

MAINSTREETER

OLD OTTAWA EAST'S COMMUNITY VOICE | LA VOIX COMMUNAUTAIRE DU VIEUX OTTAWA-EST

APRIL | AVRIL 2024

A league of nations

Ottawa's new women's pro hockey team is a multinational love affair.



Pages 4 & 5

Our readers have spoken...

More than 150 readers of The Mainstreeter have responded to our readership survey, and one thing is crystal clear - they want more local news!

Pages 22 & 23

Nigeria's saxophone preacher

Highlights from a lively celebration of African cultural diversity.

Pages 25 & 26



Enjoy the journey, embrace the detours

Greenfield/Main/Hawthorne project already trying the patience of OOE residents



Circuitous traffic detours in the northern part of Old Ottawa East that will last throughout 2024 top the list of disruptions to residents and businesses as the construction phase of the massive \$46.5 million Greenfield/Main/Hawthorne infrastructure replacement project ramps up.

JOHN DANCE PHOTO

JOHN DANCE

Old Ottawa East (OOE) is again under construction with the resumption of the Greenfield/Main/Hawthorne (GMH) project – the massive rebuilding of infrastructure in the northern part of the community. Accompanying the construction are extensive detours for residents and those travelling through OOE, many tree removals, disruptions for local businesses, and outstanding questions regarding some of the City's designs.

The \$46.5 million project is essential to replace obsolete underground water and sewer lines. It will also improve pedestrian and cyclist safety as a result of wider sidewalks and new bike lanes and see the long-sought-after burying of hydro wires. On the negative side, many large trees will be removed to accommodate the new infrastructure.

Detours

The key detour is that for the rest of 2024 no southbound traffic will be allowed on Greenfield Avenue and the portion of Main Street between Greenfield and Hawthorne Avenue. Consequently, residents in OOE's northern quadrant (Harvey Street, Havelock

Street, Concord Street North and Montcalm Street) will be required to take a lengthy circuitous route using the Lees Avenue bridge over the Queensway to reach the rest of OOE (see detour map, page 13). Or, even more circuitously, can drive north downtown to get to the Isabella Street Loblaws.

Despite continuing requests that left turns of northbound Main Street traffic be allowed at Colonel By Drive (CBD) and Main, the City and the National Capital Commission are adamant that they will not be permitted. The City says, "the new [road] geometry was not designed to accommodate a northbound Main Street to southbound Colonel By Drive movement." And it goes on to say, "Allowing a left turn from the single lane of northbound Main Street will cause traffic delays and back-ups on northbound Main Street, as the northbound left-turn vehicles will impede the northbound right-turn vehicles making their turn on the permitted right-turn-on-red when it's safe to do so."

Continued on Page 13



At last!

It was another season of disappointment for locals and tourists alike as mild weather played havoc with the Rideau Canal Skateway, which opened for just 10 days of skating this winter. But for the thousands who savoured a frozen skate and a BeaverTail, it was pure bliss!



TOP: PETER CROAL PHOTO/ BOTTOM: PETER FOWLER PHOTO



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

All Old Ottawa East bus stops and shelters have signs that commemorate the 100th anniversary of Ottawa's first bus service which ran from Elgin Street to Clegg Street.

ANTHONY LENZO PHOTO

From Elgin to Clegg

Ottawa's first bus route celebrates 100th anniversary

JOHN DANCE

Ottawa East had the very first bus route in the City and the 100th anniversary of its inauguration is being celebrated this year.

This achievement is noted at the bus stops within Old Ottawa East (OOE) and OC Transpo has provided a press release outlining the history of the City's bus service and, specifically, how it served Main Street.

Although residents have relied on bus service for a very long time, the reality is that bus service began in 1924 but lasted less than a year, at which time a streetcar line was built and replaced the bus. The streetcar service continued until 1959, at which point buses took over.

The initial bus route ran from the end of the streetcar tracks on Elgin Street, near today's location of the Ottawa Police Services headquarters, to the foot of Clegg Street. REO Speedwagon buses (yes, the source of the name for the rock group) plied the route. The streetcar that replaced the bus had its end point in what is now the Children's Garden/Legget Park at the corner of Clegg and Main streets.

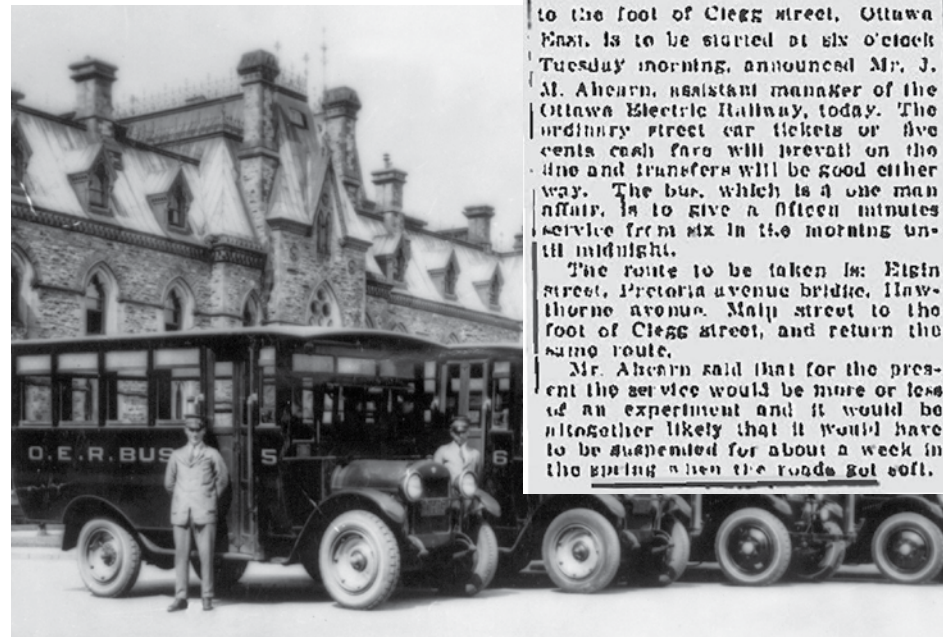
According to an article in the *Ottawa Citizen*, Ottawa East's new bus service was deemed "an experiment," and "it was altogether likely that it would have to be suspended for about a week in the spring when the roads got soft."

The private Ottawa Electric Bus Company ran the bus service and had begun operations with electric streetcars in 1891, replacing the Ottawa City Passenger Railway Company's horse-drawn streetcars which had been introduced 20 years before.

So how have things changed with transit over the last 100 years? First, it's more expensive. The bus service a century ago was five cents a ride. Using the Bank of Canada's inflation converter, that translates into 86 cents today. There is, however, a big 'but': now a single fare costing \$3.85 will take you across a city with one of the greatest areas of any city in Canada.

Also, OOE residents have three bus routes to choose from (5, 16 and 55) and their very own LRT station at Lees Avenue in addition to the nearby stations at the main campus of the University of Ottawa and at Hurdman just across the river.

BELOW: Ottawa's first buses were "REO Speedwagons" and are seen here posing on Parliament Hill; RIGHT: The *Ottawa Citizen* heralded the introduction of the City's first bus service.



OC TRANSPO WEBSITE PHOTO

O. E. R. TO INAUGURATE A BUS LINE SERVICE

Will Extend From End of Elgin Line to Foot of Clegg St., Ottawa East.

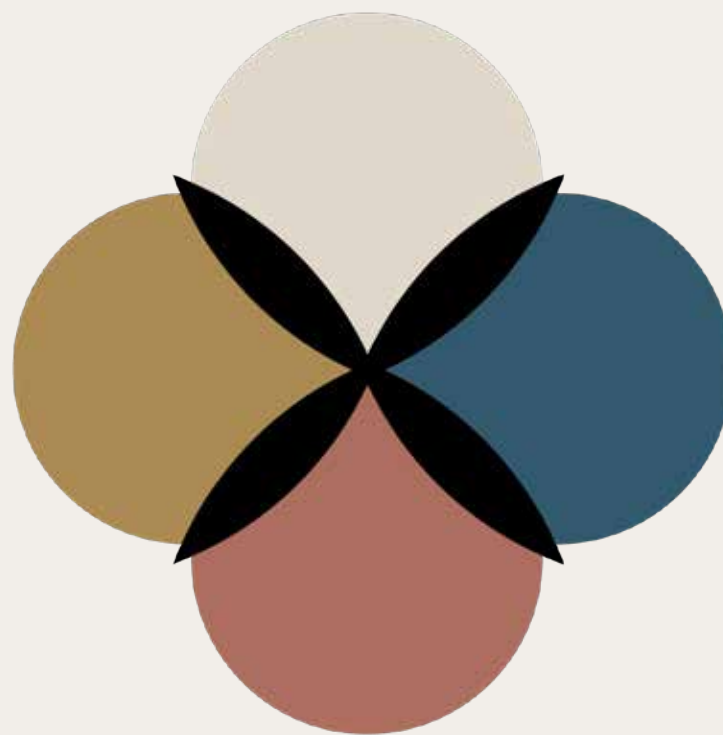
A bus line extension service from the end of the Elgin street car line to the foot of Clegg street, Ottawa East, is to be started at six o'clock Tuesday morning, announced Mr. J. M. Ahearn, assistant manager of the Ottawa Electric Railway, today. The ordinary street car tickets or five cents cash fare will prevail on the line and transfers will be good either way. The bus, which is a one man affair, is to give a fifteen minutes service from six in the morning until midnight.

The route to be taken is: Elgin street, Pretoria avenue bridge, Hawthorne avenue, Main street to the foot of Clegg street, and return the same route.

Mr. Ahearn said that for the present the service would be more or less of an experiment and it would be altogether likely that it would have to be suspended for about a week in the spring when the roads got soft.

Some things haven't changed though. The OER had to ask passengers to move to the back of the bus and, like its successor, the public OC Transpo, had to deal with complaints of poor service.

In 1948 to address complaints, "more heaters, windshield wipers, defrosters and straps for standing passengers to hold" were installed. It seems local transit has improved.



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SHARING LUNCH WITH ... OTTAWA'S NEW

Diversity in action...

Ottawa's got a world of a team!

It has no name yet, and no logo, but Ottawa's brand new women's pro hockey team has a couple of outstanding things going for it as it vies for a playoff spot in the fledgling Professional Womens Hockey League (PWHL) – a large cohort of devoted fans and a dressing room stocked with international talent.

It's a multinational love affair, and it's hard to tell whose loving it more – the home fans or the players from as far afield as Japan, Hungary, Germany, Czechia, and the United States who have discovered that Ottawa may be the best women's pro hockey market in the PWHL.

We caught up with some of the players and coaches at a couple of recent practices, and one thing is for sure – the team may not top the league standings just yet, but when it comes to languages spoken in the dressing room, Ottawa PWHL is in a league of its own!

LORNE ABUGOV

If you happen to spot Sandra Abstreiter striding across the Flora Footbridge heading to Old Ottawa East with a faraway look on her face, don't be surprised.

After all, the 25-year-old back-up goalkeeper for Ottawa's new women's pro hockey team, is 6,267 kilometres from her home in Freising, Germany.

And like 14 other international players on Ottawa's 28 player roster in the new Professional Women's Hockey League (PWHL), Abstreiter is a key part of a team within a team, an important piece of a multinational mosaic that comprises what may be the most diverse women's pro hockey

team ever assembled.

Besides Germany's Arbstreiter, there are currently nine players from the United States, three from Czechia, and one each from Japan and Hungary, all of whom have settled nicely into their new life in Ottawa for the PWHL's maiden season, joining up with 13 Canadian players and their five Canadian coaches.

And Arbstreiter, along with a number of other international players, have discovered the beauty of Old Ottawa East, just a slapshot away from their game and practice venue at TD Place Arena at Lansdowne Park, and some have even chosen to reside in the community during the season.

She enjoys crossing the footbridge and has recently walked along the Rideau River trail, which she described as "very beautiful". "It feels so European to me, with lots of cafés and restaurants that I really enjoy," Arbstreiter said in a recent interview with *The Mainstreeter* following a strenuous team practice prior to the team's road trip to their neutral site showcase game against Boston PWHL in Detroit.

"It's wonderful that our team is so diverse. Everyone on the team jokes a lot about all the different languages, about our pronunciation and our different life experiences," she says. "I had never visited Ottawa, but I had been to Washington before, so when I got drafted by Ottawa for the PWHL, I was so excited to come to Canada's capital. I love Ottawa a lot And there's also a men's pro player from Germany here with Ottawa (Tim Stutzle of the Senators), but I haven't met him yet!"

Ottawa's Head Coach Carla MacLeod echoes her goalkeeper's views on the large international group of players that makes Ottawa unique among the six PWHL teams, most of which are comprised of a blend of Canadian and American players, with only one or two players from overseas. "I think everyone's thoroughly enjoying their time here in Ottawa," says MacLeod, who doubles as the head coach for the Czechia women's national hockey team

Continued on Page 5



Goalkeeper Sandra Abstreiter in action at a recent team practice. The German netminder was excited to be joining Ottawa PWHL. She's already fallen in love with the nation's capital and says it has a European feel to it.



SANDRA ABSTREITER
Freising, Germany



PETER CROAL PHOTOS

Ottawa PWHL teammates drawn from around the world include (bottom row l to r) Aneta Tejralová (Czechia); Sandra Abstreiter (Germany); (top row l to r) Lexie Adzija (St. Thomas, ON, Canada); Akane Shiga (Japan); and Amanda Boulier (Watertown, Connecticut, USA). Shortly after this photo was taken, Adzija and Boulier were traded for a Czechian and an American player, thereby adding even more diversity.

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PWHL WOMEN'S PRO HOCKEY TEAM



ANETA TEJRALOVÁ
Prague, Czechia

Continued from Page 4

currently competing at the IIHF Women's World Championship in Utica, New York.

"Actually, what makes this experience so unique is that for most of us, we've all relocated here, even the Canadians. So settling into the community has been one of the neat parts of this process.

"This being the nation's capital, it felt really natural to invite some of the international players here. It's a beautiful city. And we've been welcomed so nicely, and been able to do some unique things, like visiting with the US ambassador. It's pretty special to have folks like him and his family coming to our games. And with Akane Shiga on our roster, we've engaged with the Japanese Consulate as well," MacLeod says. She also expressed her gratitude to the Ottawa community for reaching out to the team and supporting it with large crowds for each of their home games.

One of the three Czechian players on the roster is 27-year-old defender Aneta Tejralová from Prague. Like teammates Kateřina Mrázová, 31, from Kolín and forward Tereza Vanišová, 28, from Strakonice, Tejralová has gained confidence with every PWHL game she has played. According to Coach MacLeod, "I think everyone has had to take a little time to settle into this new league. But for these players, in particular, because I spend time with them coaching the Czechian team, it was just the time they needed to realize they deserve



CARLA MACLEOD
Head Coach, Ottawa PWHL

Defender Aneta Tejralová (left), who captains the Czechia women's national hockey team, is joined in Ottawa by two other national team members, Kateřina Mrázová and Tereza Vanišová. They are coached on both the Ottawa PWHL team and the Czechian national team by Karla MacLeod, who says that the Czechians are playing great hockey for Ottawa and realize they can make a big impact in the new pro league.

to be here, and they are here for a reason, and not just filling spots on the roster. That's causing them to have confidence and recognize that they can be impactful players in this league, and they have really shown that in the last little while."

Tejralová had visited Ottawa once during the 2013 World Championships, the first time Czechia qualified for the top division of women's hockey. What has struck her most since Ottawa drafted her are the people she meets around town. "I'm enjoying being in Ottawa because I think the people are so nice and kind and so welcoming. When we meet the people outside on the street, they are so positive. It's kind of different than in the Czech Republic because we are more quiet and maybe not quite so welcoming at first, if you know what I mean. Everyone here is always smiling, and it's amazing."

Equally amazing is the saga of Ottawa's international forward Akane Shiga who travelled a whopping 9,459 kilometres from her home in Obihiro, Japan simply to get a tryout for the team. Unable to speak English and a free agent without a contract or any assurances of a spot on the Ottawa roster,



AKANE SHIGA
Obihiro/Hokkaido, Japan

Shiga proved to the Ottawa coaches that she had the hockey skills to match her boundless courage and determination. As reported in *The Athletic*, "Her skating ability, quick release and hockey IQ impressed Ottawa's braintrust and earned Shiga a one-year contract. Now, she is a historic player in a historic league embarking on a singular path: Shiga is the youngest player in the PWHL and the only Japanese-born player."

22-year-old Akane Shiga is the youngest player in the fledgling PWHL and the only player from Japan. Undrafted by any club, she flew to Ottawa and earned a place on the roster with her skating and shooting ability. Popular with her teammates, she is learning English with the help of her interpreter, Madoka Suzuki, a Carleton University hockey player.

In the same interview, Coach MacLeod sang the praises of Shiga, both on and off the ice: "Think of all the variables: youngest in the league, playing in a country, in a league that's not native tongue to her, and she just keeps rising. What an incredible human being. To know at that moment that she had gambled on herself and she earned her opportunity — that's what sport is all about."

And like so many of the other players who have journeyed far to join the Ottawa PWHL team, Akane has quickly become a fan favourite in her newly adopted home — far, far away from home.



Head Coach Carla MacLeod says the international players on Ottawa PWHL are an integral component of the new team's identity. Here she is seen at practice at the Carleton University Icedpad addressing the squad, including goalkeeper Sandra Abstreiter.

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JOHN DANCE PHOTOS

ABOVE: Plans to upgrade the Riverdale Hydro sub-station include a second looklike building to the left near the corner of Main Street and Riverdale Avenue; BELOW LEFT: An undetermined number of trees will be removed to allow for the construction of the new building .

Riverdale Hydro Station upgrade promises greater energy capacity and resilience

JOHN DANCE

Over the next three years, Hydro Ottawa will spend \$17 million to upgrade its “sub-station” at the southwest corner of Main Street and Riverdale Avenue.

The work is needed to “ensure power is available for customers now and in the future in Old Ottawa East,” Hydro Ottawa (Hydro) told those attending an on-line information session in February. In addition, the work will “provide redundancy to our system in the event of outages or future extreme weather events.”

And it turns out the sub-station serves not just Old Ottawa East (OOE), but also the rest of Capital Ward, Alta Vista, Carleton University, as well as partial areas in the downtown core.

A sub-station takes electricity from transmission lines at a higher voltage and converts it to the voltage required to supply power to the homes and businesses it serves, says Hydro.

The specific improvements include construction of a new building to house electrical infrastructure, new “switchgear”

- a composition of electrical disconnect switches, fuses, and circuit breakers used to control, protect, and isolate electrical equipment - in the new building; and underground electricity infrastructure – specifically, a new concrete encased duct - in the roadway.

A key concern of residents is the impact of the new building. It’s to be built to the east of the existing heritage building and will be more or less at the corner of Main and Riverdale. Its compatibility with the Hydro Sub-Station No. 5, “the squat, stone building that bears resemblance to an oversized mausoleum,” as *The Mainstreeter’s* editor Lorne Abugov described it in 2020, is not clear.

The existing structure was built in 1946 and is, according to the City’s report that successfully recommended its heritage designation, an “[E]xcellent example of an industrial building influenced by the Streamlined Moderne variant of the Art Deco style and is a significant example of the early to mid 20th-century hydro sub-stations in Ottawa.” The report also noted that “The sub-station displays a high degree of craftsmanship through architectural details

such as stone panels with the building’s name, metal entrance canopies suspended by chains, stone and copper detailing, decorative parapet rooflines and large, often round-arched windows.”

“The new building will have a masonry façade similar in colour and appearance to the additions that were made to the existing heritage building,” Hydro has assured *The*

Mainstreeter. “The design will be completed sometime this summer and will be shared with the public when it’s available, or at a future community information session.”

A second concern with the new building is that it will require the removal of trees at the corner. Hydro was unable to confirm

Continued on Page 8

Slow-breaking news

“Temporary Closure” of OOE airfield

Who knew Old Ottawa East’s airfield was “temporarily closed”? Who even knew we had an airfield? The streetscape view of Google Maps has a note at the corner of Main Street and Riverdale Avenue that reads: “Slattery pasture airfield temporarily closed.”

But a bit of history: In 1913, the airfield was the site of Canada’s first flight between two Canadian cities and two Canadian provinces and also the site of the maiden flight of inter-city mail delivery between Ottawa and Montreal.

In terms of the first flight between two Canadian cities, the original plan was to land at Lansdowne Park but, according to a 2011 article in the OSCAR, “the crowds there forced the pilot to turn towards the nearby field owned by Bernard Slattery where, after narrowly avoiding a horse, he landed safely.”

All of which is to say that the Slattery’s pasture airfield is not “temporarily closed.” It’s been closed for a very long time and, unless somebody wants to land in a mass of hydro wires and transformers, it’s never going to have another plane land there. Guess you can’t always believe what you read on-line.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

One enchanted evening



MAZEN SHUHAIBAR PHOTO

While walking along the Canal this weekend on a foggy evening, my partner and I caught a glimpse of a romantic moment being shared by two people. The fog and the lighting from the Flora Footbridge made for quite a dramatic scene.

*Mazen Shuhaibar,
Glenora Street*

Concerns voiced over Riverdale Hydro project

Continued from Page 7

which of the many trees will be removed but said “We will only cut trees which are strictly necessary,” and that mitigation measures will include “tree planting or decorative community-friendly vegetation to help beautify the site after construction.”

The third concern was the impact of construction of the underground conduits on pedestrians and cyclists. To this, Hydro responded “temporary road closures may be required at times,” however, no specifics were available.

In terms of the schedule, tree cutting should be completed by early April and the underground ductwork is to be completed by May. Construction of the new building begins in October and will take about 12 months. In the final year of the project, the new electrical equipment will be installed.

Planned outages will be required but impacted customers will receive 48-72 hour notices of such disruptions in electricity supply.

Some residents questioned why the large open green space at the southern end of the three-acre site couldn't be used for the new building, but Hydro says the proposed location of the new building “offers seamless integration with the existing infrastructure, minimizing the need for extensive additional connections or relocating underground infrastructure and reducing further disruptions to the community.” That said, the purpose of the green space with its single solar panel remains an unexplained mystery. The property is strangely zoned “L1” as a “community leisure facility” zone so who knows what's really going on here.

YES OR NO

In our February issue, we asked your opinion on whether the City of Ottawa should change the names of two streets in Old Ottawa East (OOE) - Des Oblats Avenue and De Mazenod Avenue - based on concerns that the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, who owned the land on which Greystone Village is situated, operated some 40% of Canada's residential schools.

A total of 122 of our readers chose to express their opinion and cast their vote for or against. The large volume of responses confirms that readers of *The Mainstreeter* are eager to engage in community matters and to speak their mind on local issues that affect their lives.

So, do the majority of poll respondents favour a name change for the two OOE streets? Yes - by a 3 to 1 margin. Here are the results:

YES - change the street names

73%

NO - retain the street names

27%

Now here's our next Y or N! survey question for your response:

Over the past few summers, the National Capital Commission has gone back and forth on the closure of Colonel By Drive (CBD) to vehicular traffic to allow for active transportation uses (cycling, jogging, walking). Do you agree in principle with closing CBD to vehicular traffic during temperate months to promote active use along this busy parkway? Yes or No?



Next issue of *The Mainstreeter*...

Content and advertising and submissions are due on:

MAY 23, 2024

www.mainstreeter.ca

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Please see www.mainstreeter.ca for online versions of *The Mainstreeter* plus full-length interviews, archives, and other content about Old Ottawa East.

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OPINION

Looking at life – from both sides now...

The challenging historical legacy of the Deschâtelets Building

DR. ANGELA CAMERON

In 2020, the City of Ottawa passed a by-law designating the Deschâtelets Building at 175 Main Street, 320 Deschâtelets Avenue, and part of 205 Scholastic Drive to be a building of cultural heritage value or interest as per the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA). The Deschâtelets Building, like the whole of the City of Ottawa, sits upon unceded Algonquin territory. Members of the Algonquin nation, in what are now called Ontario and Quebec, were forced to attend residential schools.

The designation of the Deschâtelets Building under the OHA dictates, in part, what changes can be made to certain parts of the building, and what uses the building can be put to by its current owners.

The Oblates of Mary Immaculate Canada (Oblates) missionary order moved into the Deschâtelets Building in 1885. As noted in the February issue of *The Mainstreeter*, the Oblates were one of many religious orders named in a series of class action lawsuits for physical, sexual, cultural and spiritual abuse against Indigenous survivors of residential schools. The Oblates were amongst the religious orders that joined the 2006 Residential Schools Settlement, which required them to pay significant damages to survivors of residential schools.

The Deschâtelets Building was the headquarters and training centre for members of the Oblate order during many of the decades in which members of the order worked in residential schools. It was also, until recently, an important residential school archive.

The Oblates sold the Deschâtelets Building, along with 26 acres of undeveloped waterfront property in 2014 to a developer who has turned the surrounding lands into housing. Changes to the Deschâtelets Building in the context of this development were limited by the City of Ottawa by-law designating it to be of heritage value. The Deschâtelets Building is currently under renovation and will soon be used as a French Catholic public school, and a community centre.

There are several informational plaques along the path following the Rideau River behind the Deschâtelets Building. These plaques depict the use of the river by members of the Oblate order and note the association of the



history.ottawaeast.ca Photos

ABOVE: The rear of the Deschâtelets Building as it appeared in the 1930s; **BELOW:** Novitiates of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate pictured near the maple sugar shack near Main Street, also in the 1930s.



lands and building with the order. One of the streets in the new housing development is called Oblates Avenue. However neither these plaques nor the street name draw any links to the order's connection to residential school abuses, nor to the fact that the Deschâtelets Building was a residential school archive.

I am worried that the legacy of the Oblates in relation to residential schools will be forgotten and erased with the renovation and new uses of the Deschâtelets Building. In particular, the City of Ottawa by-law used to designate the Deschâtelets Building as a heritage site, has no mention of how to capture or commemorate these more challenging aspects of the building's history.

The by-law can be amended by City Council to require some kind of memorialisation of this important aspect of Old Ottawa East's history, and to underline our own obligations

to reconciliation and decolonisation. The first step in this process must, in my opinion, involve consultation with the Algonquin nation on the types of commemoration or educational materials that would be a suitable and necessary addition to this building.

Dr. Angela Cameron is an Associate Professor in the University of Ottawa Faculty of Law

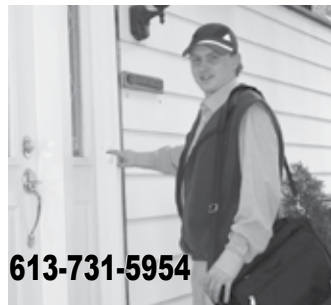


Two key books to read in relation to the Algonquin nation in and around Ottawa, including experiences in residential schools, are: "Resistance and Recognition at Kitigan Zibi" by Dennis Leo Fisher (2024:UBC Press) and "Fractured Homeland" by Bonita Lawrence (2013: UBC Press), both of which are available through Singing Pebble Books.

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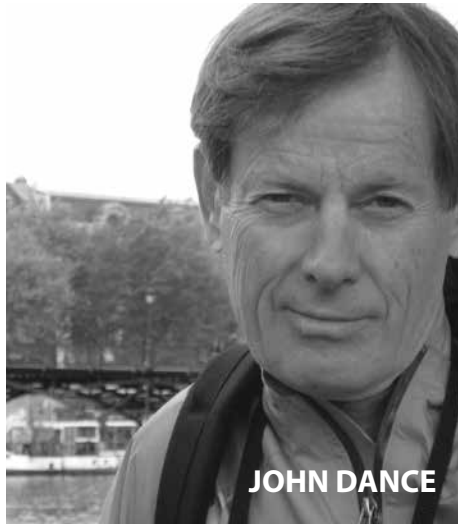


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OLD OTTAWA EAST COMMUNITY UPDATES



JOHN DANCE

John Dance is The Mainstreeter's chief reporter and the former Chair of the Old Ottawa East Community Association's Planning Committee. With his extensive experience, he keeps our readers informed of a wide range of community developments.

100 RIVERDALE PROPOSAL



The future of 100 Riverdale Avenue, a large lot on the west side of the street, remains unclear. However, the likelihood of it being redeveloped into four or more units with a very high number of bedrooms has diminished after one of the lot's owners brought a recent informal consultation session to a halt when he said he did not support the multiple-unit proposal that the other owner was promoting.

Jim Naida, one of the co-owners and a long-time Old Ottawa East resident, wants to redevelop the lot consistent with what has been built along Riverdale between Main Street and Avenue Road over the last decade. The other co-owner had drafted a plan for two "long-semis", with a total of four dwelling units and with a combined 36 bedrooms. Neighbouring residents took exception to the multi-unit scheme and the abnormally high number of bedrooms.

Some residents were of the view that the "prairie-style" house should not be demolished but, given that it has no heritage status and it is on a large valuable lot, demolition is probably inevitable.

417 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PLAN STILL STALLED

Another two months have passed and still no news from the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO) on when it will complete its environmental study for the replacement of the deteriorating Highway 417 bridge over the Rideau Canal.

It's now been a year and a half since MTO proposed a plan that would require 90-week detours of both Canal parkways – a plan that had not been raised in the previous five years of so-called consultation. The Old Ottawa East Community Association (OOECA) and others strenuously objected to the detour plan but MTO has shown no indication that these objections will be addressed.

The final transportation environment study report for the project was to have been completed a year ago and no explanation has been provided by MTO for the lengthy delay.

Meanwhile, OOECA has called for MTO to re-open consultation. In a recent email to MTO, OOECA transportation chair Tom Scott noted that MTO has selected a bridge replacement option "that had not been part of any prior meaningful consultation, but also one that had very serious and previously unseen impacts on downtown transportation - both for vehicular and for active users."

"Several of our neighbouring community associations equally impacted by the Rideau Canal Bridge reconstruction reported to us that they had not been engaged at all," Scott also noted.

When the project was first launched in 2017, MTO committed to "consultation throughout" the entire planning process. The reality is that there has been little "consultation throughout" and none with community associations and residents for the last year and a half.

BRANTWOOD PARK RECYCLING

Brantwood Park will soon have 'three-stream waste diversion receptacles', so that park users may have much of their waste recycled. The new receptacles are part of a City pilot project called "Waste Diversion in Parks" to determine the best means of ensuring that park users recycle their waste.

Windsor Park in Old Ottawa South was the first Capital Ward park to have the triple receptacles. Old Ottawa East residents have suggested that there is an even greater need for them in the busier Springhurst Park. The Councillor's office says that efforts will be made to have receptacles there too.

The contents of black and green bins at parks are a little different than the comparably coloured bins used at residences.

The park black bin accepts trash that is neither recyclable nor compostable – unlike the residential black bin that is for

paper items. The park green bin is almost the same as the residential green bin in that it accepts all compostable material including dog waste. But in addition, paper items should go into the park green bin given that there is very little of this material generated in parks and most of it is soiled from food. The blue bins for both parks and residences accept metal and plastic items.



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

Brantwood Park will have the same "three-stream waste diversion receptacles" that Windsor Park has.

SPEED CAMERA COMING TO MAIN STREET

Barring any unforeseen utility issues, City staff expect that a speed camera will be installed on Main Street between Evelyn and Springhurst avenues by the end of 2024. In February, Hydro Ottawa confirmed appropriate on-site power requirements. The site will now undergo design and utility circulation to confirm feasibility.

The "community safety zone" camera will be the first in Old Ottawa East, although there are currently about 40 in other Ottawa locations. The cameras are located in certain community safety zones, near schools or parks, where speeding is a risk to most vulnerable road users.

According to the City's website, speed cameras have had a positive impact on driver speed and safety in school zones with a 200 percent increase in compliance with the speed limit.

"Once the cameras are active, motorists photographed speeding through these areas will get a ticket," says the website. "Like speeding tickets issued by police officers, the fine amount will be based on how much the driver was exceeding the posted speed limit. Since all City of Ottawa speed cameras are installed in Community Safety Zones, fines will be doubled – even if it occurred outside of school hours." Revenue from the fines is invested in road safety programs.

Continued on Page 12

OLD OTTAWA EAST COMMUNITY UPDATES

Continued from Page 11

435 ECHO – APPLICANTS’ MINOR VARIANCES ALLOWED

The difficult challenge of successfully objecting to requested minor variances for a new development became even more apparent with a recent Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) decision that supported the applicants’ appeal of a construction project at 435 Echo Drive. The OLT appeal pertained to a proposed new three-storey house with an elevator penthouse and a roof-top patio that will entail the demolition of an existing brick house.

The Old Ottawa East Community Association (OOECA) had objected to two of the four requested minor variances and the local Committee of Adjustment ruled in favour of OOECA. However, the applicants appealed the decisions to the OLT, and with the support of lawyers and a planning consultant, they convinced the OLT adjudicator to overturn the local decision. The two contested variances related to an extra metre of height and a smaller rear-yard than allowed by the applicable zoning by-law.

OOECA objections to the variances were not supported by either City of Ottawa or National Capital Commission staff. Although OOECA spent considerable effort in objecting to the variances when they were considered by the City’s Committee of Adjustment, the community association did not have the capacity to appear at the OLT hearing or to hire a lawyer or planner to represent it. One OOECA member attempted to get ‘party status’ in order to speak at the hearing but the adjudicator ruled he did not apply for status in time and to allow him to speak would result in “prejudice to the Appellant.”

For future development applications, OOECA’s planning committee will focus its attention on the minor variances that seek material increases in height or reduced rear and front yards adversely affecting existing trees or the ability to add trees within the area of prescribed yards.

SPEED BOARD PLANNED FOR MAIN AT TORONTO STREET

In addition to the new Main Street speed camera near Immaculata and Lady Evelyn schools, Councillor Shawn Menard has requested that the City install a speed board (also known as speed limit boards) for northbound Main Street at Toronto Street. A speed board displays the speed of passing vehicles and flashes when a vehicle exceeds the posted speed limit.

For years, residents in that area have objected to cars speeding off the McIlraith (Smyth) Bridge into Old Ottawa East. Now that the speed limit has been lowered to 40km/h on Main, the speeding has become even more noticeable.

The speed board will be funded from the Capital Ward traffic calming budget. Although speed boards do not have a direct impact on the enforcement of speed limits, residents will doubtless keep a close eye on just how much speeding the new speed board indicates and, depending on what’s observed, make complaints to Ottawa Police Services.

GRANDE ALLÉE OPENING – MAY?

The likely opening of the new Grande Allée Park is tentatively scheduled for later in May. Although the work looks to be nearly completed, considerable testing, review and inspection of the works installed last fall is required.

The new lighting, drainage and electrical systems must be tested. The heritage trees which are the defining feature of the park require a health assessment and some pruning.

A key function of the park is to serve as the new permanent home of the Main Farmers’ Market and any delay in opening the park will cause difficulties for the Ottawa Farmers Market, the new manager of our local market.

RIDEAU SKATEWAY STRUGGLED

Well, it was better than last year but, sadly, a far cry from what we were used to. The Rideau Canal Skateway opened January 21st and closed February 25th, but over this 36-day period the Skateway was open for only 10 days.

Last year, the Skateway wasn’t open at all. These last two years show the drastic

impact of climate change on Ottawa and our community’s most important winter playground.

Fortunately for Old Ottawa East’s skaters, the portion of the Skateway that opened was all along our western “shoreline.” Initially, just the Pretoria Bridge to Bank Street stretch was open but, subsequently, the Skateway opened beyond the Concord change house.

However, this stretch had far from the near perfect surface that skaters have become used to. Indeed, the National Capital Commission (NCC) recommended walking rather than skating on some days when the Skateway was open.

As quoted in a recent Globe and Mail story, NCC chief executive officer Toby Nussbaum said, “The struggle to keep the Skateway open not only lays bare the climate crisis, it feels like a battle to conserve a critical part of our collective understanding of who we are as Canadians.”

The NCC’s final words were, “Our 54th season on the Rideau Canal Skateway has officially come to an end. Despite the feeble winter, you came out in full force and your enthusiasm was palpable!”



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

Many people used the Clegg Street stairs in order to access the Canal Skateway on the few days this winter it was available for skating.

CHANGE A LIFE!

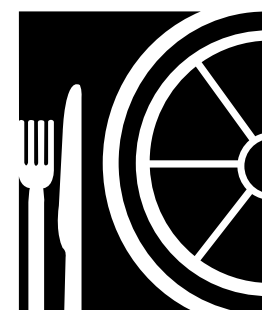


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Traffic detours, delays, loss of trees and pedestrian safety issues are becoming the legacy of the GMH Project

Continued from Page 1

Meanwhile, southbound CBD drivers who want to access Main Street need to make a left turn at Hawthorne when the “no left turn” sign has been covered. Interestingly, the CBD-Hawthorne intersection is also not “designed to accommodate” such a turn but it is being permitted anyway. Southbound CBD motorists also have the option of turning left off CBD at Clegg Street where there is also a no-turning lane to accommodate this, however, left turns are not permitted at peak times.

Better signage for the detours may be required. One OOE Grapevine post noted someone “almost went into a head-on collision when she turned from CBD onto Main.” Another Grapevine post mentioned that the detours added “an extra 20-25 minutes to my commute every day.” Others have observed lots of drivers who do U-turns when they come unexpectedly upon the detour signs.

Another impact of the detours is that more cut-through traffic is going through southern neighbourhoods of OOE. A related difficulty is that the detoured traffic makes cycling on routes such as Lees Avenue more dangerous.

Pedestrians will maintain passage along Main and Greenfield; however, no provisions have been made for cyclists, so that to go south means taking a detour and to go north requires mixing with motorized traffic.

Trees

Capital Ward Councillor Shawn Menard tried to save a number of large trees on Main and Greenfield but City staff essentially have responded that the trees can't be saved because of such factors as “conflict with the proposed sidewalk,” or the “water, hydro street light, hydrant, or underground ducts are within the root zone.”

Nevertheless, the City says it will try to save trees “if feasible.” As was seen with the first phase of Main Street reconstruction, planting new trees on residents' front yards may be the best way of restoring a canopy along the reconstructed streets.

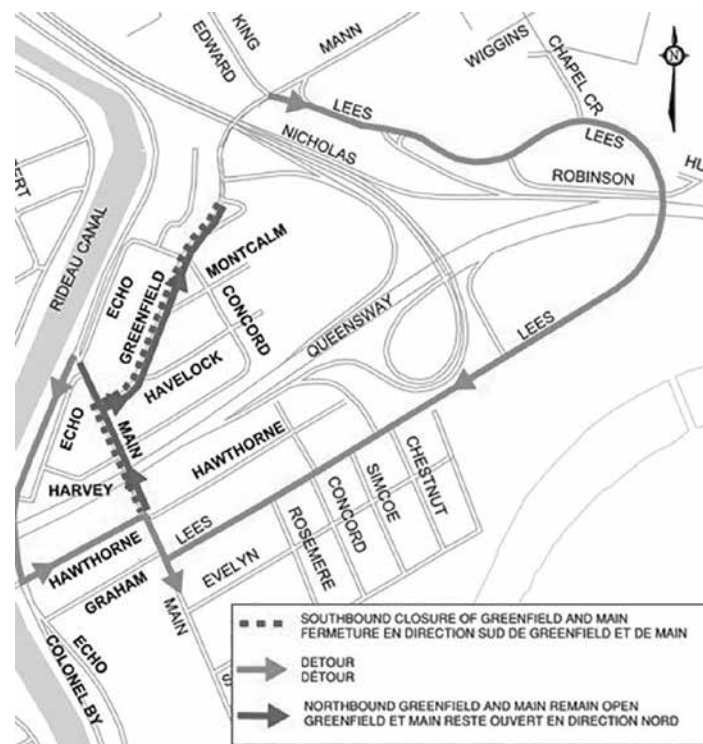
Hawthorne-Main Pedestrian Safety

Ever since the project planning began, residents have sought improvements to the southwest corner of Main and Hawthorne to make it safe for pedestrians. The existing building there is on the lot line so that no City right-of-way property exists to make the sidewalk wider. A number of measures are included in the plans to lessen the likelihood of vehicles running over the sidewalk as they proceed from eastbound Hawthorne to southbound Main but the width of the effective sidewalk remains challenging, particularly given it has a large traffic light pole intruding two feet into it.

The OOE Community Association has requested that a hard bollard be installed 45° off the corner of the building. So far, the City has refused because such a bollard would be “problematic for sidewalk plows and [it would offer] minimal additional protection to pedestrians from large vehicle turns encroaching on the corner.”

Nevertheless, a final decision still has not been taken and, on a positive note, Councillor Menard has convinced the City to install a “flexpost” in the event that a permanent bollard isn't approved. The downsides to the flexpost are that it has to be removed for winter plowing and it would not offer the same protection that a hard bollard would.

The design of the northwest corner of Main and Hawthorne also poses a safety problem that the design hasn't dealt with. The new sidewalk there will be just 1.5 metres at the corner vs. the required 2.0 metres. The City says, “Although noted as not ideal, this arrangement does meet the City's accessibility design guidelines for a localized constraint.”



CITY OF OTTAWA IMAGE

LEFT: Southbound Greenfield Avenue and Main Street traffic will be circuitously detoured until the end of the construction season; BELOW: Roadwork adjacent to the Queensway overpasses slows traffic and endangers cyclists.

Asked why the City has not acquired additional land to allow the required 2 metres, the City responded to *The Mainstreeter*, “Given the pending Ministry of Transportation's (MTO) Highway 417 work on the Main Street bridge, the MTO requirements for this property [which MTO now owns] during bridge construction are unknown at this time. The decision on potential property acquisition is deferred until these requirements are fully understood.” It's not clear how a slightly wider sidewalk would in any way adversely affect MTO's bridge reconstruction project.

CBD-Echo-Graham Traffic Issue

Last year, the divider between CBD and Echo Drive just west of Graham Avenue was shortened. As a consequence, a significant number of drivers are now making illegal turns to and from CBD to Echo/ Graham. While it's always been illegal for motorized vehicles to turn onto Echo/Graham from CBD, it's now easier to do so because of the reconstruction.

The City explanation for the change is “The bullnose divider between Colonel By Drive and Echo Drive was shortened to accommodate the shifting of the eastern curb line for the construction of the widened cycling/pedestrian facility [on the east side of Echo]. The roadway width of Echo Drive as it merges with Colonel By Drive has been designed to accommodate snow plow and garbage truck movements.”

In terms of the inadvertent accommodation of illegal turns, the City says, “Signage and pavement markings will be reviewed with Transportation Services to further investigate measures to discourage this movement.”



JOHN DANCE PHOTOS



THE REGIONAL GROUP PHOTOS

The urban design award-winning Greystone Village river corridor has a well-treed and paved switchback link to Brantwood Park.

Greystone Village River Corridor wins Ottawa design award

JOHN DANCE

The Regional Group's design and implementation of the "Greystone Village River Corridor" recently won the City's urban design award for public places and civic spaces.

The naturalized half-kilometre-long corridor protects the river ecology, connects people with the riverfront and promotes biking, walking and other active transportation. Indeed, a meandering pathway with a mulch surface provides a safe and comfortable route for pedestrians and a separate, paved multi-use path (MUP) on the western edge of the corridor allows safe and smooth cycling.

The pathways are a marked improvement to the informal mud path that ran along the river embankment of the property when the Oblates owned it. Also, the switchback access to Brantwood Park is a vast improvement over the steep and rough trail that used to be there.

The corridor is also easily accessed with good east-west connections through Greystone Village including a new one that will be built when Greystone's phase 3 is completed.

"Existing vegetation on the riverbank was mostly preserved as is, and construction areas were restored after the work was completed," notes the project brief. "Several viewing points were integrated with existing stormwater outlets to take advantage of site disturbance that was required for infrastructure and avoid any additional tree clearing. Inspired by the riverside

environment, the project uses mostly stone and wood textures along with a native plant palette."

"Another element to inform the design was that many snapping turtle nests were noticed along the riverside as well as in the adjacent Brantwood Park," says the brief. Consequently, turtle nesting areas were incorporated in the design as were bat houses.

Key to the design was a great deal of planting of trees and other native vegetation. Now, there is far more vegetation than when the Oblates were there.

The corridor's MUP is part of the City's Rideau River Western Pathway that the Old Ottawa East Community Association championed for almost all of the community's river shoreline, from

the Queensway all the way to Brantwood Park where bike traffic is diverted onto quiet local streets.

Key drivers of the corridor project were David Kardish of The Regional Group and a resident of Greystone Village, Josh Kardish of EQ Homes, and designer Ryan James of Novatech Engineering Consultants.

In addition, members of Sustainable Living Ottawa East (SLOE) had long advocated for the project. Rebecca Aird, Mary Trudeau and Ian McRae played key roles in conceiving and establishing the "nature trail" all along the river.

As The Regional Group moves toward completion of all of Greystone Village, the question is: who will provide stewardship of the river corridor? Approaches to both the Rideau Valley

Conservation Authority and the City of Ottawa have been made but neither party has expressed an interest. While the City has two easements through the corridor – one for the MUP and the other for the large sewer line that runs its entire length – it seems not to want any real responsibility for the property.

Meanwhile, SLOE volunteers work every year to remove as many invasive plants as possible. Regional has done a fine job of naturalizing the corridor but who's now going to ensure it doesn't become the unfortunate tangle of Manitoba maples, burdock, buckthorn, and Japanese knotweed that dominate the NCC's property on the eastern side of the Rideau River?



A key part of the river corridor is the area that improves the habitat for snapping turtles' egg-laying.

My Repair Café adventure

CHARLOTTE DUCHESNE

I attended the Repair Café sponsored by the Ottawa Tool Library on March 2nd at the Atelier on Clegg Street. What a great idea! I was so glad that I read about it in the February issue of *The Mainstreeter* and put it on my calendar.

It was a fun atmosphere, and the Atelier venue was filled with lots of people and a wide range of items that needed fixing. The organizers had the large room set up with 12-16 work stations and three or four sewing machines. Volunteers staffed every work station, and when something was fixed, the owners could come to the front, ring the bell and have their picture taken. Quite lively!

I was a bit tardy with my 10:45 am arrival as there were already 40+ items on the repair list by then! My item was a broken carpet cleaner; others included radios, lamps, computers, toasters, bikes, vacuums, and what have you. My personal favourite was a light-up mechanical reindeer! It took the volunteer fixer over two hours, but that reindeer was all healed up for next winter! (I know this because that's how long I waited for my turn!)

Some folks had been to several fix-it gatherings around the City, and some, like me, were there for the first time. I met some really nice neighbours and had good conversations. And yes, my carpet cleaner got fixed!



LEFT: A large crowd of people with repair-needy appliances and other items filled the Mauril Belanger Atelier for the community's first-ever Repair Café. Reader Charlotte Duchesne heard about the event through an ad in *The Mainstreeter*, and she and her broken carpet cleaner are glad they attended. RIGHT: A light-up mechanical reindeer got a new lease on life at the Café, and both volunteer fixer and owner shared in the happy outcome.



CHARLOTTE DUCHESNE PHOTOS

Neighbours helping neighbours – Glebe, Old Ottawa East residents gather to talk about sustainability

PETER CROAL

We all know that many of our habits can be influenced based on what a family member, friend or neighbour says to us. This “trusted source” effect is a powerful motivator to change one's life. The City of Ottawa and the Glebe Community Association recognize this fact and used it to help Ottawa residents make better decisions to improve the sustainability of their homes.

Over 200 people, mainly from the Glebe and Old Ottawa East, but also from all other parts of the City, gathered at the Glebe Community Centre on January 27th to hear presentations from experts on how to make their homes more sustainable. These presentations focussed on home energy efficiency and outlined government programs to help homeowners save money and protect the environment. One program gaining attention is the Better Homes Loan Program that offers low-interest loans of up to \$125,000 to cover the cost of home energy improvements.

Della Wilkinson, Chair of the Glebe Community Association's Environment Committee, says the goal of this and other similar gatherings is to inform and generate conversations with neighbours about how they can have more efficient homes. After the short presentations, people went to various tables hosted by a “knowledgeable neighbour” with direct experience with heat pumps, solar panels, retrofits or insulation. I had the pleasure of hosting a table on heat pumps since we had one installed in 2023. All the knowledgeable neighbours were able to share their stories about how they are making their homes more energy efficient and less of a burden on the environment. Questions posed at the tables sparked a lot of conversations, knowledge sharing and experiences with home renovations.



PETER CROAL PHOTO

Reporter Peter Croal wore a different hat at the recent Glebe Sustainability Café, helping to staff the table of heat pump experts.

Besides being an excellent way to motivate people to start thinking about their home energy efficiency, the event proved to be an excellent way to build community, meet neighbours and catch up with friends. More events like this are planned into the spring. You can find information about these gatherings at: <https://glebeca.ca/coffee-houses-on-sustainability-homes-energy/>. Come on out and bring your own cup for some free coffee and cookies!



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Rideau Canal Cultural Landscape priorities

MAINSTREETER STAFF

At a February consultation session on the Rideau Canal Cultural Landscape study, participants called for more trees, safer infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists, and better protection of “viewsapes.”

The joint study commissioned by Parks Canada, the National Capital Commission and the City of Ottawa will produce “a guiding document that outlines the heritage values and character-defining elements within the study area and how these can best be enhanced and protected for Canadians now and into the future.”

The study area extends from the Rideau Canal at the Ottawa River to Hog’s Back lock station – the “Ottawa Reach” of the Canal – so Old Ottawa East will be a key beneficiary of specified improvements.

Mike Samborski, chair of Sustainable Living Old Ottawa East, suggested that additional pedestrian crossings of the two parkways were needed so that the Canal and its pathways can be reached safely.

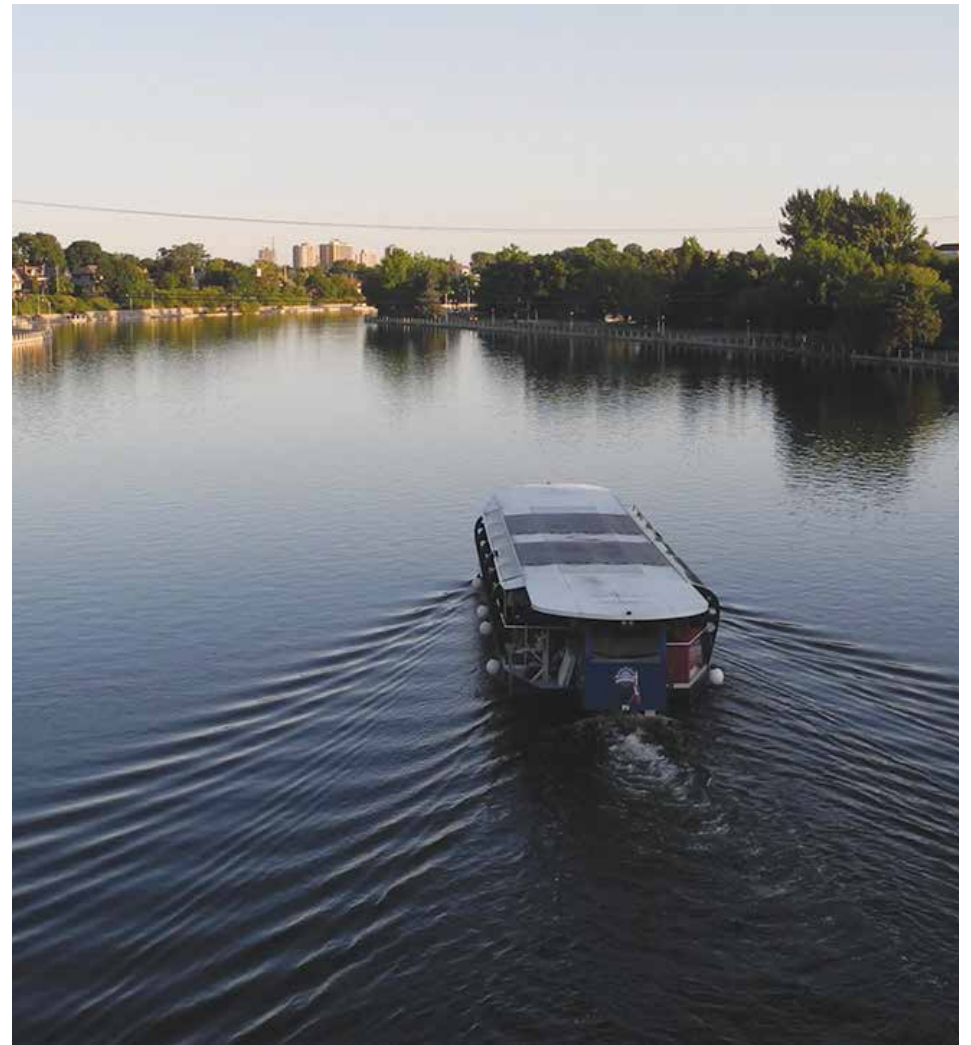
Several participants called for a wider “buffer zone” along certain parts of the Canal – wider than the minimum 30 metres that UNESCO requires for the world

heritage site – so that development does not encroach and significant bordering areas such as the Central Experimental Farm and Lansdowne Park are protected as part of a broader Canal zone.

Also, the need for many more trees on the Colonel By side – particularly through Old Ottawa East, along the University of Ottawa stretch, and opposite Dow’s Lake near Carleton University – was seen as important. The vision of a treed canopy along both parkways was suggested to preserve the Canal’s peace and beauty valued by Ottawa residents.

Other participants recommended improvements to active transportation along the parkways and their pathways. “You cannot allow increased motorized use of the parkways,” commented one community association representative. Another comment was that better ways to protect pedestrians from cyclists are necessary to ensure that people feel safe.

“People go to the Canal for family experiences – it’s an oasis of peace and quiet,” Julie Harris, one of the consultants on the project noted. Other suggestions included more historic plaques, public washrooms, drinking fountains and shade. The study’s final report is expected soon.



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

Three levels of government are studying how to protect and enhance the Rideau Canal's heritage values and defining elements.



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OPINION – PART 2

How I spent my summer!

Fighting City Hall - my private citizen's appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal

Adriana Beaman is an Old Ottawa East resident, who challenged Ottawa City Council's decision to approve by-law amendments sought by the developers of the former Sisters Convent property at 15 des Oblats Avenue. In our February issue of The Mainstreeter, Beaman explained the ins and outs of contesting the City of Ottawa's local planning, zoning and development decisions related to the Sisters Convent, and shared some important lessons learned.

In this issue, Beaman takes our readers through the steps involved and the insights gained in launching a private citizen's appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT). Her four-month struggle with the City of Ottawa and the OLT are a primer for other private citizens who wish to challenge or appeal planning actions of developers and builders that adversely impact their lives.

ADRIANA BEAMAN

Appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal

Ottawa's City Council has final approval of all requested zoning by-law amendments, and members of the public have no right to make representations at the full Council meeting. Normally, it's a formality that Council follows the City's Planning and Housing Committee's (PHC) recommendation, and they did so in this case. After Council's approval, the City sends a notice announcing the new zoning by-law. But only those who made submissions to the PHC in person, virtually or in writing are entitled to appeal the City's decision to the OLT. And appeals to the OLT are subject to a very short 20-day filing deadline and require payment of a filing fee.

Since Council's decision was taken at the end of June, I began my difficult appeal journey in the middle of the summer. Given the vacation season, I found myself unable to retain a municipal law lawyer within the 20-day appeal period. Also, I was advised to find a lawyer practising outside the City since many local municipal lawyers can't represent individuals or community associations on appeals since they have represented the City or developers on other files. While I was unable to retain a lawyer to represent me in this appeal, I was grateful to a wonderful local municipal law lawyer who reviewed my appeal before I filed it.

What I learned: My initial experience with the OLT was not positive. I learned that most OLT appeals from private citizens are dismissed; many not even passing the Tribunal's in-take process. As a result, individuals are discouraged from launching appeals. Based on my experience, the low success rate may explain why many municipal lawyers and expert planning witnesses seem uneager to accept retainers in these appeals. In sum, I believe that the challenges associated with retaining a municipal lawyer and expert witnesses, including their associated fees, prevent many citizens from appealing City planning decisions.

At the outset of my appeal, the OLT did not provide me with much guidance or information. The tribunal's website has links to its appeal rules, procedures, guidelines and forms. But the website didn't promote the fact that the OLT has citizen advocate employees to help guide individuals through the appeal. Once I was able to reach the citizen advocate employees, I found them knowledgeable and helpful. At my request, I was provided with examples of previously filed appeals that provided me with information to help reduce the likelihood that my appeal would be dismissed without proceeding to a hearing. And once my appeal was accepted, the OLT's case coordinator for the appeal was also very helpful.

Negotiations with the City

An OLT appeal must first be filed with the City. The City then prepares an Appeal Record incorporating the appeal, which it forwards to the OLT. In my appeal, I clearly stated that my goal was to secure an opportunity to have a collaborative discussion with the City and the building owner to try to resolve this matter without an OLT hearing. Unfortunately, the initial reaction to my appeal from the City was not positive, as the City solicitor told me I was an adversary in the process and, therefore, he couldn't help me. Furthermore, I received unsatisfactory, incomplete or delayed responses to my requests to the City for information. Overall, the process followed by the City from the time I filed my appeal was neither productive nor efficient.

My review of both the OLT legislation and its rules suggested that the appeal process is designed to encourage discussion and foster possible settlement between the parties. But only after numerous requests over many months did settlement discussions with the other parties, including the City's and the building owner's solicitors, take place. Ultimately, I found those discussions to be efficient, respectful and, on the basis of both verbal and written assurances given to me, I withdrew my appeal.

What I learned: Closely reviewing the City's Appeal Record of almost 2000 pages provided me with considerable insight on the City's "behind the curtain" zoning by-law amendment(s) application process. The record allowed me to see that many City departments involved in developing the Staff recommendation shared the same concerns and questions that many of my neighbours and I had also expressed. Sadly, the record appeared to have been prepared quickly to meet the Tribunal's filing deadline; as a result the record appeared to be missing documents providing an accurate chronology and, importantly, the reasoning behind the final recommendation. I was forced to file an Access to Information (ATI) request with the City in an effort to obtain documents to fill gaps and answer questions I had about the record. Although I did receive further information in response to

my ATI request, the City did not provide all the requested documents, citing some broad exemptions.

My experience confirmed that planning applications received by the City from property owners are subject to a very in-depth process. But unquestionably, in my view, this process could be improved through earlier productive engagement with neighbours, more meaningful public consultation, and increased transparency from the City. To my mind, the City gains nothing by treating Ottawa residents who appeal a Council decision as adversaries. Councillors are elected to serve their constituents and should take into consideration the best interests of all residents in their decision-making. When a City posts a notice on a property, asking "Let us know what you think," the City must follow up with responses to all

Continued on Page 19

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The red, yellow, & green of Old Ottawa East eateries

PETER TOBIN

Three business-related developments affecting restaurants in Old Ottawa East (OOE) have surfaced since the February issue of *The Mainstreeter* was published. Taken together, the changing fortunes of the three retail enterprises remind me of the three colours of traffic lights. The red for stop (or Cancelled!) refers unfortunately to the closure of Greens and Beans restaurant on Main Street; the yellow (Wait please) for J:Fuse Aburi & Bar in the Shops at Millieu, and the green (We're Back!) for the sudden return of Greek on Wheels on Hawthorne Avenue.

The landlord closed down Greens and Beans in mid-February due to failure to pay the rental requirements of the lease agreement. Customers and neighbours feel especially sorry for husband and wife team, Ali and Christa Nahle, who worked so hard to make their dream come true. Fate dealt them an early devastating blow as their opening in 2020 coincided within a few weeks with the declaration of the COVID-19 world-wide pandemic. Sadly, the community had no chance for a proper goodbye, but best wishes for them and their family go out to them from their friends in OOE.

In a brief mid-March meeting with this reporter, owner James Park of J:Fuse Aburi & Bar stated that a technical problem that had bedevilled his work team for weeks had finally been resolved. Still to be completed as we went to press were a fire inspection and a building inspection. The timing of those procedures is difficult to predict, but Park is optimistic those requirements will not take long.

After a forced departure from its Hawthorne location in 2021, Greek on Wheels made a surprise and happy return a few weeks ago. In 1996, Joe Besharah opened the family-run take-out and delivery operation at 3 Hawthorne, and the enterprise soon became a success. Local residents, students from Immaculata High School and Saint Paul University, and eventually customers from around the city were drawn there by the excellence of the food and the prompt delivery times.

In 2020, however, the Besharahs were blind-sided by an announcement from Ontario's Ministry of Transport (MTO) of its intent to expropriate their building as well as two other buildings next door. Family patriarch Joe Besharah was not only shocked, he was also heart-broken that his beloved "hole in the wall," the starting point of the family's eventual



success, would be lost forever. The MTO's plan was to have staging and construction space ready for the eventual Rideau Canal bridge replacement process.

For months, Greek on Wheels (GOW), already under pressure due to the pandemic restrictions and consequent reduction in sales and income, searched for a new location to lease but came up empty. As Joe's daughter Samantha Besharah explained in a phone interview with *The Mainstreeter*, "Nothing was available so we decided as a family that it was time to buy our own building."

While maintaining its lease on Hawthorne, they purchased a building on Somerset Avenue. That location housed not only GOW's take-out and delivery but also Trofi, their full service sit down restaurant. In a follow-up email, Ms. Besharah noted how the family had kept employees on throughout the pandemic and the search. "Cutting their hours and leaving them to resort to government funding alone was not an option for us. We went into our personal funds to finance that gap and retain our staff."

The Somerset location turned out to be less than ideal, however. The proliferation of 'no parking, no stopping' signs in that area severely challenged the drivers. Operating the Trofi restaurant on the same site posed an additional complication. When it became apparent in 2023 that the MTO had moved beyond demolition mode, GOW started the wheels in motion for a return.

"We're Back" the big sign on Hawthorne Avenue says, and we're glad they are.

Signs of the times: Take-out diners in Old Ottawa East (OOE) were saddened in 2021 when Greek on Wheels, the beloved 'hole in the wall' eatery at 3 Hawthorne Avenue announced to the community that it was leaving OOE, the result of a provincial government expropriation notice to clear staging space for the Rideau Canal Bridge replacement. But as the new sign below says, "We're back" and OOE residents couldn't be happier.



LORNE ABUGOV PHOTOS

My private citizen's appeal

Continued from Page 18

citizens who took the time and interest to provide comments. Effective public consultations must include presentations to concerned citizens from the owners, as well as meaningful efforts by the owners to engage and to evaluate the concerns of their neighbours and of local community associations. Community associations enrich the planning process and help foster good planning decisions, in my view, since their knowledge of their community's history gained through lived experience trumps written provincial policies.

Conclusion

Despite my difficult learning curve and the obstacles and hurdles I encountered, I am convinced that engagement in one's community remains worthwhile. The goal of making good planning decisions

can be achieved, I believe, through increased government transparency and more effective collaboration and co-operation among interested parties. I have now had a meeting with our Councillor, at which I reviewed my experience in detail and presented my suggestions for improvement.

I conclude by expressing my appreciation for all those community advocates, including the Old Ottawa East Community Association and legal and planning professionals, who took the time to assist me, and especially the active involvement of many neighbours whose dedication to their community is inspirational. Also, my overall impression is that all government employees involved in this process seemed to me to be doing the best job possible in the circumstances. I am fully aware that no one is immune from making occasional errors in one's job, including me.

Main Street trees: triumph and tragedy

JOHN DANCE

A stroll along the initial phase of the revitalization of Main Street that was concluded in 2017 shows, by and large, a thriving stretch of trees from the McClraith (Smyth) Bridge all the way to Hawthorne Avenue.

The highly successful plantings include the thick and diverse groves on both sides of the approach to the McClraith Bridge; the maples in front of the Cuban embassy at the corner of Riverdale, the trees that were planted in the front yards of many Main Street residents, the trees in front of Saint Paul University, and various other trees that, for the most part, were planted several metres away from the edge of the roadway.

Unfortunately, the trees planted near the roadway – particularly on the eastern side of Main between the Brantwood Gates and McNaughton – have not done well. But on the other side of the street where the new trees are on private property, they've thrived.

"Trees planted with greater setbacks from the roadway generally are more successful in their establishment and

overall healthier than trees planted closer to the road where more pollution and other stressors are present," says Julie Jackson, a manager of the City's forestry department.

In the view of Ian McRae, an Old Ottawa East resident who has been a community tree advocate for decades, the excessive use of salt on the roads and sidewalks has led to stunted or dead trees.

The City took care to plant a diverse variety of trees to prevent a vulnerable reliance on a few species. Many of these new trees – such as the hybrid elms, hackberries and hop hornbeams, or ironwoods – have done well. Fast-growing freeman maples have also flourished and distinguished themselves with brilliant reds in the fall.

Because the City was unwilling to bury the electrical cables, trees with modest maximum heights had to be planted on much of the western side of Main. These species included serviceberry, honey locust, Japanese lilac, and amur maple.

"Staff in forestry services will be investigating the trees on Main Street and will replace any dead trees that

are identified following the conclusion of the investigation," says Tracey-Lee Schwets, the program manager of the City's forest department.

Part of the reason for the general success of the trees of the first phase of Main Street reconstruction is that the City planted twice as many trees as were removed to allow construction. This will not be the case with the second phase known as the Greenfield, Main, Hawthorne (GMH) project.

As a result of GMH, approximately 40 trees will be removed and approximately 45 new trees planted. When the southern part of Main Street was reconstructed, 82 trees were removed but more than 200 street trees were planted as well as many more on the Saint Paul University Main Street frontage.

If GMH residents welcome new trees onto their front yards there is an opportunity to correct the inferior tree planting that is currently planned. And, as has been demonstrated with the first phase of Main Street reconstruction, the community may end up with an improved canopy with new trees in residents' yards.



JOHN DANCE PHOTOS

ABOVE: The Freeman's maples in front of the Cuban Embassy are particularly colourful in the fall; **BELOW:** The new trees near Saint Paul University provide a canopy for pedestrians.



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Where have all the trees gone?

Our beloved maple: 100 years in the making, and gone in half an hour

GAYLE SINGER

As we watched the steady progression of tree removal on our street, we knew that our beloved 100-year-old maple was likely going to be cut down at some point. It was with great sadness and sorrow that we recently saw the orange 'X' appear on our maple tree, and three days later it was removed. 100 years in the making and gone in half an hour.

Our maple tree stood at the corner of Mutchmor Road and Bower Street. It was our buddy in the hot summer providing shade and cool breezes, keeping our home cool. It was the meeting point for walkers, bikers, parents pushing carriages, and especially school children as they waited for the bus. It was a welcome canopy for the weary or an escape from a sudden rain shower.

Our home was built in the mid to late 1920's, in a new development called Brantwood Place. As can be seen from



SUPPLIED PHOTO

This 1920's photo of 11 Mutchmor Road shows the Singer's home before the majestic Norway Maple was first planted. The stately home was well known to Ottawans of the time for a reason other than the maple. We'll reveal all in our June issue of *The Mainstreeter*.

photographs taken at the time, the area was a barren, suburban lot.

We assume that the City planted the maple tree around that time. During that period, the City was planting Norway

Maples as they are the hardiest, fastest growing tree for an urban setting. Since then, it has become recognized that Norway maples are an invasive species and not recommended. Norway maples live for an average of 80 years in the urban setting. We figure that thanks to the City cabling the tree at some earlier point, we and the neighbourhood have been able to squeeze an extra 20 years of enjoyment from our beautiful tree.

If you recently had a tree removed you can contact the City to remove the stump and to replace the tree free of charge through the Trees in Trust program. We encourage residents to consider the Trees in Trust program so that in about 20 years our sidewalks will once again offer the shade and beautiful colour that has defined our neighborhood over the years, making Old Ottawa East the endearing place we know and love.



Before (left) and after (right) the removal of the Singer's much-loved maple, which bears the ominous "X" in the photo below.



LORNE ABUGOV PHOTOS



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THE MAINSTREETER'S NEWSPAPER READERSHIP SURVEY

Readership estimate pegged at 7,050 per issue

Loud and clear - Our readers want more local news, dining out and health & fitness content

LORNE ABUGOV
EDITOR, *THE MAINSTREETER*

The Mainstreeter's first opinion survey in almost 15 years has already yielded a fascinating profile of who is reading the community newspaper, how they are accessing it and what types of content they want to see more and less of in the months ahead. Moreover, since almost 90% of the survey respondents live in Old Ottawa East (OOE), the results of the poll also offer some interesting insights into community-wide demographics and readership preferences.

When *The Mainstreeter* last sounded out its readers on their preferences, the year was 2010, and responses were handwritten, clipped from the pages of the paper and mailed back to the editor to be tallied by hand.

This time around, over a four-month period between December 2023 and March 2024, readers were asked to click on a QR Code to respond digitally to our 21-question survey using *The Mainstreeter's* new Survey Sparrow polling platform.

The bottom lines

And respond you have! As we went to press, 159 readers had started the survey, and 123 had completed it – for a very respectable 77% completion ratio.

Overall, *The Mainstreeter* Board of Directors and editorial staff were delighted by the volume and information content of the responses to the readership survey. Incoming Board chairperson, Dianne Wing, thought the readers' response was "insightful and heartening."

"The big takeaway from the readership survey, for me, was that community news and information is so highly valued, by readers of all ages. The appeal of the newspaper is based on attitude rather than age, as evidenced by the fact that multiple people in most households read *The Mainstreeter*," Wing said.

Lorne Abugov, Editor of *The Mainstreeter*, observed that feedback from the readers "has finally given us the chance to gauge how we are doing, and to learn how our efforts to produce a quality community newspaper are resonating with our readers. We're pleased that so many readers participated in this survey and that they seem generally to be enjoying *The Mainstreeter*. But there are a few areas where some changes in the mix of coverage are suggested by our readers' opinions, and we are going to move on those," Abugov said.

So what are the survey's bottom lines?

While we don't want to pump our own tires, - we're proud to report that 94.3% of all respondents have rated *The Mainstreeter*

overall as either "excellent" ("Proud to have it serve the community" - 46%); "very good" ("It keeps me informed of things I need to know" - 33.3%); or "good" ("It ticks most of the boxes for me" - 15%). And, as for the 5.7% of respondents who rated us as "satisfactory" ("Does a decent job on some things, could improve on others"), well that's exactly what we're going to strive to do going forward!

On one topic in particular, our readers were certainly single-minded – namely, the type of content they wanted to see more of in *The Mainstreeter*. When we asked readers to rate 10 different content features, more than 93% of you said that you "always read" or "usually read" John Dance's Community Update column of local news and events coverage. And, when specifically asked if readers wanted to see more OOE community news in *The Mainstreeter*, 92% of respondents voted "yes" – fully 24% more than the next most popular content category, food/cooking/dining out content, which polled 68%.

Some key demographics

Among many other things, the survey results have helped *The Mainstreeter* to get an accurate estimate of how many people read each issue of the newspaper, the age and gender demographics of our readers, and whether you read newspapers these days, including *The Mainstreeter*, in hard copy print format or in digital/online formats.

For example, of all respondent households in Old Ottawa East, 59% of households reported two resident readers per issue, 35%

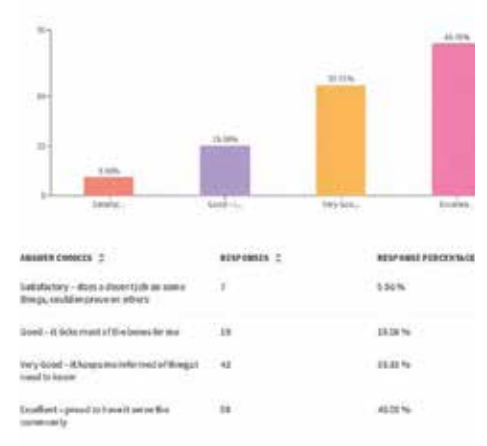
of households reported one resident reader per issue, and 5% of households reported three resident readers per issue. Based on these figures, and since *The Mainstreeter* currently prints and distributes 4,200 copies of each issue, an estimated 7,050 people read all or part of each issue of the newspaper.

As for demographics, 54.4% of survey respondents identified their gender as female, 40.3% as male and 5.3% as other. An equal percentage of respondent readers (9.8% each) were from the two ends of the age spectrum – 25 to 34 years of age and 75 to 84 years of age. Similarly, an equal percentage of readers were in the two largest groups of respondents (25% each) – 55 to 64 years of age and 65 to 74 years of age. Readers aged 45 to 54 comprised 17.4% of respondents, while those aged 35 to 44 made up 12.4% of all survey respondents.

Distribution of The Mainstreeter

One of the more revealing aspects of the survey involved asking our readers how they typically read newspapers these days, whether in hard copy print form or else in digital or online form. The results reflected a readership base in transition from hard copy readers (40%) to digital/online readers (41.5%), while the remaining 18.5% of respondents currently read their newspapers in both formats.

As for *The Mainstreeter* specifically, only 6% of readers responding to our survey accessed their copy of each issue via digital pdf emailed to them or through the mainstreeter.ca webpage. More than 13% of respondent readers accessed *The Mainstreeter* from the four community newsboxes, while 7.4% obtained their copies of the newspaper from local stores and other businesses. Not surprisingly, fully 73.3% of reader respondents benefitted from home



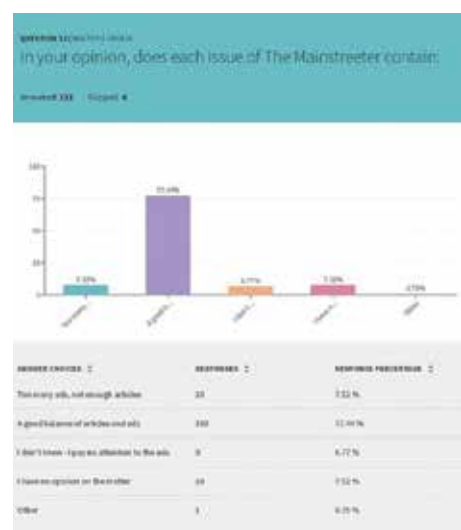
delivery of *The Mainstreeter*, courtesy of our phenomenal army of volunteer distributors under the supervision of distribution manager Dan Racicot and his team of zone captains. When we asked readers to rate the quality of our home delivery, fully 75% of respondents considered their distribution service to be either "excellent" or "very good." And of the total 136 readers who responded to this question, not a single respondent rated our home delivery in the "poor" or "very poor" categories.

We were anxious to learn whether our readers enjoyed the editorial content of *The Mainstreeter* – our news articles, our feature stories, our interviews, and even our advertisements. In addition, we wondered whether readers felt the length of the stories were generally about right and whether there was a good balance between articles and local ads. Your responses were revealing, and they provide us with a good road map for future.

Content and Advertising

About 78% of respondents told us that each issue of *The Mainstreeter* contained a good balance of editorial content and advertisements, whereas only 7.5% of respondents felt that the newspaper contained too many ads and 14% offered no opinion on the matter. More than 91% of respondents considered our articles to be "just the right length," while 7.5% felt our stories were "too long" and 1.5% felt they were "too short."

We expected survey respondents would



The big takeaway from the survey is that community news is highly valued by readers of all ages, according to Dianne Wing, chairperson of *The Mainstreeter's* Board of Directors.

Continued on Page 23

THE MAINSTREETER'S NEWSPAPER READERSHIP SURVEY

Volunteer distribution teams get top marks from our readers

Continued from Page 22

have a few surprises for us when it came to their specific content likes and dislikes – and they did.

For instance, of those who completed the survey, fully one-third offered no opinion on whether *The Mainstreeter* should publish more bilingual content, and of those who offered an opinion, 37.3% of respondents said “no” and only 20% said “yes.” Even more telling, of 123 respondents, 93 (73.8%) said “no” to

more religious or faith-based content, 25 respondents (19.8%) had no opinion, while only 5 respondents (4%) wanted to see more. While more than 68% wanted us to publish more food/cooking/dining out content and 46% asked to see more health and fitness-related content, only 31.8% favoured more coverage of schools and students in the community and an even smaller percentage of respondents, 27.8%, wished to see more coverage of sports and athletics.



For those readers who missed the chance to give their feedback to The Mainstreeter, the readership survey poll will remain open and accessible until the end of May. To access the survey and provide your opinions, simply scan the QR Code to the right.



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LIVE MUSIC

The Echoes of the Motherland: Black Out Loud Volume II

Nigeria's saxophone preacher takes centre stage at African music and culture showcase

Immersive celebration of the continent's roots transforms the Clegg Street Atelier into a showcase for diversity of African music, culture, attire, cuisine, global dialogue, and small enterprise.

LORNE ABUGOV

Self-taught sax player Jacob Olorundare, known to his Nigerian compatriots as Adebayofèrè, had a confession to make before diving into his four-song set to kick-off the live music component of *The Echoes of the Motherland: Black Out Loud Volume II*.

He leaned across the table inside the Atelier venue and offered a conspiratorial whisper: "My music and my studies here at Saint Paul University keep me on another path that I've chosen for myself on the other side of my life, a side which only a few know about. I'm actually an ordained priest, a gospel musician."

Adebayofèrè, a name that means "Adebayo, the player of wind instruments" in his Yoruban native tongue, joined the priesthood in Lagos in 2014, having completed a first degree in religious studies, a first master's degree in Christian studies, and a second master's degree in religious ethics.

He travelled to Ottawa last year to undertake further studies in a master's of public ethics program, and when event organizers learned he was an accomplished sax player, he found himself up on stage playing at the inaugural *Echoes of the Motherland* event. "I met a lot of great people, and I think the performance was great. I guess they agreed, since they brought me back again this year!"

With no training in music, Adebayofèrè considers his talent to be a God-given gift. He explains that at a young age, he developed a love for the saxophone but had no opportunity to play. "I had no teacher.



LORNE ABUGOV PHOTOS

ABOVE: Jacob Olorundare, known as Adebayofèrè, played Nigerian and South African R&B sounds on his saxophone to an appreciative audience at *The Echoes of the Motherland: Black Out Loud Volume II*.

"I'd never even seen a real saxophone, only a picture of one on a screen. I only dreamt about it, dreamt that I was playing it. I thought that if I can play it in my dreams, then I should be able to play it in the physical world. The first day my hand grabbed the saxophone, I played it like a professional without anyone teaching me. I just picked it up and played, it's a gift."

"At last year's Echoes event, it was only 10 days after my arrival in Canada. I didn't know what the event would look like, so my presentation focused on white music, mostly Michael Jackson. But when I saw the environment, the event itself, I realized it's more Africa and our roots. I have come to



LEFT: Éric Topzo, a native of the Central African Republic, played the tambour drum while recounting an African folk tale from his homeland; RIGHT: Rwandan Sound Healer and instrumental performer, Pamela Twagirayezu, from the Burning Moon Collective is pictured here playing the steel handpan drum.



The celebration of cultural diversity of the African diaspora is an important event fostering community engagement and support for local artists and businesses.

understand that I have to remind my people of their music back home, take them back to the music of Africa. So, these days, most of my music is intended to take people back to the memory of their lifetime, to their native background through classical African folk music," says Adebayofèrè.

"But that's not what I am playing this evening, because no one will understand it," he adds, with a broad smile. "Tonight, I'm singing and playing Nigerian and South African R&B, for flavour - that's my strategy - plus one Michael Jackson!"

With a roster full of strong musical talents, Adebayofèrè's lively saxophone medley set the table for three other intriguing performances to come, first from Rwandan Sound Healer and instrumental performer, Pamela Twagirayezu of the Burning Moon Collective, followed by tambour drum soloist, Éric Topzo, a native of the Central African Republic. Wrapping up the evening were headliners, the Siaka Diabaté Band, featuring Kora player Siaka Diabaté of Burkina-Faso joined by renowned Canadian cellist and composer, Raphael Weinroth-Browne.

All in all, *The Echoes of the Motherland* event delivered exactly what organizers had billed in advance promotion - an all-encompassing and immersive experience that provided attendees with a curated journey through the richness of African culture. A fascinating backdrop to the vibrant live music was an art gallery showcasing the sustainability art of talented Ivory Coast fashion artist and designer, Charifa Labarang, Labarang, and her gallery exhibit, "Hues of Contamination, pertaining to the culture of fast fashion and consumerism," are featured in Tanis Browning-Shelp's Art Beat column at page 26 of this issue of *The Mainstreeter*.

ART BEAT



**TANIS
BROWNING-
SHELP**

TANIS@BROWNING-SHELP.COM

OOE ARTIST FEATURE: CHARIFA LABARANG—FAST (BUT NOT FURIOUS) AND COMMITTED TO INSPIRING KIDS THROUGH ART

Born in Cameroon, Charifa Labarang blew the doors off the March 15th event The Echoes of the Motherland: Black out Loud Volume II with her exhibition Hues of Contamination, an art installation pointing to the culture of fast fashion and consumerism.

Charifa moved to Ottawa in 2006 at age 10. Her father was a diplomat at the High Commission. “I had a really good experience here from the start,” she says. “Two of my grade six teachers at Gabriel-Roy Elementary School—Natasha Denis and Judette Dumel—inspired me to do painting, theatre, and poetry. They were big on expressing yourself! Poetry was my first interest, then I shifted to dance.”

After graduating from Gabriel-Roy, Mme Dumel regularly invited Charifa to return to the school to do dance performances and choreography with her students, something Charifa continued doing until first year university. Charifa created a dance club at Omer Deslauriers High School where she taught hip hop, contemporary, and African dance.



A finger on the pulse of the arts in OOE



LORNE ABUGOV PHOTOS

ABOVE: Artist Charifa Labarang with her red pop bottle cap dress; BELOW LEFT: Another sustainable dress made from packing wrapper.

She also started pursuing track & field in grade nine and ended up making it to Nationals that year. She joined a track & field club and won two gold medals at the Ontario Track & Field championships in grade 12 in the 100- and 200-metre sprints. “They still have the banner hanging in the gym at Omer Deslauriers.”

When Charifa attended the University of Ottawa for Business Marketing, she became an Ottawa Gee-Gee, racing for both the university and for Cameroon. During her sprinting career she raced in Canada, the U.S., Azerbaijan, Morocco, the Ivory Coast, France (for the World Youth Track & Field Championships, and Australia (for the Commonwealth Games).

In first year, Charifa sustained a hamstring injury and had to sit out the race season for a semester. “That’s when I started my business designing and sewing dresses. I posted one of my designs on Instagram and people really liked it. So, I thought this could be my new creative pursuit and within two weeks I had built a website.” That was five years ago and the business is still going strong.

Charifa believes she became crafty because she was an only child for eight years. “I was never bored and consistently found something to do and make.” She has always worked with recycled materials. “My mom would throw things out and I’d rescue them! Mom would suggest we buy something, but I’d make it myself instead. I remember making a shoe rack out of cereal boxes.” Although Charifa ordinarily has no attachment to objects, she feels differently about items she has created in this way. “I have a genuine connection to them.”

In 2019, Charifa graduated university and left racing behind. She organized a workshop for girls and women in sport called Shape. “My message was that every person is an athlete because they need to perform in one way or another.” By using the word “shape” Charifa was referring to the mind rather than the body. “One of my workshop exercises involved getting participants to write down words for things they found really difficult (like conflict) and then guiding them in turning them into positive ones (like caring).”

Charifa did some fashion shows early in her dressmaking/designing career, but she still had a “burning feeling” to create. “I remember waking up at two a.m. once with an idea for a painting and I couldn’t get back to sleep until I painted it. It was unsettling.” She concedes that making custom dresses is creative, but the creations are not entirely her own because they involve the client’s vision too. “I wanted to get back to who I was when I was younger. So, when the Ottawa Art Gallery put out a call for artists to be part of an exhibition in 2023 I created a multimedia piece and applied. That was my first exhibition.”

In March of 2023, Charifa was invited by the organizers of The Echoes of the Motherland Volume I to do a fashion show for the event. “But I like interacting with people, so I made two dresses using plain muslin fabric and got attendees to paint on them, in that way making two collective pieces. I also did a live draping of one of my dresses.” Charifa feels that she didn’t have a voice yet. “I needed everyone’s help.”

At this year’s event (Volume 2), the organizers gave Charifa her own room for an exhibition. The glassed-in space represented a boutique. Charifa created several dresses using recycled materials such as pop bottle caps, chip bags, and packing wrappers. Instead of price tags, she made tags with QR codes that revealed how dresses and other products are made. “They showed kids working in mines and enduring other poor working conditions. The concept was that these dresses are a sort of armour or shield. Fashion is how we present ourselves, but at what cost? The installation was a meditation on how we can reduce the gap between raw materials and the finished product, and how this could affect society.”

Charifa wanted the designs to be appealing enough to bring people closer and then, through the QR codes, show that somebody might have gotten injured making them. “The exhibition was in one small room but it posed some big questions. Did somebody bleed for this? I want people to be aware and intentional in all aspects of life—be both critical and free.”

Charifa intends to continue working with children and wants to do this installation on a larger scale. “I had hoped to have an entire kids’ section in this exhibition, but I ran out of time. I did, however, work with a young friend, ten-year-old Shayla, who is super creative. She really believes in herself and I knew that she could execute what I was trying to do in a very short time frame.”

Charifa wanted to show things through a child’s eyes. “Kids see value in everything! Shayla helped me by creating a fanny pack for the potato chip vest. She used a chip bag for the pack and a braided garbage bag and recycled Velcro for the strap. I provided a canvass with paints near the exit of the exhibition. I wanted people to come in, read the messages, see Shayla’s work, and before leaving, play with paints and be creative like

Continued on Page 27

ART BEAT



TIM HUNT'S MAIN STREET SKETCHES

Tim Hunt explores his community outfitted with a small sketchbook, pen, and watercolour kit. In our regular feature, he shares the pages from his sketchbook and tells the stories behind his work.



Tim Hunt: While deciding what to draw for this issue of *The Mainstreeter*, I had a number of ideas up my sleeve. As it turns out, two of them dovetailed nicely. Saint Paul University, which has deep roots in Ottawa's ecclesiastical and academic history, provided the perfect backdrop for a sketch of Main2, our community's celebrated work of public art.

In 2017, Stuart Kinmond's sculpture was erected outside the university. Selected by competition from more than forty entries, Kinmond's whimsical stained-glass panels depict the landscape of Old Ottawa East (OOE) flanked by the Rideau River on one side and the Rideau Canal on the other. The artist's training as an architect is evident from the three austere structures framing

the glass, which also provide both shelter and seating, transforming the space into a community square.

In the process of sketching, I found that the shapes in Main2 quite naturally echoed those of the building's Modernist architecture, complementing its

surroundings. I recall the presentation of proposals for selection of public art for OOE held at the University and what a unique opportunity it was to be a part of the process of selecting an enduring showcase for the community.

CHARIFA LABARANG




ABOVE; Artist Charifa Labarang poses with her potato chip vest along with her friend Shayla, who designed the potato chip fanny pack.

Continued from Page 26

a kid. There are no limits. We are the ones who create our limitations.”

To see more of Charifa's work go to: @empresscharifa on Instagram or www.empresscharifa.com.

Author Tanis Browning-Shelp (<http://www.browning-shelp.com>) pens her Maryn O'Brien Young Adult Fiction series, published by Dog-Eared Books, from her home in Old Ottawa East. Contact tanis@browning-shelp.com if you have information about artists or art events that you believe would enrich our community members' lives.



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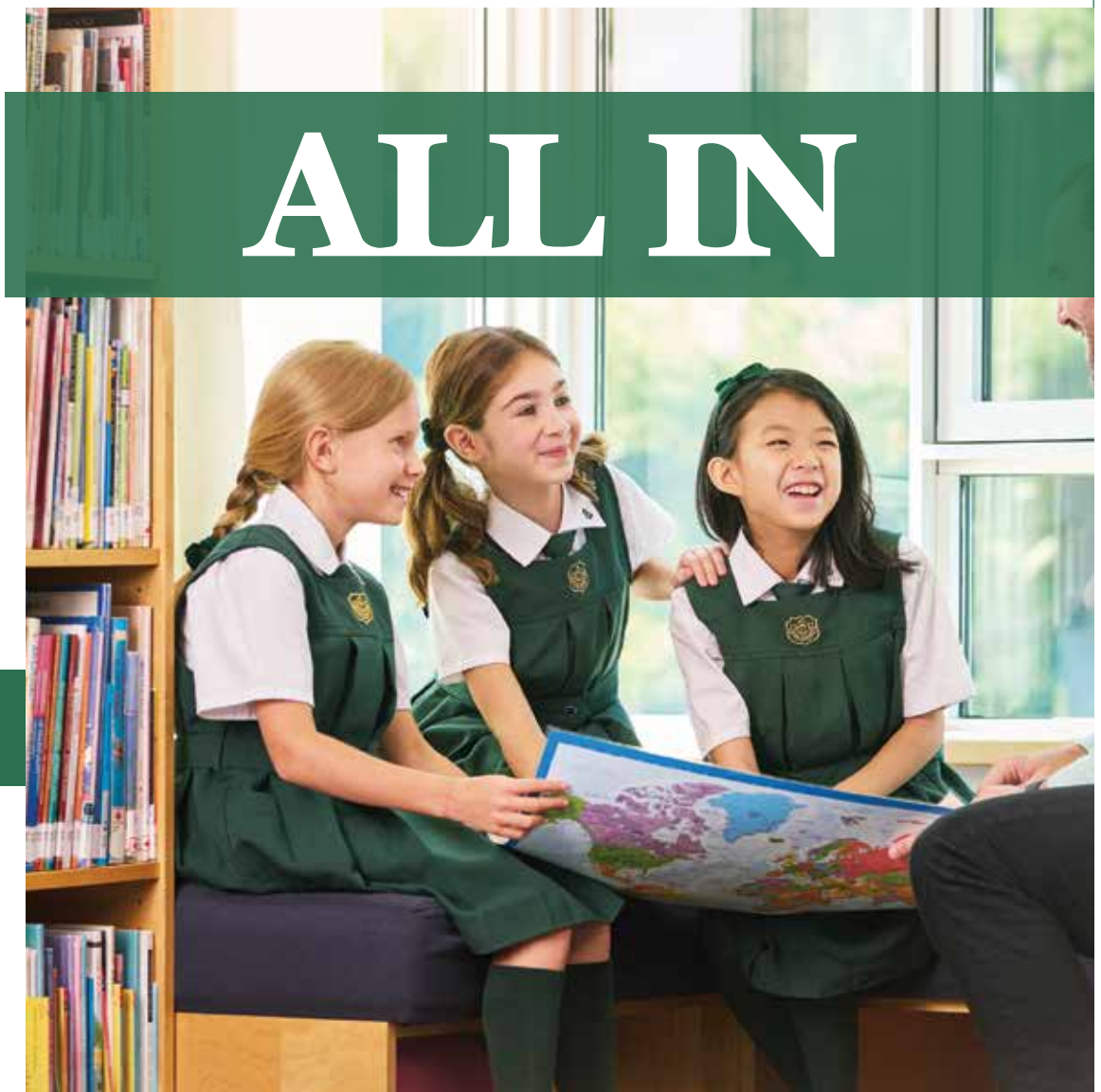
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Remembering Geoff Nimmo

DIANNE WING

Geoff Nimmo was with Jasper, his Wheaten Terrier when I first met him. Over years of early morning walks along the Rideau River behind Saint Paul's University I learned a lot about his life. He was born in Duncan, British Columbia and grew up in Saltair on Vancouver Island. He began his extensive traveling at the age of 18, voyaging by boat to New Zealand and from there going across Oceania, Africa and Europe for the better part of seven years. He returned and began his studies at the University of Victoria, working summers at the mill in Chemainus. He completed his Masters of Political Science at Carleton University and made Ottawa his home. It was here that he met his future wife, Heather Moxley, on a Toastmasters river cruise in the summer of 1985.

The couple settled in Old Ottawa East and raised their two daughters, Victoria and Amanda, on Marlowe Crescent in the Brantwood Park neighbourhood. Geoff was one of the original "hosers" who founded the rink in Brantwood Park over 30 years ago. His recollection of those early days was of flattening the snow before flooding by pulling his daughters



SUPPLIED PHOTO

The Nimmo family cottage in Nova Scotia when the kids were young; (l to r) Geoff, Heather, Victoria - and Amanda on mom's lap.



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

Geoff Nimmo (l) was awarded the coveted OOE Hoser of the Year award in 2019. Here, he receives the award from rink co-convenor Eric Cauchon.

on their sleds until they had outlines of the rink. Though he never skated on the rink, he continued his work as a hoser long after his children had gone. For this work he received the coveted Hoser of the Year Award in 2019.

Geoff shared many stories during those morning walks. One of my favourites was how he saved the change from his workday coffee purchases and set up a savings account for each daughter. Over the years, those coins added up to thousands of dollars. A good part of that money went into traveling, continuing Geoff's pre-marriage legacy. The family traveled a lot together, most recently a trip to Norway last June, staying for a night in the ski resort where Geoff bartended over 50 years ago!

That was the kind of person he was; thoughtful, kind - a consummate gentleman. He believed in the importance of giving back to his community and served as Executive and President of the Old Ottawa East Community Association from 1988 to 1991. He acted upon that belief in the broader community as well. Geoff was one of the longest serving volunteers at The Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region. After 30 years on the phone lines, he said that this volunteer experience taught him to be a better listener and increased his appreciation and empathy for those less fortunate. He was recognized for his contribution with the Whitton Award for Ottawa Centre Community Volunteers in 2005. In recent years

Continued on Page 30

Is this a dynasty in the making?

Old Ottawa East Hosers win the Capital Ward Cup again

JOHN DANCE

During a brief moment of favourable February weather, the Old Ottawa East (OOE) Hosers once again hoisted the Capital Ward Cup, emblematic of local shinny supremacy in the annual community tournament at Brantwood Park.

The victory over the Glebe and Old Ottawa South (OOS) teams was the second in a row for the OOE Hosers. They have now won the tournament eight times compared to five times by the OOS Moose and once by the Glebe Nutcrackers.

The actual playing of the tournament was very much up in the air, given the preceding mild weather and snowfalls interfering with volunteers' restoration of the ice at the Brantwood Park rink.

Rink co-convenors Louis Denis and Eric Cauchon and their volunteer hosers had to work day and night to rebuild the rink after the record high temperatures of early February.

The victory was hard won with the initial game a very close 7-6 over the Glebe. The dazzling speed and stickhandling of Hoser captain Andrew Matsukubo was the critical difference. However, the gritty and skilled performances of all the other Hoser players kept them in the game against a determined and fast Glebe Nutcrackers adversary.

The second game against the Moose was also close but, at the end, the Hosers pulled ahead and won 7-4. That said, the understaffed Moose was bolstered by three players who had originally signed up for the Hosers. In the consolation game, Glebe defeated the Moose to take second place.

While it could be argued that the rules set out by Councillor Shawn Menard, the sponsor



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

The Old Ottawa East Hosers won the Capital Ward Cup in February. From left: Madelaine Hall-Paradis, Louis Denis, Andrew Matsukubo, Mackenzie Tobin, Lee Jacobs, Eric Cauchon, Brad Scott, Shawn Menard, Miles Krauter.

of the event, meant it wasn't "real" hockey - for instance, no body contact was allowed - the high quality of play was evident and, for participants, it was simply fun.

The simple joy of women and men playing outside in snowy weather, digging errant pucks out of snowbanks lining the rink, and keeping the puck on the ice made it a delightful Canadian spectacle to watch.

Other notable performances were those of Miles Krauter, an advisor to Menard and official for the tournament; and of Lee Jacobs, executive director of CAG who organized the refreshments for the players and spectators and, as a member of the Hosers, scored a goal.

1949 - 2024

Remembering Geoff Nimmo

Continued from Page 29

he enjoyed volunteering at Roger Neilson House from the fall of 2021 to summer 2023.

Geoff was traditional but not conventional. He started martial arts when he began getting too many muscle strains from playing squash. He practiced Taekwondo and earned a 6th Dan Black Belt at the Tae Eun Lee school. And he was also the only man to attend Yin Yoga classes at The Old Town Hall on Tuesday evenings for several years. An avid reader, he was part of a book club for retired men, reading a mixture of non-fiction and fiction. As in everything he did, he took his book reading seriously and went to those meetings prepared with notes. He usually had a philosophy or other non-fiction book on the side to balance his detective/crime novels. Like many readers he was also an elegant writer. He kept detailed journals of all his travels and engaged regularly in the art of letter writing.

Everyone who knew Geoff Nimmo is deeply saddened by his death. Geoff battled ALS and passed peacefully at home with his family on February 22nd.

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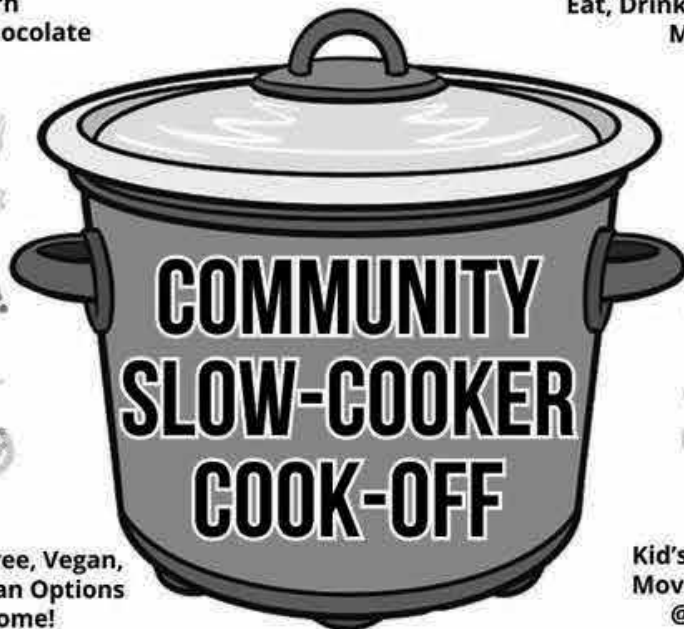


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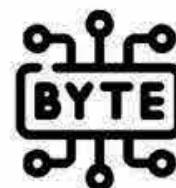
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LOUIS DENIS PHOTOS

Brantwood Rink was open for business for 25 days of skating compared to the Rideau Canal Skateway's 10 days.

Brantwood Rink sparkled this winter

MAINSTREETER STAFF

As all outdoor skaters know, it was again a really tough year for the Rideau Canal Skateway but the Brantwood Rink fared much better even if it did involve four (!) police officers paying a visit to rink co-convenor Eric Cauchon.

First, the facts: the rink opened mid-January and closed at the end of February but, because of record high temperatures the rink was skateable for just 25 of the 43 days. That said, that was two and a half times more than the Skateway and the rink had excellent conditions for 20 days while the Skateway was not excellent at any point.

Second, the struggle: it took much longer than usual to establish the base ice and the rink had to be rebuilt several times because it melted away. Volunteers made a magnificent effort to rebuild the rink so that the Capital Ward Cup could be held.

Third, the police investigation: "Someone new to the community, or new to the program, observed Eric going round and round out there and thought that wasn't right!" explains Louis Denis, the other co-convenor. This person shared Eric's licence plate number and their safety concern with the local police department. As a result, four police officers showed up at Eric's door. They had some pointed questions for him,

notably "Why was he doing 'doughnuts' in the park with his car?"

But the answer, well known to the hundreds of people who have volunteered at the rink over the last few decades, is that Eric was compacting the snow so that the initial flooding would create a sound, thick and white base for the rink. "The police emergency was quickly de-escalated and the officers wished Eric good luck with the rink as

they left his place," says Denis. He also notes, "Our top compacting speed is probably 4 km/h and we're extremely cautious during the event. Tough to pull doughnuts at that speed."

Just to add to the humour: four years ago, the same thing happened when some conscientious resident called the police to stop a volunteer from driving around as he compacted the snow.

Fourth, the thanks: In addition to the great work of the two co-convenors, many others lent a hand to keep the rink going this winter. Special thanks go to Jim Naida who helped with snowplowing when Mike Galazka couldn't do it, to. And once again, the City provided the grant to cover the cost of attendants and other expenses. It also gave new benches and additional nets to the Brantwood Rink.



Of the 25 days of skating at the Brantwood Rink, 20 of them boasted of excellent ice conditions compared with the Skateway which didn't have a single day of excellent ice conditions.

POLITICAL PAGES

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IT'S TIME FOR THE CITY TO RE-THINK FOSSIL FUEL ADVERTISING

If the City really wants to get serious about its commitment to fighting climate change, that determination should be reflected in our advertising and sponsorship policies. That's why at the Finance and Corporate Services Committee meeting recently, my team brought forward a motion to review a change to the updated Advertising Using City Assets and Programs Policy that would examine options to end fossil fuel advocacy advertising and related issues. This motion stemmed from some questionable advertising that has occurred at City facilities recently.

In 2023, we saw Enbridge at Lansdowne Park for Winterlude—in a winter when it was too warm to skate on the Canal. This year, we were alerted by various residents, including former Capital Ward Councillor David Chernushenko, to fossil fuel advertising that appeared at Brewer Arena. As the residents rightfully pointed out, ads like the ones at Brewer are misleading and inappropriate, considering the city's goal of reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

We're seeing ads from pro-fossil fuel-burning advocates (often dressed up as some type of environmental organization) - ad campaigns seeking to undo good work and accelerate the degradation of our environment.

In 2019, a motion our team put forward had the City declare a climate emergency. It passed with overwhelming support at Council and put a stronger voice to the calls of residents to have the City take better care of our environment.

Following this declaration, we were able to take greater steps towards environmental sustainability - more building retrofits saving us money and lowering emissions and beginning the transition to a full fleet of electric buses at OC Transpo.

This term, as chair of the Environment and Climate Change Committee, we continue this fight for improved environmental protections and measures to reduce the City's contribution to climate change. As extreme weather batters Ottawa - affecting the lives and homes of residents and taking a toll on city finances - the City must re-double its efforts to be better prepared for these challenges.

These advertisements are working directly at odds with policy and goals. According to the updated advertising policy, City advertising must not affect the quality and integrity of the City's properties or programs. It is wholly inappropriate for the City to be displaying ads that are subverting all the work the City—and its residents—are trying to do to combat climate change and mitigate its effects.

If the ads were real cash cows for the City, the temptation to run them would be understandable (though still not justifiable). However, in 2023, these ads brought in only \$5,459 at arenas, which forms just 2% of advertising revenue, and 0.0078% of overall revenue for the Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services Department. It would cost the City little to change advertising policy (and do outreach to regain these funds from heat pump technology advertising). The issue seems to be one of the legal right to advertising, but that hasn't stopped the City from halting advertising for guns, cigarettes, and pornography.

The Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment have a national campaign on this issue centered on the health implications of air pollution and climate change. Ecology Ottawa also took the lead on a letter to the Mayor signed by 15 organizations calling for a ban on fossil fuel advertising at City facilities.

There were many compelling delegations at committee in favor of a review or a full ad ban for fossil fuels, and I thank everyone who spoke or wrote to Councillors and the Mayor, and who gave of their time and energy to help fix this hole in City policy.

This issue is low-hanging fruit. It's a quick and easy policy improvement the City could make that would cost us almost nothing. Granted, eliminating these ads won't solve climate change; but if we can't trust Council to make the quick-and-easy changes, then how can we trust them to be stewards of the City's stated environmental policy.

Ultimately, the motion was passed unanimously and will go to Council in April for a final vote.

JOEL HARDEN MPP, OTTAWA CENTRE

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DON'T DESPAIR, ORGANIZE! AND SUPPORT COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

I recently toured our City with Official Opposition colleagues. We met with health care experts, patients, business leaders, housing providers and seniors groups.

They all told us the same thing: we are underfunding or ignoring solutions to the problems we face. Let's review the example of primary care.

At the moment, over 160,000 people in Ottawa are without a family doctor or nurse practitioner. The lack of primary care, as I have noted before, means hospital ERs are now jammed with patients for non-urgent conditions. But solutions exist.

Ottawa's Community Health Centres told us they could offer primary care to almost 30,000 new patients in Ottawa, for less than \$24 million per year. The Seniors Health and Innovation Hub is another local proposal that would offer primary care to thousands of at-risk seniors and people with disabilities.

Sadly, neither of these projects were funded last budget year. The Ministry of Health increased its funding for "primary care innovation" from \$30 million (\$2 per Ontarian) to \$110 million (\$7 per Ontarian). It's still a pittance, and Ottawa is largely snubbed.

The only new primary care proposal in Ottawa is led by two visionary nurse practitioners (Hoda Mankal and Joanna Binch). The clinic could serve 10,000 Ottawa residents with mental health and addictions issues, along with their families. The proposed cost was \$7 million. If supported well, this is a major opportunity.

But as Elizabeth Payne of the Ottawa Citizen reported, the clinic has received \$2.5 million despite the housing and homelessness emergency declared in our city in 2020. It will now figure out how to do more with less, which is not ideal for marginalized people.

What would help is prompt access to mental health support, which is also available in Ottawa through Counselling Connect. This program brings together dozens of mental health service providers in Ottawa to offer three no-cost therapy sessions to people in crisis. The aim is to place someone in therapy within 48 hours of intake. This service is multilingual, and with cultural competence for Indigenous and 2SGLBT+ folks.

Counselling Connect currently supports over 700 clients per month and has been a game changer for people and families in crisis. An application has been made to the Ministry of Health for permanent funding, at an estimated cost of \$550,000 per year.

That's not even a rounding error for health spending in Ontario. For a half million dollars, we can divert hundreds from hospital ERs in Ottawa. Further investments can offer primary care to many in urgent need of support.

Of course, some will prefer private sector solutions. That's code for allowing companies a chance to find profit in health care. Like an online app that charges fees for access to primary care. Or the clinic that charges fees for accessing nurse practitioners. Or the fees many diabetics pay to access essential medicines.

But we mustn't despair, for now is the time to organize, and support community leadership. That's how we won dental care for seniors, youth, and people with disabilities in recent years.

I'm very pleased the federal government (under great pressure by citizens and opposition parties) just introduced universal access to contraception devices and diabetes medications. We will build on this momentum together.

POLITICAL PAGES

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PROTECTING KIDS ONLINE, DELIVERING ON PHARMACARE

It has been a busy, but productive winter session in the House of Commons. The following is a brief update on some key legislation and programs that are important to our community.

Online Harms Act

Many Ottawa Centre residents have been engaged in the discussion relating to online harms. Kids deserve safe environments to learn and play whether they are at school, on the playground, or online. In addition, we cannot tolerate

distribution of hateful material online. After much consultation, the federal government has tabled the Online Harms Act to make online spaces safer and hold web giants more accountable for the harmful content they host. This Bill will create stronger online protections for children and better safeguard everyone in Canada from the proliferation of online hate and other types of harmful content, including intimate images shared without consent.

Pharmacare

Additionally, we announced an historic Pharmacare legislation that creates a framework to establish national universal pharmacare for Canadians. It is a giant step forward in delivering better healthcare to Canadians. This plan starts with free coverage for contraception and diabetes medications. It will support nine million Canadian women, and it will include diabetes coverage for 3.7 million Canadians. We believe that everyone deserves quality care, no matter how much they make. We are investing in a healthier Canada, because things get better when you do more for Canadians, not less.

Dental Care Plan

The Canadian Dental Care Plan is also a transformative investment that will help Canadians who are unable to access quality dental care because of their income or insurance. To find out if you are eligible to apply, visit Canada.ca/dental. Already, over one million seniors have been approved for the Canadian Dental Care Plan! Additionally, dental

care providers can now confirm their participation in the program as well.

And lastly, the federal government will be tabling Budget 2024 on April 16th. I am grateful to hundreds of constituents who have sent their thoughts and ideas as part of our community's pre-budget consultation. I am confident that the upcoming budget will reflect our community's priorities on fighting climate change, building more homes, making life affordable, delivery of quality healthcare, and creation of good paying jobs.

Locally, I am pleased to share that my office is once again running a Free Tax Clinic on Saturday, April 13th. To be eligible for this service, individuals must have a modest income and a simple tax situation. Please visit my website at YasirNaqviMP.ca to learn more and contact my office to book an appointment!

As always, please don't hesitate to reach out to me or my team if you have any questions on government programs or need assistance. We are here to help.

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Digging in for a super season in the Children's Garden of Old Ottawa East



LORI GANDY

The snow is gone and now it's time to get out the trowels and the hoses to bring about the next exciting season for The Children's Garden of Old Ottawa East.

Marianne, the Garden's Manager, has been busy laying the groundwork for another successful season. She started planting seeds indoors in March and they are coming along wonderfully. "It's been great to see the little stirrings of plant life amidst all the chaotic March weather we've experienced," says Marianne.

As the weather warms up, Garden activities will begin in earnest.

Garden Days - come join in the fun and learn some gardening tricks

The season will begin with two special Garden Days - May 4 and May 18th, 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. - to get the garden ready for planting. Activities will include cleaning beds, spreading compost and setting up some trellises.

With just a bit more funding, the Garden will be able to purchase three new large trellises, to complement the one that supported the squash and pumpkin plants last season. Donations can be e-transferred to the Garden's email at ottawachildrengardeninfo@gmail.com. Besides providing great support for the plants and their fruit, the trellises provide much-needed shade in the Garden. The large trellises will be installed by Marianne and her crew. Smaller trellises will be installed during the May Garden Days to support beans, cucumbers, tomatoes, cucumelons, ground cherries and herbs.

"If you are considering setting up trellises in your own garden, but are not sure where to start," says Marianne, "there is nothing

better than hands-on experience. Come join us!"

Any funds not needed for the new trellises will be put towards the next project - mulching all the beds. Mulch is key to moisture management and helps to improve soil structure. There are several beds in the Garden, which means lots of mulch. A Donation Box will also be in the garden when Marianne is there.

Regular Garden days

Volunteers are needed throughout the season to help with garden tasks, and children are especially welcome to join in and learn. If you would like to become a volunteer, and/or receive the newsletter, contact Marianne at: ottawachildrengardeninfo@gmail.com.

Marianne encourages people to come to the garden when she's there. Her schedule is posted in the newsletter and on social media, along with information about activities taking place during that week's Garden Days. As produce ripens, a harvest takes place on Thursday mornings, and produce is donated to the Sandy Hill Community Centre (the Garden's sponsor) for distribution in the community.

Adopt a bed program

Beginning in June, the Children's Garden will continue with the Volunteer Watering Program. Volunteers are invited to sign up to water a specific bed once a week throughout the 2024 season. Volunteer early and you can choose the bed you want. This program was started last year, and it made a huge difference. As Marianne says: "There are many beds in the Garden; for me to water them myself every week would take 5-7 hours."

Watering takes about a half hour per week and coverage is arranged when someone is away on vacation. "It's a very peaceful, almost Zen activity, spending a half hour in the garden watering," says Marianne. "You get to soak up the calm atmosphere of the Garden while the soil soaks up the water you are providing. And if you feel so inclined, you can also do a bit of weeding." If you are interested in becoming a Watering volunteer, email the children's garden at ottawachildrengardeninfo@gmail.com, with the subject line - Volunteer Watering Program.

Reminder about harvesting

A community garden is for everyone to enjoy. Please be careful not to harm the

plants by harvesting too much at once or taking all of the plant's fruit or leaves. The chalkboard on the back shed will indicate what plants can be harvested each week, so please check the board before picking and take only what you and your family need.

Education and Exploration

As in the past, the space will be open to various organizations to run their science and nature programs. Children participate in fun activities and learn about gardening and how to appreciate the natural world. Stay tuned to the Garden's website, Facebook page or newsletter for more details on the program(s) that will be offered this summer.



Back by popular demand

Kids can exhibit their art at A Walk of Art 2024 in the Children's Garden

Mark the date – Saturday, September 28th

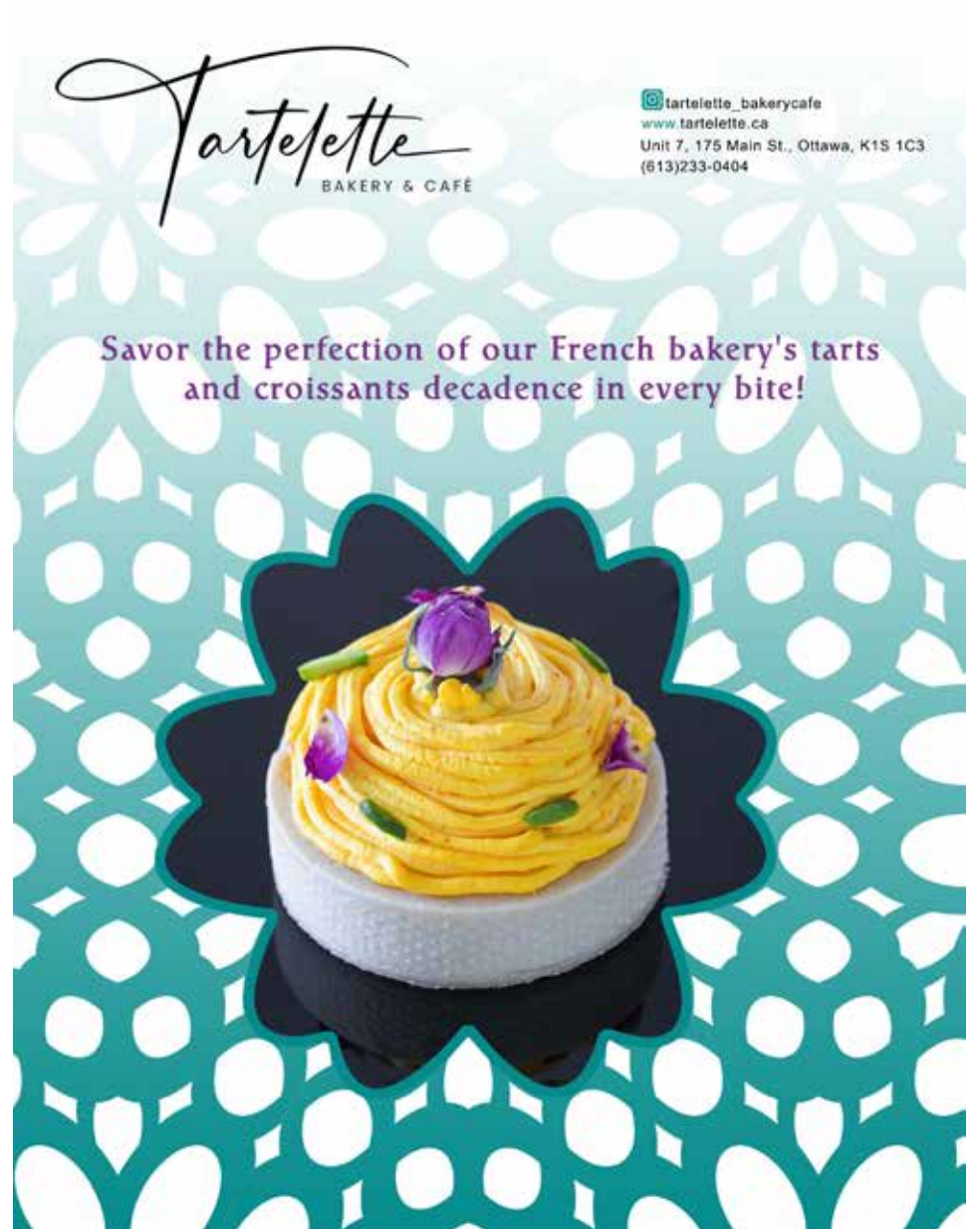
A Walk of Art 2024, the fifth annual installment of Old Ottawa East's popular outdoor art tour, will take place on Saturday, September 28th (rain date September 29th) from 11am to 3pm.

Following up on a successful debut at last year's event, the Children's Garden will once again host an exhibit of children's art.

There are two ways for young artists to participate in *A Walk of Art 2024*. Youngsters can set up their own Kids' Art exhibit outside their homes, in which case the tour organizers ask that parents or guardians contact Whitney Bond at whitneyb@sympatico.ca in order to register.

The other option is to join with other young artists to display artwork at the Children's Garden. Five young artists participated last year and had an amazing time. Those who wish to pursue this option should email info@mainstreeter.ca - with the subject line Children's Garden Art Exhibit - and provide the following information:

- the young artist's name; and
- a telephone number where you can be reached on the morning of the exhibit.



Doing less better: some first steps to follow on the path to more Zen

ELAINE MACDONALD

“I need to be more Zen” is a popular phrase that we hear more and more people saying these days when they want to be calm. Zen is a beautiful word that can encapsulate so much, but what does it truly mean?

There are many ways to describe Zen but for the purpose of this article, only a couple will be shared, the first from Zen-Buddhism.net:

“Zen is about simplicity, but not in the way it’s often portrayed in popular culture. It’s not merely about decluttering physical spaces or leading a minimalist lifestyle, though these can be aspects of it. The simplicity in Zen refers to a state of mind – being fully present in the moment, clear-headed, and free from unnecessary complications. It’s about experiencing life in its purest form, without the distractions and distortions often cloud our perception.”

Merriam-Webster dictionary offers up a second description of Zen: “Having or showing qualities (such as meditative calmness and an attitude of acceptance) popularly associated with practitioners of Zen Buddhism.”

Based upon those descriptions, most would likely agree that Zen is something we could all use a little more of in our day to day lives. To help you on your quest for more Zen, here’s Tip #1 for starting on this journey:

Tip #1: Take more time. Slow things down.

Slowing down is a conscious choice, and not always an easy one, but with a conscious effort, it will lead to a greater appreciation for life and a greater level of happiness. Here’s how to do it.

1. **Do less.** Make the conscious choice to do less. Focus on what’s really important to you and go easy on yourself. Taking a few moments to first note your priorities is a useful tool.
2. **Be present.** It’s not enough to just slow down — you need to actually be mindful of whatever you’re doing at the moment. Focus on what’s going on right now and slowly work on doing things intentionally.
3. **Disconnect.** It’s hard to slow down when you’re always checking new messages coming in. You will feel empowered!
4. **Focus on people.** Too often we spend time with friends and family, or meet with colleagues, and we’re not really there with them. With conscious effort you can shut off the outside world and just be present with the person you’re with. Try it, you will like it!
5. **Get outdoors.** Take the time to go outside and really slow down in nature, take a deep breath. Try to do this daily — by yourself or with loved ones. The Japanese refer to this as forest bathing (The simple method of being calm and quiet amongst the trees, observing nature around you whilst breathing deeply can help both adults and children de-stress and boost health and wellbeing in a natural way).
6. **Single-task.** Focus on one thing at a time. When you feel the urge to switch to other tasks, pause, breathe, and pull yourself back. And when one task is completed, be conscious that it is done and take note that you have done something before rushing off to the next thing. Give yourself a pat.
7. **Breathe.** When you find yourself speeding up and stressing out, pause, and take a deep breath. It’s the easiest way to bring calm to the body which will in turn, calm the mind.

Elaine MacDonald is a Registered Health and Life Coach and operator of Findingyourzen.ca

Rideau Chorale

A maturing choir prepares to close its 8th season singing the works of Gabriel Fauré

JANICE MANCHEE

Rideau Chorale is wrapping up its eighth season on May 4th by returning to two pieces it originally performed in 2016: Gabriel Fauré's Requiem and his Cantique de Jean Racine.

"They are beautiful works," says Rideau Chorale's new Music Director, Kevin Reeves. "And since it was last performed, the choir has matured and grown."

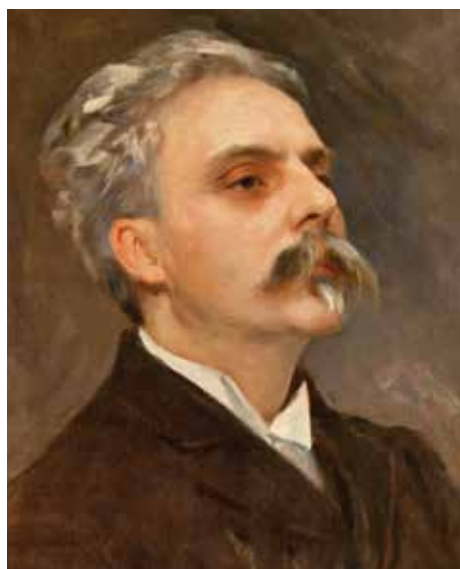
Rideau Chorale originally grew out of the non-auditioned Folklore Centre choir. When Ottawa lost the Folklore Centre, members moved across the street to Southminster Church under the direction of Roland Graham. By 2017, the choir was incorporated as a non-profit, charitable organization.

From singing short, folk/pop music with simple harmonies, Rideau Chorale dove into some of Europe's classical master works, including The Messiah and Requiems by noted composers such as Mozart.

"It's been challenging," says Mark Olo, a long-time choir member and bass, "but Rideau Chorale is not only dedicated to producing excellent concerts with beautiful music. We work hard to develop the choral skills of our members."

Gabriel Fauré would approve of Rideau Chorale's origins and transition. He himself provided an essential link between the Romantic tradition of Chopin, Schumann and Brahms and the Modernism of Debussy and Mahler.

Fauré was born in France in 1845. By



Gabriel Fauré



PETER POLGAR PHOTO

Rideau Chorale's May 4th concert at Southminster United Church will pair the music of Gabriel Fauré with songs of two local composers.

the age of nine, Fauré's musical gifts and a scholarship found him in residence at the far-from-home École Niedermeyer de Paris. It was here Saint-Saëns introduced him to then little-known composers like Liszt and Wagner who were busy innovating traditional music. And it was here he composed Cantique de Jean Racine.

It's always fun to have a bit of gossip about these "greats," and Fauré doesn't disappoint. He was married to a woman he was reportedly quite fond of. This didn't stop him, however, from seeking passion elsewhere. Contemporary reports agreed that he was extremely attractive to women and that "his conquests were legion in the Paris salons."

Fauré began work on his Requiem in 1887, in his own words "purely for the pleasure of it." He selected the text to emphasize the idea of rest and peace.

By the mid-1890s, Fauré was teaching at the Conservatoire de Paris, where he was popular and well respected. He did ruffle some feathers when he was appointed head of the school in 1905 due to his commitment to modernizing and broadening the range of music taught.

It's not surprising then that Rideau Chorale is pairing him with two modern, locally based composers at their upcoming May 4th concert (7:30pm at Southminster United

Church). Ottawa's own Andrew Ager composed the music for Garden Shadows, with text by Canadian poet Bliss Carman. Rideau Chorale Music Director Kevin Reeves drew on Archibald Lampman's poem In Beechwood Cemetery to compose a piece specifically for this concert.

Rideau Chorale will be joined by soprano Ania Hejnar and baritone Phil Holmes. A small chamber orchestra, including strings, harp, organ and French horns, will complete the sound.

Information about joining and/or supporting Rideau Chorale and its virtual and upcoming performances can be found at rideauchorale.com. Tickets are available on Eventbrite.ca.

Janice Manchee (tenor) is the Chair of Rideau Chorale.

Rideau Chorale presents

Fauré
REQUIEM




TICKETS
EVENTBRITE

Directed by Kevin Reeves
Rideau Chorale is joined by Soprano Ania Hejnar, Baritone Phil Holmes, and Chamber Orchestra.

May 4th, 2024 - 7:30pm
Southminster United Church
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www.rideauchorale.com/faure-requiem

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An ecumenical worship experience

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ANDREI DAVEDIANOV

There are many reasons why Christians from various traditions and cultures stay separated nowadays, but what might bring them together? Genuine fellowship? Expressive worship music? Passionate prayer? Delicious food? How about all of it at once? Will we see a loving spiritual community then?

Last September, a generous grant from the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship enabled a team of volunteers to start a new, unique initiative at Saint Paul University (SPU). As the head of the team, Professor Sarah Kathleen Johnson, a theology professor and a Mennonite minister, puts it, the project aimed to experiment with ways of worshipping together as Christians from across traditions that reflect the cultural, linguistic, and denominational diversity of the SPU community: "We want to strengthen relationships and to embody in practice the deep connection between Christian faith and our social justice commitments."

Sister Mary Linda Onuoha, IHM, the Pastoral Services Coordinator at SPU, describes how Christians from different backgrounds can unite in worship, regardless of their theological differences: "It emphasizes what unites us instead of

what divides us, giving an average believer a sense of solidarity and belonging. It fosters fellowship and mutual respect among Christians and encourages them to work together for a common goal."

Singing together was essential to building ecumenical relationships among believers of different Christian traditions. Joshua Zentner-Barrett, an Anglican church musician and a doctoral student, worked hard to select music the participants could sing together: "Sometimes it meant selecting simple songs that might not be well-known



but could be quickly learned. Most recently, we discovered that contemporary worship songs were a shared music source."

Each of the worship services was based around sharing a vegetarian meal. Through conversation and prayer, participants reflected on people they have loved and lost, the practices that shape their experiences of the Advent season, the call to love their neighbours, their connectedness to all creation, and much more.

The diverse university community responded to the initiative with a desire to embrace an ecumenical worship experience, transcending differences. Tomi Olutunda, a Pentecostal student, emphasizes that many students and faculty eagerly welcomed the opportunity to establish deeper connections. A Catholic doctoral student, Father Erik Sorensen, SJ, was reminded once again that God is beyond our comprehension: "Praying together is a way of exploring the inexhaustible source of love that we Christians call God."

In the spirit of the university's commitment to fostering mutual understanding among all religious traditions as well as between cultures, the project expanded beyond Christian ecumenism to include a meal gathering focused on trust as foundational for respectful dialogue with Canada's First People. Professor Sheila Smith, RSCJ, from the Centre on the Churches, Truth, and Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, believes that this enhanced the evolution of the project.

Will this fresh wind of spiritual freedom continue to blow in Old Ottawa East? The Reverend Margo Whittaker, SPU's Anglican



SUPPLIED PHOTOS

Sharing conversation, prayer and a vegetarian meal is helping to create bonds of unity among Christians at Saint Paul University.

chaplain, hopes that the strengthened relationships will continue: "I imagine further worship services that bring together Christians from across traditions, as we share many languages and cultures."

Andrei Davedianov is a Wesleyan doctoral student.



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ECLECTIC EVENTS

**April 27th from
11:00am to 6:00pm**

TASTE OF JAMAICA, OTTAWA INTL. FOOD & BOOK EXPO, Horticulture Building @ Lansdowne.

For an unforgettable culinary experience, visit the Taste of Jamaica | Ottawa International Food and Book Expo! Indulge in the vibrant flavours and rich cultural heritage of Jamaica, right in the heart of Ottawa. This in-person event takes place on Saturday, April 27th at the

Horticulture Building at Lansdowne.

Prepare your taste buds for a tantalizing journey through the diverse and mouthwatering cuisine of Jamaica. From jerk chicken to ackee and saltfish, this event offers a wide array of authentic Jamaican dishes that will transport you to the tropical island.

But it's not just about the food! Immerse yourself in the lively atmosphere as you enjoy live music performances, traditional dance shows, and engaging book presentations. Discover the rich literary tradition of Jamaica and explore the works of talented authors. Whether you're a food enthusiast, a book lover, or simply curious about Jamaican culture, this event is a must-attend. So mark your calendars and get ready to savor the flavours, rhythms, and stories of Jamaica!

Order tickets at eventbrite.ca/e/taste-of-jamaica-ottawa-international-food-and-book-expo-tickets-837086005777?aff=ebdssbdestsearch.



April 28th @ 3:00pm SPRING CONCERT, THE BYTOWN VOICES CHOIR, Knox Presbyterian Church, 120 Lisgar Street.

The Bytown Voices Choir welcomes you to attend their Spring concert entitled Home: Songs of Belonging, Land and Connection. Among the featured songs you'll hear are Canadian classics like En Canadien Errant and Gilles Vigneault's Mon Pays. Songs celebrating the rivers of Canada and Georgian Bay will be performed along with a special premier of the song Home to Africville composed by local musician and teacher, Lyndsey E. Bolden, in which she remembers Africville, the sadly displaced and vibrant black community of Halifax. A bluegrass band will accompany a suite of songs entitled Dear Appalachia, while another beautiful trio of songs celebrates Emily Carr and the divinity she found in the pulse of nature.

The Bytown Voices is a "no-audition necessary" choir of mixed voices, soprano, alto, tenor and bass. Children aged 9 and up are eligible for membership too, making The Bytown Voices a true community choir. We encourage parents along with their children to join our ranks along with any interested tenor or bass voices - we need your participation! No previous choir experience is necessary and members benefit from many on-line learning supports in a nurturing environment.

The Bytown Voices Choir practices at 7:30 pm on Tuesday nights at St. Basil's Church on Maitland just north of the Queensway. Registration for Fall of 2024 begins in August, so check the website in late Summer for more information on repertoire and starting dates (www.bytownvoices.com).

Tickets for the concert are on sale now at the website. Adult admission is \$20, children 12 and under are free. Free parking is available on street and for \$2 at the nearby City Hall lot, entrance on Laurier Avenue.

May 31st to July 9th

THE WIZARD OF OZ, ORPHEUS MUSICAL THEATRE, Meridian Theatre @ CentrepoinTE, 101 CentrepoinTE Drive.

When young Dorothy Gale is swept away by a tornado from her Kansas farm to the magical land of Oz, she encounters a host of whimsical characters: good witches, bad witches, animals that talk, scarecrows that walk, and things magical to behold. To find her way home, she must journey along the Yellow Brick Road to see the mysterious and all-powerful Wizard in Emerald City. Along the way, she makes new friends, but must also brave many dangers, including the Wicked Witch of the West, who will stop at nothing to get her hands on Dorothy's magical ruby slippers. To make it home safely, Dorothy must learn an important



lesson: there's no place like home.

Based upon the classic motion picture, this musical production is appropriate for all ages. For ticket information, scan the QR Code below.



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April 20th @ 7:30pm**

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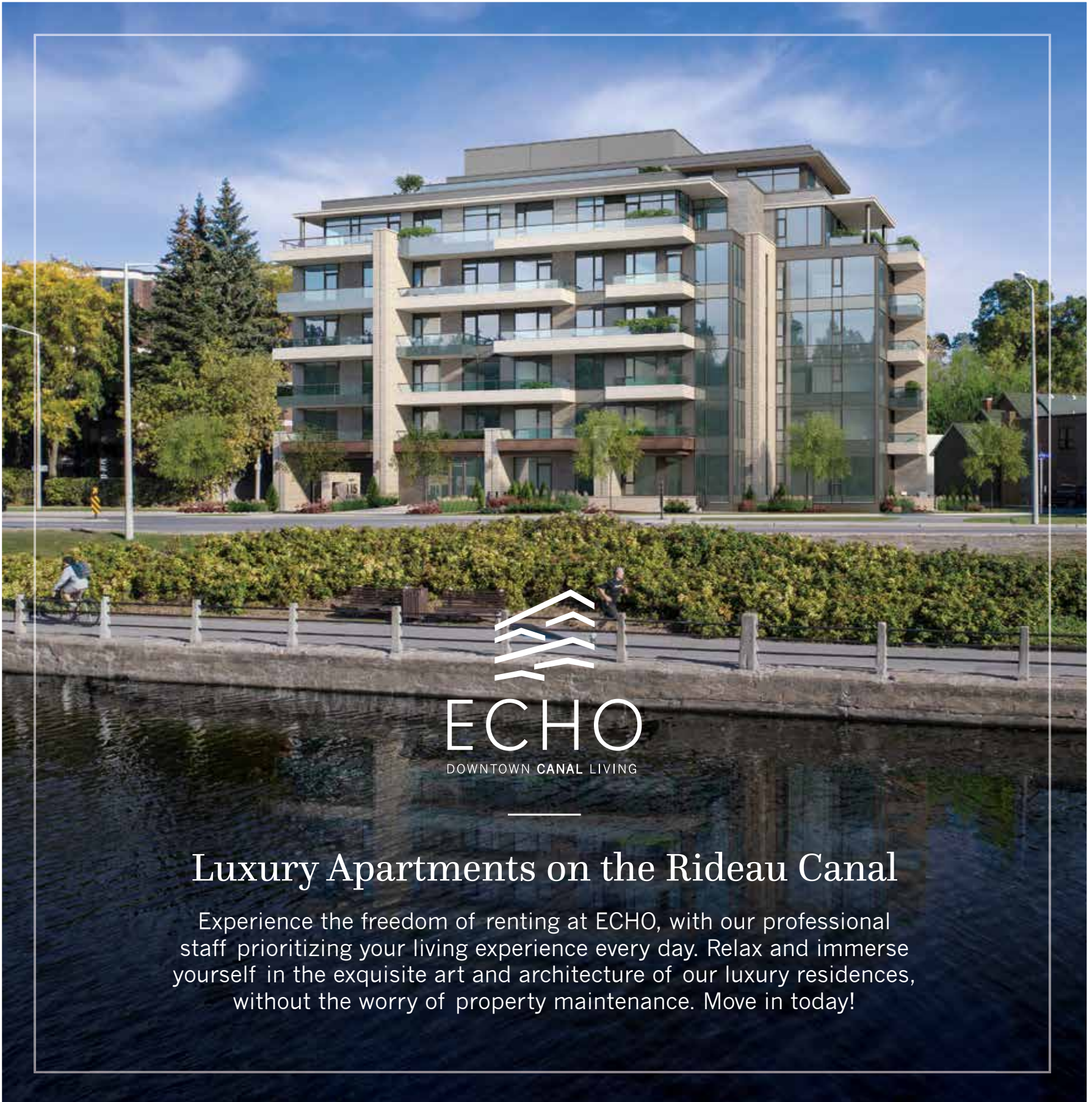
Spring is in the air! Get ready for gardening by ordering your supplies from the 17th Southminster Ottawa Scout Group, delivered FREE to your driveway in Old Ottawa South, Old Ottawa East, and the Glebe on Saturday May 4th, 2023. All proceeds are used to support fun and exciting Scouting activities for boys and girls in the local community. We offer a variety of high-quality products thanks to the generous support of Ritchie Feed & Seed.

Ordering is available now and easy to do at our online store - <https://17th-ottawa-southminster-scouts.square.site/s/shop> or by scanning the QR Code below.



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Pharmacists can now prescribe for 19 minor ailments

On January 1, 2023, Ontario pharmacists were authorized to prescribe medications for 13 minor ailments that include:

- Allergic rhinitis
- Candidal stomatitis (oral thrush)
- Conjunctivitis (bacterial, allergic and viral)
- Dermatitis (atopic, eczema, allergic and contact)
- Dysmenorrhea
- Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD)
- Hemorrhoids
- Herpes labialis (cold sores)
- Impetigo
- Insect bites and urticaria (hives)
- Tick bites, post-exposure prophylaxis to prevent Lyme disease
- Musculoskeletal sprains and strains
- Urinary tract infections (uncomplicated)

On October 1, 2023, Ontario pharmacists were authorized to prescribe certain drugs for 6 additional minor ailments that include:

- Acne (mild)
- Aphthous Ulcers (canker sores)
- Diaper dermatitis
- Vulvovaginal candidiasis (yeast infection)
- Pinworms and threadworms
- Nausea and vomiting of pregnancy

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