

# The South Etobicoke News

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Number 58

## New Air Support Unit sky bound to fight crime

Four new police helicopters to fight vehicle thefts and other crimes will soon be taking to our skies.

Toronto Police have long been calling for helicopters to fight crime, similar to Air Support Units used by York and Durham Regional Police forces,

The \$46 million choppers were part of last month's Ontario government budget which set aside funds for provincial police forces. It is hoped the helicopters will be used to deal with tracking increased auto theft, street racing and impaired driving, high-risk suspect arrests or to search for missing people.

Police said the helicopters could have helped with Project Paranoid which wrapped up on March 26 in which 150 charges were laid against seven people and led to the seizure of 48 stolen vehicles worth about \$4 million. York



FOUR NEW POLICE HELICOPTERS will be taking to the skies to fight crime, according to the provincial budget. Only York and Durham Regional Police have the crime-busting choppers.

and Durham Region Police forces are the only regional police to have helicopters to battle crime.

York police in March last year replaced an old chopper with a new \$7.1 million Airbus H12 helicopter, used by more than 200 police forces worldwide. York Police said their air unit supported over 1,300 calls for service, helped

to make 213 arrests and assisted in finding 15 missing and vulnerable people.

It can stay in the air for about four and a half hours, where it can take video of incidents in day and night, conduct traffic enforcement using thermal imaging, track suspects or stolen vehicles, alert officers on the ground and identify indoor cannabis grow operations.

The chopper has a camera sensor with infrared technology, a reality mapping system, search light capable of operating in all lighting conditions, and a public address system to communicate with people on the ground.

The York Police Air Support unit includes civilian pilots and tactical flight officers trained in patrol and suspect tactics, airborne surveillance and advanced thermal imaging. Its only time for Toronto Police get theirs.

## Hottest climate change year and getting worst

Last year was one of the hottest on record and it is not getting any better.

The City warns that climate change is causing weather that is hotter, wetter and wilder and the conditions are expected to only worsen.

The number of extreme heat days yearly with temperatures above 30°C has already increased from an average of eight days in the 1950s to about 18 days a year now.

The warnings come from a Climate Change Readiness report by the City's Environment and Climate Division that was presented on March 13 to an Infrastructure and Environment Committee.

It said for every \$1 of insured losses, Canadians pay an additional \$3 to \$4 on uninsured losses such as time lost from



CLIMATE CHANGE WILL ONLY get worst for Toronto residents and by 2025 will end up costing us about \$700 each yearly due to supply-chain issues, flooding and disruptions to services,

work, loss in property value and environmental clean-up. By 2025, Canadians will lose about \$700 from their annual income due the extreme weather, as supply-chain disruptions increase grocery prices, home insurance premiums

go up, and taxes increase to pay for disaster recovery and infrastructure repairs. It said the dangers of a changing climate could add more than \$4 billion per year to the cost of maintaining Ontario's public infrastructure over the rest of the century.

The report cited the 2023 wildfires led to more than 150,000 Canadians being displaced, and the health cost for Ontario of the air pollution from these fires estimated at \$1.28 billion.

The report states that if global emissions remain on their current path it could increase from 29 extreme heat days by the 2030s, to 54 days by the 2060s.

It said by 2080 we will see an increase in annual precipitation of 19 per cent, extreme flooding, infrastructure damage, injuries, habitat degradation, degraded water quality, soil erosion and disruptions to services and the economy. The impacts of climate change unfairly affects people globally who have challenges coping with the stresses of life.

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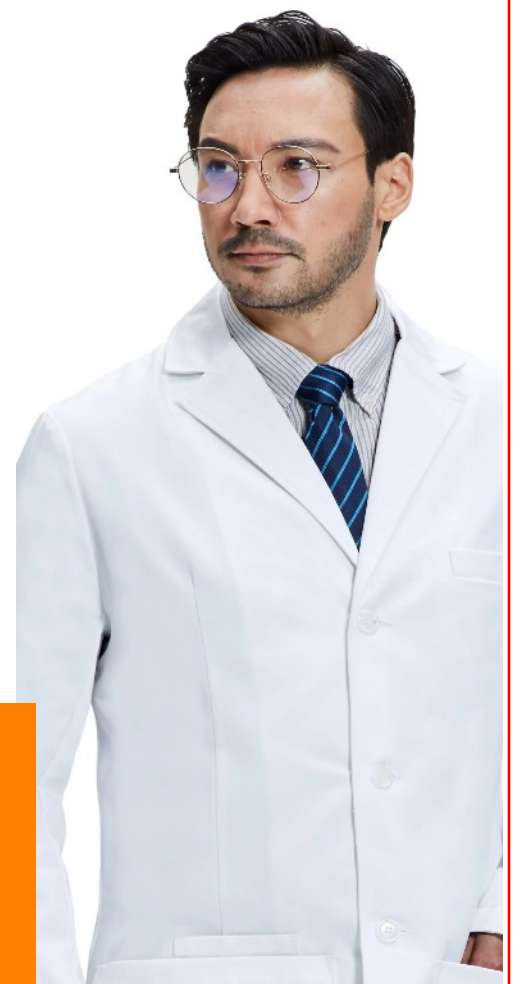
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# Man sought for chicken store fire and big blast

# Automated plate readers to be installed on some Toronto cruisers to fight high rate of auto thefts



SUSPECT sought and horrific fire scene below.

A police manhunt is underway to find a suspect accused of setting a Humber Bay Shores chicken restaurant on fire that demolished the place. Officers from 22 Division said the suspect was reported to be on fire as he ran from Mero's Hot Chicken, on the ground floor of a condo at 2183 Lake Shore Blvd. W., near Marine Parade Drive.

Police said they responded to a one-alarm call on March 14 at 11:12 p.m. to fight a fire in the Lake Shore Blvd. W., and Park Lawn Road area. The suspect is alleged to have illegally entered the business at 11:07 p.m. and soon after an explosion occurred and the business was engulfed by fire. The man was seen running from the store and witnesses said he was on fire. The explosion shattered large windows with glass ending up on the road. The powerful blast also damaged two adjoining stores.



FIREFIGHTERS putting out Mero blaze.

Mero's restaurant had been operating in the area for about two years and had been on sale for about four months.

Investigators believe there may have been witnesses who may have dashcam or video footage of the incident. They are asking any witnesses, or anyone with video of the offence, to contact police at 416-808-2200. Investigators are urging the suspect to seek immediate medical attention for their injuries, seek legal advice, and turn themselves in to 22 Division.



POLICE MOBILE scanner that reads license plates.

Automated license plate scanners are being installed in a number of Toronto Police cruisers to detect stolen vehicles or drivers with suspended licenses or in poor standing. Police Chief Myron Demkiw said the Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) cameras will automatically scan and detect license plates in the surrounding area of a police cruiser.

The cameras will be installed on the windshield of police cars and scan thousands the plates of vehicles hourly in front of the cruiser to detect stolen cars, suspended drivers, expired plates, validation tags, or plates associated with persons with outstanding Canada-wide warrants or who are reported missing.

The measure is intended to reduce the 12,000 cars that were stolen last year, or one every 34 minute that is ripped off in Toronto, police said.

There has been an outcry from Toronto community residents to stop the violent vehicle thefts in which thieves break windows or front doors to enter a home to



CAR THIEVES check out these high end vehicles before stealing them for sale overseas.

violently steal the car keys from homeowners in horrifying late-night thefts. Police said the ALPR camera will send out a signal if there is a 'hit,' and the officer will be required to stop the vehicle to conduct checks.

Police said the camera will be able to access an Ontario Ministry of Transportation and Canadian Police Information Centre "hot list," which is a database that contains millions of license plates in poor standing.

If there is a hit, the officer will receive basic information about the vehicle and the registered owner such as the make, model and colour of the vehicle, and the name, gender and date of birth of the owner.



THESE VEHICLES can be stolen within minutes by experienced crooks.

The officer must verify all information within the hit before taking any enforcement action. Hit information is retained in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA). Demkiw said there has been more than 68 carjackings so far this year that have left many residents terrified.

"That's a 106 per cent increase compared to the same period last year," he said. "We are putting a significant amount of resources to address this citywide, and have seen an escalation of violence, threats and intimidation, where weapons are being used to steal vehicles."

"Break and enters for auto thefts continue to rise. There have been more than 34 incidents so far this year compared to 22 for all of last year," said Chief Demkiw. In one theft on March 16, a balaclava-wearing man approached a person in a mid-town parking lot and stole her vehicle at gunpoint. He was nabbed soon after and charged with a string of offences.

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# Work starts at hi-tech Etobicoke Civic Centre

Construction is underway for a new massive community-based Etobicoke Civic Centre, which will feature cutting edge technology.

The City's CreateTO said the contract to construct the centre was awarded last December to Multiplex Construction Canada and some work is already underway. The 46,500 square metre large project is expected to be completed 2028, with staff moving in by December. Officials say the new facility will be the jewel of Etobicoke Centre.



**THE UPCOMING** Etobicoke Civic Centre will be state-of-the-art and house many City departments and is praised as a jewel of the community (right). It will feature a public library branch and recreation centre.

winning design team for the project in May 2017.

"To date, a feasibility study, schematic design and detailed design have been completed," according to CreateTO. The Centre will have four buildings, with the tallest at 16 storeys. Once completed the Centre will have a recreation centre, municipal offices, market office space, an outdoor civic square, medical clinic, childcare centre, a café, public art gallery and a new Toronto Public Library district branch.



The recreation centre is proposed to have a gymnasium, aquatic centre, multi-purpose rooms and fitness rooms, according to plans. Council Chamber will be located on the first floor directly above the main entrance and will be highly visible from the Civic Square. The second level of the building will house a child centre outdoor playground and a wedding chapel roof terrace.

The new ECC will contribute positively to the area and be the jewel of the Etobicoke Centre," city officials said, adding a number of city services will be housed there. It said the Centre will be the cornerstone of a complete community on six hectares of City-owned lands at the former Westwood Theatre Lands, at Bloor Street W., and Kipling Avenue. It will anchor a new residential and retail area with as many as 2,700 homes, 900 of which will meet Toronto's affordable housing criteria.

## Helping out for Easter in the community



**YOUNG GIRLS WITH** the Easter Bunny at an Easter event at the gazebo on Eighth Street in New Toronto that was sponsored by the Lakeshore Village BIA. **Photo by Danuta Gumienik.**



**PREMIER DOUG FORD** and Mayor Olivia Chow with MP Christine Hogarth help sort food on March 30 at the Daily Bread Food Bank, on New Toronto Street. Some 200 volunteers showed up at the annual Spring Easter event in which 60,000 pounds of food were sorted to help those in need in the community. It is a fraction of the 250,000 pounds sent out daily to food banks across the GTA. The Food Bank in February had over 300,000 client visits at its 200-plus programs across Toronto. **Photo courtesy Daily Bread Food Bank.**

The Six Points area was originally a web of roads until the city began work on a new intersection in 2017. This work cost \$77 million and involved the demolition of bridges and creation of regular intersections between Kipling Avenue, Bloor Street W., and Dundas Street West. The civic square is slated to have various types of landscaping like large erratic (boulders) landscape elements, including a water feature, garden area, event plaza, a sacred fire vessel and outdoor seating areas.

It will have 427 parking spots in two floors of underground parking. The ground floor bike storage area will have 72 short-term and 67 long-term bicycle parking spaces, and a bicycle repair area. The spacious Centre will cost about \$526 million to build.

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# Calls for a National Nutritional Program for kids



**MANY STUDENTS** go to school hungry or without enough to eat due to the high price of groceries these days all across the country.

With Easter gone and as food prices rise, a call is underway for all levels of government to fund a Universal National Nutrition Program to help feed at-risk school children in underfunded communities.

A City of Toronto executive committee is being told to request the Government of Canada to allocate funding to support the program across the nation.

A School Boards Advisory Committee told a City Executive Committee that it should consider establishing new food nutrition programs for students in marginalized priority neighbourhoods.

“City Council request the federal and provincial governments to work with Toronto’s Food Nutrition Program so more children can receive nutritious food at school through a Universal Nutrition Program,” according to the committee.

It said a food program last year provided 820 school nutrition programs in 619 communities with some 227,285 meals daily.

The universal meal or snack program is run locally by parents, volunteers and students in public schools. It gives students access to safe, adequate and culturally-appropriate healthy food.

“It is especially important for those at risk for poor nutritional intake,” the committee said. “It supports student learning and development over the school day.” The programs also creates opportunities for community capacity building, volunteering and job skills development.

The committee said the programs increase consumption of healthy foods, reduces obesity, chronic diseases, health disparities and social isolation.

The food increases student attendance in classes; test scores in math, science and reading; attendance and class participation and reduces dropouts.

The program will cost \$19.16 million this year, which includes an 8.5 per cent food inflationary increase for 227,000 meals daily.

Some \$16.8 million will come from the City, \$8.47 million from the province and \$2.2 million from the federal government.



**KIDS CAN** learn better when they have enough food and can focus on class.

Other funding will be raised from parent and student contributions; community and school board fundraising and corporate donations.

Canada is the only country in the G-7 that doesn't have a national school food program or national standards, according to the Breakfast Club of Canada. That means that while every province has different needs, there isn't an aligned approach to feeding students across the existing programs.

Researchers say that as high inflation affects food prices, more children need access to these programs but



**THERE ARE CALLS FOR** a National Nutrition Program to help children concentrate and study better in classes.

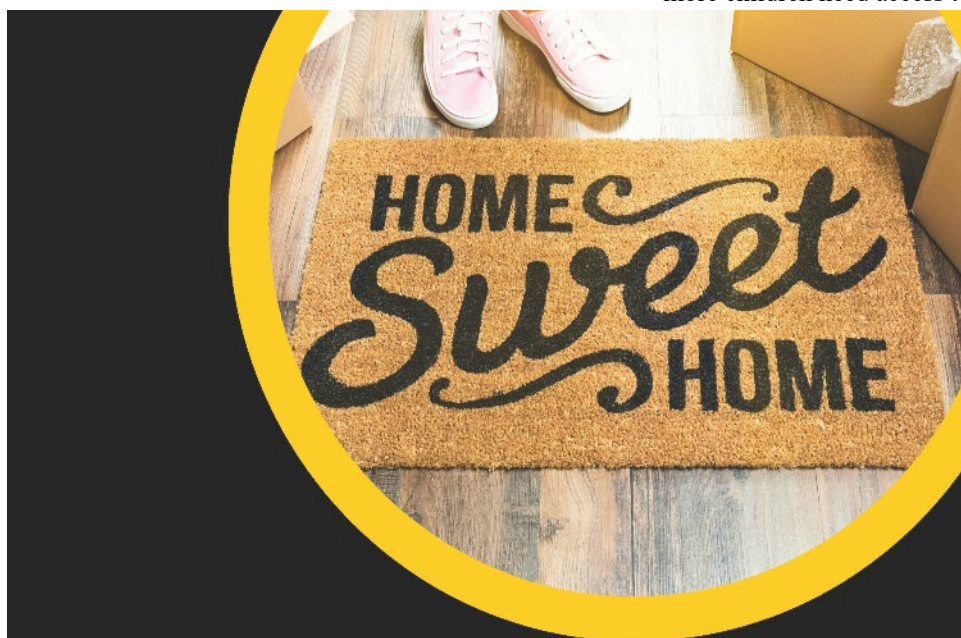
community groups say they need stable funding from the federal government to keep everyone fed. According to Statistics Canada, one in four Canadian kids experience what's called "food insecurity;" when a person can't access a quality diet or enough food, or aren't certain that they can. Meanwhile, 33 per cent of food bank users in Canada are children, according to Food Banks Canada.

The Daily Bread Food Bank states that Canadians made almost two million visits to food banks in March last year, and of that some 642,250 were visits from children. They said more than 17 per cent of Food Bank users are employed and one in every 10 Toronto residents rely on their service.

In Toronto, 28% of food bank clients are children or youth. Food insecurity compromises the health of children and stifles their ability to succeed in school, according to Daily Bread.

Every day, over 211,000 Toronto students participate in student nutrition programs through their schools and other community sites, the agency said.

These programs rely primarily on funding from the City of Toronto and the province, which has not increased its funding for nearly a decade, Daily Bread said, adding school food programs are reporting rises in students accessing the programs due to growing food insecurity.



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## Woman attacked on TTC bus

A woman was hospitalized after being attacked on a TTC bus by a man with a piece of wood.

Police have arrested a suspect who fled after the unprovoked attack at a bus stop at The Queensway and Islington Avenue.

Officers said the assault occurred on March 27 around 5:14 a.m. outside a bus stop at the intersection.

The suspect was nabbed by officers a day after the brutal incident.

Police said the man approached the woman on the bus, which was stopped at the time, and allegedly assaulted her with a piece of wood before fleeing.

Police said the victim was transported to a local hospital with non-life threatening injuries.

Tevin Gooden, 35, of Toronto, was arrested and charged with assault with a weapon and fail to comply with a probation order.



**SUSPECT NABBED**

*The South Etobicoke News* is a free, independent monthly newspaper that serves Humber Bay Shores, Mimico, Lake Shore Village, Long Branch and Alderwood areas. Established in 1999.

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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**PHONE:** 647-739-2235 **Email:**

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# Park drinking may be legit



**DRINKING ALCOHOL IN** some 27 Toronto parks is being recommended for approval by a City committee, who said there were few complaints in a pilot project

Drinking booze in the parks may soon become a permanent summer outing in Toronto. A pilot project studying the drinking of alcohol in 27 parks in the City of Toronto has been given a glowing thumbs up and may soon become law. A Parks, Forestry and Recreation report is recommending that City Council approve the pilot project and possibly expand the program to at least one park in each Ward where drinking is allowed. "Overall, the Alcohol in Parks Pilot Program was implemented with a high level of satisfaction among park visitors, few issues arising, and minimal operational impacts," according to the manager of the Forestry Department. The report said a vast majority, or 92 per cent, of those who visited a pilot park and answered a experience survey said 'they were satisfied with their visit.' "Respondents felt safe, and people who chose to drink at the park were considerate," according to the study.

It stated there were minimal increases in 311 calls for noise, behaviour, garbage or recycling bins at the pilot parks, even though there were other special events taking place at some of the parks. "There was no increased need for police response at the vast majority of pilot parks," according to the report. "And no increase in hospital emergency department visits due to alcohol compared to 2022."

It said a public opinion survey of Toronto residents showed that 46 per cent of those polled were 'supportive of allowing drinking in parks,' 23 per cent were neutral and 30 per cent were opposed.

The report recommends that Council can make the pilot parks permanent drinking locations and include at least one alcohol park in each of the City's

25 Wards, including Etobicoke Lakeshore. It said Forestry officers will continue to monitor the drinking activities and update local Councillors.

Officials said those consulted for their feedback included: Toronto Police Service, Toronto Paramedic Services, Toronto Public Health, Municipal Licensing and Standards, Solid Waste Management Services, the City's Legal Services and Customer Experience.



**CITY COUNCIL IS** expected to approve the drinking of alcohol in at least one park in every Ward across the City.

# Work underway to protect Toronto at risk turtles



**THE FRIENDS OF** Sam Smith Park are rescuing at risk turtles in the lakefront park.

Spring must be here as training has begun for volunteers to protect and monitor endangered baby turtles at Colonel Sam Smith and other parks.

The Friends of Sam Smith Park (FSSP) are training volunteers this month on protecting the baby turtles

which make their way from nesting locations to a nearby wetland pond to feed and grow.

The hatchlings are eaten by predators as they make their way from wire protected nesting locations to the pond.

The group has joined forces with the Indigenous led Turtle Protectors of High Park to form Turtle Protectors – Sam Smith Park.

"We started our own programme protecting and monitoring Snapping Turtle nests in Sam Smith in 2023," FSSP said on its website.

"We were successful in safely helping nearly a hundred hatchlings on their perilous journey to the water in the wetland pond – good news for this species at risk!"

Training sessions for volunteers will continue on April 13 and 20 at the park.

The turtle volunteers are taught how to respond to turtle nesting calls; install a nest protector; nesting site locations; some turtle behaviours and life cycle.

Ontario's at risk turtle species are the Blanding's turtle, eastern musk turtle, painted turtle, northern map turtle, snapping turtle, spiny softshell, spotted turtle and the eastern box turtle.

The hatchlings are preyed upon while trying to reach water sources by otters, minks, raccoons, foxes, skunks and opossums. You can learn more by visiting [www.friendsofsamsmithpark.ca](http://www.friendsofsamsmithpark.ca)



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# HBSRA file complaints against Cirque du Soleil

Concerns about traffic congestion, noise and bright lights are being raised as another run of the popular Cirque du Soleil show is slated to begin at Humber Bay Shores. The Humber Bay Shores Residents Association (HBSRA) in a March 21 letter to Cirque officials and Councillor Amber Morley complained the situation is so bad that residents have to leave their condos with their pets when the show is on. The Cirque du Soleil is planned to run from May 8 to July 21 at the former Christie Cookie site at 2150 Lake Shore Blvd. W., across from dozens of high-rise condos. The HBSRA wrote that attendees face 'the risk of serious injury or death' due to the traffic congestion from the show and by crossing the street illegally between moving TTC streetcars. "The traffic congestion both vehicular and pedestrian is already a quagmire in this neighbourhood," the group warned. "Confused Cirque-goers may be standing in the middle of the roadway or crossing lanes of traffic to get on or off the TTC streetcar." They said the area is already congested with taxis, Ubers and drivers who are unfamiliar with Lake Shore Blvd. W., and are attempting to navigate the neighbourhood.



**HUMBER BAY RESIDENTS** say the Cirque du Soleil shows lead to more traffic congestion, noise, vibrations and bright lights in their community.

The HBSRA said a lack of sidewalk on the north side of Lake Shore Blvd. W., near Brookers Lane, leads to many show-goers jaywalking to get to the show.

The group suggested traffic wardens be installed at key intersections on Lake Shore Blvd. W., while the show is on to direct pedestrian and vehicles.

The HBSRA complained residents suffer nuisances ranging from an influx of people, traffic, noise, vibrations and bright lights during the show.

"Vibrations from Cirque's loudspeakers could be felt inside homes," according to the letter.

"Residents could audibly discern what Cirque were

speaking or singing into microphones."

The group complained that 'the same soundtrack of music would repeatedly play on loop throughout the day and night.'

"The drumming and constant music noise was nearly impossible for residents to avoid with their windows shut," according to the HBSRA.

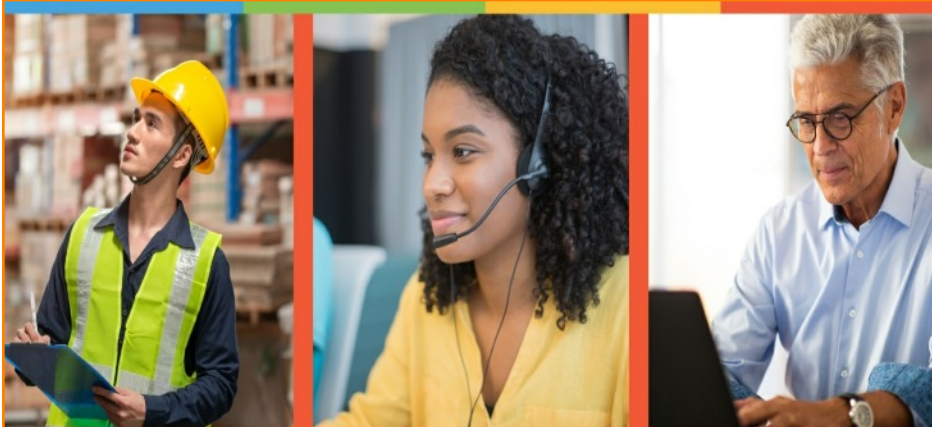
The group called for a roadway on the Cirque site for taxis, ride share and shuttle buses that will also serve as a drop-off and pick-up point.

"We strongly suggest law enforcement should be stationed on Lake Shore Blvd. W. to enforce prohibitions against stopping or parking," they wrote.

Some residents are forced to leave their condos with their pets when the show is on due to the noise, vibrations and light, according to the HBSRA.



**THE SHOWS TAKE** place at the Mr. Christie cookie site (above) and attracts many visitors to the Humber Bay Shores, which is densely populated with high-rise condos.



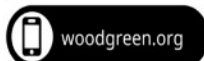
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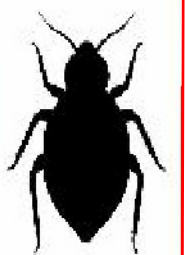
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# A talented Ukraine refugee artist celebrates first year here



**UKRAINIAN PAINTER** Evgenia Yaremchuk with some of her lighthouse paintings. **Photos by Christina Murie.**

South Etobicoke resident Evgenia Yaremchuk is a former fine art and history professor from Kharkiv, Ukraine who just celebrated her first year in Canada. She fled here as a refugee claimant to escape her war-torn homeland, where many of her friends and family members still live. Yaremchuk loves painting lighthouses from all over the world, in addition to lovely portraits of people, children,



**LIGHTHOUSES**



scenery and pets.

She describes herself as a “lighthouse,” one of the thousands of Ukrainians who resettled abroad leaving everything behind to escape the deadly war in their homeland.

Her lighthouse series of paintings represent places where Ukrainian war refugees have settled around the world, seeking help and helping others.

“It’s difficult to lose your home and life due to war, learn a new language and try to get a job,” Yaremchuk said of her new life in Canada. She enjoys the peace and safety that this country offers.

“I purchase paintings of lighthouses to help her pay her rent,” said South Etobicoke resident Christina. “She also does lovely paintings of pets, family members and landscapes.”

## Outrage by some Mimico residents due to cycle track fear

Outraged Mimico residents say there were no consultations and traffic calming measures are being sought instead of a cycle track to slow down traffic on Superior Avenue.

The measure is part of an upcoming Mimico Mobility Plan meant to slow down and lessen traffic using the area, which includes residential streets north of Lake Shore Blvd., to Cavell Avenue. Andrew Vanderwal, a concerned resident who started a petition, said members of the community had been requesting traffic calming measures since 2015, when a petition was organized.

“Instead of getting traffic calming measures on Superior Avenue we are getting a cycle track that is necessary to protect cyclists only because no traffic calming measures have been implemented,” Vanderwal said.

He said the cycle track will affect Superior Avenue from Stanley Avenue south to Lake Shore Blvd. W. It is slated to take affect this month. Vandewal said the track was pre-approved by Toronto City Council last June 15 without any consultation with affected residents. They have since met with Councillor Amber Morley to discuss the project.



**“The Undertaker”**

*The midnight hour, the darkest hour  
That human grief may know,  
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Asks me to come – I go!  
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I know not where the blow may fall,  
I only know that I must go  
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–The tangled skein of human life  
Winds slowly on the reel.  
And I? – I’m the undertaker,  
“Cold-blooded,” you’ll hear them say,  
“trained to the shock and chill of death,  
With a heart that’s cold and grey.”  
Trained – that’s what they call it  
How little they know the rest-  
I’m human, and know the sorrow  
That throbs in the aching breast.*

He said the primary concern of Superior avenue residents is road safety for all road users, cyclists, pedestrians, and drivers alike and a lack of traffic calming measures will allow aggressive drivers to continue to speed and pass vehicles as before.

“Instead of curtailing such behaviour with calming measures such as speed cushions,” Vanderwal wrote. “We are getting fortified segregated bike lanes designed to protect cyclists from aggressive drivers who are given free reign to continue to drive aggressively on Superior Avenue.” “This is totally the wrong solution for this street,” he said. “Arriving at this flawed solution could have been avoided where affected residents consulted.” Cycle tracks are distinguished from cycle/bike lanes in that they are physically separated from vehicular traffic.

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# Iconic Grenadier Cafe may shut

Another piece of Toronto history is in danger of being lost. High Park lovers say business has dropped about 80 per cent at the Grenadier Café located centrally in the park due to a vehicle ban and it is in danger of shutting down.



THE ICONIC Grenadier Cafe (above) in High Park (below) faces possible closure. It was opened in 1958.

Almost 13,000 residents have signed a petition calling for Toronto City Council to open the park again for vehicles. Council last August approved full road closures of High Park to private visitor vehicles on Saturdays, Sundays and statutory holidays as some roads are being converted to one-way traffic.

Vehicles are no longer able to enter High Park from Bloor Street and have to enter off Parkside Drive at High Park Blvd. The roadway will lead you either left to the zoo or right towards the Grenadier Café and the Bloor Street exit.

Area residents have taken to social media to express fears that their beloved Café might be forced to close due to a lack of people from the restriction of cars in the area. "We learned that they lost 80% of their business since cars have been

banned on the weekends," one park user wrote on social media. "If the City shuts the park completely to cars as planned, how could it (Café) survive as costs to keep it open exceeds profit."

The Café and other park attractions hope to lure some business as nature lovers flock to see the cherry blossom season this year.

They said the car ban has led to a drop of attendance at other High Park attractions including visitors to Grenadier Pond, Nature Centre, High Park Zoo, Children's Garden, Colborne Lodge Museum, Adventure Playground, Dog Hill, swimming pool and splash pad.

The Café was opened in 1958 and can seat 300 patrons in its dining room and coffee shop. It offers visitors a choice to sit and relax with a coffee or meal as they hike or tour

the massive park, that was deeded to the City.

Toronto architect John George Howard and his wife donated the 165-acre property to the City in 1873 on the condition that the park remain 'for the free use, benefit and enjoyment of the citizens of Toronto and it be called High Park'.

"I think this is ill-advised planning and ask to stop the full closure which will further damage park use," a nature lover wrote.

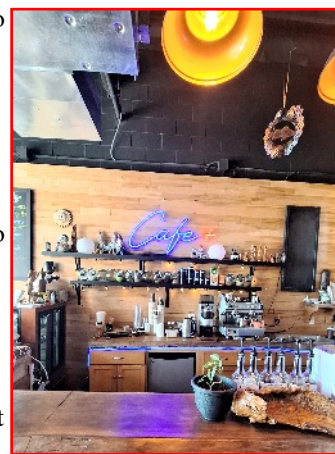
She said High Park is a 'perfect spot to walk through one of our most beautiful City parks and its zoo in any season.'



A local group called High Park Movement Strategy said the City is estimated to lose up to \$15 million over four years due to a lack of visitors.

The park is accessible daily by foot but many parents say it is difficult with young children or for the elderly or those with mobility issues.

# Zen Cafe Plus more



INTERIOR of Zen Cafe Plus.

A coffee shop like no other at Humber Bay Shores is getting a lot of attention these days. The Zen Café Plus, at 160 Marine Parade Drive, Unit 5, is busy selling organic locally roasted coffee, sour sop tea, sea moss and mushroom coffees that area residents seems to love.

"People here and elsewhere are now into health products," said John, who with his son, John Jr., owns the café, that is on the ground floor of the Eau Du Soleil condo development. "There is a

shift going on with people towards natural health." Customers love the functional mushroom coffee with no psychedelic effects.

Zen Cafe Plus sells some snacks and an assortment of health drinks, including the sour sop drinks, coffees made with dandelion and no caffeine.

He sells three mushroom coffees with functional mushroom Lion's mane, Chaga and turkey tail. The café has been operating at Humber Bay Shores since May 2023. "Sales are growing as more people are aware of alternative coffees without the afternoon crash"

The store also rents electric bikes and scooters for those who want to take a trip on the waterfront trail just yards away. There is also large patio facing Lake Ontario which he plans to sell ice cream, sausages and other goodies this summer. He also plans to feature live entertainment for his customers. Zen Café Plus can be reached at 647-951-9268.

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# Award winning Etobicoke garbage plant expand



**WORKERS TAKING** a break at the Disco Road Organics Processing Facility above, winner of an Excellence award.

An award-winning Etobicoke organics processing plant is being expanded to handle our City's growing garbage disposal issues. A huge expansion is planned for the Disco Road Organics Processing Facility (OPF), at 120 Disco Road, which processes 75,000 tonnes of organics yearly using state-of-the-art pre-processing

processing capacity versus building a new facility," according to a report. It said the expansion will allow the City to increase its organics processing capacity at Disco OPF from 75,000 tonnes per year up to 140,000 tonnes per year "Expansion of the Disco OPF would take advantage of existing infrastructure and known technology, reducing



**THE PRIZE WINNING** organics processing system (top) and collection tanks (bottom) and winning plaque below.

system and anaerobic digestion (AD).

AD is a process by which organic materials in an enclosed vessel are broken down by micro-organisms in the absence of oxygen. AD produces bio-gas which can be used to heat City buildings, according to a report.

Many residents may know the Disco site because it also serves as a transfer station, outdoor areas for yard waste composting and a drop-off depot for household hazardous waste and electronic waste.

The City's Solid Waste Management Services on March 13



**SECTION OF THE** processing system used to convert some of Toronto's garbage into heating gas.

called on an Infrastructure and Environment Committee to expand the Disco Road facility as a more cost-effective measure rather than building a new plant. "Expanding the existing Disco OPF would be the most cost-effective way to increase the City's organics



both risk and costs of the project," according to the City. The expansion, which has been approved by the City, is expected to cost millions of dollars and possibly hire more local workers. The City is responsible for the collection, transport, processing and disposal of over 900,000 tonnes of waste a year. This includes garbage, Blue Bin recycling, Green Bin organics, yard waste, oversized and metal items, household hazardous waste and electronic waste that requires a sophisticated network of facilities. The City collects about 170,000 tonnes of organic material through its Green Bin organics program each year. There are two state-of-the-art organics processing facilities at Disco Road and Dufferin OPF that use innovative pre-processing and anaerobic digestion technology.

The City has seven transfer stations where waste is collected, sorted and then transferred to various processing or disposal facilities, which include the Disco Road Organics Processing Facility, Dufferin Organics Processing Facility, Material Recovery Facility and Green Lane Landfill. The City in 2016 won a Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) Silver Excellence Award in the Composting category for the Disco Road Facility.



## Thousands sign petition to rename park after a local skater

More than 9,000 people have signed an online petition to rename Eight Street Park after local skateboarder Jordon Carter.

Last March 20 marked 26 months since Carter, 15, was shot dead in a senseless incident by a 13-year-old boy in a Scarborough parking garage.

Many of his friends and well-wishers in South Etobicoke have since been calling for the popular park to be renamed after Carter, who taught many young people the joys of skateboarding there.

Thousands of his friends and those who loved him have signed the petition to keep his name alive. A park bench has also been sponsored by well-wishers near the park

where he will best be remembered. Carter, who is the city's eighth murder victim of 2022, had many friends in the Beach community, as he had been raised by his grandmother there. He is remembered as a young man with a bright future and had a scholarship to one of Toronto's most prestigious private schools. His friends said he made "everyone laugh and smile" and



**JORDON CARTER** loved skateboarding and taught many youth the sport.

cared about seeing the people he taught to skateboard succeed. A memorial poster said his "energy was inspiring and he truly had a creative nature to everything he did."

Carter, who was always seen on a skateboard, had many friends who lit up social media to mourn his loss. He was so beloved that more than \$15,000 was raised in a Go Fund Me page to help with the funeral services.

"He was a talented young man who loved skateboarding," fund organizer Krista Langille wrote at the time. "We are all devastated by this loss." He had many friends in the area who loved him and would like to have the skatepark named in his legacy, she said.

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# Security beefed up at Humber Bay water plant



SECURITY IS BEING beefed up at the Humber Waste Water Treatment Plant (above, right) following community complaints.

More security systems are being installed to protect Toronto's second largest water treatment plant following concerns from the community.

A major security upgrade has begun to tighten up systems at the Humber Waste Water Treatment Plant (HWWTP), at 1340 The Queensway.

An almost \$4 million contract was awarded by the City on March 2024 to Black & McDonald Ltd., to install and upgrade security cameras, closed circuit television services, security access control systems, safety or security systems as smart cards and security chains or accessories.

Also being installed are smart door locks, smart card readers, supporting equipment along with electrical, mechanical and civil infrastructure.

"The City is embarking on a project to upgrade the security system at the plant," according to City documents.

The plant was built in 1960 and is Toronto's second-largest wastewater treatment plant. There are four in Toronto to process our waste water.

There has been concerns from the community about easy access to the plant, which treats millions of gallons of water for residents in Etobicoke, York and North York. The sprawling facility is located at the mouth of the Humber River and serves more than 680,000 residents with an annual capacity of 473,000 m-s of water.

Over the years the plant has undergone extensive upgrades to improve air quality and odour issues.

Area residents have repeatedly complained of the odour arising from the plant, which has about 60 employees.

"The Humber WWTP works to treat used water that residents and businesses deposit down the drains every day," according to City information. "Flushing toilets, taking a shower and running a washing machine, for example, produces wastewater."

The water travels through a sanitary sewer system, though a network of underground pipes to treatment facilities. The sludge removed is piped to Ashridges Bay.

The scope of work for this project includes all engineering services related to preliminary design, detailed design, construction consultant services including construction site inspection and post-construction engineering services.

As of December 2022, there was 17 health and safety incidents, and 29 lost time days due to work related injuries.

Three odour complaints were received in 2022. All complaints were investigated and not attributed to any cause after the entire process was checked by operational staff in each case.

The plant is operated by Toronto Water, which is one of the largest municipal water, wastewater and storm water utilities in North America.

As part of Toronto's large-scale Capital Improvements Program (CIP), the Humber Treatment Plant required upgrades to address aging infrastructure and buildings, optimize operational performance, and address community concerns.

There were concerns that the plant required security upgrades to stand the test of time. The other Toronto treatment facilities includes the R.C. Harris Water Treatment Plant, Island Water Treatment Plant the F.J.Horgan Water Treatment Plant and the R.L. Clark plant in Long Branch. **Also see Rainwater Tax story Page 11.**



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## City considers a water tax

A so-called Rain Tax may soon be coming our way. Toronto Water has begun holding virtual meetings on a stormwater charge and water service charge.

Public consultations will be held April 8, 11 and 16 to determine the possible implementation of the charges, which would impact the rate that customers pay for water.

It will mean residents with more hard surface run-offs may pay more due to water entering City sewers, roadways or lake.

The City's water and wastewater services are funded using a "pay-as-you-go" system that charges a combined water and wastewater consumption rate called the "water rate" based on the volume of water a customer uses.

A proposal for a stormwater charge for all property classes was first considered by City Council in 2017.

City Council in 2021 directed Toronto Water and the Chief Financial Officer to further consult with the public on possible changes to water rates, fees and charges, including a stormwater charge, stormwater charge credits and an administrative water charge.

Stormwater is rain and melted snow. When not absorbed into the ground, stormwater runs off hard surfaces, onto streets, down storm drains and through a network of pipes that carry it into local waterways.

Toronto has many hard surfaces and when severe storms happen, more stormwater runs off hard surfaces and enters the City's sewer system. Too much stormwater can overwhelm the sewer system, which can lead to flooded basements and impacts to surface water quality in rivers, streams and Lake Ontario's waterfront.

A stormwater charge would be based on the impact of a property with respect to stormwater runoff to the City's storm sewer system, which is represented by

the amount of hard surface area on a property. Hard surfaces include roofs, asphalt driveways, parking areas and concrete landscaping.

Under the stormwater charge proposal, costs for stormwater management would be removed from the water rate and the stormwater charge would appear as a separate line on the utility bill.

For properties less than one hectare in size, there would be a tiered, flat rate stormwater charge based on the average hard surface area of all properties in each tier. Property tiers are determined by property size ranges for different property types as residential, multi-residential and condominium, and industrial commercial and institutional (ICI).

For properties one hectare or larger in size, the City would undertake individual assessments of each property using aerial photography to determine the hard surface area on a property.

The City's stormwater management includes the funding of programs as the Basement Flooding Protection Program to reduce the risk of basement flooding from extreme storms.

The City also funds wet weather flow projects like the Don River and Central Waterfront Wet Weather Flow System to improve water quality, and watercourse erosion control projects to protect city infrastructure

Also funded are new and upgraded stormwater ponds, sewers, storage tunnels, tanks and green infrastructure on City streets.

This survey is for feedback on the stormwater charge and water service from residential, commercial and industrial water users. To submit feedback on the changes being considered send an e-mail to [stormwatercharge@toronto.ca](mailto:stormwatercharge@toronto.ca) or call 416-338-2985.



## In the Community

By TOM GODFREY

A 22 Division Toronto Police officer is in hot water after advising the community to leave their car keys in Faraday pouches at their front door to prevent confrontations with thieves.

The remark was intended to curb the number of break and entries into homes and late-night confrontations by crooks with homeowners to steal the keys for their vehicles. In many cases weapons are used or the homeowners assaulted if they do not turn over their keys to the crooks.

The comment, which was made at a community anti-crime session with Councillor Amber Morley and other officials, sparked an uproar from the angered community including Premier Doug Ford.

The officer suggested "that people leave the keys to their vehicle in a Faraday bag by the front door," according to a statement from police.

"While well meaning, there are also other ways to prevent auto theft motivated home invasions," it continued.

Ford said he had to be "picked (up) off the floor" when he heard the comment and said Const. Marco Ricciardi was a friend and "one of the finest police officers in the country."

"To prevent the possibility of being attacked in your home, leave your fobs at your front door," Ricciardi advised a sparse crowd at the Etobicoke Civic Centre meeting.

"I just didn't understand the answer," the Premier said. "We might as well leave cookies and milk at the front door along with a note. 'Dear Mr. Criminal, the keys are in the mailbox, don't kick my door in.'"

Constable Ricciardi is an experienced cop who has been a Crime Prevention/Community Relations Officer at 22 Division for many years.

Crime Prevention Officers (CPO) educate and assist community members in becoming more aware of their own safety and taking a proactive role in the reduction of crime and eliminating the opportunity for crime.

Many community members have taken to social media to blame police for not preventing or stopping the violent car thefts, but encouraging homeowners on how to get their vehicles stolen.

Violent auto thefts is on the front burner these day as more than 12,000 vehicles were stolen in Toronto last year. That works out to 34 vehicles stolen daily or about one every 40 minutes, according to Chief Myron Demkiw.

He said there have been 34 break and entries this year alone. In most cases the thieves enter home by breaking window or kicking in doors so they can steal the keys for cars in the driveway.

The situation is horrifying as tracking devices are being placed on sought-after vehicles in shopping malls and the drivers are followed home and their vehicles stolen.

Last month a man walking to his vehicle in broad daylight in mid-town was approached by a balaclava-wearing suspect who pulled out a gun and stole his expensive vehicle. The suspect was later arrested and charged with a slew of offences.

"We are putting a significant amount of resources to address this citywide, and have seen an escalation of violence, threats and intimidation, where weapons are being used to steal vehicles," Demkiw said.

The Provincial Carjacking Joint Task Force, co-led with the OPP, has arrested 121 suspects, laid 730 charges and recovered 157 stolen vehicles since September 21, 2023. Police, insurance and auto officials from across the country, including those internationally, have to crack down on the car theft phenomenon since most of the ripped off vehicles end up for resale overseas.

It is about time auto manufacturers install anti-theft or tracking devices on new vehicles so we don't have 12,000 car thefts yearly.

Aside from the auto theft the crime leaves a trail of stress, monetary loss and perhaps injury in its wake for many seniors and ordinary residents.

**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

Spring into Colour, it's good for you! Spring is a time of growing new roots, new shoots and strength. This season embrace spring blooms, the colours and aromas that surround you. It's a sure fire way to boost your wellbeing. Plan a hike in search of spring colours, as you get active in the warmer days ahead. After a mild, but drab winter, surely you are ready for a burst of colour and the aromatic hint of fresh blooms in the air. Your guide to colours in nature is below! Farmer's Almanac is forecasting greater showers than usual this spring, so expect your garden blooms to be more showy than ever. With mild temperatures and plenty of rain this spring, colourful blooms are bound to be plentiful. Whether you're a seasoned gardener tending flower beds full of crocuses, pasque flowers, irises and daffodils or a spring hiker in search of our beloved wild Trilliums, Arethusas (Arethusa bulbosa, a native purple orchid) or Coltsfoot plantings, you will surely enjoy the 'warmer than normal' temperatures predicted for this spring. By the way, when spotting Coltsfoot, remember this herbal, medicinal yellow flower is the first to appear on the forest floors and tends to grow near streams and wetlands. On your next woodland hike, impress your friends by announcing 'I sense water is near' the moment you spot a patch of Coltsfoot (Tsussilago farfara) growing in the distance. For some Ontarians, spring blooms such as crocuses and snowdrops may have appeared early this year since there was no snow until now! The dump of spring snow we received was the ultimate April fools wasn't it? That's just fine with the parade of April and May flowers to come. Peony, Magnolia and Sakura blossom lovers: revel in the magnificent blooms that arise from rainy spring days. However, I would argue that the most beautiful blooms of spring are Azaleas and Rhododendrons. Rhododendrons bloom especially well after they have received a few weeks of rain, affirming the phrase 'April showers bring May flowers'. With more than 10000 species in the Rhododendron genus, you are sure to find a stunning, colourful variety that you can't resist adding into your garden. In case your garden is non-existent due to condo or apartment constraints, or brown thumb syndrome (Brown thumb syndrome is easily overcome by simply hanging out with a few gardener friends on the regular...Ok, I just made up that condition, but it could be a thing), plan a date on your calendar to visit a local conservatory in the GTA. Our local, Centennial Park Conservatory is a warm, inviting and delightful place to stroll on

any day. Since it's open 365 days of the year, you can visit anytime. If the Farmer's Almanac prediction of 'plenty of spring rain' proves to be true, walking through a covered greenhouse, conservatory or arboretum is the perfect way to enjoy of spring day in search of colour.

Centennial Park Conservatory is a spring must-see. The conservatory building contains three sections: main greenhouse with tropical plants and wonderful tropical temperatures, South wing with arid, desert, warm loving plants (perfect for Arizona weather lovers) and the North wing that showcases seasonal designs and stunning colour displays. As a master gardener, you are sure to be inspired on your next visit to your neighbourhood conservatory. If you are a 'budding' gardener, guaranteed you will be awed by the sheer abundance of plants and colour that coexist together in a professional planting.

Not used to seeking out spring blooms and colours? Searching out something out of the ordinary is good for your brain, and exceptionally good for problem solving. In Entrepreneur Magazine (MAR 29, 2023), Amy M. Chambers notes the first hack to embrace in problem solving is to step away. Distance yourself from a life challenge at hand, by devoting time to an outing completely unrelated to your dilemma. Heading out for a garden walk or a woodland hike (Rouge Valley anyone?) can guarantee you a better solution than sitting in the office. Thus, exploring Allan Gardens (another wonderful Toronto Conservatory) is not just about finding colourful blooms, but also about taking time away from everyday problems.

Get outside to hike some of 1500 km+ of the Bruce Trail (did you know it is Canada's oldest marked trail system?) Explore the vast grounds of the Toronto Botanical Gardens and their enchanting 'native spring ephemeral wildflower.' Or getaway on your lunch hour, if you're in Etobicoke, to nearby James Gardens. No matter where you go, welcome the colours of spring into your day. Allow them to bring joy into your heart and a smile to your face. This is best part of spring.

"Spring is far more than just a changing of seasons; it's a rebirth of the spirit." — Toni Sorenson.

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## Retired Judge Speaks

By Retired JUDGE LLOYD BUDZINSKI

Recently, Premier Doug Ford has been criticized for blaming the judiciary for perceived leniencies in the criminal justice system. Ford advocates for the appointment of stricter judges to increase incarceration rates, a stance that raises concerns about undermining judicial independence and meritocracy by favouring political affiliations. He makes the false assumption that Conservatives are more rigid than others. This perspective neglects the complexities of judicial decision-making and the broader systemic issues contributing to crime, such as socioeconomic disparities, and inadequate rehabilitation resources, lack of resources causing delay and restricting the police's ability to provide disclosure or monitor an accused.

Judges are tasked with upholding justice based on the law and individual case facts including: the position of the Crown and Defence. A principle Ford's policy seemingly disregards by pushing for outcomes that align with political biases. Moreover, this approach overlooks the essential role of addressing the root causes of crime, suggesting a misplaced focus on punitive measures rather than comprehensive crime prevention strategies. It's cheaper to blame Judges rather than examine government resources and policies. It's an oversimplification in order to dumb down the issue for public consumption

Remarkably, the discourse surrounding this issue needs more significant input from the Attorney General of Ontario, the chief legal advisor responsible for the justice system. The absence of the Attorney General's voice in this matter raises questions about Ford's policy direction's integrity and alignment with established legal principles and the rule of law.

Ford's stance also risks compromising the foundational principle of judicial independence, where judges must remain impartial and free from political influence. Advocating for politically motivated judicial appointments can erode public trust in the judiciary and exacerbate issues like prison overcrowding, recidivism, and unequal impacts on marginalized groups.

Instead of attributing blame to the judiciary or pursuing politically charged appointments, there are alternative strategies exist for addressing concerns within the criminal justice system. These include legislative reforms to address the systemic disparities.

Underfunding justice means cheap justice. Most importantly, resourcing the lack of which is causing systemic delay. Instead of pursuing the charges, which takes time, Crowns are instructed to plea bargain to avoid backlog and delay. Instead, he blames the Judges. A "deal" can limit the Judge's power to disregard what the Crown has requested. Remember The Charter requires trial without delay to benefit the accused and the victims. Keeping a person in jail for two years before a solution is unjust to everyone. Ford's approach seems to sidestep the failure to resource, leaning towards a strategy that may serve political interests rather than addressing the justice system's complexities. Such a strategy neglects the need for a collaborative and multifaceted approach to criminal justice reform and overlooks the importance of maintaining the judiciary's integrity and independence.

Ultimately, the judiciary and the government, including the premier and the attorney general, are responsible for addressing systemic issues within the justice system and ensuring its fair and efficient operation. Engaging in constructive dialogue, focusing on resource allocation, and pursuing evidence-based interventions are crucial steps toward meaningful reform and upholding justice for all Ontarians, not blaming.

The Attorney General's silence on this issue is particularly alarming. In fairness, I asked Christine Hogarth, our MPP and a member of the Justice Committee, for her input. She shared, "I have no additional comments on these two public appointments, but as the Attorney General said in the Legislature, the committee provides him advice on applicants for possible judicial appointment. As has been the practice for decades, the Attorney General makes appointment decisions and recommendations to the Cabinet at their discretion. Please note the public appointments process is separate from the independence that judges have from government once they are appointed to their positions."

Her response was accurate in law, but unfortunately, it did not directly address the concerns regarding The Justice Committee's and the Attorney General's roles, to protect our justice system. Their silence to Ford's 'I'm not going to appoint some NDP or some Liberal. I've made it very clear where I stand with judges,' can be construed as consent to the Premier's position regarding it inappropriate to have lawyers associated with a certain party as judicial candidates. Hogarth's and the AG's silence is a principle in law -- "Qui tacet consentire videtur. It means "silence means assent," if you don't object to a statement it is the same as an agreement. They avoid their government's accountability for insufficient resourcing, causing delays and many problems of which the Premier complains to scapegoat the Judges.

Hogarth's last sentence appears odd; if appointments don't affect juridical independence, then why the political test?

The Attorney General is the legal advisor to Cabinet and, like Hogarth's Justice Committee, is responsible for maintaining traditions of an independent Bench, free of partisanship. Their silence permits the Premier to take over the Attorney General's role having accepted the politicization of the justice system to avoid government accountability, contrary to over 1,000 years of the democratic convention "If MPP Hogarth feels I have been unfair, I will share one-half of my next column for her reply as long as I can address her reply with the other half."

**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 17<sup>th</sup> floor balcony in March 1981. He can be reached at lbudzinski@talkjustice.info**

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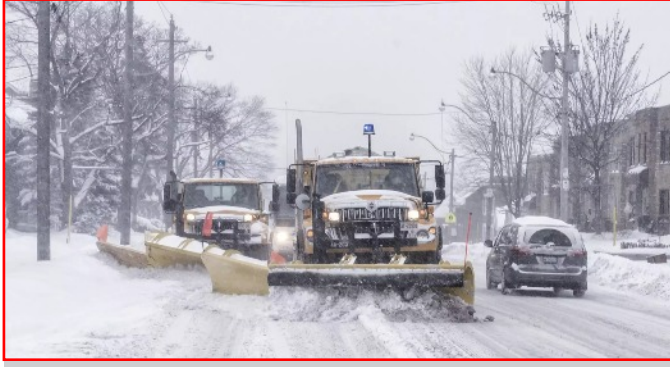
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# Our area residents vocal on 311 calls

Vocal South Etobicoke residents made the most calls to the City for service requests last year, according to a Toronto Customer Experience report. Residents of Ward 3 Etobicoke Lakeshore made almost 30,000 calls for service to the City, according to a March 8 report from the Customer Experience Director to a Service Excellence Committee.



**SOUTH ETOBICOKE RESIDENTS** were most vocal to the City's 311 service about snow removal (above) and wildlife issues like this at risk turtle (below).

Toronto Rosedale was second with 25,596 calls for service and Toronto-Danforth was third with 25,428 calls, according to the Customer Service Division. Etobicoke Centre was number eight with 22,735 calls and Etobicoke North placed 18<sup>th</sup> with 15,333 calls for service.

So far this year there has been more than 22,700 service requests made in Etobicoke Centre to 311, and the top requests last month were for pot holes, with 54; followed by 51 for garbage bin lid damaged; 43 to pick up dead wildlife; 38 for sewer line issues and 31 calls for injured wildlife.

There were 65 calls made to 311 relating to unsafe construction sites; 119 for untidy construction sites; 630 for leaking water hydrants; 663 for pollution spills; 661 for sewer odour; 308 for discoloured water and 1,064 for low water pressure, according to Toronto Water.

City officials said it takes from two to 10 days for City workers to respond to a call. Customer Service Representatives at 311 responded to some 848,000 general inquiries by phone, e-mail, twitter and other contacts last year, with property tax billing and vacant home tax being the most popular topics. Some 44,000 people made inquiries at the counters.

The Service Committee said 80 per cent of their phone calls were answered in 75 seconds.

It said there were spikes of 28,180 calls made during snowstorms, which were handled on an average of just over three minutes for each call. Another spike occurred during the 2023 mayor by-election in which 311 received 6,321 inquiries from residents asking about election jobs, voting cards or polling station locations. "The Complaints and Compliments project aims to create a more customer-centric, consistent, and scalable complaints and compliments process for Toronto's residents, businesses and visitors," according to the report.

The 311 service is also looking at expanding support and intake for calls relating to bicycle safety concerns, operations, maintenance and the drinking of alcohol in parks and facilities within them.

They are also working with refugee support system so people can donate or offer accommodations to newcomers. Last year 311 received 73 inquiries, which included offers of housing support and requests for information on ways to support or donate. The service is working with Toronto Fire Services (TFS) for providing non-emergency information freeing up TFS workers for more pressing calls. Almost



10,000 calls were received last year for fire-related information.

Work is also being taken to launch a Housing Data Hub to track the City's progress towards approving 40,000 affordable rental homes by 2030.

The service provides information on Transportation Services and Traffic Systems Operation

as it relates to transit signal codes, communication issues and timing requests. The 311 operators provides residents, businesses and visitors with easy access to non-emergency City services, programs and information 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The service is integrated with five of the City's divisions including Municipal Licensing and Standards, Toronto Water, Transportation Services, Solid Waste Management Services and Urban Forestry.

## OBITUARY

# Family and friends mourn passing of iconic border agent



DAN SNOW

Family and friends are mourning the loss of a legendary South Etobicoke border agent who worked at Pearson International Airport for more than 30 years.

Daniel 'Dan' Snow, a long-time officer of the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), passed away on February 21 at the age of 74.

The well-liked Snow lived on Cordova Avenue for decades after moving here from his hometown of Summerside, Prince Edward Island, where his dad served as a Sergeant in the Canadian military. He obtained a Business Administration Degree from

Saint Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, in 1972, and moved to Toronto, where he worked at the airport as a Senior Immigration Officer for more than 35 years.

Snow was well-versed in the job, which he loved and formed many lasting friendships. He is credited for preventing the entry into Canada of Jimmy Hoffa, famed U.S. labour union leader who served as the president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters from 1957 until 1971. He also intercepted an aging Nazi scientist for being inadmissible into the country.

He, with colleagues, briefly detained Italian opera superstar Luciano Pavarotti, who was travelling here for a sold-out concert. Snow also turned around hundreds of other travellers, including a number of high-profile celebrities who were inadmissible to

Canada for criminality or other reasons.

He is survived by his sister, a brother, nieces, and other family members.

Cremation has taken place and his ashes will be buried in a plot next to his parents in Glace Bay.

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# Looking after yourself and others in the community

**APRIL 3 TO MAY 9 ART EXHIBITION** By the Lake Book Club called *Wild Alchemy & Global Grove: A Broken Forest* to explore the connectedness experienced in forests and uninhabited lands through paintings and photography, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, Assembly Hall, 1 Colonel Samuel Smith Park Drive. Contact 416-338-7255 or visit [www.toronto.ca](http://www.toronto.ca)

**UNTIL APRIL 7 ANNUAL SUGAR BUSH MAPLE SYRUP FESTIVAL** at Kortright Centre for Conservation, at 9550 Pine Valley Drive, Woodbridge, enjoy demonstrations, family activities and discover the process of making maple syrup with lanterns and campfires. For more contact the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority at 416-661-6600 or e-mail [afiya.jilani@trca.ca](mailto:afiya.jilani@trca.ca)

**APRIL 10 SOUTH ETOBICOKE COMMUNITY** Land Trust via Zoom at 6 p.m. at LAMP CHC, 185 Fifth Street, as we continue work on establishing a land trust for affordable housing in South Etobicoke. For more e-mail [brig@lampchc.org](mailto:brig@lampchc.org) or phone 416-252-6471 ext. 308.

**APRIL 10 TO MAY 2** the 7 Works Collective will be staging their second art exhibition of collected sets that provide insight into the ways that artists create from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Etobicoke Civic Centre Gallery, 399 The West Mall. For more e-mail [7workscollective@gmail.com](mailto:7workscollective@gmail.com),

**APRIL 11 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** Mimico Residents Association from 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. At Mimico Library, 47 Station Road, also online, with MPP Christine Hogarth and MRA president Rozhen Asrani. Visit [www.mimicoresidents.ca](http://www.mimicoresidents.ca)

**APRIL 14 SPRING CLEAN-UP** join TRCA and Friends of Humber Bay Park for first clean-up of the season from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Meet in parking lot at Humber Bay West, across from Mimico Creek Bridge. Visit [Spring2024FOHBP.eventbrite.ca](http://Spring2024FOHBP.eventbrite.ca)

**UNTIL APRIL 16** Etobicoke Master Gardeners a non-profit charity to provide gardening support is sponsoring a lecture series on garden design

featuring horticulturist **Frank Kershaw** as he talks about creating garden mysteries and the oft-neglected front and side yards from 7 p.m. at the Kingsway Lambton United Church, at 85 The Kingsway. For more visit [www.etobicokeastergardeners.ca](http://www.etobicokeastergardeners.ca)

**APRIL 16 BY THE LAKE BOOK CLUB** presents *The African Samurai* by **Craig Shreve** at the Assembly Hall, 1 Colonel Samuel Smith Park Drive, from 7 p.m. to 8:45 p.m. Shreve will talk and sign his historical novel, based on a true story of a 16<sup>th</sup> century slave and soldier who was the only samurai of African descent. Tickets are required. For more information, visit [toronto.ca/assemblyhall](http://toronto.ca/assemblyhall), or call 416-338-7255.

**APRIL 17 MOVIE MATINEE** at LAMP CHC, 185 Fifth Street, at 2:30 p.m. in our Community Room as we screen a family-friendly film. Contact 416-252-6471 ext. 308 or e-mail [jasmind@lampchc.org](mailto:jasmind@lampchc.org).

**APRIL 18 MYSTERY BOOK CLUB** as we discuss *Gallows View* by **Peter Robinson** from 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Stonegate CHC, 10 Neighbourhood Lane, second floor. Book can be borrowed at Humber Bay Library, also available as an e-book or e-audiobook at library website. Join us every third Thursday as we discuss an intriguing mystery. Call 416-231-7070 ext. 307 to register or email [health.promotion@stonegatechc.org](mailto:health.promotion@stonegatechc.org).

**APRIL 20 ENVIRONMENTAL DAY** with Community clean up, frog watch, guided walks, talks and more. Held during Earth Week; a collaboration between environmental groups including Toronto Region Conservation Authority, Riverwood Conservancy and others. Meet for community clean up of Arsenal lands. Event at Creative Hub 1352 Lakeshore Rd. E., Mississauga.

**APRIL 24 BUILDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING SERIES;** Co-operative housing at LAMP CHC, 185 Fifth Street, at 6 p.m. Contact 416-252-6471 ext. 308 or e-mail [jasmind@lampchc.org](mailto:jasmind@lampchc.org). Community Land Trust and affordable housing advocacy measures.

**APRIL 27 REPAIR CAFÉ** if you have broken items in need of fixing. LAMP CHC, at 185 Fifth Street, will be hosting a free repair café where you can come and have your broken items mended; reducing waste and fostering sustainability. Volunteer fixers are required if you are good with tools, electronics or a sewing machine. Contact 416-252-6471 ext. 308 or e-mail [jasmind@lampchc.org](mailto:jasmind@lampchc.org).

**EVERY FRIDAY JOIN US FOR FUN** and safe indoor gross motor activities for families with children up to 6-years-old at the Sunnylea Drop In every Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at 851 Royal York Road. Running shoes required. Contact Anna or Larissa by e-mail at [early.years@stonegatechc.org](mailto:early.years@stonegatechc.org)

**STONEGATE CHC THE GOOD FOOD MARKET** runs every Thursday from 12 noon to 3 p.m. at 10 Neighbourhood Lane, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, for affordable produce. Cash and debit accepted. Any questions call 416-231-7070 ext. 307.

**EVERY TUESDAY SENIORS GENTLE EXERCISE** from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. at Trillium Room at Stonegate CHC, 10 Neighbourhood Lane. A Registered kinesiologist will lead a group with exercises to increase strength, balance and flexibility. Participants need to register with ESS Support Services and schedule an assessment prior to attending sessions. To register call 416-243-0127 or visit [www.stonegatechc.org](http://www.stonegatechc.org).

**LAST FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH OLDER ADULTS 55 PLUS** Seniors Social Game Group from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Stonegate CHC, 10 Neighbourhood Lane. It is an opportunity to meet, socialize and take part in card and board games. Light lunch served. To register call 416-231-7070 Ext. 307 or email [health.promotion@stonegatechc.org](mailto:health.promotion@stonegatechc.org).

**MAY 5 ST. GEORGES ON-THE-HILL ANGLICAN CHURCH A** Season of Growth Spring Concert 4 p.m. at the church 4600 Dundas Street W., featuring Canadian Sinfonietta Youth Orchestra and the choir of St. George's. Tickets \$30. For more visit [www.stgoth.ca](http://www.stgoth.ca).

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The Lakeshore Charitable Foundation sponsors about 500 students with books, some food and other classroom gear at three schools in the Philippines.



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# Venues to hear live music in the neighbourhood



THE BANDS are always rocking at Timothy's Pub (above) or have some laughs (below) at the Long Branch Social House.



classic rock and pop.

If you head down Brown's Line to Lakeshore, you'll find Southside Johnny's Bar and Grill, at 3653 Lake Shore Blvd. W., at the corner of Thirty Sixth.

Music is a powerful medium. It affects our emotions. It's social. It's usually fun. Rumours about live music being gone from South Etobicoke are grossly exaggerated. It's true some venues such as The Blue Goose have closed over the years, but there are many gems still going strong. We're going to take you on a tour of places in South Etobicoke where you can get your musical fix – whether it's just to enjoy listening to a band or to be more active.

Our starting point is in the southwest corner, in the neighbourhoods of Alderwood and Long Branch.

Probably the most active music venue in South Etobicoke is Timothy's Pub, at 344 Brown's Line, a landmark in Alderwood. Opened in 1998, Timothy's has bands every night of the week except Monday. And on Saturday afternoon, they have a matinee with a different band each week. The music tends to be

By **RON JAMIESON**

Their house band, Skip Tracer, plays an amazing range of classic rock tunes every Thursday evening. Fridays and Saturdays they have a rotating roster of great bands playing rock, soul and Motown.

If you sing or play an instrument, their Sunday evening jam is a great way to show off what you can do, supported by



THE DREAMBOATS (above) at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 101 and the Rock Express Band at Southside Johnny's (below).



professional musicians. It's one of the best jams around. Very well run. A bit further east is Long Branch Social House, at 3595 Lake Shore Blvd. W., which is relatively new on the scene.

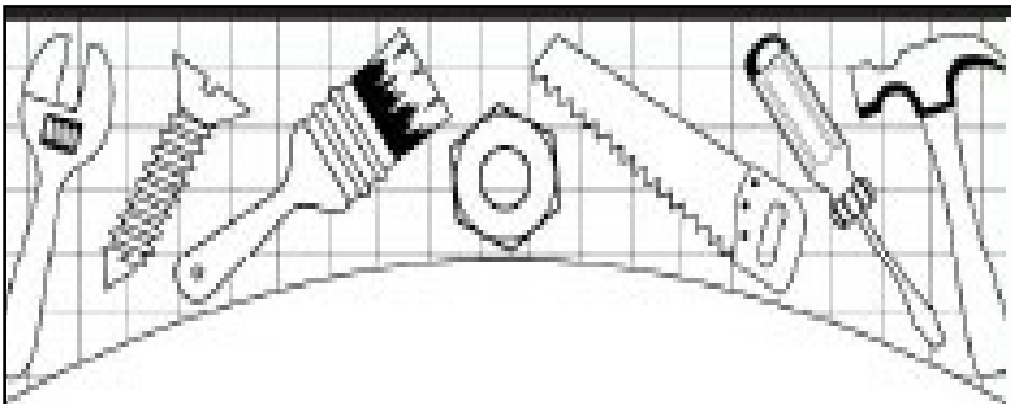
On Thursdays, they usually feature smaller acts like singer-songwriters while Friday they'll have a band. Monday evenings they offer karaoke, where you can test out your vocal skills on a wide range of genres.

West of Brown's Line on Lakeshore, The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 101, at 3850 Lake Shore Blvd. W., has live bands Wednesday and Friday nights.

You'll hear classic hits from the 60s and 70s, R&B and even some country.

In our next article, we'll introduce you to the venues in New Toronto and Mimico.

If you'd like to include your establishment in this column, please drop me a line at [rgjamieson@rogers.com](mailto:rgjamieson@rogers.com)



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