHORNCLIFFE & DUNDAS SITE



The matter goes before City Council on December 15 for consideration.

Council will consider a report by Pinnacle International to redevelop a 4.38 hectare site located east of Shorncliffe Road and south of Dundas Street West.

The application proposes to amend the zoning

bylaw to permit a mixed-use development of residential, retail and office uses within four base buildings and eight towers, ranging from 26 to 44 floors high.

The application would create 15,000 square metres of commercial space and 2,875 residential units. It would bring hundreds of families into the area.

The plan proposes a 21-metre public road and .4-hectare park, as well as two privately owned public spaces (POPS). The application will result in a total of 6,792 square metres of parkland, with more than 4,000 square metres fronting Dundas Street W.

If approved, 20-and-28-storey towers will be built at the corner of Shorncliffe Road and Dundas St. W.

Prior to issuance of the first above-grade building permit, the owner made a cash contribution to the City in the amount of \$1.6 million by certified cheque, according to the proposal.

The funds will be allocated toward capital improvements for local traffic calming projects, park improvements, including the new public park; or new child care and community recreational centre proposed for the new Etobicoke Civic Centre.

Five levels of underground parking are planned, with 2,881 parking spaces of which 2,265 would be

for residents, 258 for visitors, 98 retail spaces and 217 for office spaces. There would be 3,104 bicycle parking spots.

The matter will be considered by City Council on December 15, subject to the actions of the Etobicoke York Community Council.

Moving along is the massive Grand Central Mimico development, near the Mimico GO Train, which will be built in phases and take years. The master-planned development will span four city blocks, house nine towers that will be home for thousands. It will include an expansion and reconstruction of Mimico GO station. Also coming along next year is construction of the 15-tower site at the former Mr Christie cookie plant at Humber Bay Shores.

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Condo in Mimico Village not good for area, residents say



TEN STOREY condo with 282 units planned for Mimico Village across from San Remo's.

Irate Mimico Village residents have taken to social media to blast a plan to build a 10-storey mixed use condo directly across from San Remo Bakery that will lead to the removal of eight homes.

A zoning by-law amendment application has been filed by Tonlu Properties to redevelop 351 through 365 Royal York Road, which residents say is already congested with traffic and will get worse as hundreds of new condo-buyers move in. A developer is seeking rezoning for increased height and density for the construction of a 10-storey, mid-rise, mixed-use building, combining eight properties; now detached single storey houses in Mimico Village.

The proposal calls for 282 dwelling units, ranging in different sizes. The building is "U-shaped" as it wraps around a courtyard facing east in the centre-back of the building. The ground floor is set back five metres from the front property line and the building include terraces on the west, north, and south faces, according to documents filed.

The Mimico Village area has been designated for mixed use in the City's Official Plan. With Mimico GO station a short walk away, multiple high-rise residential building developments as high as 37-storeys have been approved for the area, or are in the process of seeking approval.

This "will intensify this under-utilized area in Etobicoke," according to planners.

The proposal includes 288 bicycle parking spaces and 206 underground parking spots. It did not take long before social media lit up with complaints from local residents.

"It's going to be a disaster, it's already chaotic trying to drive around that area can you only imagine condos going in sad, sad, sad," Adriana Cofone wrote.

Long-time resident Hope Farrugia said the developer has expressed interest in constructing nine condo buildings in the area ranging from 12-to-39 storeys.

"This has pushed us out," she complained. "As much as we love this neighborhood, we won't be here much longer."

"This is a drop in the bucket," cited Shauna Currie. "That whole area has close to 3,600 units coming to it. The location on Royal York is awful."

"The 10-year plan is to move out of city," wrote Alyssa Dickey.



SOME OF EIGHT homes across from San Remo will be gone.

Nice art to honour our seniors goes up north



ARTIST Fernando Ferreira (centre) with Prescilla Una and Hilton (left) with some of the artwork for seniors.

Pieces of artwork in honour of seniors by Mimico artist Fernando Ferreira are making inroads on walls across northern Ontario.

Ferreira has completed more than 500 pieces of abstract art and has hundreds more to paint to reach 1,001, which he hopes will hang in every long term care home for seniors in Ontario.

"This is a project of love to help lift our seniors," Ferreira said. "All the paintings are bright, upbeat and are meant

to help them in these challenging times."

He is being helped by Prescilla Una, a well-known singer, entrepreneur and transplanted Torontonian who now lives in Wasaga Beach.

Una has donated more than a dozen pieces of the beautiful art to facilities in her community; including seniors' homes and the Huronia OPP station.

Another piece of the hand-made art was also donated to Toronto Police headquarters. "I love the project," she says. "It is a great way to honour our seniors and meet people."

The art is painted on two-foot square boards, is original and contains a heart and love.

They come in bright, upbeat colours that helps people celebrate. Ferreira hopes to be finished by next June.

The artist is from the Azores and loves painting and artwork. His father was a noted paint chemist and at home "is where I learned to mix paints."

Ferreira can be reached for artwork or donations at 647-855-0721.



HURONIA OPP with art for seniors donation. Courtesy Prescilla Una.

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Calls for more affordable housing from our local groups and residents



PROTESTS for affordable housing. PHOTOS BY Nekpen Obasogie and Norkyi Tenzin

South Etobicoke at one time was one of the more affordable places in the City of Toronto for people to find affordable housing.

Today, like most of the city, there is little affordable housing accessible to low income families, seniors, students or anyone searching.

Housing is a cornerstone of sustainable and inclusive communities. Each year, National Housing Day is held on November 22. It's a day to recognize the important work done by housing partners across Canada to improve access to housing for everyone in Canada.

In our community, a number of agencies have banded together to call for action. Groups like LAMP Community Health Centre, the Lakeshore Affordable Housing Advocacy and Action Group (LAHAAG) and Humber Research Study on Affordable Housing (SEHA) have launched a campaign for action to address the 'af-

fordable housing crisis in South Etobicoke.'

Group members warn that investment companies are purchasing properties which are renovated and have their rent increased to displace renters.

"Using 'rennovictions' they get tenants to move and then jack up the rents unaffordable to the previous tenants and others on income supports," according to a statement by the groups.

"They are calling on the three levels of government to build or convert buildings into affordable housing and 'we need to give renters who are struggling to pay skyrocketing rents housing allowances to stay where they are.'"

"We need more of the housing allowances-subsidies and higher ones for cities like Toronto where rents are much higher than in smaller towns," the activists said..

Cards were sent to politicians seeking their help and collaboration.



VIVIANA RUBEN, of Delicia Bakery and Pastry, (left) at 2864 Lake Shore Blvd. W., were voted top honours for having the best decorated Christmas tree this year by the Lakeshore Village Business Improvement Area (BIA). "We are very happy. It took us about three hours to decorate the tree," Ruben said. The tree had a small Santa Claus sitting at its base. In second place was Pharmasave, at Fourth Street. Here is Christopher (centre) with his company's trophy. In third place was Keith Pope, of Village Vinyl Emporium and Cafe, who was not expecting to win. "I am honoured," he said. More than 30 businesses compete yearly for the best decorated Christmas trees. Staff photos.



THE QUEENSMEN male chorus wants the community to know that their members have been entertaining Etobicoke residents for 68 years and have sung for generations of fans. The male singing group began as The Chorus in 1949 and became The Queensmen in 1953 "in recognition of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II." They will be on stage at Parkland On the Glen Retirement Home in Mississauga on December 18. The group sings popular light songs or music 'you like to hear.' For more info contact Einar at 905-876-1477 or einar.voldner@gmail.com



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Community activist Julie rose over many addictions to help others with their lives



Julie is an Indigenous woman who has overcome a lot of difficulties in life and is now using her many experiences to help others in the community. A member of the Garden Village Reserve of the Nipissing First Nation, near North Bay, she has been living in Toronto for decades. In her years, she has managed to beat addiction, abuse and overcome homelessness and speaks to groups on how to avoid her pitfalls. "I had to change my life," Julie explains. "It had changed me."

Julie has a lot to offer and is a volunteer in a number of community organizations. She now is an Ambassador for the Vaccine Engagement Team as they work to make the area safer and healthier. She obtained the job through LAMP community health centre. Julie has worked at the Breakaway Addictions Program and volunteered at the Rape Crisis Centre. She was also involved in the Out of the Cold Program at St. Margaret's Church and helped women and children in crisis at Women's Habitat.

"I am proud of who I am and my many achievements. I worked hard to get here. My life was given back to me," she says. "I must give back in any way that I can. Better the person, better the world."

She speaks to local groups about life on the street and how to break the cycle of addiction and homelessness. She spoke at St. Margaret's Church on Sixth Street last month about reconciliation..

"It all comes down to a matter of choice," Julie says. "You have to be willing to want the change."

She is planning to finish her second year of school at Humber College and hopes to work in a shelter for the homeless.

Her supervisor, Amber Morley, praised Julie's hard work in the community for the last 12 years.

"She has suffered abuse, in addition to homelessness and tries hard to help those in need," Morley says. "She worked hard to change her life and now wants to give back." Julie says her uncle was a residential school survivor "who was never the same when he came back home."

"He came back home traumatized," she recalls. "He was broken and was never the same man."

The Nipissing First Nation is a long-standing community of Nishnaabeg peoples located along the shorelines of Lake Nipissing in northern Ontario. The Nipissing are part of the Anishinaabe peoples, a grouping of people speaking Algonquin languages, which includes the Odawa, Ojibwe, Potawatomi, and Algonquins.



In the Community

By TOM GODFREY



If you have lived in this community for some time you can see on a daily basis all the development that is taking place around us.

The green and spacious Etobicoke that I used to know has changed. It now seems like every parking lot, car wash or empty space in the area is being dug up to construct buildings, mostly tall and unattractive condos.

Today realtors are describing our still-struggling community as "much-desired, desirable, safest, chic and having charming patios and cafes." The developers are making a fortune as they carve up the area.

There are dozens of major redevelopment projects that are underway right now, changing our precious landscape. It is difficult to obtain a list of the ongoing projects, which should be posted online so residents can keep track.

Residents are being driven out of the area, and their homes, due to the sky high costs. Not many can afford to buy into an upcoming five-star development as Verge Condos, at the south-west corner of The Queensway and Islington Ave., or at the Cineplex Theatre Queensway site.

A Scotia bank and bar and restaurant fronting The Queensway are slated for closure or is already shut. Verge condos development will occupy the front of the property as the Cineplex remains open for business.

Verge Condos, at 1001 The Queensway, will feature a 17-storey and 10-storey towers, with a total of 545 units, will start selling at more than \$500,000 each. The estimated completion date is set for Spring 2025.

The development is being constructed by Rio-can Living, which claims to have 81 residential buildings with over 20,000 units in the pipeline.

Also on borrowed time is a Hyundai dealership at the northwest of Kipling Ave. and The Queensway, that has been there for decades. A developer has proposed a 14-storey, 325-unit condominium for 1045- 1049 The Queensway, where the dealership sits. Major changes are also planned for the half-empty Kipling Queensway Plaza, which houses Sobeys.

Plans have been on the books for years to build condos on part of the mall site. A large chunk of the mall's huge parking lot will be modified for use as a ramp for the Queen Elizabeth Way, according to one plan.

Further up the street eight towers are being built in the Dundas St. W. and Shorncliffe Drive area. The Six Points Interchange area will also house a new Etobicoke Civic Centre, daycare and other buildings planned to enhance that area.

Also coming are townhouses and condos planned for a site at The West Mall near the outgoing Etobicoke Civic Centre.

And construction at the Mimico Go Station has begun on a Grand Central Mimico community, which will span four city blocks, consisting of nine buildings with 2.1 million feet of residential space and commercial space.

We may have to take photos to remember South Etobicoke as it now, since it will be gone soon, filled with towers, less green space and become a wind tunnel similar to what has happened to Humber Bay Shores, where construction is to begin soon on 15 towers on the former Mr. Christie cookie site.

We live in one of the best communities, with Lake Ontario and downtown Toronto at our doorstep. Residents support each other and it is truly "a village in a city." We have to hang on and not get pushed out of our homes by development.

Tom Godfrey is Publisher of The South Etobicoke News, who lives in the community. He was a reporter at the Toronto Sun for many years before deciding to use his skills to work in community journalism.

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Your Health

By MONIKA MEULMAN

The lights are growing dim and the days are growing shorter.

With each passing breath, we know we're getting older. It may sound lyrical and poetic and it is. I say it is inspiring and enlightening. Despite the long dark nights and cold winter days, let us celebrate light, in a hundred different ways. Let us celebrate growing older because it comes, hand in hand, with the joys and wonder of our friends' and loved ones birthdays and family dinners.

The passing days are marked by anniversary dinners, graduations and a host of other beautiful celebrations and holidays that enrich our lives.

If you were to light a candle for every celebration you had this year, I bet your room would be ablaze (ok, not on fire! I mean ablaze in gentle, soothing candlelight!)

In the darkest of the months, embrace the smiles that greet you, as you step from the darkness, into your warm lit family home. I say hello to all the members of my plant family (and it is extensive!!!). As I enter from the drive, I also nod, with warmth in my heart, to the giant Grandmother Cedar that welcomes me. The short days and the cold winter nights urge us to love and enjoy. Celebrate each day.

How? By reflecting and enjoying..

Enjoying what?

Enjoying a stroll in the first snow of the season.

Enjoying a nicely chilled eggnog.

Stopping along a side street and listening to a group of carollers, singing once again!

Enjoying a warm steaming triple baked potato pie with friends and family.

Or how about my favourite: A bowl of freshly popped popcorn with your loved ones, cozied up in blankets, immersing yourself in a hallmark Christmas movie.

There are so many celebrations coming around the corner. Do you hear them? I think they are heralded by a distant jingle of sleigh bells, no? No wait, is it the joyful beat of the Yuletide season.

From winter solstice to the arriving of the winter season to Christmas and New Year's: Which of these brings the greatest smile to your face?

Out of every darkness a light is born. Out of the great mystery.



This miracle of life AND light couldn't be more true than at this time of year. It's a wonderful time to celebrate the duality of who we are.

Embracing our Light and Dark, we create true harmony. Accepting our natural duality, we grow into strength and power. We exist and therefore we get to experience the joy and wonder of our family, our children, grandchildren travels, and growing up.

As we welcome change, we are giving joy and wonder to enter into our lives.

As you light the first candle on your Advent Wreath, honour the Festival of Lights with your Hanukkah candles, break out your African drums, songs and fruits for Kwanzaa (matunda ya kwanza) or dance under the moon celebrating the Winter Solstice Yule (birth of the Sun) with candles adorned with lace ties, know that you are in good company.

You are in the grand company of billions of humans.

We have all arrived on this great mother earth to celebrate being human. There is no better month than December to begin.

We have all come from the darkness, as a spark of life and are born into this world (or of this world, as some say -- Read Eckhart Tolle anyone?) I dare say, this month is a most wondrous month to celebrate everything from family, good health, our beliefs, and our fortunes to living another day, seeing the earth complete its cycle and begin growing daylight anew on December 21st (Northern Hemispheres).

Will you join me in growing the light of our human spirit?

"The universe is an example of love. Like a tree. Like the ocean. Like my body. Like my wheelchair. I see the love." -- Ram Dass

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From the Bench

By Retired JUDGE LLOYD BUDZINSKI

It's Christmas. It reminds me of "better be good; better watch out; the Judge is coming to hear your case out." What value has good character?

Rules for character differ between trial, sentencing and Santa.

Character doesn't mean Mom saying; "he's a good boy." Parents are too personal and forgiving. We need a witness testifying about what people as a group (societal, neighbors, job, or school contacts) think about you. It's your general shared reputation. It should include: how they know you (e.g., co-worker); for how long; knowledge of the charges and the community's opinion regarding a specific character (non-violent, honest) relevant to that charge. It's a general understanding of what the village thinks and not a personal one.

In the Trial, the Crown cannot raise bad character unless the defendant raises their good character. That is important. If the defence at any time suggests the defendant's Good Character, the Crown can rebut it by calling evidence of Bad Character but it cannot be used to raise propensity to commit crime. However, if the accused can establish good character, the Judge instructs the jury, "Good character is not a defence but it may be important in the Jury's decision. It may make it less likely the accused committed the offence. You must consider that evidence along with all the other evidence in deciding guilt beyond a reasonable doubt." In some cases, where the facts challenge the Jury, it may swing the balance to a reasonable doubt. Be careful, if you raise it, social media captures our past behaviour forever: no matter how good you are today, the bad is always available for the Crown. Santa, like your mother, is a bit more forgiving about last year's conduct than a Jury, but I understand that may end soon. The North Pole is installing Social-Media.

The rule for Criminal Records is different. If any witness including the accused testifies, their Records are relevant for credibility -- only credibility; "The Record can only be used to consider how much or little you believe the person. It cannot be used to infer a person's propensity to commit the crime." The generalization that the defendant is bad for all purposes is dangerous. It distracts from the trial's issues. For this reason, many defendants with Records avoid the stand.

Be careful whom you call as a character reference. The person's character can be attacked and it may reflect on you.

I remember cross-examining an accused when a man sitting in the back row suddenly started a drunken ruckus. The Judge ordered the spectator out! The defendant shouted "But, but, Your Honour, that man is my character witness"

Sometimes, a lawyer thinking he is helping the client produces an inappropriate reference, maybe hoping to impress the Judge. I was once handed a note signed by a city councillor on City Hall 'letterhead' speaking to a person's behaviour. Confused, I asked the lawyer: "Was it the witness or the city who had the opinion." It appeared that the writer may have attempted to use status to influence me. If counsel didn't know who was making the recommendation he should have found or withdraw the letter and did. Public officials must be wary when using their titles for a personal matter; otherwise, their opinion could be misinterpreted by the public.

There is a need for a strong, independent, and experienced Attorney General to protect Crowns from outside interference. As a Crown Attorney, it was stressed you never responded to a call from an MP or Minister regarding a case—the same as a Judge. The standing joke among Crowns was to respond to such calls by laughing; "Who are you really? You're kidding me. Don't be ridiculous, no MP is foolish enough to call about a current case, stop these tricks... phone my boss, the Attorney General." We would then hang up. It was inappropriate to engage with a MP about a case. Attorney Generals like Roy McMurtry, Ian Scott and Howard Hampton always backed us up.

In Sentencing, rules are different. With a conviction, both sides can call evidence of good or bad character as well as 'Criminal Records.' It relates to the probability of a successful rehabilitation or chance of re-offending. Good character and apologies make a strong case for leniency. Rehabilitation is more likely and re-offending less. Good Character has value, not only at Christmas time but for your entire life. Better watch out, better be good. Tonight, it is for Santa, tomorrow it is for a career opportunity and always it is a matter of trust and respect. Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas.

Judge Lloyd Budzinski retired after 28 years and was a former Crown Attorney, Defence Counsel and Ontario's Assistant Deputy Minister of Criminal Law. He was Chief Prosecutor in the trial of ex-RCMP officer Patrick Michael Kelly, found guilty of murder for throwing his wife from a 17th floor balcony in March 1981. He can be reached at lbudzinski@talkjustice.info



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Staff of The South Etobicoke News: now in the fourth year of serving our community. Have a safe and happy holidays.

Looking after yourself and others in the community

UNTIL DECEMBER 16 FESTIVE FOOD COLLECTION DRIVE - support our community and bring your non-perishable food items to Rendezvous Hair Salon, at 3693 Lake Shore Blvd. W. All items will go to St. Margaret's Anglican Church, at 156 Sixth Street., to help those in need at this time of the year. For more information call 416-252-9530. We thank you for your support.

DECEMBER 9 ANNUAL TURKEY DINNER from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Franklin Horner Community Center, 432 Horner Ave., for a delicious holiday dinner in the gym with all the fixings. Tickets are \$15 and are going fast. Contact the office at 416-252-6822.

DECEMBER 6, 13, 20 Interactive Polish language program from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. for children 18-months to 6-years and their caregivers on Zoom. Save a spot email anna.wasiak@stonegatechc.org or barbarac@stonegatechc.org

DECEMBER 18 BREAKFAST WITH SANTA from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Enjoy a delicious pancake breakfast, a bouncy castle and a visit from Good Old St. Nick as the holiday season continues at Franklin Horner Community Center, 432 Horner Ave. Contact the office at 416-252-6822 for tickets, which are \$7 each and are available from December 2.

FREE EMERGENCY FOOD TAKEOUT MEALS offered Monday to Wednesday from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. through LAMP's adult drop-in program. Thursday harm reduction supports from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT CENTRE operating from St. Margaret's Church, at 156 Sixth Street, on Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Meals, snacks, washrooms, showers, and laundry available for folks who are unhoused.

LAMP's COMMUNITY CHIROPODIST is now taking new patients for foot care services for people who are prediabetic or diabetic. For more information on call 416-252-6471 ext. 264.

EVERY WEDNESDAY from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. Stonegate Community Health Centre presents Everything Baby Discussion with Barbara and Larissa to discuss prenatal, post-natal and parenting topics on Facebook Live on the Stonegate CHC Family Program Facebook page at [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com)

LAMP TOY DRIVE looking for new unwrapped toys for South Etobicoke families for newborn to age 19. Our annual toy distribution continues to families in need of gifts this holiday season. There is a greater need for newborns and gift certificates for children aged 10-16. Drop off at the screening table until December 10. Contact Camishaj@lampchc.org or call 416 252 6471 ext. 292 for more.

EVERY THURSDAY The Good Food Market from 12 to 4 p.m. at Stonegate CHC at 10 Neighbourhood Lane for affordable produce, outdoor market and bring your own bags. COVID-19 protocols are in place. For more call 416-231-7070 ext 307.

VOLUNTEERS needed to help plan a community leadership program. The purpose is to build community capacity and involvement. Need your ideas! For more info contact jasmind@lampchc.org or call 416 252 6471 ext. 308.

FREE MATH, English and Science Tutoring online Grades 3-12 Mondays and Thursdays 4 -6 pm. One on one sessions. To register contact IshaGreenyouth@lampchc.org

YOUTH PROGRAMMING every Monday online empowering conversations about mental health and wellbeing from 6 p.m.-7:30 p.m. Contact IshaGreenyouth@lampchc.org to register

MARTIAL ARTS on Mondays & Wednesdays 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. and Basketball Fridays on Friday from 7p.m. – 10 p.m. Contact Isha Green for more information at youth@lampchc.org

NEW TO CANADA-LAMP's Settlement Services offer a wide range of support and referrals to government services, employment and immigration sup-

ports, health and education and more. For more information call Ask! At 416-252-6471.

LAMP's COMMUNITY RELATIONS Advisory Committee is looking for new members in the new year. Are you looking for a volunteer position to become more involved in your community? To help promote better health and well-being? To improve lives for others? Join LAMP's Community Relations Advisory Committee. LAMP is inviting applications from members of the community to serve on a volunteer basis on its Community Relations Advisory Committee. We are looking for passionate, committed people to join our team. A strong commitment to social justice and equity is an asset. Commitment is four hours a month including meetings. To learn more please e-mail jasmind@lampchc.org or phone 416-252-6471 ext. 308.

LAMP MORE SUPPORT for people who are homeless or are experiencing affordability issues. LAMP CHC in partnership with St. Margaret's Anglican Church are hosting a new program every Friday 5 p.m.-8 p.m. at St Margaret's at 156 Sixth street, South Etobicoke from 5-8 pm. The programs includes: hot meals. Housing information and referrals, harm reduction, case management, access to training, showers and hygiene kits, and more! Just in time for the cold weather. For more information contact Sarah or Ryan at 416 252 6471 Sarah or Ryan ext. 277 or 206.

THE SOUTH ETOBICOKE Winter Drive distribution of warm winter gear and supplies will begin December 5, 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., as an extension to the Toiletries Pantry that operates out of St. Margaret's Anglican Church, on Sixth Street. Items to be distributed include hats, gloves, socks, moisturizers, facial tissue and hand sanitizers. All are welcome.

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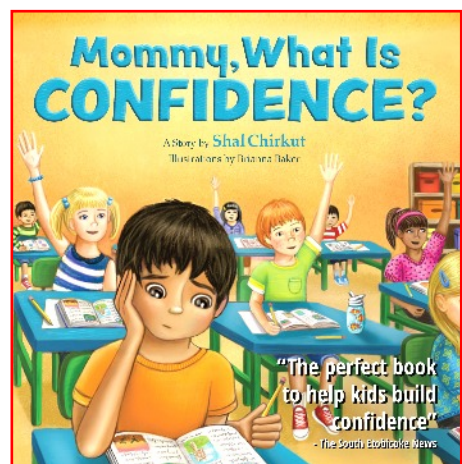
Mimico author pens children's book that helps kids to develop

A Mimico resident has written a children's book that is getting great reviews in Canada and in the U.S.

Shal Chirkut has been writing for many years and has a keen interest in covering topics that have a positive impact on the lives of young people. Chirkut's work highlights the importance of confidence and self-esteem in a young person's life. His new book "Mommy, What is Confidence?" is published by Indigo River Publishing, based in Pensacola, Florida.

"He believes confidence can be developed through challenging oneself," according to a release from the publisher. "He hopes children will learn to challenge themselves to accomplish great things early on. It sets the foundation for productive, goal-oriented, and successful futures."

Chirkut created the Mommy Series to communicate abstract topics that are difficult to explain to kids. "It is a way for parents, kids, mentors, and educators to explore important issues in a simplified, visual, well-written and easy-to-comprehend way," the author said. "Teaching confidence can lead to great achievements in childhood to adulthood."



SHAL CHIRKUT's children's book *Mommy, What Confidence?* (below) is receiving good reviews. Photo by Tom Godfrey.

He believes self-confidence greatly affects the way children develop and get along with others. "Introducing confidence, self-improvement, and positive change to children allows them to feel good about themselves and maximize their potential," Chirkut wrote.

The interactive book, which includes a confidence building activity called the Confidence Cup, has received excellent reviews and has been hailed as "the perfect book to help kids build their confidence."

"The use of simple dialogues, straightforward approaches, and motivating activity is a fun way to make kids fire up to challenge themselves to be more confident," said Rabilatul Adawiyah Z.

Brianna V. said the theme behind the book is important. "It is something I don't think I've seen in any picture book," Brianna wrote in a review. "I would love to read this book with my niece and complete the lovely activity with her." She continued, "Mommy, What is Confidence?" is simple enough for a beginner reader, yet long enough a parent can read it as a bed-time story."

Chirkut enjoys challenging himself in life, which has seen him mentoring students, skydiving, climbing mountains in Iceland, and proposing to his wife on the Eiffel Tower.

The avid tennis player has earned an Honours Bachelor of Commerce degree from the University of Toronto and lives in the area with his wife and children. Along with being an author, he also works in the project management field. Visit mommyseries.com to learn more about Chirkut.

"Mommy, What is Confidence?" can be found on Amazon, Chapters Indigo, and Barnes & Noble. Copies of the e-book retail for \$10.99 and the paperback for \$18.52.

Lakeshore charity helping students this Christmas in the Philippines



STUDENTS in the Philippines are twinned with Etobicoke students and are supported by the Lakeshore Charitable Foundation.

Students from two Etobicoke high schools are reaching out to their school age counterparts in the Philippines to share stories of life, school and Santa Claus.

The Etobicoke teens are replying to 300 letters to Santa sent to them by students in a twinned school who want to learn more of Canada. The responses from the Grades 9 to 12 students at Richview Collegiate Institute and Etobicoke Collegiate Institute, plus others at Upper Canada College will be scanned and returned to the students from three schools in the Philippines, being helped with funding and educational materials by the Lakeshore Charitable Foundation. Foundation president Jay Francis Llave is slated to travel to the Philippines this month to take presents for the students, who are studying from at home due to COVID-19.

He will be taking large boxes of much-needed school goods, and is being helped with the shipping by Cathay Pacific airline.

The hundreds of students will receive a signed letter from kids here, a loot bag containing precious school items such as binders, pens, paper and more.

Llave said each student will also receive an emergency kit in a waterproof bag due to the large amount of rainfall underway. Each bag contains a flashlight, whistle, crackers, disinfectant wipes, personal health items and more.

"We met with the school principals and the emergency kits were a priority requirement for the kids," Llave explained. "There is a lot of rain and it can lead to floods or landslides since they walk everywhere."

He said the kids walk to school, stores, or anywhere they have to go and can easily get stranded due to the weather.

"The children are studying at home due to the virus," Llave noted. "Their parents walk to the school once a week to pick up their childrens' schoolwork and then return the next week to bring them back and pick up more."

You can reach the foundation at 416-259-2441.

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Skating Steve raising funds to fight Alzheimer's

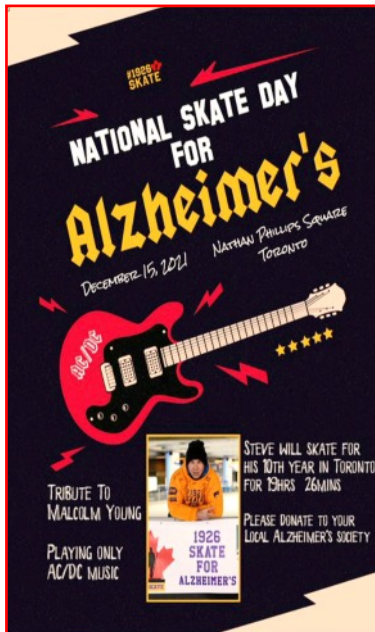


STEVE McNEIL is skating to raise funds for Alzheimer's

It's a rock and roll skate-o-rama for a very worthy cause. Come rain or snow, Etobicoke resident Steve McNeil is getting ready for his eighth charity 1926 Skate for Alzheimer's at midnight on December 15 at Nathan Phillips Square. McNeil will skate for more than 19 hours to honour his late mom, Eunice, who was born in 1926 and suffered from Alzheimer's. The marathon will wrap up the following day. He reminds everyone that the 1926 National Skate Day is December 15 and support is being sought from the community, and across the country. "He is asking hockey teams to skate for 19 minutes and 26 seconds while listening to the music of rockers ACDC," according to a release. Teams can "then challenge rival teams to do the same."

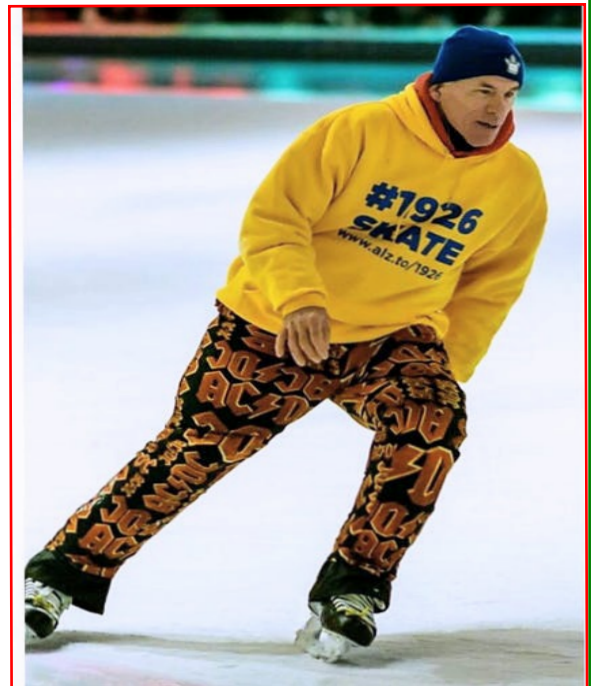
"It's easy its' fun and you are helping," McNeil Tweeted. "Alzheimer's Hockey teams young and old, pro or minor hockey teams can crank up ACDC in the rink and skate." Steve has since 2018 travelled across Canada to carry out his marathon skate in each province and raise both funds and awareness for the Alzheimer Society of the region. He encourages followers to donate to their local Alzheimers Society.

The miles of skating in the freezing cold had left McNeil in great shape physically and mentally. He stands out in his trademark yellow Skate 1926 hoodie, which he always wears.. He will be skating, raising funds and awareness



to folks in Hamilton on December 18 and in the New Year will skate in Kingston, Windsor, Simcoe County, Bracebridge, Peterborough and Niagara. The dates are being worked out. He is also seeking permission to skate at CFB Petawawa. Last year, McNeil skated in 12 Canadian cities, up from eight in 2019, when he began the charity skate. "It's also about raising awareness," he said. "Because when you raise awareness, you also raise involvement."

The Broady brothers, who co-founded A Night to Remember fundraising gala which has raised more than \$300,000 for the Alzheimer Society of Montreal, will skate for the cause once again on March 7. This year, due to COVID-19, Steve will not travel, but the Broady brothers will be at Maison-neuve Park on March 7. McNeil, a hockey referee, estimates he has raised more than \$70,000 to fight Alzheimer's. Also of concern are caregivers nationwide who are looking after loved ones living with Alzheimer's. These days Steve only skates to ACDC music in tribute to his musical hero Malcom Young, who lost his battle with dementia in November 2017. Donations can go a local Alzheimer's branch or www.1926Skate.com.



ETOBICOKE's OWN Steve McNeil will be taking to the ice on December 15 to raise money in a 1926 Skate for Alzheimer's fundraiser to help those suffering from the ailment, which included Steve's mom, Eunice. Courtesy photos.



Royal York Baseball League



Girls and Sport



Just 26% of girls aged 5-17 are getting enough physical exercise to benefit their health

- Girls involved in sports:
 - Report higher levels of confidence
 - higher GPAs
 - Use social media at lower rates
 - Experience less sadness and depression
- 25% of girls are not committed to return to sport post COVID-19.

At Royal York Baseball League Inc, our volunteers are committed to the importance of keeping girls in sport.

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Find out more at <https://rybl.com/girls-baseball/>