

# TICA TALK

*News From the Toronto Island Community Association Executive*

## *Committee Updates*

### **RAT FACTS OR IS IT TIME TO HIRE THE PIED PIPER?**

**Kiloran McRae**

Warren Hoselton and I recently met with an "integrated pest manager" who has helped Parks with rats at Riverdale Farm and elsewhere. This is what we learned. The island community, with its long grass, wood stacks, compost heaps, leaf piles, bird feeders, and handy water supply, is an ideal habitat for rats. Based on our discussion and given the number of recent sightings, we should be taking the following measures to be less hospitable.

1. Be on the lookout for rat droppings, burrows, runways, and gnaw marks around your house and sheds.
2. Eliminate nesting sites by careful storage of garbage, grass seed, pet food, and bird food, reducing debris, restacking wood piles, turning over compost, picking up fallen fruit, and keeping areas around bird feeders clean.
3. Seal holes or vents with sheet metal and heavy gauge mesh. A half inch diameter opening is big enough for a rat.
4. If you need to eliminate an existing problem, anticoagulant poisons, used in a bait station, are safe and effective. Bait stations are secure containers designed to keep pets and humans from coming into contact with the poison. The stations and anticoagulants are available at hardware stores (e.g. Home Depot and Canadian Tire). It is reassuring to know that, according to our expert, a child would have to ingest a pound of poison to suffer any ill effects and there is no danger of secondary poisoning as only the dead rat's liver is toxic and too small to harm a dog or cat. Traps (Victor makes the best), placed against walls where rats are active, are also effective. Partly cooked bacon, secured with a twist tie, makes great bait. Traps must only be used where children and pets have no access and always follow the instructions on the product label.

Happy, secure, well-fed rats can reproduce at an

alarming rate. The Alberta government web site calculates that under ideal conditions a single pair could produce 15,000 offspring in a year. Disturbing their environment causes stress and interrupts the reproductive cycle, so the best way to control numbers is to reduce or remove food and shelter. If we try to make our community a little less ideal for them, it may be a little more ideal for us. Please check out these web sites for more information:  
[www.toronto.ca/health](http://www.toronto.ca/health)  
[www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/agdex816](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/agdex816)  
[ipm.uiuc.edu/hyg/pests/brown\\_rat/](http://ipm.uiuc.edu/hyg/pests/brown_rat/)

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

**Glen Newbury**

Since 1998 Sandra Wood has operated "MyNeighbours" and "TorontoIsland" newsgroups along with Eric Zhelka and after a long haul is now stepping back from the task.

I'll be stepping up in her place. Sandra and Eric have offered their help while I get up to speed with operating the system and will surely continue to help as tricky situations arise or if I'm away.

As you probably know, the two groups have different purposes. The TorontoIsland group is for circulation of announcements regarding the Toronto Island. This group has grown beyond the borders of the Algonquin and Ward's residents, with other stakeholders (e.g. Gibraltar Point Centre for the Arts) having expressed significant interest in being informed about Island happenings and making announcements. It benefits our community by providing an announcement space for the current 904 members, fewer than half of whom are Islanders. Many live in the City of Toronto and some live elsewhere in Canada and the world. Many rentals and house exchanges have been arranged through this group. The

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TorontoIsland group is a moderated group meaning messages get approved before being passed on. Given the diverse membership of this group and its external aspect of representing our community, it seems like a good idea to leave it like this.

The MyNeighbours group has information intended only for your neighbours on the Island and issues and discussions can be shared more privately in this forum. MyNeighbours has 272 members. MyNeighbours is an unmoderated group meaning that once you post a message, it goes out immediately. As such it has some fairly relaxed courtesy policies:

- Please ensure that your messages are safe for kids. When composing your comments, consider that they may be quoted by someone else.
- Use the same courtesy that you would show when speaking face-to-face with someone. Flames, insults, and personal attacks will not be tolerated.
- Sign your name and address on every posting. Please do not post anonymous messages.

On a humorous note (well, hopefully it remains in the realm of humour), three islanders have already wished me good luck in maintaining this and one libel lawyer has graciously offered his service of advice not *if* but *when* I need it.

Many of you may want to use both lists, since they have complementary purposes. Internal postings should go to myneighbours@yahoo.com. Announcements for the world beyond the Island should continue to go to torontoisland@yahoogroups.com. Some announcements will be appropriate on both lists.

I will do my best and hope I can continue the excellent community service that Sandy has provided these past years. I can be reached at work at 416-423-8492 or at home at 416-203-1029 but in this age of email you can probably reach me most efficiently at myneighbours-owner@yahoogroups.com, torontoisland-owner@yahoogroups.com, or glen@newburyng.com.

## **WATERFRONT ISSUES**

**Pam Mazza**

### **Community AIR Update**

*A Change in Strategy from "Close the Airport" to "Boycott the Airport"*

For those of you who attended the Toronto Port Authority (TPA) AGM, you would have heard their CEO say the distressing words that the TPA has given Robert Deluce

the exclusive right to sue should the airport be shut down. This is, in effect, making it impossible for any future federal government to close the Island airport, as Deluce could then turn around and sue the government. He got a reported \$20 million for merely threatening to sue the last time, so the cost would likely be too prohibitive for any government to take on.

Our recourse is to ask people not support the Island airport. At the Friday evening rallies, the airport buses do a circuit and they are largely empty. Business looks pretty slow to us. Getting accurate numbers is difficult and Porter will certainly claim they are doing well. However, we ask everyone to spread the word that this airport serves a very few at the expense of many. Take the train. It's wa-a-y less polluting and safer for all.

### *The TPA Misleads the City*

The most recent encounter between the TPA and the City involves the west side of Bathurst St., south of Queen's Quay. The TPA drawings for their new terminal facility have shown a disconcerting 3 lanes for queuing traffic. However, we know the City owns the land and it has been leased strictly as a parking lot to the TPA. The TPA was seen paving it a couple of weeks ago. The City investigated and was told they were simply making surface improvements to the parking lot. Next thing, three yellow lines appeared on the new pavement that looked a lot like queuing lanes. Then the concrete curbing was removed. Once again, local observers called on the City to investigate. As a result, the City has sent a letter telling the TPA to replace the curbing (which effectively dead ends the queuing lanes) and not to proceed further. This is the first time the City has been truly proactive.

The three additional lanes of traffic would have a huge impact on the neighbourhood, essentially widening that part of Bathurst St. to five lanes of traffic. These separate the schools, the community centre, and the daycare program from the community and the park. The community is now asking that a traffic guard be installed, as the speeding taxis and increased bus traffic have now made the street a serious hazard. Three lanes of idling taxis, cars, and buses would also add significantly to the air pollution.

### *The Court Case*

We also heard at the AGM that the TPA would be willing to talk to our lawyer to discuss a settlement and that we should have him give them a call. Our lawyer did so. The TPA lawyer had not been given any instructions to discuss a settlement. End of call.

The case was to begin on December 8. However, the TPA lawyer is evidently unavailable for that date. No new date has been set.

We are delighted to say that the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (a defender of free speech) is supporting us in name in our case.

### **Other Waterfront Development**

Plans to turn the parking lot to the west of the Terminal Quay building into a park has been in the works for some time. Starting this spring or early summer, community consultation will finally begin to make it happen. The parking will be moved underground.

### **GO Transit Plans for Union Station**

I attended a very interesting presentation by GO Transit outlining its plans for their role in the Union Station Renewal. This includes

- restoring the historic train shed and updating the still-operating 1922 switching system over a period of 4 years
- adding new trains and cars to meet the growing demand (about 9 million passengers in 1976; now about 35 million)

- building a GO Transit office building on the little parking lot behind the Hummingbird Centre (it will be a LEED (environmental standard) building
- building an enclosed walkway under Bay much as they have done at York in the tunnel.

For more information visit [gotransit.com/unionstationrenewal](http://gotransit.com/unionstationrenewal).

The Toronto Historical Train Association also does tours of Union Station. I believe Derek Bowles leads them.

The GO Transit staff will be pleased to do a public presentation for the waterfront communities, so watch for a date.

### **York Quay Neighbourhood's Plan Adopted**

The York Quay Neighbourhood Association (YQNA) developed a scheme to connect people from Union Station down to the foot of York St. by extending the PATH system. The City has adopted the plan, and the early stages of implementation have begun. The idea is to get people down to the waterfront in a safer, more pleasant manner.

*Thank you, Sandra Wood,  
for your many years of dedicated service as  
the co-moderator of the MyNeighbours e-group.*

## *Toronto Islands Residential Community Trust Matters*

**Marilyn Nazar, Trust Administrator**

### **COMMUNITY MEETING**

Those who attended the October 29 community meeting enjoyed hearing City Councillor Pam McConnell's impassioned speech about the City's commitment to making the waterfront a greener and more pedestrian and bike friendly community. She reaffirmed that the City remained committed to this principle despite the Island Airport and the wall of condos that currently fly in the face of plans for more sustainable neighbourhoods such as the Regent Park Project, the new building codes for East Bay front development, and the West Donlands Earthworks project. She congratulated the Island commu-

nity for their strong sense of community and strong voice on waterfront issues. She also reported that the bike lanes promised for Bay, Yonge, and Jarvis had been approved and were with the Transportation Department for implementation.

A total of 57 Island residents attended the community meeting. Geoffrey Gladdy from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing attended on behalf of the Trust Board, along with Island Board Members Pam Mazza and Ellen Allen and representatives from TICA. Dennis Reed, taking over from Jim Henning as the Trust auditor with Clarke Henning, was on hand to present last year's audited financials, which were passed unanimously.

## **CURRENT FINANCIAL PICTURE**

At the community meeting, Pam Mazza reported that as the trees are maturing, tree maintenance had been a huge expense so far in the 2006/07 fiscal year. Questions were raised about the managing of the Trust's financial reserves. It was agreed that the Finance Committee would review the current financial policy, capital reserve funds, and investment strategies to ensure the Trust is managing these funds the best way possible.

The Finance Committee has already met once since then and plans to put forward recommendations to the Board in the new year.

## **PURCHASERS' LIST**

Several issues regarding the Purchasers' List were raised as part of the Trust/TICA question and answer session of the meeting, particularly around the publicity of the list. Community members passed a motion that the current policies and procedures around the list be reviewed by an ad hoc committee which Connie Clement agreed to chair.

## **HOUSE SALES**

Congratulations to Caroline Wuschke who is our newest Island homeowner, having purchased 4 Omaha in October, 2006. She is no stranger to island living, however, and in fact has lived at 4 Omaha as a renter in the past. There are currently three other houses for sale: 3 Wyandot, 7 Ojibway, and 21 Sixth Street. Both open houses for these homes were very well attended in November. Offers closed December 7.

## **LEVY PAYMENTS**

Christmas is just around the corner and I know many of you bought wonderful gifts at the Christmas Boutique. Before the bills come in January, you may want to at least make a partial payment on the 2006/07 levy and/or any amounts you may have outstanding from previous years. This year, the levy is \$232.81 including GST. If you are unsure about what you owe or want to arrange a payment plan, please contact me at the Trust office at 416-203-6163. I'd be happy to help.

## **NEW ADMINISTRATOR**

By now many of you know that I will be leaving by the end of January, 2007 as I am planning to go back to school. While it has been short, it has been very sweet and I thank many of you for your support while I was here. The Trust has been looking for a new administrator who should be on board in January of the new year.

## **HOLIDAY HOURS**

During the holiday season, I will be in the office Monday, December 18 and Tuesday, December 19 but will be off from December 20 to January 1. I will be back in the office January 2, 2007. If I don't talk to you beforehand, I hope you all have a great holiday and a very happy New Year!

*We wish everyone a very happy holiday season!*

## *Community Messages*

### **ELECTION COUNT**

**Liz Amer**

Here is the vote count as provided by Pam Mazza and Lynn Robinson:

Mayor: David Miller, 287; Jane Pitfield, 14; Mitch Gold, 4; others 7.

Councillor: Pam McConnell, 290; Perez, 9, others, 8.

Public School Trustee: Joel Dick, 211; Sheila Ward, 63; others 31.

The overall voter turnout is difficult to calculate

accurately for a variety of reasons. 312 eligible voters voted. There were 450 eligible voters on the voters' list. I make that 69.5 per cent, well above the 40 % average across the city. However, there are many inaccuracies and anomalies, so it is only ballpark. This is an important number for us, however, because, for some candidates we become an "A" poll: one where many voters support the candidate and many turn out to vote. So, however small we are, we turn out a big number of reliable votes.

Further study is required for a more definitive analysis.