

## A Country Unlike What They Knew Before

### How Hockey Helped Ease Three Young Refugees' Transition

BY JOE PARASKEVAS



Ismail Amam, 9, (left) and Ahmed al-Masri, 8, of the Ottawa East Novice 'C' Coyotes have their skates tied by their fathers at Sandy Hill Arena. Last winter, the boys and their families lived in war-torn Syria. Now, thanks to the game of hockey, they are beginning new lives in this country.

On a fall Saturday morning at Sandy Hill Arena, the familiar elements of Canadiana are there.

The non-stop sequence of hockey game after game has begun. The rink is filled with the usual sounds: referees'

whistles, spectators' cries, the rumble of a Zamboni, the cut of skates on ice, the slap of sticks on puck.

And yet, look closer. This place holds some surprises, as well.

In one dressing room, there is only the

mutter of a few voices. Three young boys are already in their hockey gear, despite the fact game-time remains three-quarters of an hour away.

Their teammates on the Ottawa East Novice 'C' Coyotes have yet to arrive.

PHOTO CREDIT: JOE PARASKEVAS

Their fathers tie their skates, repeating a ritual played out in countless Canadian arenas.

This is where things get interesting.

The back-and-forth conversation is in Arabic.

Nine-year-old Ismail Amam and two brothers, Ahmed and Mohammed al-Masri, eight and nine respectively, can't wait to take the ice. Their hockey careers are but a month-and-a-half long.

Not only are the boys new to the game, they and their families are new to this country.

Eight months ago, the al-Masris weren't playing any sports. Because of the violence that had gripped Syria, they weren't even going to school. They, their parents and their 12-year-old brother Hamada were about to flee the village of Daraa as refugees.

Ismail and his family left their home in the Syrian town of Idlib.

The families went to Lebanon, then Jordan and finally came to Canada. It was a journey fraught with concern about the unknown.

"We were very worried about how the kids would adapt to the weather, the

*Continued on page 8*

## Une Nouvelle École Française pour le Vieux Ottawa Est?

### Fort probable, disent les autorités

PAR JOE PARASKEVAS

Parmi la construction de la nouvelle rue Main et tant de nouvelles maisons et appartements résidentielles, la possibilité existe qu'il y aura bientôt un édifice inattendu dans le Vieux Ottawa Est.

Avant l'automne de 2019, il est fort probable qu'une école élémentaire de langue française pourrait ouvrir ses portes dans ce quartier, selon un responsable du Conseil des écoles

catholiques du Centre-Est.

« Présentement, on a un site qui serait disponible, » a dit le directeur de l'éducation du CECCE Réjean Sirois après une soirée de consultation à l'université Saint-Paul à la fin d'octobre. « Ce serait dans ce quartier, très près d'ici. Je dois respecter la deuxième partie qui travaille avec nous. Mais, si on avait l'argent on pourrait construire demain matin. »

Le CECCE a organisé la soirée pour surveiller l'enthousiasme de parents des secteurs Vieux Ottawa Sud, du Glebe et du Vieux Ottawa Est envers la possibilité d'ouvrir une école élémentaire catholique de langue française.

À peu près 25 personnes y ont assisté. Tous ont encouragé les représentants du CECCE de poursuivre le projet. Tous ont exprimé un besoin pour une école française dans le quartier.

Le conseiller municipale David Chernushenko s'est arrêté à la soirée afin d'offrir son soutien au projet.

Les représentants du CECCE ont expliqué qu'ils étaient toujours à la recherche de fonds pour le projet. La présidente du conseil, Johanne Lacombe a avoué qu'elle était très encouragée par les commentaires des parents. Elle reviendrait à ses collègues et à la municipalité avec confiance

*Continued on page 8*





Paddler extraordinaire Jamie Brougham (stern) and his buddy Dave Best (bow) took to the Rideau Canal on Canada Day. PHOTO CREDIT: BROUGHAM FAMILY PHOTO

## Rideau River Year in Review

### Despite low water levels, OOE's river continues to charm

BY JAMIE BROUGHAM

The Rideau River this year was excellent again: good for swimming, boating, and beautiful sights.

Between paddling down to Vincent Massey Park, seeing wildlife, particularly the swan of Brantwood, it was evident the river is an underappreciated natural resource.

Just the great exercise and refreshing environment it provides makes it an excellent social resource, right in our neighbourhood.

Some personal highlights of the summer included paddling with a neighbour to see the annual Aboriginal Powwow at Vincent Massey.

Having the Brantwood swan swimming beside me as I paddled was dream-like. Once it followed me back to Brantwood beach and showed off for a couple of neighbours watching. It even got its

picture in the *Mainstreeter*.

The water level this year was low. The last time I paddled in 2015 was Christmas Eve day. It made me wonder what the changing climate will do to this beautiful waterway and the many across this country.

A few observations: since cormorants began hunting on the river, the big carp have disappeared. The fish were never anything pretty to look at, but I did always marvel at their size. I think the birds have pushed the small fish population down to the point it has affected the food chain in the river.

Over a longer period of time, zebra mussels have cleaned up the water of both the river and the Rideau Canal. I really never paddled the river too much years ago before the zebra took hold, but I can remember not seeing a foot deep into the canal and now it looks

clean enough for swimming, too. Not that I would, but the water is certainly nicer when you can look into it.

Then there are the geese. Because of the large number of goose droppings, they have replaced anything that was king of such a distinction before them. If not for their mess the geese would be great to have around. It is cool to be on the river when a bunch of them take off. They fly in formation resembling jets cruising over your head. It is magic to be floating beneath them.

One of my greatest river experiences in 2016 was a special tour I took with my neighbour Dave Best on Canada Day, as we have done on that day for the last 16 years.

We paddled down the Rideau from Brantwood to the Ottawa River, up the Ottawa to the canal and then up the canal back home. We did it when our

kids were younger. Now, we meet our wives for lunch at the Canal Ritz.

The two of us are a tourist attraction carrying the canoe up by the locks downtown. To add a little flavor to the day, when we paddle past the National Arts Centre we use broken goalie hockey sticks as paddles. It is great to provoke smiles. This year, I told some observers that the voyageurs who played goalie often used their sticks as paddles.

I hope the river becomes an even better social resource for our community. Ideally we will build a community cottage where people can come and enjoy the area next to the Rideau and have room for boats to borrow. In that way, everyone could get out there and experience the Rideau for themselves.



## The Poppy Song

by Leanne Doyle

A poppy for you and a poppy for me  
We wear to remember why it is we are free  
People gave their lives and that's why you see  
A poppy for you and a poppy for me.

Freedom for you and freedom for me  
We don't live in fear of what is to be  
We all have a voice in a loving country  
Freedom for you and freedom for me.

A poppy for you and a poppy for me  
This is a symbol of peace and harmony  
Everyone join hands, let the doves fly free  
A poppy for you and a poppy for me.  
A poppy for you and a poppy for me.



A teacher at Lady Evelyn School composed this song for her students to mark Remembrance Day.

PHOTO CREDIT: MEREDITH NEWBERRY



The annual Remembrance Day ceremony usually held at the Brantwood Gates took place at Saint Paul University this year due to Main Street construction.

PHOTO CREDIT:  
JOHN DANCE

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# FROM THE EDITOR

## WHAT WE BUILD TELLS US A LOT ABOUT WHO WE ARE.

OK. That's obvious. But it bears mentioning this month because of what we learned recently.

There might be a new school built in Old Ottawa East in the next two or three years. The Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est held a public consultation in late October to gauge support for their plans to build an elementary school that would serve the Glebe, Old Ottawa South and OOE.

Unsurprisingly, interest was strong. Parents expressed the kind of fondness for the three communities you often hear at such events. It had to do with how safe and welcoming they are.

In fact, it was occasionally amusing to hear about life in the Glebe, OOS and OOE from a French perspective. One parent spoke about the depth to which the French language had penetrated the communities.

She recalled speaking English with people on multiple occasions, only to discover they were actually French speakers. She referred to such a hidden culture as "une francophonie discrète."

A French school would answer a profound, practical need but also add to the quality of life of our area, participants said. School board officials were pleased.

They came away convinced their plan to build a school was destined for success. While they secured funding and began construction, temporary daycare, kindergarten and Grade One and Two classes could be set up at Saint Paul University next fall, they said.

I left the meeting with a different message. I told myself we at the Mainstreeter had to focus on French far more than we had.

That meant not simply covering events linked to the Francophone community but also looking at how French – in all its manifestations – was lived in OOE. A few days later, my sources sent me a message that underlined the importance of that way of thinking.

People in another corner of OOE were talking about the possibility of adding French as an immersion program at Lady Evelyn Alternative School. Was it the key to keeping a beloved school alive? The Streeter had tried to tackle that story earlier this year. It was high time to revisit the matter.

So, as we head to 2017 – a historic year for Canada, when we celebrate 150 years of nationhood – this is one way I, as editor, want to mark the event: by turning to stories about French: as a language, a culture and a way of looking at the world. Who knows? It could open doors to other buildings. Happy New Year!



PHOTO BY NANCY MCL IMAGES

**Joe Paraskevas, Mainstreeter Editor.**

## CE QUE NOUS BÂTISSONS EN DIT LONG SUR QUI NOUS SOMMES.

Cela va évidemment de soi. Mais, avec ce que nous avons appris récemment, il vaut la peine de le répéter.

Une nouvelle école pourrait être construite dans le Vieil Ottawa-Est dans les deux ou trois prochaines années. Le Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est a tenu une consultation publique à la fin octobre visant à évaluer le soutien de la communauté pour son projet de construction d'une école élémentaire qui desservirait le Glebe, le Vieil Ottawa-Sud et le VOE.

Naturellement, le projet a suscité un vif intérêt. Les parents ont exprimé le type d'affection pour ces trois communautés que l'on entend souvent à de tels événements, exprimant notamment qu'elles sont sécuritaires et chaleureuses.

En fait, c'était même amusant d'entendre parler de la vie dans le Glebe, dans le VOS et dans le VOE d'un point de vue francophone. Une mère a exprimé à quel point le français est présent dans la communauté.

Elle a dit avoir parlé en anglais avec des gens à plusieurs reprises, pour ensuite apprendre qu'ils étaient en fait francophones, phénomène qu'elle a nommé « une francophonie discrète ».

D'après les participants, non seulement une école francophone répondrait à un profond besoin, elle enrichirait aussi la qualité de vie de notre quartier. Les représentants du conseil scolaire étaient bien satisfaits.

Ils ont quitté la réunion convaincus que leur plan verrait le jour. Ils ont aussi indiqué que pendant qu'ils assurent les fonds et commencent la construction, une garderie et des classes de maternelle, de première et de deuxième année seront temporairement installées à l'Université Saint-Paul à l'automne.

C'est plutôt un message différent que j'ai retenu en sortant de la réunion. Je me suis dit qu'il fallait, au Mainstreeter, mettre beaucoup plus d'emphasis sur le français que dans le passé.

En plus d'accorder une couverture aux événements touchant la communauté francophone, il faut aussi se pencher sur comment le français – sous toutes ses formes – est vécu dans le VOE. Quelques jours plus tard, j'ai reçu un message de la part d'une source qui soulignait l'importance de cette réflexion.

Il est question, dans un autre coin du VOE, d'ajouter des cours d'immersion française à l'école alternative Lady Evelyn. Est-ce là la clé pour préserver une école bien-aimée? Le Mainstreeter a tenté d'aborder ce dossier plus tôt cette année, mais le temps est venu de jeter un regard sur la question encore une fois.

Alors que nous sommes à quelques semaines de l'année 2017 – année historique pour le Canada, alors que nous célébrons les 150 ans de notre nation – voici une façon dont j'ai l'intention, en tant que rédacteur en chef, de souligner cet événement : publier des articles sur le français en tant que langue, culture et façon de voir le monde. Qui sait? Cela pourrait ouvrir la porte à d'autres bâtiments. Bonne année!

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Editor: [editor@mainstreeter.ca](mailto:editor@mainstreeter.ca)  
Copy editors:

Joe Paraskevas  
Joe Paraskevas  
Michele Castonguay  
Keltie Roberston  
Ron Rose

Rédactrice (pour le français):  
Advertising Manager:  
[advertising@mainstreeter.ca](mailto:advertising@mainstreeter.ca)  
Accounts Manager:  
Layout Designer:  
Photographers:

Cynthia Dwyer  
Monika Lavallée - Unika Studio  
Peter Croal  
John Dance  
D.N. Milburn  
T.L. di Giacomo

Reporters:

Web Team:

Phil Legault, Michele Castonguay,  
Meredith Newberry

Social Media Editor:  
Production:  
CAG program guide layout:  
Distribution

Anthony Lenzo  
Monika Lavallée - Unika Studio  
Carol Workun  
Daniel Racicot

Old Ottawa East eUpdate: [info@ottawaeastCAG.ca](mailto:info@ottawaeastCAG.ca)

Carol Workun

Beat Editors  
Environment Editor:  
Education Editor:  
Faith Pages Editor:

Gayle Singer  
Nancy MacDonald

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**Sandy Hill Community Health Centre:** 613-565-3265



In October, *Counting Crows*, a short story by Sandy Hill author Catina Noble and the Mainstreeter's first piece of fiction in years received ... mixed reviews. Some people liked it. They stopped by and actually told us. Some people didn't like it. They wrote in.

## Counting Criticisms

"The community newspaper is for community news and events. It is not for publishing fiction and especially not for publishing fiction with violence and swearing. If I want to read fiction, I go to the library as my source."

Nancy MacDonald

"I would to thank you for your introduction to the fiction piece. I note that you had some misgivings about publishing Catina Noble's story. I strongly believe your misgivings were well-founded. This story is not appropriate for the target audience of the Mainstreeter."

I have always enjoyed the Mainstreeter as it provides information on the Ottawa East community. I certainly hope that this will continue to be the main objective of the paper.

I was very disappointed to see a story using language that is not appropriate for children and that includes violence. This paper is not the venue for this story. Note that I have nothing against the story. It is well-written but it should not be in the Mainstreeter. I would also note that it takes an enormous amount of space which could include additional

articles on what is happening in our neighbourhoods.

I am copying the Ottawa East Community Association in the hope that we can address the mission of the Mainstreeter. I would like to know what the advertisers think about including a 2.5-page fictional story in future editions.

I would hope that future editions will include information much more relevant to Ottawa East."

Jocelyne Caloz

"You asked for feedback on the above story. Here it is. I did not enjoy the story. It was morbid. I support the opinion that this story should have been declined for publication. Furthermore, it covered more than two full pages of the Mainstreeter. This is a family newspaper and people read it to keep up to date on community news. I don't believe *Counting the Crows* or any other literary works should be published in a community newspaper. I view it as free advertising for the author."

Janet Campbell



## Francojeunesse Families Protest School Rezoning Changes Affecting Downtown Students

BY MARIE-ELISE RANCOURT

The *Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario* (CEPEO) recently proposed to alter a school catchment zone that would directly affect residents whose children currently attend the CEPEO's Francojeunesse school in Sandy Hill.

Currently, the catchment zone for Francojeunesse includes the Glebe, Old Ottawa South and Old Ottawa East, among other neighbourhoods. Under the new rezoning proposal put forward by the CEPEO, a temporary school would open in September 2017 at 175 Beech Street in Little Italy. Francojeunesse students who live in the Glebe and west of Bank Street would be asked—or possibly required—to transfer from Francojeunesse to the new school.

Many parents from the Glebe, Old Ottawa South and Centretown are

expressing concerns with the proposal, citing a flawed and inadequate parent and community consultation. They claim only one rezoning scenario was proposed and it would cause significant disruptions to students' academic and social development as well as split the communities in two.

Some families have expressed their intent to consider other options for their children which could create a spillover to crowded English downtown schools if the proposed rezoning plan is implemented.

A group of parents has set up an online petition to ask that the rezoning process be halted and a more open process be put in place that would consider more than one scenario. The petition had 132 supporters as of Nov. 16. It can be viewed online at <https://goo.gl/Z0ZQZ2>.

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### Correction

The author of the story, *A Great Day on Main Street*, in the October Mainstreeter was Carol Workun, not Erin O'Connor.



# Celebrate Your Inner Scot on New Year's Eve

BY DON CUMMER



For the third year in a row, the best New Year's Eve party in town will take place across the Rideau Canal at the Aberdeen Pavilion.

It's called Hogman-eh! and is hosted by the Scottish Society of Ottawa.

New Year's is a big deal in Scotland. In 1996, more than 300,000 people gathered in Edinburgh and set the Guinness World Record for the world's largest New Year's party.

Here in Ottawa, thousands have come to the Aberdeen Pavilion to ring in the new year Scottish-style. As one of the first events to celebrate Canada's 150th birthday, this year's Hogman-eh! may draw its biggest crowds yet.

Its success comes, in part, because the event is free, but also because there's something for everyone.

Families with young children take advantage of the annual tradition of having two countdowns for New Year's. The first is at midnight in Scotland, which is 7 p.m. here. This means that families can bring their kids from 5 p.m. onward to enjoy the live music, dancing, magicians, jugglers, face-painters and LED-light performers. They can be on hand for the stroke of 'midnight' when the balloons rain down from the rafters. And they can be back home by 8.

The second New Year's countdown will include the traditional singing of Auld Lang Syne followed by fireworks. From 5 p.m. until midnight, Hogman-eh! offers whisky tasting, food and

beverages, pipe bands, Scottish dancing, and live music – all in the warm confines of the 'Cattle Castle.'

Many who come to Hogman-eh! bring along their skates for a late-night circuit around the Lansdowne Park rink. Others settle in before the stage to enjoy the variety of musical entertainment. Bobby Watt, whose band Ecosse is a perennial favourite at the celebration, is also responsible for lining up the entertainment.

"Our headliner act this year is one of the biggest names in Celtic music," he said. "We're under contractual obligation not to release the name of the act until later in December, but believe me, lovers of Scottish music won't want to miss this."

Across from the Aberdeen Pavilion at the Horticulture Building, New Year's revelers can get a preview of portions of the Scottish Diaspora Tapestry that has toured the world and will be exhibited through the month of January at the Main Branch of the Ottawa Public Library.

Entrance to the Aberdeen pavilion is free to everyone, but those 19-years of age or older who want to upgrade their New Year's Eve experience are invited to purchase a VIP package for \$75. They will enjoy select seating, entrance to a special area where they can meet the musical performers, complimentary coat check, cocktails and appetizers in the Milestones VIP Lounge, and various other items of swag that will make this a memorable night. More information can be obtained at [www.ottscot.ca](http://www.ottscot.ca).

At Hogman-eh! Mayor Jim Watson will declare January 2017 to be Scottish Month in Ottawa. The Scottish Society of Ottawa has organized several events to celebrate.

The Scottish Diaspora Tapestry will be on display. The annual Robbie Burns Dinner will celebrate the birthday of Scotland's national poet. And on Jan. 28, skaters will gather on the Rideau Canal Skateway for the Third Annual Sir John A's Great Canadian Kilt Skate.

Whether you have Scottish blood in your veins, or whether New Year's Eve is a chance to bring out the inner Scot that lives in all of us, Hogman-eh! is going to be the place to ring in 2017.

## Christmas Hamper Project

For over 35 years, the Christmas Hamper Project has helped thousands of Ottawa families and individuals who have been referred by Centretown agencies. This year, our goal is to supply 175 Ottawa families and individuals with boxes of food, toiletries, and small gifts to make their Christmas season brighter.

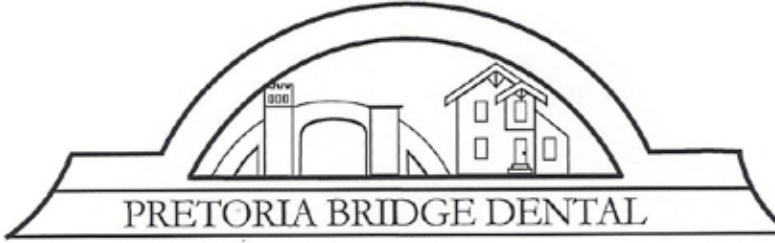
Hosted by Centretown United Church, hampers will be delivered on December 23. You can help in a number of ways.

To adopt a hamper, please register by 30 November online at <http://www.centretownunited.org/xmashamperproject/>.

To pack hampers and help wrap gifts on December 22nd, please contact Willy at [chp2016.volunteers@gmail.com](mailto:chp2016.volunteers@gmail.com).

To deliver hampers or drive on December 23rd, please contact Linda at [linda.pollock@sympatico.ca](mailto:linda.pollock@sympatico.ca), or phone 613-232-0370.

If you prefer, please send a cheque made out to "Centretown United Church, 507 Bank Street, K2P 1Z5, indicating "Christmas Hamper Project". You can also donate on the "Donate Now" button on the church's website <http://centretownunited.org/> by selecting the Christmas Hamper Project. Thank you for your support!



**PRETORIA BRIDGE DENTAL**

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Dr. Mike Watkins  
Dr. Serena Wong

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223 Echo Dr. Ottawa, ON. K1S 1N2  
-New Patients Welcome-

**PRETORIA BRIDGE DENTAL**



## A COUNTRY UNLIKE WHAT THEY KNEW BEFORE *cont. from page 1*

schools, the culture,” said Easen Amam, Ismail’s father, through an interpreter. “All these worries have been alleviated.”

Much of the credit for the boys’ relatively easy transition to a country unlike what they knew before goes to hockey, Amam and Moammar al-Masri admitted. The children met a Syrian-Canadian boy whose father happened to be past-president of the Ottawa East Minor Hockey Association. They decided they wanted to play the sport, too.

With donated equipment and a complete lack of fear or inhibition, they began attending practices. At first, they were hesitant, their coach, Karina Potvin, admitted. They would essentially run on skates. But the boys were “good listeners,” she added and they caught on.

“I was really shocked actually,” Potvin said. “They are excelling at what they’re doing. Eight months ago they were in Syria. Now, they’re playing hockey in the capital of Canada.”

She chuckled at the way the boys’ enthusiasm grew as the season approached.

Ahmed came to her and would say: “Coach, coach. Team, team,” Potvin remembered. She realized he was asking when the season opener would take place.

The trio’s success has won the hearts of team parents and hockey officials. But the newcomers have received practical support as well as praise.

“Some parents come to the rink (with their own children) and then go get them,” said Allan Martel, the official whose son introduced Ismail, Ahmed and Mohammed to the game. “This is what community and hockey parents are all about.”

Easen Amam and Moammar al-Masri remain slightly in awe of their sons and their new pastime.

“It’s their favourite sport, right now,” al-Masri said.

In the game that particular Saturday in Sandy Hill, the Coyotes win 3-1. Mohammed al-Masri notches a goal.

## UNE NOUVELLE ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE POUR LE VIEUX OTTAWA EST? *cont. from page 1*

que le projet serait soutenu par la communauté.

«Je pourrai leur dire : l’intérêt dans la communauté est palpable» a-t-elle dit.

Mme Lacombe et M Sirois ont encouragé les participants de la séance de se joindre à un comité de parents qui pourrait offrir des conseils à chaque étape et de faire la promotion et «aimer» la page Facebook du projet.

M. Sirois a dit que le conseil va travailler avec l’Université Saint-Paul afin d’ouvrir un endroit temporaire possiblement en automne prochain.

Ce lieu pourrait comprendre une garderie, une classe de maternelle-jardin et possiblement des classes de première et deuxième année, a confirmé M. Sirois. Il a ajouté que la construction possible de la nouvelle école pourrait se passer avant 2019.

« Je pense que, idéalement, si on recevait du financement d’ici les deux prochaines années, on peut parler d’à peu près d’ici trois ans,» a-t-il dit. «Mais, ça n’empêche pas de démarrer une école temporaire et répondre aux besoins de la communauté. »

# Weaving the Fabric of Community and Country

## THE INSPIRATION

The Department of Creative Works was formed this past summer, inspired by fantastical celebrations of the arts and music across the world – from the Bosch Parade in the Netherlands, to the Parade of Lost Souls in Vancouver to Trinidad’s Carnival and many stops in between. These events each have an aspect that makes them unique: local participation – as opposed to mere spectating, the use of waterways, or simply the telling of a story in a special way. While Ottawa is home to many festivals, it has few events which satisfy this craving for rich story-telling and creative expression for all participants.

This is where we saw an opportunity.

Old Ottawa East is known for its inclusive and eclectic residents. What better place to plant the seeds of an annual parade, as a point of pride for the neighbourhood? We are fortunate to be bounded by two waterways, each with its own history. A parade between them could be a fantastic way to connect with the people we live with and the environment we call home.

## THE TRADITION

Uniquely positioned between the Rideau River and the Rideau Canal, Old Ottawa East serves as a crossroads between many different traditions – First Nations, English and French, and a rich multicultural heritage of arrivals from around the world.

OOE is home to many different histories. We hope to honour them all through an event that is rich in music and storytelling.

Some of the aspects we hope to share include: the Rideau River’s story of the First Nations, the early voyageurs and the mythic flying canoe, la chasse-galerie, as well as respect for the natural environment – fish, birds, trees and water – which has sustained us throughout.

## NEIGHBOURS, ARTISTS, MUSICIANS... WE NEED YOU!

Old Ottawa East is known for its great sense of community spirit. With so much growth on the horizon, we hope that this event will strengthen the bonds with our neighbours, reconnect to our roots and help welcome newcomers. Planning is still underway. Let us know what you would like to see!

## Inaugural Event – Summer 2017



The celebration will begin with an opening ceremony beside the Rideau River. From there, we will travel toward Main Street, loop through the neighbourhood and return to the starting point. Along the way, there will be stops to interpret different parts of the story of Canada. Participation is not only allowed but desired and encouraged! Join us and make sure your story is woven into Canada’s history as well.

For more information, or to become involved with planning, contact us at:  
DepartmentCreativeWorks@gmail.com

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RON ROSE 613-680-9000

advertising@mainstreeter.ca



**When the Mainstreeter heard from a group of Old Ottawa Easterners calling itself the Department of Creative Works, we thought, “Who ARE these guys?” So, we asked them.**

The three principals of the Dept. of Creative Works outside their “favourite hangout” Cafe Qui Pense. From left to right: Nigel Pequette, Jess Ross, André Martel  
PHOTO CREDIT: JESS ROSS



#### **CAN YOU TELL ME MORE ABOUT THE DEPT. OF CREATIVE WORKS? WHAT IS IT?**

The Department of Creative Works is a local group that formed this past summer. The three of us met through the CAG Community Noticeboard Facebook page. We had a shared love for the annual Bosch Art Parade in the Netherlands. We were inspired to find a way to bring something like that to life in Ottawa.

The three of us are not full-time, professional artists or musicians, but we strongly believe in the role of the arts as a means to bring communities together. OOE is such a warm and diverse community. We thought, if there is anywhere in the city that we could find some like-minded individuals who might want to help bring a new event to life, it would be right here among our friends and neighbours.

We are looking for more people who would like to be involved with shaping this dream and helping to plan it - artists and musicians of course, but also organizers, communicators, thinkers. Really, we see the Department as being able to help bring together the community in a common effort, an effort that is shaped, owned and ultimately realized by the community itself.

#### **WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU WANT PEOPLE TO DO DURING THE PARADE?**

We have noticed that Ottawa has no shortage of parades and festivals. There is a different one every week. There are food trucks and vendors. You pull up your lawn chair and you are entertained and (sssssh!) they all kind of seem to be the same. This event is about active

participation.

We hope to start the event with an accessory-making session and an opening ceremony. Then, instead of watching a parade go through the neighbourhood, we will all walk (and dance and sing) through the neighbourhood together. We will stop at several locations along the way to share different pieces of the story. To get the whole experience, you will have to come along through the neighbourhood.

#### **WHAT DID YOU DRAW FROM THE OTHER PARADES YOU HAVE SEEN AROUND THE WORLD THAT MADE YOU THINK THIS COULD WORK IN OOE?**

None of us grew up in Ottawa. Our influences come Trinidad, Montreal, Vancouver and beyond. We have each participated in events where the spectators are just as much a part of

the event as the official performers. We just loved the excitement and shared experience of being involved in something so much bigger than oneself. We felt this was something Ottawa not only lacked but craved. Based on the response we've had so far we are only more convinced of this!

Part of the beauty of OOE is its rich history – both Canadian history with

the Rideau River and the Canal and also the history of its residents. We come from all over the world and have woven ourselves into the fabric of the community. We want everyone to feel comfortable with sharing those stories – anywhere from telling a story or singing a song at one of the stops along the way, to simply wearing a traditional costume or accessory proudly during the event.

**daniellepratt**  
rmt

613-MASSAGE (627-7243)  
113 Onslow Cr.  
Ottawa, ON

massage@daniellepratt.ca  
daniellepratt.ca

**Archville Chamber Series**  
**Harmonic Generation**  
Christmas Concert  
December 4 at 7pm

**A cappella choral music** in the spirit of Christmas. Last year's show sold out! Festive tapas and a free drink are included. **Tickets** are \$18/adult, \$7/student, \$5/kids, or \$60/series pass, at the door or online at [harmonicgeneration.eventbrite.ca](http://harmonicgeneration.eventbrite.ca)

**ASCENSION** Church of the Ascension  
253 Echo Drive  
[churchoftheascension.ca](http://churchoftheascension.ca)



# ASK RAINBOW

**My child cries every time I leave her, what can I do to help her with this?**

Do you have questions about your toddler's development? Rainbow Kidschool can help. Send us your questions via Facebook at [www.facebook.com/rainbowkidschool](http://www.facebook.com/rainbowkidschool). Learn more about us at [www.rainbowkidschool.ca](http://www.rainbowkidschool.ca).  
PHOTO CREDIT: ROXEANNE MARBERL



Separation anxiety is a common occurrence in children of all ages especially toddler and preschool children. Whether you are leaving your child for the first or the hundredth time, there is a good chance your child has cried when you left them. Toddlers especially will cry when left by their parents as they often do not have the language to express how they feel. Preschool children may also cry, but typically they verbalize their feelings by asking you to stay or to play with them.

Talk to your child before leaving them home with a babysitter or extended family member or before bringing them to a child-care centre. If possible, have the babysitter come to your home a couple of times and play with your child(ren) while you are there. Likewise, take a couple of visits to the child-care centre with your child the weeks before they start. This helps your child become comfortable with their new environment and caregivers. They also begin developing a relationship with their new babysitter or caregiver while still having the reassurance that you are close by.

When it is time for you to say goodbye to your child, tell them where you will be going. Reassure them you will return. Let them know when they can expect you: "You are going to play with Jane while mommy/daddy is at the dentist. Then, after you eat lunch, I will be home." Allow the child to express their feelings by crying. Let them know you understand they will miss you, but that you will return to them. While you may feel the need to stay and be the one to offer your child comfort, don't linger. Allow the caregivers/babysitters the opportunity to continue building the

relationship they are developing with your child and be their support at that time. As you begin to leave your child more often, the separation anxiety should begin to lessen.

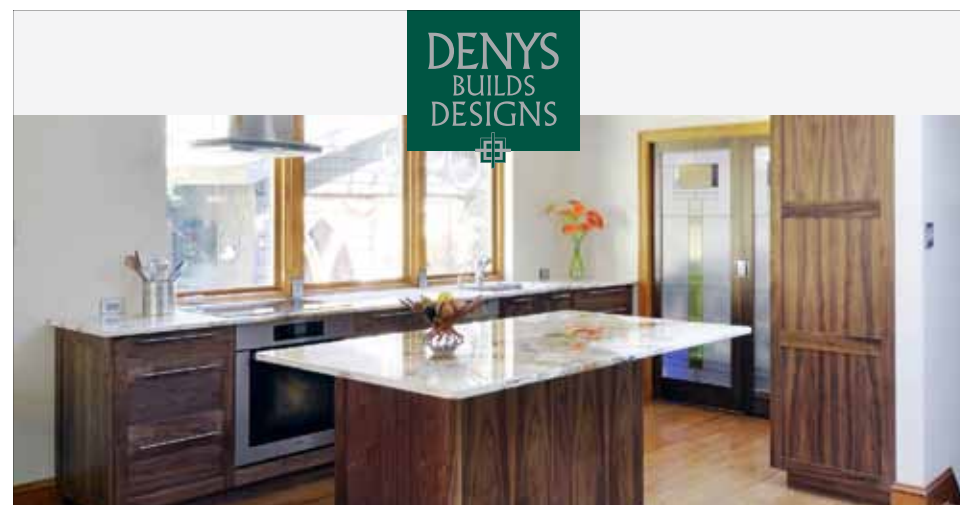
If your plans change while you are away, let the caregiver know as soon as possible so they can explain the changes to your child. Everything you do to help your child build healthy relationships at an early age is important for their development.

Send questions about your toddler's development to the educators at Rainbow Kidschool. Rainbow (Carleton Preschool) has been a community leader in child development and preschool since 1967. Rainbow also offers an after-school program for kindergarten and school-aged children. Submit your question via our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/rainbowkidschool](http://www.facebook.com/rainbowkidschool). For more information about us, visit [www.rainbowkidschool.ca](http://www.rainbowkidschool.ca)



**Quality childcare in Old Ottawa East**

Lilia Fick, R.E.C.E • 613-567-5150 • [NatureNurturePlaycare.ca](http://NatureNurturePlaycare.ca)



**RENOVATIONS**

613-236-6516 | [Denys.ca](http://Denys.ca)

DESIGNS BUILDS REPAIRS RESTORES RENOVATES



# COMING BACK TO MAIN STREET!

**The 2016 season may have just ended, but we're already getting excited for our return to Old Ottawa East in 2017. Opening day is May 6 – mark your calendars!**

**The Main Farmers' Market – Saturdays from May to October**

**210 Main Street**  
Beside Singing Pebble Books



**More than 30 vendors**  
Plus music, crafts, face painting  
for the kids, and more!

Check our website for next year's vendor list and details: [www.mainfarmersmarket.org](http://www.mainfarmersmarket.org)



**The Rideau River awaiting winter. The river saw another healthy summer in 2016, according to long-time paddler, river watcher and OOE resident Jamie Brougham. | CREDIT: JAMIE BROUGHAM**



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the **new**  
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Street

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# Community Activities Group of Old Ottawa East (CAG)

Le groupe d'activités communautaires du vieux quartier d'Ottawa-Est

[www.OttawaEastCAG.ca](http://www.OttawaEastCAG.ca)

**Winter 2017  
Program Guide**

**Registration  
opens Tuesday,  
December 6 at  
9:00 p.m.**

Photo: Jim Lamont

[info@OttawaEastCAG.ca](mailto:info@OttawaEastCAG.ca)

Old Town Hall 61 Main Street 613-627-0062 Wednesdays 2:00 – 9:00 p.m.  
Brantwood Park field house 39 Onslow Crescent 613-230-0076



**CAG... making Old Ottawa East an even better place to live, work and play**

# Preschool

For children with parents/guardians unless otherwise stated

## Community Playgroup (0 – 5 years)

Old Town Hall, 61 Main  
January 11 – March 22,  
no program March 15  
Wednesday 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.  
\$37 first child, siblings \$25  
January 13 – March 24,  
no program January 27 or  
March 17  
Friday 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.  
\$34 first child, siblings \$19

## Cooperative Playgroup (0 – 3 years)

Brantwood Park field house,  
39 Onslow  
January 10 – March 21,  
no program March 14  
Tuesday 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.  
\$23 per child

## Parent Time

A get together for parents who  
are home on parental/mater-  
nity leave – baby can come too!  
Old Town Hall, 61 Main  
January 10 – March 21,  
no program March 14  
Tuesday, 10:15– 11:45 a.m.,  
**FREE**,  
Pre-registration required.

## Peekaboo/CouCou (0 – 3 years)

Brantwood Park field house,  
39 Onslow  
January 12 – March 2  
Thursday 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.  
\$30 first child, siblings \$15  
Pavillon du Parc Brantwood,  
39 Onslow  
12 janvier – 2 mars  
Jeudi 9h30 à 11h30  
\$30 premier enfant, frère-  
soeur \$15

## Hush-a-Bye Babies® (1 – 12 months)

Old Town Hall, 61 Main  
January 12 – February 23  
Thursday 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.,  
\$96  
March 9 – April 27  
Thursday 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.  
\$108

## Little Lotus™ Mom and Baby Yoga (6 weeks – crawling)

Old Town Hall, 61 Main  
January 11 – February 8 OR;  
February 15 – March 22,  
no program March 15  
Wednesday 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.  
\$75 per adult

## Music Together - NEW (0 – 4 years)

Old Town Hall, 61 Main  
January 14 – March 25,  
no program February 18  
Saturday 9:30 – 10:15 a.m.  
\$160, siblings \$110.  
Siblings under 9 months are  
free

# School age

Drop-off programs unless  
otherwise stated

## Adoption Potluck & Play (5 – 12 years)

Brantwood Park field house,  
39 Onslow  
January 15, February 26,  
and March 19  
Sunday 4:30 p.m. – 6:30p.m.  
\$19 per child

## Learn to Skate (4 – 7 years)

## Brantwood Park outdoor rink, 39 Onslow

January 14 – February 18  
Saturday 1:00 – 1:45 p.m.  
\$45  
Parent or supervising adult  
required to stay at the rink

## Youth Activity Club (7 – 12 years)

Old Town Hall, 61 Main  
January 27, February 24 or  
March 31  
Fridays 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
**FREE**  
Pre-registration required.  
Program presented in partner-  
ship with Sandy Hill Commu-  
nity Health Centre

# SUMMER Camp 2017

**Online registration for summer camp** begins at 9:00p.m.  
Tuesday, January 3, 2017. All camps are drop off, children  
must be independent in the bathroom.

## Kinder Camp (3 – 6 years)

Brantwood Park field house, 39 Onslow  
August 8 -11 (4 days)  
Tuesday – Friday  
9:00 a.m. – noon, \$80

## Jump Start Summer (5 – 10 years) - NEW

Old Town Hall, 61 Main  
June 26 - 30 (5 days)  
Monday – Friday  
8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., \$190

## Camp Brantwood (4 – 8 years)

Brantwood Park field house, 39 Onslow  
July 31 – August 4 (5 days)  
Monday – Friday  
8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., \$190  
August 21 – 25, (5 days)  
Monday – Friday  
8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., \$190

## Children's Garden Camp (5 – 10 years)

Brantwood Park field house, 39 Onslow  
August 14 – 18, (5 days)  
Monday – Friday,  
8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., \$190

## Canoe Kids (7- 12 years)

Brantwood Park field house, 39 Onslow  
July 4 – 7, (4 days)  
Tuesday – Friday  
8:30 – 5:30 p.m., \$230  
July 10 – 14, (5 days)  
Monday – Friday  
8:30 – 5:30 p.m., \$285  
July 17 – 21, (5 days)  
Monday – Friday  
8:30 – 5:30 p.m., \$285  
July 24 – 28, (5 days)  
Monday – Friday  
8:30 – 5:30 p.m., \$285

Children must pass a swim test to participate;  
see website for details

## NEW THIS YEAR -

**We have extended the camp day to a 5:30 p.m. finish.**



For more detailed information visit [www.OttawaEastCAG.ca](http://www.OttawaEastCAG.ca)



# EVENTS

## Winter Party in the Park

Brantwood Park field house,  
39 Onslow Crescent  
Sunday, January 22  
1:00 – 4:00 p.m.  
**FREE**

## Valentine Skate

Brantwood Park field house,  
39 Onslow Crescent  
Friday, February 10  
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.  
**FREE**

# AFTER school

## Brantwood Park After School

**(Kindergarten – Grade 6)**

Brantwood Park field house,  
39 Onslow  
Pick up 5:45 p.m.  
\$180/month

## Old Town Hall After School

**(Kindergarten – Grade 6)**

Old Town Hall, 61 Main  
Pick up 5:30 p.m.  
\$170/month

## PD Days

**(Kindergarten – Grade 6)**

Brantwood Park field house,  
39 Onslow  
Friday January 27 OR  
Monday January 30  
Friday 8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.  
\$40

# March break

## March Break Camp (5 – 10 years)

Old Town Hall, 61 Main  
March 13 – 17, (5 days)  
Monday – Friday,  
8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.,  
\$190



*Want to book a  
children's birthday  
party? CAG has lots  
of options for you!  
More details on the  
website.*



Photo: Jim Lamont

# ADULT general interest

## New Canadian Learn to Skate (5 – 75 years)

Brantwood Park outdoor rink,  
Onslow, meet at the field house  
January 21 – February 11  
2:15 – 3:15 p.m.

**FREE**

To register; call Chris at 613  
565-3265, skates and helmets  
available for loan. Program  
presented in partnership with  
Sandy Hill Community Health  
Centre

## Lacto-Fermentation: Sauerkraut & Kimchi Lesson

Please bring a cutting board  
and a sharp knife, we supply  
the rest.

Old Town Hall, 61 Main  
Tuesday, January 24  
6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
\$43



## Games Time

Join your neighbours for  
bridge, scrabble, backgam-  
mon, cribbage, euchre and  
more. Steaming mugs of tea  
or coffee included.

Old Town Hall, 61 Main  
January 13 – March 24,  
no program March 10  
Friday 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.  
\$23

## Cooking with Seaweed

Learn about the differ-  
ent kinds of seaweeds, their  
nutritional properties &  
health benefits, and how to  
use them in your cooking.  
Old Town Hall, 61 Main  
Monday, March 20  
6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
\$35

# ABOUT us

The Community Activities Group of Old Ottawa East (CAG) is a voluntary, not for profit, community-based organization that works in partnership with the City of Ottawa to provide the residents of Ottawa East with programming, recreation, and special event opportunities that are local, affordable, inclusive and of interest to members of the community.

**Chair**, Don Stephenson, **Past Chair**, Melanie Gilbert,  
**Treasurer**, Lynne Byford, **Secretary**, Stacey Wowchuck  
**Volunteers & Events**, Lisa Dunnett,  
**Communications**, Tina Raymond

**Executive Director**, Carol Workun, **Program Assistant**,  
Megan Shoemaker, **Program Assistant**, Isobel Smith

[info@ottawaeastCAG.ca](mailto:info@ottawaeastCAG.ca)

**For more detailed information visit  
[www.OttawaEastCAG.ca](http://www.OttawaEastCAG.ca)**



# ADULT fitness

## Vinyasa Flow Yoga

Old Town Hall, 61 Main  
January 11 – March 22  
Wednesday 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.  
(Intermediate)  
Wednesday 7:15 – 8:45 p.m.  
(Beginner/Intermediate)  
\$88

## Hatha Yoga

Old Town Hall, 61 Main  
January 14 – March 25,  
no program February 18  
Saturday 9:15 – 10:45 a.m.  
\$80

## Yin Yoga

Old Town Hall, 61 Main  
January 9 – March 20,  
no program February 20  
Monday 7:15 – 8:30 p.m.  
\$80

## Pilates

Old Town Hall, 61 Main  
January 10 – March 21  
Tuesday 7:15 – 8:15 p.m.  
\$88

## Tai Chi Qi Gong

Old Town Hall, 61 Main  
January 11 – March 22,  
no program March 15  
Wednesday 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.  
\$80

## Better Body Boot Camp

Lady Evelyn School gym,  
63 Evelyn  
January 9 – March 6,  
no program February 20  
Monday 8:00 – 9:00 p.m.  
\$96  
January 11 – March 8  
Wednesday 7:15 – 8:15 p.m.  
\$108



## Better Body Boot Camp: Strength and Core

Old Town Hall, 61 Main  
January 12 – March 9  
Thursday 6:15 – 7:15 p.m.  
\$108

## Strength & Tone

Old Town Hall, 61 Main  
January 13 – March 24,  
no program January 27 and  
March 17  
Friday 8:00 – 9:00 a.m.  
\$53

## Cardio Dance Fit

Old Town Hall, 61 Main  
January 10 – March 21,  
no program March 14  
Tuesday 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.  
\$80

## Single Class Fitness Passes

\$18/class Better Body Boot-camp  
\$12/class for Yoga, Pilates,  
Tai Chi and Cardio Fit  
\$9/class for Strength & Tone

## Women's Hockey

Brantwood Park outdoor rink,  
39 Onslow  
January 16 - February 27  
Monday 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.  
\$55

# www.OttawaEastCAG.ca

## For more detailed information visit

## Women's Recreational Sport

Lady Evelyn School gym,  
63 Evelyn  
January 12 – April 27,  
no program March 16  
Thursday 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.  
\$75

## Men's Basketball

Lady Evelyn School gym,  
63 Evelyn  
January 11 – April 26,  
no program March 15  
Wednesday 8:30–10:00 p.m.  
\$75



**Online registration** opens 9:00 p.m. Tuesday, December 6 at [www.ottawaeastCAG.ca](http://www.ottawaeastCAG.ca), with Visa or MasterCard.

**In-person registration** opens 2:00 p.m. at the Old Town Hall on Wednesday, December 7, payment is by personal cheque only.

Programs are advertised in the language in which they will be presented/ Les programmes seront donc offerts dans la langue dans laquelle ils sont présentés.

**Financial assistance** is available to Ottawa East residents; please apply in person.

The **CAG Weather Policy** cancels outdoor programs if the temperature is below -25C with wind chill, or in the event of rain or hail. To find out if a program or event is cancelled due to weather, please check the CAG website.

## COMMUNITY Partners



Sandy Hill  
Community  
Health Centre



Centre de santé  
communautaire  
Côte-de-Sable

diane & jen  
dianerandjen.com

The Green Door  
Restaurant

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# COMMUNITY UPDATE



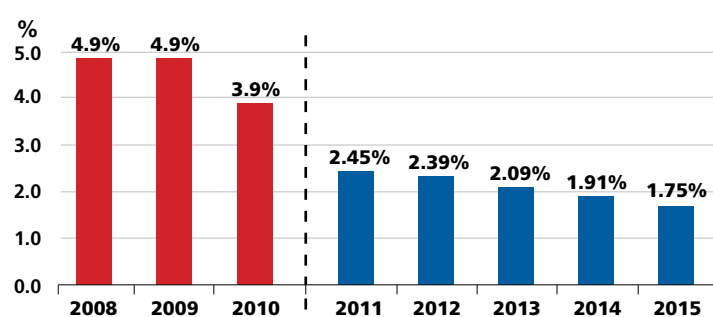
## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Innovation Centre at Bayview Yard: Grand Opening Fall 2016
- \$ 2.2 Billion in building permits
- Provincial funding secured for Stage 2 LRT
- Confederation Line to open in 2018
- Education and the Economy Summit held



## TOURISM

- Year-long sesquicentennial Celebrations in 2017
- Hosted 1300 One Young World Summit delegates from 196 countries
- Tourism Summit held for industry leaders - Beyond 2017
- Ottawa Art Gallery opens in 2017



## FINANCIAL DISCIPLINE

- 2.5% or lower tax promise kept every year
- Maintained front line community services
- Moody's triple A credit rating



## ENVIRONMENT

- Ottawa River Action plan underway
- Planted trees and built community gardens across the City
- Converting City streetlights to green LED technology
- Record Investments in active mobility infrastructure



## HELPING PEOPLE

- Record Investments in Affordable Housing and accelerated 10 year Housing Homelessness Plan
- New EquiPass low income transit pass introduced for 2017
- New recreation facilities opened across the City



## COMMUNITY SAFETY

- Hired 25 new police officers this year and another 25 in 2017
- Increased the number of Paramedics
- Created and implemented the Gang Exit Strategy
- 20 additional red light cameras installed



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## SHOULD LADY EVELYN SCHOOL HAVE A FRENCH IMMERSION OPTION?

Over the course of my time as Trustee, I have heard from different voices in Old Ottawa East that they would like to see French Immersion at Lady Evelyn.

As many will know, Lady Evelyn is an 'alternative school'. This means that the school is based on student-centered learning and provides students opportunities to meet Ministry expectations with flexibility to allow greater concentration in areas of their own interest and aptitudes. I believe in the value of alternative education.

The OCDSB has just released a draft Elementary School Program Framework (ESPF). The Framework explains that the district's model for elementary school program delivery is the designated community school model. The framework outlines our elementary program offerings, school configuration models, school size, and addresses single and dual track schools.

### THE DOCUMENT DOES NOT ADDRESS THE POSSIBILITY OF FRENCH IMMERSION IN ANY OF THE OCDSB'S ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS.

I personally believe that at least one school should offer this option and that it should be Lady Evelyn. Students bus from all over the city to attend alternative schools, and that would continue, but with a French immersion option (early or middle French immersion), more parents would consider utilizing this community school in OOE (which is under-capacity), particularly with the large Greystone development directly beside the school.

#### Consultation on the ESPF is underway and there is a need to get involved:

- Discuss this issue at school council;
- complete the survey; and/or
- Send an e-mail to [shawn.menard@ocdsb.ca](mailto:shawn.menard@ocdsb.ca) and [ElementaryProgramFrameworkConsultation@ocdsb.ca](mailto:ElementaryProgramFrameworkConsultation@ocdsb.ca)

Consultation is planned between November 3 to December 21st. The survey deadline is December 13, 2016. The final staff report, including feedback gathered through consultation will be presented for discussion at the OCDSB Committee of the Whole meeting on January 17, 2017.

Thanks for taking the time to read through this.

Kind Regards,  
**SHAWN MENARD**  
Trustee for Capital and Rideau-Vanier Wards





## Public School Board Update

BY SHAWN MENARD, OTTAWA-CARLETON DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD TRUSTEE

### GIFTED PROGRAM REVIEW

The Ottawa Carleton District School Board has been going through what I would characterize as a massive change-management undertaking. There have been changes proposed by senior staff to the way we deliver programming in JK/SK, changes in course offerings for adult learners, severe budget constraints and learning-disability program changes, among others. A review is ongoing of boundaries and learning accommodation (read: potential closures). Senior board staff have now approached trustees with recommended changes to the Gifted program.

Staff brought the following recommended changes to trustees at a recent meeting:

1. Segregated classes for Gifted students in Grades 1 to 4 would be eliminated.
2. Segregated classes for Gifted students would remain in Grades 5 to 8, but more variety would be offered. One stream of classes would be offered for children who are gifted in one area, but challenged in another. Another stream would be for the profoundly gifted (above the 99.6 percentile of the population). An 'inquiry' stream would be available to all.
3. The number of secondary schools offering segregated gifted classes would be reduced from four to three, eliminating the program at Merivale High School.

4. A new screening process would be introduced in Grade 3 that would include measures to try to get rid of bias in the selection process and possibly broaden the definition of gifted.
5. Students would be offered a place in a Gifted program at one school; parents could not request placement at another school.

At that meeting, trustees listened to more than 20 delegations and to staff detailing the report. The primary issue around the table was that trustees were not happy with what was perceived as a lack of a proper consultation plan and the timelines being imposed (implementation for Sept 2017). They had concerns about the changes themselves. I personally support some of the changes (a new screening process that provides better equity). I oppose others (elimination of Grade 1-4 gifted). A vote was taken and trustees approved having staff come back to the board with a far more comprehensive consultation plan, a general issue that I have felt very strongly about since becoming a trustee in 2014.

The next steps will be to review that consultation plan and discuss and incorporate community feedback into our decision-making on this issue.

If you have questions or comments you wish to share with me, please send them to [Shawn.Menard@ocdsb.ca](mailto:Shawn.Menard@ocdsb.ca)



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# POLITICAL PAGES

## OLD OTTAWA EAST COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

BY PHYLLIS ODENBACH SUTTON  
INFO@OTTAWAEAST.CA



This article roughly coincides with the end of my first year as your president. When I was first elected, I was asked about my priorities. After some reflection, I concluded that liveable intensification was key. My involvement with the community association began with our local planning committee. So, I have decided this month to focus on several city planning initiatives. I will also reflect on why I feel so strongly about the need to present our views to the city, even when the outcomes can be so discouraging.

First up, the recent unanimous decision by the city's Planning Committee to approve new rules for coach houses. In the August Mainstreeter, I noted we were pleased that the city's revised proposals generally limited coach houses to a single storey. We still have concerns, however, which we presented to the city on Oct. 11. In particular, the rules allowing coach houses to be built on or close to the property line could damage both structures and trees in neighbouring yards, as well as make routine maintenance almost impossible. We also disagree with city staff that a 3.2 metre coach house wall will be "not much different" from a fence of 2.13 metres.

The Old Ottawa East Community Association was not alone in relaying concerns. The Federation of Citizens' Associations (FCA) and several other community associations noted a number of the same concerns. There was also general frustration with the consultation process.

When city staff were asked by councillors on the expected take-up on this initiative, they suggested there would only be limited activity (perhaps 40-50 coach houses built per year), which left us all puzzled as to why such a high level of resources was devoted to this project.

Why are community associations so concerned? We are fearful that such intensification may soar and eliminate much of our current green space in rear yards. We feel the city does not really want to listen to us or address our concerns. Many of us are trying to ensure that the current character of our neighbourhoods is not completely lost. As we are already disheartened by a lack of enforcement of existing by-laws, we are fearful of a future with

these new bylaws in place.

Although the city has suggested they will monitor this bylaw, I encourage residents of OOE to help us identify such projects as they are built.

Next up, the R4 zoning review. There is considerable angst already in the largest R4 neighbourhood in our community (north of the Queensway) with recent and proposed developments. Although the city has announced a review of R4 zoning, for many residents this review is not taking place quickly enough. A detailed discussion paper was to be posted in mid-October. I suggest concerned OOE residents monitor the web-site [Ottawa.ca/R4zoning](http://Ottawa.ca/R4zoning) and ensure they make their views known. Hopefully this time the city will listen to our concerns.

I would also like to provide a quick update on plans for the reconfiguration of Elgin Street and Hawthorne Avenue. The preliminary preferred design was to be presented for broader public input at a Public Open House on Nov. 24. See the project website at [Ottawa.ca/elginstreet](http://Ottawa.ca/elginstreet) for more information.

One of the key goals of this reconfiguration is to make sidewalk spaces more welcoming. I am pleased to say I think we have succeeded in finding such welcoming spaces on the new Main Street. It is wonderful that one can feel so safe and comfortable enjoying a coffee while sitting on one of the new benches in what was previously such a car-centred thoroughfare.

Finally, I would like to note that 2017 will soon be here. We are still hoping to sponsor several sesquicentennial projects. Watch for details of our monthly discussions of Canadian prime ministers (more volunteers to help organize and plan these nights would be welcome). Mark your calendars for Saturday, Sept. 9 (rain date Sept. 16) for a canoe/kayak Rideau Island circumnavigation.

For more details check out the OOECA website at: <http://www.ottawaeast.ca/>

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For the many seniors who live in some form of retirement home or assisted living residence, getting outside is a special and yet rare event. A stroll in the garden, a walk or wheel around the block, sitting on a bench in the sun, perhaps a drive. All are welcome distractions, I'm sure, but they can't compare to the mobility and social engagement that many seniors once enjoyed.

In Denmark, where almost every senior remembers what it feels like to ride a bike, the loss of that ability is more than a loss of exercise. It also removes one's ability to experience and enjoy the world beyond a very limited local environment.

This explains the extraordinary success of Cycling Without Age ([cyclingwithoutage.org](http://cyclingwithoutage.org)), a social movement that enlists volunteer 'pilots' to take older adults for a free ride in a three-wheeled bicycle-rickshaw hybrid, or 'trishaw.'

Cycling Without Age was founded in Copenhagen in 2012 to help residents of a local nursing home get back on a bicycle and feel the wind in their hair.

An electric-assist trishaw seats one or two passengers up front, affording them a full view, while the pilot wheels them along. A canopy shelters the passengers from sun or rain and everyone aboard is close enough to chat if they wish.

That's it. Simple and yet life-changing.

Based on feedback, Cycling Without Age is not 'just a bike ride', but a way for seniors to rediscover or be re-immersed in the place where they live, both the social community and the physical environment. The pilot, who can be of any age provided he or she can ride a bike, enjoys

the benefit of exercise, along with the feeling of contributing to the health and well-being of the passengers. For everyone, it's a way to make new friends across generations.

This social experiment demonstrates that a simple act can translate into uplifted spirits and improved medical health for individuals. More than that, when implemented on a larger scale, it improves the morale and spirits of entire communities, with profound changes noted by staff and volunteers at participating seniors' residences.

Can it work in Ottawa? It already is. Earlier this year, Gary Bradshaw brought Cycling Without Age to the St. Louis Residence in Orleans in partnership with Bruyère Continuing Care.

I'm so enthused about Cycling Without Age that I will be working with several partners over the coming months to explore how we might roll out more bikes at more facilities, including seniors' residences in Capital Ward. At around \$9,000, the specialized bikes are not cheap. And we need volunteer coordinators and pilots to make a large-scale program work. But I'm confident it will.

After all, the program is popular in more than 200 locations around the world that have joined the Cycling Without Age network. Sponsors, residence operators, pilots and donors are coming together because of the obvious genius of the idea. If that is you, please let me know.

Together, we can give everyone the opportunity to feel the wind in their hair.

Until then, I would like wish you every happiness during the holiday season and throughout the coming year.

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# POLITICAL PAGES

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We are fortunate to live in a vibrant downtown community in a major North American city. Our neighbourhoods continue to grow with development all around us. As your MPP, nothing is more important to me than ensuring that Ottawa is healthy, sustainable and safe for all of us.

Balance is a central factor in maintaining the vibrancy of our communities. We must understand the need for growth and development along with the protection of our green spaces and enhancing the character of our neighbourhoods. The Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) plays a central role in the province's land-use planning process and the City of Ottawa's own plans for how to best develop our land. Because of this, the OMB's decisions have a direct impact on Ottawa families and communities.

As such, along with you, I have long advocated for changes to the OMB to ensure community-inspired development. I am proud that the Ontario government has undertaken a comprehensive review of how the OMB operates and its role in our province's land-use planning system to help make it more efficient and more accessible to all communities.

The OMB review is framed by the following guiding principles: protection of long-term public interests; maintenance or enhancement of access to dispute resolution; provision of transparency in hearing processes and decision-making; and, minimizing impacts on the court system. As a result, the review has been organized according to the following five themes:

- OMB's jurisdiction and powers;
- citizen participation and local perspective;
- clear and predictable decision-making;
- modern procedures and faster decisions; and,
- alternative dispute resolution and fewer hearings.

The government has released a Public Consultation Document to support the review of the OMB. It provides context and direction. It gives background on Ontario's land use planning system and on the OMB. It sets out possible changes being considered to improve the OMB's role within the system as organized under the five key themes, and raises questions for consideration. I had the opportunity to host the Ottawa town hall on Nov. 9. The turnout was fantastic with great ideas and suggestions on how to make the OMB work better for our community and give more consideration to council decisions.

If you were not able to attend, there is still opportunity to submit your thoughts online by simply going to [ontario.ca/OMBreview](http://ontario.ca/OMBreview). We want to hear from you!

I have often heard from residents that the OMB must be reformed so that it can better serve the unique needs of our community and incorporate better land-use planning principles. Any changes our government makes to the OMB in the future will put people and communities like ours first. Over the next 25 years, our population is expected to increase by more than four million people. That means our communities and municipalities will need to respond and adjust to this growth. We believe no one knows better what is best for the community than the people who live there. That is why the input and advice you share on how to move forward with an improved and modernized OMB is very important.

With that in mind, I hope everyone has the opportunity to gather with family and explore our wonderful community this holiday season. My family and I want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and Season's Greetings.

It's hard to believe that on Oct. 19 we celebrated the first anniversary of the 2015 federal election.

Although my portfolio as a cabinet minister has been front and centre in recent months, I remain very much focused on Ottawa Centre and working with the amazing individuals and organizations that are doing so much to improve quality of life in the riding.

In just one year, we have compiled many great achievements for Ottawa Centre. We recently published a first-year status report that includes highlights of the work done on behalf of constituents and accomplishments related to promises I made during last year's election campaign. This status report is available on my website [www.CatherineMcKennaMP.ca](http://www.CatherineMcKennaMP.ca). Hard copies are available from my community office.

Through Coffee with Catherine and town hall events, I have had thought-provoking discussions with hundreds of Ottawa Centre residents. I really appreciate that so many of you have taken time out of your busy schedules to talk to me about issues that are really important to you. My office will continue to publicize upcoming events at [www.CatherineMcKennaMP.ca](http://www.CatherineMcKennaMP.ca) and through social media.

With Parliament back in session, Question Period has become a significant focal point. If you would like to obtain tickets to a future Question Period session, please complete the form on my website or call my Parliament Hill office at 613-996-5322. Ratification of the Paris Agreement at the United Nations

From the earliest days of our government's mandate, as Minister of Environment and Climate Change, I have been invested in the Paris Agreement. Last December, I led Canada's delegation to the United Nations Climate Change conference COP21, where our country played an instrumental role in reaching a historic treaty to keep the global temperature increase below 2 degrees Celsius. Canada fought to make sure Indigenous rights were recognized in the Agreement by all 195 countries that signed on. I was there when Canada signed the Paris Agreement on April 22, Earth Day. On Oct. 5, Parliament voted to support Paris ratification, true to our commitment to do so this

year. Once again, Canada is a leader in taking action on climate change. Our support brought the world over the threshold of 55 countries accounting for 55 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions needed to bring the Paris Agreement into force. Here at home, we continue to work for Canadians, including Indigenous peoples, businesses, and the provinces and territories. We remain committed to developing a Canadian plan for clean growth and climate change to support families and businesses in making our country cleaner and more competitive.

Electoral Reform Consultation

Our electoral system is the basis of our democracy. It shapes the way our government operates and makes decisions. However, with the exception of the most recent election, since the 1980s, voter participation rates in federal elections has declined. National levels fell as low as 58 percent in 2008. One of the main reasons appears to be our current first-past-the-post voting system. On Oct. 11, I hosted a discussion about electoral reform at the Tom Brown Arena. Some 150 participants enthusiastically shared their ideas on this very important topic. It was great to hear constituents from Ottawa Centre express their views on our current system and the principles they would like to see form the foundation of the electoral system of the future.

I joined other MPs from across the country in sending a report, including feedback and ideas from our consultations, to the Honourable Maryam Monsef, Minister of Democratic Reform. A Special Committee on Electoral Reform was also struck by the House of Commons in June. Its mandate is to identify and conduct a study of viable voting systems to replace the first-past-the-post system, as well as to examine mandatory voting and online voting, and to assess how such options could advance the following principles for electoral reform:

- effectiveness and legitimacy;
- engagement;
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The committee will release a report including recommended electoral changes and additional methods to engage with Canadians.

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