



MANOR PARK Chronicle

The voice of the community since 1949

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Food bank demand reaches “crisis” level

By Ryland Coyne

The excitement of the holidays may have subsided. But while many people bask in the glow of another festive season, a growing segment of the population continues to struggle just to put food on the table.

Those on the front lines at the Rideau-Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre's (RRCRC) Emergency Food Bank know all too well what so many are facing. While January may be a time of quiet reflection for some, there's no time to rest at the food bank with demand for services at an all-time high.

“The need is so dire right now in Ottawa,” says Gabrielle Davis, Communication and Fund Development Lead with RRCRC. “We are seeing crisis, emergency

levels that are only increasing.”

The statistics appear to bear that out.

According to a recent RRCRC overview presentation, the emergency food bank — which includes Manor Park within its catchment area — assists an average of more than 1,450 community members every month. The latest verified statistic confirms the program served 1,581 residents in October, 2025 — a record high.

“Over the past five years, we have seen roughly a doubling in the number of residents served by the Emergency Food Bank, representing an increase of approximately 96%,” reports Sébastien Gassé, the RRCRC's executive director.

And all signals point to even more pressure in 2026 with

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Rideau-Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre Emergency Food Bank manager Patricia Lau goes above and beyond, offering love and support to clients who walk through the door.

PHOTO: RYLAND COYNE

Sidewalks decision pushed back

By Staff

The decision on sidewalks for the ongoing integrated sewer and roads project in Manor Park has been pushed back to February, 2026.

The matter was to be discussed at the city's Public Works and Infrastructure Committee (PWIC) on Nov. 27. However, on Nov. 17, Rideau-Rockcliffe councillor Rawlson King announced, via email, that a staff report on the Integrated Sewer Renewal Project, which includes its

support for sidewalks, would not be presented at that meeting.

“They've advised that this change is tied to the City's ongoing budget deliberations, and specifically budget deliberations at PWIC as well as the timing needed to ensure there is adequate time at Committee to deliberate on the Manor Park Integrated Sewer Renewal Project report,” King wrote.

In September, 2025, King announced sidewalks would be deferred for the integrated roads project. The work

involves upgrades to sewers, water mains and roads along parts of Kilbarry Crescent, Farnham Crescent, Arundel Avenue, Jeffrey Avenue, Finter Street and Braemar Street. Work started in the fall with estimated completion in 2026.

King's decision was to allow for more detailed studies before committing to sidewalks. These studies would examine the effect that future major transportation infrastructure changes will have on the community.

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FEATURED ARTICLES INSIDE...

The Manor Park Community Association outlines its response to two key issues: zoning and the Kettle Island bridge - See pages 6 and 7

City park upgrades feature new playground and fitness equipment in Manor Park - See page 26

Remembrance Day was marked with a moving ceremony at Beechwood Cemetery - See page 36

Accomplished bird photographer talks about his efforts to capture images of a Barred Owl - See page 38

A welcoming community gathering space opens in Vanier - See page 39

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Food bank, cont. from page 1

food prices expected to climb four to six per cent, according to a report from the Dalhousie University Agri-Food Analytics Lab. Combine that with high rental and transportation costs as well as continued inflation, it creates what Gaisser describes as "a perfect storm."

Ottawa Food Bank network

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Blvd. (former Rideau High School), is one of 71 member agencies within the Ottawa Food Bank (OFB) network. With rising costs, unprecedented demand and government assistance programs not keeping pace, the OFB had to cut the amount of food it distributes to its agencies by 20 to 50 per cent at the start of 2025.

That led to some difficult decisions for the RRCRC, Davis says, as the food bank sought ways to "bridge the gap" as much as possible.

"Originally we were giving five to seven days worth of food when you came for your appointment. Now you're getting three or four," she says.

To help with the shortfall, the food bank adds fresh produce from its Social Harvest program and, during warmer months, from its onsite greenhouse. With funding from the City of Ottawa and community donations, it is able to make some food purchases. Nearby retailers like Food Basics, Your Independent Grocer and Adonis also support the emergency food bank's food rescue program.

Community efforts, like that at St. Columba Anglican Church in Manor Park, see the collection and donation of non-perishable food items as well as hygiene and cleaning products. During the summer, the church devotes several of its garden boxes to grow fresh produce for the food bank. And local schools like Ashbury and Elmwood collect food and provide volunteers, Gaisser says.

"It has been a village effort, I would say. We all rely on each other."

Ottawa Food Bank: by the numbers

- 25.7% of Ottawa households faced food insecurity in 2024.
- 2.1 millions meals served,
- 588,866 visits to member agencies within the OFB network,
- 37% of network visitors are children,
- 101% increase in visits to OFB member agencies since 2019.

SOURCE: 2025 Ottawa Hunger Report: Food Insecurity in a Broken System

Service day

With so much demand, it's not easy to get an appointment, many having to wait a month to get registered.

On a service day, clients with an appointment check in when they arrive. Once inside, a volunteer assists them with their selections from the community refrigerators and off the shelves.

"We try to give choice wherever we can," Davis says.

At any given time, the food bank has an average of 30 or more volunteers. They take on any number of tasks, from sorting food items, assisting with clients, stocking shelves and more.

"The volunteers are the key," says food bank manager Patricia Lau. She notes the program would not survive without them.

In the September-October edition of the *Manor Park Chronicle*, local resident David Goldfield shared his experience as a volunteer.

"Volunteers like me generally work a four-hour shift," he wrote.

He described one truly heartwarming experience with a client.

"I was amazed one shift, escorting a single mother from Sudan in her late twenties who has five young children under 10. They had just arrived in Canada as refugees a few months before. Despite her incredible family load and with few other friends or family in Ottawa, she smiled and laughed with me. Her positive attitude was infectious."

Daniel Coderre has been assisting at the food bank for close to two years. "I came here to work as a co-op (Co-operative Education program student), then after my co-op, I stayed here to volunteer once or twice a week," he says.

It's this level of commitment that inspires Davis.

"It's amazing what this team does," she says. "The amount of people they serve every week, it's hard for me to wrap my head around, really."

Means a lot

Speaking to two senior clients awaiting their time slot at the food bank, both say they are grateful for the assistance.

"To me, this means a lot. I'm a veteran, and I've been in a shelter for 10 months," one man tells the *Chronicle* during our visit. "I just moved into a place last month so I'm just getting my feet back on the ground. It's like starting over."

Another client says her monthly visit helps her to get by. "I have a very small pension so you have to stretch it

out," she says meekly. "The food bank really helps a lot."

She notes she welcomes the assistance of the staff and volunteers on site. "They're very kind, very patient and helpful."

It's knowing you're making "a real difference" that makes her job so rewarding, Davis says.

"I find I'm very inspired by my colleagues and community members. Seeing what these community members overcome and deal with, and still greet you with a smile, it's really powerful. It really puts things into perspective," she says.

Hunger Report

According to the Ottawa Food Bank's 2025 Hunger Report, one in four households (25.7%) experienced food insecurity in 2024. Incredibly, that's up from one in seven in 2022 and 1 in 15 households in 2017.

Gaisser says the food bank — together with the RRCRC's associated wraparound services — has a key role to play, even beyond offering food to those in need.

"It's sad to see the need and people struggling, but we hope to be a source of hope, support and warmth," he tells the *Chronicle*. "It's so important to tell the story."

To learn more about how to volunteer for or donate to the Rideau-Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre, visit their website: <https://www.crrccr.org>.

One can read the OFB's Hunger Report at:

https://www.ottawafoodbank.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/OFB_HungerReport2025_English_Digital.pdf



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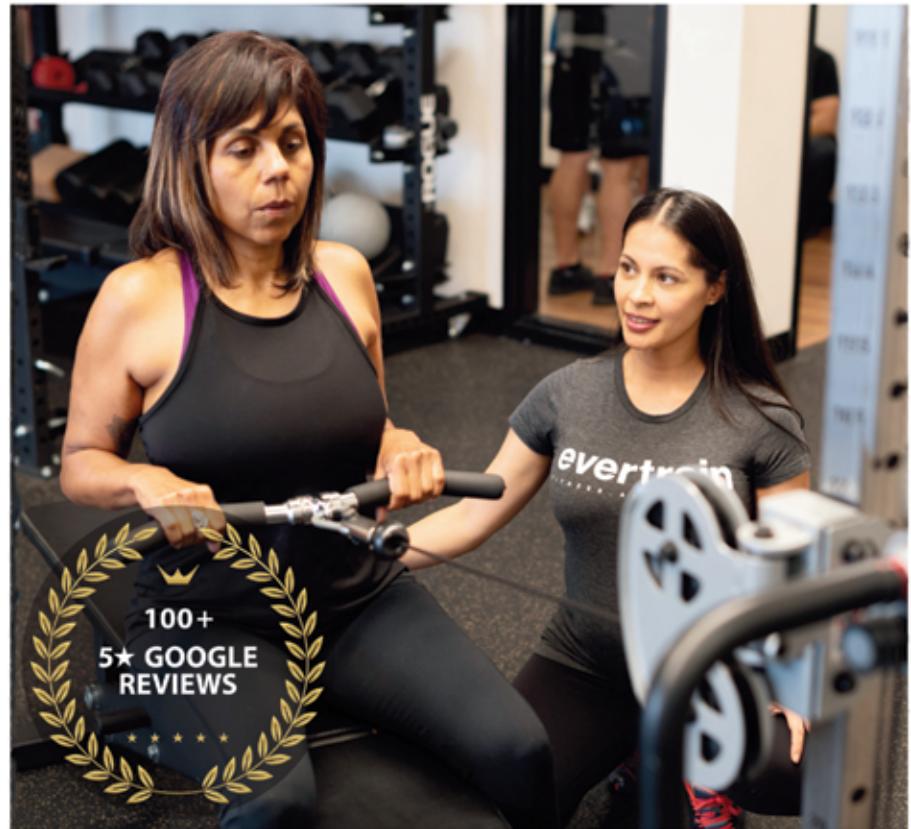
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The **Chronicle** welcomes for consideration information on community news, essays, events, letters, opinion pieces, photographs and profiles, but does not guarantee publication. We reserve the right to edit for length, clarity, grammar and legal considerations. We take care to preserve the writer's position and to retain the writer's "voice."

Send submissions articles, photos, letters to the editor, notices to:
editor@manorparkchronicle.com

Please ensure that:

- articles do not exceed 800 words;
- letters do not exceed 300 words;
- event listings do not exceed 50 words;
- submission is in by deadline, or earlier;
- all submissions are sent as electronic files [Microsoft Word or RTF] to:
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PHOTOS:

The **Chronicle** is always interested in receiving photos. Large, clear photos work best and must be sent in jpeg format to the editor. Send high resolution [300 dpi], uncropped digital images [as separate email attachments – not embedded in the body of your email]. Please submit with your articles and include a caption and photo credit.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Senders must include a complete address and a contact phone number. Addresses and phone numbers will not be published. We reserve the right to edit for space and content.

MANOR PARK NOTABLES:

Submit suggestions for future column profiles to manorparknotables@gmail.com

BULLETIN BOARD NOTICES:

Submit notices for community events to the editor.

Next Issue: March-April 2026

Deadline for booking advertising: Tuesday, February 10

Deadline for submitting ad creative: Thursday, February 19
Send to: ads@manorparkchronicle.com
613-749-9922

Deadline for articles and photos: Wednesday, February 11
Send as attachments to editor@manorparkchronicle.com

A fresh start

Welcome to 2026! A new year is upon us and time is already flying by. With that in mind, the **Chronicle** is making preparations for our March-April edition which publishes on Thursday, March 5.

Keep us in mind. Send us:

Your views on what's important in Letters/Your Opinion Matters
Your suggestions for a neighbour to feature in Meet Your Neighbour
Your suggestions for a pooch to profile in Dogs in the Hood
Your neighbourhood reminiscences in the form of photos and stories for publication

We'd love to hear from you: editor@manorparkchronicle.com

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ABOUT THE CHRONICLE

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EDITOR'S POV

Survey analysis

Back in the fall, the **Chronicle** conducted a survey of our readers. The intention was to give everyone a chance to critique the paper, to let us know their likes and dislikes, and offer any suggestions and/or advice.

A QR Code that linked to the queries ran in the September-October edition. The link was also sent out via the Manor Park Listserv during that time period.

In all, 51 people took the time to answer the '8 Burning Questions', offering some valuable insight — Thank you!

If nothing else, this purely un-scientific poll proved one thing. Among those who responded, the **Chronicle** is well received with 86 per cent noting they 'always' read it and 72 per cent saying they read it cover to cover.

News is the most popular content with features, columns and opinion running next in that order. One representative comment: "News is what interests me most, but I truly enjoy it all."

The **Chronicle**'s 'Meet Your Neighbour' and 'Business Buzz' are the most popular columns/features, with Manor Park Notables and the Manor Park Community Association close behind. Though every column received at least a dozen votes.

Asked what topics could get more coverage, Manor Park/ local history was raised a few times. With that in mind, we've started a new 'Looking Back' column. This features snippets of news items that appeared in the **Chronicle** 75, 50 and 25 years ago. This initial effort can be found on page 31.

While the paper has lost two columnists in recent months, we've also added one. And we're always open to new ideas — whether a renewal of the Bird Corner column, a look back on our history or perhaps a focus on our many amazing volunteers in the community.

We are so grateful for the feedback. And as we enter a new year, we are encouraged and excited to keep bringing you the news that matters most to you.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sidewalks in Manor Park: a bigger picture

Dear Editor:

I completely understand why my neighbours on parts of Braemar, Arundel, etc. do not want sidewalks and I support their being granted the exception they clearly want. However, the area in question is a very small enclave. I am concerned that the furor over sidewalks on those few streets distracts from the crying need for sidewalks very close to the areas under discussion.

The streets around Manor Park Public School should have more and better sidewalks, given the unholy mess of pedestrians, cars and school buses converging on the school. As well, the streets leading to the streets around the school, particularly in the Glasgow area and the blocks of Eastbourne between St. Laurent and Braemar, can be downright dangerous even outside of school hours. There

are times of day and early evening when there are too many hurrying drivers and too many people — children, adults, disabled, elderly, distracted, dogwalkers, you name it — occupying the roadways in those areas.

Getting off the bus at Eastbourne and St. Laurent in the winter, in the rain, or in the dark, with turning cars, has been a personal challenge for me for more than 20 years. I do not have mobility issues, but my heart goes out to those who do.

Imagine properly designed pedestrian infrastructure! It is possible! You exit the bus. The sidewalk is the right height for stepping off the bus. You step onto a surface that is unlikely to be slippery. There is a textured incline to the pedestrian crosswalk, and a sidewalk all the way around the corner onto Eastbourne.

It separates pedestrians from moving and parked cars and cyclists. It continues down toward Braemar with little interruption.

You could navigate it on crutches, with a cane or walker, or in a wheelchair. Or, with small children in tow, heading for school or daycare. There would be adequate lighting. Audible signaling at the corners would be deluxe. The sidewalks would be well built with drainage to minimize puddling and freezing, and easy to maintain.

These things do exist.

I think a general review of the area is in order. Again, I am concerned the discussion of sidewalks or not, on the very quiet surrounding streets, is distracting from the real needs of the populous parts of the neighbourhood.

Janice Seline
Manor Park

New street lights do come at a cost, writer suggests

Dear Editor:

The new street lights in Manor Park may be cheaper but in one respect they are no better than the old ones — that is, in the amount of ambient light pollution.

Manor Park children grow up without ever see-



ing a starry sky. The night ecology of birds, bats, insects and small animals is disrupted. This is not inevitable. Shaded and focused lights are not much more expensive. Johan Eklof, a Swedish ecologist and bat scientist, received the Waterstones/

Financial Times award for the best popular science book of the year (2020) for "The Darkness Manifesto: On Light Pollution, Night Ecology and the Ancient Rhythms that Sustain Life".

Manor Park used to be part of the night ecology of the Gatineau Hills and the Ottawa River. No more. Alas.

Kenneth Watson

Thoughts for the new year

Dear Editor:

Astoundingly, 2000 years ago there existed a civilization that ignored zero. Although the Romans built aqueducts, colossal arenas, paved thousands of kilometres of roads, and fortified their empire with a massive wall that stretches through Great Britain and Germany, their numeral system started with one. So obsessed was this civilization with tangible numbers, that they even crucified a man who claimed that there was something beyond the number one.

Today, 2000 years later and more enlightened, we have built our modern technology and civilization on the solid binary foundation of zero and one. We no longer crucify scientists who claim that there is something even beyond zero. And we have moved from religious fanaticism to peaceful complacency — let scientists talk about what lies beyond the realm of concepts and boundaries. Who cares.

And yet, our streets have become the home of the homeless, the physical and mental well-being of half of our population depends on medication, our daily bread is filled with nanoparticles, and our daily news are filled

with poison.

It is time to discover that realm of consciousness from which zero has emerged as the basis of everything in our manifest universe and which governs the universe. It is this discovery, and this discovery alone, that will allow us to make the big leap into the next legs of the human journey.

Sincere regards,
Michael Larrass, PhD

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Thank you to all my friends, neighbours and clients who worked with me and referred me business this year. I am privileged to have the opportunity to live and work in this great community.

Best regards to all for a happy and healthy 2026. I look forward to assisting you with your real estate questions and needs in the future.

J'aimerais remercier tous mes amis, voisins et clients qui ont travaillé avec moi cette année et qui m'ont référé des nouveaux clients. Je me sens privilégiée de vivre et de travailler dans notre communauté.

Je souhaite à tous santé et joie pour l'année 2026. Je suis toujours disponible pour répondre à vos questions au sujet de l'immobilier et pour vous servir.



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Manor Park Community Association

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FROM THE DESK OF:



Manor Park Community Association President
NATALIE BELOVIC

When you live in a micro-community such as a condominium or rental complex, you form a village of people with, likely, similar lives and interests.

I'm addressing my neighbours at The Highlands, Le Parc, Brittany Place, 500 Thompson, Manor Park Estates, Cardinal Glen, 500 St. Laurent, and the Giovanni Co-op, to name a few, to remind you that you ARE also part of the larger Manor Park community and we represent you.

Even though the west side of St. Laurent has been "given" to Ward 12 (Vanier) in the last Ward review, our association, the MPCA, continues to support the residents, and even though the municipal ward has changed, the community's boundaries have not.

When it comes to important issues, we are here to fight for your interests, and we encourage you to contact us to share your concerns.

Current concerns

Regarding current problems, it's probably the Kettle Island Bridge and corridor project that's causing the most concern in the community.

Some of you might think the bridge will be a good solution for getting to the cottage faster, BUT, it's not that simple.

Neither the STO nor OC Transpo have the capacity to add bus routes in the foreseeable future, so this bridge will only serve cars and heavy trucks.

A big problem is figuring out where and how the trucks and cars will exit the corridor. Will there be an exit at Hemlock, which, once opened at Wateridge, will make traffic impossible on St. Laurent and make Hemlock-Beechwood even more so than it already is?



Or, will there be an exit at Montreal Road? How will that affect traffic on that street?

Or, since it's highly likely that a westbound entrance to Highway 417 will be physically impossible to build, will trucks be directed to turn onto Ogilvie, then left onto St. Laurent, cross the Boulevard, and then enter at the St. Laurent on-ramp and merge on the Queensway where we know it's already difficult to do safely?

The new Kettle Island corridor will only reduce truck traffic downtown by 30 per cent so we don't believe this proposal is truly a solution to the problem of heavy trucks passing through Sandy Hill and Lower Town.

Furthermore, the green space along the Aviation Parkway will no longer be usable as a peaceful place for cycling, walking with friends or dogs, or for cross-country skiing in the winter. When Manor Park Estates is redeveloped in the coming years — especially at the southern end of the community — and thousands of new residents move in, what green spaces will remain for all these new people?

Chance to participate

With this said, I ask you to take note of this potential project "in your backyard" and contact us at the MPCA to let us know your position. If you are or have a resident from your association who would be willing to participate in the NCC's "consultative" process, we can get you added to the group. There are currently representatives from Le Park and Brittany Place at the table.

There is a lot of reluctance to participate in this process and frankly, it's mostly because people think it's a "done deal" (and often don't have much power to influence it's true). But there is a group of very dedicated residents from both Gatineau and Ottawa, from many different commu-

nities, working together to change this perception.

This group recently sent a letter to all our elected officials at every level explaining that the process being followed by the NCC and the government is not legitimate. The letter is available on our website: www.manorparkcommunity.ca.

If your community of residents agrees in principle with our comments about the consultation process (this is not a letter against the bridge), we would be grateful if you would add your signature to our letter. It's not too late.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a wonderful 2026. I look forward to seeing you in the community and would always be happy to welcome you as a member of the Board or to join a committee. Just reach out.

■■■

Qu'est-ce qui définit Manor Park?

Quand on habite en micro-communauté tel que dans un complexe de condominium, ou de location, on forme un village de personnes avec des vies et intérêts probablement comparables.

J'adresse mes voisins au Highlands, Le Parc, Brittany Place, 500 Thompson, dans les maisons du Domaine de Manor Park, Cardinal Glen, 500 St-Laurent et à la coopérative Giovanni pour en nommer quelques-uns pour vous rappeler que vous faites aussi parti de la communauté de Manor Park élargie.

Même que le côté ouest de St Laurent a été « donné » au Quartier 12 (Vanier), notre association le MPCA, continue à appuyer les résidents et même que le quartier municipal a changé, les frontières du quartier ne l'ont pas.

Quand vient aux issues importantes, nous sommes là pour nous débattre pour vos intérêts et nous vous encourageons de communiquer avec nous pour nous faire connaître vos préoccupations.

Pont Kettle

En ce qui concerne les problèmes actuels, c'est probablement le trace du pont Kettle qui chicotte la communauté.

Il y en a parmi vous qui penserez que le pont sera une bonne solution pour vous rendre au chalet plus rapidement MAIS, ce n'est pas aussi simple que ça.

Ni la STO ni OC Transpo

ont la capacité d'ajouter des lignes d'autobus pour le l'avenir visible, alors ce pont ne servira qu'aux voitures et aux camions lourds.

Ce qui est aussi problématique est de trouver où et comment les camions et voitures débarqueront du couloir. Il y aura-t-il une sortie à Hemlock qui, une fois ouverte à Wateridge, rendra la circulation impossible sur St Laurent et sur Hemlock-Beechwood, plus qu'elle l'est déjà, OU, aura-t-il une sortie au chemin Montréal? Comment affectera ça la circulation sur cette rue? OU, puisque qu'il est fort probable qu'une entrée vers l'ouest à la 417 sera peut-être impossible physiquement à construire, les camions seront dirigés à tourner sur Ogilvie ensuite à gauche sur St Laurent, traverser le Boulevard pour embarquer à la rampe de St Laurent???

Le nouveau couloir Kettle n'allègera que de 30% les camions au centre-ville alors nous ne pensons pas que cette proposition est vraiment une solution au problème des camions lourds qui passent dans la Côte de Sable et la Basse-Ville.

De plus, l'espace vert de la promenade de l'aviation ne sera plus utilisable comme espace vert paisible pour faire de la bicyclette, marcher entre amis ou avec nos chiens ou pour faire du ski de fond en hiver.

Quand le domaine Manor Park sera redéveloppé dans les années à venir et que des milliers de nouveaux habitants seront sur place, quels espaces verts resteront-t'ils pour tout ce nouveau monde?

Alors, je vous demande de prendre note de ce projet potentiel « dans votre cour » et de communiquer avec nous au MPCA pour nous laisser savoir votre position. Si vous avez un représentant qui serait prêt à participer au processus « consultatif » de la CCN vous pourriez être ajouté au groupe. Il y a présentement un représentatif du condo Le Parc et de Brittany Place à la table.

Il y a beaucoup de réticence à participer parce que le monde pense que c'est un fait accompli, mais il y a un groupe formé de résidents de Gatineau et d'Ottawa qui travaillent ensemble pour changer cette perception et le groupe a envoyé récemment une lettre à tous nos élus, a

MANOR PARK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

MPCA responds to Councillor's paper on new zoning bylaw

The following submission is in response to Councillor Rawlson King's paper on Draft Three of the City of Ottawa's Zoning By-law.

KEY POINTS FROM THE MANOR PARK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Population growth will decrease

The Official Plan (OP) and the Zoning Bylaw (ZBL) are based on the premise that Ottawa's population will grow by 400,000. The OP promised gentle densification of up to three units per lot. Now because of provincial regulations, there can always be a minimum of four units per lot. Even though the MPCA has supported the reduction of sprawl into rural areas and gentle densification in the core and suburbs, we have instead ended up with up to 16 units per lot, high rises in non-good transit corridors and still, suburban and rural sprawl.

The 400,000 predicted increase in Ottawa's population is invalidated by recent immigration and employment policy shifts that represent a watershed moment in the country's approach to population growth. The federal government's decision to sharply reduce both permanent and temporary resident admissions

sions — particularly international students and temporary foreign workers — marks a deliberate pause in population growth which has slowed to near zero. CCPA Analysis: Predicts cumulative federal job losses could reach over 57,000 by 2028, with the majority in Ottawa-Gatineau. Ottawa lost 9,000 jobs in October.

The underlying push for accelerated growth is no longer valid. Although no one can argue that house and rental prices are very high, the real housing crisis remains for people who are unhoused and who struggle on low paying wages.

Uneven densification

The city has approved an OP amendment for the redevelopment of Manor Park Estates which accounts for an increase in community density of 600 per cent, despite having projected only a — now discredited — 40 per cent population growth over the next 25 years.

It is inappropriate to up-zone the entire community when one major development already exceeds intensification targets.

Provincial standards offer built-in intensification

Under current provincial regulations, every lot in Ontario is permitted to accommodate up to four units. This already provides a foundation for intensification without the need for sweeping upzoning.

Neglect of social infrastructure

Neighbourhood livability has been sacrificed by the new ZBL in favour of a transect-based, one-size-fits-all model.

There is no urban planning, no available funding, nor any zoning authority to ensure adequate parks, schools, libraries, or retail on main streets. The continuing loss of retail on Beechwood is an excellent example. There is no mechanism to guarantee access to medical or retail services, nor are the needs of children and seniors being addressed. In the Inner Urban Core especially, there is limited land available for future parks and recreational spaces.

Inner urban neighbourhood height increase to 11 metres

City staff have misrepresented agreed OP-appropriate height limits for inner urban N1 and N2 zones. As demonstrated in the previously shared Nov. 5, 2025 study by builder Paul Goodkey, a height of 8.5 me-

ters is sufficient to accommodate three-storey units and support increased density. Raising the limit to 11 meters will result in significant loss of privacy and sunlight in older neighbourhoods. Manor Park

does not support this change. **School closures will reduce available parkland**

Ontario Regulation 374/23, enacted under the Better Schools and Student Out-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



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MPCA, cont. from page 7

comes Act, 2023, grants the Minister of Education authority to approve school closures and determine the disposition of school lands.

It is reasonable to expect these lands will be sold to developers, further diminishing opportunities for public green space in Ward 13 where a number of schools are on the block for closure.

Hemlock

Hemlock Road leads into Beechwood Ave. It should not be zoned a minor corridor because it is narrow, and commercial uses are not appropriate when parking is not easily available and parking itself on this rapid moving street is dangerous. With the opening of Hemlock to Wateridge and the potential exit from the Kettle Island corridor on to Hemlock, space will need to be reserved to move vehicles, and it will not be appropriate to have business there. If there are too many locations for commercial enterprise, we won't get the desired 15-minute walkability because things would be too scattered. Best to focus on St Laurent

North up to Blasdell and no further as this commercial is already started and fits into the already approved OPA of the Manor Park Estates.

The six-storey homes, now approved for Hemlock if a minor corridor, could now be built to a full mid-rise. The traffic created on Hemlock by Wateridge and the OPA plus other developments makes increased height beyond 8.5 on Hemlock from the school to Beechwood dangerous for bike lanes and entrance and exit into homes. On the Rockcliffe section homes back onto the Hemlock and Heritage will be threatened.

Misleading claims about green-space, tree canopy, and carbon reduction

The city is misrepresenting greenspace in Manor Park by including areas such as the Aviation Parkway and Manor Park Public School grounds — neither of which are under city ownership nor control.

The proposed Kettle Island truck route threatens to destroy the Aviation Parkway as a quiet, healthy recreational corridor.

The city has failed to commit to preserving tree canopies that shade homes. The loss of mature trees will increase household energy costs due to reduced natural cooling and insulation.

Front and rear yard setbacks are insufficient to support healthy tree growth or meaningful greenspace, and no studies have been conducted on the impact of tree loss on watershed management in riverside neighbourhoods.

Lack of integrated strategy: siloed management

Zoning staff have declined accountability for the outcomes of the ZBL, citing too many external variables. This "it will all work out" attitude is unacceptable.

There is widespread concern about the lack of coordination with other departments, particularly those responsible for infrastructure and transportation planning.

A unified, cross-departmental strategy is needed to implement the OP and ZBL in a way

that fulfills the city's goal of becoming "the most livable mid-sized city in North America."

Currently, there are no measurable outcomes to guide the city decisions' alignment with its long-term goal.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Affecting Manor Park and other communities:

- Reduce intensification targets to match current realities and to halt their effects in driving up speculation and housing costs, and contributing to lack of affordability, especially in the urban core.
- Improve transit to reduce the need for cars and parking.
- Launch a comprehensive implementation strategy for the Official Plan and Zoning By-law in staged interventions to achieve integrated outcomes: strengthened social fabric, regional economic vitality, and improved environmental and human health.
- Include a strategy on the increased noise levels to target reduction of individual HVACs. In the current OP, where there is one now, there will be at least four.
- Break down departmental silos and foster partnerships.

Improve the ZBL with rules to:

- stop renovation until the developer is permit-ready;
- tax vacant land if construction does not start within 1 to 2 years;
- require adequate storage on multiplexes for garbage, bikes — not racks which are not secure or weather-proof — strollers and other outdoor equipment;
- commit to three independent evaluations to measure the impact of 15-minute neighbourhoods and aggressive intensification at 5-, 10-, and 15-year intervals;
- decrease setbacks to maintain mature and new tree growth, reduce height to 8.5 metres, and keep N2 zones at 8.5 meters;
- increase rear and front yard setbacks to provide sufficient space for mature trees;
- reduce hard surfacing;
- hold developers accountable for sustaining tree growth. (Kavanagh Canada example).

Pont Kettle, cont. from page 7

tout les niveaux expliquant que le processus que suit la CCN et le gouvernement n'est pas juste.

La lettre sur notre site web: www.manorparkcommunity.ca.

Si votre communauté de résidents est d'accord en principe avec nos commentaires à propos du processus de consultation (ce n'est pas une lettre contre le pont) nous se-

rions reconnaissant si vous ajoutez votre signature à notre lettre. Il n'est pas trop tard.

Je prends cette occasion pour souhaiter à tout le monde une bonne année. Au plaisir de vous voir dans la communauté et nous serions toujours vraiment heureux de vous recevoir en tant que membre du comité de gestion.

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CANDLELIGHT SERVICE: The Main family came decked out in colourful lights to the Beechwood Cemetery Foundation's Annual Christmas Candlelight Service on Dec. 7. Holding their memorial candles are (left to right) Jeffrey, Allister, Buffy and Sterling Main. The popular event featured carols, led by the University of Ottawa Choir, prayers and readings from Monseigneur Gilles Lavergne and Capt. Rev. Michael Perreault, as well as a concluding multi-faith prayer from Capt. Barbara Helms. A highlight of the evening was the solo performance by Katy Unruh who sang *O Holy Night/Minuit Chrétien*. PHOTO: RYLAND COYNE

Community maple tree tapping returns

The Vanier MuseoParc is once again inviting the community to take part in one of the most important steps in making maple syrup: tapping the maple trees in the Richelieu Park forest.

Home to Canada's only active urban sugar shack, the Vanier Sugar Shack continues a local tradition that brings together generations of Ottawa residents.

Families, couples, groups of friends, and curious first-timers are encouraged to roll up their sleeves and help prepare the forest for the upcoming syrup season. Participants will learn to tap sugar maple trees the traditional way: drilling a hole, inserting a tap, and hanging a bucket to collect the maple sap.

The sap will be gathered in early spring, when warm days and frosty nights trigger

the flow of this naturally sweet water. After hours of boiling in the sugar shack's evaporator, the clear sap will turn into the rich, sweet maple syrup loved by — almost — everyone!

How to take part?

- Date:** Saturday, Feb. 14, 2026
- Time:** Drop in anytime between 9 a.m. and 12 p.m.
- Where:** Vanier Sugar Shack (320 des Pères-Blancs Ave.)

Additional details:

- Registration is recommended this year through the MuseoParc's social media channels or at <https://museoparc.ca>.
- If possible, bring a wireless drill with charged batteries.
- Dress warmly and be prepared for winter forest conditions.

- Short training sessions on tree tapping and forest orientation begin every hour.
- Free parking is available in limited quantity at Centre Richelieu-Vanier (300 des Pères-Blancs Ave.). Follow the path near the library to reach the Vanier Sugar Shack.

Held during the Family Day long weekend and included once again in the 2026 Winterlude program, this hands-on activity is a perfect way to celebrate winter, connect with neighbours, and help keep a cherished French-Canadian tradition alive in the heart of the city.

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Welcome to 2026 following a very busy 2025

FROM THE DESK OF:



Councillor – Ward 13
Rideau-Rockcliffe
RAWLSON KING

As we say goodbye to 2025 and hello to a new and exciting year, it's clear that progress, partnership, and meaningful investment continue to define our community goals.

To say we have been busy is an understatement. This past year brought renewed infrastructure, expanded access to health care, and ongoing commitments to building a more equitable city. Together, we have set the stage for even more transformative work in 2026.

This December, I had the pleasure of celebrating the renewal of Hemlock Park, a \$260,700 investment that introduced new swings, junior play equipment, an accessible swing, and a fitness circuit. It was a joyful day for families, and only the beginning of what's ahead for our parks. In

2026, Alvin Heights Park will receive upgrades including double basketball hoops, shade tables for the pool deck, a concrete ping-pong table, new benches, and, thanks to expanded scope, a full pool deck replacement, accessible ramp upgrades, and repairs to the pool building.

Momentum is also building with the Beechwood Avenue Public Realm Plan, which will guide future enhancements to sidewalks, cycling facilities, lighting, trees, benches, waste bins, and landscaping. Technical studies and design concepts progressed last fall, with broad public engagement set for early 2026. The city has allocated \$1.5 million to advance the detailed design.

Gateway Speed Zones

Gateway Speed Zones will also be introduced in parts of Manor Park in 2026, standardizing residential speed limits at 30 km/h and improving neighbourhood safety.

Looking more broadly, council finalized the Transportation Master Plan Update in 2025, a document that will shape how we travel across Ottawa for the next 20 years. For Manor Park, this includes proposed continuous bus lanes on Montreal Road, new sidewalks around schools and parks, pathway enhancements, cycling safety

upgrades, and parking-protected bike lanes on Beechwood. These investments will support safe, accessible, and sustainable transportation for residents of all ages.

Integrated road, sewer, and watermain renewals are planned for Arundel Avenue, Braemar Street, Farnham Crescent, Finter Street, Jeffrey Avenue, and Kilbarry Crescent. Once complete, residents will benefit from improved drainage, reduced risk of flooding, and more reliable infrastructure. These upgrades will make a noticeable difference during heavy rain or snowmelt.

Equity work

Alongside physical investments, equity work continues to move forward. As Council Liaison for Anti-Racism and Ethnocultural Relations Initiatives, I have been working closely with Black, racialized, and immigrant communities to support change where it is most needed. The city's five-year Anti-Racism Strategy is well under way with 132 actions advancing improvements in employment equity, housing, economic development, health outcomes, and youth opportunities. Partnerships with organizations such as the African, Caribbean and Black Wellness and Resource Centre in Overbrook, and the

Ottawa Black Coalition, continue to expand capacity for mental health supports, youth programs, and Black-led economic initiatives.

We also celebrated a major milestone just south of Manor Park with the opening of the Ottawa Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic at 214 Montreal Rd. Now accepting new patients daily, the clinic will eventually serve up to 4,000 residents across Wards 12 and 13, prioritizing those on the Health Care Connect waitlist and referrals from partners including the Montfort Hospital and nearby Ottawa Community Housing. This represents a meaningful step forward in care close to home, especially for families, seniors, and newcomers.

Community engagement

Most importantly, much like 2025, I believe 2026 will

continue to be rooted in passionate community engagement. I truly value the moments I get to connect with residents. Whether we are aligned on an issue, celebrating a success, or solving challenges, representing you is a privilege, and I want to thank you for your trust, your energy, and your dedication to making our neighbourhoods welcoming, vibrant communities where people can live, work, and raise a family.

We achieved a great deal together in 2025, and there is so much more ahead in 2026. I look forward to continuing to build community with you.

As always, you can contact my office at rideau-rockcliffeward@ottawa.ca or 613-520-2483. Subscribe to my newsletter at www.rideau-rockcliff.ca.

Sidewalks, cont. from page 1

City staff, however, have a different view and wish only to defer sidewalks over a shorter term, King explained.

Staff has delegated authority to proceed without returning to council for approval — on two conditions. One of those is concurrence provided by the ward councillor. Because King disagrees with their interpretation, the issue now heads to public works committee. There, staff will present their report to move forward with sidewalk installation. If accepted, it would move to council for final approval.

In his Nov. 17 statement, King noted he intends to present a motion to counter the staff report.

"I will be requesting that Committee and Council support the option for further study. Once the report is released, my office will share

it with the community along with details on how to participate."

"I can't speak for my colleagues but I do think there's a strong case to be made that the decision deserves more time and community input," he told the *Chronicle* in a previous interview. "There are so many changes coming to Manor Park."

This isn't a matter of simply blocking sidewalks from being built due to aesthetics or neighbourhood character, he added. "There are exceptional circumstances here ... that should require greater holistic input and analysis."

King said delegations are welcome at the committee meeting.

"I will continue to support constructive community input related to transportation concerns throughout this process," he noted.

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MARK LINDENBERG



SHARLEEN TATTERSFIELD

BUSINESS BUZZ

Happy New Year readers! To our advertisers and our local business community, thank you for your ongoing support of the Chronicle. May 2026 bring continued business growth and success, also good health and happiness.

This Buzz is timely: a wonderful mix of local, community-based information with columnists **Marc Lindenberg** and **Sharleen Tattersfield** profiling several current and new advertisers.

Together, we thank those who have renewed as five-issue advertising subscribers with this edition: **Beechwood Auto Service** (Pierre Fortier); **Beechwood Cemetery, Funeral & Cremation Service** (Nicolas McCarthy); **Books on Beechwood** (Hilary Porter); **Compu-Home** (John and Malcolm Harding); **Elmwood School**; **Fresh** (Margot Robinson); **Guertin Poirier Avocats/Lawyers** (Natalie Guertin and Michèle Poirier); **Halley's Service Centre** (Josée Jolivet); **Kavanaugh Garage** (Terry & Ken Kavanaugh); **Mackay United Church**; **St. Columba Anglican Church**; **St. David and St. Martin Presbyterian Church**;

Steadfast Dental (Howard Zheng); **Stonemont On the Park – Retirement Lifestyle Residence and Your Pet Palace** (Diane Campbell).

We extend a warm Chronicle welcome to new advertisers joining us this issue: **A Love Letter – Paper Boutique** (Carol Steuri); **MyLook Vision Care** (Nirmalan Vadivel and Umaa Nirmalan, RO) and **Quelque Chose Pâtisserie** (Julia Dahdah & David Seba).

Mark writes about **A Love Letter – Paper Boutique**, **Dr. Luc Ducharme & Associates**, **MyLook Vision Care** and **Polaris School and Centre** while I report on artist and painter, **Marlene Munroe de Montigny** and **Quelque Chose Pâtisserie**. Read on!

Sharleen Tattersfield,
Ad Manager

A LOVE LETTER

Nature-inspired paper boutique
When I asked Carol Steuri, owner/operator of A Love Letter Paper Boutique located at



Carol Steuri recently opened **A Love Letter**, her new paper boutique, at 137 Beechwood Ave. Inspired by her love of trees and beautiful, majestic forests, her boutique exclusively carries recycled and next-generation paper products from conscientious suppliers.

PHOTO: SHARLEEN TATTERSFIELD

137 Beechwood Avenue what inspired her to open up her shop, she tells me that her work in forest conservation and climate was part of her decision.

"We actually don't need to be cutting down trees anymore for paper because we have enough recycled resources out there and [many] other

resources that can make really great paper," says Carol.

"This shop is a marriage between my love of paper and tactile things, and my environmental background."

All the paper products carried by A Love Letter are made from either recycled paper or recycled cardstock or from 'next-generation' paper – a low-impact, tree-free alternative made from any kind of agricultural or textile waste."

With a background in corporate-brand development and communications, and experience working in Can-

ada, the United States and Switzerland, Carol says that, after having explored a variety of creative avenues, "I knew when we came back to Canada that I wanted to devote my work to the climate."

Carol undertook a post-graduate degree in climate policy. Once back in Canada, her first job was as the Executive Director of Green Communities Canada, an association of grassroots community environmental groups and organizations, where joint programming around green

>>CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

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BUSINESS BUZZ

FROM PAGE 12 >

infrastructure, green transportation and energy use was a priority.

"I knew so much about business, marketing and communications, I wanted to bring that experience into doing more good."

Carol notes that, the location of A Love Letter on Beechwood Avenue, was somewhat strategic. "People who love paper shops, love their paper shops and I didn't want to encroach on two long-standing papeteries, The Papery and Paper Papier."

"I fell in love with the antique feel of the Beechwood space, even its creaky floor," says Carol. "There's a constant wave of traffic, so for me, it felt less risky."

"Since I've opened, everyone's been really excited and supportive. My expectations keep getting exceeded."

A Love Letter Paper Boutique carries a selection of cards, journals, notebooks, agendas, stationery, gift wrap, pens and writing tools.

"I'm most proud of some of the suppliers who use next-generation materials, made from either agricultural waste or textile waste." Carol learned about many of these suppliers from her work at Canopy Planet. Buying products made in India from flax or wheat straw in Carol's shop means consumers are doing their part to help divert the 92 billion tonnes of agricultural waste burned every year in India alone.

"There are a lot of really lovely designers in Canada too," Carol says. "From the get-go, they all use recycled materials, their environmental impact is one of their main concerns. None of them are big businesses; some are based in Montreal, some are in Ontario, some are out West. The majority are women-run businesses trying to do their best, environmentally, and they make beautiful stuff, too."

"Humble transparency is about me being open and honest about how I'm doing business and how I'm finding suppliers and supplying goods in my store – everything

from hiring practices, to material sourcing to customer engagement," she says.

"I'm doing what I can to make good in all areas of this business."

Love paper, but want to find new ways to make every page of a letter or a diary entry or that special card go a little farther? Drop in to A Love Letter Paper Boutique, discover the store on the web at: <https://www.aloveletter.co/>; email hello@aloveletter.co or give Carol a call at 613-741-1115.

The boutique is open weekdays (10 a.m. to 6 p.m. - closed Tuesdays); Saturdays (10 a.m. to 5 p.m.) and Sundays (11 a.m. - 4 p.m.).

Mark Lindenberg

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Dr. Luc Ducharme began practising dentistry in the Vanier area on Montreal Road in the summer of 1995 just after he graduated from the Université de Montréal. He remained there for nine years, moving to a location on Beechwood Avenue in 2004, practising there for 18 years.

In December 2021, he moved the practice Dr. Luc Ducharme & Associates just a block away from that previous location to newer, larger premises at 230 Beechwood Avenue.

By the time he was seven years old, Luc already knew he wanted to become a dentist.

"The funny thing is, on either my mom's or dad's side, we knew no health professionals," he says. "That choice came from me."

"I always wanted to be a health professional, to work with my hands. I studied always with the intention of one day becoming a dentist," he continues.

And with that drive to succeed, Luc celebrated his 30th year in the profession this past summer. His son, Jacob is currently in dentistry school, and will join his father, the latter says, in two years.



Dr. Luc Ducharme recently celebrated his 30th anniversary as a dentist. His practice at 230 Beechwood Ave., runs an annual clinic to support community residents in need of dental services. Shown here at his December 2025 clinic (left to right) are Dr. Jacynthe Desjardins, Dr. Ducharme, Anne, their office manager and Fanny, a dental assistant.

PHOTO: SHARLEEN TATTERSFIELD

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BUSINESS BUZZ



Pictured here at her very favourite painting spot by the banks of the Rideau River in New Edinburgh is local watercolour artist Marlene Munroe de Montigny. The day was gray and chilly, but Marlene was inspired by enchanting clouds and light effects, and wildlife on the water.

PHOTO: SHARLEEN TATTERSFIELD

FROM PAGE 13 >

Dr. Luc Ducharme & Associates.

"Our patients range in age from four years old to 100 years old. It comes down to the service we offer," Luc tells me.

"We treat them as if we were treating our own family.

I've built this practice on honesty. People know, from word of mouth, that they can trust us."

Aware that patients can be anxious when visiting the office, he says, "It's our job to make patients feel comfortable, safe and secure. We do this by being gentle, taking

our time, explaining procedures well. Instilling that confidence makes our job a lot easier."

After four years in the current location, Dr. Ducharme's patient base is still growing, "Right now, I'm seriously looking to expand. We're proud of what we've achieved," he says, referring to being featured on the cover of the 2023 *Best Offices Ottawa* magazine as an example.

"I'm so proud of being able to do all of this in the New Edinburgh/Beechwood Avenue

community, he says. "I've been in this neighbourhood for 30 years. It's a blessing to be able to practise in this community."

Every year, Luc supports the Vanier Community Service Centre's Déjeuner Flocons de Neige (Snowflake Breakfast) with a donation, and during the holiday season, his practice provides dental services to disadvantaged populations.

For the past three years, the beneficiary of this support has been the Centre Espoir Sophie, a French-language community and drop-in centre for women in need. Luc tells me that these are just two of the many ways that he has supported the community over many years.

And it's clear that a much wider community supports Luc Ducharme. "In the past four years, we've welcomed countless new patients." He wonders, "Where are they coming from? I'm of French Heritage, so we have new patients coming from French communities across the city. However, most of our patients are based in the Beechwood neighbourhood.

Want to learn more about the services Luc and his associates can offer? Call 613-749-1785, email the office at info@drlucducharme.com or visit <https://drlucducharme.net>.

Mark Lindenber

MARLENE MUNROE de MONTIGNY

Finding beauty in everyday life

Meet artist and painter Marlene Munroe de Montigny whose artistic career has spanned some six decades and explored numerous genres, styles and creative processes.

A native of New Bruns-

wick, Marlene obtained her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Université du Québec (in Trois Rivières) prior to continuing her studies at the Center for Advanced Visual Studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts and later studio work and seminars in San Francisco, California and Montréal, Québec.

Marlene has studied many of the great masters, taught as a member of the Fine Arts faculty at the Université de Québec and has had her paintings exhibited world-wide, including Montréal, Québec City and Trois Rivières in Québec and at her studio in Vence, in the south of France, as well as in Palm Beach, Florida and in her own studio/gallery in Boca Raton, Florida.

Her artistic journey has been expansive with each period bringing "the challenge and joys of capturing the emotion integral to the motif of each piece," she says. Life itself is her canvas.

"What delights me most is capturing and getting the emotion across in each of my works," says Marlene.

Marlene's portfolio encompasses different artistic periods. She began by painting large canvases in oils – each with a unique story for the viewer to discover. In conversation, she tells me that her first period was dedicated to abstract art, then sculpture, followed by figurative art exploring the human condition and later, by her modern approach to semi-abstract paintings. Her 1988 framework series explored human interaction with figures both in and out of frames.

Marlene's refugee series, >>CONTINUED ON PAGE 15



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PHOTO: SHARLEEN TATTERSFIELD

BUSINESS BUZZ

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created in 1989 to 1991, portrayed the human tragedy of refugees, the beauty of their resilience and their care for one another. It was from this series that Amnesty International chose her work 'The Barriers' for its 1993 poster. Her landscape paintings, strong and illuminating, capture the seasons and the many places she has called home.

Throughout her artistic journey, Marlene has painted still life works exploring this genre with, and beyond, flowers in varied backgrounds.

"Drawing has always been my strong point," says Marlene. "And, being continuously passionate about life and my work."

Painting with watercolours is her most recent passion with a focus centred on our nearby neighbourhoods – Manor Park and its gathering spots, New Edinburgh and the Rideau River, Rockcliffe Park and its public garden spaces.

Her favourite spot for inspiration? Marlene tells me that it's at her riverside park bench alongside the Rideau River where the scenes of nature and everyday life come to life.

"I love to paint outside, from a motif. There are so many enchanting subjects to be discovered nearby," says Marlene.

"I begin with a pencil

sketch and continue with my colours, usually returning to my studio to finish the painting while keeping the initial spontaneity and emotion I experienced when capturing the scene."

Today, Marlene's watercolours reflect our vibrant local neighbourhoods teeming with activity, the many interesting people she encounters, the intricate and rich details of nature – elements that take her way beyond mere obvious observations to capture the joys, delights and emotional connectedness she so vividly sees and experiences.

Marlene's original watercolours are now available at marlenemunroe.com. An inspiring visual treat awaits!

Sharleen Tattersfield

MYLOOK VISION CARE

Opening soon in Manor Park!

We welcome new advertiser, MyLook Vision Care which will open to serve Manor Park and surrounding communities later this January.

Ahead of their planned grand opening, I spoke to owners and operators Umma Nirmalan, RO and Nirmalan Vadivel, (optician and store manager respectively). When we met, they were in the process of setting up their new



Getting ready for the January opening of MyLook Vision Care at the Rockcliffe Crossing Plaza in Manor Park (left to right) are Nirmalan Vadivel (store manager), his wife Umma Nirmalan (optician), their daughter Priyankaa and son Raahul Nirmalan. PHOTO: SHARLEEN TATTERSFIELD

premises in the Rockcliffe Crossing Plaza at 369 St. Laurent Boulevard.

"I went to the University of Toronto (Scarborough Campus) for its Life Sciences program and then decided to go into opticianry," says Umma

... [a specialized field covering the technical aspects of vision care including the fitting, dispensing and adjustment of optometrist-prescribed, vision-correcting glasses or contact lenses].

"I completed a two-year

training course at Seneca College and have been a practicing optician for the past 12 years."

After practicing in Toronto for a number of years, Umma and her family moved to Ot-

>>CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

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BUSINESS BUZZ



Congratulations to David Seba and Julia Dahdah, owners of Quelque Chose on the opening of their new pâtisserie shop at 311 St. Laurent Boulevard in Manor Park. PHOTO: SHARLEEN TATTERSFIELD

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tawa in 2019. She worked as a licensed optician at the New Look Eyewear store in the St. Laurent Mall for seven years until its closure.

"I built up a great clientele – I love working with people. And, I love working in this community," she tells me. "My dream was to open my own clinic."

In their new store, Umma and Nirmalan will provide vision care products and services, including eyeglasses, contact lenses, safety glasses and more. They will eventually have an optometry clinic for conducting eye exams.

"People who have special needs for lenses can come to us. We will be providing services to people on ODSP as well," says Umma. "We aim to

offer a quality service."

Nirmalan, an accomplished engineer and educator, notes that, "the advantage to having an individual operation (as opposed to a corporate store) is that MyLook Vision Care can go to a nearby lab and have a customer's glasses ready within two or three days." Working with Essilor and Riverside Labs in Ottawa, MyLook Vision Care will offer a wide range of lenses at all price points.

"We're also planning to implement a tracer system, which will allow the lens-maker to begin making the lenses before they have the frames, making the process even faster. We can also customize solutions for the customer to help them see clearly," he says.

Umma and Nirmalan's

daughter, currently studying optometry at the New England College of Optometry in Boston, Mass, will graduate as an optometrist in two years. "She may come and join us at the store," Umma says with pride.

As for keeping up with advancements in technology, that goes hand-in-hand with mandatory continuing education through the College of Opticians, which enables Umma to renew her optician's license on a yearly basis. Self-directed education is also a part of that process. And, Nirmalan notes, the labs also keep up-to-date with their lens-making technologies.

Umma and Nirmalan are setting mid-January as their target date for the opening of MyLook Vision Care.

"We are talking to the labs and to our frame providers to put together a number of two-month promotions, valid from our opening date, so that we can provide something special for the community," says Nirmalan.

Need new glasses, or repairs to your existing glasses? MyLook Vision Care will be open six days a week, Monday to Saturday, with plans to stay open late one day a week so that customers can visit their store after work.

Get in touch by calling 613-748-1375 or check out their website at: mylookvision.ca.

Mark Lindenberg

QUELQUE CHOSE PÂTISSERIE

Macarons, pastries and so much more!

A tasty gem has opened shop in our neighbourhood. Quelque Chose Pâtisserie offers delectable, high-quality French confections – always fresh; always tempting. Among its well-known classics are the pâtisserie's signature, all-colours-of-the-rainbow macarons, butter croissants, gluten-free scones, crêpes,

brownies and lava cakes as well as seasonal specialities such as ham rolls and festive sweets — imagine Galette des Rois and Bûche de Noël delicacies.

My visit to their newly opened premises at 311 St. Laurent Blvd. happened on a Wednesday afternoon this past December. The aromatic flavour of the moment was vanilla with co-owner and head pastry chef Julia Dahdah busily overseeing the production of vanilla macarons. Not just a few – but an amazing quantity of 700 delicate, almond meringue discs all lined up for filling with creamy ganache filling made with pure Madagascar vanilla bean. As I watched, Julia moved skillfully around her immaculate commercial kitchen with its two baking ovens and the large refrigerators used for maturing macarons before filling.

"The flavour is in the ganache filling," says Julia. "We source our ingredients from all over the world – our latest creation, the Dubai chocolate macaron, is made with tahini paste, pistachio cream, crêpe crisps and a hint of eau de geranium."

The result – delicious Dubai chocolate sandwiched between bright green, crispy, almond meringues – the newest in their line of 18 different macaron flavours.

I learn that 99 per cent of their macarons are gluten-free (only one contains gluten) and that two varieties, the raspberry/dark chocolate and the brownie, are dairy-free. All 18 varieties are made on site in Manor Park to serve both this store as well as their shop in Westboro Village; that macarons should be refrigerated and eaten within five to seven days. And, that Julia creates special seasonal and holiday flavours throughout the year.

Julia tells me that the macaron we know today is Parisian in origin, created in the early 20th century by baker Claude Gerbet. Julia herself has Parisian credentials having travelled from her home in Venezuela to Paris to study the art of making macarons from the maîtres at L'École Grégoire-Ferrandi, followed by working at Pierre Hermé's pastry shop.

Quelque Chose Pâtisserie was founded in Ottawa by Julia and her husband David Seba. They opened their first location (and main production centre) on Montreal Rd. in Vanier with her sister Michelle working with them for

>>CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

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BUSINESS BUZZ

FROM PAGE 16 >>

several years. Family ties had brought the couple to Ottawa - and the rest is history.

"I've always been passionate about pastry," says Julia. "I love what I am doing - my former hobby has become my profession. What could be better!"

2025 marked not only their 10th year in business, but also their early November move to newly renovated and specially retrofitted, two-level premises just north of Hemlock Road in Manor Park.

"Our priority is for our customers to like and enjoy our products," says Julia.

More than just a pâtisserie, Quelque Chose also offers a complete catering service - tea and croissant sandwiches, wraps and salads etc. with delivery - for breakfast and lunch functions, corporate meetings, and celebrations with friends as well as specially packaged favours for wedding receptions.

Drop in at the lower-level of 311 St. Laurent Boulevard for delicious coffees, sandwiches, macarons and sweet treats.

Keep an eye out for the official opening this spring of their afternoon tearoom in the upper level of the shop - an expansion that Julia and David are particularly excited about bringing to Manor Park.

Quelque Chose is open Monday to Saturday (8 a.m. - 5 p.m.) and on Sundays (9 a.m. - 3 p.m.). Visit: <https://quelque-chose.ca>

Sharleen Tattersfield

POLARIS SCHOOL AND CENTRE

Nurturing curiosity, confidence, creativity

To learn about Polaris School and Centre, located at 1805 Gaspé Avenue, I talked to Dina Cristina, the administrator of the school that follows a Waldorf-inspired philosophy to teach students from Kindergarten to Grade 7 (and set to expand to Grade 8 for Sept. 2026), and to Yasmeen Osman, the school's lead Kindergarten teacher.

"We were delighted to move to Manor Park in 2022, where as part of a community hub, we share ground-floor space with the Manor Park Community Council Daycare and the Beechwood Farm Store," says Dina. "Being here offers many nearby green spaces for outdoor learning and creates stability and roots for our school which first opened its doors in 2018 in Overbrook."

"What sets Polaris apart is

its developmentally informed, whole-child approach to education," explains Dina.

Yasmeen references the Waldorf educational philosophy. "It's an approach that sees children as being on a developmental journey," she says. "As they grow their needs, their abilities and the way they learn change significantly."

"We tailor their learning experiences in accordance with where they naturally are [in that developmental process]," says Yasmeen.

She describes a play-based Kindergarten program that honours childhood as a time of awe and wonder, with time and space for imaginative, creative and purposeful play while laying the foundations for their academic journey which begins in Grade 1.

"Through play children develop social understanding, language, problem-solving skills and a sense of self," says Yasmeen.

As students move into grade school, the hands-on, experiential curriculum evolves with learning becoming increasingly interdisciplinary. Academic subjects are taught through movement, art, music, storytelling, and handwork, bringing concepts to life in a meaningful way.

"The academics are quite rigorous," Yasmeen notes. "But we recognize that children learn in different ways. Some are visual learners, some auditory, some need to move while learning, providing multiple entry points into learning."

She adds, "Through collaborative and creative interactions, students learn to problem-solve, to create their own stories and to listen. It's a very rich curriculum, building



Students from the Grade 4 and 5 class at Polaris School and Centre, located at 1805 Gaspé Avenue in Manor Park prepare for their art lesson with Miss Hidayet, their class teacher.

PHOTO: SHARLEEN TATTERSFIELD

communication skills, resilience and curiosity."

Dina describes the school's Nature Connect program as a wonderful curriculum complement and an opportunity for students' personal growth.

"A connection to nature is foundational in Waldorf education," she says.

"One day a week is dedicated to Nature Connect. Students spend the day outdoors in all seasons and all types of weather, learning practical outdoor skills, with opportunities for teamwork and developing resilience, self-awareness, and confidence."

Small class sizes of between 10 to 16 students allow teachers to genuinely know each child and to support families through transitions, such as the move from home to school. Students remain together for years, at times with

the same teacher, fostering trust, belonging and a strong sense of community.

Yasmeen notes that what the students learn about who they are in group settings is also important. "We see how that learning benefits both the individual, and the creation of community."

Additionally, Dina notes that each child is unique with their individual strengths and challenges. "Our educational approach really benefits children, allowing them the opportunity to grow at their own pace."

As an independent school, Polaris is sustained solely

through tuition and community support. It offers a Financial Adjustment Program through ongoing fundraising such as their online auction, seasonal fairs and annual appeal. This commitment helps ensure that access to a Polaris education is not limited by a family's financial circumstances.

Want to learn more about how Polaris School and Centre can accompany your child on their learning journey? Send an email to info@polarisschool.ca, visit the website at <https://www.polarisschool.ca/> or call 613-842-4322.

Mark Lindenber

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OPINIONS AND ARGUMENTS

Building a fair and forward-looking future for Manor Park

Sidewalks vote more than concrete and construction, resident writes

By Julie Zhang

For many Manor Park residents, the decision against sidewalks felt discouraging, but it reminds me that progress rarely comes easily. Every society faces moments when comfort collides with change, when the familiar feels safer than the uncertain.

Yet history teaches us that true progress demands courage. The vote against sidewalks was not just a matter of concrete and construction — it reflected our willingness to see beyond familiarity and toward a more forward-looking, equitable, and connected community.

The decisions we make today will ripple far beyond our lifetime. When seat belt laws were first introduced in 1976, many resisted them, citing inconvenience and infringement on their personal freedom. Today, seat belts are indisputably embedded into our daily habits and thousands of lives have been saved. Our social values evolve, and progress requires the willingness to act at a cost. A Chinese proverb reminds us, “One generation plants

the trees, the next enjoys the shade.”

We need to seize the opportunities to build a better environment for our kids. The constant back-and-forth that leads to construction change orders and last-minute reversals wastes public money and momentum. By removing sidewalks from a project already under way, we trade progress for paperwork and squander the tax dollars meant to serve everyone. Every delayed improvement is a deferred act of care for our community.

Equity and inclusion

Sidewalks are not a matter of preference — they are a question of equity and inclusion. They grant safety and dignity to children walking to school, to people with mobility challenges, and to parents pushing strollers. A compassionate community does not settle questions of accessibility through majority vote. Even if only one in ten residents directly benefits from sidewalks, their presence represents a win for all who value equality, safety, and shared public space.

Designs for safety improve as standards evolve. Decades ago, the planners of Manor Park could not have known what modern research tells us about traffic safety and pedestrian infrastructure. Just as the first cars did not have seatbelts in their designs. The idea that residents “feel safe” without sidewalks misses the point entirely — feelings cannot substitute for evidence. Roads built for a different era should not dictate the choices of today. A progressive city accepts that its neighbourhoods must adapt to new realities, not resist them.

Good health is never something we should take for granted. For most of my life, I was blessed with excellent health and never once considered what life might feel like without full mobility. But after the birth of my baby, I began to understand the value of accessibility infrastructure. Now, when I come across stroller ramps or cooperative seating on buses, I no longer see them as minor conveniences. They have become quiet affirmations of care and inclusion. They remind me how our society builds these

small but vital structures not just for those who currently need them, but for anyone who might, one day, find themselves in a moment of vulnerability.

Personal experience

While some residents may feel safe without sidewalks, it does not reflect my family's experience. When I push a stroller to playgrounds or the bus stops, especially in rain or snow, I feel exposed as I weave around cars parked on the street. In winter, snowbanks erase what little walking space exists. And looking ahead, when my child is old enough to walk to school alone, the thought of them doing so without a dedicated sidewalk is deeply worrying. Safe, dedicated sidewalks are a necessity for some families, not a luxury or an option.

City council has a moral and civic responsibility: to lead according to evidence, fairness, and long-term vision. Councillor King has a role to play to not just inform the resisting residents about the benefits of sidewalks, but to lead with conviction and compassion. True leadership

means standing firm for the right decision, even when it is uneasy. The role of government is to guide society with foresight — not to mirror fears of change.

We find ourselves at a critical crossroads. Will we allow familiarity and nostalgia to guide our decisions, or will we act with foresight and principle?

Building sidewalks may seem like a small step, but this kind of small step builds great communities. It signals our understanding of what fairness means in practice — our society's care for every resident's right to move safely and confidently in their neighbourhood. So, what kind of legacy do we want to leave behind?

Julie Zhang (pronounced Jah-ng) P. Eng is a new resident of Manor Park and a member of the Rideau Vanier Transit Action Group. Road safety holds dear to her since her grandfather passed away because of a car accident. This article was written with assistance from Perplexity AI to enhance and accelerate editing.



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Heartfelt Thank You for a Magical December 5!

On Dec. 5, the Holiday Night Market and Children's Holiday Market were filled with festive cheer.

The Holiday Night Market offered a cozy winter atmosphere with local vendors, handmade treasures, and seasonal refreshments. The Children's Holiday Market provided young shoppers with a

magical experience of choosing Christmas gifts for their loved ones.

We extend a special and heartfelt thank you to everyone who donated to the Children's Holiday Market. Your generosity ensured that every child who walked through the doors had the opportunity to find the perfect gift. The joy on their faces

was made possible by you.

A warm thank you also goes out to our dedicated team of holiday "elves." These wonderful volunteers guided children through the gift-selection process, supporting and encouraging, to create their moments of excitement and independence.

To everyone who attend-

ed, shopped, or volunteered: Thank You. You brought energy and enthusiasm to both markets and helped them to be a success. When our community shows up, it strengthens traditions, uplifts local makers, and creates memories that last well beyond the holiday season.

Thank you, Manor Park!

Need a space?

Looking for a private space for your next meeting, event, or gathering? The MPCC offers rental spaces at 1805 Gaspé. Perfect for groups of all sizes.

We have three private rooms available, starting at just \$55 per hour. A wide range of amenities are available, such as:

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- speakers and microphones,
- games,
- tables & chairs,
- sink,

- mini fridge (Art Space only),
- free parking.

Whether you're hosting a workshop, game night, reception, birthday, club meeting, or social get-together, our spaces are flexible and fully equipped to support your plans. Pictures of all spaces available can be found at manorpark.ca.

Ready to book? Email events@manorpark.ca and let's get started!

Thanks for your help



The Manor Park Community Council is sincerely thankful for these contributions!

- Community for donations to the Children's Holiday Market
- Beechwood Chiropractic for donations to Children's Holiday Market
- Canadian Tire (Coventry Road) for sharpening our used skates
- JR Landscape and Snow for clearing snow off the hockey rink

- Elves at the Children's Holiday Market

'Brand' new MPCC in 2026

By **Lana Burpee**,
Executive Director

The Manor Park Community Council (MPCC) is leaping into 2026 in a 'brand' new way: new logo, new look, new website — new energy!

We have undertaken a branding exercise with the talent at Studio Q Designs to create a cohesive visual image and a user-friendly website, all launching in early 2026.

With the launch of our new face, you will still find familiar things remain. Our website will continue to be found at manorpark.ca. Our email addresses will remain @manorpark.ca. Amilia SmartRec will continue as our registration portal but the new website will make it easier for you to find and register in the program of your choice. Your data will continue to remain safe and confidential.

MPCC history

The Manor Park Community Council was incorporated in 1987 as a not-for-profit after some years of ad hoc operation. Formerly associated with the Ottawa Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) Light-

house Programs, we became a City of Ottawa community partner in recreation when then OCDSB pulled away from extracurricular activities. That relationship explains both our legacy office in the Manor Park Public School and our operation of the Manor Park Community Centre.

The MPCC has made significant investments in the community: \$210,000 to renovate the Manor Park Com-

munity Centre, \$15,000 to install the Fire Engine play structure; \$10,000 to fence the preschool/toddler area; \$40,000 to support the 'green' play structure near the tennis courts; and nearly \$300,000 to renovate 1805 Gaspé into additional programming space.

These investments have allowed us to meet more community needs with a dedicated daycare for 54 toddlers and preschoolers, a licensed af-

ter-school program; triple the programming space, and new rental opportunities for your special occasion bookings.

We have added partners to help with our work through local businesses, community recreation providers, and in 2026 the Rideau-Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre (RRCRC).

Branding was an intentional step to have the face we present to you grow with our aspirations.

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From Monday, January 12, 2026 to Monday, March 9, 2026
The Art Space (1805 Gaspé)

In this relaxing, guided studio-style class, you'll work on one meaningful charcoal drawing from start to finish – learning how to see, refine, and elevate details in ways you've never tried before. Each student chooses their own project, with personalized instruction, professional tips, and techniques tailored to your skill level.



SOUND BATH EXPERIENCE

Wednesdays
January 14, February 11, March 25, 2026
7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
The Studio (1805 Gaspé)

A sound therapy treatment provides a quiet and gentle space where we can be surrounded by harmonic sound, letting our brains "switch off" so that our bodies, minds and spirits can move to a place of greater health and well-being.

DROP-IN PICKLEBALL

Thursdays
6:10 p.m. - 7 p.m. & 7 p.m. - 7:50 p.m.
From Thursday, January 15,

2026 to Thursday, March 12, 2026

Large Gym (Manor Park Public School)

This unstructured drop-in session welcomes all skill levels – from curious beginners to seasoned players. Courts are open for casual play, with games typically running about 10 minutes. Players can choose to rotate, switch partners, or keep the same group – it's all decided together on the court.

LEARN TO PLAY PICKLEBALL

Thursday, March 26, 2026, 6:10 p.m. - 7:50 p.m.
Large Gym (Manor Park Public School)

Join our Pickleball clinic and learn the game in a fun, friendly and supportive environment. Let's get you playing, laughing and loving Pickleball!

INTRODUCTION TO TAI CHI

Mondays, 6 p.m. - 7 p.m.
From Monday, January 12, 2026 to Monday, February 23, 2026
Saturdays, 10 a.m. - 11 a.m.
From Saturday, January 10, 2026 to Saturday, February 21, 2026
Main Hall (1805 Gaspé)

Embark on a journey to enhance your physical and mental well-being. Each week, you'll discover and practice a new set of movements, gradually building upon what you've learned in previous sessions. This progressive approach allows you to master the basics while deepening your understanding of Tai Chi's calming

and strengthening benefits.



MINIATURE CAKE MAGNETS

Friday, January 16, 2026, 6 p.m. - 7 p.m.
South Room (Manor Park Community Centre)

Design and sculpt your own Vintage Style Birthday Cake Magnets using polymer clay. Learn simple shaping and detailing techniques to create everything from frosting swirls and cherries to sprinkles and other retro decorations.

KID'S DRAWING

Wednesdays, 6 p.m. - 7 p.m.
Wednesday, February 4, 2026 to Wednesday, March 11, 2026
North Room (Manor Park Community Centre)

Learn the basics of drawing as you explore techniques like shading, outlining, and sketching while strengthening fundamental drawing skills and gaining artistic confidence.



HOME ALONE SAFETY FOR KIDS

Sunday, January 25, 2026, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
The Studio (1805 Gaspé)

Help children gain confidence and skills to stay at home alone successfully. Designed for children aged 9 through 15 years old.

RED CROSS BABYSITTING COURSE

Sunday, February 1, 2026, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
The Studio (1805 Gaspé)

Aspiring babysitters learn how to manage difficult behaviours, essential leadership and professional conduct and basic first aid skills.



CARDBOARD CLUB

Mondays, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.
From Monday, January 12, 2026 to Monday, March 9, 2026
South Room (Manor Park Community Centre)

In this one-of-a-kind makers club, kids will explore building cardboard creations with the ChompSaw, a kid-safe power tool and Makedo cutting tools and connectors to bring their ideas to life. Perfect for young inventors who love to dream, build, and create!



BAKE MY VALENTINE

Saturday, February 7, 2026, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
South Room (Manor Park Community Centre)

Bake, create, and decorate your own festive treats from start to finish in this special one-day Valentine's Baking Workshop. Learn simple baking skills along with fun decorating techniques using Valentine's themed designs. Take home a beautifully packaged box full of fresh homemade treats.



IMPROV 101: INTRO TO YES AND

Wednesdays, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.
From Wednesday, February 4, 2026 to Wednesday, March 11, 2026
South Room (Manor Park Community Centre)

Jump into the world of improv! Ready to think fast, be funny, and let your imagination go wild? Create wild stories, invent memorable characters, crack each other up with comedy challenges, and take on fast-paced games that keep everyone on their toes.

Happy New Year, Manor Park!

FROM THE DESK OF:



**MPCC Chair
MARK SMITH**

January is a good moment to take stock of what makes Manor Park work as a community. Much of it comes down to people and organizations who quietly step up to support shared spaces and shared experiences. Over the winter months in particular, that support becomes especially visible — and especially important.

This season, we are grateful for the generosity of two businesses who are helping ensure our winter programming remains accessible and welcoming. Canadian Tire will be sharpening our collection of used skates at no cost, allowing us to make skates available to children who might not otherwise have access to them. JR Lawn & Snow has generously committed to clearing the outdoor hock-

ey rink for free after heavy snowfalls, helping keep the rink safe and usable throughout the winter. Their contributions directly support families and kids in our neighbourhood, and we thank them for it.

Giving in Manor Park also takes the form of volunteering — people showing up and contributing their time. There are many opportunities in the coming weeks to get involved. We are always looking for volunteers to help with community events, including our Skating Party on Feb. 7, a winter highlight that depends heavily on volunteer support to pull off.

We also welcome volunteers for our children's recreational programs, including *Bake My Valentine*, *Cardboard Club*,

Dungeons & Dragons, *Improv*, *Jr. NBA Basketball*, *Cooking Club*, *Kids' Drawing*, *Miniature Cake Magnets*, and *Soccer*. Volunteers must be 16 years or older, and opportunities range from one-day commitments to recurring programs. These roles are well suited to students earning high school volunteer hours and equally appealing to retirees or anyone looking to stay connected and contribute in a hands-on way.

Manor Park remains a strong community because so many people — individuals, families, and local businesses — choose to give back. Thank you for helping keep our programs running and our shared spaces active throughout the year.

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ARTS PROGRAMMING

JR. NBA BASKETBALL

Tuesdays, 6 p.m. - 7 p.m.
From Tuesday, January 13, 2026 to Tuesday, March 3, 2026
Gym (Manor Park Public School)

The Jr. NBA program curriculum is designed by Canada Basketball and NBA Staff to teach the game of basketball to players aged (5-7) and (8-12). Equipment, nets, drills, and games will all be age-appropriate and based on the latest foundations in long-term athlete development.

SOCER TOTS

Fridays, 6 p.m. - 6:45 p.m.
From Friday, January 16, 2026 to Friday, February 27, 2026
Large Gym (Manor Park Public School)

Introduce your little one to the fun and fundamentals of soccer! Soccer Tots helps young players build confidence, coordination, and basic skills through age-appropriate drills, simple gameplay, and lots of movement.

SOCER STARS

Fridays, 7 p.m. - 7:45 p.m.
From Friday, January 16, 2026 to Friday, February 27, 2026
Large Gym (Manor Park Public School)

Kick your game up a notch with Soccer Stars! This high-energy program helps young players build stronger skills, learn game strategy, and gain confidence on the field. Through dynamic drills, mini-matches, and plenty of active play, kids develop teamwork, coordination, and a love for the sport.

DROP-IN GYM: TEEN & FAMILY

Tuesdays, 7 p.m. - 8 p.m.
From Tuesday, January 13, 2026 to Tuesday, March 3, 2026

Large Gym (Manor Park Public School)

Shake off the winter chill and get active together! Join us Wednesday nights for a high-energy hour of sports, movement, and fun.

Children under 12 years old can attend Drop-in Family Gym for free with a paid adult drop-in fee. Children 12+ can attend the Drop-in Teen Gym.

MANOR PARK COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Fitness & Movement

MON	Pilates Fundamentals 9:30-10:30am	Strong & Stable 11:00am-12:00pm	Mobility & Strength Lab 4:30-5:30pm	Tai Chi 6:00-7:00pm
TUE	Power Up 6:15-7:00am	Core & Strength 6:00-7:00pm	Rest & Restore 7:30 - 8:30pm	Pickleball Skill Building 4-5 & 5-6pm
WED	Strong & Stable 10:00-11:00am	Contemporary Mat Pilates 4:00-5:00pm	Hatha Yoga 5:15-6:15pm	
THU	Tabata (Pop-Up) 6:00-6:45am	Pilates Fundamentals 5:00-6:00pm	Step & Sculpt (Pop-Up) 7:30-8:30pm	Drop-In Pickleball 6:10-7 & 7-7:50pm
FRI	Sunrise Groove (Bi-weekly) 7:00-8:00am	Strong & Stable 9:30-10:30am	DROP-IN TEEN & FAMILY GYM Tuesdays, 7:00-8:00pm	
SAT / SUN	SATURDAY Hatha Yoga 10:00-11:00am	SATURDAY Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	SUNDAY Full Body Reset 10:00-11:00am	

January to March 2026

manorpark.ca

SKATING LESSONS

(Ages 5-7)

Sundays, 10 a.m. - 10:50 a.m.
Wednesdays, 6 p.m. - 6:50 p.m.
From Wednesday, January 14, 2026 to Wednesday, February 4, 2026
Outdoor Rinks

(Ages 8-12)

Sundays, 11 a.m. - 11:50 a.m.
Wednesdays, 7 p.m. - 7:50 p.m.
From Wednesday, January 14, 2026 to Wednesday, February 4, 2026
Outdoor Rinks

Glide into winter fun with a program that introduces kids to skating basics in a safe, supportive, and energetic environment. We start with essential skills, then tailor activities as the group progresses – ensuring every child feels challenged and successful. Participants will receive a total of 6 lessons on Sundays and Wednesdays. Dates are weather dependent. You will be notified in advance.

REMINDER! Please bring indoor shoes to all programs. Keep your toes toasty and our floors clean. Boots may be removed and left at the door. Thank you!



Santa's elves were kept busy at the Manor Park Community Council's annual Children's Holiday Market on Dec. 5, helping youngsters select their gifts and wrapping them ahead of the big day. PHOTO: LANA BURPEE

RECREATION COORDINATOR



Alycia Maskiew

Happy New Year!

I'm excited to share our winter recreation line-up – one that reflects the growing interests of our community and offers opportunities for all ages and activity levels.

Back by popular demand, Tai Chi returns with two days per week to choose from, making it easier to enjoy this calming and restorative practice.

Pickleball continues to gain momentum, with skill-building workshops and weekly drop-in play for those looking to stay active and social.

Children can look forward to a range of new and returning programs designed to build confidence and spark creativity, including Cardboard Club, Soccer, After 3 (A3) PA Days, and outdoor Skating Lessons. We're also offering fun one-day programs such as Miniature Cake Magnets and Bake My Valentine, perfect for hands-on, DIY experiences.

And teens won't want to miss Improv 101 and Drop-in Teen Gym, a welcoming space to stay active with friends.

Our fitness programming has expanded as well, with more class options across multiple days and times – making it easier than ever to stay warm, active, and connected this winter.

Welcome to a season of movement, creativity, and community.

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CHILD CARE AND EARLY LEARNING

Before-and-After-school in Manor Park Supervisors' Messages



**Amy Mombourquette,
RECE Supervisor
Before- and
After-School in
Manor Park**



**Julie Irwin, RECE
Manor Park
Child Care Centre**

As 2025 has come and gone, we want to thank all of our community members and families who have joined us in licensed care this year. It is beyond fun for children and educators to take part in and plan such fun activities, PA Days and licensed summer camps.

2026-2027 Before and Afterschool in Manor Park registrations will open to the public on Feb. 3, 2026. Licensed summer camp registrations will open to the public on March 3, 2026.

We offer:

- fun programming that follow children's interests,
- qualified and knowledgeable educators,
- licensed care which is part of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care initiative (CWELCC),
- care for families through City of Ottawa subsidies,
- full day care on PA Days, through the summer, and with continued interest and need during March Break.

Once registrations open to the public you are welcome to contact us with any questions or to get a registration package at bas@manorpark.ca

I look forward to sharing another fantastic year with you and your family!

As the school year progresses and our new children have now fully settled into the program, it gives the classrooms a chance to focus on incorporating more structured, large group activities to the daily activities. My favourite of these has always been "circle time" or "community time".

This is the part of the day where the children are invited to gather and listen to stories and participate in songs and fingerplays.

Our toddlers and preschoolers tend to run right to the carpet as soon as they hear the educators announce that circle time is about to begin. They relish hearing stories that invite a lot of participation, whether they need to "Press Here" (a preschool favourite, written by Hervé Tullet), determine what colour Pete the Cat's shoes have turned, or to help tell Mortimer to "be quiet!" Felt/flannel stories also tend to be fan-favourites.

From "Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed" to "Brown Bear, Brown Bear" or "A Very Hungry Caterpillar", being able to see these stories represented through cut-outs on a board rather than just visuals on pages in a book adds a new experience.

After sitting for a few minutes, the children often need to get some of their "wiggles" out. This is when we play the song "Sleeping Bunnies" which encourages the children to "hop little bunnies, hop, hop hop"! Circle time remains the part of our program that is loved by the children and educators alike!

Annual Skating Party & Chili Cook-off returns February 7

On Feb. 7, 2026, families are invited to the annual Skating Party and Chili Cook-off.

The fun begins with exhibition hockey games at 4 p.m. From 5-7 p.m., we celebrate winter with good food (did we mention those pots of chili?), hot drinks, music, a bonfire, skating — and the warmth of neighbourhood friendships. This is a free event to attend, but food and drink are extra.

Residents line up to taste the steaming pots of chili entries in our annual Chili Cook-off at the Skating Party! Bowls of chili — or chili dogs — both satisfy!

Are you ready to be our 2026 Chili Champ? This is what you need to know:

- Chili Cook-off takes place during the 'Skating Party' on Saturday, February 7.
- Pots of chili are donated to the contest.
- Entries may be made by persons, businesses or organizations — but chili may not be store bought. (Unless of course, your business is making chili!)
- Multiple entries are permitted.
- Meat, vegetarian and vegan entries are accepted.
- Chili should be delivered to the Manor Park Community Centre (100 Thornwood Road) on Feb. 7, between 3-4 p.m.
- Chili should arrive pre-heated.
- Where possible, chili should be in a crockpot.



- Chili must be accompanied by an ingredients list. (This helps those with food allergies).
- All pots that should be returned following the con-

test must be marked with name and email address.

• Judging panel is selected by the Manor Park Community Council. (best job EVER!) The decision of judges is final.

• The chili maker need not be in attendance at the events (but, we hope you are!)

• The winner agrees to allow the Manor Park Community Council to publish their photo and winning recipe on social media, our website and in the Manor Park Chronicle newspaper.

• Pots may be picked up at the community centre at 7 p.m. on the evening of the event.

MANOR PARK COMMUNITY COUNCIL BEFORE- AND AFTER-SCHOOL IN MANOR PARK



Before- and
After-school
Child Care



PA Day Child
Care



Summer
Child Care

Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6
Manor Park Public School, 100 Braemar Street
Before-School: 7:15 - 8:30 AM / After-School: 3:00 - 6:00 PM

REGISTRATION OPENS FEBRUARY 3, 2026

MPCC is part of the Canada-Wide Early Learning & Child Care (CWELCC) initiative of the federal and provincial governments to reduce daycare fees for eligible children.

Manor Park
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MANOR PARK COMMUNITY COUNCIL

SUMMER DAY CAMPS IN MANOR PARK

Registration opens
March 2, 2026!

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“Take two (tours)... call me in the morning”

Science validates art gallery walkabouts are beneficial to physical health and wellbeing

By Robert Sauve

At the beginning of 2025, I started a four-year feel-good project. The motivation was largely triggered by the shenanigans south of the 49th parallel, and by the wars in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. Not to mention the most concerning accusations of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. Against that backdrop, the prime intention and objective of this feel-good project was to put into relief what it means to be fully and authentically human without the handrails of ideology, whether religious or political; how to be fully human while being fully in the moment.

On a concrete level, I can report that during this past year, I have avoided countless hours spent in the endless chattering of echo chambers, or the ever-deeper spelunking in rabbit holes, or the gloom-inducing doomscrolling. What I encountered was the reassuring presence of authentic characters, the types one meets in big-hearted feel-good novels. These are also the kind of people one meets in one's daily life, the types of people who remind us of what it means to be human.

In general, the creative arts remind us of our humanity and stimulate us to respond to each other with empathy, compassion and reason. All the while, never let us forget our own intricate natures — each of us is complex, imperfect and vulnerable. We all

live in communities of like individuals and of shared values.

Nevertheless, as we inevitably seek to connect with others, we carry within ourselves a unique purpose and are entitled to dignity as we focus on our equally unique shifting horizon lines. Thus, we meander our chosen paths — and for the most part we get along and grow and experience epiphanies of what it means to be fully human.

It is the wonder of our being human that, along the way, our wellbeing increases as the brain releases those feel-good chemicals the creative arts arouse. There's no end to the wonders of evolution and the capacities it enables in us. Through the creative arts one can even dream of peace, of mutual aid, and of love.

Validation

Some important and rewarding validation has punctuated this first year of my project.

Recent scientific findings validate what the Docents of the National Gallery of Canada, and seasoned gallery/museum visitors, have known forever. Visiting an art gallery is more than an aesthetic experience. It is also beneficial to one's wellbeing. Exposure to the arts is healthful.

King's College in London, England has found "... that art positively influences the immune, hormone and nervous systems all at once — something never previously recorded. The findings suggest that seeing original art not only

moves people emotionally, but also calms the body and promotes health and wellbeing."

The researchers measured and assessed physiological responses of subjects while viewing original works of art in art galleries. Among the research findings, the subjects' responses showed the following:

- significant stress reduction (e.g. 22 per cent reduction of the stress hormone cortisol),
- an improved balance in the various bodily systems (the immune, the hormonal and the nervous) at the same time,
- improved mental, emotional, and cognitive wellbeing.

The aspect of the research I found most encouraging was the capacity of viewing art on renewing hope in the viewer. And, perhaps best of all, the benefits of viewing art were found to be universal. These could be experienced by anyone, someone new to art appreciation or a seasoned viewer. Prior art knowledge did not matter.

In their conclusion, the researchers affirm the result of their study, "... advances psychoneuroimmunology into real-world, non-clinical contexts

and highlights museums and galleries as accessible settings for public-health interventions."

How's that for validation? Will doctors start to prescribe, "Take two art gallery strolls and call me in the morning?"

If you would like to learn more about the study, see the

link below for the King's College research paper. It provides explanations and methodology:

https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/354596251/Physiological_Impact_of_viewing_original_artworks_vF_1.pdf



Answer this quiz for a free tour of the National Gallery of Canada

The theme again focuses on that most Canadian and resonant of rallying cries: "ELBOWS UP!"

The artist is a national treasure, as is the sculpture. It is proudly on display in the Indigenous and Canadian galleries of the National Gallery.

The Quiz: Who is the artist and what is the name of the work of art that the blow-up is taken from. Submit your guess to the editor of the *Manor Park Chronicle* (editor@manorparkchronicle.com) by Jan. 31, 2026.

The winner will be announced in the next issue of the *Chronicle*. The prize is a free tour of the National Gallery of Canada, and the opportunity to get to know why our very own gallery is world class.

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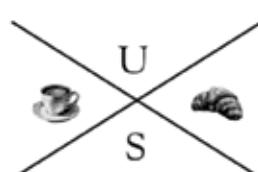
CHRONICLE ESSAY

Winter person or tourist: which one are you?

By Douglas Cornish

Former Prime Minister John Turner, when someone complained about the weather, would playfully retort: "Are you a Canadian or a tourist?" This time of year, there are Canadians who choose to become tourists simply because of the weather and head to warmer climes.

Winter does provide choices: you can love it, put up with it, or leave it.



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kitchen cafe local store

MON 8 - 2
TUE - FRI 8 - 5
SAT SUN 9 - 5
42 CRICHTON STREET
AT UNION STREET



Yes, there are people who do like winter. They like the change of the seasons and the winter wonderland effect it brings. They like to ski, and skate, and throw snowballs with (or at) their kids, and make a snowman (or woman) on their property. They like the sun glistening on clear icicles, hanging from eaves. They like the festive Christmas lights (if people still have them turned on), brightening up the neighbourhood. They like crisp and fresh winter walks on bright and sunny winter days.

These winter people adapt to the weather and don't try to fight it. They are four-season people, and winter just happens to be another season. Even on a cold day, they might even comment that it's a nice day.

Of course, if you have a dog, you are forced to get out daily. A dog's brain knows nothing about seasons, although there are dogs that don't really go out in the winter, only briefly to pee or poop in the backyard, then quickly scamper back inside.

Part of being Canadian

In the second category are people who don't necessarily like winter, but realize it's part



of Canadian life. They feel they have no choice but to put up with it.

They either don't like to travel, or perhaps their pocketbook may not allow them to. As a result, they stay indoors as much as possible. They are fireside people, or do things indoors, like crafts or indoor renovations. They mostly view winter from the inside looking out, and looking out often depresses them.

I lived in France once, and the French love to close their shutters in winter. This provides insulation trapping heat inside, offers protection from harsh winter weather (which might mean just a cold rain), and also enhances privacy.

Winter escape

The third category includes folks who choose to escape winter. There's nothing wrong with that. They are the sun and sand types, martinis-by-the pool types, and lawn chairs-on-the-beach types. Some rent a place down south, while others actually own a residence in a sunny place, which they rent out in the off-season when they're not there.

Some have even sold their house here and just have a summer cottage, then head to warmer climes when the cold weather comes. It may be Florida or Arizona (if they still want to go in today's unpredictable political climate), or it could be Spain, Portugal, Mexico, the south of France, or some tropical island.

Some people like to go on a Mediterranean cruise, which usually combines cultural and ancient destination seaside stops along with the onboard entertainment cruise ships offer. Cruise ships are floating cities. And, of course, there is also the infamous Spring Break, which gives people a chance for a family getaway, either to glitzy ski resorts or to sunny havens. For this group, it's not solely a vacation but rather a necessary form of

sun therapy, cheaper than a psychiatrist! Whatever the reason, they are still proud Canadians but simply don't spend the winter months in the country.

Curl up with a good book

If you're not in a touristy mood, you can sit in a comfortable chair near a warm fireplace (if you have one) and become a literary tourist. Read through the works of Charles Dickens, Victor Hugo, Virginia Woolf, Hemingway, Honoré de Balzac, or whatever your particular taste happens to be. The weather outside is frightful, but the books are so delightful! There's a book out there for everyone's taste, literary or not.

If you're not the bookish type, you can always binge a streaming service series, which you may not have had time to do, or even explore video gaming.

To winter, or not to winter, there's a choice for every personality type. The unforeseen gift is that if you can't travel this winter, or you have to endure winter when you don't want to, these two winter types just might blend into one, and you may realize you actually enjoy this season!

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Community celebrates Hemlock Park upgrades

By Ryland Coyne

Spring can't come soon enough for Manor Park residents living near Hemlock Park.

The public recreation area received some significant upgrades in 2025, culminating in a 'reopening' ceremony on Wednesday, Dec. 3.

The total investment of \$260,700 includes the following:

- two belt swings and two junior bucket swings;
- junior play equipment (frog jump climber, wobble sphere spinner and accessible sand digger);
- two new accessible benches; and
- removal of sand, replaced by engineered wood fiber, for ground cover and accessible pathway connections.

The existing ATV spring toy was salvaged and moved to a new location within the park as part of the project.

Funding

A Canada Infrastructure Program grant of \$135,000 covered the cost of most of the project. Another \$95,700 was secured by Rideau-Rockcliffe councillor Rawlson King from the ward's 'Cash-in-Lieu-of-Parkland' fund.

"Every time there's develop-



Rideau-Rockcliffe councillor Rawlson King (centre) cuts the ribbon to commemorate the re-opening of the revamped Hemlock Park. Joining in the Dec. 3 celebration are (left to right) Claire O'Donnell, City of Ottawa Program Manager with Parks and Facilities Planning; Sean Schuck, Manor Park Community Association; King; Kevin Wherry, Manager, Parks and Facilities Planning, and Vaughn, a young park user. PHOTO: RYLAND COYNE

ment, developers have to pay into a fund so that we can invest in parks," King explained at the Dec. 3 ribbon-cutting. "We were able to expand the amount of equipment that was installed here to (include) a fitness circuit and accessible saucer swing."

The councillor credited the feedback received from the community during consultation back in 2023 for the project's additional items.

"One of the nice things about local government is that when you contact us, we're listening, and we're able to make

adjustments," he said. "By you telling us what you want to see, we're really able to relay that and make that a reality."

Parks staff

Kevin Wherry, Manager, Parks and Facilities Planning, told the small crowd gathered along

Meadow Park Place it took a large team of "really committed and dedicated people" to bring the project together.

"It takes a village to produce these kinds of projects," he said.

Like King, he said input from residents was invaluable, leading directly to inclusion of the outdoor gym equipment.

"We might be experts in what we do but we're not experts in what you might want," he said.

Claire O'Donnell, Program Manager with Parks and Facilities Planning, said the Hemlock Park project first came about in 2023 as part of a life-cycle review.

"With the addition of the fitness equipment, this park better caters to all ages," she said. "We're especially excited to see the accessibility components," such as benches, path and swings.

She thanked the Manor Park Community Association for its support, passion and participation.

King thanked the staff for their efforts in helping bring the community's wishes to life.

"There's nothing more exciting to me, to hear the vision of the community and actually translate that into reality," he said. "That's what has occurred ... we're celebrating that today."

Start the New Year with Peace of Mind - Plan Ahead with Beechwood Cemetery

As we welcome a new year, it's the perfect time to think about the future.

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T'was the Season

Happy New Year from all the folks at St. Columba Anglican Church!

By Diana Poitras

The past two months have been extremely busy — and purposeful.

The Clothing Drive and Pop-Up Shop in November was well supported and successful. The donations were generous and abundant. The shoppers on the 15th found a large assortment of cold-weather clothing, and even a few linens/bedding items.

We estimate that about 50 individuals — some representing large families — shopped and left with overflowing bags of needed items. An Afghan family, newly arrived in Canada, found many items for the 10 members of their family.

We were happy to welcome city councillor Rawson King and his support of this event. Leftover items went to Centre 454 (shelter) and Gite Amis in Gatineau.

Four weeks of Advent

The four weeks of Advent started on Nov. 30 with our service of Lessons and Carols, featuring the beautiful voices of Shawn Mattas, Spencer Cripps, Sophia Nickel, Mallory Williams and Keumnim Lim; as well as violinist, Douglas Brierley; pianist, Genie MacKay; and Music Director/organist, Faye Grinberg Rice.

The weekly Advent Devotional led by Reverend Susan was a quiet time for prayer and meditation. The Lord's Prayer, sung in Aramaic, was a new and beautiful experience for us.

Throughout December the Sunday School was very busy working on their play, which was presented during the 4



The Clothing Pop-up Shop was well supported at St. Columba. Pictured (left to right) are Judy Graham, Rev. Susan Lewis, Debbie Christie MacDonnell, Marie Chantal Ross and Coun. Rawson King. PHOTO: SUBMITTED

p.m. Christmas Eve service. The children had a "working" Christmas Party, which included a rehearsal and Happy Meals! The children also had a popcorn and Christmas movie afternoon — with a rehearsal on the side.

Our thanks go to Sunday School teacher, Becky Hynes, for her creativity and commitment to nurturing the children of the parish.

Unexpected gift

We received an unexpected gift from the students at ARC Studio School at the completion of their 5-week collaborative project, 'Profit with Purpose'. The students designed and ran a leaf-raking business called 'Hello Mini-Leafers!', and came up with a slogan, flyer, door-to-door script and managed bookings. Plus, they did the actual raking!

They did all this despite the challenges of early snow and cold rain. The students proudly presented Rev. Susan

Lewis and Diana Poitras with \$300 in proceeds at their end-of-session Exhibition. We thank these young students for their thoughtfulness and support.

Before Christmas \$500 in gift cards were delivered to Manor Park Public School to assist their families in need. A further \$300+ in gift cards have been set aside to be delivered to Veterans' House in the New Year.

Services

A "new-to-St. Columba service" took place on Dec. 17. A

Quiet or Blue Christmas was an opportunity for those who struggle during the holidays to attend a Christmas service in a quiet and contemplative atmosphere.

There were two services offered on Christmas Eve — the "kids of all ages" service with the play by the Sunday School at 4 and the Choral Eucharist Candlelight Service at 7:30. Mallory Williams was Cantor at the early service, with Natasha Henry our guest soloist at the 7:30 service. Douglas Brierley on violin once again accompanied Faye Grinberg Rice and Genie MacKay.

The Christmas Day service was very special and a first for Rev. Lewis and her husband, the Venerable Eric Morin. Eric read a very sweet and poignant Christmas story, Mallory Williams led the hymns and sang a solo, as the congregation celebrated the birth of Jesus.

The last service of the year was extra special as we welcomed Rev. Dr. Sony Jabbouin as our guest speaker of the sermon/homily. Originally from Haiti, Rev. Sony previously served as a parish priest in the Roman Catholic Church. This past May he was received as a priest in the Anglican Communion at the

>>CONTINUED ON PAGE 36



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OPINIONS AND ARGUMENTS

Issues continue for Manor Park resident over road construction work

By Robert Hage

The following is a follow-up to a story that appeared in the November-December edition of the Chronicle.

The City of Ottawa has awarded a \$1.3 million contract to Cavanagh Construction for road improvements and enhancements of six roads in Manor Park from 2025 to 2026. The objective "is to rehabilitate underground and roadway infrastructure that is nearing the end of its lifespan."

According to their website, Cavanagh has been in the Ottawa area for more than 50 years with a fleet of more than 500 pieces of equipment and "state of the art facilities."

In August, 2025 Ottawa issued a 'Notice to Residents' document. It included a reference to "Property Damage" as follows: "the contractor assumes full responsibility for the construction work until completion as well as for any damages to private property resulting from these construction activities. In the event of occurrences all claims for damage should be immediately reported both verbally and in writing to the Contrac-

tor and to the City's on-site inspector. This will ensure prompt notification of appropriate authorities to complete the claims investigations."

Events did not proceed that way at our home on Kilbarry Crescent.

For the past two months we have had to endure our house shaking, our porch moving right, our front and back doors not opening and cracks appearing on the walls, particularly on the first floor where cracks have appeared on the side and front walls. As a result, Ottawa civic representative Julie Lyons, an Ottawa senior engineer, and a city contract representative visited our home. The group also included a representative from an independent entity, Blastek Engineering Group, reporting to Cavanagh.

This individual had previously viewed the inside of our home which he referred to as an "alleged damage claim." In his first report, he noted "there was no evidence of the jamming of the door frame due to the door being solid wood." I subsequently paid \$640 to a locksmith to open the front and back doors since I felt the road's construction move-

ments had damaged them.

Following the second visit with city representatives, during which photos were taken throughout our home, Blastek advised Cavanagh, in a letter dated Nov. 28, 2025, that there has been recent movement to the property. "Although this movement occurred during construction, it does not mean that construction activities or vibration were the root cause of this movement."

The letter claims the home "continues to experience settlement which is most likely due to underlaying soil conditions."

Blastek noted that "the levels of vibration" were "below the damage threshold criteria," and concluded "it is not possible for vibrations at such low levels to be the contributing factor to the structure movement observed at the subject property."

It is only fair to remind Cavanagh that its obligation, as put forward by the City of Ottawa, is that "the contractor assumes full responsibility for the construction work until completion as well as damage to private property." Has Cavanagh forgotten?

It's time for us to speak up, Manor Park mother writes

By Ayse Comeau

After 11 years of living in Manor Park, and countless hours volunteering in our community, I am writing to express my deep concern about the ongoing sidewalk debate. As the mother of two young children, I have come to believe that a strong community is one that finds ways to meet the diverse needs of all its residents.

Every day, I make a deliberate choice. When leaving our home on Mart Circle, which has a sidewalk only on the south side, I cross the street to walk on that sidewalk. I do this whether I'm walking with my children or heading out for a stroll alone. Why? Because I feel safer on a sidewalk.

I find myself asking: when we travel to other neighbourhoods, don't most of us naturally use the sidewalks when they're available? Isn't there something instinctive about choosing that separated, protected space? We all seek safety and comfort while walking. None more so than our neighbours who rely on walking as their primary way of getting around.

I want to emphasize something important: those who prefer to walk on the street will always have that option. The street will remain. But sidewalks provide a crucial alternative for young families, seniors with mobility challenges, people using wheelchairs or walkers, and the many residents who do not own cars. For these neighbours, every trip to catch a bus, visit a friend, or buy groceries on streets without sidewalks means navigating roadways alongside vehicles. While some may feel comfortable with this arrangement, others do not, and their needs deserve equal consideration. Sidewalks simply give everyone a choice, allowing each resident to travel in the way that feels safest and most comfortable for them.

The argument that sidewalks "won't improve safety" on our streets contradicts the expertise of urban planners, public health officials, and traffic engineers across North America. The city's Transportation Master Plan explicitly

aims to "Maximize Walkability" and to "build sidewalks when roads are being reconstructed or redeveloped, as this is cost-effective and less disruptive." These policies exist because sidewalks save lives and prevent injuries.

Yes, our streets may feel quiet during certain hours. But despite our collective efforts to create a safe neighbourhood, vehicles regularly exceed the speed limit on our roads. This includes not just the occasional local driver, but delivery vehicles, taxis, and others who are unfamiliar with our streets and who may not share our values in our neighbourhood safety. This is not a criticism; it is simply the reality of modern urban life. Infrastructure must account for real-world conditions, not idealized ones.

Evolving community

I understand the attachment many long-time residents feel to the neighbourhood as it has been. I share that affection. But I also recognize that Manor Park is evolving. New families

>>CONTINUED ON PAGE 34

MacKay United Church keeps active during winter

By Andy Bethune

January and February are often the quietest months at MacKay United Church. After the Christmas season, the public calendar can look sparse. But a quieter schedule does not mean the building — or the community it supports — is inactive.

Even with fewer large concerts, dinners, or seasonal gatherings, the church remains in steady use as a shared neighbourhood space and as a place of ongoing community care.

A working building, and not just on Sundays

One of MacKay's ongoing monthly commitments is support for Centre 507, an adult drop-in centre in downtown Ottawa. Once a month, volunteers prepare sandwiches and treats for the Centre's clients. Throughout the year, the congregation also collects clothing, toiletries, and other essentials to support Centre 507's work.

The church building is also used regularly for fitness and wellness programs. A variety of classes take place in Memorial Hall. 'Fitness with Alex' is led by Alex MacDonald, a certified Canfitpro instructor specializing in older-adult and mind-body fitness.

'Fitness with Stewart' is run by Stewart Maskell, personal trainer and co-owner of The Fitness Union. These classes use props to engage both body and mind, and are designed to be accessible to a wide range of participants.

Music continues as well. Vyhovskyi Strings, a group of young violin players, has been meeting weekly at MacKay since 2010. The group performs annually at a Christmas concert fundraiser in the sanctuary.

The church remains in steady use as a shared neighbourhood space

Woodworking Club, potlucks

A different kind of creative work happens in the church's onsite woodworking shop. The Woodcarving Club, founded by former MacKay minister Rev. Dr. Joseph Burke, has been meeting weekly for more than 25 years. The group, made up of retirees, continues to work on a variety of carving projects.

Informal community life also continues through the winter. The church organizes potlucks and shared meals when schedules allow, and a Sunday school program runs alongside regular worship. These gatherings tend to be smaller in winter, but they remain part of the church's week-to-week rhythm.

While these activities may not appear as public "events," they make up a significant portion of the building's regular use.

Ministry that doesn't look like an event

Some of the church's work never appears on a calendar. Support during times of loss is one such example.

Funerals and celebrations of life take place throughout the year. People from the wider community often come to the church during times of grief to find support in a spiritual setting.

MacKay also has a pastoral care committee whose members visit church members who are ill, aging, or otherwise in need of support. This work

happens quietly and without public notice, but it is a steady part of congregational life.

The church is also used for weddings, life covenants, and vow renewals. The sanctuary serves as a gathering place for couples and families marking important life transitions.

A small church with a global reach

MacKay supports the Nicaragua School Project, which helps children living in poverty obtain the supplies they need for school. Items are purchased locally in Nicaragua, supporting both students and their communities.

A shared civic space

Over the course of a year, many people pass through MacKay who would not necessarily describe themselves as church-goers. For some, it is a fitness hall. For others, a rehearsal space, meeting room, classroom, or place of remembrance. In this way, the building functions both as a place of worship and as part of the neighbourhood's shared civic infrastructure.

Looking ahead

After a busy December, MacKay is looking forward to returning to its normal pace in January.

In the meantime, regular activity continues inside the building through the winter months: food prepared, fitness classes held, music rehearsed, woodworking under way, potlucks shared, pastoral visits made, children learning on Sundays, and ceremonies marking both loss and celebration.

Andy is a member of MacKay United Church. He can often be found walking through Manor Park with his wife, daughter, and two Pomeranians.

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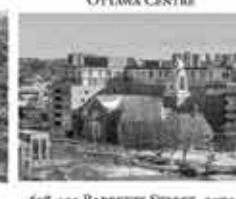


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Wellness

Riding the rhythms of renewal: Stepping into the Year of the Fire Horse

By Sophia Wood Massicotte

As we step into a new year, many of us can feel that something is shifting (or has already shifted) beneath the surface. Life has a way of guiding us through seasons of release and renewal whether we want it or not, and 2025 was no exception.

In Chinese astrology, this past year was marked by the Year of the Snake, paired with a Universal Year 9 in numerology. Together, these energies invited us into a deep process of shedding, endings, truth-telling, and remembering the essence of who we are beneath the noise and expectations.

The snake does not rush, nor does it fear change. It listens, and trusts when it's time to release the old. And in its own quiet way, it teaches us to do the same: to let go of what is false, to dissolve outdated roles, and to clear the old skins that no longer reflect who we are.

As we cross the threshold into February 2026, we are stepping into the Year of the Fire Horse, alongside a Uni-



Follow a few simple but powerful practices to help you enter the Year of the Fire Horse centred and ready. PHOTO: SOPHIA WOOD MASSICOTTE

versal Year 1, a potent combination of transformation, new beginnings, and forward momentum. If the snake taught us to shed and make space, the horse now asks us to rise, to embody our truth, and to carry it outward with courage and heart.

The Fire Horse is dynamic, bold, creative, and fast moving. Its energy sparks leadership, action, and the pursuit of what feels meaningful and alive. This is the year to align with purpose, take inspired risks, and trust your inner fire.

Life has a rhythm

But we cannot ride the horse with clarity unless we've honoured the wisdom of the snake. That's the gift of attuning to the cycles around us: We begin to remember that life has a rhythm. Nature has a rhythm. And we too have our own rhythms.

When we look at the world through the lens of seasons and cycles, we understand that we're not meant to be in constant productivity or perpetual rebirth. Some phases are for letting go, some for resting, some for reimagining, and some for blooming. Yet

most of our suffering comes from resisting the natural ebb and flow, trying to speed up when life wants to slow us down, or trying to cling when life is nudging us to expand.

When we align ourselves with these existing rhythms — through our daily self-care practices, rituals, ceremonies, community support and awareness — we begin to meet change with more grace and less gripping. We stop seeing ourselves as isolated islands, struggling to manage everything alone. Instead, we become participants in a larger, living

conversation with the world around us. We move *with* life instead of against it, rooted in trust, connection, and a devotion to our individual and collective wellbeing.

So how can we prepare ourselves to step into the momentum of 2026 with clarity and steadiness? Here are a few simple but powerful practices to help you enter the Year of the Fire Horse centred and ready:

1. Get clear on what you truly want.

Not what you "should" want, not what others expect ... but what feels aligned, alive, and meaningful in your bones. Write it down. Name it to claim it.

2. Let go of what no longer brings you peace.

This includes old commitments, outdated dreams, draining relationships, and internal stories that weigh you

down. Release what creates friction so you can move forward with more ease.

3. Prioritize what nourishes your joy and vitality.

Make room for the people, practices, and places that inspire you. These are the fuel sources for your fire this year.

4. Spend time with yourself.

Walk, journal, move, meditate. Get honest about what you value, what you fear, and what you're ready to grow into. Self-connection is the foundation of embodied leadership.

5. Reach out for support (i: or in community).

We're not meant to walk these transitions alone. Surround yourself with mentors, friends, and spaces that reflect your brilliance back to you.

6. And above all: never stop believing in yourself.

This year will move quickly. The more you trust your inner compass, the steadier your ride will be.

For the women feeling called to walk a deeper path of empowerment and embodiment this year, I've opened the doors to an online sanctuary — Rhythms of Remembrance: A nine-month journey into feminine embodied leadership. This experience is for the woman who is ready to birth a new way of living, loving, and leading: one rooted in harmony, authenticity, and connection to her body's wisdom.

If you'd like to learn more or connect with me directly, you can reach me at sophia@alkimiahealingarts.ca or visit my website alkimiahealing-arts.ca.

May this new year guide you toward clarity, courage, and a deeper remembrance of who you are.



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■ Looking Back ■

The Chronicle begins a new column, glancing back at some of the issues that made the news in Manor Park during January/February 75, 50 and 25 years ago.

FEBRUARY, 1951

Boundary Paving Planned: Big summer project slated

Welcome news to Manor Park residents is the announcement of plans for the paving of the boundary roads, with some excepted portions, and of the remaining streets in the built-up portion of the village this year.

The city works department, considering the boundary roads will be bus routes and subject to heavy traffic, is planning to lay asphalt on a concrete base, 40 feet wide, on Birch Ave. from Eastbourne to Sandridge Rd. along Sandridge to St. Laurent, and along St. Laurent to Eastbourne. The portions of Birch and St. Laurent left unpaved will not be hard-topped until they are no longer the main thoroughfare of cement-mixing trucks and other heavy construction vehicles which will be in use until building is completed in the southwest corner of the village and in the Manor Gardens-Alvin Heights sectors.

New executive takes office: eight elected

Election of the 1951 executive of the Manor Park Community Association took place at the January 25 meeting at the RCMP barracks auditorium, with the following placed in office: Lionel Tipple, Mrs. Valerie Parker, Capt. C. B. Christensen, H. S. Hodgins, Major A. E. Wood, Rogers Scrivener, Robert Young and G. Bailey. They will name a chairman at the first executive meeting.

Discuss Plans for Church

Looking to the future development of St. Columba's Anglican mission in Manor Park, parish officials discussed the building of a church in the area at the annual vestry meeting. Rev. John Stewart, rector of St. Margaret's, Eastview, and in charge of the mission, presided over the meeting. W. K. W. Baldwin was named chairman of a building fund committee which will review suitable plans for the church.

FEBRUARY, 1976

WINTER CARNIVAL 1976

Our Annual Winter Carnival will again run from Wednesday through to Saturday this year from: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11th to SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14th.

From Wednesday to Friday, all the programmes will be held in Manor Park School. On Saturday morning, we will again hold the Cross-Country Ski Relay Races that were so popular last year. In the afternoon is our traditional SKATING CARNIVAL on the skating rink at the school, and later movies are being planned for the children.

THE STORE WITH THE HAPPY ATMOSPHERE

"I have felt no need for a holiday" is Nick's way of saying how much he enjoys his work among us.

In fact, he hasn't been away during the 11 years that he has owned the Manor Park Grocery ... he works 14-1/2 hours each day. "While I have my health, I want to work hard and build a good country in Canada,"



he says.

The Saikaley family came to Canada from Lebanon about 18 years ago, but Nick's father soon returned home. He didn't want to adopt Canada as his country. Nick owned a restaurant on the Quebec side during those years, and there he learned the business. He married Lucy, and soon they moved to Ottawa and bought his present store. He always remembers a store in his home village that he visited as a child — it was "his" store.

JANUARY, 2001

Magic Holiday Concerts at Manor Park School

It was standing room only in the Big Gym at Manor Park School on Thursday evening, December 21, for the first of two holiday concerts — and that was with only half the school performing! With some 600 students and over 20 classes there had to be two separate performances.

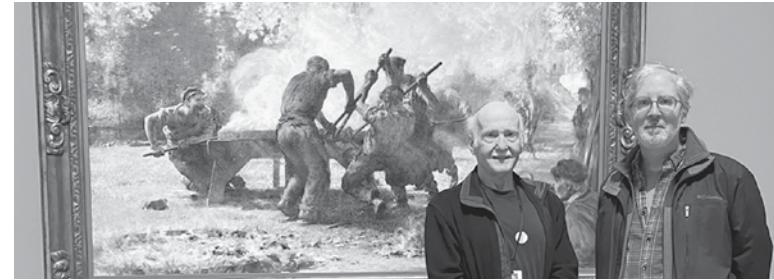
"Share the Manor Park Magic" has long been a motto of the school and this year's holiday concerts were indeed magical. The school has an excellent music programme this year, funded in part by the School Council, and taught by the amazing "Goyo" (a.k.a. Greg Mackintosh). The children performed with gusto a wonderful medley of songs to celebrate the season.

Amalgamation

The year 2000-2001 will be a time of major change around Cardinal Glen as the City of Ottawa amalgamates to form one city with the eleven surrounding municipalities that currently make up the Region of Ottawa-Carleton.

The initial effect of amalgamation is the change in our representation at City Hall following the election on November 13th. Where we once had two Councillors working at separate levels of municipal government, now we have one. Jacques Legendre, the previous regional councillor, won the election to become the first Councillor for Rideau/Rockcliffe (Ward 13) of the new City of Ottawa.

Secondly, the provincially appointed Transition Committee, led by Claude Bennett, is creating a new organization that will provide all the municipal services we receive as taxpayers and residents. These changes present several opportunities and challenges for communities such as ours. We may feel like a "small fish in a large pond", but by banding together with our neighbours throughout the larger Manor Park area, we can have a greater voice.



National Gallery of Canada docent Robert Sauve (left) poses in front of *The Smiths* by William Blair Bruce along with Chris Schaller (right), the winner of the 'Elbows Up' quiz featured in the Chronicle's September-October issue. PHOTO: SUBMITTED

Chronicle quiz winner enjoys National Gallery tour

By Robert Sauve

Our recent tour of the National Gallery focused on the radical changes in the art movements rooted in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. We ended the tour in the gallery featuring the painting, *The Smiths*.

Why is William Blair Bruce a Canadian artist worth viewing and contemplating? The National Gallery of Canada explains: "William Blair Bruce has come to be known as one of Canada's finest Impressionist painters, a position he earned through prodigious talent, stylistic exploration and astute exhibition planning. In both scale and subject, *The Smiths* is among his most significant paintings, works that find po-

etic moments in the everyday."

Bruce is noted as the first Canadian impressionist painter. He harnessed impressionist and the post-impressionist colours and gestures to the narrative mode of painting popular in Canada at that time.

Visit the National Gallery and see it in person to truly appreciate this masterpiece and, perhaps, enjoy a good moment of healthy wellbeing.

Even more appropriate are the facts that not only does *The Smiths* feature 'Elbows Up' poster boys, but also that William Blair Bruce was from Hamilton whose industrial culture, then and now, is captured in the motto: "Our product is steel, our strength is people!" Amen.

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GOOD DOG: Training, goals and key ingredients

By Gregory Thompson

Why is training your dog of critical importance?

The answer to this question is not as self-evident as one may have thought. Inexperienced owners, for example, may assume living with their dog's problems is what "normal" dog ownership is all about. Other dog owners may assume their dog's behavioural and obedience problems will somehow evaporate as the dog matures.

Neither of these assumptions withstand scrutiny. Rather than leading to success, the absence of a structured training environment where the trainer makes the decisions and where obedience and good manners are the rule, dogs very quickly begin making their own decisions, including competing with you and your family for the role of pack leader.

Fortunately, there is an alternative to the chaos of the structureless environment. It starts with recognizing the



dog is never the problem; rather, the dog owner bears responsibility for establishing the guardrails of good dog behaviour and obedience.

From there, the goal is very clear. Build a strong bond with and train your dog, using rewards and encouragement, to be an obedient, well-mannered and affectionate member of the household. Easier

said than done, I admit. But with some learning, coaching and effort, I am convinced this goal is well within reach of every dog owner and offers significant benefits to both owners and their dogs.

We will return to this last point presently. Next, we will explore the elements of a practical dog training goal and the foundation for it all; the human/dog bond.

Setting a training goal for you and your dog

Any road will suffice if you do not know where you are going. This is certainly the case when it comes to training dogs. Of course, the training goals of individual owners depends on their dog's intended purpose — companionship, hunting, guarding, agility, herding, assistance, etc. But there is a basic dog training goal all dog owners share which likely meets the needs of most households and also serves as a foundation for advanced levels of dog training. That goal is the training of your dog to the level of a companion dog.

What is a companion dog? In answering this question, we need to consider both dog obedience and dog behaviour.

Starting first with obedience, the Canadian Kennel Club (CKC) has published an authoritative standard for companion dog obedience in

Chapter 10 of the CKC's Obedience Trial & Rally Obedience Rules and Regulations. The standards for novice obedience, which are updated frequently, include a detailed description of what is expected at this level for walking at heel, standing, walking heel-free, recall, sit-stay, and group sit.

But basic obedience is only part of the companion dog story, albeit a critical one. Equally important here in training your companion dog is the task of ensuring your dog learns and adheres to a suite of essential behaviours. There is general agreement that, at a minimum, all well-behaved dogs are affectionate and gentle; are easily handled and groomed; show appropriate energy and drive; are house-trained; remain quiet, calm and non-destructive including when left alone; are well-behaved around children, other dogs and pets; travel well; and are a low escape risk. Readers may have additional expectations to those proposed here.

The human-dog bond

At the end of every dog-related discussion and field training session with my friend and mentor, Mike Ducross, he always says "Remember, I always want to see a happy dog!"

Mike is referring, of course, to the fact that the trainer and the dog are partners; the trainer is responsible for building and maintaining this partnership in a fair and respectful fashion. Most importantly, he would add, a strong human-dog bond is the foundation for shaping good dog behaviour and reliable obedience.

Our long-standing relationship with dogs is a symbiotic one. Across time, geography and cultures, dogs have played a role in supporting the full suite of mankind's physical, social and emotional needs.

But what about the benefits that dogs obtain from their bond with humans? Where humans have fully

embraced their leadership and welfare responsibilities for dogs, these benefits can be substantial. An unstructured environment in which the dog is left to make all the decisions is not only stressful for humans, but also extremely stressful for the dog and, as pointed out earlier, prompts the dog to challenge the humans for the role of pack leader. This stress disappears, however, in the presence of a human leader who can do the following:

- understand and communicate effectively with their dog;
- set the rules, teach the rules and then fairly enforce them in a humane fashion;
- show the dog what is expected in terms of good manners and obedience;
- regularly groom, train, play with and exercise the dog; and
- reward compliance.

Dogs truly benefit from the mutual well-being of living with their human leaders. They understand their leader's expectations and their own respective roles, they comply enthusiastically with all that is asked of them, and they are praised and rewarded for their effort. Under these conditions dogs do thrive.

Conclusion: In upcoming columns, we will explore techniques to strengthen the human-dog bond — especially communication. We will discuss essential training and other equipment, identify the fundamental strategies for obedience and behavioural training, and then discuss how to put these strategies into practice.

Until the next issue of the *Manor Park Chronicle*, my thanks to the many dog owners who have provided feedback on the Good Dog column. Remember, letters to the editor with your questions or suggestions are always encouraged.

Season's greetings to you and your family!

Obedience training tip

Here is an obedience training tip you may wish to practice with your dog. In the months ahead, training tips will be a regular feature of the Good Dog column.

Heeling and road safety: Walking on the left side of the road, facing the direction of oncoming traffic, places you and your dog in a safe position. The safest side to heel your dog is on your left, further away from the traffic. Allowing the dog to decide which side to heel on, as some handlers do, creates a po-

tential safety risk and makes recall to heel confusing for both dog and handler. Always insist on a left heeling position for your dog. Carrying treats in your left pocket creates an added incentive for your dog to walk on your left. Your dog will pick up on this new routine very quickly but you must be consistent. Walking your dog on your left side is an easy way for the handler to strengthen their leadership role, lower the potential for confusion on heeling and recall, and ensure a safe and happy walk!

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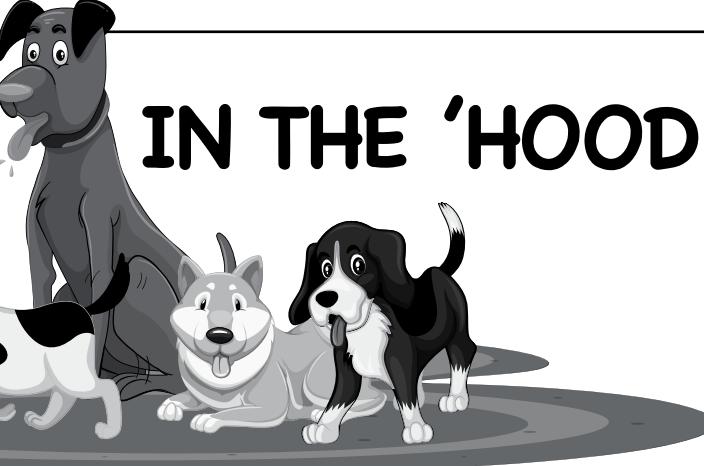
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DOGS IN THE 'HOOD




BENNY

Benny is a springer spaniel that was rescued almost four years ago. He loves any stuffed toy that he can hold on to and bring to anyone who comes to his home. He loves visitors and will suck up to anybody that is near, always looking for cuddles and attention. Benny wants to always be around his people and will climb right into your lap just to be close.



JEWL

Jewl is an 11-year-old morkie which is a cross between a Maltese and a Yorkshire terrier. She used to be a store dog for Chew-That on Beechwood Ave. Yet, she is very independent - she will be sure to greet everyone that enters but will then run away the second someone tries to pet her. She is just full of personality and loves to do whatever she wants.



ROMAN

Meet Roman, a rescue with distinctive German shepherd markings. His DNA testing report referred to Roman as a "super mutt" - with traces of not only German shepherd, but also collie and golden retriever. Originally from the Brockville area, he's believed to be between six to eight years old. He loves his forever Manor Park home, meeting new people and sitting on the couch staring out the front window.



ZOE

Zoe, a four-year-old Bernese mountain dog, can be seen frolicking through Manor Park - always with a smile on her face. She loves winter, treats, spending time with her family and especially playing with her fellow Manor Park pooches Cleo, Roscoe, Rosie, Bertie, Ollie, Maggie and Boo. Zoe loves her walks, especially in winter, and playing outside at least three times a day. Did we mention Zoe loves winter?

Winter Tips for Dogs

Although our canine companions have a built-in fur coat and enjoy being outside, they are not immune to the harsh, icy realities of winter in Ottawa like we've experienced so far.

Limit their exposure: When the mercury plunges, limit their exposure to freezing temperatures and blustery winds.

Keep on grooming: Being exposed to cold, wet weather followed by warm, dry indoor air, can lead to itchy, flakey skin. Brushing your dog's coat regularly will distribute natural oils throughout and help invigorate their skin.

Be mindful of sensitive paws: After a walk, always wipe down paws to avoid the temptation of having your dog lick them clean. Keep the hair between their paw pads and around the paws trimmed to prevent painful ice balls from forming. Keep those nails trimmed - too long and they tend to splay the paws while walking, making it easier for irritants to get between the pads.

Avoid contact with antifreeze: Watch for antifreeze spills and leakages as animals find it tasty and will consume if given the chance.

The Chronicle would love to feature your dog in our Dogs in the 'Hood column. Send digital photos (high resolution please) and a brief introduction to dogsinthegoode.chronicle@gmail.com We look forward to including your pooch in a future issue.

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Speak up, cont. from page 28

lies are moving in. Our demographics are changing. These realities demand that we prepare for the future, not cling to a past serving only some of us.

Dr. Eugenie Waters, a family physician and former Manor Park Community Association board member, noted that "despite very strong anti-sidewalk rhetoric, there are members of the community who have had to be quite brave to speak up publicly and say that they do need sidewalks."

I am one of those people. I suspect many others share my views but have remained silent, wary of the divisiveness this issue has created. It is time for us to speak up.

No deferral

In addition to the safety issues, deferring this project is fiscal-

ly irresponsible. The city has a construction contract in place. The streets are already being excavated for sewer and water main work. Installing sidewalks now, as planned, is the economical choice. A delay means either abandoning sidewalks entirely or requiring a costly, disruptive standalone project in the future. Neither option serves the community well.

What is the cost of continued inaction? We cannot quantify the value of a child's safe journey to school, a senior's independence, or a wheelchair user's dignity. But we can recognize these benefits matter profoundly.

I urge the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee, and ultimately council, to approve the sidewalks as planned. Let us be a commu-

nity that builds inclusively, prioritizes safety, and plans for all residents, not just those

whose voices have been loudest.

Let us make Manor Park a

welcoming, accessible neighbourhood for generations to come.



Youngsters enjoy kayaking along the river. PHOTO: SUBMITTED

ONEC summer camps now open for registration!

Summer may still feel far away, but at the Ottawa New Edinburgh Club (ONEC), preparations for an exciting season of outdoor adventure are already under way. Families across Ottawa know ONEC as one of the city's best destinations for youth camps — and spots fill up quickly every year.

If you're hoping to get your child into a high-quality, active, and confidence-building summer experience, this is your chance. Registration is now open at special early bird rates, and signing up ahead of the spring rush is the best way to guarantee your preferred weeks and benefit from discounted prices. Further discounts are offered for multiple camp

weeks, including across different sports offered, so you can put together a tailored program to suit your interests and needs.

Choose from unique outdoor sports and recreation camps at ONEC

Situated right on the Ottawa River, ONEC offers a unique waterfront environment where kids can explore, learn, and stay active in a variety of outdoor sports and recreation activities on the water, based from the NCC RiverHouse, as well as under the pines just across the parkway. With camps led by certified coaches and experienced instructors, safety and hands-on learning are always top priorities.

ONEC's programs give kids the chance to challenge themselves, grow their skills, and enjoy a summer filled with new friendships and unforgettable memories.

Camp Options for Ages 7-17

ONEC offers a variety of sports-focused camps for different age groups and interests: **Tennis camps** (ages ~7+), **Sailing camps** (ages ~9+), **Rowing camps** (ages ~11+), **Kayaking camps** (ages ~9+)

Learn more

For program information, registration links or sign-ups for summer camps, visit onec.ca, email info@onec.ca or call 613-746-8540.

Call-out for 'Meet Your Neighbour' submissions

Do you or does someone you know have an interesting story to tell? Perhaps they devote their time to worthy causes or contribute to their community in other ways. Maybe there's an interesting family history to share? We would love to hear from you.

The *Chronicle's* 'Meet Your Neighbour' column is designed to introduce readers to

fascinating people. Whether long-time residents of Manor Park or newcomers to the community, this is a fun and interactive way to get to know the individuals who make up our little part of Ottawa.

If you would like to participate or would like to nominate someone, please feel free to reach out to editor@manorparkchronicle.com with the

subject 'Meet Your Neighbour nomination'. One of the column coordinators — Jennifer Morin or Jennifer Elder — will get in touch and send a series of questions. How you answer them is up to you, with as much or as little detail as you like.

For more information or to view other 'Meet Your Neighbour' columns, visit [www.manorparkchronicle.com](http://manorparkchronicle.com).

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New Little Library takes hold in Manor Park

By Ryland Coyne

Manor Park's mini network of Little Free Libraries added to its numbers this fall. The latest chapter in this developing story was installed along Farnham Crescent near Birch Avenue.

"I wanted to bring a little bit of joy to my corner of Manor Park," says Leah, the library's creator.

She says a weekend project to build a "DIY library" from a design she found online took a bit longer than expected to complete. But with the help of neighbours "and my incredibly supportive husband Phil", the little library got done.

"It turns out there's a little more to carpentry than I bargained for, not to mention having to put the project on hold to have a baby," Leah explains.

Once built, the next challenge was installing it. That task fell to David Rondeau of Woody Woodpeckers Custom Decks and Renovations. He answered the online call for assistance and volunteered his services. "He dug the hole, and installed the library for free, as a gift to the community."

Concept

The little library concept is straightforward. Users stop by to view what's on the shelves,



The newest Little Free Library is open for business along Farnham Crescent near Birch Avenue. PHOTO: SUBMITTED

pick a book that grabs their attention, then, perhaps, replace it with one they've already read.

Leah says she's pleased with the results so far.

"I honestly wasn't too sure what to expect," she admits. "It's rare a day goes by when I don't see someone stopped outside the little library having a look. Whenever I go to



David Rondeau of Woody Woodpeckers Decks and Renovations poses next to the new Little Library he installed for Manor Park residents. It's located at the corner of Farnham Crescent and Birch Avenue.

PHOTO: FACEBOOK, MANOR PARK FRIENDS

check on it, new books have always appeared!"

The variety of books has also impressed.

"Kids books, fiction, non-fiction, French and English ... hopefully there's something for everyone," Leah says. "A thoughtful person even added some battery-operated lights inside!"

Bringing community together

As an added reward, Leah says she's noticed neighbours chatting with one another next to the friendly installation.

"I like to think it's something that can bring our community that little bit closer together."

Many Manor Park residents have lived in the neighbourhood for decades and look out for one another, she says.

"Manor Park is really special. I hope my little library can add to that positive community spirit."

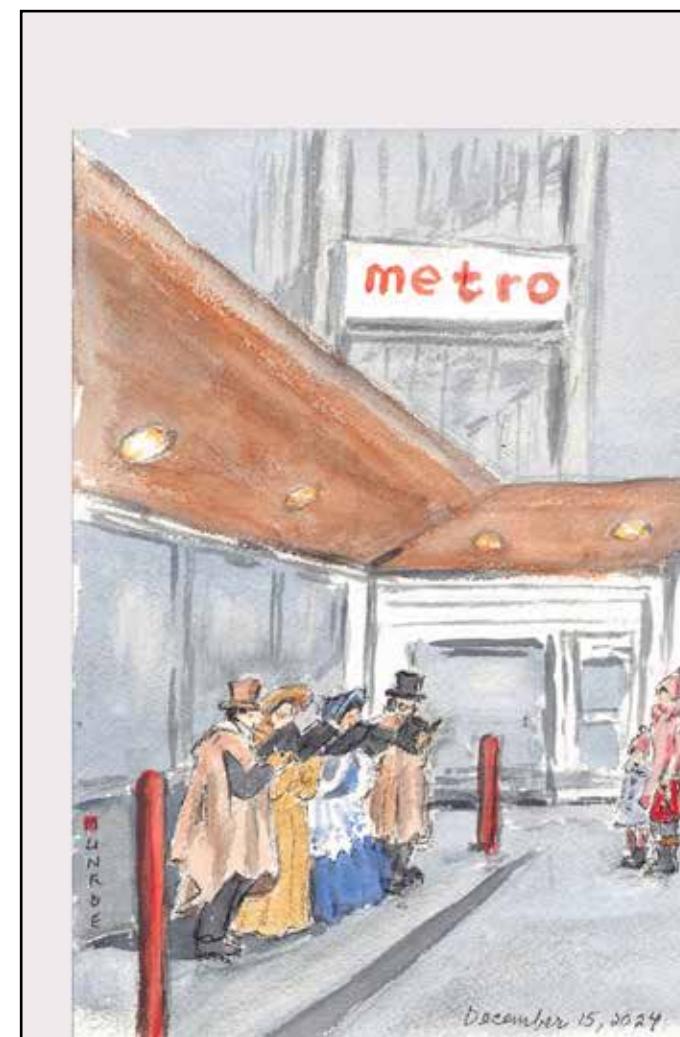
Leah says there are several other little libraries in Manor Park — along Hemlock Road, Braemar Street, Meadow Park Place, Gaspé Avenue and Alvin Road.

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Thousands of area residents took part in the annual Remembrance Day ceremony at the National Military Cemetery of the Canadian Forces in Beechwood Cemetery on Nov. 11. Top left, Officer Cadet Jean-Sébastien Gamache performs on the bagpipes; top right, Sailor First Class Halina Golka of the Royal Canadian Navy stands vigil at the Cenotaph; above, the large crowd gathers among the military headstones to attend the ceremony. PHOTOS: RYLAND COYNE



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St. Columba, cont. from page 27

Church of St. Bartholomew. It was a joy to welcome Sony and members of his family as well as friends.

January will mark the one-year anniversary of the arrival of Rev. Susan Lewis to St. Columba and we give thanks for her presence with us this past year and look forward to 2026.

New Year

The New Year is often a time when people try new things or make small or large changes in their lives. Perhaps one of those changes could be a visit to St. Columba for a Sunday Service. You will find a warm welcome, beautiful music and a meaningful message that is relevant to our lives today.

We have an exceptional Sunday School program and teacher, Becky Hynes, brings her many gifts and talents to this role. The children don't walk to Sunday School; they run with eagerness and anticipation.

In 2026 we look forward to continuing our delivery of non-perishable and fresh food items to the Emergency Food Bank at the Hub, hosting more dinners for the Veterans at Veterans' House, supporting families in need at Manor Park Public School, and being a positive presence and support in Manor Park.

We wish all the *Chronicle's* readers and their loved ones, a happy, healthy, prosperous and blessed New Year.

A New Year, a renewed commitment to community

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LUCILLE COLLARD**

The start of a new year is always a valuable moment to step back, reflect on what we've been through, and imagine what we can improve together. In Manor Park, I see a community that is supportive, energetic, and determined — a dynamism that inspires great hope for the year ahead.

Turbulent session at Queen's Park
At Queen's Park, the scandal involving the Skills Development Fund shaped much of the debate. Revelations about the misuse of public funds to benefit private interests shocked many Ontarians.

People deserve clear answers and real accountability. I remain committed to demanding greater transparency and ensuring that every public dollar truly supports families, workers, and communities like ours.

Laws passed too quickly

The session also saw a record number of bills rushed

through without thorough study or meaningful consultation. Some measures may be positive, but several raise serious concerns.

- Bill 33 – Centralizes power in the hands of the Minister of Education, reducing the ability of communities to be heard on issues that affect them directly.
- Bill 56 – Eliminates photo radar despite clear evidence that it keeps our streets and children safer.
- Bill 46 – Allows companies to more easily expire loyalty points, which many families rely on to save on groceries, gas, or holiday expenses.
- Bill 60 – Makes it easier to evict vulnerable tenants instead of offering a truly balanced approach.

A good news story: protecting our children online

Despite these challenges, one positive moment stood out: the unanimous adoption of my bill proclaiming the Month of Online Safety and Privacy Protection for Children. In a fast-evolving digital world, dedicating time each year to raise awareness, learn, and act to better protect our children is essential.

Looking ahead – together

As we move into 2026, I wish everyone in Manor Park a year filled with health, hope, and opportunities to strengthen our sense of community. Our daily gestures, volunteer commitments, and friendly exchanges at the park or the

grocery store shape the quality of life we are so proud of.

I look forward to seeing you around the community soon.

Wishing you all a happy and hopeful 2026!

Lucille

Le début d'une nouvelle année est toujours un moment privilégié pour prendre du recul, réfléchir à ce que nous venons de traverser et imaginer ce que nous pouvons améliorer ensemble. À Manor Park, je vois une communauté solidaire, énergique et déterminée, un dynamisme qui inspire beaucoup d'espérance pour l'année qui s'en vient.

Une session mouvementée à Queen's Park

À Queen's Park, le scandale entourant le Fonds de développement des compétences a marqué les débats. Les révélations sur l'utilisation abusive de fonds publics au profit d'intérêts privés ont choqué de nombreux Ontariens. Les citoyens méritent des réponses claires et une véritable reddition de comptes. Je reste déterminée à exiger plus de transparence et à faire en sorte que chaque dollar public serve réellement les familles, les travailleurs et les communautés comme la nôtre.

Des lois adoptées trop rapidement

La session a aussi vu un nombre record de projets de loi adoptés à toute vitesse, sans étude approfondie ni véritables consultations. Certaines mesures sont positives, mais plusieurs suscitent de vives préoccupations.

• Projet de loi 33 – Il centralise le pouvoir entre les mains du ministre de l'Éducation, au risque de réduire la voix des communautés sur les enjeux qui les touchent.

• Projet de loi 56 – Il élimine les radars photographiques malgré des preuves claires de leur efficacité pour protéger nos rues et nos enfants.

• Projet de loi 46 – Il permet aux entreprises de faire expirer plus facilement les points de fidélité, un soutien important pour de nombreuses familles.

• Projet de loi 60 – Il facilite les expulsions de locataires vulnérables au lieu d'offrir une approche réellement équilibrée.

marqué la session : l'adoption unanime de mon projet de loi proclamant le Mois de la sécurité et de la protection de la vie privée des enfants en ligne. Dans un monde numérique en constante évolution, il est essentiel d'offrir chaque année un temps dédié pour sensibiliser, apprendre et agir afin de mieux protéger nos enfants.

Regarder vers l'avant – Ensemble

À l'aube de 2026, je souhaite à tout Manor Park une année remplie de santé, d'espérance et d'occasions de renforcer notre sens de la communauté. Ce sont nos gestes quotidiens, nos engagements bénévoles et nos rencontres au parc ou à l'épicerie qui façonnent la qualité de vie dont nous sommes si fiers.

Bonne et heureuse année 2026 à toutes et à tous!

Lucille

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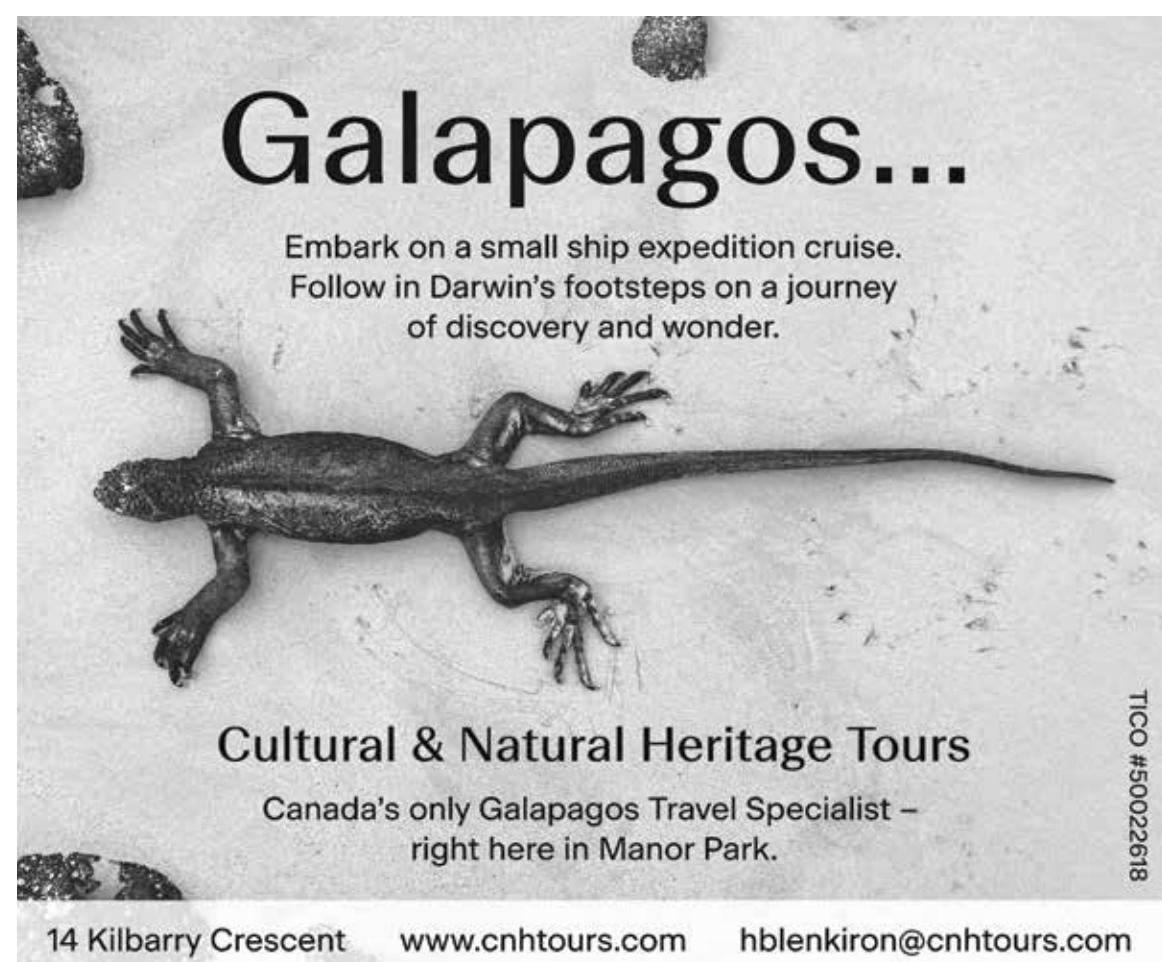
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Wildlife photographer Richard Birchett captured this stunning shot of a barred owl in the local woods.



Observing birds of prey in their natural environment has been a passion for wildlife photographer and Rockcliffe resident Richard Birchett. Here, he poses with some of his tools of the trade. PHOTOS: RICHARD BIRCHETT

For the love of owls

Local wildlife photographer Richard Birchett shares his passion for nature

By Christiane Kirkland

Meeting with Richard Birchett was a real delight: an award-winning ethical professional wildlife photographer, passionate about nature and a bird lover. I had the pleasure of interviewing him about his experience and expertise with owls. His eyes sparkle when

he talks about those beautiful birds of prey.

Richard, who currently resides in Rockcliffe, has been an avid bird watcher for 40 years. He photographs wildlife in its natural environment, without any sort of lures. Observing birds of prey has always been an interest for him, impressed by their beauty, elegance, grace, and their secretive nature.

His favorite owl is the Barn Owl, a native of his home in the countryside of Cornwall, UK. Owls have behavioural patterns, and once you know their habits, you can follow their whereabouts and be in the best position to observe and study them. Richard prides himself in his fieldcraft of his subjects.

Owls are crepuscular, hunting at dusk and dawn. When weather is bad, they may have to hunt during the day and risk being mobbed by other predators. Since they are territorial, if you happen to be in their way they may warn you off by flying by and flapping their wings. Remember, you are in their home. On the other hand, they can be very tolerant to humans, like the one Richard has recently

observed on his local patch, the friendly neighbourhood barred owl.

Unusual discovery

I asked Richard what his most unusual discovery was when observing the barred owl. "I saw this particular owl pick up a paper bag and a plastic bag, little logs and sticks and play with them, and witnessed pellet ejection. What was interesting to observe is its playful nature."

He noticed that an owl got used to him, flew close and landed next to him. "I knew him and he respected me. That was a special moment for me," he says.

What is crucial for Richard in observing and photographing wildlife is engaging with nature and respecting owls and other birds of prey and their environment.

"Give them space, approach them cautiously, read their behaviour, don't get too close, engage with your own eyes."

He is a firm believer of the health benefits and healing power of enjoying the outdoors, absorbing nature and listening to its sounds. Nature, in its different forms, makes us connect to life at its best!



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Community celebrates Vanier Hub opening

Seven-year effort culminates in open-air gathering place

By Ryland Coyne

It's a community space — open to all — almost seven years in the making.

The new Vanier Hub held its official kick-off on a chilly fall day, though the warmth of the welcome was felt by all those in attendance.

Located at 267 Marier Ave., the open-air facility is framed like a home. It features a common space for large gatherings, seating areas, a long table for chess and backgammon play, a children's play room and more.

"Welcome to the Hub," Nathalie Carrier, Vanier Business Improvement Area (BIA) Executive Director, announced on Nov. 20.

She told the crowd of close to 100 local and area residents, the idea of the hub was hatched seven years ago. Young people living at the nearby Ottawa Inn and area shelters had no place to play and congregate. There was a parking lot, however, located across from the Vanier Community Services Centre (CSC). Skateboard ramps were installed and the space began to emerge as one where families could gather.

The local transformation ultimately culminated in a \$188,700 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. With the vision of many dedicated people in the community, the area developed into what the hub is today. According to the CSC, the total value of the project — from volunteer hours, in-kind donations, expert contributions as well as grant money — tops \$550,000.

"We're not just celebrating a new space today, we're celebrating the realization of dreams," Carrier said. "Not just our dreams (BIA and

CSC) but the dreams of this community, of the children who will come through here, the women who now have a place to take their kids.

"This is our house, everybody's house, everybody is welcome at the Hub and everyone is welcome in Vanier. We have made efforts for the last seven years to make sure this place is inclusive for all and today is just the culmination of it."

Many volunteers

According to a press release, close to 140 volunteers were involved in the Hub's development. These included architecture students from Carleton University, residents, and community members. In all, a total of 11,000 volunteer hours were contributed to the project.

Andrée-Anne Martel, Executive Director of the Vanier CSC, thanked the Carleton University Architecture Action Lab "team" for their tireless support, for listening to what the community was looking for and for delivering on those dreams. Municipal, provincial and federal "partners" were also key, as were the local volunteers, contributors and sponsors.

Ottawa Mayor Mark Sutcliffe praised the community for helping bring the project together.

"I've been to this space many, many times and to see it dressed up like this — this is absolutely beautiful. I'm so inspired by it because this is what community is all about," he said. "People come together, they take a little corner of the world and they beautify it, they make it inviting, they make it a warm place for everybody."

Special recognition

Carrier introduced Grand-



Mayor Mark Sutcliffe and Sally El Sayed, Carleton University Architecture Action Lab project co-lead, help cut the ribbon to officially launch the Vanier Hub.



Volunteer students and community members join Ottawa Mayor Mark Sutcliffe (centre) along with project co-leads professor Menna Agha (left) and Sally El Sayed (right) of the Carleton University School of Architecture Action Lab, prior to the Vanier Hub's ribbon-cutting. PHOTO: RYLAND COYNE



Nathalie Carrier (left), Executive Director of the Vanier BIA and Andrée-Anne Martel (right), Executive Director of the Vanier Community Services Centre, serve as co-hosts for the Vanier Hub opening. PHOTOS: RYLAND COYNE



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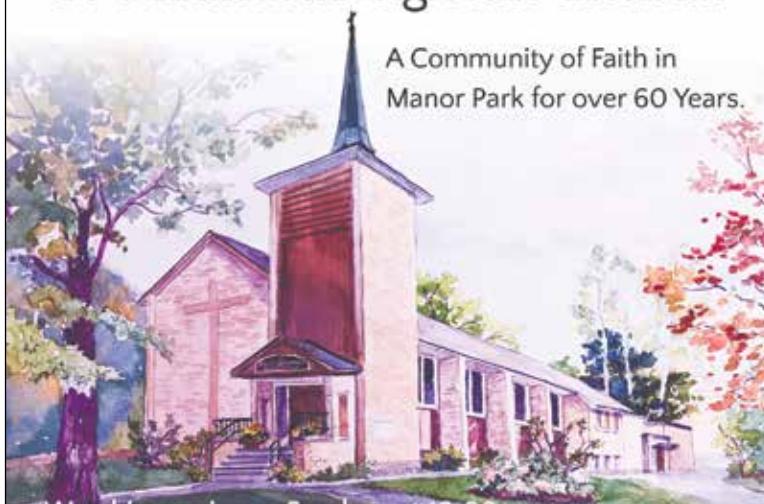
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Our January meeting will be immediately followed by our Annual General Meeting for members only. Free parking and refreshments.

For more info contact Connie constance_nunn@yahoo.com or go to ottawahumane.ca/get-involved/volunteering/ohs-auxiliary/.

Snowsuit Fund 50/50 raffle

The Snowsuit Fund is thrilled to kick off its 5th annual 50/50. For the City raffle, giving one lucky supporter the chance to win a life-changing jackpot that could exceed \$500,000, while helping keep children across Ottawa warm all winter. Past raffles have delivered extraordinary payouts, with winners taking home \$400,000 or more and even surpassing \$500,000. Grand Prize Draw: Friday, Jan. 16, 2026 at 9 a.m.

Tickets are now on sale at 5050forthecity.com. Bundles



The Manor Park Community Council's annual Children's Holiday Market and Holiday Night Market were both successful on Dec. 5, thanks to the generosity of donors, and the participation of volunteers, vendors as well as shoppers. PHOTO: DOUG BANKS

start at 5 for \$10 and go up to 500 for \$100. Every ticket sold grows the jackpot and directly funds snowsuits for local kids, reducing the impact of poverty on children, youth, and families in our community.

Snowflake breakfast success

On Friday, Dec. 5, the community proudly came together for the 20th edition of the Snowflake Breakfast. This is an annual fundraising event

benefiting the Partage Vanier Food Bank of the Vanier Community Services Centre (CSC Vanier), held at the Pauline-Charron Centre.

With great enthusiasm, the CSC Vanier team, joined by volunteers and the founding members of this signature event, announced that the original fundraising goal of \$55,000 had been greatly surpassed. Thanks to the remarkable generosity of the commu-

nity, an impressive \$111,000 was raised to support the vital mission of the Partage Vanier Food Bank.

"The Snowflake Breakfast brings our community together," noted Andrée-Anne Martel, Executive Director of Vanier CSC. "The generosity shown fills us with hope and pride to be part of such a caring community."

Smart Aging Core Program

The Council on Aging in Ottawa hosts the Online Smart Aging Core Program, an eight-week education course covering key topics facing older adults today.

Each workshop is designed to provide you with the information you need, before you need it, to make smart decisions at key transition points in your later life. Each week, participants will take an active role in preparing for these transitions by assigning themselves homework on the topic presented.

This program runs Mondays, from Jan. 12 through March 9, 2026, from 10 a.m. to noon. To register, visit <https://sa-core-program-online-20260112.raiselysite.com/>

Canadian Blood Services seeks plasma donors

Plasma, which makes up over

half of our blood, is urgently needed to make lifesaving medication called immunoglobulins.

For more information or to book an appointment, visit blood.ca or the GiveBlood app.

MPCC Game Night themes

January: Blood on the Clocktower — a game of murder and mystery, lies and logic, deduction and deception for up to 15 courageous players and one devious storyteller. Registration is mandatory. Limited to ages 16+ due to the dark theme.

January 22 at The Studio, 1805 Gaspe, 7-9:30 p.m., \$5 per person

February: Code Names — a popular party board game that combines clever wordplay and teamwork is offered 'tournament-style'. Bring along someone you know well because communication is key to Code Names success. No experience is needed. Ages 12+.

February 26 at The Studio, 1805 Gaspe, 7-9 p.m. Free!

Game Nights take place on the fourth Thursday of each month. Hosted by local board game enthusiasts and local retailers from Meeple and Sheep.

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