

MAINSTREETER

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

AUGUST | AOÛT 2020

OOE projects delayed, uncertain

Arrested development in COVID's wake



LINDA POLLOCK PHOTO

Construction of Regional's buildings 2A and 2B along the northern side of the Grande Allée is on schedule despite the challenges of the pandemic.

Mainstreeter Interview

OOE Opera singer Wallis Giunta

Pages 4 & 5



JOHN DANCE

The face of Old Ottawa East has changed greatly over the last five years but, with the profound health, economic and societal impacts of the COVID-19 virus, the question is whether this trend will continue.

When the pandemic hit in March, developers in Old

Ottawa East reacted swiftly, stopping or at least limiting construction activity on a number of sites.

The Regional Group and its EQ Homes, the largest developer in Old Ottawa East, sent all its workers home in late March and then proceeded to establish best practices rules for staff, contractors and clients.

Staff and contractors were and continue to be required to adhere to a "COVID-19 checklist," which bans those with virus symptoms, those who have been in contact with others who have the virus or those who should be in quarantine because of recent travelling. On site, rigorous physical distancing and proper protective

equipment and practices were made mandatory. For instance, only one sub-trade could operate in a unit at a time.

The temporary work stoppage coupled with physical distancing has added about 30 days to the usual 240

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Footy Sevens to pay the bill

MPAC ruling eliminates property tax exemption on Immaculata turf field

JOHN DANCE

The property tax exemption for the Immaculata High School's commercialized turf sports field has been extinguished by Ontario's Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC), as sought by the Old Ottawa East Community Association (OOECA) with support from Councillor Shawn Menard.

"The total assessed value of Immaculata High School is \$19,370,000, of which \$2,332,700 is taxable at the commercial rate," Paula Chung of MPAC's media relations and issues management told *The Mainstreeter* following the assessment body's ruling.

Although the City of Ottawa would not tell *The Mainstreeter* how much tax revenue this would bring in, the City issued a tax bill to the

school board in July. Recourse to the City's on-line property tax estimator suggests that the annual taxes would be about \$60,000.

Asked if the taxes would also have to be paid for the previous years, Wendy Stephanson, the City's chief financial officer, responded, "Provincial legislation allows the City to retroactively bill for two years plus the current year, the date used for the bill is typically based on

occupancy of the business or residence."

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Scene around the neighbourhood

Going above and beyond, Debbie Kuchciak, a Mooney's Bay area resident who makes the rounds of various parks in the city, uses her metal detector to clear the Brantwood Park play structure area of dangerous metal fragments. Her work netted five nails, six screws and three pieces of sharp wire.

PEGGY WEST PHOTO



Getting our "ducks in a row" can be a challenge for all of us, and it's no different for this gaggle of Canada Geese as they paddle their way down the Rideau River en route to the Bank Street bridge. The geese are majestic in the water and in flight, however, their presence in large numbers in and around Brantwood Park this summer has caused a proliferation of goose "poop" and turned pedestrians and cyclists along the river into artful dodgers.

JAMIE BROUGHAM PHOTO



PHILIP NIEDZWIADK PHOTO

Greystone Village had a bit of a snapping turtle invasion in June as the massive reptiles lumbered up the river bank to lay their eggs in the shoreline park. The turtle in this picture climbed up a very steep bank to lay her eggs near the corner of Scholastic and Telmon streets. Residents and the Regional Group quickly put up protection around a couple of the nesting areas. The eggs should hatch by the end of September.



BARRY DAVIS PHOTO

The Invasive Weed Brigade were hard at work uprooting pesky wild chervil on the riverbanks of Old Ottawa East recently. Pictured from left to right are Vicki Davis, Inesa Adriana Rojas, Phyllis Odenbach Sutton, Roger Bird, Karen Gravelle, Aileen Larkin and Marc Dicaire. Anyone interested in helping should contact sloe@ottawaeast.ca.



I love that tree...

OOE Tree Recognition Project proves popular

MAINSTREETER STAFF

In our June issue, we initiated a popular collaboration with Sustainable Living Ottawa East (SLOE) entitled the “I Love That Tree” challenge, which is just one of several components of SLOE’s Old Ottawa East Tree Recognition Project. In developing the initiative to feature many of our community’s glorious trees, Jayson MacLean, chair of SLOE, observed that “(t)his is the chance for readers of *The Mainstreeter* to wax poetic about that one tree in the neighbourhood which always brings them delight.”

Our first entry back in June was a much-loved majestic red maple tree that fronts Alexandra Gruca-Macaulay’s home at 49 Herridge Street.

Response to the SLOE/*Mainstreeter* challenge has been heavy with many residents coming forward to exclaim the virtues of their favourite community tree.



If you have a favourite tree – and who doesn’t! – send a couple of photos and an accompanying submission of up to 250 words on why you love it, adding any particular details you might know about the tree (history, approximate age, species, etc.) to sloe@ottawaeast.ca. All entries will be published on the Old Ottawa East Community Association website and one (or more) entry will be featured in the pages of each of the next few issues of The Mainstreeter.



My past and future ash trees

My “past” tree, the ash, grows near the sidewalk on Concord North. When it was originally planted, there probably weren’t any sidewalks, and it has been a witness to the growth and change in that special corner of Old Ottawa East. It is majestic in size and grace, and its canopy provided protection from the sun on days like the ones we’re experiencing now. It and its sister tree, which had to be removed because of Emerald Ash borer, gave the house so much shade that we rarely used air conditioning.

But it wasn’t just its size, grace or practicality that endeared it to me. It was home to a continual stream of visitors all year long—from the upper deck on a summer’s evening, we would watch the cardinals, the

starlings, the crows, the squirrels, and the occasional raccoon as they got ready for the night ahead. Some of them made their homes in the tree, and others just stopped by on their way to somewhere else, all part of the evening symphony.

My “future” tree just appeared a few weeks ago. It is one of many that have been planted along the Rideau River Nature Trail and symbolizes the hopes of the community for growth and permanency. As with all new plantings, I view it with tenderness and trepidation, praying that it will survive and truly become part of our community.

***Heather Jarrett,
Corners on Main***

Oblats Avenue maple tree

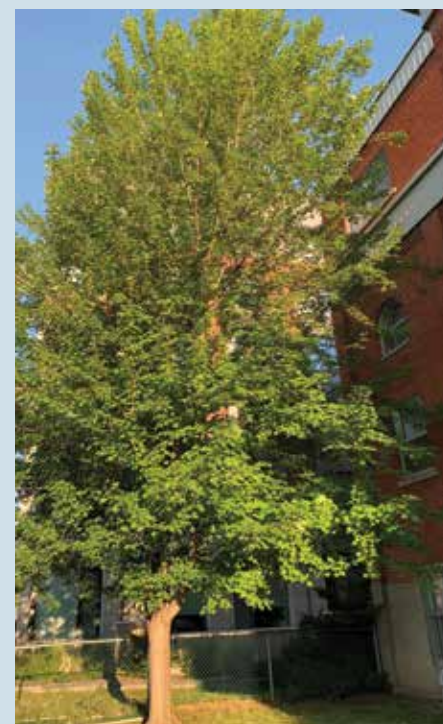
The stark branches of the tree in the winter shelter the snow. The pale green buds in the spring hold such promise of the warmth to come. The leaves of summer offer shade from scorching sunlight. And of course, the brilliant red and orange leaves of the fall capture the eyes of all passers-by.

This maple tree is beautiful, but it is also quite special. It has history.

Planted by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus at their convent, the Sisters put slips of paper into the ground when the tree was planted expressing their hopes for the merger of two of their provinces.

The Sisters of the Sacred Heart began living in this convent on Oblats Avenue in 1915. They operated a school here and were involved in many of the churches and schools in Old Ottawa East. In time, the order grew so large that it split into two provinces. When the numbers of Sisters decreased, they merged the two provinces together.

Shortly after we moved into Phase One of the Corners on Main, a tea party



was organized for the Sisters to visit our building. It was one of the Sisters at the tea party who told us about this incredibly special tree.

While it is likely that the convent will be demolished in time, it would be a shame to lose this tree which has such beauty and such deep roots in the history of Old Ottawa East.

***Lorna Kingston,
Corners on Main***

Growing up in Archville

In the late 1800s, Archville, now known as Old Ottawa East, was a growing concern.

North of the Queensway, on Macadamized Road, now known as Main Street, a couple of young maple trees were planted by Maxime Landry, who worked as a cooper making flour barrels for J.T. Ballantyne. In 1886 and 1893, Landry purchased two lots on Macadamized Road which became 38 and 40 Main Street, respectively.

The maple trees became part of the Landry family. Léa and Maxime raised five girls, one boy - and two maple trees. These magnificent trees have many stories to tell.

With regard to the family, Max Jr., the only son, worked as a cooper with his father. He was also a star player for the Capital Lacrosse Club. Max Jr. later became a conductor on the Ottawa Electric Railway. Daughters included Delina, Amanda, Laura, Louisa, and Eva. Delina was one of the first ladies in Old Ottawa East to own and drive a car, and she was employed by St. Patrick’s College.

Amanda and Laura, married and raised their children on Harvey Street and Echo Drive while Louisa and Eva, left the neighbourhood but eventually returned. Eva married Mr. Villeneuve and lived with her son, Lawrence at 38 Main Street. Lawrence also worked for J.T. Ballantyne



and, after the war, he was employed by Morrison Lamothe to deliver bread by horse and wagon.

The two maple trees are still there. They stand tall and proud, 134 years after being planted and they are perhaps the only mature trees left on all of Main Street.

***Viv Villeneuve,
Echo Drive
Great-granddaughter of
Maxime Laundry***

SHARING LUNCH WITH...

"Performing was always my comfort – it's where I feel most at home..."

We continue our popular interview feature this issue, focusing on a gifted young talent from the world of opera, Wallis Giunta, who grew up and began to hone her world-renowned classical music and performance skills while living with her parents and siblings on Marlowe Street in Old Ottawa East, and before that in Old Ottawa South. Among her many accomplishments, the mezzo soprano who has trained with both the Canadian Opera Company (COC) in Toronto and the Metropolitan Opera in New York, and has performed with opera companies around the world, was named "Young Artist of the Year" at the 2018 International Opera Awards.

Described recently as 'the real deal' and "a transcendental talent" in influential music publications, Wallis took time during the pandemic to talk to *The Mainstreeter* and reflect on her roots in our community. In this interview, conducted from her home in Leeds, England, she recalls her childhood and adolescence in Ottawa, discusses the dedication and passion for singing that has brought her international success, and speaks with her characteristic frankness about the important work she is doing offstage, using her social media platform to influence change and betterment within the opera world.

THE MAINSTREETER: Wallis, you grew up in Old Ottawa South, and then moved to Old Ottawa East as a teenager. Music obviously was a key to your childhood. But what other interests did you have as a youngster and what else did you enjoy doing beyond the realm of music and singing?

GIUNTA: I was a really outgoing, very busy, active kid. We grew up next to Brewer Park, across the street from the Ottawa Tennis and Lawn Bowling Club. My sister and I were over there almost every day. We

were actually competitive junior lawn bowlers. They started this program when we were kids for junior members; they were trying to encourage kids to pick up lawn bowling because, up until then, the average member age was probably over 65. So, we were there almost every day in summer, and with our parents' encouragement we ended up loving it. We both did it for about seven years, until around age 15.

Our parents made a choice for us to grow up in a home without television; at some point we got a TV, but we had just basic cable, and a few VHS movies that we would get to watch if we were good! We were hardly ever in front of screens, but we did spend a ton of time building with our Dad's childhood LEGO collection! Since we didn't watch television, we never saw commercials and we didn't know about all the trendy plastic toys that everybody was getting - we were pretty oblivious to whatever was on the market. I'm super grateful for that, and I know my parents did the right thing.

For me, childhood was full of imaginative play. Anytime it wasn't miserable weather, I was outside. I was down by the river, chasing toads or snakes or building forts in the trees with my sister. We were super outdoorsy and active, always climbing on the play structures at Brewer Park. For my sister and I, and my brother when he came along a little later, we would play creatively with whatever we found - we would go out in the backyard and we'd use clay pots, a trowel and some garden hose and we'd build a bakery or something, and play all day selling each other mud pies. It was just that kind of childhood, and I know we were really lucky to have that.



I was also an avid reader. That's the other thing I suppose that comes from no television. I absorbed books like a plant in the desert in a rainstorm. I really loved *Sherlock Holmes*. I think I used my first bit of allowance money to buy an annotated compendium of the complete works of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle when I was about 11! I've got to chuckle at that.

THE MAINSTREETER: I had a report from a neighbour who was also a member of the Ottawa Tennis and Lawn Bowling Club that you were occasionally spotted around the pool.

GIUNTA: Not occasionally, probably eight hours a day! We lived in the water, my sister and I. We had a membership there as a family, and whenever we weren't lawn bowling, we were in the pool. It was ideal for my parents to have a place like that which they could take us just a stone's throw from home, with all our friends and a great community of families every day. I loved swimming and still do, and even ended up

becoming a lifeguard at our family camp, Red Pine Camp, in my teens.

THE MAINSTREETER: I understand that, as a teenager in Ottawa, your commitment to singing was ironclad, and that commitment really had some impacts on you during your adolescent years and as you trained for your professional career.

GIUNTA: I think it had a really big impact. The single-mindedness that I had for my musical training growing up went a long way to preparing me for the next step of studying singing at the university level and attending professional training programs at the Canadian Opera Company (COC) and the Metropolitan Opera. I went straight into the COC program in Toronto when I finished my post-secondary training, at age 23. That's fairly young to be singing at an opera house of that level, but they were great about only involving me in shows that were appropriate for such a young singer. And I felt well prepared for the challenge

OOE OPERA SINGER WALLIS GIUNTA

having been singing since I was a kid! It was a wonderful place to grow as a young artist. After two years there, I went directly to the Met in New York to join their training program. The Met is a much bigger opera house, so I had to be even more careful about pacing myself. The operatic voice can't really be rushed - it takes the time it takes to develop. I had an advantage over a lot of my peers in post-secondary training and in my early career because I'd started so young and had been fully immersed in musical and dramatic training from age 5.

I think that making sacrifices for my chosen art form as a young person was the best thing I could have done to set myself up for the career that I now have. There were a lot of parties I couldn't go to in high school, because I had to do a singing lesson the next day or some important performance with my choir, or a show for the Orpheus Musical Theatre Society. I was aware at the time that I was missing out on certain things, but I never really wanted to take my foot off the pedal. And I sought out every single opportunity I could growing up in Ottawa to be involved in the arts, music and performing. I'm grateful that I started early, with a slow and steady journey, and even more grateful to my parents for supporting me in everything that I wanted to do.



THE MAINSTREETER: Wallis, you've had so much experience singing in front of people from a very early age, and you seem absolutely fearless. For most of us, using our singing voice in public is a daunting prospect. I wonder whether fear has been a motivator for you, or whether it has in any way been an inhibiting factor?

GIUNTA: I haven't actually experienced that fear that I think some people would have, had they been in my position. I remember reading once that the average

person would rank fear of public speaking over fear of death! The joke being that if they had to be at a funeral they'd rather be in the casket than giving the eulogy. While I don't feel that fear, myself, I totally understand that the idea of using one's voice in a public way in any capacity can be terrifying. I can't really tell you why fear of performing has not been an issue for me - maybe because I started so young? The process of performing was always my comfort - it's where I feel most at home.

"I have a secure position in the opera industry, and I don't have any worry that my career will be shaken by me speaking out for what's right."

THE MAINSTREETER: You do some amazing stuff on social media, and you've come out recently shedding some light on the issue of racism in the opera world. These initiatives seem to be reflective of you as a person and as someone who seems very comfortable with herself and her milieu.

GIUNTA: I consider it a responsibility for me, as a person with somewhat of a platform, not just to speak about vital issues, but also to educate myself and work to remove any implicit biases I have. To make the effort to take action on a day to day basis, behind closed doors, when no one can see it - that's what I consider to be the real work of advocating for needed change. That takes intention and commitment, and you do it because it's the right thing to do.

THE MAINSTREETER: Through your social media, I've learned about some aspects of the challenges that opera faces with regards to racism and to promoting Black people to positions of power and management within the world of opera. This is one area that you seem to be pioneering, and it's very brave of you to do that.

GIUNTA: I'm definitely not a pioneer in this work, and I wouldn't say I'm brave, in the sense that I have very little to lose. I have a secure position in the opera industry, and I don't have any worry that my career will be shaken by me speaking out for what's right. I know that there are quite a few younger singers and people who aren't as established who would be risking a lot if they were to go head to head with a bigger institution. They'd be risking not being hired in the future, or being branded problematic

- but at this point, I'm lucky that I have enough experience and investment in this career that my work speaks for itself. And frankly, if an institution decided that they didn't want to hire me because I drew attention to some racist practices, for example - that's not an institution I want to work for.

I consider myself fortunate to be able to speak in this way, and so it doesn't seem to me to require any bravery. But I do know what you mean. There are people who are at my level (or much higher!) and in my position who aren't choosing to do that. But I couldn't go to sleep at night knowing that I hadn't done anything or said anything to help make needed change in the classical music industry and our society.

THE MAINSTREETER: What it's like to be a Canadian opera singer? What does the Canadian part have to do with it? Is there place for a Canadian singing star in the opera world, and how has being a Canadian influenced or affected your career?

GIUNTA: I am a successful, working singer, but by no means am I a star. And I'm actually happy about that because I feel like the kind of pressure that comes with that status would be a lifestyle I'm not interested in. I like being able to do my own groceries and fly around in economy class!

For me, being a Canadian in this industry has been quite advantageous. Canadian singers have a really good reputation internationally. We generally have quite well-respected post-secondary musical education standards in this country for classical music. And I think, per capita, we crank out quite a few world class opera singers. More than you'd expect for such a small country in terms of population size. I think it has to do with the fact that we have a comparatively strong music education culture for young people. There's a lot going on in Canadian culture - young people singing in choirs and taking piano lessons or another instrument as a kid and being in the school band. I know music education in elementary and secondary school is an issue; a lot of the time when budgets are cut, that's what goes first, and that's a problem that needs to be addressed. But when I was a kid, it was still pretty strong, and I had some great musical experiences in school. So, I think my Canadian background has been quite a wonderful thing for me. And it's always been an advantage to be a Canadian working abroad. Usually people say something like, "I love Canadians!"



TIM DUNK PHOTOS

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the cancellation of the 2020 Beyond Music Festival in Ottawa. Festival organizers have instead mounted a virtual concert series, releasing 100 new multi-disciplinary video productions, including four featuring Wallis Giunta, who recorded her performances in Leeds, England. There is no charge to view the videos. For more information, go to musicandbeyond.ca.

In our next issue of *The Mainstreeter*, we meet young Canadian race car driver, Zacharie Robichon, who grew up in Old Ottawa East on Brown Street in a family with roots in both ski racing and car racing. From his first ski racing experience at the age of three to his current exploits as a member of Team Porsche, Zacharie has already driven to 38 victories and 55 podium visits on racetracks around the world.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

In response to our request to readers for their perspectives on the Flora Footbridge, we received many responses from members of our community. We have reproduced some of them in this special edition of our Letters to the Editor page.

The bridge has meant everything to us! We live on the OOE side, and we walk our dog across to the Sylvia Holden dog park almost daily. It's also been amazing to walk our daughters over to Lansdowne for the farmers' market, splash pad, theatre, etc. We LOVE that bridge. - **Valerie Gapp**

We are so grateful for the Flora bridge!! We have friends who live in the Glebe that we see significantly more often just because we can now meet on the bridge and go from there. We love it!! - **Anya Pelot**

Well, this morning it meant an extra 80 cents, picking up beer cans after a party the previous evening on the Glebe-side benches. - **Barry Davis**

When I commuted to work at Dow's Lake from OOE, it certainly improved the safety of my commute vs. awkwardly navigating the Pretoria Bridge intersections. - **Stephan Telka**

I cycle commute from OOE to Little Italy (pre-COVID) with a stop along the way at the daycare at Fifth Avenue and Queen Elizabeth Drive. It is much safer to take the wide Flora bridge rather than Pretoria with a toddler in tow. - **Kate Koundakjian**

I am happy with the bridge. The concrete fades away in certain lights. The arch is graceful. The stone cladding and plantings are attractive. Getting to Lansdowne, the market, dog park, restaurants, is much faster. It adds an interesting additional loop for walks and bike rides. Oh, and it is lovely to stand on top and look at the Canal in either direction in every season. - **Carol Buckley**

As a mother of two under four, it has given us immediate access to an entirely new neighbourhood/park that was previously a car ride away, or a specifically planned trip with the right conveyance to get us back for nap time. Pre-pandemic, we gained quick, walking access to new parks, the farmer's market, and more. Mid-pandemic, it's still an exciting new neighbourhood to amble through. - **Crysta Tschirgi**

It is revolutionary in terms of promoting access, encouraging healthy activities (as demonstrated by the hundreds that have crossed it each day during the pandemic) and in building community. - **Mona Nandy**

I love the view ... I sometimes go up there just for that. Not long after it opened we set up some camp stools at sunset one evening and enjoyed cocktails and socializing with a bunch of friends and acquaintances passing by. I hope we do get to have a community dinner on it when health risks subside. - **Rebecca Aird**

The bridge is great. We use it all the time. It's really nice to have a quicker route to the Glebe and new places to walk my dog. - **Margaret Vant Erve**

Love it! It has fulfilled its objectives -- better connectivity with our neighbouring communities, safer walking and cycling infrastructure -- and beautiful views! - **Heather Jarrett**

Even though it opened one year after I retired from the daycare at Fifth and Queen Elizabeth, I am still so pleased with the footbridge. No more crossing the Canal illegally in winter and getting a fine. Actually, it's much safer to cross the bridge than the ice considering my age! And we saw the Canada Day fireworks from the bridge last year. - **Janice Cameron**



LINDY NEWMAN PHOTO

This footbridge has been such a source of delight to us. We cross it on many of our daily morning walks. During the pandemic we 'take' our four-year-old grandson on the walk with us "virtually" using our smart phone and we love to show him the amazing views from the bridge. We often chance upon our neighbours crossing the bridge and that always makes us feel like such a part of a close-knit neighbourhood. We love the bridge and all that it represents in bringing communities and people together, especially during these trying times. - **Patricia Burnett**

I nearly always take the Flora to cross the Canal, even when it's not the shortest or quickest route. It looks fantastic from a couple blocks away or a kilometre away. If I am on a bike ride back to Corners on Main it seems like 'home' as soon as I round the bend near Lansdowne, and I am able to see the bridge. I sometimes stop at the seat on the west side ramp or stop at the top and look up and down the Canal. On very rare occasions I have seen the bridge empty, not that it ever stays that way for long. Great contribution. - **Peter Tobin**

Fossil fuel emissions make the virus more deadly

During the current pandemic many of us have become more concerned with our respiratory health because of the risk from the novel coronavirus. But there is also a link between environmental conditions and increased risk of acquiring COVID-19.

Worldwide, air pollution causes seven million deaths annually, including premature deaths from asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, according to the World Health Organization. Health Canada has concluded that fine particles from diesel exhaust, the components of smog, and other fossil fuel emissions, damage people's immune systems and reduce their resilience to diseases. Studies by Harvard University researchers determined that COVID-19 is more deadly where there is more air pollution and particulates from fossil fuels.

COVID-19 is highlighting that a shift to green energy is critical for our health and longevity, as well as for mitigating the impacts of global climate change. We've experienced some of the other benefits of a lower carbon lifestyle throughout the COVID-19 lockdown: fewer cars on the roads means less noise and more sounds of nature; traffic congestion is greatly reduced; and pedestrians and cyclists have taken back some of the roads.

We don't have to go back to gridlock, noise, and smog. There are a lot of great initiatives going on in Old Ottawa East (OOE) that you can help support for the environment and your health. OOE residents can embrace a healthier and more pleasant future while implementing climate actions.

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THE MAINSTREETER

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Community Police (for non-emergency concerns): 613-236-1222 x5287 or huntmr@ottawapolic.ca

Old Town Hall: 613.627.0062

Opinion

Victory for all concerned

The saga of the Deschâtelets Building zoning appeal

RON ROSE

A “saga” can be defined as a heroic story involving many unexpected challenges. It’s a word that aptly describes the struggle by the Old Ottawa East Community Association (OOECA) to appeal planning and zoning decisions made by the City of Ottawa a little more than a year ago. *The Mainstreeter* has published several news stories about aspects of this legal battle, but my intent is to detail the unexpected challenges and obstacles OOECA and the community had to face in overturning these rulings.

The community association was initially surprised when planners working for the Regional Group, the developer of Greystone Village, alleged there was an “anomaly” in the Community Design Plan that had been created between 2005 and 2011 and set out, among other things, the maximum heights allowed for each area of Old Ottawa East.

Those involved within the community believed that the CDP clearly specified that building heights permitted between Main Street and the historic Deschâtelets Building could not exceed six stories. However, the developer argued that ambiguity caused by this “anomaly” meant that buildings of up to nine stories could be built in front of the Deschâtelets Building. It was at this point that the developer introduced a design for a nine storey building which was referred to as building 2B.

OOECA argued that there was a simple way to rectify any ambiguity, while adhering to the spirit of the CDP. City of Ottawa planners, faced with a choice to recommend acceptance of the developer’s interpretation or OOECA’s proposal, which would restore the height limits set out in the CDP, opted to support the developer’s interpretation. As a result, the community association began its battle aligned against both the developer and the City.

On July 6th, 2019, City Council agreed to two changes that would allow taller buildings in front of the Deschâtelets Building. At that point,

OOECA decided to appeal. One of the consequences of the appeals was that the City could not issue a building permit for the construction of the proposed building 2B while it was subject to an appeal.

The first hurdle came when we were informed we had only 30 days to file an appeal with the provincial Local Planning Appeals Tribunal (LPAT). That left scant time to learn what was required to file an appeal and to then develop the necessary arguments and documents. However, members of the OOECA, assisted by members of other community associations, ramped up to prepare the appeal with Monica Helm offering to compile the numerous documents to be submitted to LPAT. Thanks to the concerted efforts by many who volunteered to help formulate the arguments and compile documents in a form acceptable to the LPAT, the August 6th filing deadline was met.

The OOECA had some funds to pay the costs of the appeals, but not nearly enough. We learned that other planning appeals within Ottawa had cost in excess of \$100,000.00, and we recognized that we needed to raise additional funds. Heather Jarrett stepped up and organized a fundraising campaign, which featured the sale of green t-shirts emblazoned with the slogan “RESPECT APPROVED PLANS”. These t-shirts have been featured in previous issues of *The Mainstreeter*. She also organized a GoFundMe campaign, which has generated income for the appeals.

September presented additional unexpected twists. First, the province changed the legislation governing appeals to the LPAT, implementing Bill 108, which governed the community’s appeals. Second, the new legislation changed the basis and the grounds for the filing of an appeal, which required OOECA to resubmit the two appeals. Under the new law, we had only 20 days in which to refile.

At this point, OOECA hired a planning lawyer, Kristi Ross, a resident of Old Ottawa East who was both qualified and experienced

in municipal planning appeals. She was able to guide the community association through the complexities of the new legislation and prepare two new appeals under the new format, all within the narrow deadline.

The breakthrough in settling the appeals came in December when David Kardish, one of the principals of Regional Group, reached out informally to the community to assess possible interest in a negotiated settlement. The OOECA agreed to a discussion and following a positive meeting, both sides drew up an agreed Minutes of Settlement which included, among other items, a reduction from nine to eight storeys for the contentious building 2B, an agreement to limit building heights directly in front of the Deschâtelets Building to four storeys, and an agreement that any buildings constructed behind the Deschâtelets building, including their permitted rooftop projections, would not be visible from Main Street.

The negotiated settlement was a victory for all concerned, as it would allow Regional to proceed with the construction of building 2B, and, while it did not give the community association the height reduction it desired for 2B, it did provide certainty for the heights of any other buildings on the site.

The agreement was sent to the City, which endorsed it, and it was sent along to the LPAT for a settlement conference at which all parties would agree, and the appeal would be settled. That would allow the City to issue a building permit, and permit construction on building 2B to begin.

However, COVID-19 shut down a wide range of government activities, including hearings, so the settlement conference scheduled for April 9th was postponed indefinitely. Eventually, the LPAT agreed to a telephone conference on June 18th, at which all parties agreed to the measures outlined in the Minutes of Settlement. Fully 11 months after the City made its initial decisions, the appeal was settled.

Theresa Ann Wallace

OOE resident wins 2020 National Capital short story competition

In this interview, The Mainstreeter's Lori Gandy "sat down" virtually with Theresa Ann Wallace, a long-time resident of Old Ottawa East, who was recently selected as the winner of the 2020 National Capital Writing Competition (short story category) presented by the National Capital Region (NCR) branch of the Canadian Authors Association (CAA). In the interview, Wallace talks about her award, her winning short story, Water, Fire, Air, and her writing aspirations. She also describes the unique awards ceremony conducted virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic by the NCR branch of the CAA which was suspenseful enough to leave her "a nervous wreck"!

The Mainstreeter: First of all, Theresa, what was your reaction when you learned you had won the 2020 National Capital Writing Competition for your short story Water, Fire, Air?

Wallace: I felt very encouraged. I worked really hard on that story. Short story writing is harder than any other sort of writing I have done. I didn't understand when I started out that you have to be brave, and even braver to do it well, which I usually fail at. One of my teachers said our subconscious mind is a lot smarter than our conscious mind, and it is our subconscious mind that we bring to creative writing, and that takes us places that are surprising, not always comfortable—that are sometimes quite dark. But the adventure is worth being on.

The Mainstreeter: Have you had a lifelong interest in writing?

Wallace: I always wanted to be a writer,

although I had only a vague notion of what kind of writing I wanted to do. I got an English degree and moved to Ottawa to go to journalism school, then joined the federal government as a writer/editor. After the first of our three children was born, I had this idea I could have a career working at home as a freelance researcher, writer and editor. So, I did that. Later on, I added in some magazine writing just for fun, particularly for sports magazines—mostly Triathlon Magazine Canada and Canadian Running Magazine.

The Mainstreeter: How long have you been writing short stories?

Wallace: When I was a kid, I started making up stories and poems, as all kids do, but I forgot about all that at some point.

Six years ago, I almost died when tendrils of scar tissue from my three caesareans strangled my small intestines. When I woke up in the recovery room, the surgeon told me he was not sure if the emergency surgery removing several feet of my intestines had been a success. That night, I looked out my window in the intensive care unit and tried to make sense of what had just happened. I realized I'd had a wonderful life but felt a tiny twinge of regret that I'd never pursued creative writing. That fall, I started to get serious about learning how to write short stories and disengaged from most of my other freelance pursuits.

What helped me very much in this learning process was taking a great CAG (OOE Community Activities Group) course at the Old Town Hall taught by Suzanne Nussey, who has lived right around the corner from me for decades, but we didn't really know each other. Suzanne is an award-winning poet and memoir writer, and now we are friends.

The Mainstreeter: Have you taken any other writing courses or workshops that

have helped your writing?

Wallace: I've taken fiction-writing courses at the Banff Centre and at Sage Hill Writing in rural Saskatchewan. Both writing schools were terrific, especially since they gave me an opportunity to be with other fiction writers, as I didn't know many fiction writers back then. And of course, the settings – Banff and rural Saskatchewan – were beautiful. Now, in part thanks to these courses, I have writer friends who live in other parts of the country. I've been so proud of them when the writing they were toiling over in our workshops has been published. In some of my writing courses there have been women whose sole objective is to write family stories for their children and grandchildren to read and remember them by. They think it should be a straightforward task until they start gathering the so-called facts. Their descriptions of their research, and how each person in the same room recalls an event differently, are always fun to hear, and so educational about the fallibility of memory and the tricks it plays on us.

The Mainstreeter: You have won other awards for your writing – fiction and non-fiction. Can you talk a bit about these previous awards?

Wallace: I was the runner-up in the 2015 Ottawa Magazine short fiction contest. I also won the Capital Crime Writers short story contest a few years ago and this award was presented by Louise Penny—that was a thrill—during an Ottawa Writers Fest event at Southminster United Church across from my favourite library.

The Mainstreeter: Given the COVID-19 situation, what kind of "ceremony" was organized to recognize the winners of the 2020 competition?

Wallace: There was a National Capital Writing Awards Zoom ceremony in May organized by the National Capital Region branch of the Canadian Authors Association. I just joined the association in January, and I did not know any of the people, but they did a really good job making it feel special for participants despite the pandemic. The President, Arlene Smith, was a great MC. She announced the top ten poetry winners, starting with the poem that placed tenth, then the top ten short story winners from tenth to first as well. It was very suspenseful. The judges also spoke, and each person got to speak for a minute about their story. My name was announced last and by that time I was a nervous wreck. I believe the substance of my remarks involved complimenting the fiction judge on the bright colours of her cooking pots that were displayed behind her in the Zoom call.



ROSS DANCE PHOTO

Theresa Ann Wallace

The Mainstreeter: I'd like to turn to the story itself, which contains a dark and disturbing theme, foregrounded by the protagonist's guilt, violence unleashed on the innocent, a family gone wrong. Where did the idea for this story come from?

Wallace: My father was in the Canadian army and we moved a lot. At a crucial point in my childhood we lived on an army base in Winnipeg. I loved it. There was a community of kids running in packs on the streets and the base had fantastic athletic facilities, which we got to use for free. My dad was a soldier and an instructor on the rifle ranges, so he was obsessive about gun safety.


The characters just came to me. My story is completely fabricated, but I do remember hating the popping noise made by my older brothers' air rifles and not feeling good about my father's real rifle being in our basement. What I brought to this dark story about the consequences of living in a closed society where there's a gun in almost every house may have been some of those long-forgotten childhood fears.

The Mainstreeter: What writing projects do you have on the go now?

Wallace: I am trying to write another short story set on an army base in the 1960s. But I am having a hard time writing during this pandemic.



To support the CAA and read the works of local winners of this year's poetry and fiction contest, you can purchase a copy of 20/20 Vision: Select Poems and Stories from the 33rd Annual National Capital Writing Contest for \$12 through Amazon. Follow this link on the National Capital Region's part of the CAA website at <http://canadianauthors.org/nationalcapitalregion/contests/> to the relevant page on Amazon to purchase 20/20 Vision.



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Colonel By Drive traffic signs

May mystery resolved, though not solved

JOHN DANCE

Thanks to the curiosity of OOE resident Justin Tang, a bizarrely conflicting turn restriction sign at the Colonel By Drive and Clegg Street intersection has been removed, but neither the City of Ottawa nor the National Capital Commission has any knowledge of how the erroneous sign got there in the first place.

Back in May, a sign with its base supported by sandbags was placed in front of the traffic signals and attached signs at the northeast corner of Clegg Street and Colonel By Drive. The new sign prohibited all right turns from Clegg to northbound Colonel By at any time.

But this new prohibition was much more restrictive than the existing sign on the traffic signal standard, which only prohibited right turns on a red light between 7 am and 7 pm.

So, after using the intersection a few times and perhaps ignoring the new sign, Tang posted the matter to a community Facebook page. After many residents waded into the matter, Councillor Menard's office was contacted to get an explanation. Advisor Ariela Summit had the conflicting signs investigated by the traffic management department and the new sign that purported to prohibit all

right turns was removed a few days later.

But questions remained: why was the sign erected and who put it there?

The Mainstreeter asked the City for an explanation, and the initial response from Media Relations was, "Staff have looked into this and have determined that this road belongs to the NCC and they would be best positioned to answer these questions."

So, the NCC was contacted, and Corey Larocque, strategic communications advisor, responded, "After verifying internally, I can confirm the NCC did not install the sign in question. Numerous stakeholders have been involved with different repair projects in that area. Although we cannot confirm which one installed it, we believe the sign could have been linked to these projects."

Armed with this response, *The Mainstreeter* again asked the city about the sign and Phil Landry, director of traffic services said, "Traffic Services has checked the records for the Colonel By and Clegg intersection and does not have any documentation of installing the signage. This is an NCC property and the City doesn't install signs on these roads unless requested by the NCC."

The sign is gone, but the mystery remains.



JUSTIN TANG PHOTO

Justin Tang's efforts led to the removal of an erroneous and conflicting new traffic sign at the Clegg Street and Colonel By Drive intersection. The new sign prohibited all right turns from Clegg onto Colonel By.

City to review Deschâtelets

JOHN DANCE

Plans for repurposing the Deschâtelets Building are tentatively to be considered by the City of Ottawa's Planning Committee on Thursday, September 10th.

The Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre Est (the French Catholic school board) aims to convert the main Deschâtelets Building so that its Au Coeur d'Ottawa school can relocate from its temporary home at 88 Main Street as soon as possible, Luc Poulin, CEECE's Director of Facilities, told *The Mainstreeter*.

CECCE requires rezoning to allow a school within Deschâtelets and, together with the Regional Group, the current owner of the building, also seeks permission to demolish the chapel wing of the structure.

In 2011, the exterior of the entire Deschâtelets Building was given heritage protection as was the interior of the chapel. However, the school board is not interested in repurposing the chapel nor is the City of Ottawa which has plans to build a separate gymnasium/multi-purpose space just to the north of Deschâtelets.

Both the boards of the Community Activities Group and of the Old Ottawa

East Community Association (OOECA) unanimously support a new school and a community centre within the main portion of Deschâtelets. However, the OOECA board does not support demolition of the chapel wing "unless the sale of the main part of Deschâtelets to the CEECE is completed and the City of Ottawa commits to the timely construction of a community centre in the Deschâtelets Building and an adjoining gymnasium/multi-purpose facility."

Some residents are opposed to the demolition of the chapel wing, given its heritage value and potential for other uses, including conversion of the chapel to a gymnasium. Concerns have also been expressed about uncertainty surrounding Regional's plans to develop the land behind the main portion of Deschâtelets on which the chapel is built.

As of this writing, "Regional and the CEECE continue to discuss terms for the purchase [of the main part of the Deschâtelets building] and access prior to taking possession," says Poulin. Meanwhile the school board has closed a tender for removing any contamination in the main part of the Deschâtelets and intends to begin the work this August.



LORNE ABUGOV PHOTO

Cable drop halts Main Street, internet traffic

MAINSTREETER STAFF

A downed Rogers Communications cable suspended chest-high across Main Street between Mason Terrace and Bower Street left hundreds of Old Ottawa East residents without internet service for several hours on July 17th and caused a rare traffic snarl along normally placid side streets including Mutchmor, McGillivray and McNaughton.

Responding to a 9-1-1 call from a Main Street resident who observed the fallen overhead cable, Ottawa police cordoned off both sides of the busy thoroughfare at around 5:30 pm on a steamy Friday afternoon, forcing southbound vehicles to turn either east through the Brantwood Gates or west along Bower Street. Northbound vehicles were routed along Mason Terrace.

Residents in the area were kept busy directing bewildered motorists unfamiliar with the twisting street pattern in the quiet pocket between the Cuban

Embassy and Echo Drive.

According to several witnesses, including the driver of a northbound #55 OC Transpo bus which braked safely directly in front of the fallen cable, the accident resulted when a large southbound construction vehicle clipped the overhead cable, dragging it down in the process. Apparently unaware, the driver of the vehicle continued southbound leaving dangling wires in his wake.

In addition to the cable strewn across Main Street, several cables running north and south along the eastern side of Main Street along a span beginning midway between Mason and Bower and extending to the Brantwood Gates were dragged down along sidewalks, posing a hazard to pedestrians until Ottawa police arrived on the scene to cordon off the one block stretch.

Internet service to Rogers subscribers in the neighbourhood was restored within two hours of the accident.

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Arrested development

Continued from Page 1

days that it has taken to build Greystone Village homes, says Josh Kardish, EQ's vice president. Construction of the large condominiums and apartments has been delayed more because of the constraints forced by such things as limited capacity of elevators.

Two specific consequences are that the complete occupancy of the finished nine-storey condominium just east of Saint Paul University (Terraces 1) was delayed by approximately three months and its companion condominium will have occupancies beginning in the summer of 2021. Work on the large condominium and the apartment building along the Grande Allée remains on schedule.

Also, planning approvals are now being sought for the "Spencer," a nine-storey condo where the bus turning road is at present, and Regional plans to finish the project within two years of starting.

"Sales are still going great," says Kardish, "We're optimistic." This fall, Regional intends to present to the community its proposal for development on the area just to the east and immediate south of the Deschâtelets building.

Greystone Village Retirement, the new residence just to the northeast of the Deschâtelets building, was scheduled to open on April 1st but the opening was postponed due to COVID-19. According to Juanita Cody, GVR's director of marketing, "the owners felt the risk to residents, staff, family, and community was too high to have the residence open as planned - therefore other than security staff, the building remains closed although it is finished and ready for occupancy. We are currently unsure of when GVR will open," Cody told *The Mainstreeter*.

In terms of Domicile's Corners on Main development, Vice President David Chick says the short-term impact of the pandemic is "huge."

Commercial retail tenants

"Prospects for renting the last two [commercial] bays have stalled with no new enquiries at the moment," says Chick. "We are working with our existing

new tenants on their ability (and ours) to qualify for the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance program - the devil is in the details in many respects and we are sorting through these. We hope we are all able to ride this out and resume vibrant, full-service operations as soon as possible."

"We own and manage the retail/commercial spaces at The Corners on Main Phase 2 so, as the resolution of the pandemic unfolds, we will experience firsthand the mid- and long-term impact on these spaces, ones that I think we all consider to be somewhat vital for the planned future of Main Street in Old Ottawa East," says Chick. "I do believe that the community will do its part to support our retail/commercial tenants at The Corners."

At the end of July, Domicile took ownership of the Sisters convent just to the north of the completed Corners condominium. The lot size of the convent property is about the same as the combined area of the two occupied phases of the Corners development. In response to the question of what Domicile proposes to do with this newly acquired land and its building, Chick responded, "Nothing to share at the moment. COVID-19 is on our minds in this respect as well. We are waiting and watching."

Several community issues that pertain to the development of the convent site are what becomes of the Mary statue and its parkette on Springhurst Avenue and whether there will be a pedestrian link between Springhurst and des Oblats avenues east of the completed Corners condos.

Smaller developers impacted

Sales for the new boutique condominium at the northeast corner of Main Street and Echo Drive "have been moving along well," reports Ryan MacDougall of Uniform Urban Developments. "COVID-19 did have an impact on Echo [the name of the condo] and it felt like we lost some momentum for a few months at the very outset. Having said that, we are already sensing resurgence in the market and have recorded some sales in the last month." Construction may begin as early as next year "but this is a moving target," says

MacDougall.

The impacts of the pandemic have been similarly felt by smaller developers. Claudio Falsetto, president of Revelstoke Custom Homes and Renovations and an Old Ottawa East resident, says his firm initially had to shut down the renovations within occupied homes but, despite the difficulties of physical distancing and "the work process slowing down," the firm has maintained schedules, experiencing only two- to three-week delays in various projects.

"The phones were quiet in April," Falsetto notes. "People hunkered down and were scared. But in May there was a resurgence of interest. People looking at the long term, sitting at home, realized 'I need a new bathroom or whatever, so there was an impetus to move forward, quickly.' By mid-July, Revelstoke had

12 renovations and five new homes underway in Old Ottawa East.

The economic impact of the pandemic on the City of Ottawa's OOE projects is not currently clear. "The Greenfield Avenue, Main Street, Hawthorne Avenue reconstruction project is currently in design, with construction expected to follow in the spring of 2021," says Luc Marineau, Acting Manager of the City's Design and Construction Group. "The design work is proceeding as planned throughout the pandemic. Currently, there are no anticipated delays, however, the project schedule is being carefully tracked, monitored, and assessed for any potential impacts due to COVID-19." At this point there is no news on the pandemic's impact on the availability of funding for the planned new OOE community centre.

Ruling imposes property tax

Continued from Page 1

Ottawa Footy Sevens, the company that refurbished the high school field in 2018 in exchange for use of the field in non-school hours, will be paying the bill. "I can confirm that the Board does not pay property taxes to MPAC," Debbie Frendo, the responsible superintendent at the Ottawa Catholic School Board (OCSB), told *The Mainstreeter*, "and any partnerships that may result in incremental tax assessments would become the responsibility of the Board's partners, not the OCSB".

Information on the impact of the new taxes on Footy Sevens' operations and player fees was sought from the business but they had not responded to *The Mainstreeter* when this article was submitted.

"The MPAC decision brings a small measure of restoration of justice to the taxpayer," notes Alexandra Gruca-Macaulay, one of the community association board members who had been involved with a community group that had worked to mitigate adverse impacts of the commercialized field.

The refurbishment of the field resulted in a much-improved facility for Immaculata students, but the changes were made with little consultation with or consideration for the neighbouring

residents and the community at large. Previously, there was no night-time activity on the field, and in non-school hours community members could readily use the field.

During the pandemic, the OCSB and Footy Sevens provided daily public access to the field since Footy Sevens couldn't make commercial use of it.

Footy Sevens says, "Hundreds of hours of free community usage of the field have been made available to the public since the rejuvenation of the field and these hours have continued to be published here: <https://ottawafotyblog.footysevens.com/blog/2019/05/25/community-usage-at-the-immaculata-high-school-field/>".

Before the Immaculata field was refurbished, OOECA argued that the proposed intensive commercial use of the field by Footy Sevens was not of a "scale and intensity that is compatible with neighbourhood character," as is required by the existing zoning for the field. The City responded that in its view there was no change in use. Despite the property's changed tax status, the City maintains this position of "no change in use" and says no rezoning is required.

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Colonel By Drive pathway safety questioned

JOHN DANCE

Improving the substandard pathway running along Colonel By Drive between Bank and Clegg streets should be made a priority for the National Capital Commission (NCC), says the Old Ottawa East Community Association (OOECA).

Much of this busy kilometre-long stretch is less than the three-metre width required by NCC standards and, making matters worse, pedestrians can't readily avoid cyclists because the canal railing is on one side and the busy parkway is on the other.

In October, the NCC board of directors will consider a new capital pathway strategic plan and, while the OOECA sees many positive elements within the plan, the plan's recommendation pertaining to the dangerous stretch of the Colonel By pathway is Old Ottawa East and Old Ottawa South regarded to be inadequate and indefinite.

The draft plan recommends "Improv[ing] narrow roadside conditions along Colonel By Drive and consider[ing] reclaiming space from the vehicle lanes."

In a recent letter to the NCC's CEO, Toby Nussbaum, OOECA acting President Bob Gordon says the NCC should make it a priority to address the

unsafe pathway conditions within the next two to three years. The Old Ottawa South Community Association has also written to the NCC in support of the idea.

OOECA specifically recommends "reclaiming space from the vehicle lanes in order to create bike lanes on the parkway that would serve faster cyclists, e-cyclists, and e-scooters; and/or by constructing a pedestrian-only pathway expansion over the canal, similar to the type of pedestrian boardwalk expansion that was installed along the northern shore of Dow's Lake or at the eastern end of Jacques Cartier Park along the Ottawa River."

"We will certainly take the recommendation in the letter into consideration along with the other public comments received during the Capital Pathway Strategic Plan review," says Corey Larocque, NCC strategic communications advisor.

"The pandemic has made us all even more aware that more safe space is required for pedestrians and cyclists and the NCC's experiment of closing Queen Elizabeth Driveway at specified times has been a resounding success," wrote acting president Gordon.

"But it is not readily possible to do



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

Sub-standard sections of the Colonel By pathway between Bank and Clegg streets are dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists.

this for Colonel By Drive, so alternative means for providing additional space for pedestrians and cyclists is needed, a real challenge given the limited available 'real estate' in much of the Clegg - Bank stretch of Colonel By," continued Gordon.

"Building a pedestrian-only boardwalk alongside the canal for the substandard portion of the pathway would require a substantial investment but it would fit well with the federal government's infrastructure program and would finally give the necessary safety to pedestrians. Our idea of having bike lanes on the roadway itself may also be necessary as

e-bikes and e-scooters become more popular. They - as well as fast cyclists - endanger pedestrians, who, as per the draft report, are the most vulnerable users," concluded Gordon.

The draft pathway plan proposes a number of improvements elsewhere on the canal routes. Specifically, the western side by the National Arts Centre is to be improved and, on the eastern side, a "slow zone" is proposed between Laurier and Daly, and construction of the missing segment between Daly and Rideau is recommended.

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Crime in Old Ottawa East - has there been a COVID-19 impact?

PHYLLIS ODENBACH SUTTON

News reports have talked about an increase in crime in Ottawa since the COVID-19 pandemic began. *The Mainstreeter* decided to look more closely at the City's recent crime statistics, particularly for Old Ottawa East (OOE), seeking to compare our community to others in Ottawa.

This article combines information obtained from the Ottawa Police Service (OPS) and from Stephanie Lemieux, our Community Police Officer (CPO), as well as from the personal experiences of local residents interviewed by *The Mainstreeter*.

We were disappointed to learn that the Ottawa Police community statistics crime-mapping tool (<https://www.ottawapolice.ca/en/crime/Crime-Mapping-Tool.aspx>) does not capture online incident reports submitted by residents. Furthermore, we discovered that Freedom of Information rules limit the statistical numbers that one can readily access. Another difficulty in looking at particular categories of crime is that different category codes can be used to describe similar incidents.

Thus, while we received some information from our CPO relating to criminal incidents in OOE, it was not possible to rank our community relative to other communities throughout the City of Ottawa.

So, what did we learn from the police? While break and enters (B&Es) have increased overall in Ottawa during the pandemic, OOE saw residential B&Es decline from 2019 to 2020 (January 1 to July 6), while non-residential B&Es within our community increased slightly. Bike thefts in Ottawa almost doubled this year when compared with last year, but there was not a significant change in OOE.

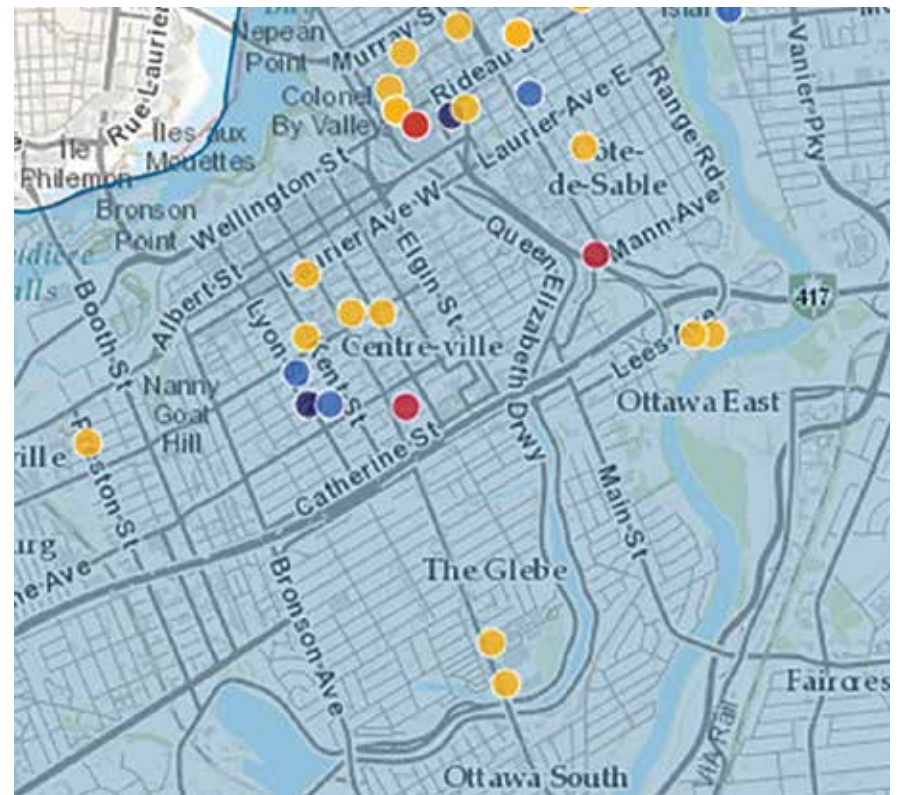
We also discovered that there is some seasonality to crime statistics as property crimes (thefts from vehicles, B&Es and bicycle thefts) typically increase in the warmer months. There is no indication that online or computer crimes have been more prevalent during the pandemic than before. In terms of scams/frauds, there is no information available as to whether there has been an increase during the virus lockdown, but the OPS indicated that these types of crimes are typically under-reported and happen regularly.

From our conversations with local residents who have been victims of crime, we discovered that the majority of these crime incidents in OOE happened over night. In many neighbourhoods, this was the time when cars were rifled through - often even when there was nothing to steal inside the vehicles. Where such incidents were common, residents often only made reports to the OPS if something was actually stolen. Of the residents we spoke to, most thefts from cars or trucks happened when the vehicles were accidentally left unlocked. A number of bicycle thefts were from locked (or in some cases unlocked) sheds or garages, and on at least one occasion, a bike theft was through entry to a garage accessed by first breaking into the car and then using the garage door opener. In a number of cases, thieves were not deterred by long driveways.

We also discovered that there are many opportunities to share information about bike thefts with social media groups, e.g., Stolen Bikes Ottawa. Many residents checked Kijiji, Craig's list and Garage 529, but none of the residents we interviewed had successfully found their stolen bike using these resources.

CPO Lemieux provided advice on the reporting of incidents as follows: "...it is very important for the community to report criminal incidents in their neighbourhoods...One person's report could be the piece of the puzzle to solving other reports. ...we rely on the community to tell us where the problems are so that we can put our resources in the areas that need them most." She went on to say that: "Thieves typically look for an unlocked or locked vehicle showing valuables, and once they gain entry, they go through the entire car, including the trunk. It isn't enough to hide items in the console or under the car seats because the thieves are just that thorough."

And the residents that we spoke to gave some practical advice as well: remember to lock your car and do not keep any valuables in it; ensure that sheds are well-secured and locked; consider installing security cameras; and be cautious of strangers.



OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE

A recent screenshot of the Ottawa Police crime-mapping tool shows few criminal incidents in Old Ottawa East.

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Report to be taken over the phone: 613-236-1222 Ext. 7300

Online reports: www.ottawapolice.ca

CrimeStoppers: Crimestoppers.ca or 1-800-222-TIPS (8477)

Tips to prevent residential break and enters:

- Do not leave windows and doors open or unlocked while you are outside on your property or in a different area of your home.
- If you have an attached garage, always keep the access door between the house and the garage locked.
- If you have a garage door remote in your vehicle, ensure it is kept out of sight and keep your vehicle locked.
- Keep valuables and sentimental items you wouldn't want lost in a safe and, if possible, secure the safe to the floor or wall stud.
- Don't leave purses and wallets just inside your entry door.
- Install and use a security bar on your patio door.
- Keep grass cut and shrubs trimmed to give your home a lived-in look.
- Consider security lighting and cameras.
- Watch out for one another. If you see a suspicious person in your neighbour's yard or driveway, call police.

Tips to prevent thefts from your vehicle:

- **Remove all Valuables** - Never leave anything on display when you leave your vehicle including loose change, cigarettes, cigarette lighters, sunglasses, CD's, cell phones, stereos, cameras, and clothing - if thieves can see it, they will steal it.
- **Park Safely** - When parking at home, always use your garage if you have one, and lock both your vehicle and your garage. If you don't have a garage, try to park in a well-lit, open place. When parking at work or your local mall, park in a well-lit open place.
- **Remove Portable Accessories** - Removing stereo face plates - locking them in the trunk or taking them with you, will deter thieves.
- **Get an Alarm Installed** - Alarms can deter thieves not only from stealing items from your vehicle, but also from stealing your vehicle. Even if you have an alarm installed never leave anything in your vehicle. Thieves can smash a window, reach in, grab an item and be gone in seconds before your alarm is even activated. Caution: do not set your alarm to sensitive. Storms, wind, and large trucks passing by your vehicle can set it off.

Tips to prevent bicycle theft:

- Invest in a durable bike lock or put your bike away in a locked shed or garage.
- Residents living in high rise apartments and condominiums should store their bike in designated secured enclosures.
- All riders should choose bike racks in areas that offer high visibility and foot traffic or surveillance.



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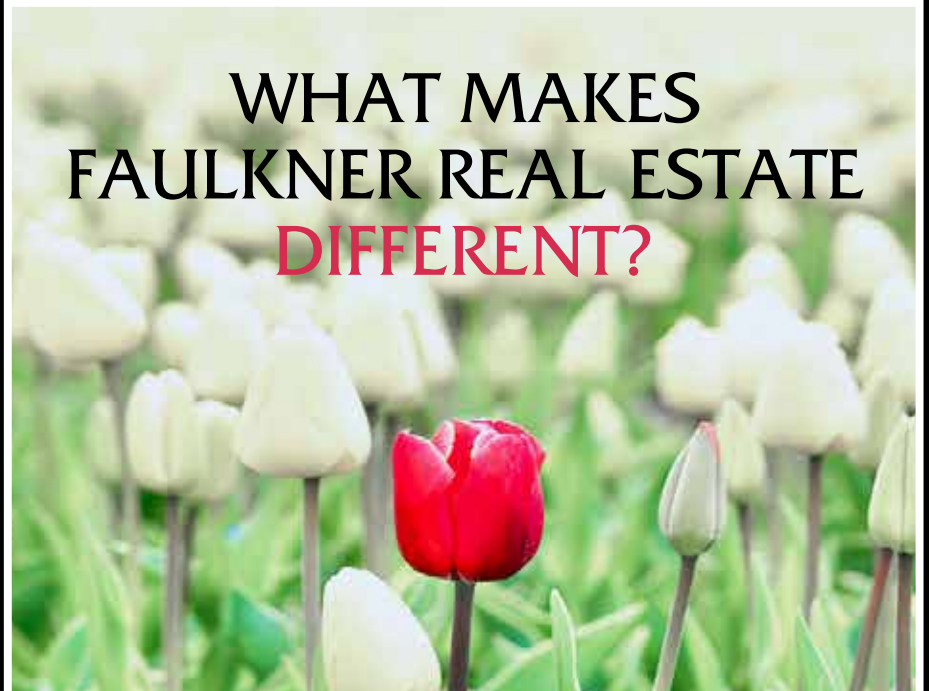
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VOLUNTEERING

Melinda (Lindy) Newman

OOE resident receives prestigious June Callwood Award for outstanding service to May Court Hospice

LORI GANDY

When Melinda (Lindy) Newman learned this past March that she was to be inducted into the June Callwood Circle of Outstanding Volunteers, she says she was “absolutely shocked.” She had no idea that she had even been nominated. That reaction speaks volumes about why the long-serving volunteer was unanimously selected for this distinction by the staff, fellow volunteers, and the Volunteer Council at Hospice Care Ottawa’s May Court site.

She did not seek nor expect this recognition; according to colleagues at the May Court Hospice; this is very much Lindy’s way, and one of the many reasons why she deserves this award.

In nominating Newman, colleagues at the Hospice described her as “quiet and unassuming, working behind the scenes, going about her business in a humble way” to get things done and to comfort and care for others. It is this quiet compassion and genuine desire to help others without fanfare that inspired her colleagues to nominate her, and to see her recognized formally for her dedication, excellence, and professionalism.

The June Callwood Award, named in honour of the late June Callwood, a long-time advocate of hospice care, recognizes and honours outstanding hospice volunteers throughout Ontario. The award was established in 1994 by the Hospice Association of Ontario, which joined in 2011 with Ontario Palliative Care Association to form Hospice Palliative Care Ontario.

Newman came to hospice care through personal experience. Her father received palliative care in Halifax in the early 1990’s when he had cancer. She remembers how important that care was, allowing her family to continue to be a family, and to be by his side supporting him through his final journey. Back home in Ottawa, when she learned that a hospice was to open in the neighbourhood, she knew that was where she wanted to spend her volunteer time, to help families and their loved ones move through their final days in peace, dignity and compassion.

For the past 20 years, Newman has volunteered three times a week at the May Court Hospice, one of three sites operated by Hospice Care Ottawa, a community-based charitable organization that offers

palliative and end-of-life programs and services at no charge to people living in Ottawa. All services are offered in a setting that reflects as closely as possible a comfortable home environment to clients and their families. With the COVID-19 situation, the residence remains open but none of the community programs are currently running at the three sites.



Melinda Newman

In addition to performing volunteer administrative tasks – keeping the Hospice organized, updating residents’ records, and sending out bereavement cards – Newman is also a regular volunteer in the residence, always reliable, compassionate, and ready to support families, clients, and staff.

She is a Registered Nurse (retired) and was able to step in as coordinator for the Day Hospice and Home Support programs from 2000 to 2002 when one of the nurses took a sabbatical. Many of the volunteers have also benefited from Newman’s giving nature through her mentorship when they came on board.

“I have been inspired by the courage, strength and grace of residents and their families. It has been a privilege to do a small part within an amazing team of dedicated caregivers. I receive more than I give,” she says of her important work at the Hospice.

When asked about how the organization has evolved over 20 years, Newman had this to say: “The organization, although much larger than 20 years ago, has not changed. Its mandate is to do what we are able to do to support individuals and their families at a very vulnerable time of their lives in a warm, caring, and welcoming environment.” Today, the Hospice offers

Community Hospice Care programs such as in-home visits and day hospice, Residence Hospice Care, Bereavement Care and Caregiver Support.

Her family members are enormously proud of her for her volunteer work, and for the recognition she received through this award. With the COVID-19 situation, Newman was unable to attend an award presentation event in Toronto. So, her family decided to organize a surprise “awards ceremony” for her. “My family is my life,” she says. “I love them dearly. I was so touched!!”

Newman is a volunteer in the truest sense of the word – giving freely of herself without any expectation of reward. As she says without hesitation: “I do the work that I do since I see it as an honour and a gift to volunteer. I do not expect anything, as the Hospice is a place I feel that I am meant to be.”

As her colleagues expressed so aptly in their nomination, “She gets along with everyone. With her kind heart, work ethic and continued dedication to Hospice, she is truly one of a kind. Lindy is a super star.”



Hospice Care Ottawa is always looking for volunteers to carry out various tasks. If you would like to volunteer, please visit their web site to apply or email the volunteer services team at volunteer.services@hospicecareottawa.ca. More information about Hospice Care Ottawa, including information on donations, can be found on their website at <https://www.hospicecareottawa.ca>

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BE THE CHANGE

On becoming a Transition Network - let's start the conversation

ALEX WATSON

As an Old Ottawa East (OOE) resident, I care about our wonderful community, and how it is developed. I would like to introduce you to the concept of Transition Network that I believe could work well for OOE.

Transition Networks have been around for fifteen years and are associated with Rob Hopkins who helped set them up. A Transition Network is: "about reclaiming the economy, sparking entrepreneurship, reimagining work, reskilling and weaving webs of connection and support". This is done at the community level. There are approximately 78 Transition Networks across Canada. Maybe we can start one in Old Ottawa East!

As part of my own conversation of what a Transition Network could mean to me, I tried to repair my nine-year-old washing machine. After diagnosing the problem, I researched how to do the repair and ordered the parts online. However, I discovered through the

disassembly process that an expensive part called the spider also needed replacing. Three weeks of hand laundry in the midst of a pandemic was enough for my family and the parts of the washing machine ended up being recycled for the metal.

Could my outcome have been different if Old Ottawa East had someone who had experience with repairing washing machines, or had the missing part that I was looking for? There are a number of steps we can take to help our community become more of a Transition Network. For example, we could:

- develop a directory of trusted businesses and neighbourhood resources that support the circular economy and sustainable living;
- implement community actions that promote sustainability and resilience (e.g., community oven, community garden – greenhouse, tool sharing program, etc.);
- influence city and government policies, to support community-focused food



PETER CROAL PHOTO

The Community Garden behind Saint Paul University is a good example of how to create food security as part of a Transition Network.

- networks and sustainable energy sources among other examples; and
- enhance the connections with neighbours and nature that have sprung up during COVID-19 and start conversations about an OOE Transition Network.

Old Ottawa East has already achieved many sustainability successes that demonstrate Transition Network characteristics. These include: The Children's Garden, the Main Street Farmers Market, the Community Gardens, Main Street revitalization, nature and bike trails, parks and footbridges, local events, as well as the community collaboration that influenced the development of Greystone Village.

We also have pockets of expertise such as the Terra Firma Cohousing Community on Drummond Street, and

neighbours' adoption of solar panels, sustainable sources of electricity, more use of electric vehicles, solar water pipes and experience with food gardens. These examples show that one can balance sustainable living while supporting the local economy and development.

We can work together to explore ways to lower our carbon footprint and increase our resilience in collaboration with the local economy. Success will sometimes be lower carbon solutions as opposed to a perfect "green" solution. The objective is to continue to influence how Old Ottawa East integrates sustainability and improves the local economy. Connection will be the foundation. The late Paul Dewar (former MP for Ottawa Centre who lived in the neighbourhood) said it best: "Let the building of a better world begin with our neighbours."



To learn more about Transition Networks, visit <https://transitionnetwork.org>. If you want to start your own conversation about the possibility of creating a Transition Network for Old Ottawa East, please send an email to SLOE at sloe@ottawaeast.ca and share your thoughts on how OOE could be more sustainable and resilient.

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Perspectives, mostly positive...

One year in the life of the Flora Footbridge

JOHN DANCE

She's now been very visibly with us for more than a year. The Flora Footbridge was officially opened last June and as of mid-June of this year, there were 722,411 trips across the Rideau Canal between Clegg Street in Old Ottawa East (OOE) and Fifth Avenue in the Glebe.

The bridge was built after decades of lobbying by the neighbouring communities. Now, it's simply a part of Capital Ward's fabric, tying OOE and the Glebe together and making it easier, safer and more enjoyable for Ottawa pedestrians and cyclists to get across the mid-town section of the Canal.

In terms of use, the bridge has met expectations. Its environmental assessment forecast 1,500 to 2,500 daily trips and it's averaged 2,058, although this varies greatly month to month. This past May there was an average of 3,401 per day while in February there were only 701 per day.

Numbers aside, the bridge has positively altered the daily patterns of residents. Many commuting, shopping and social trips now go via the bridge rather than over the Pretoria or Bank Street bridges.

And with the profound impacts of the pandemic, residents have become urban adventurers with Glebe-ites safely

exploring OOE and Old Ottawa South and vice versa. As per the reaction of users in our special Letters to the Editor section of this issue of *The Mainstreeter*, young families have become regular users as they sample the parks on both sides of the Canal.

"The Flora Footbridge has reduced the distance between two important mid-town Ottawa communities and has improved access for all users of the city's extensive network of multi-use pathways," Heidi Cousineau, the city's acting director, transportation planning, told *The Mainstreeter*. "The footbridge was built in keeping with the distinctive location and historic significance of the area and will allow for the continued enjoyment of the Rideau Canal in all seasons, while providing important connections for cyclists and pedestrians. With landscaping and public art (including benches) on both sides of the canal, the Flora Footbridge will be enjoyed by Ottawa residents for years to come."

During the lengthy consultations on the desirability of the bridge and its design, many worried that the bridge would turn Old Ottawa East into a parking lot when there were large events at Lansdowne Park. Yet, the experience so far is that while use of the bridge jumps when there is a Redblacks game or other major activity at the park, there is limited



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

In the midst of pandemic anxiety and BLM awareness, the message "You are loved!!!" appeared in pastel chalk on the OOE-side abutment.

additional parking on streets near the OOE end of the bridge.

One less positive impact is the bridge abutment and ramp on the Old Ottawa East side. "I think the bridge is lovely," said OOE resident John Graham, but he went on to say, "Unfortunately the guy who designed it seems to have spent most of the money on the bridge, and then got his wife's cousin to design the ramp on the Clegg side. I can't imagine how sad and annoyed the people who live in its shadow feel."

During the design process, the Old Ottawa East Community Association asked that the city use slender columns to support the ramp and the eastern end of the main span, but the city chose to have the space closed off.

Some of the residents now behind the ramp and the abutment negotiated a solution with the City to get "top down bottom up blinds with a sheer component so that our privacy was not being compromised," says Echo Drive resident Margaret Vant Erve. "This has turned out to be a really good solution. As to the landscaping, we do find it rather uninspiring on our side, but at least they have the underground watering system in place and it is maintained so in time, it will restore some of the greenery that we lost."

Another point of contention was the sharp turn on the eastern switchback

Continued on Page 19



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

Pleasure crafts and pedestrians mix easily and often below and atop the Flora Footbridge.



CYNTHIA DWYER PHOTO

At night, the Flora Footbridge paints a brilliant streak across the Rideau Canal. Over the course of its brief existence, Flora has become one of the most popular photo subjects in the City.

One year in the life...

Continued from Page 18

ramp. Residents wanted more space to make the turn, but the city said this wasn't possible. Furthermore, staff said the tight design would force cyclists to slow down and this would reduce collisions. The turn remains an awkward, even dangerous, part of the design but it is now well-signed to advise cyclists to yield to pedestrians and to slow down. However, this spring, a 12-year-old OOE boy required several stitches after his arm brushed the snow-plow damaged railing. When the city was informed of the hazard, it immediately repaired the railing.

Aside from the much-improved accessibility that the bridge provides, there have been two other notable benefits. The first is that the bridge serves as a vital public space where people can meet, chat and, on occasion, even picnic

or enjoy fireworks or the Snowbirds flying overhead. The second is that the bridge provides a superb vantage point to take in the beauty of the Rideau Canal.

"I am thrilled that so many people love this bridge as much as I do," says David Chernushenko, the former Capital Ward councillor who championed the footbridge at City Hall. "It is practical and elegant. People do literally stop me in the street to praise the bridge and thank me for my role in it. It's nice to hear after all the work that went in to it. I try to remember to add that it was a team effort with many contributors over many years."

One complaint that Chernushenko hears is that the stairs are closed in winter. "We knew from the outset that most City staircases are not maintained in winter; a factor of liability and cost," he says. "The good news is that this is something that might be changed, with enough pressure from users."

The bridge was forecast to cost \$21 million but was built for \$2 million less. The bulk of the funding was provided

through the efforts of MP Catherine McKenna (\$10.5 million) and those of former MPP Yasir Naqvi (\$6.9 million).



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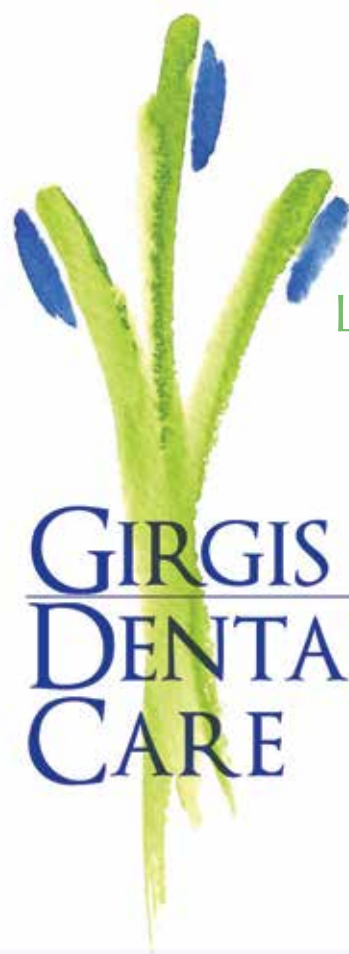
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Photo by Ashley Notley

**Peter
Fowler's
OOE
Focus**

Newcomer to Old Ottawa East, Peggy West was pleased to take up The Mainstreeter's invitation to submit favourite neighbourhood photos, this one taken during a spring walk along the Canal.

Peggy West: Being new to the neighbourhood, and walking most every day, always with the cell phone camera at hand, it is hard to resist recording what is pleasing to the eye. While out for an afternoon walk, these colourful chairs, contrasted with the black bistro table in the foreground, brought joy in mid-April, signaling the arrival of spring. This cheerful set-up can be seen on Echo Drive at the corner of Herridge Street, the chairs arranged in differing formations.

Peter Fowler's Comments: I have often walked by those chairs and said to myself - there's a photo. But now I don't have to because Peggy West captured them perfectly. The shallow depth of field enhances the colours of the chairs and gives the black table a chance. The composition of the line of chairs is just right.



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A finger on the pulse of the arts in OOE

THE CANADA COUNCIL'S TARA LAPOINTE

Tara Lapointe wants people to discover the diversity of the arts in Canada. In her role at the Canada Council for the Arts, she is perfectly placed to see that this happens—even more so, it seems, during the pandemic. “The Canada Council promotes the creation and enjoyment of the arts, connects Canadians with art, and promotes Canadian artists in Canada and internationally,” says Lapointe, who currently works as Director of Communications and Prizes.

In 2018/19, the Canada Council distributed \$242.7 million in grants to more than 2,000 arts organizations and more than 3,000 individual artists and groups. They also administer 38 prizes.

“The grants are for projects—research, creation, production, and touring in all art forms—including a specific program for Indigenous arts,” Lapointe says. “The prizes recognize achievement—either lifetime achievement such as The Governor General’s Awards in Visual and Media Arts or achievement at a certain point in an artist’s career, such as the Michael Measures Prize.”

One of the other ways the Canada Council connects the public with art is through its Art Bank collection, which Lapointe oversees. “The Canada Council has been collecting art by living Canadian artists for more than 40 years,” Lapointe says. The Art Bank now contains 17,000 works of Canadian contemporary art. “We have a cost-recovery program where the public and private sector can rent art from the Art Bank for their workplaces. This method of promoting Canadian visual artists is a self-sustaining business model,” she explains. The full collection is accessible online at www.artbank.ca.

The Canada Council Art Bank also organizes exhibitions and does outreach in the visual arts. “The Ajagemô Exhibition Space at 150 Elgin Street, for example, is home to contemporary art exhibits, performances and events and

these exhibitions are free and open to the public,” Lapointe says.

They also work with partners on touring exhibitions. “*Awakening* is an exhibition of Canadian artworks—all from our Art Bank—that provokes questions about the human impact on the environment.”

The Art Bank partnered with the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario on the exhibition, which is also tied to the United Nations sustainable development goals. The art works chosen all speak to sustainability and first appeared in the public space at Queens Park, then toured the UN headquarters in New York and Geneva, and an international environmental conference in Bonn, Germany. It is now here in Ottawa at Ajagemô. “*Awakening* uses art to speak to today’s issues and gives Canadians access points to important discussions.

Lapointe observes that right from the early days of COVID-19 Canadians turned to the arts. People streamed their favourite music, consumed plays and opera online, and formed pandemic book clubs. “The arts help us make sense of the world we live in,” she says. “They help us explore new worlds. They bring us comfort.”

The Federal Government has provided emergency funding for the arts sector during the pandemic, and the Canada Council has been entrusted and tasked with administering a portion of it. “Phase 1 (\$55 million) will support arts organizations across the country, recognizing that organizations employ artists, technicians and administrators within their communities, and Phase 2 (\$7.8 million) will support Indigenous and equity-seeking arts organizations.”

In some ways, COVID-19 has opened up opportunities for Canadian artists to have an even wider reach. Lapointe will be making her first virtual



CHRISTOPHER DAVIDSON PHOTO

Tara Lapointe of Canada Council for the Arts seen here matching the artwork at the Art Bank. Artwork: Jacques Hurtubise, Nathalie (1980), acrylic and charcoal on canvas.

prize presentation this summer—the Michael Measures Prize—awarded to a young musician in the National Youth Orchestra. “Usually, 1,500 people attend this presentation. Online, however, it could have a much larger impact since so many more people can ‘attend’ or re-watch it at a later date.”

Lapointe believes that the creative engine of our country is enormously resilient. “I have been excited to see innovative solutions like the NAC Orchestra’s online programming and Bluesfest with its drive-in concerts,” she says. “I am optimistic when I learn of new ideas and new forms of art being created for us to enjoy. I hold out hope that this pandemic is a moment in time, and that the economy, including performance venues, will open up again.

But Lapointe concedes that there will be challenges ahead in the performing arts until COVID is under control. “Orchestras, theatre and stage productions may have to look at new models and alternative venues. The NAC’s Southam Hall seats 2,000 but how many people will be allowed in a room and will the economics of that cover the costs?”

Lapointe acknowledges that part of the enjoyment of the arts is the collective experience. “We will have to be prudent and take precautions as things open up,” she says. “There is a company located in Stratford, Ontario doing

micro performances outside on a hill for ten people at a time. And I’ve heard of a husband and wife performance duo renting themselves out and coming to peoples’ front lawns to perform. Talking about these opportunities lights me up. It is much like the thrill of discovering a new author or visual artist.”

As optimistic as Lapointe is about the arts sector, she has an earnest message for Canadians. “If you care about the arts, find ways to show your support for the arts.”

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.



For more information on how the Canada Council distributes funds to support the arts in Canada and on the impact of COVID-19 on the Canada Council’s programs go to: <https://canadacouncil.ca/research/stats-and-stories>.

ART BEAT

Contemporary dance in a Zoom world

TANIS BROWNING-SHELP

What do dancers do in a pandemic? What about choreographers?

According to Old Ottawa East resident Yvonne Coutts, Artistic Director of Ottawa Dance Directive (ODD), her dancers have continued to take class and engage with their artistic practice. "ODD's contemporary dancers have found new and innovative ways to study and engage via Zoom with artists around the world," she says.

In collaboration with 14 dancers from Ottawa, France, Montreal, Quebec City, and Kingston, Coutts has created a unique contemporary dance piece in Zoom. "I was inspired to create *Take My Hand* as a way to reconnect with all of the artists who were supposed to be dancing with ODD in projects this past spring," she says.

"It began as an exploration of hands and togetherness. At the same time, I was also listening to one of my father's favourite songs: *I Can't Help Falling in Love With You*."

"For ODD dancers, who are normally doing in-studio rehearsal and performances right now, it provided a refreshing sense of togetherness in a creative process that provided all kinds of quirky visual expression."

"We hoped to bring a real sense of

intimacy and presence to the work. I wanted to move from the personal to the abstract in a way that would allow for the practicalities of Zoom to disappear. It was vital to have the viewer feel our connectedness as a small community on screen. Overall, it was our way of giving back and offering a bit of dance light to the world in a time of great uncertainty."

Take My Hand can be viewed on YouTube by clicking on the following link: <https://youtu.be/AvhBgziTUEA>

Sit back for 17 minutes and experience something extraordinary, created by a neighbour.

"It is best viewed full screen from beginning to end and is inspired by our joint humanity through these times of crisis," Coutts says. "Hands, love, loneliness, presence, togetherness, all within the strange and glitchy Zoom world."

A COVID-19 silver lining.



Screen shot of contemporary dance performance, *Take My Hand*, choreographed by Old Ottawa East resident, Yvonne Coutts.



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OUR NEIGHBOURS

Liam Dwyre & Julia Buchan



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Echo Drive apartment is a 1930s "time capsule" for OOE couple and their cat.

BONNIE WEPPLER

Liam Dwyre and Julia Buchan both work at Whole Foods in Lansdowne Park. Through their work, they knew of each other, but neither was looking for a partner. Julia noted that, while they are friendly, they don't make friends at work.

All that changed one day when Julia went to work wearing a Joey Division (a British new wave/post-punk band) t-shirt. It was that day that Liam made a point to meet her. And from there, love blossomed!

Julia and Liam and their seven-year old, orange cat named Miles Davis, have lived together in an apartment building on Echo Drive since April 2020.

"We saw this 1930s apartment; we were actually the first ones to see it when it went up for rent. The landlord asked us if we wanted it. We did; it's a bit of a time capsule apartment, especially with the 1970s bathroom. The landlord did pull out the shag carpeting in the bathroom before we moved in though!"

Julia is a recent law graduate from

Carleton University who hopes to practice criminal justice. Liam pursued cabinet making at Algonquin College but hasn't really worked in that field. Instead, while working at Whole Foods, he's been working on his interests in art (primarily screen printing) and music.

"I got into drums when I was a kid and, since then, I've picked up some other instruments, I started singing and recording and I used to perform two or three times a week around Ottawa. I also did some house shows. It keeps me busy!"

Liam also notes that their second bedroom is now a music room, with guitars, synthesizers and a piano.

Julia professes that there is nothing in this neighbourhood that she doesn't like.

"And the view is insane! The canal is right there, and we can see it from our top floor apartment."

Julia knew the neighbourhood a bit before moving here as her parents have been taking their family to The Green

Continued on Page 26

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OUR NEIGHBOURS

Continued from Page 25

Door since the 1980s! It is their favourite restaurant.

"I also like how quiet the neighbourhood is. It's not extremely built up and if we want to go to a pub, we can go over to Elgin Street. We don't have to have everything right outside of our door."

When talking about travels, Liam confesses that he has only been one place in the USA: Myrtle Beach. Julia

has travelled more than Liam and one of her favourite places is New York City. They both dream of going to Berlin for the music scene but also because the late Anthony Bourdain filmed an episode of his show there. Julia would like to see Scotland because of her family heritage.

"I would really love to see the Isle of Skye with its hills and mountains."

Liam and Julia have been to Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia and were planning to go to both provinces this summer but, due to COVID-19, the trip was cancelled.

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POLITICAL PAGES

ROB GORDON A/PRESIDENT OLD OTTAWA EAST COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



SUMMER SUCCESSES AND A CHALLENGE

It's been a summer unlike any in memory as we all try to cope with the distress, disruptions and challenges of the pandemic. In the midst of these trying times, the Old Ottawa East Community Association (OOECA) saw two major efforts yield positive results while, on another front, our response to a city proposal resulted in criticism from some residents.

The first success was the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal approving the compromise that the Regional Group and the OOECA negotiated in terms of heights of new buildings in front of and behind the Deschâtelets building. The agreement, as Ron Rose reports in this issue of *The Mainstreeter*, ensures that Deschâtelets retains its prominence.

The second success is that property taxes will now be paid on land for the commercial operations on Immaculata High School field. Previously, the field, like the rest of the Immaculata site, was tax exempt because of its educational purpose. However, two years ago Footy Sevens, a for-profit commercial operation, refurbished the field in exchange for use of the field during non-school hours. The community association felt the intensive commercial use of the field late into the evening needed to be recognized as a significant change in the field's use. That municipal taxes must now be paid on the commercial portion of the Immaculata property is a step towards redressing some of the inequities that have resulted from the changed use.

Then there is the matter of food trucks in the Brantwood Park parking lot. In an effort to help food truck operators, who have lost much of their business in established locations during the pandemic, the City proposed that operators be given the opportunity to have their trucks in parking lots of eligible city parks. If permitted, trucks could operate from 6am to 11pm, 7 days a week, until the end of October.

Our immediate response to the city was to ask whether it would be consulting with affected communities. The city responded the next day that it would not. As a result, in the absence of a Business Improvement Area (BIA), the decision rested with the OOECA which, by this time, had to be provided within 24 hour.

Given the relatively short time frame, the OOECA's executive believed there was not enough time to conduct a meaningful community consultation and decided to use the criteria provided by the city for evaluation to make the decision on behalf of the community. The conclusion was that Brantwood did not meet the requirements and should not be part of the proposed program. The response should not be taken as an indication that we do not believe in community consultation; requests for input from community associations are based on this. Our purpose, and therefore goal, is always to act on behalf of the community.

The OOECA Board is strictly a volunteer organization – there is a limit on how much we can do, especially when the city gives you just days to respond. However, this is not to say we could not, and cannot, do better. Recognizing that there was no process in place to facilitate consultation on such short notice, we will work with local community residents and businesses to develop a process, consistent with our volunteer-based nature, to initiate consultations quickly when needed, while also improving our communications capacity. I encourage more community members to consider volunteering their time such that we can facilitate this type of engagement, as many have done before, and continue to do so.

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RE-THINKING OUR POLICE FORCE, WARD BOUNDARY REVIEW

With recent events in places including Minneapolis, Toronto and New Brunswick, along with ongoing issues of racial profiling and militarization in Ottawa, it is clear that we need to change our approach to policing. This includes acknowledging that we ask our police officers to respond to many types of situations that they themselves may not be comfortable with or not fully trained to manage.

Defunding the police can initially come across as questionable. What it means to me is reallocating some resources, and a comprehensive look at programs, services and the professionals who are tasked to respond to emergencies, with the goal of better outcomes for residents in need of help.

Given that the police budget has tripled over 19 years to \$360 million, we should be assessing value and outcomes regularly.

Examples of the type of reform we could see includes a 24/7 team of responders who are trained to de-escalate, provide support and guidance, and offer unarmed mental health services. This has been done elsewhere already, such as the CAHOOTS program in Oregon, which has replaced 17% of emergency calls.

We need to question the militarization of police. I am also concerned about the increased outfitting of weaponry such as tasers, which the police board recently approved. We must shift our overall approach to policing, so that we focus on maintaining public health and well-being.

To get these necessary changes implemented in our city, Councillor Rawlson King and I have requested options for a review of policing in Ottawa.

In addition, Councillor Catherine McKenney and I have given notice that we will present a motion to City Council to examine improving the way we do policing. The purpose of this motion is to replicate the unarmed front-line mental health response teams trained in de-escalation that exist in other jurisdictions.

The motion would direct the City Manager, in consultation with the Ottawa Police Services Board, and the City's Community and Protective Services Committee, to develop alternative models of community safety response. It would also give the City more control over the police budget, bring more transparency to policing in our city and introduce other necessary reforms.

Unfortunately, the City can't do all of this alone. We will need help from the province and the federal government to make the full, wide range of improvements needed. However, we can take the first steps in assisting a public process.

Ward Boundary Review

During this term of council, City staff have been conducting a ward boundary review to determine if the current 23-ward model was properly serving residents' needs. It examined how many wards would be appropriate and how to distribute the population more evenly across wards.

The consultants hired by the City have now released a report with results of the review. The report includes five options for the City to consider, including an increase to the number of wards, maintaining the same number of wards, and reducing the number of wards. The options also propose new ward boundaries.

The Mayor, unhappy with the review report, has now directed the consultants to go back and create a sixth option that, by design, would tilt power away from urban wards towards suburban and rural wards.

This will be an important issue and will have significant ramifications on the type of city we will live in and the amount of representative democracy we afford the people of Ottawa.

Soon, the City will begin public consultations on all options. I would encourage you all to review the work done by the consultants and provide feedback, to help protect democracy in our city. We will keep people informed of consultations through our newsletter and social media.

Peter
Fowler's
Travel
Focus

JARDINES DE LA REINA, CUBA

Old Ottawa East welcomed yet another talented photographer last fall when Sean Landsman and his wife, Sarah McConnachie, moved into the community. An Instructor in Carleton University's new Interdisciplinary Science and Practice program, Landsman "moonlights as an underwater photographer and freelance science writer, a natural fit with my background as a fisheries ecologist". In this dramatic underwater shot, taken during the couple's 2017 honeymoon in Cuba, Landsman captures three streamlined Caribbean reef sharks, typically found in the tropical waters of the western Atlantic Ocean from Florida to Brazil and measuring up to three metres in length.



Sean Landsman: We stayed with a local husband and wife in Santa Clara for two or three nights and then spent a week on a live-aboard dive boat diving one of the most spectacular areas in the world – the Jardines de la Reina (Garden of the Queen). This area remains perhaps the most pristine coral reef ecosystem in all of the Caribbean, thanks to a limited number of divers allowed per year and the

relatively low amount of coastal development in Cuba compared to other parts of the Caribbean.

The underwater photo shows three Caribbean reef sharks I encountered on one of my dives. Jardines de la Reina is known for its abundance of predators – we swam with sharks every dive, and even crocodiles in the mangroves in between dives! There is really no feeling like swimming up close with

sharks. It's not for everyone, but for those that are willing to try, it can be a life-changing experience. They are stunningly graceful, and surprisingly curious. I like this photo in particular because it conveys their gracefulness and the abundance of sharks at the site. The circular arrangement of the sharks keeps the viewer focused on the animals themselves.



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In collaboration with USP Atelier, CAG...

The Mainstreeter announces new community events to spotlight social issues and local artists

LORNE ABUGOV

The Mainstreeter is pleased to announce that it will work in collaboration with several organizations and groups in Old Ottawa East (OOE) to partner and promote a series of innovative community events, beginning this month and continuing into 2021. The goal is to allow readers of the newspaper the opportunity to delve more deeply into a range of social issues of importance in OOE and to enjoy greater engagement with our talented local creative community.

The cornerstone of *The Mainstreeter's* newly formed community collaborations is a "social alliance" developed with Saint Paul University's Mauril-Bélanger Social Innovation Workshop (the "Atelier"), at 95 Clegg Street. Working in conjunction

with the Atelier, *The Mainstreeter* will launch a series of community issues-based panel discussions and lectures, featuring issue experts with local, national and international perspectives and experiences.

Kicking off the *Mainstreeter/Atelier* "social issues" series on Friday, October 16th is a socially distanced panel discussion on the topic of **Food Security**, timed to coincide with World Food Day, which has been observed annually since 1981. Weather permitting, the afternoon event will be staged outdoors, either at the Main Street Farmer's Market or across the street on the lawn adjacent to Saint Paul University.

Bonnie Weppler, co-chairperson of *The Mainstreeter's* Board of Directors, explained that the explosive growth and dynamism of Old Ottawa East has raised new and exciting challenges and

opportunities for the community that *The Mainstreeter* and the Atelier are well-positioned to explore together.

"This isn't the first time that *The Mainstreeter* has worked with the Atelier, and it won't be the last," Weppler explained. "Our Board of Directors appreciate that we have many valuable partners and friends in Old Ottawa East, all of whom enhance the work that *The Mainstreeter* and the community can do. These partnerships ensure that social issues and the arts in Old Ottawa East are well entrenched in *The Mainstreeter*, sometimes through our own initiatives and sometimes through the good work of our partners and friends."

Speaking for the Atelier, Elisabeth Bruins, the community and youth engagement officer with the social innovation workshop, said that the collaboration with the community newspaper will help her organization to promote its social innovation agenda, expand the ambit of bilingual programs and services offered within Old Ottawa East and enhance its focus on the social challenges that face the community and its residents.

Alice Trudelle, the director general of the Atelier, acknowledges that "it will be tempting to 'return to normal' (after the pandemic), but we believe it is precisely at this moment that we must develop new ways of functioning that are more democratic, egalitarian and collective. To that end, we want to anchor our work more meaningfully in the local community," she says.

Trudelle adds that "we are collaborating with *The Mainstreeter* and other organizations because we don't want the work that happens in our social innovation ecosystem to be disconnected from the local reality, or the university resources to be exclusive to the campus. Many members of our ecosystem are already working on topics related to food security, for instance, so collaborating with organizations like *The Mainstreeter* allows this work to connect with the reality and experience of folks in the community."

The Mainstreeter/Atelier social issues series will extend throughout 2021 and is expected to include expert panel presentations and lectures on some of the following issues of relevance to Old Ottawa East: affordable housing; environmental change; sustainability; densification; local governance and pandemic impacts.

In addition, buoyed by the success of its expanded coverage of local artists through the Art Beat pages, edited by Tanis Browning-Shelp, and Peter Fowler's

Focus on photography features, *The Mainstreeter* will organize several special events this year and next designed to expose our readers to the creative talent in our community. *The Mainstreeter* will join forces with Old Ottawa East's growing cadre of local artists and photographers, and with the OOE Community Activities Group (CAG), to develop and promote events showcasing the depth of creative artists living and working in our community.

The first cultural event is an outdoors and socially distanced **Old Ottawa East Mini Art Tour**, featuring local artists Rosie Cusson, Steve Fick and Kathleen McCrea, displaying their artwork outside their homes on Saturday, August 22nd from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm (rain date, Sunday, August 23rd). In what is hoped to be the first of an expanded annual OOE artist studio tour, the trio of local artists will proudly display their paintings, icons and ceramic sculpture to the community.

Carol Toone, Executive Director of CAG believes the planned arts and

Continued on Page 30

**Old Ottawa East
Mini
ART
TOUR**
Outside, socially distanced
Saturday, 22 August
11:00 am to 3:00 pm
(Rain date, Sunday, 23 August)

Featuring:

Rosie Cusson: 164 Glenora

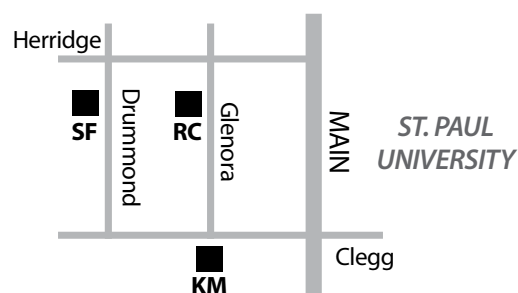
paintings of tea pots and more

Steve Fick: 170 Drummond

landscapes and portraits of Old Ottawa East

Kathleen McCrea: 70 Clegg

contemporary icons and ceramic sculpture



The first of *The Mainstreeter's* community cultural events is the outdoor Mini Art Tour scheduled for Saturday August 22.



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ASCENSION

Remembering Kevin Figley

Community loses an “unfailing source of ideas, laughter, and joy”

THERESA WALLACE

Kevin Figley passed away suddenly at home on June 1st from a non-COVID-related cause. He was 65 years old.

The Belgrave Road resident adored his lifelong partner, Peggy Ledden and was devoted to their sons Sean and Conor. He deeply enjoyed the company of his siblings, including his twin brother, and his extended family, but he had a big heart so there was plenty of love and time left over for his wider community. “Kevin was really the outgoing guy in our family,” says his wife Peggy. “He loved to walk or ride around the neighbourhood, stopping to chat, and he knew everyone.”

Occasionally Kevin suggested they sell their house because they planned to spend their retirement years travelling. “I always resisted. I love this neighbourhood,” recalls Peggy. “The sense of comfort and caring, well, you just can’t put a price on that.”

“A couple of days after Kevin died, I was driven to an appointment by my son. As we came home and turned the corner onto Belgrave, I saw the entire neighbourhood gathered in the street in front of our house, with a huge flower arrangement and beautiful handmade card. I was overwhelmed. We all stood around chatting for awhile, and I could just feel Kevin up there saying, ‘Okay, okay, I’m glad we didn’t move!’ He would have been the first to regret it if we had.”

Kevin was co-winner of the inaugural Hoser of the Year award for the Brantwood Park rink in 1996. He shared this award with Don McCanse, longtime rink coordinator of dozens of volunteers who, winter after winter, with sometimes frozen mittens, would drag the heavy hose around the rink to create the gift of a fresh sheet of ice for skaters.

Don Pease, founding Brantwood rink coordinator, also got to know Kevin well. At the small online funeral gathering for Kevin—a bigger celebration of his life will be held when circumstances allow—Kevin’s son Sean incorporated into his eulogy this excerpt from the note Don and Carol-Anne Pease included in their sympathy card to the family: “Our community has lost a wonderful person—so very joyful and so giving and generous to others. The Kevin I knew from our years working together at the Brantwood rink was an unfailing source of ideas, laughter, and joy. A rare person Kevin was - the most responsible of big-hearted adults while still bursting with the playfulness, mischief and simple joy in the moment that most of us forget to bring along from childhood.”

Kevin coached Glebe Little League. His sons also played hockey at Brewer Arena. Paula Clark, whose late husband Tony was president of the Ottawa Centre minor hockey association, recalls that, “Kevin became a source of rationality and calm during the four



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

Back in 1996, Kevin Figley won the Brantwood Park rink inaugural Hoser of the Year award. He is pictured here on the left along with Don Pease, the rink coordinator (centre), and Don McCanse, co-winner of the award that year (right).

years Tony was president. Tony valued Kevin’s support with hockey issues and also enjoyed Kevin’s fun-loving wit.”

When no one could be found to succeed Tony as president, Kevin took on the demanding job of making sure hundreds of children had a good time and developed their hockey skills. Part of this job involved endless hours on the phone. “But it was worth it to him,” Peggy notes, “so that the kids could have a good experience.”

When a hockey parent sent Kevin an abusive, irrational complaint, he pulled the note out of his pocket one day at the arena and read it to me in theatrical tones without revealing or hinting at the identity of the sender. Kevin was a natural-born storyteller with an appreciation of the absurd: his irreverent performance was hilariously funny, and his mockery of the letter and the letter writer was well-deserved.

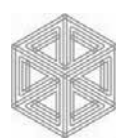
In his early 50s, Kevin took up cycling. He bought a road bike and kept track of how many hundreds and thousands of kilometres he rode during biking season. Each summer he did the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada fundraising bike ride from Ottawa to Cornwall. The day before he died, he went for a 60-kilometre ride.

A city of Ottawa employee for most of his career, Kevin retired two years ago. After that, he became something of the neighbourhood handyperson. “I would often answer the door to find one of the neighbours there, asking if Kevin could look at this or that appliance, light, plumbing fixture or whatever,” explains Peggy. “He would then take on the repair project and not give up until the broken item was fixed. Now I guess someone else will have to step up into that role.”

Kevin, you will be greatly missed.



Old Ottawa East Community Activities Group (CAG)
Groupe d'activités communautaires du Vieil-Ottawa-Est



THE MAURIL-BÉLANGER
SOCIAL INNOVATION WORKSHOP

New collaborative events announced

Continued from Page 29

culture events dovetail well with her organization’s mandate to provide cultural programming in Old Ottawa East that is accessible, diverse and responsive to community interests and needs.

“The CAG is proud to partner with *The Mainstreeter* on promoting quality, interesting and relevant programming for the community of Old Ottawa East.

These online events are in keeping with the CAG philosophy of continued connections through programming in this challenging time,” Toone explained.

The month of November will see an array of outstanding local photographers, many of whom have already graced the pages of *The Mainstreeter*, come together with the support of the newspaper and CAG to mount “FRAMEwork: Home and Away”, the first photography exhibition dedicated to the imagery of Old Ottawa

East, as well as images from abroad taken by our local OOE photographers. Organizers hope the event could become annual in frequency and could have one or both of an indoor gallery format (COVID pandemic permitting) and an online format. The date, location and additional details on the exhibition will be forthcoming through *The Mainstreeter* and CAG.



Any Old Ottawa East resident interested in volunteering to help out with any of the new event initiatives planned for the community should email editor@mainstreeter.ca or admin@ottaweastcag.ca and provide contact details and specific volunteer interests.



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MID-YEAR MARKET REPORT

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HOMES
OTTAWA

JANUARY - JUNE 2020

OLD OTTAWA EAST SALES

STYLE OF HOME	# OF SALES	DAYS ON MARKET	AVERAGE PRICE	MOST EXPENSIVE SALE
Residential Detached Home	14	23	\$990,243	\$1,650,000
Semi-Detached Homes	8	16	\$872,738	\$1,389,900
Row Homes	13	16	\$854,062	\$1,100,000
Condo Row Homes	2	46	\$759,500	\$960,000
Condo Apartments	12	114	\$474,532	\$764,785

PRICE BAND ACTIVITY

PRICE RANGE	# OF SALES	DAYS ON MARKET	CURRENTLY FOR SALE
Under \$500,000	8	12	9
\$500-699,999	11	103	2
\$700-899,999	12	30	6
\$900-999,999	11	19	0
\$1,000,000-1,249,999	4	28	1
\$1,250,000-1,499,999	3	62	3
\$1,500,000-1,999,999	1	42	1
\$2,000,000+	0	-	2

*All data and figures compiled from the Ottawa MLS system

OTTAWA NOW HAS THE LOWEST MONTHS ON INVENTORY IN THE LAST TWO AND A HALF YEARS, WHICH TRANSLATES TO SIGNIFICANT PRICE APPRECIATION.

If you have any questions or are considering selling, we invite you to get to know us. We are a group of individuals who have chosen to specialize within the real estate industry by offering only experiences of exceptional quality. We create strategic plans using superior marketing and support them with a deeply instilled ethic of personal service.



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Fish of the Rideau River

More than 40 species inhabit the waters of Old Ottawa East

SEAN LANDSMAN

The Rideau River in Old Ottawa East is one of the best features of our neighborhood. But did you know that there are fish swimming around the dock at Clegg Avenue that are longer than your kids are tall? Or that there are over 40 species of fishes that call the Rideau home? Let's take a look at a few of the more popular fish species.

Muskellunge, or “muskie” for short, are the kings and queens of the Rideau River. Capable of reaching lengths in excess of five feet and weights over 60 pounds, muskies are the largest fish species swimming in the Rideau. Muskies in the Rideau are usually between 30 and 50 inches, but fish over 50 inches are not unheard of. These large predators feed on whatever they can get their mouths around – from other fishes to ducklings and small rodents. They are, however, relatively rare and thus make for a challenging fish to target by angling, but when they are caught, most are released.

Walleye are arguably the tastiest fish in the Rideau. Some people call them “Marble Eyes” because of their extremely well-developed *tapetum lucidum*, which is a layer of tissue in the eye that reflects back any available light. Biologists can actually count walleye when they spawn simply by shining a light into the water and counting the number of eyes that reflect back! Animals that have well-developed *tapetum lucidums*, like cats, are highly effective nighttime hunters. Walleye are mostly fish eaters, but also eat leeches, crayfish, and other invertebrates. They can be caught during the day, but the

best fishing often occurs at night or dawn and dusk. Walleye in the Rideau can reach lengths in excess of 26 inches.

Largemouth Bass (aka “Bucket Mouths”) and Smallmouth Bass (aka “bronze backs”) are perhaps the most popular sportfishes in the entire Rideau River system. Bass are generalist feeders, eating whatever they can engulf in their mouths. Following the act of spawning in the spring, male bass are left to take care of the young. Male bass routinely win “Dad of the Year” awards for vigorously defending their babies



A male Pumpkinseed Sunfish circles its nest of zebra mussel shells.



A 49-inch Muskie is released into the Rideau River near Kemptville as part of a research project.



The muskie is one of the rarest sportfishes in the Rideau and a favourite of anglers.

SEAN LANDSMAN PHOTOS

from all the other fishes that want to pillage the nests. The males will stay with their broods from the egg stage until the young are able to swim on their own. Most bass you'll find in the Rideau are between 10-18 inches, with the occasional individual above 20 inches.

Two of the most ubiquitous species in the Rideau are the Bluegill and Pumpkinseed Sunfishes, which many often lump together and refer to simply as “sunfish.” Bluegills and Pumpkinseeds also display parental care behaviour like bass. Bluegills are unique, however, in that they not only form colonies of nests, but also because the males display two different alternative spawning strategies. “Sneaker” males dart in and fertilize

eggs when the larger, dominant male isn't looking. “Satellite” males take on the appearance of females, effectively tricking the larger male into thinking he's spawning with two females!

A shallow, bottom-dwelling member of the Catfishes, the Brown Bullhead use their sensitive barbels to root out food on the river bottom. These fish also display parental care behaviour, digging a hole in the river bottom where they judiciously defend their young. Brown bullheads are relatively small as far as catfishes are concerned, usually topping out around 14-15 inches.

The diversity of fish species in the Rideau is worth celebrating, and just another reason we're so lucky to call Old Ottawa East home.

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Saint Paul University is the founding college of the University of Ottawa (1848), with which it has been academically federated since 1965.

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