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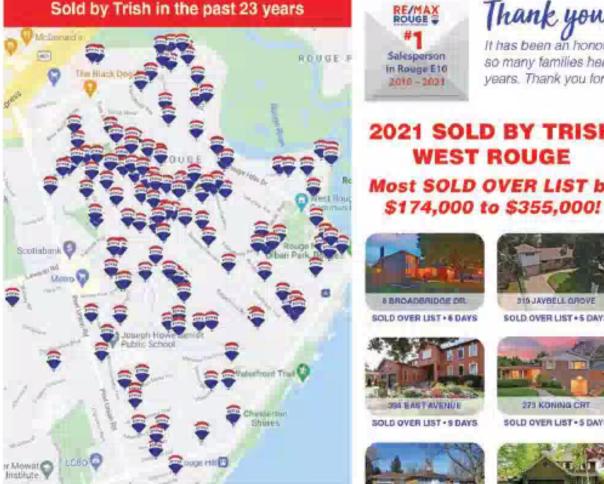
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WRITE FOR US! SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLE

JULY 31, 2022

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The views and opinions expressed may not necessarily be those of the West Rouge Community Association.

Please submit your article by e-mail to:

**DEADLINE FOR ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS** 

SPRING/SUMMER 2023 JANUARY 31, 2023

EMAIL wrlpublisher@gmail.com

Rose Morra

FALL/WINTER 2022

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This magazine is produced by community volunteers.

#### ON THE COVER

VOL.22 NO.1 SPRING/SUMMER 2022



Photo Credit: Colin Winn colinwinnphotos.com

West Rouge Life is published two times a year and delivered to every house in the community by volunteer West Rouge residents. We invite your letters and comments about material in this issue, or on any other matter of interest to West Rouge residents.

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Kevin Narraway



# President's Message

Reza Khoshdel



Please feel free to contact me: reza.khoshdel01@gmail.com

I want to wish everyone a happy spring and hope 2022 brings you good health, prosperity, and joy. As the changing season signifies transformation, the West Rouge Community Association (WRCA) has also experienced some recent changes. I have been elected as the new President of the WRCA. My name is Reza Khoshdel and I have called West Rouge home for six years, proudly serving on the WRCA Board since 2019. As a lifelong Scarborough resident, my wife and I chose West Rouge to raise our young family because of its abundance of natural beauty and strong sense of community. We feel grateful to call West Rouge our home and it is my honour to serve as your President to make our shared community even better.

I would like to thank Kathi Loughran, who has tirelessly served as WRCA's President for the past two years. The pandemic has presented numerous challenges for every organization and she did a tremendous job leading our association through many difficult and uncertain situations. We are lucky to have Kathi continue to serve on the WRCA Board of Directors as Past President.

I also want to thank all the WRCA Board of Directors for their hard work and dedication. It is truly inspiring to work alongside neighbours with a deeply rooted passion in seeing their community prosper.

The WRCA's mission is to serve the diverse needs of our community in a variety of ways: a) we advocate for the preservation of the natural elements of our community; b) we advocate for responsible growth and development by working with all levels of government; and c) we strive to keep you informed about local events, groups, or social causes. We strive to be your voice and will always work hard to have your best interests at heart.

As a local community organization, we strive to keep our members informed about local issues and we do so by using a variety of methods including West Rouge Life Magazine, our website www.westrouge.org, on Facebook www.facebook.com/westrougeca, our monthly email newsletters, and our electronic sign located on Island Road (beside No Frills).

Although we have been unable to physically gather as much as we would like, our community has collectively shown great resilience and spirit throughout this pandemic. I remain hopeful that we will have more opportunities to gather in person as a community in 2022.

There are two projects that I want to highlight. The Rouge Beach Improvements Project, managed by Parks Canada, will aim to connect Rouge Beach to the existing Mast Trail. The Detailed Impact Assessment (DIA) was released in February and the WRCA will continue to work with Parks Canada to advocate for the best interests of residents, the ecological integrity of the Park, and to ensure our collective voices are heard. Another important capital project is the widening of Port Union Road, scheduled to begin construction in spring 2022. The final design will incorporate two lanes of vehicle traffic and a separate/elevated bike lane on each side of Port Union Road. These long awaited improvements will undoubtedly improve the flow of traffic and increase safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

The West Rouge Community Association would not be possible without the dedicated commitment and efforts of our volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering your time and giving back to your community, please feel free to contact me at reza. khoshdel01@gmail.com. We have a variety of roles that may be of interest to you.

In conclusion, I want to encourage everyone who has yet to purchase their \$15 annual membership to do so, and I thank those who have already renewed for their continued support. Your membership contributions are invested directly in our community and help fund the work of the association, which includes supporting local events and initiatives in West Rouge.



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# Vijay Thanigasalam

MPP Scarborough–Rouge Park

105-8130 Sheppard Ave. East, Scarborough, ON Website: vijaythani.ca • Twitter: vijaythani 416.283.8448 • vijay.thanigasalam@pc.ola.org

I hope everyone has been keeping healthy and warm these past few months. I am excited to share that 90% of Ontarians aged 12 and over have received two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine! I want to thank everyone for doing their part and rolling up their sleeves.

Please note that the following information may have changed. Please feel free to reach me by email at vijay. thanigasalam@pc.ola.org or by phone at 416-283-8448 for the most up-to-date information.

#### SINGLE LARGEST INVESTMENT IN EDUCA-TION IN ONTARIO'S HISTORY

I am proud to announce that the Ontario government has announced the single largest investment in public education in Ontario's history. The government is investing \$26.6 billion in 2022- 2023. This is our plan to respond to the impact of the pandemic on our children's education. This investment ensures that our children get back on track in a healthy and positive environment. We are focusing on learning, recovery and mental health supports.

#### FREE LICENSE PLATE RENEWAL IN ONTARIO

The Ontario government is eliminating license plate renewal fees and stickers as of March 13, 2022, for

passenger vehicles, light duty trucks, motorcycles and mopeds. Legislation has also been introduced to refund millions of drivers for license plate fees paid since March 2020. For more information or assistance, call Service Ontario's dedicated line at 1-888-333-0049.

#### COVID-19 BOOSTER DOSES FOR YOUTH 12 TO 17

Over 6.7 million boosters have been administered! As of February 18th, youth 12 to17 years of age were able to book their vaccine appointments at ontario. ca/bookvaccine. To book an appointment online, individuals must be 12 years old at the time of appointment. Thank you for rolling up your sleeves!

If you have any questions or concerns, my office is always here to help. Please reach out by email at vijay. thanigasalam@pc.ola.org or by phone at 416-283-8448. To receive weekly updates, sign-up for my e-newsletter at vijaythanigasalam.ca/rougereport. I look forward to meeting you in-person soon!

Vijay Thanigasalam, MPP Scarborough - Rouge Park



# VIJAY THANIGASALAM MPP - Scarborough-Rouge Park

I am here to listen and serve you. Let me know how I can help you.



8130 Sheppard Avenue East, Unit 105, Scarborough, ON M1B 3W3

416-283-8448 vijay.thanigasalam@pc.ola.org

vijaythanigasalam.ca





#### WRITERS WANTED

Are you interested in talking to people and sharing their stories? Would you like to help others get to know some of the amazing people in our West Rouge community? West Rouge Life Magazine would like to encourage additional local content, with a focus on profiling people in our wonderful community of West Rouge.

If you are interested or have questions, please email: WRLpublisher@ gmail.com



**COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION** 

WE ARE VOLUNTEERS who take time out of our day to make life in West Rouge better for everyone in the community.

#### OUR PRINCIPAL FUNCTIONS ARE:

- to distribute information of interest to the community,
- · to promote and encourage participation in civic and community life, and
- · to monitor and act on those issues before our governments
- of concern to residents.

The West Rouge Community Association relies on your support. Please contact your street captain or any WRCA Board member to learn more and to become a member!

# From the Publisher

Rose Morra

Please feel free to contact me: WRLpublisher@gmail.com



#### **GRADUATION – CONGRATULATIONS!**

I have personally experienced a young adult in the family graduating from university and this question came to mind. What does graduation really mean? Graduation is the successful completion of a course of study at a university, college, or school, for which you receive a degree or diploma. I think most people may relate to going through a school program and completing it. Hooray you have graduated! All over the world, graduation may have the same meaning, but the practices could be different when graduating. For example, some may host small gatherings in an informal setting followed by food, music and dance, and others may host large formal gatherings (a black or white tie affair) in a luxurious facility.

COVID has led to the expansion of creativity in how we celebrate graduation ceremonies -- like taking place virtually, running one hour with key speakers, providing students virtual graduation backgrounds to present themselves as if they were in an in-person setting. Kind of cool!

However, I think graduation could mean several other things. What might graduation mean to you?

For me, the road to graduation could start anywhere. Online learning for schools, programs and courses, or a school learning program that comes in the mail, are a few typical paths that I think people are familiar with. But what about learning on the job, a sport progression or even mastering to be a life coach?

Here is what I mean. A colleague provides training, your peer demonstrates how to use a new tool for your job, a friend sends you a link to a self-wellness program, a child learns to ride a bike, and someone receives a medal for Olympic swimming. Yes, the medal is a symbol of a stupendous job well done, but I think the essence of graduating from one point in your knowledge or capability to a heightened point in knowledge and capability, is that all personal paths of learning, regardless of the context, lead to GRADUATION.

I congratulate each and every one of you, as I think you all may have taken a path of learning and experienced a "graduation". In closing, I would like to leave you with one of my favourite quotes for learning.

"You must have some VISION for your life. Even if you don't know the plan, you have to have a DIRECTION in which you CHOOSE to go." - Oprah Winfrey





# **Jennifer McKelvie**

Toronto City Councillor



Please feel free to contact me: 416.338.3771 • councillor\_mckelvie@toronto.ca

#### **INVESTING IN WEST ROUGE**

I look forward to continuing to work for West Rouge residents this year and build on the progress we made in 2021 to invest in community safety, advance public transit innovation, implement the Ravine Strategy and accelerate our climate action targets to be net zero by 2040.

In 2021, I was delighted to be appointed Vice-Chair of the Budget Committee. This new responsibility is in addition to my appointments as Chair of the City's Infrastructure and Environment Committee, Chair of Scarborough Community Council and Chair of the Toronto Francophone Affairs Advisory Committee. I am also privileged to serve on Mayor Tory's Executive Committee, the Toronto Transit Commission Board and the Toronto Zoo Board.

#### Investing in Community Safety

The City of Toronto is continuing to advance Vision Zero and the Cycling Network Plan to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety. In West Rouge, school safety zones will be implemented at William G. Davis JPS, West Rouge JPS and Joseph Howe SPS. To improve safety for cyclists, bike lanes are planned for installation on Lawrence Avenue East between East Avenue and Rouge Hills Drive, pending budget approvals.

Construction is also scheduled to begin on the widening of Port Union Road from Lawrence Avenue East to Island Road in the spring of 2022, with completion anticipated in 2023. Work will include the addition of a second northbound lane, complete sidewalks on both sides, raised cycle tracks and centre-turn lanes in some locations. Once complete, this project will improve conditions for people walking, cycling, and driving, and better manage traffic flow. To learn more, please visit www.toronto.ca/portunion. To improve community safety, the City of Toronto has launched SafeTO to shift from a reliance on reactive emergency response to a culture of prevention. As part of SafeTO, the City has launched a Community Crisis Response. The pilot involves a non-police led, alternative community safety response model for calls involving Toronto residents in mental health crisis. I am delighted to share that TAIBU Community Health Centre has been selected as an anchor partner for the northeast area of the City. The pilot will launch this spring and will be assessed annually, with data collected to inform potential expansion throughout the City.

#### Advancing Public Transit Innovation

Unfortunately, in January, the City of Toronto, TTC and Metrolinx jointly agreed to conclude the West Rouge Automated Shuttle trial. Despite not offering service to the public, the City and its partners tested the automated shuttle service for two months in the fall of 2021 and gathered data about how automated vehicle technologies operate, their different requirements when compared to conventional transit vehicles, the current limitations of the technology and the range of solutions available in the market.

To ensure the insights gained from the trial will support future decision-making and planning for automated vehicles in transit and the broader transportation system, I have asked for a presentation to the TTC Board on the lessons learned from this pilot. In addition, I have asked the TTC to investigate the feasibility of microtransit to increase ridership and decrease greenhouse gas emissions.

I want to thank the residents of West Rouge for their support and enthusiasm throughout the duration of the trial. This micro-transit pilot embraced innovation and environmental sustainability by using driverless technology and electric charging.



#### Implementing the Ravine Strategy

Since my election, I have advocated for funding towards the restoration of our ravines and the creation of a citywide trail network. In 2021, we advanced the strategy by investing \$12M towards litter and invasive species removal. Working with our MP Gary Anandasangaree, we were also able to secure \$20M in funding through the new Natural Infrastructure Fund. In our community this year, trails in the Highland Creek Ravine and the Port Union Waterfront will receive funding for repair.

#### **Accelerating Climate Action**

In December 2021, I worked with my Council Colleagues to pass the City of Toronto's ambitious plan to be net zero by 2040. To reach our 2030 target, the City will use its influence to regulate, advocate and facilitate rapid transformation in five critical steps:

- Demonstrate carbon accountability locally and globally by establishing a carbon budget;
- Accelerate a rapid and significant reduction in natural gas use;

- Establish performance standards for existing buildings;
- Increase access to low carbon transportation options, including walking, biking, public transportation and electric vehicles; and
- Increase local renewable energy to contribute to a resilient, carbon free grid.

Getting to net zero will require all levels of government, the private sector and residents to do their part. To learn more about how you can green your home and contribute to climate action, please visit https:// betterhomesto.ca.

#### We're working for you

To ask for assistance, stay up to date on our projects and/or receive my newsletter, please e-mail councillor\_ mckelvie@toronto.ca. You can also follow me on Facebook, Instagram & Twitter, via my handle @ McKelvieWard25.

# Gary Anandasangaree

MP Scarborough-Rouge Park



3600 Ellesmere Rd, Unit 3, Scarborough, ON 416.283.1414 • gary.anand@parl.gc.ca

Dear West Rouge,

I want to thank all of you for your incredible resilience and compassion during these difficult months. From the everyday sacrifices made by residents, to the remarkable efforts of our essential and frontline workers, our community has risen to the occasion.

As we work towards a safe return to normal, our government will continue to support Canadians every step of the way by delivering vaccines, rapid tests, therapeutics, and targeted support programs.

#### VACCINATION UPDATE

Since the start of the pandemic, our government has been committed to protecting the health and safety of Canadians. That is why we have distributed more than 92 million vaccines in Canada to date and established the most diverse vaccine portfolio in the world. Thanks to our healthcare professionals, volunteers, and millions of Canadians who rolled up their sleeves to get vaccinated, Canada now has a two-dose vaccination rate of more than 77%. As we continue to brave the Omicron variant, I encourage those who are eligible to register for their booster, and for parents and guardians to vaccinate their children. You can book an appointment at www. ScarbVaccine.ca

An early lesson from the pandemic was that no one is safe until everyone is safe. This is especially true with global vaccination efforts, as countries must share vaccines and resources to save lives and prevent dangerous new variants. Canada has stepped up, making available 98.8 million doses to the COVAX vaccine-sharing initiative through financial aid and donating surplus doses. In all, Canada is committed to provide 200 million doses to COVAX by the end of 2022 and will work with partners to ensure an equitable and timely vaccine rollout.

#### **INVESTING IN MENTAL HEALTH**

Our mental health has been greatly strained by the daily uncertainties and difficulties of the pandemic. To help Canadians deal with rising feelings of anxiety, loneliness, and depression, our government worked with partners in 2020 to establish Wellness Together Canada (WTC): an online platform connecting Canadians to support workers, social workers, psychologists, and other professionals for confidential chat sessions or calls. To build on this, we have recently launched the PocketWell App to help Canadians seamlessly access WTC and its wealth of mental health and substance use supports. I am also pleased to report that as of January 10th, over 2 million Canadians have accessed the WTC portal, with around 30,000 Canadians using its services weekly. I encourage everyone to take some time to practice self-care, check in on their loved ones, or simply ask for help.

#### LOVE, SCARBOROUGH

Residents of Scarborough-Rouge Park and other Scarborough communities have long faced inequitable access to hospital care. This was reflected in the Scarborough Health Network's new 'Love, Scarborough' campaign, revealing that SHN receives less than 1% of all Toronto hospital donations, despite serving more than 25% of the population. As one of the most diverse communities in the GTA and home to many new Canadians, Scarborough deserves the same standard of hospital care as the rest of Toronto. I encourage all of you to visit the website below to see how we can collectively support SHN Foundation's fundraising campaign,

### GARY ANANDASANGAREE, MP SCARBOROUGH-ROUGE PARK



"During the COVID-19 pandemic, my team and I, as always, are here to assist you with all federal issues. Whether it is COVID-19 related federal supports or other inquiries, we are here for you ."

Constituency Office 3-3600 Ellesmere Road, Scarborough, ON M1C4Y8 416.283.1414 GARY.ANAND@PARL.GC.CA

to expand emergency care, upgrade diagnostic imaging, and support our healthcare workers right here in Scarborough. Learn more about the initiative at www.LoveScarborough.ca/

#### **CONNECT WITH US**

For those of you who would like to connect with

my team, I encourage you to contact my office at 416-283-1414 or Gary.Anand@parl.gc.ca. We are always happy to hear your thoughts, answer any questions, and assist you with any federal issues you may have.

Gary Anandasangaree MP Scarborough-Rouge Park



To advertise with us, contact Paul Kravis at rougerunnerpi@gmail.com LETTERS & REPORTS

### Anu Sriskandarajah TDSB School Trustee - Ward 22,

Scarborough-Rouge Park



Please feel free to contact me: 416.395.8787 • anu.sriskandarajah@tdsb.on.ca

### TDSB TO PROVIDE MEDICAL MASKS FOR ALL STUDENTS

Trustees with the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) have approved a motion to purchase Level 3 medical grade masks for TDSB students. While students may continue to wear their own mask as per the TDSB's COVID-19 Mask Procedure, one medical mask per day will be made available to all students until the end of the school year should they wish to wear them.

#### MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Everyday, the TDSB supports and focuses on the mental health and well-being of all students. Professional Support Services staff continue to develop resources to support students and their families. Check out the new, Grade-Specific Choice Boards: <a href="https://www.tdsb.on.ca/School-Year-2021-22/">https://www.tdsb.on.ca/School-Year-2021-22/</a> Mental-Health-and-Well-Being>.

#### **TDSB SYSTEM CALENDAR**

There are many ways for parents/guardians and school community members to get involved, learn, connect and participate in TDSB activities and events. Check our new system calendar to see what's going on across the Board: <a href="https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/School-Year-Calendar">https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/School-Year-Calendar</a>>.

### ENGLISH INSTRUCTION FOR ADULT NEW-COMERS WITH FREE CHILDCARE

The TDSB's Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program is the largest LINC provider in Canada. All sites provide free childcare for newcomer's children, so adult newcomers can gain English instruction without worrying about costly childcare. Visit linctoronto. ca to learn more.

### KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION BEGAN IN FEBRUARY!

Registration for all TDSB Kindergarten programs began in February. We look forward to welcoming you and your child at school in September! To attend Junior Kindergarten in September 2022, children must turn four-years-old by December 31, 2022. To register for Senior Kindergarten, children must be five-years-old by December 31, 2022. For more information about the Kindergarten programs and registration requirements, please visit www.tdsb.on.ca/kindergarten.

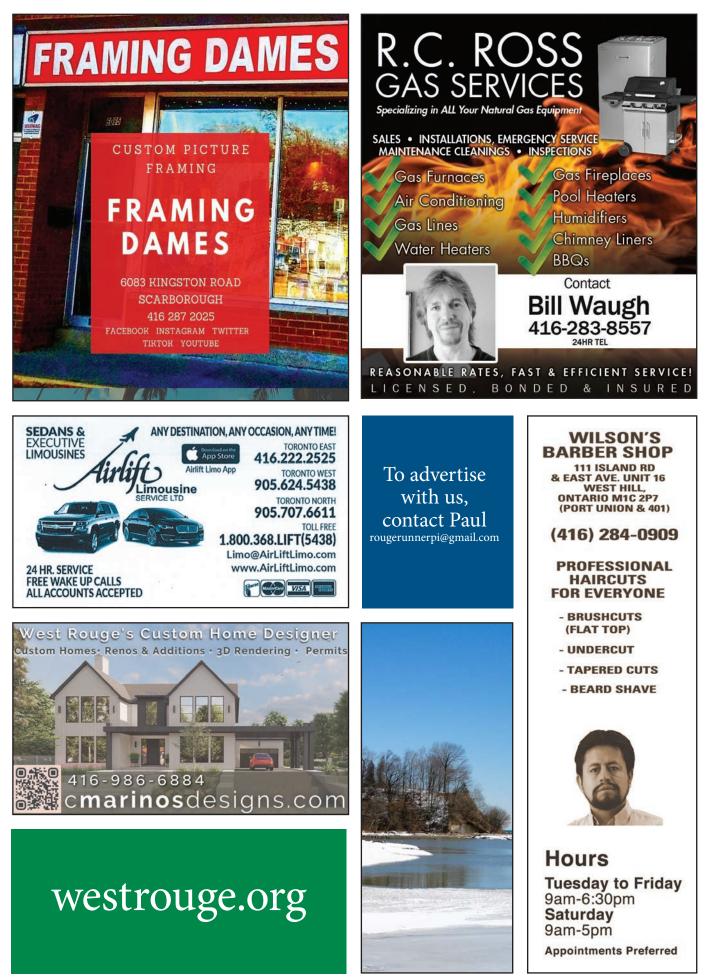
#### WINTER WALK DAY

On February 2, TDSB students joined schools across Canada for Winter Walk Day - an annual celebration of active transportation! It was the perfect opportunity for parents and kids to get outside together and stretch those legs. Walking is the simplest form of exercise and helps kids get the 60 minutes of daily physical activity they need.

Winter is still a great time to walk and be outside, and it's also a great cure for those winter blues! Dress properly and don't let cold, wind, snow or rain keep you from heading out for a walk. Below are some great winter weather dressing tips from Green Communities Canada:

- · Keep hands and head covered to prevent heat loss,
- Wear warm, waterproof boots,
- Wear a warm coat that deflects the wind,
- Woolen clothing helps to retain heat,
- On really cold days, wear a scarf over your face and mouth,
- If possible, change wet clothes at school
- Wear clothing or carry knapsacks with reflective material, as it's important to be seen,
- Below -25 degrees Celsius is considered too cold for walking, so move your walk indoors or select another day.

To learn more about road safety visit: https://www.tdsb.on.ca/ Road-Safety



# West Rouge's Urban Forest

By Bob Hester | Photo: Bob Hester

Five hundred years ago, the landscape of West Rouge looked quite different than it does today. Instead of paved streets surrounded by houses, the area was covered in forest. These trees were an invaluable resource for the Indigenous peoples that lived here. They provided materials to build their homes, for transportation and for bedding. The nuts and berries that the trees produced were a source of food.

A transformation took place with the arrival of European settlers. Initially, trees were cut down to create space for agriculture and to produce wood for personal use and export. Later, urban expansion resulted in the construction of the many homes, commercial and industrial properties, and roads we see around us today.

We are fortunate to live in a transition zone between the southern Carolinian Zone to the south and the Mixed Forest Zone to the north. This means that a wide variety of trees grow here, including oak, maple, beech, walnut, hickory, pine and hemlock. Some of the oldest trees in our area can be found in the Rouge River and Highland Creek valleys, or on older streets such as Rouge Hills Drive and Ridgewood Road. Our neighbour on Rouge Hills Drive has a White Oak in front of his house that began its life long before Canada was a country. The photo accompanying this article shows two walnut trees at the edge of our property.

Trees provide many benefits. They beautify a neighbourhood with their greenery in the spring and summer, and their often spectacular colours in the fall. They increase a property's value. They provide shade and reduce home energy consumption. They store carbon, thus helping to mitigate the effects of climate change. They remove pollution from the air. They help with storm water management by taking up water. They promote biodiversity by providing food and habitat for a variety of wildlife; the acorns and walnuts produced by the trees on our property are harvested annually by both red and gray squirrels, while chipmunks feast on the many maple seeds produced. Another biodiversity benefit is the opportunities the trees provide to a variety of birds to build nests and raise their young. Gray squirrels build their homes among a tree's branches, as well as in the cavities to be found in older trees.

While all trees can provide some of the benefits identified in the previous paragraph, trees that are native to our area are the best choice from an environmental perspective. They have evolved with the



species of mammals, birds and insects that are native here and provide what those species need for food and shelter.

Much of the surface area of Toronto is private land, which leaves the responsibility for renewing the city's tree canopy in the hands of individual homeowners, businesses and institutions. Native trees can be purchased at local garden centres. Care should be taken about where the tree is planted with respect to soil type and condition, natural light conditions and soil drainage. A newly planted tree requires care after it is planted, particularly frequent and thorough watering to allow the roots to become established. It is also important not to damage the bark, to protect the roots and not to damage the tree through the use of chemicals or deicers. Advice on these points can be obtained from the location where the tree was purchased.

Much more information about Toronto's trees, including the range of species from which to make your choice for planting, can be found online in Trees, Shrubs and Vines of Toronto, a booklet prepared for the City.

At the time I wrote this, the City's 2022 budget had not yet been approved. If the 2021 programs are extended into 2022 as planned, you can request a tree from the City that would be planted on the road allowance in front of your property at no cost to you. There would also be a continuation of grants and incentives for planting trees on private land. All the information that you need for both programs can be obtained at www.toronto.ca/ services-payments/water-environment/trees. Additional information can be obtained at www.yourleaf.org.

As you plan your landscaping for the spring, consider planting a native tree. The benefits to you and our local environment are significant.

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# Helen Morton, Activist Always!

#### By Julie Purmalis

"I'm going to Swiss Chalet!" Helen Morton exclaims jubilantly, when asked about plans for her 88th birthday, Jan. 31. How lucky for her that Ontario will be lifting indoor dining restrictions on such a special day. But, perfectly appropriate, as you will read, because not only is Helen both a special and lucky individual, she is also a valued member of our West Rouge community, an activist who deserves all the accolades one can bestow.

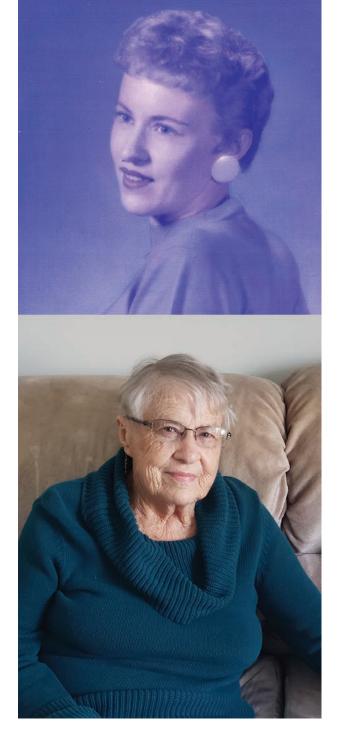
Helen is a transplant from Manitoba. Born January 31, 1934, the middle child in between two brothers, her father was a farmer who eventually moved the family to Ajax, Ontario for new employment opportunities. During World War II, her father and mother went to work at a war plant making bombs for the Canadian Armed Forces. Yes, Helen's mother was a BOMB GIRL! Incredible! Helen remembers a childhood filled with rolling grass hills, cool river swims and picking field berries. She attended business college and got a job as the secretary to the administrator of Ajax.

Helen has been married to her beloved Fred (born January 4, 1933) since 1957. Fred was a sheet metal mechanic. Helen has two children, Debbie and Mark. Debbie currently lives in Ajax, is a medical secretary and has one daughter, Megan. Mark was a director of technology and proudly volunteered for the Brantford police service. Sadly, Mark passed away in his early forties from complications relating to diabetes. He is survived by his two children, Hannah and Luke, and a grandson, Beckham.

"I didn't intend to get so involved, it just happened."

So, when did Helen's activism begin? Well, it began with...storm sewers, and...sidewalks!

You see, when Helen and Fred first moved to West Rouge (then under the Township of Pickering), most properties were still on a septic system. Sidewalks and storm sewers, so commonplace today one hardly even notices them, were the talk of the town! She got her first taste of community involvement by assisting then alderman John Mackie, going around and surveying her neighbours, asking them questions about their



preference whether or not to have sidewalks and storm sewers built (options were yes or no), and, if yes, which side of the street the sidewalks should be put on.

It was an ambitious task, but one that didn't phase the much-determined Helen. She recalls having to go out in the evening (when people were home from work), and not having everyone be so welcoming to her presence. But at some point in all that walking and questioning, listening and note-taking, Helen made a decision to ensure community activism would always be a part of her (already busy) life.

The roles Helen has played in the West Rouge community have been diverse and indispensable: Street Captain, working with the Metropolitan Police on crime prevention and community safety, treasurer of the former West Rouge Home and School Association and volunteering in various school libraries and classrooms. She has always loved working with children and making a difference in their lives.

In the late 1990s, Helen fought alongside then mayor, Frank Faubert, to stop the amalgamation of the smaller cities like North York, East York and Scarborough into the new "mega-city" of Toronto. She went to public meetings where amalgamation was presented as an unfavourable option for a city like Scarborough. She knew her community would end up left out of important planning decisions, and have its funding cut. Helen knew Scarborough would be better off on its own, but unfortunately, despite better advice, the mega-city did form in 1998.

When you are an activist, you learn to take the losses with the wins. But this was a big loss for West Rouge (and Scarborough) and we are still seeing the effects of bad decision making today.

And what advice does she have for the young men and women who are living in the community and raising their families?

"A community is only as good as its volunteers."

Wise words of encouragement for everyone who can, to get involved to continue to ensure West Rouge remains the vibrant, kind, wonderful community it is.

Here's to you, Helen. The commitment, dedication and time you have given to the West Rouge community is immeasurable.

J A Purmalis is a proud West Rouge resident! She is a teacher in the Toronto District School Board. Email her at: japurmalis@gmail.com



# Highland Creek Community Association Report (HCCA)

By David Adamson, President

I trust that the residents of the West Rouge community are coping well during this COVID – 19 pandemic. It is difficult to believe that it has gone on for the past 2 years. This problem of course has been compounded by the Delta and Omicron variants. So, my only suggestions are; stay safe, get your shots and wear your masks. It is also important to keep in mind those people who are presently unable or have difficulty in getting out and about, and to maintain contact with any people that you may know who fall into this category.

The HCCA Board of Directors has continued to hold virtual discussions on a monthly basis to address various local issues. Unfortunately, the HCCA has had to postpone its annual general meeting along with the Highland Creek Heritage Festival due to the pandemic and hopefully they can both be re-scheduled in 2022. The major issue the HCCA is presently dealing with pertains to our involvement with Metrolinx/ BRT (Bus Rapid Transit). Metrolinx along with the Durham Region and the City of Toronto completed an Environmental Project Report on January 20, 2022 and the review period concluded on February 21, 2022. Overall, the Metrolinx plan as it currently stands will have an impact within the Highland Creek area involving Ellesmere Road. This is of particular concern to our local residents.

The cold weather along with the heavy snow fall experience presented a challenge and City staff did a pretty good job clearing the streets and sidewalks. Thanks to those staff and of course to our Postal workers who continue to deliver the mail under all weather conditions.

Work continues at the Legion Branch 258's new location – 305 Morrish Road, which is expected to be completed by April 2022. Starting in February 2022, the Legion's current location at 45 Lawson Road will reopen on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

I am sure many of you look forward to the Spring weather which is just around the corner. Just imagine, instead of shoveling snow, we will be cutting grass, planting bulbs and having a pint or two on St. Patrick's Day.

Should you wish to contact me on any items in this report, I can be reached at email: dw.adamson@ rogers.com or telephone (416) 281-7758.

David Adamson, President Highland Creek Community Association (HCCA)



COMMUNITY

### West Rouge Tennis Club Introducing West Rouge Tennis Club 's Tennis Pro – Cameron Wittick



By Mary Soye, Vice President, West Rouge Tennis Club



#### How long have you been the tennis pro at the West Rouge Tennis Club (WRTC)? Qualifications?

"I have been with WRTC at least since 2016. I am a certified Coach 2 (High Performance U12 National Players)."

#### Tell me about the tennis camps you ran last summer?

"We ran half-day camps in the morning from the first week of July until the end of August. Participants learn tennis skills, as well as lots of games and some other related sports activities." These camps are very popular!

#### What do you offer the adult members?

"Adults learn to play with house league for beginners, as well as tennis aerobics for the more advanced adults."

There was enough demand for house league last year that the club offered a free beginner's house league for an hour each week for nine weeks. Coach Cameron was there to offer direction, rules and encouragement. This was in addition to our regular house league which is designed for intermediate level players and better. On top of that, Cameron offers semiprivate and private lessons to adults and kids.

*What makes the WRTC so successful in your opinion?* "The club's success is a direct result of the community and

the active club members." The club is run by a volunteer committee which plans the tennis season, including all of the programming to be offered, tournaments to be played in, competitive tennis teams and social events to be enjoyed.

#### Cameron is a WRTC Personality

"Having been there for about 5 years now, the neighbourhood all know me, so when folks are out with their kids enjoying the nice weather, I always get several greetings from the neighbourhood kids" -- "Hi Coach Cam!"

WRTC is lucky to have Coach Cameron who is a favourite with kids and adults alike. Having a tennis pro as part of the club helps to develop the members into better tennis players, so that we can participate in and enjoy a variety of club offerings such as the house league, the club tournaments, the competitive tennis league (levels A, B1, B2, C1) and just playing with a group of friends.

Note: WRTC is a member only club except during public hours on Sunday and Monday from 4pm to 7pm. We welcome new members and look forward to playing again this summer!

Visit wrtctennis.com for more information.

# Tidbits from the World of Animals



By Renée Petersen

Animals have always been a part of the lives of humans; from wildlife to domesticated animals, their lives are closely intertwined with ours. As humans have evolved, so has our relationship with animals; they may provide us with food and clothing, they may work for us, entertain us, or provide us with companionship.

These days, domesticated animal roles range from protecting sheep or other farm life (donkeys and Pyrenees dogs are good at this) and using barn cats to keep rat and mice numbers down, to providing food and clothing (cattle for leather, sheep and alpaca for wool). Companion animals also have roles – many are working, such as guide dogs, therapy dogs and cats, and others provide us with comradeship and joy (who doesn't smile at that dog chasing its own tail or a kitten playing with a toy?).

Animals at our Toronto Zoo (where a great deal of research, education and conservation takes place) have an important role as ambassadors for wildlife conservation both here and around the world. From pollinators to tigers and giraffes, each are representatives for their species. Their lives at our Toronto Zoo can help make the emotional connection between us and the natural world (so exciting when there is a new birth or having the opportunity to witness a natural wild behaviour); this is so important to understanding them and their needs, which leads to caring for our shared environment. Come visit our Zoo and make the connection! Love them and leave them? Better to love them and help support them through organizations or personal habits such as practicing the 6 Rs of sustainability: Reuse, Recycle, Refuse, Rethink Repair, and Reduce! Our Toronto Zoo's mobile phone recycling programme for example is one we can all take part in. Proceeds from this programme and the fact that reused minerals lead to less mining in gorilla habitat areas help protect gorillas and at the same time protect other flora and fauna in the same habitats.

Our understanding of behaviour and the needs of animals, both wild and domesticated, has increased by leaps and bounds – from believing that animals feel no pain and are not able to think or communicate, to understanding that they are not so much different from us humans; after all, we are animals too! We continue to learn from them – through biomimicry, we investigate the strength of spider silk or a gecko's ability to stick to surfaces upside down – all applications for research to make lives better. For further information, check out: Examples of natureinspired sustainable design - The Biomimicry Institute (https://biomimicry.org)

Also check out One Health Institute | University of Guelph (https://onehealth.uoguelph.ca) "One Health is the collaborative effort of multiple disciplines working together on our planet's most complex animal, human and environmental health problems." Veterinary medicine has also evolved along with the change in relationships between animals and humans. We all bear a responsibility to care for all wildlife, as well as animals directly under our care. Enjoy your companion animals!

### **Caregivers** Caring For Those Who Care



By Amy Stephenson, Program Coordinator, Caregiver Wellness - Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities

### ONE IN FOUR CANADIANS ARE ACTING AS CAREGIVERS.

Despite the commonality of the role, many people don't recognize the role of unpaid or family caregivers. Often these roles come on slowly, and we take on the caregiving duties without even realizing we are one. For many, it means being a good child, spouse, cousin, or friend. Not recognizing the role makes caregivers more vulnerable to burnout and the potential of decreased wellbeing. Nevertheless, the caregiving role is significant and should be recognized. In Canada, caregivers provide \$28.5 billion dollars' worth of care annually.

In the wake of Caregiver Appreciation Day on April 5th, 2022, we can all take a moment to recognize the efforts of caregivers and raise awareness for their support.

Caregiving can be a few hours a week or a full-time job supporting a loved one 24/7. The most common supports provided are transportation, scheduling appointments, and housework or maintenance. For some, it can mean performing medical tasks, usually done by professionals. Regardless of the type and amount of care provided, recognizing the caregiving role is important to help cope with the emotional impact of the role. Guilt, joy, stress, and questions are standard on the caregiving journey. While it can feel isolating, it is not a journey anyone has to do alone. There are ways to help build a circle of care to ensure that those who receive and provide care maintain their wellbeing.

Caregivers have played an even more prominent role over the past two years. During COVID-19,

access to outside services decreased in an effort to limit exposures from outside support workers. This led to an increase in caregivers and hours of support provided. The "sandwich generation," those supporting aging parents and children at home, have felt this pressure more acutely than others. Caregivers are often squeezed on a few sides. Approximately 35% of the Canadian workforce is balancing caregiving with professional duties. Adding to already full plates can put caregivers' health at risk.

With all this, you might be wondering, am I or is someone close to me a caregiver? What support is available for caregivers?

To the first question - A caregiver is a person who tends to the needs or concerns of a person with short- or longterm limitations due to illness, injury or disability.

To the second question - One step is having a conversation with friends and neighbours. Normalizing the recognition of the role can help reduce stigma and feelings of isolation. Knowledge is power along the caregiving journey. Learning from experts and others in a similar situation can provide you with tips on how to prepare, as well as insight into aspects you may not have considered.

There are also local programs that provide support and education for all those within the circle of care. The Caregiver Wellness Program at the Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities offers free services to Scarborough caregivers in English and Tamil. To learn more or to get connected, checkout https:// www.schcontario.ca/caregiverwellness.html or caregiverwellness@schcontario.ca or by phone (416)-847-4138.

# Crime Prevention & Safety



By Police Constable Leanna Gill



The "spring cleaning" season is upon us to freshen up our homes and property after the cold winter months and unpredictable weather. This is a great opportunity to implement some home safety concepts to better protect your family and property from crime.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) are concepts that assist in preventing crime to your home, business and/or property. There are many security measures that can be put in place, but with the addition of natural surveillance, access control and territorial reinforcement, your safety measures will be elevated.

Maintaining your property aesthetically and showing pride of ownership displays that the owner has taken extra care and control over the property. Some quick tips include keeping your gardens maintained, shrubs trimmed no higher than two feet in height to avoid obstructing windows, and ensuring trees at the front of the property are pruned to allow clear sight lines.

Sight lines into your home offer natural surveillance within your community. Perpetrators will assess the risk of being caught. If they can be seen on your property and through the windows of the home, they may avoid it. Creating barriers around your home should be limited to establishing property lines and ownership, but still have some visibility so that natural sight lines can be established. Avoid having isolated areas on your property, particularly close to entrance and exits points. Utilizing LED lighting at all points of entry assists with optimal lighting during night time hours.

There are upgrades you can purchase for your home to

enhance safety that include installing a solid wood or steel door at entrances, security strike plates, door lock wraps, additional locking devices for doors and windows, and security window screens.

Cameras and alarm systems can add an extra layer of security and will assist in investigations within your community on reported crimes or suspicious behaviour.

If you have plans to go away for the day or night, consider some of the additional tips shown on the diagram to assist in creating an illusion that someone is home. Perpetrators often will wait for an opportunity where they believe the home is empty, which limits their chance of being caught or encountering witnesses.

If you feel that you may be vulnerable to a home or business break in, please reach out by email to leanna.gill@ torontopolice.on.ca to set up a meeting to review home safety tips or receive a complimentary CPTED audit.

If you believe a crime was committed, have information on a crime that was committed or observe suspicious activity in your neighbourhood, please contact police. In the event of an emergency, please call 911. Less urgent matters, please contact the non-emergency number at 416-808-2222.

If your crime meets the criteria, it can be reported online at https://www.torontopolice.on.ca/core/

If you wish to remain anonymous, please go to https:// www.222tips.com, call 416-222-TIPS (8477), online on our Facebook "Leave a Tip" page, or text TOR and message to CRIMES (274637). Lastly, you can download the free Crime Stoppers Mobile App on iTunes or Google Play.

Follow me on my social media platforms for more Crime Prevention sharing and tips.

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Stay safe,

Police Constable Leanna Gill #10688 43 Division – Crime Prevention Officer Toronto Police Service







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#### FEATURES

# **From The Archives**

West Rouge Life, Spring 2002



Exactly 20 years ago, in the SPRING 2002 edition of the West Rouge Life magazine, WRCA President Ralph Wissborn commented about the changing media landscape. Remember our local Shaw cable channel? How about the Scarborough Mirror three times a week! And then there was our recently launched website, as well as our "new" sign on Island Road, which is now our "old" sign on Island Road. Our Facebook page would come later, in 2014. Our electronic sign on Island Road went live in 2016. Through it all, West Rouge Life endures as the most high-gloss community association magazine in Scarborough.

By the way, Ralph and his wife Fiona still volunteer for us, as the circulation team for West Rouge Life!

## President's Message

**Ralph Wissborn** 



ewspapers, magazines, the post, radio, telephone, mobile phones, television, voice-mail, fax machine, e-mail, and the World Wide Web are all testament to our society's quest for vehicles and tools with which to communicate. The speed of communication has certainly exceeded the wildest dreams of our ancestors, but has communication quality improved? I would like to think so.

One of the key mandates of the WRCA has always been to inform residents about matters affecting, and of interest to, the West Rouge community. This very publication, West Rouge Life, is our main vehicle of communication which, at the present time, is published three times a year and distributed by West Rouge volunteers. In it are updates from our three levels of government, various WRCA committee articles, snapshots of local events, and stories of interest written by local residents. Our magazine just keeps getting bigger and better. Many thanks and congratulations go out to the hard-working and dedicated communication committee members for producing this wonderful publication. Keep up the good work!

Complimenting the magazine is our informative website, www.westrouge.org. Visit it to find out about community events, environmental issues, and even pickup a new recipe. There are also links to our neighbouring community association websites and to the City of Toronto website. Special thanks go to our volunteer webmaster, Tammy O'Connor, for maintaining such a professionallooking website.

Many of your will also have noticed our new and upgraded West Rouge sign board on Island Road by White Rose. Our old sign was rotting and needed replacing. The new sign sports fresh heritage colours, our logo, and more space for posting upcoming community events. Many thanks go to Gabe Oliver for the tedious task of keeping the sign up to date.

Unfortunately, the switching of West Rouge's cable provider from Shaw to Rogers resulted in our Cable 10 community news coverage being reduced drastically. This form of community news delivery will be missed. Fortunately though, The Mirror continues with its Scarborough community news coverage which we receive and enjoy three times a week.

With the demise of the City of Scarborough, West Rouge is more remote than ever in the newly amalgamated City of Toronto. This does not, however, make us less important! With the co-operation of our local councillor, Ron Moeser, the WRCA Board of Directors we hope to continue to keep you up to date with and help shape city initiatives and future plans that will directly affect our community.

Communication as we all know is a two-way street. Therefore, the WRCA board of directors and I look forward to receiving or hearing your concerns, solutions, ideas, and general comments – all in the interest of making life better in West Rouge!



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Email: info@tathampearson.com Website: www.tathampearson.com



# JILL'S TEAM GIVES BACK TO OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

One of the key goals of Jill's TEAM is to promote the benefits of living in West Rouge-Centennial and, by extension, the value of homes in our neighbourhood. We also believe in giving back to the community in which we live and work. As a token of thanks for the trust and support given to our team by the residents of West Rouge-Centennial, Jill's TEAM is pleased to donate \$250 from each sold listing to a community-based non-profit group or organization of the SELLER's choice.

Some examples of groups and organizations that can benefit from this donation program include:

- 1. Schools (for equipment, instruments, books, special programs or events)
- 2. Sports teams/clubs
- 3. Community associations (CCRA and West Rouge)
- 4. Churches/Places of worship
- 5. Port Union library
- 6. Guides/Scouts
- 7. Seniors groups
- 8. Group homes and long term care facilities
- 9. Local food bank



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# **Membership Report**



By Larry Whatmore, Membership Director, WRCA

### THANK YOU FOR KEEPING WRCA STRONG DURING THE TURBULENCE OF COVID.

Thank you to the many of you who have continued to support WRCA over the past two disruptive years.

We haven't been able to ask you in person. We haven't been able to thank you in person. We've missed seeing you at the many programs and events that knit this special community together. But thank you for supporting us, so that we can "keep the WRCA engine running": our website, our email communications, our digital sign, and donations to local community organizations, albeit at a lower level than usually applies. And of course West Rouge Life, although that's primarily a thank you to our contributors and advertisers! WRCA continues to serve you as an advocate and as a community connector.

### WRCA IS PREPARING AS WE EMERGE FROM THE COVID COCOON.

The online connections that have emerged and flourished during COVID are great. My compliments to the many community volunteers who have enabled us to engage online better than ever over the past two years. But many of us look forward to reconnecting in person, be it in WRCC programs, at the tennis club, at school events, or at the many local events and programs that have enriched community life in West Rouge for many decades. WRCA is ready to play our part, as a catalyst for the return of a more normal community life.

#### MEMBERSHIP SEASON IS ABOUT TO BEGIN. PLEASE CONSIDER SUPPORTING WRCA ONCE AGAIN.

We are so fortunate to have such a vibrant community association. This happens because people care about our community and step up to serve as volunteers and as community leaders. And it happens because many of us step up to become members on an annual basis. Please consider doing so once again this year. Your \$15, together with \$15 from many more households, keeps us strong and enables us to financially support the kind of in-person community events and programs that we've been missing for the past two years.

You can join using PayPal by visiting our website at www.westrouge.org and clicking on the "Membership"

link at the top of the page. Or you can complete the membership form included with West Rouge Life and mail it to the West Rouge Community Centre. Or you can drop it off there. We have a mailbox behind the front desk. The staff will be happy to take it from you.

Or many of you will be visited by your volunteer street captain this spring, public health conditions permitting. Please welcome them. We've not been able to do in-person connections for the past two years, but perhaps this year will be different!

#### WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST STREET CAPTAINS AND AREA COORDINATORS!

I have often said how our network of almost 100 volunteer street captains and area coordinators is the backbone of our association.

I want to thank the following community members who joined our team in 2021:

#### Area Coordinators:

Jon Mendoza, Slavica Vasilevska, Cathy Wenske

#### **Street Captains:**

Jonathan Mora, Tiago & Jodi Do Couto, Kathy Bridger, Mona Salama, Teblet Kassaye, Cathy Wenske, Marlene Michaud, Valeria Mircea, Marion Cashman, and Victoria, Maggie & Sam Lecker

I also want to thank the following street captains for picking up extra routes in 2021: Paula Chambers, Alyce Bouchie

As a result, all of our street captain routes are presently filled! However, we are always looking to lighten the load of those who wear multiple hats. So please let me know if you'd like to join our team. I can tell you more about what's involved on a noobligation basis!

Larry Whatmore Membership Director Larry.Whatmore@rogers.com (416) 562-2101

# The Zoo Report

When did you last visit the Toronto Zoo?

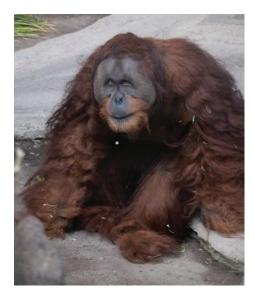


By Amy Naylor, Media Relations Coordinator, Toronto Zoo

Hello folks! Spring is in the air and for your Toronto Zoo this means things we have been looking forward to all through the winter months are now coming to life! This spring and summer will be an exciting time for our Sumatran orangutan family as we prepare to welcome a new baby and a new outdoor habitat for them!

Our twenty-nine-year-old Sumatran orangutan Sekali is pregnant and due to give birth any day now! She and father-to-be Budi (a fifteen-year-old male Sumatran orangutan) were paired at the recommendation of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Species Survival Plan (SSP). Your Toronto Zoo is thrilled to further contribute to the future of this critically endangered species.

Orangutan pregnancies are a little shorter than in humans, averaging about 8 months. The babies are much smaller than human infants, generally only 3 to 5 pounds



a baby bump if you look really closely, it is amazing that mother orangutans gain less than 10 lbs. during pregnancy! In aid of her pregnancy, Sekali receives prenatal vitamins – designed for humans and also conveniently available on our pharmacy shelves. She and Budi continue to enjoy each other's company, spending a lot of time together throughout the pregnancy.

at birth. While you can see

Not only will guests soon be able to meet the baby orangutan, but all the

orangutans at your Zoo will be able to enjoy a brandnew outdoor habitat! Wild orangutans spend almost all of their lives high up in the trees. Tragically their forest homes are being cut down or burned at an alarming rate to make way for the planting of oil palms. One of the goals of the new outdoor orangutan habitat is to connect our guests with the issues facing orangutans in the Sumatran rainforest. The habitat will include climbing structures, hills, a stream and towers. The new habitat will be designed for their physical, social and intellectual needs, and enrich their daily lives. Our six (soon to be seven!) orangutans, including 54-yearold female Puppe, will be able to climb high and feel the breeze on their faces as they look out over the treetops of the Rouge Valley.

The habitat will also include a research station where animal behavioural scientists can study these majestic tree dwellers. What we learn here will be shared globally to help restore the Sumatran orangutan population. Our new habitat will also provide educational opportunities to learn more about the factors impacting orangutan survival, and the positive actions each and every guest can take to fight extinction of these critically endangered animals.

Sumatran orangutan populations are under increasing pressure due to habitat loss and the palm oil crisis. The role of accredited zoos has never been more critical, as their populations decline and we continue to lose thousands of species each year due to climate change, loss of habitat due to deforestation, mining and development, while also dealing with the challenges of illegal wildlife trafficking. Your Toronto Zoo is proud to participate in the AZA- SSP (Association of Zoos and Aquariums - Species Survival Plan) programs, as well as the Saving Animals from Extinction (SAFE) Program specifically for orangutans. These programs, as well as our efforts through this conservation breeding program, help ensure this incredible species continues to survive for future generations.

Please follow us on social media for updates about our orangutans, or head to our Toronto Zoo Wildlife Conservancy website ( https://www. wildlifeconservancy.ca ) for more information about how you can help this critically endangered species, including our adopt-an-animal program. Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to seeing you soon at your Toronto Zoo!

# **Guildwood** Physiotherapy

Formerly East Scarborough Physiotherapy

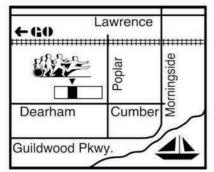
### **Post Surgical Recovery**

After discharge from hospital, many patients should be referred to a rehabilitation hospital or clinic to regain strength and return to independent functioning. It is very important that Physiotherapy begin as soon as possible after surgery to ensure a prompt recovery.

In our clinic we see patients after various types of orthopaedic surgeries, such as Rotator Cuff tears, Anterior Cruciate Ligament repairs, total and partial knee and hip replacements, back, foot, and hand surgeries, etc. Appointments are usually available in a day or two.

Our Physiotherapists follow standard treatment protocols or work closely with the surgeon's specific protocol for recovery. Passive exercises and gentle mobilization techniques are used first, and exercises are later introduced to gradually strengthen and return full function.

The exercise program is gradually increased based on the healing time of that particular surgery. We find that using modalities such as laser, ultrasound and Electro-Accuscope help to heal and repair the wound faster with less pain. Our treatments typically last from 45 minutes to 1-1/2 hours, depending on the condition being treated.



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## West Rouge Sports & Recreation Association

By Louise Redgers Bonnycastle, President

It seems that we take one step forward and two steps back in the battle with Covid 19. We were finally able to hold a few outdoor events in the community before the latest wave hit.

Our 4th annual Pumpkin Parade was held on November 1st outside the Port Union Community Center. We had well over 100 beautifully carved and creative pumpkins lit up on a lovely clear evening. It gave everyone a chance to see the expressive ways that families celebrate and the costumes had one last hurrah! Thanks to all those who came out for a wonderful evening in the park. If you missed this event and would like to see the fruits of our labours, please go to our website and view the video of the event that has now been uploaded! You can also look back at the virtual event we did for 2020. Let's hope the 2022 version is better than ever!

One of our ambitious community members approached us in November with a wonderful idea for a new event. On Friday December 17th we held our first Holiday Carol Sing in the parking lot of the West Rouge Community Center. The Bel Canto Singers were invited to send as many as possible of its members to lead us all in some badly needed holiday cheer. With the help of Douglas Tranquada to MC, we had an amazing evening. We had an exceptional turn out with even the local dogs joining in the singalong. The kids had fun with the crafts we provided, and with the guidance of the city staff they could warm up for a few minutes indoors and go home with a cute project. Hot chocolate and warm cider were enjoyed by many. My thanks to those who helped us light up the area with festive lights and décor, serve the hot beverages and help restore the area at the end of the evening. The photos and video of the evening are now up on our website, so take a peek. It was such a huge success that we have already invited everyone to do it all over again in December 2022. We hope that many more of you will come out and join us for a wonderful way to start off the holiday season.

Once again, we tried running our Holiday Artisan Sale online. We offered local artists and crafters the opportunity to advertise their business on our website with a link to their social media. Several took us up on the offer. We hope that some of you were able to find gifts using this source. Let's hope we can shop in person for the next holiday season.

We are now, hopefully, into the snowy season. Once again, we have launched our Tallest Snowman Contest. It really does not have to be a snowperson -- just an incredible and tall snow cre-

ation. We hope that groups of friends, neighbours and families will participate this year. All you have to do is make your creation, take a photo with a measuring device clearly visible and go to our website to upload your entry. There will be prizes, so it is important that you share your information with us about your team. You can enter more than once, as we hopefully will get some decent packing snow this year and we would not want to cramp your creative style. Let's get building with every snowfall.

The spring will launch a new photo contest focusing on the emerging season. The contest is focused on our young emerging photographers in the community. There will be groupings by age right up to 18 years. We are hoping for photos of the first flowers, the receding ice and melting snow. The animal babies that are making their appearance should make for some good shots too. The Emerging Spring Youth Photo Contest details will be announced in early March on our website and the West Rouge Resident's Facebook Page. Please encourage your kids, tweens and teens to get out and take some amazing photographs.

We are hoping to hold some form of our Annual Easter Egg Hunt in April. Unfortunately, we have to wait and see what will be allowed at that time. It might be fun, weather permitting, to hold it outside since Easter is late this year. Please check our website or the Facebook page to look for details.

Start gathering up your Garage Sale items. We are hoping our annual Parking Lot Sale will resume in June. This is your chance to sell items that your family might have outgrown -- all in one place with other neighbours. You know the old saying, one man's junk is another man's treasure, so start thinking about what you need and what can go. Join us in the parking lot of the West Rouge Community Center for the ultimate recycling event.

West Rouge Sports and Recreation wants to keep up our community spirit. Please keep watch on our website, the signboard at the bottom of Port Union Road and the West Rouge Resident's Facebook Page, and come out to join us for our events or participate online.

Louise Redgers Bonnycastle President, West Rouge Sports and Recreation Association Email: president@sportsandrec.ca www.sportsandrec.ca | 416-283-1938





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The West Rouge Sports & Recreation Association are selling these unique sweatshirts. They make an ideal gift. These high quality long sleeve sweatshirts are available in black and have an attractive gold and plaid West Rouge motif on the front.

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### The Rouge Butterflyway

Gearing up for another busy year!



Hello, and Happy New Year! As I write this, the snowbanks are taller than I am, and winter is well established. But our sleeping plants are well-protected from the winter winds, and gardeners are curled up with seed catalogues and garden design magazines, planning the growing season ahead.

Last year, a small group of gardeners, focused on adding more butterflies to our neighbourhood, planted hundreds of native plants on their properties. With 24 native plant gardens in Centennial / West Rouge, we were declared an OFFICIAL

Butterflyway by the David Suzuki Foundation, and we believe we have only just begun!

This summer we will continue our nurturing of the native plant gardens at Sir Oliver Mowat Collegiate. The Tony Stacey Centre for Veterans Care has also expressed an interest in having native plants added to



Mowat Front Entrance Garden, Day 1 of the Clean-up



their gardens to provide more garden interest for their residents and more natural habitat for butterflies, bees, and birds.

Furthermore, we would like to double the number of private native plant gardens, and we invite you to join us. Whether you would like to create a new garden in your yard or simply add a few native plants to fill in a current garden bed, we welcome your interest. Optional webinars, garden tours and plant sales provide opportunities to learn more about the important role these plants play in our ecosystems. Some of our members have a great deal of experience with native plants, and others are just beginning, but all of us are driven by the desire to help the animals and insects whose lives depend on these plants.

If you would like to join the Rouge Butterflyway and add colourful, beautiful, and nature-attracting native plants to your property, or, if you have any questions, please send an email to rouge.butterflyway@gmail.com. We will also welcome anyone willing to spend a few hours helping with the planting and maintenance of the gardens at Sir Oliver Mowat and the Tony Stacey Center.

We look forward to meeting you and working together to make our neighbourhood even more special.

### **Fernie Youth Services**



By Madison Perdue, Resource Development Coordinator, Fernie Youth Services

We are a non-profit charity that gives opportunities to young people who have been given up on, often based on their position in society. We offer compassionate community programming to youth in conflict with the law across the GTA, transforming their lives and creating safer communities for a lifetime.

Fernie has fortunately called West Rouge our home for over 55 years. Here we offer a second chance to fix mistakes and change futures. But this new chance comes with a need to support oneself, so in 2015 we created the employment readiness program, Fernie Works.

#### FERNIE WORKS – LANDSCAPING WITH HEART

Fernie Works prepares young people to enter the workforce while helping our community.

Youth facing barriers in society, including those identifying as BIPOC or having a history with the law, can join this one-year program. Committed participants access free training and paid job experience. With an employment certificate as proof of their achievement, our young people are prepared to take the next step towards their independence.

Fernie Works Lawn Care offers affordable quality services to residents, businesses, and places of faith in the neighbourhood. Youth are trained and supervised by experienced professionals, so every home receives our best care.

A neighbour and Fernie Works Lawn Care client said, "From our first contact with Nolan to the guys that do the actual work, we have received the best service. The guys interact with us when necessary (when we were going through the heat wave they felt it was not a good idea to cut the lawn one week - good decision); other times we don't even notice they are here. I honestly can say that this company and in particular the guys that work at our house go above and beyond, and my yards look great. Five stars is the highest I can give, but I would give them more if I could."



This Spring, our team of professionals and young workers in training are offering services including but not limited to grass cutting, aeration, trimming, and debris removal.

Feel great about your landscaping – call or text for your free quote: (416) 312-7521.

Do you want to partner with Fernie another way or join our donor list? Send me an email at madison@ fernieyouth.ca.



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My products have been sold in Canadian Tire, Loblaws, Sobeys, Metro, Shoppers Drug Mart, Food Basics, Lawton Drugs, Needs Convenience Stores and CVS Drugs in the US.

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## West Rouge Captured

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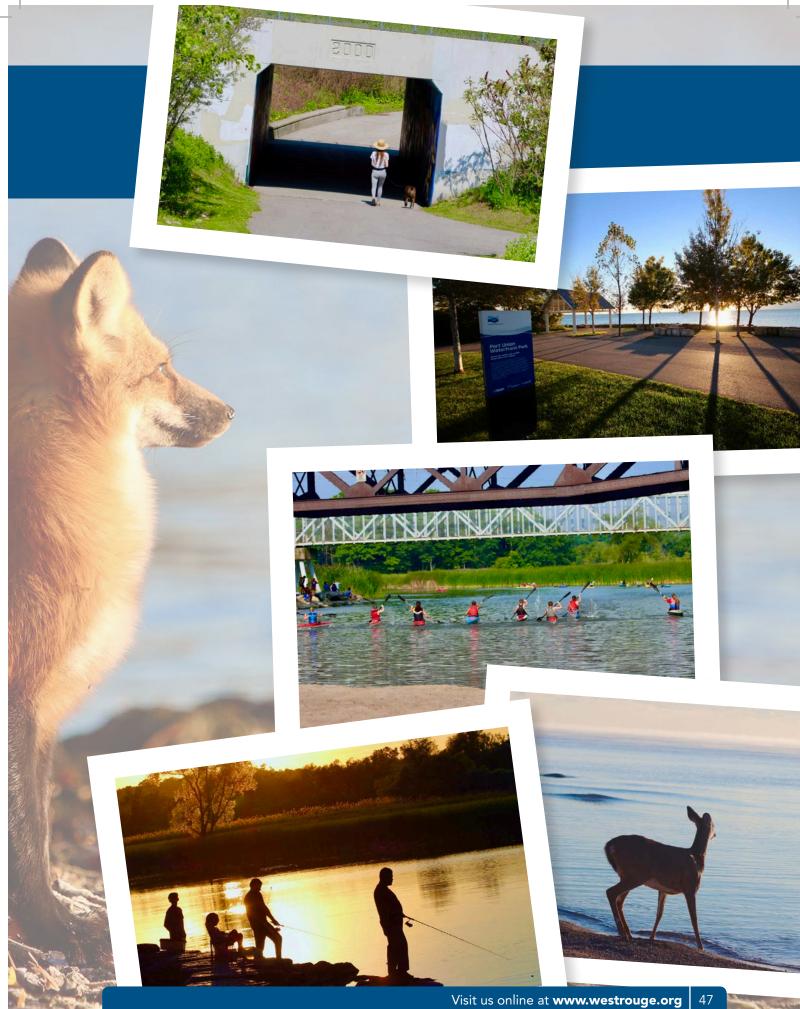
## West Rouge Captured

Photography: Colin Winn





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<b>COMMUNITY SERVICES:</b> Toronto Public Library (Port Union Branch) Port Union Community Centre (PUCC) West Rouge Community Centre (WRCC)	416-396-8885 416-396-4031 416-396-4147
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