



# Centennial News

A publication of the Centennial Community and Recreation Association

## Red light doesn't stop repair cafe



Centennial resident John Hodge joins Joseph Chan, both Repair Cafe volunteers, along with owner Jill MacMillan showcasing the repaired traffic light.

By Jill MacMillan

The Repair Café volunteers work hard to fix everything. If they can fix it on the spot, they will. If they need parts, they will tell you the parts you need and to come back again, so they can help you get it working. If it isn't fixable, they will let you know that too.

I had something that needed fixing; to be brought back to life and shine bright like it once did. I was sure that the Repair Café volunteers had never had the experience of working on anything so unusual before. The question was, could they get an actual traffic signal light to work?

Before bringing in this signal light, I had to find out what parts were needed to get it working again. Knowing it needed to be rewired for a plug, I bought an extension cord and found a sequencer board with three slots for different connections on Amazon, hoping this was all that was needed.

On the day the Repair Café volunteers set up shop at the Port Union Community Centre, I carried this 4-foot-tall traffic signal light in with the parts I had purchased.

There were others signed up with their items and many volunteers working intently to repair them; everything from broken zippers on coats to clocks, toasters, jewelry and sewing machines. I learn something ev-

ery time I visit the Repair Café because the volunteers explain what they are doing and how.

I was given a number for the waiting list and instantly felt lucky because I got number 11, which is my favourite number and has been since my tee ball and volleyball years.

While I was waiting for my number to be called, I could feel the excitement grow as several volunteers came over to see the light, hoping to work on it. This was something new for them; something that they never imagined would be brought in!

Two gentlemen carried the traffic light into the repair room and set it on the table. Together, we opened it up and discussed what I would like the traffic light to do, which was to alternate between the lights and add a plug. I showed them the parts I had and they quickly got to work on it, removing the old wire and cutting wires that needed to be rerouted through the sequencer board.

They were very excited to get this project started! It took about an hour of intense labour, but they got it working with the lights cycling through red, green, then yellow!

Many volunteers and patrons stopped what they were doing and came over to see it working. John Hodge, Joseph Chan and Abdallah Kassem stood proudly holding up the light they had repaired as many photos were taken.

» continued on page 2

## National Flag Day celebrated all over Centennial



Centennial joined Canadians nationwide to celebrate National Flag of Canada Day. This day is observed annually on February 15, to commemorate the first raising of the red and white maple leaf flag on Parliament Hill in 1965. The red maple leaf is a globally recognized symbol of our values, our geography, our nature, and most important, our sovereignty and independence.

Photo credit: Kathy Rowe

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## Publishing Policy

CCRA Centennial News invites submissions of articles, signed letters, art and photography from Centennial community members and all elected representatives. We will consider all submissions for publication that are information-based and relevant to the community. Not-for-profit and community groups are also invited to submit event listings to be published free of charge, space permitting. CCRA Centennial News reserves the right to decline material considered to be unpaid advertising, politically partisan or likely to offend. CCRA reserves the right to edit all submitted material. The opinions expressed in CCRA Centennial News do not represent the views of the CCRA Executive. All submissions will be considered for both print and online publication unless otherwise instructed by the author. CCRA will notify all authors prior to publication.

To be published in CCRA Centennial News, articles must reach the Communications team by the 15th day of the preceding month. To submit an article or suggest a story, please contact any member of the Executive by phone, or by e-mail to [editor@ccranews.com](mailto:editor@ccranews.com).

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Nearly 5,000 copies of CCRA News are delivered, for free, to homes and businesses throughout the Centennial community and surrounding neighbourhoods. In addition, all ads appear in the online version of CCRA News, so you know your ad will reach customers.

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### Notice to Advertisers

Advertising copy must reach the CCRA no later than the 10th day of the preceding month for publication. Files should be in high resolution PDF, TIF, EPS or JPG format for best results. Please e-mail your advertisement to Jill MacMillan at [advertising@ccranews.com](mailto:advertising@ccranews.com). Cheques in the correct amount are to be addressed to "CCRA" and deposited in the CCRA mailbox at 5450 Lawrence Ave. East, in the Port Union Recreation Centre. **It is the advertiser's responsibility to advise CCRA of any problems with an advertisement before the 20th of the month in which the ad appears.** For more about advertising, visit [www.ccranews.com/advertising](http://www.ccranews.com/advertising)

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## Repair Cafe

### Traffic signal repair

*continued from page 1*

I held up a sign next to them which read "REPAIRED", as is customary at this shop, and everyone smiled and cheered as they watched the traffic lights flashing its signals. It was very exciting!

Once an item is repaired, customers are asked to ring a bell to let the crowd know it was a successful endeavour. There were two bells and I rang them both loud and proud!

There is an option to tip the repair crew which I did quite happily as I was so grateful to them for their time and energy! This was a fun and gratifying day as I didn't have to risk getting a shock by trying to do it myself, with little knowledge of electrical wiring.

The two technicians politely carried the light out to the car for me. At only 1 foot shy of my height, it was awkward to carry.

They told me I had made their day and thanked me for bringing it in. I smiled and thanked them for their great work, and for making my day fun and exciting!

"My niece will love it for her birthday" I said, "and it will look great on her wall."

I let them know that I would be back again on Saturday, February 28 with another unusual item: a Walk/Don't Walk signal! They laughed.

I'm sure they are looking forward to this next "electrifying" experience!



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**Jill's Team believes in giving back to the community we call home. That's why we donate \$250 from every house we sell to a local non-profit chosen by the seller, \$2500 every year through our team sponsorship program and \$100 from every house bought or sold to the Royal LePage® Shelter Foundation.**

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Not intended to solicit those already under contract with another Brokerage

## President's Message

# Pride, participation and local highlights

By Kathy Rowe

February 15 was National Flag of Canada Day, otherwise referred to as "Flag Day". It marked the anniversary of the first official raising of Canada's flag on Parliament Hill in Ottawa in 1965.

Our current flag replaced variations of the Red Ensign which was used prior to 1965. After much debate and consultation, a new design featuring a single red maple leaf centered on a white square with red bars on either side was adopted. The maple leaf was selected as a unifying symbol intended to reflect unity, peace and Canada's heritage.

While Flag Day is not a statutory holiday, it is recognized in communities across the country with ceremonies, neighbourhood flag displays and school events. Here in Centennial and surrounding neighbourhoods, many flags were on display as residents marked the occasion, demonstrating their national pride.

### Community Earth Day

Community Earth Day planning is underway, and we will be bringing something new to the table this year. Mark your calendars for Saturday April 25th!

This year we will be partnering with Toronto Nature Stewards for the

community clean-up. Details about the clean-up structure are still being discussed. There will be activities at the Port Union C.C. and a Scouts recycling drive at the West Rouge C.C. At Port Union, children will be able to build an "upside down bird feeder" for free. Suet for the feeders will be sold for a nominal cost. As in previous years, the Repair Café (mini) will be at Port Union for repairs of household appliances. Free compost, courtesy of Councillor Neethan Shan, will be available in the parking lot. Bring your shovels and pails!

Along with other display tables, CCRA will be selling memberships and hoodies at Earth Day. We hope you will stop by to purchase your 2026 CCRA membership or purchase a warm and cozy hoodie.

If you are a student needing volunteer hours please contact me. There are volunteer opportunities and a complimentary BBQ lunch for volunteers as a thank you following the community clean-up. I can be emailed at: [president@ccranews.com](mailto:president@ccranews.com)

### March Break

Students will be taking a week off school starting March 16. Please drive carefully as children will be outside playing in our neighbourhoods. If you are looking for activities for

your children and families during March Break, please take a look at the Port Union Library's list of special March Break events on page 16. Activities such as friendship bracelet making, chess club and family club are on their list!

Enjoy this time with your family.

### In this issue

This issue highlights the strength and spirit of our community through a variety of engaging stories. Readers will enjoy the centre spread featuring Denise Bacon's journey aboard the VIA Canadian train from Toronto to Vancouver, offering a glimpse into one of the country's most iconic travel experiences. We also share a meaningful interview with two local families marking Autism Awareness Day, helping to foster understanding and inclusion within our community and beyond. Together, these stories in addition to our coverage of Flag Day, reflect the diversity, compassion and community pride that continue to define our area.



*This March Break, check out how to create a Mystery Book Exchange bundle on page 9 or the Port Union libraries list of special events including friendship bracelet making on page 16.*

*Kathy*

An article on Page 6 of our February issue about local author Saumiya Balasubramanian misstated her academic credentials. She holds a Master's degree, not a PhD. We apologize for the error.



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Theatre Mowat

# From the page to the stage for two Mowat students

By Shelley Cooke

What began as a shared idea two years ago has grown into a full theatrical production! Isabelle D’Sousa and Emily O’Regan, Grade 12 students in the performing arts program at Sir Oliver Mowat Collegiate Institute, have been co-writing their original play *Smile on Set* since Grade 10. The production will be performed and adjudicated at the NTS (National Theatre School) Dramafest held at Mowat on March 3, marking the culmination of their creativity, collaboration, and dedication.

The play follows four characters striving for success while navigating intense social pressures from the public eye. When asked about their inspiration for the theme, the students explained that some of it draws from their own experiences and observations. O’Regan reflected on the personal nature of the work, noting that in the past she “felt a lot of pressure to change for others” before realizing she had lost sight of who she truly was.

One of the play’s key plot points centers on Jasmine, a main character who experiences isolation due to her cultural background. She also faces significant pressure from her parents to conform to their expectations, despite having her own aspirations and passions. This storyline was included to emphasize the importance of staying true to oneself and resisting exter-



nal influences.

The students’ complementary theatrical skill sets have contributed to a strong creative partnership. While O’Regan’s background is in acting, D’Sousa brings experience in technical production. Their differing areas of expertise have allowed them to approach the directing process from multiple perspectives.

When asked about the moments of the process they are most proud of, the students highlighted the rehearsal of the play’s climactic scene, where all four characters come together to express their frustrations. D’Sousa noted that “you could feel the coldness in the room when certain words were said ... you could feel the raw emotion.” It was at that moment that they knew they had assembled the right cast.

The girls also expressed pride in the

contributions of their stage manager, Serephina Milley, whose dedication and work ethic have been a significant asset to the production. In addition, they credited their drama teacher, Ms. Morton, for her consistent support, particularly in the areas of props and costumes. Her expertise and guidance have played an invaluable role in the success of the production.

Those highlight moments, however, did not come without setbacks. One of the challenges the pair faced was a period of writer’s block that lasted nearly a month. Eventually, they returned to the script with fresh perspectives. “We helped each other through it,” O’Regan said. “We wanted to make every line meaningful and every line we chose sparked a conversation,” noted D’Sousa.

D’Sousa and O’Regan are thrilled that their student-

written play was selected to compete in the NTS (National Theatre School) Dramafest! They hope that the adjudicator recognizes the effort and the care they invested in both the writing and staging. “Every element we included had a purpose,” they said. “We hope the adjudicator notices the creativity and unique touches that make our production stand out.”

When asked about their future plans in theatre, both students said they intend to remain involved in community theatre. O’Regan plans to continue acting in her free time, while D’Sousa hopes to focus on stage management and production roles.

We wish Isabelle D’Sousa and Emily O’Regan all the best with their play on March 3. The production promises to be a compelling showcase of student talent and creativity for Mowat and the local community.



Meet the cast of *Smile on Set* (left) Emily O’Regan and Isabelle D’Sousa holding their co-written script of this year’s NTS production (above)

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## Autism Acceptance

# Autism: From acceptance to inclusion

By Janice Bennink

Nowhere does the phrase “it takes a village” have more meaning than to families raising a child with autism. Following diagnosis, parents navigate through a maze of health, education and support systems to guide autistic children through their early years. On reaching adulthood, parents describe the “post-18 cliff” when many services become unavailable. Families find themselves facing overwhelming gaps that include access to post-secondary programs, employment, housing, health and social supports.

Needed change happens in our own neighbourhoods. It starts with families, allies, advocates – and with young adults like Centennial residents Shylo Clarke and Michael Santos.

Nineteen-year-old Shylo, supported by her family, started Luxx Body Beauty, a business of hand-crafted candles, bath and beauty products with the vision of creating opportunities for young adults with disabilities. Combining Shylo’s love for luxury bath items and mother Suhair’s medical training, they craft and sell high-quality



Shylo (top) and Suhair Clarke at a market with Luxx Body Beauty products

self-care products on their website [luxxbodybeauty.com](http://luxxbodybeauty.com). They also sell at markets like West Rouge Artisan Market, Sarah’s Place, Ran’s Closet, and enjoy the support of another local artisan, Stephanie’s Stuff.

For Shylo, starting the business is about doing something positive. She feels it is “more than just candles and skincare. It is about creating opportunities and showing that people with disabilities can make meaningful contributions to the community.” Luxx also allows Shylo to express herself. “I love being



Michael Santos (right) with his mother Christine

creative and designing eco-friendly products that help people relax and feel good,” she says.

Although autism is diagnosed due to challenges in social communication, Shylo enjoys interacting with others. She feels “very happy when I have a table at a market. Setting up my products and talking to customers is exciting.”

Suhair understands how meaningful work is to her daughter, since only 33% of autistic adults are employed compared to their non-autistic peers. “The business

allows my daughter to contribute, whether it’s helping prepare products, managing social media, or interacting with customers. Seeing customers appreciate something she made boosts her self-esteem and shows her that she is capable and valued.”

Michael Santos is a 20 year old autistic youth and valued parishioner at St. Joseph’s Parish in Highland Creek. He proudly serves in multiple ministries at St. Joseph and says that “being involved makes me very happy because it allows me to support my community in every way I can.”

Michael enjoys volunteering at Tony Stacey Centre for Veterans Care as “the residents show how much they appreciate my help in leading the para-eucharistic service and distributing communion”. While he misses his grandmother, Michael says that “being with the residents brings me comfort, as it feels like I am spending time with her again.”

Michael’s mother Christine is “grateful for the pastors and the dedicated organizers of the ministries Michael belongs to. Each one of them has embraced him fully, his strengths, his challenges, his

» continued on page 17

## Decluttering Masterclass Announced March 24th

**Moving to a smaller space is a big transition**, and for many, the “stuff” is the hardest part. If you’ve been feeling stuck, join the Decluttering Masterclass where we tackle the number one stressor head-on. You will learn how to stop the overwhelm by making real progress in just 25 minutes a day.

You’ll also get help to answer that nagging question: “Is this actually valuable?” You’ll get a clear guide on how to find out what your items are worth, what is worth keeping, and what should be sold or donated; and the best places to sell your stuff. Topics included are:

- The 25-Minute Rule: How to clear space without losing your mind.
- Value Assessment: Practical steps to identify treasures versus clutter.
- The Decision Matrix: Simple logic for what stays and what goes.

**Why you should attend:** Most people decluttering are often struggling with the memories, not the stuff. It’s hard to part with a dining room set when it holds 30 years of family dinner celebrations. That emotional weight is exactly why sorting for just an hour can leave you feeling completely drained. This masterclass gives you a practical roadmap to handle the “emotional tug” of your belongings, so you can make clear decisions and move forward with your plans.

**This is for you if:**

- You are planning a move to a smaller home in the next 12 months.
- You are currently helping a loved one prepare for a transition.
- You are an adult child supporting a parent through a move.

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Reading Corner

# Author Hasina Knox's Longing to Belong: An Orphan's Story

By Pamela Collins

Hasina Knox is a local Scarborough author living in the Malvern community. She is best known for her autobiography *Longing to Belong – An Orphan's Story*.

I met up with Hasina at a local café to learn more about her life and her book. Hasina is a lovely, vibrant lady and very generously shared her personal story with me.

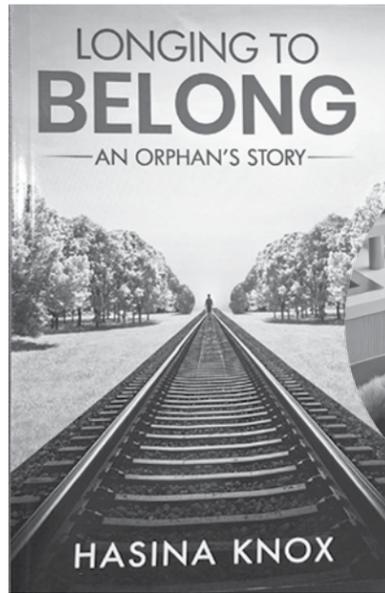
Happily married for 29 years and a proud stay at home mother of four, Hasina told me she has always loved to write. She began writing short stories at age 8 inspired by Grimm's Fairy Tales, and she wrote children's books influenced by her family life and everyday experiences.

When Hasina was just 11, she wrote a book called *The Gold Land*, a childhood story about kindness and generosity and how it can change the world.

Born in Bangladesh and orphaned as an infant, she was adopted by a Canadian farming family near London, Ontario at age 3.

Her book, *Longing to Belong – An Orphan's Story*, chronicles her life as an orphan and her search for her place in the world.

Hasina has no memories of her birth parents; she was told that she was abandoned by her



Author Hasina Knox and her memoir, *Longing to Belong: An Orphan's Story*, which explores her journey of identity and belonging.



mother and left in a basket at an orphanage with a note saying her name was Hasina and records that only provided vital details such as height and weight. As she grew, she felt displaced as a brown child in a small, Caucasian community. Her adoptive parents were stern, hardworking people who did not show much affection.

Each chapter relates a different stage of Hasina's development, from leaving her family and moving to Toronto, meeting her husband, to finding the Christian faith that helped to heal her and teach her forgiveness.

As she wrote her book, long-buried memories resurfaced, and putting them to paper became a cathartic act of emotional honesty. The process

forced her to confront unresolved pain from her childhood as an adopted child, including struggles with self-worth and belonging. Feeling misunderstood and adrift, she eventually rebelled and left home, only to encounter new challenges along the way.

Hasina Knox's memoir is so relatable; it will speak straight to your heart with her honesty.

In a podcast interview with Joshua Kangley, also an adoptive child, the pair discuss the challenges of adoptees and how they tend to compartmentalize their feelings.

Hasina told Joshua that her book was "not just about her story but rather a reflection of the universal, human longing to find one's place in the world, a statement of shared longing in countless hearts. By acknowledging this shared longing, we build connections beyond individual experiences, fostering understanding and compassion among people."

She hopes readers have this takeaway from her book: "We are all connected and can learn to forgive one another despite what trials we face in life; we can learn empathy, kindness, compassion and resilience." You can listen to this interview on Spotify: Table Talks with Joshua Kangley.

Each chapter of her book is prefaced with a quote from different sources. My personal favourite is, "People who wonder if the glass is half empty or half full, missed the point. The glass is refillable" (author unknown).

A poignant quote, by C.S. Lewis, at the end of her last chapter, sums up Hasina's journey from then to now: "You can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start where you are and change the ending."

Hasina has published over 80 works, from children's books to adult journals. Her memoir, *Longing to Belong - An Orphan's Story* is available in print, eBook, and audiobook on Amazon and Audible and is being adapted into a movie. She has created a companion song, *Longing to Belong*, available on Spotify, Amazon Music, and Apple Music.

Follow her on Instagram: [@a\\_journey\\_of\\_flavours](#).



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- A young family of three searching for a detached home between 1500-2000 sq ft. They are open to different styles (an ensuite is ideal, and a pool would be amazing but not a deal breaker)
- A family of five looking for a 2000-3000 sq ft detached home, 4 bedrooms, and space for their three kids to grow

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"Jeannie was simply amazing! She prioritizes clients' needs and guided us expertly through both buying and selling. Her knowledge, coaching through fine details, and advocacy made her a dream to work with. From home searching to staging, purchase agreements and everything between, she was timely, thorough, and friendly. After such a wonderful experience managing these major life transactions, we couldn't imagine working with anyone else. Highly recommend!"

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**Akhil Kejriwal ★★★★★**

"Seeking a realtor in Port Union/GTA? Choose Jeannie for her deep area knowledge, exceptional listening skills (perfect for our remote search), and valuable contractor connections. Truly "A-Mazing!"

**Sara Razmavar ★★★★★**

Jeannie goes above and beyond - she's more like a friend than a real estate agent! Her meticulous, caring, and fun approach makes property hunting joyful. Even months after our commercial deal closed in May, she's still following up on construction and ensuring everything runs smoothly. Her exceptional client care truly sets her apart!

**Dave Graham ★★★★★**

"Jeannie's exceptional dedication and expertise made selling our home smooth and successful. Her professionalism and personal touch - from expert property showcasing to securing a fantastic deal - truly set her apart. Her invaluable guidance made this a positive, memorable experience. Highly recommend this outstanding realtor!"

**Neil D'Souza ★★★★★**

"Amazing experience with Jeannie and her team! She handled everything - from open houses and video shoots to social media marketing and staging - securing an over-asking price in a tough market. She even helped us find our dream home! Her knowledge, thoughtfulness, and incredible work ethic make her truly amazing for any real estate needs!"

**Anne-Marie Avgerinos ★★★★★**

"From our first meeting, we fell in love with Jeannie's amazing spirit and bubbly personality! Her caring yet professional approach made selling our home flawless. We couldn't be happier with the outcome and would choose her again in a heartbeat. She continues to maintain her exceptional service to this day - we're forever grateful!"

**Penny Bell ★★★★★**

"JEANNIE is the best rep out there! One of the kindest, most patient people I've met in years, her patience, expertise, and kindness made selling my family home stress-free. She also has the best sense of humor—we had some great laughs, and I've made a friend for life. I love Jeannie!"

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**65 Tudor Glen Cres**  
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**6 Ivanhoe Court**  
Sold over asking in 7 days Aug 2025



**149 Clappison Blvd**  
SOLD over asking in 7 days July 2025



**304 East Avenue**  
Sold over asking July 2025



**3 Ivorwood Cres**  
Sold over asking in 7 days - July 2025



**6 Langevin Cres**  
Just Purchased July 2025



**14 Eastport Dr**  
Sold over asking in 2 days June 2025



**2 Wichey Road**  
Sold over asking in 7 days June 2025



**64 Invermarge Dr**  
Sold in 7 days June 6 2025



**72 Charlottetown Blvd.**  
Sold Over Asking in 7 Days May 2025



**565 Rouge Hills Dr**  
Purchased May 2025



**West Rouge Beauty**  
Purchased April 2025



**9 Delbeatrice Cres**  
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**20 St Magnus Dr.**  
Sold in 7 days April 2025



**51 Eastport Ave**  
Purchased March 2025



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## Local Business Spotlight

# Artisan bread and bagels rise in Centennial

By Shelley Cooke

The smell of fresh bread fills Brandon Timney's kitchen every morning as he bakes eight loaves and 24 bagels for his home-based business, Four Cubs Bread Co.

The business, which opened about six weeks ago, grew out of his long-time love of baking. What started as Christmas gifts for family and friends quickly turned into requests for more, fueled by word-of-mouth recommendations.

Timney also credits his love of math and science which led him to baking, "especially the sourdough making process which is very scientific," he said.

Sourdough production spans about 36 hours. Timney builds a 1,600-gram starter overnight, then spends six to eight hours the next day mixing and folding the dough in intervals. After an extended cold fermentation in the refrigerator, the loaves are baked and ready by noon. This method develops both flavour and nutritional value. Despite the lengthy process, Timney said the time and attention required are part of what he enjoys most about the craft.

Beyond the careful process, what sets Timney's business apart is his approach to baking: he treats every loaf as if he's baking for family, friends and neighbours. Unlike commercially-made bread, his sourdough is tradi-

tional, made without added yeast or sugar. He also selects ingredients that accommodate a variety of dietary needs, including vegan, nut-free and diabetic-friendly diets.

Timney said his most popular item is the sourdough "Four Cubs Original" (FCO), known for its crisp crust and soft interior. The herb and cheese bagels are also a customer favourite, made with a blend of Italian herbs and Parmesan cheese and topped with old cheddar and additional herbs. A sample of his bagels highlighted the flavour and texture he strives to achieve!

An added bonus is that "the bagels can be sliced and frozen, and they'll last for months," Timney explained.

Starting the business hasn't been without its challenges. Since his kitchen serves as his home base, finding suitable equipment can be tricky. Will the fridge be large enough to store all the loaves? Can the oven handle hours of high-temperature baking? On the day of our interview, Timney's oven igniter had burned out - fortunately, a neighbor's oven was available to keep him on schedule.

When asked how his family and neighbours have responded to his idea of opening a bakery in his home, Timney said his wife, Sarah, has been one of his biggest supporters. She often puts her own baking on hold to keep the oven free for his daily batches, and has embraced the extra mess and open windows required to regulate humid-



Brandon Timney holds freshly baked loaves of FCO sourdough bread. Next photo: Cheddar and herb bagels fresh from the oven



ity during production.

Timney said support from neighbours and the wider community has played a key role in the growth of his business. He offered special thanks to fellow local businesses, The Nor'Easter Bakery, This Is My Jam, and Mel's Skin Laundry Co., for championing his entrepreneurial spirit and traditionally crafted breads and bagels.

As for expanding his production, Timney says, "not right now". He wants to maintain his current baking capacity in order to balance the other responsibilities of his homelife and being a dad to his four cubs!

Timney is looking at more creative and sustainable ways to grow without keeping the oven on. He is pursuing

the idea of selling sourdough starters and using social media to teach others how to bake bread.

Timney posts his weekly bake schedule and availability on the West Rouge Residents Facebook page and Instagram, where customers can place orders for personal use or small-scale events. He offers free delivery within West Rouge and Centennial, as well as front-door pickup from his home. More information is available at @fourcubsbread.

As word continues to spread, Brandon Timney's small home-based bakery is proving that simple ingredients and a lot of dedication can go a long way!

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**Creative Corner**

# Consider a mystery book exchange this March Break

By Amanda Pompilii

Looking for something fun to do this March Break? Consider a mystery book exchange! Invite the book lovers in your life to wrap a book, hiding its title and author, and let everyone choose a surprise bundle. You can also write out clues about the plot or genre and let everyone take a guess.

**Materials:**

- Kraft paper roll
- Book
- Tape
- Scissors
- Ruler
- Optional: Bone folder
- Decorations (twine, tags, pens, stickers, dried flowers, photographs, etc.)

**Directions:**

1. Unroll the kraft paper. Cut the paper to about four books wide.
2. Place the book onto the centre of the paper, with the front cover face-up. Position the book so that the top of the paper reaches about halfway down the cover when folded. Cut the bottom of the paper to leave about 3 cm below the book.
3. Fold the top of the paper over the book to about halfway down the cover.

4. Fold the top right flap of the paper down diagonally along the right outer edge of the book until it touches the bottom right corner of the book. This forms two half triangles: one on the surface to the right of the book, and one sticking up from the right outer edge of the book.
5. Fold the triangle sticking up diagonally across the cover, forming the bundle's first pocket.
6. Fold the top left flap of the paper down diagonally along the book's spine until it touches the bottom left corner of the spine. This forms two half triangles. Fold the triangle sticking up diagonally across the cover, forming the second pocket.
7. Fold the triangle lying to the right side of the book diagonally across the cover of the book. Position it below the first pocket, forming the third pocket.
8. Repeat step 7 with the triangle lying to the left side of the book, and fold it down diagonally across the cover. Position it below the third pocket, forming the fi-



For instructions, watch "Easy Origami Bookmark Corner – How to Make a Corner Bookmark DIY" on the Red Ted Art (Maggy Woodley) YouTube channel, and "How to Wrap Books with Pockets for Unique Gifts" for wrapping mystery book bundles. by @foliage\_and\_fiction on TikTok.

9. Fold the bottom right corner of the final pocket around the back of the bundle and tape it down.
10. Cut off the excess paper at the bottom of the bundle and tape the remaining up onto the back of the bundle.

11. Decorate!

Consider including an origami corner bookmark to go with your personalized book bundle!

**Materials:**

- Scissors
  - Ruler
  - 15 x 15 cm patterned paper
  - Optional: Bone folder
1. Place the paper flat. If using one-sided patterned paper, place the blank side face-up.
  2. Fold the paper in half diagonally into a triangle.
  3. Fold the bottom right corner of the triangle up diagonally to meet the top point of the triangle. Repeat with the bottom left corner.
  4. Unfold both bottom corners.
  5. Take the top point of the triangle. Fold the top layer down to meet the bottom midpoint of the triangle. This forms the bookmark's pocket.
  6. Refold the bottom right corner of the triangle diagonally, tucking it into the pocket. Repeat with the bottom left corner.

This craft is great for trying a genre you haven't read before, and for sparking your next book discussion

**John Whyte, a trusted local Real Estate Broker serving Centennial and West Rouge**

John Whyte is not just a real estate broker, he's a familiar friendly face, a dedicated neighbour, and a trusted advisor for local homeowners. With over 20 years of experience selling across Toronto and the GTA, John has built a reputation for achieving the highest results while maintaining a personal, hands-on approach.

As a proud resident raising his family right here in Centennial, John understands that selling a home is about far more than a transaction it's about protecting one of your most important investments. John's connection to the community shows through his involvement in youth sports, support of local businesses and schools, donations and support to PUC youth programs and volunteering at community events. John understands what makes our neighbourhood special and how to attract the right buyers and maximize value.

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## THE CANADIAN: RAIL JOURNEY FROM TORONTO TO VANCOUVER

In the early 20th century, Canada's popularity as a tourist destination was beginning to surge. Companies such as the Canadian Pacific Railway, commissioned talented illustrators and designers to create eye-catching posters that beckoned visitors to explore the country's natural beauty and urban attractions. Promising world-class adventure, spectacular scenery and luxury, these ads targeted globe-trotting tourists and Canadians alike. This Canada Post stamp pictures the famous transcontinental train, the Canadian, winding its way through the Rocky Mountains



## My amazing 4 day journey aboard 'The Canadian'

By Denise Bacon

**O**h Canada! How lucky we are to call this our home and native or chosen land. A train trip on VIA's The Canadian train from Union Station, Toronto to Pacific Central, Vancouver, a journey across 4,466 kilometers, showcased the vastness and majesty of our country. (This article does not in any way take away the beauty and character of Canada from Ontario east of Toronto right to Newfoundland! That feature will be for another time.)

A tiny bit of apprehension about being "stuck" on a train for 4 days and 4 nights was quickly put to rest as the welcome started right in the VIA Passenger Lounge at Union Station. We had only carry-on luggage so we got to stow away our things in our sleeper car just as we boarded so we could start exploring the train. Sipping welcomed Mimosas (Champagne & orange juice) while sitting in the domed car relaxed us immediately while we watched the train start its westward journey promptly at 9 a.m., leaving behind the CN Tower and familiar city sights. Crossing the provinces, across trestle bridges, through ridges and canyons, across the tremendous prairies and through the mountains was a reminder to pay homage to the thousands of people who laid these tracks to connect our nation in the late 17th century.

The journey across Ontario highlighted that the 2nd largest of Canada's provinces is truly massive! We were thrilled to stop and stretch out our legs in -30 degree temperature in Sioux Lookout, a place until this trip was just a place on a map. A couple of passengers on the train disembarked here to go back to their homes after they shared their happy life stories about living in Sioux Lookout.

A good lesson learned on this train journey was to simply enjoy the moments. Train time was different from "real time" as we passed from Eastern to Central, to Mountain to Pacific time zones. It was important to pay attention to "Train Time" as meals and activities ran according to this special clock! Speaking of meals, we were treated to gourmet dining complete with white linens and menus for every meal. The dining car had three seatings for each meal which passengers selected in advance. Staff were the epitome of grace and service with the added bonus of great senses of

humour. Breakfast while watching the sun break across the Prairie horizon was simply magical.

We learned about Manitoba pride and their special sense of humour. "If you can see your dog outside, it's summer. If you can't, it's snowing!" Elk and wolves ignored the train as they continued doing what they do best – just being.

Saskatchewan is known for producing potash and mining operations which dotted the countryside as the train made its way across the province.

As the train left the snow-covered prairies where the horizon was almost beyond sight, the train came upon the gigantic Rockies in Alberta – gradually at first, but there they were in their magnificence, draped in snow and looking down on us.

Coming into Jasper was a reminder of the devastating fire that ripped through the region and half this town in July 2024. 25,000 residents and visitors were evacuated at that time. It was heartening to witness the spirit of the people and to see the town rebuilding. The countryside will take longer to heal as new growth is visible among the charred remains of still-standing trees.

The Rockies guided us into British Columbia. Mount Robson, the highest peak in the Canadian Rockies, graced us with a full un-clouded view. Pyramid Creek Falls, rivers and lakes filled our senses.

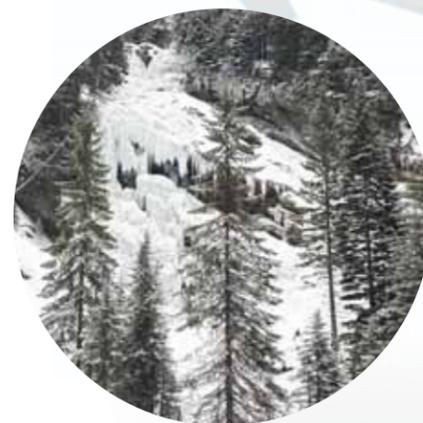
"Train time" is actually quite a magical concept. The Canadian often had to stop and wait for freight trains. Passengers simply relaxed into this rhythm of stop and go, without worry, making friends, sharing stories, joining activities, reading or by simply enjoying the stillness. The train was about eight hours behind schedule as it pulled into Saskatoon, but magically, it made up time and arrived in Vancouver at 4 a.m., four hours ahead of schedule!

Tim, one of the activity managers, regaled us with stories about The Canadian train which was built in 1955. The stainless-steel cars remain gleaming, 71 years later, with past glories seeping out of every corner. Prior to the pandemic, travel on The Canadian was a luxury primarily enjoyed by a seniors who saved for this bucket-list trip across the country. Today, because of the power of social media, people of all ages and from different parts of the world get on board. We met a



Stopping at Pacific Central Station in Vancouver was bitter sweet as it marked the end of our great train adventure. Built in the early 20th century, the current name of "Pacific Central Station" was selected through a naming contest in 1991. The station was designated a federal heritage railway station in late 1991 under the Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act.

Vancouver Kamloops



The train slowed passengers to take in the view of Pyramid Creek Falls in British Columbia. The park is on the east side of the river. It is visible from the train tracks. We were up close!

young couple who fled eastern Ukraine to settle in Canada just after the war started. Having good educations, each of them got good jobs in Halifax and are eagerly awaiting their Canadian citizenship. They learned first-hand how fleeting life can be, so they are living life to the fullest now and they loved traveling across their new homeland in the intimate setting of The Canadian.

A Mennonite family, Mum, Dad and three little ones aged one to four were travelling back from visiting family near farm country in St. Mary's to their new homestead in Manitoba, about 300 kms north of Winnipeg.

Twin sisters from Australia disembarked in Jasper to snowboard. Fred Frailey, a renowned author on railroads was an interesting fellow traveller. Travellers bonded over this shared experience on The Canadian with hopes and plans that our paths will cross again.

We ended this fabulous train adventure in Vancouver, four days after we left Toronto, with our last delicious breakfast in the dining car, saying adieu to staff and new friends.

The Canadian approaching Valemount B.C., a beautiful village surrounded by the peaks of the Rocky, Monashee and Cariboo Mountains. A couple from the train loves living here now. They moved from Toronto to "their paradise" here in Valemount 10 years ago.



The Club Car, here at Sioux Lookout train station, was a favourite gathering place for travellers to chat and have a drink from the adjacent bar. The view, especially from the back window, watching the tracks speed off behind us was mesmerizing.



A friendly VIA lineman jumped up onto the wheels of the Club Car to wave hello as the train stopped in Jasper. He was checking rail switches which allow trains to move across tracks so other trains may pass by.



Richard, my hubby, was the first to arrive in the Club Car after breakfast one morning. Soon the Car was filled with stories and laughter as passengers shared their lives with each other. This was an ideal spot for photographers in the group.

The Canadian made a scheduled stop in Sioux Lookout where the temperature was around -30 degrees. This is a key point along the journey to refuel with about 6,000 litres and to give passengers an opportunity to stretch their legs outside. The station itself is closed, but this stop is an important link for passengers particularly between Sudbury and Winnipeg.



Menu for the first lunch on the train near Washago, Ontario. The seafood ravioli and beet-cured salmon were scrumptious. This meal whet our anticipation for all the other meals to come! The highly trained chefs on board took great pride to create and beautifully present every dish.



...down to a crawl to allow ... in the stunning Pyramid ... C. Access to these falls within ... falls Park is very limited as the ... side of the North Thompson ... e from Hwy 5 and from CN ... very lucky to see this wonder



Mount Robson in B.C. is in Mount Robson Park which borders Jasper National Park, all part of the grand Canadian Rocky Mountains. Mount Robson is the highest peak in the Canadian Rockies at 3,954 metres or 12,972 feet above sea level. Its grandeur is something to behold!



A quick stop in Capreol, Ontario for passengers to board and disembark. Capreol is the northern most community of the greater Sudbury area. It is known for its early roots as a railway junction for the Canadian Northern Railway, as well as its rich lumber, mining and railroading heritage.

Passengers were able to explore Jasper for about an hour. This town was originally a trading post along the Athabasca River in the crook of the Rocky Mountains. Today, it is a beacon to tourists who seek adventure and beauty. Jasper National Park is a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Crossing over the Uno Trestle Bridge over the Red River Valley near Beaulah in Western Manitoba. It is the longest trestle bridge in Manitoba, a significant historical landmark constructed in 1929. The Uno Trestle Bridge is a key crossing point for trains with crossings at least every hour. It felt like being in mid-air as we crossed this span across the valley.

For more information: [viarail.ca](http://viarail.ca)

Search - **Explore Canada by Train**

Photo credit: **Denise Bacon**

**Just For Fun**

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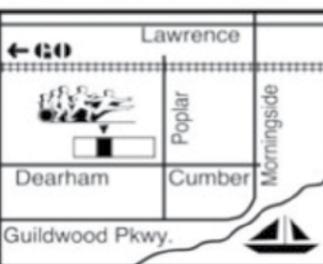
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**Sir Oliver Mowat's  
Iftar Night**

*By Vishahgan Anandaraj*

Originally launched in 2023, Mowat's Iftar Night has become the school's largest club run event. Held during the month of Ramadan, the evening marks the moment Muslims break their fast at sunset after abstaining from food and water throughout the day. More than just sharing a meal, the event offers students an opportunity to learn about Islamic traditions and better understand the significance of Ramadan in a welcoming and respectful setting.

This year's fourth annual Iftar Night took place on February 26 at Sir Oliver Mowat after school hours. Over time, the event has continued to grow and is now one of Mowat's most highly attended student-led evenings. The celebration includes dinner, along with games, activities, and prizes that add excitement and encourage students to engage with one another. These features help create a lively atmosphere where everyone feels included.

For the first time, the event was also open to members of the wider community reflecting diversity and a strong sense of wholeness at Mowat. As the tradition continues each year, Iftar Night remains a meaningful example of student leadership and cultural celebration.

## Councillor Neethan Shan, Scarborough–Rouge Park

# Councillor’s report: Budget highlights and community updates

### Highlights from the 2026 Budget

This winter has been especially cold, yet our Centennial community has continued to show warmth, resilience, and strong neighbourhood spirit. Throughout the season, we worked closely with residents, community groups, and local partners to ensure people stayed connected and informed.

On February 10, City Council adopted the 2026 budget, and we worked hard to make sure it reflects the priorities we continue to hear from Scarborough residents. This year’s budget includes several measures aimed at improving affordability, supporting local families, strengthening services, and investing in small businesses across our community. I’m pleased to share some of the key highlights with you.

### Winterfest

I want to extend a sincere thank you to Centennial for inviting us to our first Winterfest. We had the opportunity to meet many residents, listen to local concerns, and learn about the incredible work being done by community organizations and small businesses.

We appreciated every conversation especially the ones shared over hot apple cider. Events like Winterfest reaffirm how dedicated and engaged Centennial residents are, and we look forward to continuing to support and participate in community-driven initiatives throughout the year.

### Lawrence & Starspray Off-Leash Dog Park

We advocated to accelerate the new off-leash dog park at Lawrence Avenue East and Starspray Boulevard, successfully moving the project forward by an entire year. The City is adding this off-leash area to the open space on the north side of Lawrence and Starspray, with the final design shaped through ongoing community engagement. The off-leash area will include accessible pathways, seating, and features developed through public input.

We want to thank everyone who took the time to participate in the most recent community survey. Your feedback directly informs the design and ensures this new space reflects what local residents and dog owners want to see in their neighbourhood.

### Local Advocacies: Expanding Bill Hancox Park

We also took action on a key local priority by contacting the Mayor’s Office about the future of the vacant property owned jointly by TDSB and TCDSB. This parcel of land is underused and the provincial government has recognized it as surplus land. This

land sits next to Bill Hancox Park, and we advocated for the City to explore acquiring it so we can expand and improve the park for the community.

This effort reflects our commitment to protecting and growing green space in Scarborough, especially as the surrounding neighbourhood continues to evolve. By putting this issue directly on the Mayor’s radar, we’re working to ensure the City actively pursues opportunities to strengthen our local parks and recreation network.

### Budget Highlights

We advocated the Mayor’s Office to keep property taxes low this year, with Council adopting a combined

residential property tax and City Building Fund increase of just 2.2% for 2026.

We kept transit affordable by freezing TTC fares for a third consecutive year. Starting in September 2026, we will introduce monthly fare capping so that after 47 paid trips, residents can ride for free for the rest of the month. This change makes transit more affordable for frequent riders, including students, workers, and families.

We expanded supports for children and youth by growing the Student Nutrition Program so it can reach more students across the city. We also ensured that all 100 Toronto Public Library branches will receive more weekday hours and transition to

seven-day-a-week service year-round starting this summer.

We advanced community priorities by supporting a set of targeted enhancements, including investments in a youth-focused innovation hub. To further strengthen community safety and frontline response, we added 258 new emergency positions including police officers and paramedics alongside other safety initiatives.

### Staying Connected

Getting in touch is the best way to bring your concerns and priorities to City Hall. If you need help navigating City services or want to raise a local issue, my constituency office is here to help.

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## MPP Vijay Thanigasalam

# Eglinton LRT officially opens

I hope you and your families are doing well. My team had an amazing time being part of the Port Union Winterfest. Every year, this highly anticipated event brings the community together, and it was truly heartwarming to see so many families, neighbours, and local organizations out enjoying the festivities. A big thank you to the Winterfest committee for putting this event together year after year!

### Eglinton LRT

It was great to join the grand opening of the Eglinton Crosstown LRT ahead of its official opening. This is a major milestone for Scarborough and for commuters across Toronto.

Our government made a clear commitment to expand transit and reduce gridlock, and this project delivers real results for families, workers, and businesses in our community. Spanning 19 kilometres with 25 new stations, Line 5 will make it faster and easier to get across the city.

For Scarborough residents, this means stronger connections to jobs, schools, and essential services. Operated by the TTC, Line 5 links riders to three subway lines, two GO stations, and more than 50 bus routes. And with the One Fare program, transfers between the TTC, GO, and regional transit are free, making commuting more affordable and seamless!



Line 5 Eglinton Crosstown is officially LIVE. 19 km of track, 25 brand-new stations, and up to an hour saved on your commute. From Kennedy to Mount Dennis, the city is now more connected.



### 2026 National Youth STEM Summit & Expo

I was proud to welcome The Society for Canadian Women in Science and Technology (SCWIST) as they hosted the National Youth STEM Expo in Scarborough—Rouge Park. With students from across Canada taking part, the energy, and talent on display were truly inspiring. Seeing young people connect directly with industry leaders and explore future opportunities in STEM is a strong reminder of why investing in our youth matters so much.

That's why our government is investing \$750 million to expand STEM programs and create 20,500 new seats each year, strengthening

Ontario's talent pipeline, protecting our province's future, and opening doors of opportunity for students.

This Summit showcased innovation at its best, from interactive exhibits to meaningful networking, while highlighting Scarborough's growing role as a hub for talent and opportunity. It was a pleasure welcoming Minister Nolan Quinn to the riding for this special event and celebrating the bright future of our young people right here in our community.

### Investing An Additional \$30 Million to Expand Primary Care Workforce

Our government is continuing to take action to strengthen and protect

Ontario's health-care system with a \$30 million investment to expand the province's primary care workforce.

This investment will help upskill more than 1,400 registered nurses to work in primary care settings, create 170 new education seats for nurse practitioners, and add up to 150 physician assistant training seats. By growing and strengthening our health-care workforce, we're building capacity where it matters most, on the front lines of patient care.

This investment moves us one step closer to delivering on that commitment and ensuring people can access the care they need, when and where they need it.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to our office at 8130 Sheppard Ave. East Unit 105, by email at [vijay.thanigasalam@pc.ola.org](mailto:vijay.thanigasalam@pc.ola.org), or give us a call at 416-283-8448.

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MPP - Scarborough-Rouge Park

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**MP Gary Anandasangaree**

# Standing with Tumbler Ridge

On February 10, our country was shaken by tragic news from Tumbler Ridge. My heart breaks for the families, friends, and loved ones of all the victims as they grieve an unimaginable loss.

In Tumbler Ridge, I witnessed both profound heartbreak and extraordinary strength. From the RCMP, whose swift response saved lives; to the paramedics and medical staff at the Tumbler Ridge Health Centre, who acted without hesitation; to the teachers and school staff, who protected their students with extraordinary courage; and to every resident of Tumbler Ridge, who have shown resilience in the face of abject cruelty—know that all of Canada stands with you.

My officials and I remain in close contact with my provincial counterparts, Mayor Darryl Krakowka, law enforcement, and community leaders. Across party lines and at every level of government, we are working together to ensure Tumbler Ridge has the support it needs. A thorough investigation is underway, and we must allow it to proceed with the care and seriousness it demands. We owe that to the victims and their families.

In the hours, days, and months ahead, our promise to the community of Tumbler Ridge remains: we will always be with you. It is not in memorial, but in solidarity.

**Making Groceries and Essentials More Affordable**

Canada is moving from reliance to resilience. In under a year, we have secured 12 new trade and investment partnerships, fast-tracked 11 nation-building projects, cut taxes for 22 million Canadians, and expanded vital social programs.

We are equally focused on lowering costs. In January, we introduced the Canada Groceries and Essentials Benefit. This benefit will replace the GST Credit with a 25% increase for five years starting July 2026 and a one-time 50% boost this year.

- A family of four could receive up to \$1,890 this year, and about \$1,400 per year for the next four years.
- A single person could receive up to \$950 this year, and about \$700 per year for the next four years.
- A single senior with \$25,000 in net income would receive up to \$950 this year, and about \$683 per year for the next four years.

**New EV Rebates to Help Canadians Save and Cut Emissions**

Canada's auto industry has been on the frontline of global shifts and the target of U.S. trade action. These changes require a bold plan to transform Canada's auto sector—one that rewards the production of made-in-Canada vehicles, supports Canadian



Minister Gary Anandasangaree stood alongside Premier David Eby and Mayor Darryl Krakowka in Tumbler Ridge the night after the tragic shooting to offer all available federal assistance.

autoworkers, and cuts emissions as we build an increasingly electric future:

- Allocate \$3 billion through the Strategic Response Fund to help Canada's auto industry adapt, grow, and diversify into new markets.
- Launch a five-year EV Affordability Program with incentives of up to \$5,000 for battery-electric and fuel-cell vehicles, and up to \$2,500 for plug-in hybrids.

Incentives would apply to vehicles priced up to \$50,000 from countries with Canadian free trade agreements, while Canadian-made EVs and plug-

in hybrids would not be subject to this cap.

- Expand Canada's EV charging network and strengthen greenhouse gas emission standards to put Canada on track to reach 75% EV sales by 2035.

By setting stringent emissions standards, manufacturers will have the flexibility to use a range of technologies to meet consumer needs in the near term, while driving EV adoption over time.

More details about the EV Affordability Program (EVAP) will be available online.



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## Culinary Corner

# Fresh ideas for eating more vegetables

By Kathryn McLean

A friend recently told me she feels her family should be eating more vegetables and asked for ideas on how to incorporate them into their regular meals. They're open to increasing their intake in any form: cooked or raw, in salads, packed into lunches, or added to everyday dishes.

Their family enjoys vegetables, but they haven't made a habit of including them in their daily meals. I've written about this topic before, and here are some of the suggestions I shared with them.

One simple strategy is to start by buying more fresh vegetables. Keeping them on hand makes it easier to incorporate them into meals as you cook. If there's a head of broccoli in the fridge, for example, it's easy to wash, chop and steam it while preparing chicken and rice.

If there's no broccoli in the fridge, you're unlikely to run out and buy some just as you're preparing dinner and realize a vegetable side would be a good addition. Keeping a wider variety of vegetables on hand makes it more likely you'll prepare and eat them simply because you don't want to waste them, nor the money you spent.

If you buy a zucchini, a couple peppers and a pack of mushrooms and keep seeing them in the fridge, you'll feel obligated to use them before they go bad.

Another trick that works is starting with what you like. Choose a vegetable, or vegetable dish, that your



Fresh vegetables: an easy step toward healthier eating

family likes and prepare it more often. For example, offer steamed peas with butter and black pepper twice a week instead of once.

Other vegetable options that work well for dinner and the next day's lunch include squash soup and a tomato and cucumber salad, which can also be added to sandwiches as fresh slices.

Another way to enjoy more vegetables is to stop saving them for special occasions like Thanksgiving or Christmas. Dishes such as Brussels sprouts, mashed turnip, and butter-nut or acorn squash can be enjoyed just as easily on ordinary days.

Also try preparing a vegetable you already like in a new or different way. When you like a new variation on an old favourite, it might open a door to serving it more often. And eating vegetables more often is similar to eating more vegetables.

Try roasting vegetables such as broccoli instead of steaming them to bring out a deeper flavour. Bell

peppers can be chopped into salads, served raw on a vegetable platter with or without dip, or roasted and puréed into soup.

Roasting several peppers at once allows you to use them throughout the week. Sprinkle them with fresh herbs for a warm side dish, stir them into fried rice or noodle dishes, add them to omelettes or sandwiches, toss them into pasta, or combine them with feta cheese and cucumber for a simple salad.

In lieu of a lettuce salad, try to make a raw vegetable plate instead. Mix and match raw vegetables that you enjoy and eat them alongside your lunch and dinner.

I've found that when people talk about trying to eat more vegetables, the first step is having more vegetables at home. Start small, with a couple more veggies in your shopping cart. That way you won't feel overwhelmed, or wasteful if you can't use everything you've bought.

## Port Union Library

### March Break Programs:

**Family Movie Night:** Monday, March 16 6-8 p.m.

The Bad Guys 2 (2025) No registration required – all are welcome!

**Friendship Bracelet Making:** Tuesday, March 17 2-3 p.m. For children ages 6-12 years old. No registration required. Space is limited.

**Lego Challenge:** Wednesday, March 18 2-3 p.m.

Build, design, and compete for a fun filled day! This is also a chance to display your imagination and creativity with friends! For children ages 6-12 years old. No registration required. Space is limited.

**Movie Night:** Mondays, March 2, 9, 23, 30 6-8 p.m.

Adults & Older Adults are welcome Monday evenings for Port Union Movie Night.

March 02: The Life of Chuck (2025)

March 09: Novocaine (2025)

March 23: Kneecap (2024)

March 30: Materialist (2025)

**Afternoon Book Club:** Tuesday, March 3 2-3 p.m.

This month's book is *The Women* by Kristine Hannah. The library will provide 15 copies of the books or you may order your own copy.

**Evening Book Club:** Tuesday, March 11 6:30-7:30 p.m.

This month's book is *Behind You* by Catherine Hernandez. The library will provide 15 copies of the books or you may order your own copy.

**Family Time:** Wednesdays, March 4, 11, 18, 25 10:30-11 a.m.

Enjoy stories, songs and rhymes at a staff-led story time for the entire family. For children (5 years and under) with their parents or caregivers. This is a drop-in program.

**Chess Club:** Wednesdays, March 4, 11, 18, 25 4:30-5:30 p.m.

Learn how to play, or improve your game with members of the University of Toronto Scarborough Campus Chess Club! No registration required. This is a drop in program for ages 7-17 years old.

**Baby Time:** Fridays, March 6, 13, 20, 27 10:30-11 a.m.

Introduce your child (18 months to 3 years) to sounds and actions at a staff-led story time with rhymes, songs and stories. For toddlers with their parents or caregivers. This is a drop in program.

**Knitting Circle:** Saturdays, March 7, 14, 21, 28 9:30-11 a.m.

You can also share your projects with others! This is a drop-in program but limited to a room capacity of 20 participants. Arrive early to secure your spot!

**Family Club:** Saturdays, March 7, 14, 21, 28 11:30-12:30 p.m.

You can colour your favorite characters or create freestyle Legos with family and friends! This is a drop-in program but limited to a room capacity of 20 participants. Arrive early to secure your spot! No registration needed.

### Book-a-Librarian Sessions

For more program information, visit our website [tpl.ca](http://tpl.ca), or phone Answerline at 416-397-5981

Submitted by Seema Datta, Senior Library Assistant, Port Union Library



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**Transportation**

# Lawson Road culvert rehabilitation

By John Murphy

You may have noticed that the work on the Lawson Road Culvert over the Centennial Creek has begun. It has an estimated projected end date of sometime in May.

The plan by the City's contractor is to:

- Repair and renovate the culvert including concrete and chain link fence repairs.
- Removal of the build-up of sediment, debris and vegetation.
- Extend existing soffit drain outlets.

**What to expect during construction**

**Hours of work:** Construction will take place between 7a.m. and 7p.m. and the city will do its best to reduce the dust, noise and other inconveniences.

**Sidewalk Access:** While both sidewalks are passable now, extra care is needed as you walk through a construction. The north sidewalk will remain open and the south sidewalk is to be considered closed.

**Vehicle Traffic:** We are asked to be careful as bicycles and cars will be sharing the road lanes. Lawson Road will be maintained with one narrow lane in each direction.



Lawson Road construction between Cedarview Drive and Irvine Road will be in effect until late May.

**On-Site Communication:**

There are times when contractors need to communicate with homeowners about what is happening on-site. This could be about driveway access, water shut-offs, pre-construction inspections, and site restoration work (landscaping, installing pavers etc.). If you need to speak with staff on the construction site, please ask for the Site Inspector. If you experience a disruption, have a specific access need or related accommodation request, contact the Field Ambassador listed in the following paragraph.

**Need more information?**

For general inquiries, call 311 or visit [toronto.ca/scarboroughrangepark](http://toronto.ca/scarboroughrangepark).

If you are deaf or hard of hearing, connect via the hearing-impaired service with Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) by dialing 711 (24/7). Field Ambassador Mike Campaner, can be reached at 416-433-2382, or at [mike.campaner@ghd.com](mailto:mike.campaner@ghd.com).

Building a great city takes time, and better infrastructure for all of us is worth the wait.

**Autism Acceptance**

**Autism**

*continued from page 5*

diagnosis, and everything that makes him who he is." Wilderness and community service programs with the Federation of the North American Explorers youth movement increased Michael's independence, confidence and social connections, earning him recognition with peers.

Michael thanks his many teachers and mentors for guiding and supporting him, and offering employment and volunteer opportunities. He also credits his special education teachers and assistants at St. Brendan Catholic School with making elementary school experiences meaningful and successful, paving the way towards future success. Currently, he is pursuing creative studies in fine art, music and performance at Centennial College. A huge basketball fan, he is passionately involved in Special Olympics and Nike Sports Camps.

Formerly known as Autism Awareness Day, World Autism Acceptance Day is celebrated on April 2. The change to acceptance represents a growing recognition of autism as a natural variation in people like Shylo and Michael, just two of many autistic adults for whom inclusion has made a big difference. By fostering a more compassionate community, full inclusion of autistic people benefits us all.

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## Support Canada

# Canadian spelling still matters

By Kathryn Stocks

Last month, I bought some delicious greenhouse-grown cherry tomatoes called “Flavor Bombs” at one of our local supermarkets. I purchased them because for the past year I’ve been trying as hard as I can to buy food and goods that are produced in Canada or at least not in the U.S.



**The American spelling on the label suggested these “Flavor Bombs” were from the U.S., but they’re actually grown in Canada by an Ontario-based company.**

There are a lot of greenhouses across this country right now, and I’m happy to support these local food producers, even when the prices are a little higher than produce from other countries.

The label on the Flavor Bombs tomato package says they were grown in Canada and at the bottom it says, MPL, Kingsville, ON.

After doing a little online research, I found that MPL stands for Mastronardi Produce and while it labels itself a North American company with greenhouses in Canada and the U.S., I was encouraged to discover that it has its headquarters in Kingsville, Ontario, which is in the southwestern part of our province. The company is family-owned and has been in the commercial greenhouse industry since 1954.

The thing that piqued my interest in looking it up was the American spelling of ‘flavor’ on the label. This spelling on the package made me think the tomatoes came from the U.S. I don’t know why a Cana-

dian company would spell it that way, but I suspect it’s because the American market is a bigger part of their business.

As an editor interested in correct word spellings, I always make an effort to use the Canadian spellings of words in this paper. This includes words like flavour, neighbour, colour, favourite and all the words where the “u” in an “our” ending often gets dropped.

In fact, it’s a constant challenge to maintain Canadian spellings. As I was typing this

story on my phone, auto-correct changed them to the U.S. spelling of flavor, neighbor, etc.

Another type of spelling that’s part of Canadian English is doubling the consonant before adding “ed” or “ing” to the ends of certain words. Our spelling is “travelling”, but in the U.S. it’s “traveling”, and we write “travelled” while Americans write “traveled”.

And what about “theatre,” which Americans spell “theater”? We also write “cheque” while it’s “check” in the US.

There are many instances of slightly different spellings in Canadian English and I encourage everyone to watch for them and change them back when they get auto-corrected. It might be a little thing, but I think it’s important to maintain the differences between us and our American neighbours at this time.

## Canadian animals more active in winter

By Wanda Wierzbicki

Winter is a great time to visit the zoo. There are fewer visitors and many animals like the polar bears, Arctic wolves and caribou are more active.

Four polar bears call the zoo home. The older two are twin sisters Aurora and Nikita, who are both about 25 years old. We don’t know their exact birthdate because they came to the zoo as orphaned cubs after their mother was killed. Aurora is the mother of 14-year-old Hudson and 10-year-old Juno.

Polar bears are the largest land carnivores – similar in size to Kodiak bears. They can weigh up to 600 kg and they have black skin and a black tongue. Their fur is thick with outside guard hairs and a thick undercoat. They have short tails and small ears that minimize heat loss in the cold Arctic climate.

Polar bears are endangered because they depend on large ice flows for hunting and travel. But the ice is forming later and melting sooner due to global warming, and this results in longer fasts and declining populations.

The Arctic wolves are one of my favourite animals, perhaps because they are members of the dog family. There are currently seven wolves in the pack at the

zoo, all between 5 and 6 years old. Wolves live in a highly organized social structure. There is a dominant (alpha) male and female that bond for life. Often the members of the pack are family members.

Wolves are primarily carnivores, hunting caribou and muskox as well as other small animals and birds. They communicate with body language using their tail and ear positions. They also use various vocalizations: growling, snarling, whining, yipping and barking. Their howl can be heard 5 km away.

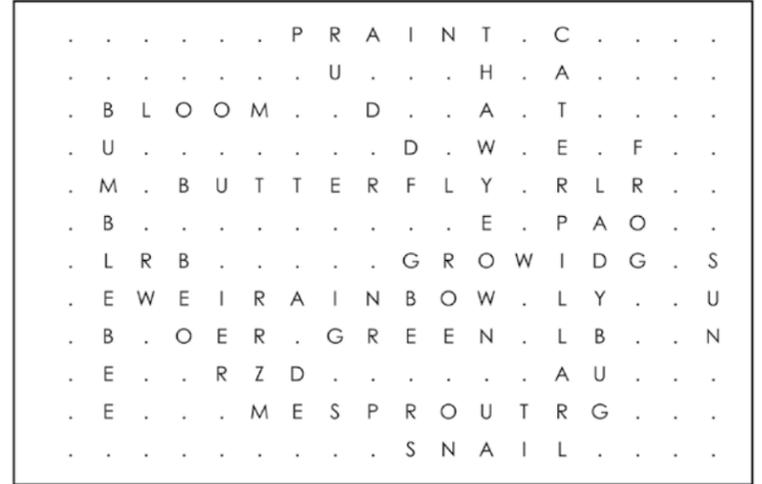
The zoo is home to four female caribou: Mitella (16), Hyacinth (9), Delilah and Rose (7). Caribou are sometimes called reindeer in Europe. As members of the deer family, they are larger than deer but smaller than moose.

Like all animals that live in cold and snowy environments, they have thick coats, and hooves that act like snowshoes to allow them to walk through deep snow. Both male and female reindeer grow antlers, but females keep their antlers longer into winter in order to protect their young. This means that Santa’s reindeer are likely female.

While these animals are outdoors, visitors can warm up inside the zoo’s heated buildings, which remain open during the winter months.

## Continued from page 12

Correct solution the Spring Word Search on page 12.



### THE ART GUILD OF SCARBOROUGH



Cardinals – Shirley Huang

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# CCRA NEWS

## ADVERTISING BOOKING

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## Membership



### Membership Update

By Denise Bacon

Thank you to the many residents who purchased their 2026 CCRA memberships! The draw for the special gift basket will be made at the March 4 CCRA board meeting from among all residents who got their 2026 memberships by February 28. *The name of the winner will be published online at ccranews.com and in the April edition of Centennial news.*

Residents who have not yet purchased their 2026 membership, remember that you are still a big winner for living in our beautiful community of Centennial! Your community association, made up solely of volunteers, works tirelessly to keep our community connected and to maintain its special character. Please buy your 2026 membership today and help keep Centennial strong and flourishing.

Membership for each household is \$15.00 for the calendar year.

[membership@ccranews.com](mailto:membership@ccranews.com)

## Distribution



By Wanda Wierzbicki

The calendar says March and some lucky families are going to be heading off to warmer destinations in a few weeks, for the annual spring holiday. However, there are still big snow piles on my property and there is a big snowman in the middle of my neighbor's front yard. The longer, sunnier days tell me that spring is coming – it just isn't quite here yet. Don't put away that winter coat.

Many of our regular distributors are snow birds. While they are enjoying the sunny south, please wave and say hello to the wonderful group of people who stepped in to deliver additional newspapers, so that everyone in the neighborhood has the opportunity to read this newspaper. Thank you!

I am still looking for a distributor for part of the townhouse complex at **121 Centennial**. These are the homes that are located on the corner of Lawrence and Centennial Road. If there is a high school student in the neighborhood who would like to earn some volunteer hours – please get in touch with me. You can earn one volunteer hour for every month that you deliver the newspapers. Distribution usually takes less than 1/2 an hour. Hoping to hear from one of you soon.

Email: [distribution@ccranews.com](mailto:distribution@ccranews.com)

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I am interested in volunteering at CCRA events. Please contact me.

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## A Look at What's Happening in the Market Today

What a winter we are experiencing. With frigid temperatures and significant snowfall across the region, the Greater Toronto real estate market has started 2026 at a slower pace.

There were **3,082 home sales** reported in January, down 19.3% compared to January 2025. **Active listings increased by 8.1%** year over year to 17,975, bringing the months of inventory across all home types to 5.8 months. Months of inventory measures the pace at which homes would sell if no new listings were to come to market. As inventory levels approach six months, economists suggest the market is shifting toward more buyer-friendly conditions—offering greater choice, putting downward pressure on prices, and improving overall affordability.

The **average selling price was \$973,289, a decline of 6.5%** compared to January 2025. With the Bank of Canada recently announcing no change to interest rates, mortgage rate stability combined with lower prices is expected to encourage more buyers to re-enter the market and take advantage of current conditions.

Jason Mercer, Chief Information Officer of the Toronto Regional Real Estate Board, has noted that current inventory levels should help keep prices in check. However, he anticipates a busier second half of 2026 as affordability improves and consumer confidence begins to strengthen.

With market conditions expected to improve later this year, buyers should be actively looking for opportunities now and educating themselves on where true value exists in today's market. Historically, periods like this—when optimism is cautious, and the market feels uneven—often prove to be moments of opportunity in hindsight.

The condominium market continues to face some challenges, largely due to the above-average delivery of new units. Approximately 20,000 new condo units are expected to be completed by the end of 2026, compared to a historical average of closer to 15,000 annually. **Condo sales were down 26%** in January compared to January 2025, with **average prices declining nearly 10% to \$604,759**. This decline is largely driven by increased sales of smaller, investor-type units.

That said, it's important to look beyond today's headlines. While supply is elevated in the near term, the number of new condo projects expected in future years is projected to drop significantly. In fact, by 2029, fewer than 1,000 new condo units are expected to be delivered. This sharp decline in future supply has meaningful implications for long-term value, particularly as population growth and housing demand continue.

Housing markets don't move on headlines alone—they move on the key factors that drive real estate values. As part of our ongoing focus on understanding what's really happening in the market, our brokerage partnered with Canada's leading real estate research firm, Urbanation, to develop a comprehensive paper analyzing the seven most important macro factors that influence housing values.

If you'd like to talk through what 2025 meant for you personally, or what lies ahead in 2026 and beyond, we're always available to help you cut through the noise and make confident, informed decisions.

If you would like this type of market information emailed to you monthly - contact us to be added to our mailing list.

We are always here and happy to assist you with any of your real estate-related needs—please never hesitate to reach out.

Heather Lemieux & Ross Macdonald  
 REALTORS®

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 ROSS 416.529.0486

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## SOME OF THE HOUSES **SOLD** BY SOPHIA TAN



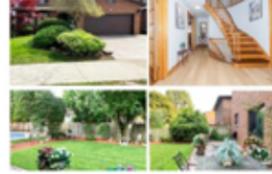
**23 Invermarge Dr.**  
Both LISTED and SOLD  
By SOPHIA TAN Exclusively  
**SOLD** July 2025



**540 Lightfoot Pl (Pickering)**  
Listed at \$999,888  
**SOLD** \$1,065,000 in 5 Days  
**SOLD** June 2025



**261 Koning Ct.**  
Listed at \$999,888  
**SOLD** \$1,150,000 in 4 Days  
**SOLD** May 2025



**89 Invermarge Dr.**  
Meadowvale/Bathgate Dr.  
**SOLD** \$1,348,000  
**SOLD** April 2025



**137 Maberley Cres.**  
Lawrence/East Ave.  
**SOLD** \$988,500 in 8 Days  
**SOLD** April 2025



**15 Island Rd. #41**  
Listed at \$598,800  
**SOLD** \$653,500 in 4 Days  
**SOLD** April 2025



**3233 Eglinton Ave. #1606**  
Listed at \$578,800  
**SOLD** \$578,800  
**SOLD** February 2025



**10 Guildwood Pkwy. #824**  
Represented Buyer  
**SOLD** \$1,200,000  
**SOLD** November 2024



**39 Satchell Blvd.**  
Lawson/Meadowvale  
**SOLD** \$1,115,000 in 4 Days  
**SOLD** October 2024



**445 Friendship Ave.**  
Listed at \$1,199,800  
**SOLD** \$1,400,000 in 2 Days  
**SOLD** May 2024



**26 Dunwatson Dr.**  
Listed at \$1,499,800  
**SOLD** \$1,510,000 in 1 Day  
**SOLD** May 2024



**124 Acheson Blvd.**  
Listed at \$1,150,000  
**SOLD** \$1,255,000 in 1 Day  
**SOLD** April 2024



**24 D'arcy Magee Cres.**  
Represented Buyer  
**SOLD** \$1,140,000  
**SOLD** November 2023



**88 Oakmeadow Blvd.**  
7 Oaks Community  
**SOLD** \$1,450,000  
**SOLD** November 2023



**1886 Parkside Dr.**  
Represented Buyer  
**SOLD** \$1,235,000  
**SOLD** November 2023

**FREE** *CURRENT MARKET EVALUATION CERTIFICATE*

This Certificate entitles a residential property owner to one market evaluation. If you are interested in finding out the current value of your home, please call me to arrange an appointment without cost or obligation.

**SOPHIA TAN, Broker**      RE/MAX ROUGE RIVER REALTY LTD BROKERAGE  
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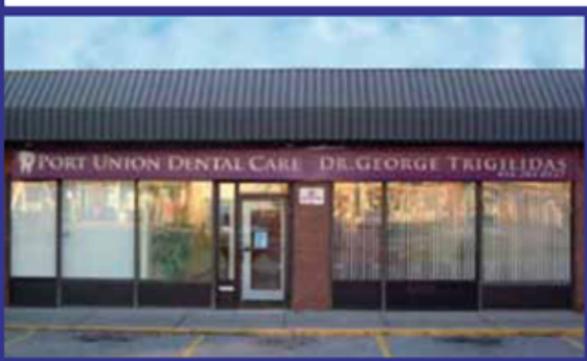
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