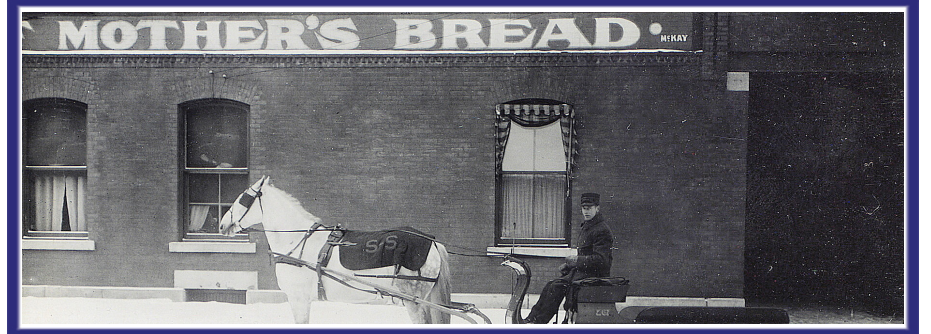




Decorating Dundonald, 10



Heritage horsepower home deliveries, 3

THE CENTRETOWN BUZZ

A better winter deal for pedestrians?

Alayne McGregor

This month, you can tell the City of Ottawa what your priorities are for clearing sidewalks, paths, and roads in the winter months—with an emphasis on keeping pedestrians, transit users, and cyclists safe.

The city's current Winter Maintenance Quality Standards, which determine how soon and how frequently the city clears snow and ice, date back to 2003, shortly after amalgamation. They've been criticized for concentrating on clearing roads for motorists – and for simply failing to keep up with several recent winters with heavy, repeated snowfalls, freezing rain, and below-normal temperatures.

For example, the current standards specify that, after 5cm of snow has fallen, collector and arterial roads will be cleared within six hours of the last snowflake having fallen, but busy sidewalks could wait 16 hours for a plow.

At virtual workshops being held January 25 to 28, city staff will unveil proposed new standards, which will focus on "sidewalks and pathways, reducing rutting on residential roads, roads next to schools with no sidewalks and roads with bus stops." The project website said these changes will improve winter maintenance of



Should the city clear stairs, like these ones on the Corktown Bridge, in the winter? That's one issue up for debate in the city's current review of its winter maintenance quality standards. Have your say this month in virtual workshops. *BRETT DELMAGE/THE BUZZ*

residential roads, pedestrian walkways, cycle paths, and multi-use paths.

The public will be able to participate in the workshops. You can register for a workshop and fill out a survey at engage.ottawa.ca/wmq

In March, city staff will issue a summary of resident feedback and preferred options for the standards. The final version of the proposed new standards will be released in September for City Council approval. Any funding for improved snow clearing next winter would need to be approved next fall in

the 2022 budget.

Why the new standards? It's because Ottawa residents have moved from single-person cars to transit, walking, and cycling, the city website says, and have "come to rely on year-round access to these options and face challenges when mobility is obstructed for prolonged periods."

As well, the 2003 standards did not consider "issues like climate change, accessibility, equity, gender, sustainability, injury prevention, healthy living and livability," it said.

cont on p 3

Solutions wanted for West Centretown's "food desert"

Victoria Welland

A recent study commissioned by the Somerset West Community Health Centre (SWCHC) has shed new light on food insecurity in the area, a problem which is only growing with COVID-19.

[The Food Security Feasibility Study](#), published on November 24, highlights the scarcity of affordable, healthy, and accessible food in West Centretown. The study says the area can be classified as a "food desert" since the closure of the Loeb grocery store on Booth Street in 2006.

But not everyone agrees with this classification, including a local business improvement association (BIA).

According to a [2013 report from Health Canada](#), food deserts are "areas where vulnerable populations have poor geographic access to nutritious food."

The SWCHC commissioned the study in response to feedback from the area's low-income residents on the accessibility and affordability of food. According to the study, 28.2 percent of the area's residents are classified as low-income, compared to the Ottawa average of 12.6 percent.

The study recommends establishing food kiosks as an interim solution and

ultimately creating a community food store to address the problem in the long term. "A kiosk could mean a small section, a shelf or an aisle that starts to carry fresh produce and other staples," Pei-Ju Wang, a community health promoter at the SWCHC, explained in an email.

As the kiosks would operate inside local grocery and convenience stores, this option would require "buy-in from local BIA and other agencies supporting local businesses in the neighbourhood," according to the study.

"Our next step is to speak with local businesses," wrote Wang. "We know it's been a difficult time for small businesses and our hope is that this initiative could lead to further collaboration and investment in the West Centretown business community."

Chinatown not considered?

But Grace Xin, the executive director of the Somerset Street Chinatown BIA in Centretown West, is concerned that the report doesn't reflect what stores in that area offer.

"There was no consultation with the business community," she said. "We were not interviewed, we were not invited to the discussion, so that's our concern."

cont on p 4

Comment

"Plain Jane" monster skyscrapers don't deserve landmark status

Jack Hanna

Jarring, massively intrusive skyscrapers are proposed for a Centretown heritage neighbourhood.

Taggart O'Connor Corp. has applied to the city to erect a pair of skyscrapers, 28 and 30 storeys tall, at the corner of Gilmour and O'Connor. The skyscrapers would stick up like the proverbial sore thumb in a neighbourhood of elegant old houses and mid-rise buildings.

The site is located in the Centretown Heritage Conservation District; the red brick podium base is a concession to this.

Taggart does have the right to build towers up to 27 storeys on this particular lo-



The podium of the proposed 267 O'Connor development

cation, 267 O'Connor Street, because of the quirky outcome of a legal battle over the site several years ago.

However, the new towers, exceeding even that limit, would be a monster-sized violation of both the character of the neighbourhood and the district's zoning.

The surrounding dis-

trict's zoning calls for four storeys. Along O'Connor, the Centretown Secondary Plan (part of the city's Official Plan) allows up to nine storeys. The proposed towers would exceed that by well over three times.

The secondary plan explicitly mentions 267 O'Connor

cont on p 5

January 15, 2021 — Vol. 26, No. 1

THE CENTRETOWN BUZZ

AT THE HEART OF OTTAWA SINCE 1995.

101-210 Gloucester St.
Ottawa, ON
K2P 2K4
Phone: 613-565-6012

centretownbuzz.com
twitter.com/centretownbuzz
facebook.com/centretownbuzz

BUZZ Staff

Managing editor: Alayne McGregor
editor@centretownbuzz.com

Associate editor: Eleanor Sawyer

City Editor: Robert Smythe
cityskyline@centretownbuzz.com

Distribution manager: Archie Campbell
circulation@centretownbuzz.com

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Centretown BUZZ is created and distributed in Centretown, Ottawa, located on traditional and unceded Algonquin land.

NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of *The BUZZ* will be published Feb. 12. Deadline for ads and submissions: Feb. 1. ISSN 1204-1604

ADVERTISING

The BUZZ is proud to offer an effective advertising medium that reaches 10,000 Centretown homes and businesses each month. Our competitive advertising rates are as low as \$31 per issue.

View our rate card and publishing dates at centretownbuzz.com/advertising.

For more information, email ads@centretownbuzz.com or call 613-565-6012.

Thank you to our volunteer carriers

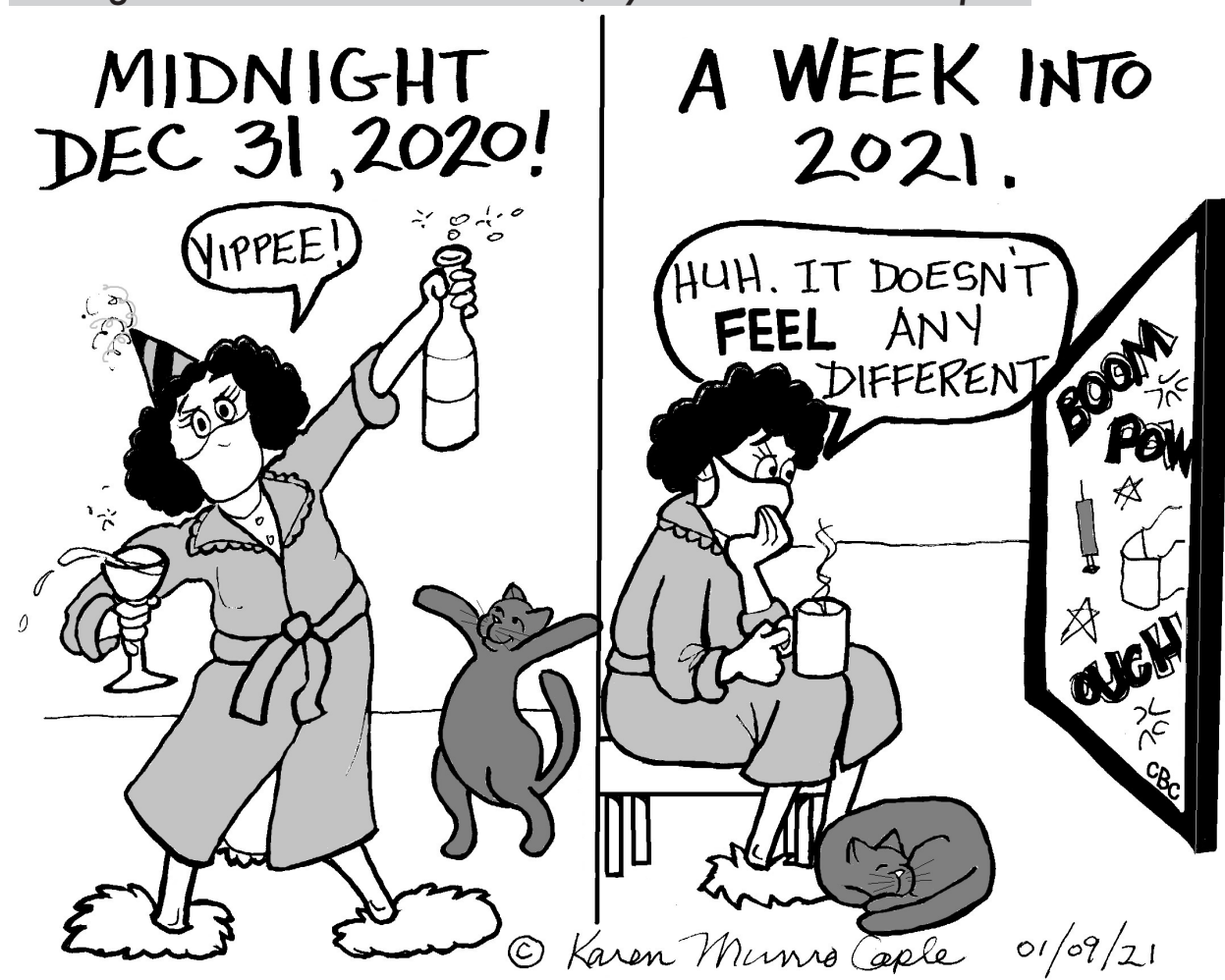
Ahmed Shalabi, Amanda Asquith, Anne O'Connor, Archie Campbell, Arwyn Holmes, Bayne Pearen, Betty Gregory, Brendan Hennigan, Brent McLean, Brett Delmage, Carol Sissons, Cassidy Beers, Catharine Vandelinde, Catherine Boucher, Charles Akben-Marchand, Chris Edwards, Craig Layng, Colleen McGuire, David Seaborn, Debbie Barton, Diane Holmes, Don Smith, Drina Wethey, Eleanor Sawyer, Emily Graves, Emma Chamberlain, Glynda Newton, James Bruce, Jennifer Bedwell, Kathleen Oliver, Kenney Vandelinde, Kim Malcolm, Laura Mueller, Michael Hatfield, Michael Powell, Michelle Kirkman, Mike Gregory, Mindy Sichel, Neil Parkinson-Dow, Pam Gahan, Pat Shaulis, Patricia Marsden-Dole, Robert Smythe, Ruth Barrie, Shelley Pearen, Suzanne Nash, Venita Warren, Wendy Bennett, Wendy Hunter, Wendy Sewell, Zsafia Orosz

To join our distribution team, please call 613-565-6012 or email circulation@centretownbuzz.com

The Centretown BUZZ is published by the Centretown BUZZ Board of Directors, a group consisting of community members representing all residents of Centretown.

The Centretown BUZZ operates under the guidelines of the Canadian Copyright Act.
© 2021 The Centretown BUZZ

The Lighter Side of the Pandemic, by Karen Munro-Caple



The Good, the Bad, and the Bumpy: we need to step up the lockdown

Ryan Lythall

Happy 2021! I hope you all had a good New Year's Eve and are enjoying the New Year so far.

As I write this, we're once again in lockdown and the number of people with COVID-19 continues to rise. We're not off to a great start this year.

Some of you may recall that, when Premier Ford announced the second lockdown, Mayor Jim Watson quickly responded that Ottawa shouldn't have to be in the lockdown for 28 days due to our (then) low numbers of people with COVID-19.

Since the lockdown has started again, there seem to be many people fighting against it or downright ignoring it.

Over the holidays, I saw many photos and videos of people gathering without masks or any type of physical distancing. One example was the skating rink outside Ottawa City Hall. There have been several videos of people sitting on benches near each other. Some were wearing masks, while others wore them like a chin strap, face uncovered.

I understand that people need to go out for both their physical and mental health. But it's clear that some people continue to ignore the request to wear masks and keep their distance, especially around strangers.

I hate to say this but I think Ottawa needs to step up in terms of stricter lockdown measures. Our numbers are continuing to rise, and unless Mayor Watson and the city do something, I

predict that the number of cases will continue to grow and the lockdown will be extended.

The longer the city chooses to do nothing, the more risk you're putting on those who need to use public transportation to get to their jobs or to go out for groceries and other necessities.

As for people with disabilities and the immuno-compromised, many of us have stayed home. Yet, while we're sitting at home, we see all these people going out and only thinking of themselves.

Mayor Watson, if you genuinely want the numbers to go back down, more needs to be done by you.

The sooner that happens, the sooner we can all get back to business.

Follow Ryan on Twitter: [@rolling_enigma](https://twitter.com/rolling_enigma)

From the managing editor's desk

Alayne McGregor

The Centretown BUZZ is online-only this month. *The BUZZ* board made this difficult decision in early January, after careful consideration, because of the current lockdown and the increasingly dire news from Ottawa's medical officer of health. We did not want to put our volunteer delivery team at risk.

In the hope that conditions improve, we are currently planning to go back to print in February. We hope this edition of *The BUZZ* will provide you with some upbeat alternatives to all-COVID news.

In the meantime, please wear your masks, keep two metres distance from those not in your household, wash your hands, stay as well as we can in these stressful and frustrating times, and get vaccinated when you can.

We have a request for you: please push *The BUZZ*! Let your friends, your relatives, your neighbours know that *The BUZZ* is still here for their reading pleasure. Send them the link to our website so they can read the paper online or print it themselves. And patron-

ize our advertisers if you can.

In a month when we've seen mob rule, violent insurrection, and a disregard for the truth in the United States, let's celebrate the current City of Ottawa review of winter maintenance quality standards. (See our story on page 1.)

The review has come about as a result of both citizens speaking up, and the city listening.

After the particularly dangerous winter of 2018-2019, citizens made it clear that we needed better snow clearing. The city—pushed by central-area councillors—responded with more frequent clearing and gritting, and machines that could remove built-up ice.

That has resulted in noticeably safer winter walking conditions, though by no means perfect. We still see bike lanes filled with snow and ice blocks, and dangerously icy patches on sidewalks.

And this is not just an impression: For the past few years, the Snow Moles program of the Council on Aging has been collecting and compiling pedestrians' reports on the actual conditions on local sidewalks and paths, writing year-

ly reports, and regularly feeding the information into the city. This facts-based approach has allowed us to get a better idea of what's really under our feet and where the winter barriers are.

Later this month, city staff will present their proposals for revised winter maintenance standards. You can learn more about them and respond at virtual consultation meetings. Building on what's already been accomplished, it's now our responsibility to carefully evaluate those standards, see if they're workable, check if anything needs to be added, and let our councillors know what the final standards should look like—for everyone's safety.

And we can hope that Ottawa City Council will take the same attention to community concerns in other areas important to Centretowners. Democracy depends on transparency, accountability, clear adherence to stated policies, lack of favouritism, and, many times, the willingness to keep talking and listening in order to find a reasonable solution.

As British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan said, "Jaw, jaw is better than war, war."

Skyline: Heritage horsepower home deliveries

Robert Smythe

Winter conditions usually halted the limited number of motor cars moving about Ottawa's streets in the first decade of the twentieth century. That is when the horse regained its position as the undisputed king of the road.

The J. Templeton, Centre Town Livery, Hack & Sale Stable - "Victorias, Broughams, Landaus, Tally-Ho Coaches, &c, &c" oper-

ated at 68 Queen Street, between Elgin and Metcalfe.

At the time that these photos were taken in the winter of 1910, the livery stable was run by Thomas Rogers. They furnished all manner of horse-drawn conveyances. The tally-ho coaches sound like a lot of fun.

This livery stable also provided equine services to local businesses like these cab, dairy, and bakery rigs pictured here.

All photos: City of Toronto Archives



Ottawa Dairy Co.'s grey mare and sleigh number 15, December 30, 1910. The dairy was located in a large facility on Somerset Street, just west of Bank, and maintained some home milk delivery by horse until the 1940s, although by then the open cart had been exchanged for a covered box wagon.



Grey gelding and open delivery sleigh of Slinn-Shouldis, December 30, 1910. This bakery operated from a brick row on the west side of Bank, between Slater and Bank. Our neutered steed wears a horse blanket monogrammed with an S-S. Mother's Bread was one of their favourite offerings. The building is still there and bears the firm's name in a stone tablet.



Jewel and Hinton's cab sleigh, December 29, 1910. The bowler hatted driver is bundled up against the winter weather in a raccoon coat. He is at the helm of a pretty swanky coach. The passengers remained cozy inside this sweet ride.

City review concentrates on winter clearing of sidewalks, paths, bus stops



New city sidewalk plowing policies, combined with a so-far mild winter, have left an easy-to-walk surface for pedestrians on Cartier Street. BRETT DELMAGE/THE BUZZ

created major challenges in getting around.

It concluded that the extreme weather of that winter "merely exposed existing challenges in the city's Winter Maintenance Operations. ... the problems that arose relating to winter maintenance were not unique in their nature; they deviated only in degree from issues residents have been experiencing consistently in recent years."

Problems pedestrians faced

- The report specified many challenges;
- uneven and unsafe walking surfaces on sidewalks, because ice and compacted snow wasn't cleared soon enough
 - uncleared bus stops, making it a struggle to board and exit buses, especially for people with limited mobility
 - side streets that became so plugged with snow that they were reduced to a single through lane, reducing car and fire truck access
 - icy road ruts so large they damaged the undercarriage of cars
 - snowbanks in front of driveways left behind by snow plows and not removed, which become so compacted and ice-laden that they couldn't be moved by residents
 - frozen-over catch basins and sewers that were not cleared, leading to water pooling and flooding, and creating dangerously slippery conditions for pedestrians
 - multi-use paths along the canal that were not sufficiently cleared, becoming frozen and slushy.

"Superior snow clearance" last year

The city did increase its winter maintenance budget in 2019-20: hiring more staff, adding 10 new icebreaker machines and new blades on sidewalk plows to handle ice better, making grit and salt more available, and introducing catch basin heat maps.

The result, Menard's report said, was "superior snow clearance" for residents last year.

What to look for

How can you evaluate the proposed new city standards? Here are two sets of recom-

mendations to consider.

Menard's report recommended five principles for urban snow clearing:

Accessibility: ensuring access to sidewalks, crosswalks, pathways and bus stops for all, and in particular for residents with mobility issues.

Equity: decisions as to which sidewalks, bicycle lanes, pathways, laneways and roads get priority snow clearance must be made so that residents are treated equitably, regardless of gender, age, income level or mode of transportation.

Sustainability: city operations must support and encourage efforts to reduce the city's carbon footprint by not giving a higher level of service to roads. Operations should be conducted in the most environmentally friendly way possible, including using less salt and incorporating more electric vehicles.

Climate Change Resiliency: winter operations must respond faster and be more flexible because climate change has drastically and irreparably changed Ottawa's weather patterns.

A Healthy and Livable City: Residents need to be able to get outside, be active, avoid social isolation and live in community with other Ottawans throughout the entire year. Winter operations must allow for active lifestyles and vibrant communities.

"The urgency of ensuring safe walkability"

The Snow Moles program of the Council on Aging (CoA) has volunteers conduct walkability audits every winter and has channeled this data to the city to demonstrate "the urgency of ensuring safe walkability in winter." (See *The BUZZ* story on Snow Moles on page 6.)

Janet Luloff, the chair of the CoA subcommittee that runs the Snow Moles program, said that the council has been pushing for a review of the city winter maintenance standards for several years and, particularly, sidewalk clearing standards.

She said that her subcommittee was very hopeful that the standards would improve because, based on the information the CoA

and other groups gave the city, "we did see an improvement last year. That shows a will to improve."

Snow Moles' 2020 recommendations

In its 2020 final report, the Snow Moles project made six recommendations:

1. **prioritize safety and put pedestrians first** in city snow clearance from Class B (snow packed) to Class A (bare pavement) on high density residential sidewalks.
2. **train sidewalk plow operators** about key issues related to safety, especially for senior pedestrians, those using mobility aids, and children.
3. **remove snowbanks** on residential streets before they become hazardous to pedestrians and before thawing and freezing into ice buildup that is difficult to remove and dangerous to walk on.
4. **plow to connect sidewalks to transit stops**, corners and curbs to pedestrian crossings, and residential streets to pathways.
5. **solve ice build-up problems** due to plowing and freeze-thaw cycles, such as ensuring that drains are kept clear
6. **improve safe access to city parks** through the winter months.

Do homeowners have a role?

Some cities, such as Toronto, require that homeowners shovel the sidewalk in front of their houses, a system that might produce very uneven snow clearance depending on when homeowners were available.

Luloff said the city should be clearing sidewalks on city property because of the burden it might put on homeowners without the physical capacity to shovel heavy snow. "We don't know who's living in that home. It could be someone who's handicapped, it could be somebody who's elderly, who doesn't have the capacity perhaps to even do their own driveway."

If homeowners were encouraged to clear sidewalks and drains when they could, and "they wanted to do it for exercise, why not? But to make it a requirement? That's a whole different thing."

2018-19 wasn't uniquely miserable

His report was based on consultations that he and other urban councillors, including Councillor Catherine McKenney, had with residents in 2019, after a miserable winter that

cont from p 1

Capital Ward Councillor Shawn Menard issued a [report in February 2020](#) about the problems with the city's current "outdated" winter maintenance standards.

It said that "Ottawans from across the city, and especially within the urban wards, are turning towards sustainable modes of transportation to a greater degree. As they walk, bike or take transit, they are no longer willing to have their transportation and winter maintenance needs relegated to a lower class than the desires of those choosing to drive private vehicles."

Planet of the Scapes: new starts

Pearl Pirie

This month I try to recreate an English trifle made by co-worker Mary Sullivan circa 1997. I've never had a trifle as good before or since. I can't completely replicate it, but I can make it safe for dairy.

After winter solstice has always struck me as an odd place to start a year. Spring equinox makes more sense as is done in Korea, Japan, China, and Iran. With so much going on, I'm taking it one tiny bit at a time. So what better time than for tapas at home? They're a good alternative to chips or popcorn with the movies.

Dig out the stores of relish, pickles, and chutneys, frozen herbs, and scape pestos, as well as croustades shells.

Side Dish: Croustades

If you can dream it, you can fill it. Make each a unique creation. Make a tray of options and each person can fill their own shells.

They get soggy if made too long ahead. To do ahead, stick in a baby spinach leaf as a liner.

Possible filling combos:

Chard a New Course: Swiss chard leaf, sweet potato, mustard, nutritional yeast, pepper, mayo

Mini-East: olives, hummus, cucumber, hard cheese

Get Stuff: bread-onion stuffing, chutney or cheese spread, and red pepper jelly

Bedevilled: egg salad or tofu spread, scape pesto, and capers

Mid-East: zucchini relish, baba gannoush, sliced pickled ginger or pickled radish

Sweeties: cream cheese, sprinkle of cardamom, sliver of strawberry berries and jam

Monkeying: nut butter and banana, sunflower seeds

Micro-tacos: refried beans, salsa, chopped parsley, jalapeños or hot pepper flakes

Easty does it: sticky rice, slips of avocado, sesame seeds, vegan caviar



English trifle.

PEARL PIRIE/THE BUZZ

Dessert: English Trifle (dairy-free)

If you can eat egg, use an angel food cake. If not, whip up a non-egg angel: <https://www.justapinch.com/recipes/dessert/cake/eggless-angel-food-cake.html>

For this dessert, a large glass dish can show off the layers. The deeper, the more layers. Tear or slice the cake into

smallish wedges.

Make a serving of custard with Frye's powder (no dairy, no eggs) according to package directions, but add a teaspoon of vanilla or almond extract for an extra flavour boost.

Melt 8 squares of semi-sweet baking chocolate over a double-boiler, adding about half that amount of almond milk.

• 2 cups frozen berries, thawed and mashed

• 2 Tbsp of berry jam
• 1 can of whipped coconut cream
• 2 to 3 packages of fresh fruit (6 oz each of blueberries, raspberries, strawberries, expecting to use half)

• 1 sliced banana or kiwi (optional)
• a sprinkle of brandy for the cake (optional)

On the bottom of the dish put about half the custard. Put half the mixture of mashed fruit and jam.

Layer the fresh fruit and cake, followed by more mashed fruit and custard.

If your dish is deep enough, or your family large enough, repeat the layers. Add whipped coconut cream on top. Drizzle with the cooling chocolate and decorate with more berries.

This is a great presentation for Zoom or for a special-occasion birthday or Valentine's Day.

Pearl Pirie's fourth poetry collection, footlights, is getting good reviews! Get your copy: www.radiantpress.ca/shop/footlights

*Author site: www.pearlpirie.com
Keep washing your hands, phone, and masks. Get the vaccine when you can.*

Centretown West a food desert?



Chinatown grocery stores.

BRETT DELMAGE/THE BUZZ

cont from p 1

Smaller grocery stores like Kowloon Market have serviced Chinatown since 1998. "We have a lot of grocery stores in Chinatown," said Xin. "When they talk about what is affordable, we need a clear definition," she said. "The report is a waste of money from my point of view."

Despite this, Xin said that she and the SWCHC have discussed working together in the future.

Another food support for the neighbourhood

The Parkdale Food Centre has found a way to both work with local businesses affected by COVID-19 and address food insecurity. At the start of the pandemic, the centre launched an initiative called Cooking for a Cause.

The goal of the initiative

is to provide "food that's nourishing, culturally appropriate, and fresh," according to Megan Aubin, the project's coordinator. Cooking for a Cause works with 27 social service agencies to address the immediate problem of food insecurity made worse by COVID-19.

Twenty restaurants, cafes, caterers, and grocery stores have partnered with the project to provide fresh meals to those in need. This approach helps to both address hunger and support local businesses struggling to remain open in the pandemic.

Since the start of the pandemic, they have delivered 87,875 meals, 10,537 soups, and 13,227 breads and bagels. "Is food going to get wasted? Are people not going to be able to eat," Aubin said about her holiday meal deliveries. "If the answer is yes, then I'll keep working."

SWCHC Executive Director Naini Cloutier said they are "deeply grateful" for the work of the Parkdale Food Centre.

"Somerset West Community Health Centre receives 100 hot meals every weekday and 250 meals for the weekends," she wrote in an email. "People now know there is a reliable food source. There is dignity in knowing where your next meal is going to come from."

Catherine McKenney • City Councillor for Somerset Ward

Don't let up on COVID-19 precautions!

For updates on Ottawa's COVID-19 response, including resources and best practices, please visit: www.ottawapublichealth.ca



Keep in touch!

For the latest news on Somerset Ward, sign up for my newsletter at catherinemckenney.ca and follow me on social media:

[f mckenneycatherine](https://www.facebook.com/mckenneycatherine) [t cmckenney](https://twitter.com/cmckenney) [i cmckenney14](https://www.instagram.com/cmckenney14)

Questions? We can help!

613-580-2484

catherine.mckenney@ottawa.ca



Our community has lost a kind friend



Kerry Kaiser (right) and Allison Dingle (left) were thanked with flowers at a recent appreciation dinner for Centretown Emergency Food Centre volunteers.

CATHY FORTIN/CCSAC

Patricia Marsden-Dole

At Christmas, Centretowners said goodbye to a wonderful community friend and helper, Kerry Kaiser, the former coordinator of the Centretown Emergency Food Centre (CEFC).

Kerry joined the food centre in 1994. Over the next 26 years, she was an inspirational leader and an effective manager and fundraiser. She was valued as a friend and confidant of the unemployed and rooming house residents, and worked with donors large and small, city and social services officials, volunteers from across the city, and members of the Centretown Churches Social Action Committee (CCSAC) which supports the CEFC.

During this time, she guided the centre into the 21st century: from doing all office work by hand to the introduction of computers, Excel spreadsheets, and then the Internet; from space on the second floor of the Centretown United Church to larger accommodation in the basement; and from being the only staff to working with an assistant and summer social work students.

Kerry was very proud of the Acadian roots of her mother's family and went back every summer to an extended family in New Brunswick. During her childhood years, her family lived for five years at the Canadian Forces Base in Lahr, Germany, where her father was posted with the Canadian military.

As a university student, Kerry worked at various restaurants, including the Parliamentary restaurant, before taking up a professional career beginning with the The Well/La Source. Kerry raised her two daughters,

Jessica and Sarah, on her own, returning to work at the centre after her maternity leave for Sarah.

In March 2020, Kerry resigned from the CEFC because of illness. She died of cancer at the Ruddy Shenkman Hospice on November 30. She was a loving daughter, mother, and grandmother. She will be sorely missed by all of her family, and many co-workers, volunteers, students, donors, and community and church members.

Remembrances:

Natalie Spooner-Bourgogne, Ottawa Food Bank in a note to member agencies: "Kerry had been an active and vocal member in the network and worked tirelessly in her community. She was also a pillar of knowledge and actively engaged in advocating for those she served."

Julie Ireton, CBC reporter: "She was a lovely, giving person and I always enjoyed our visits. I think I first met her at Southminster United when she came on a Sunday to talk about the food bank...that led to my first story."

Barbara Nimigan, manager of an earlier CCSAC employment program: "Kerry was a remarkable woman from whom I learned a great deal over the years I volunteered and then worked."

Louise Carriere-Normand Zucco, CEFC volunteer: "I will miss Kerry a great deal, she was an exceptional person. I'll miss her laughter and her no-nonsense attitude."

Laurie Clarke, CEFC volunteer: "When I think of her standing at the bus stop early a.m. going to work in the cold and riding home after a day's work and how long she sat on those buses. When I think about that basement office where she worked for 26 years and never did I ever hear a complaint of the conditions. This is a real loss in every way for the food centre and everyone who knew her. Very sad."

Allison Dingle, Chair of the CEFC: "I never heard Kerry give a talk or short presentation that did not impress me with its sincerity and her intense concern for her clients. And she had a great and almost boisterous sense of humour that could turn any challenging day into a bit of an uplift."

Mayor Jim Watson: "Thank you very much for taking the time to let me know the sad news of Kerry's passing. What a great loss for the centre and the whole community."

As soon as COVID protocols permit, CCSAC and the Food Centre will organize a celebration of Kerry's life. Should you wish to make a donation to the food centre in her honour, you can donate online at cefcottawa.org, or send a cheque to the CEFC, 507 Bank Street, Ottawa.

Patricia Marsden-Dole is a member of the Centretown Churches Social Action Committee



The proposed 28 and 30-storey towers at Gilmour and O'Connor.

Comment: "Plain Jane" tall skyscrapers

cont from p 1
as a "significant site strategically located." The plan allows it to be as tall as 27 stories, but with a caveat: the developer must abide by the city's Landmark Buildings Policy.

That policy is designed to promote "developments that, through their design and public uses, establish true civic or national landmarks." They must "make both significant and exceptional contributions to the public realm and overall identity of Centretown. They combine iconic architecture, extraordinary site design and a unique civic or national function to create a distinctive place that invites visitors to experience its qualities. Both the building and its landscape should be appreciated as much for their beauty as for their utility."

It allows a developer to ignore development guidelines for a neighbourhood – and build up to 27 storeys – in return for creating buildings that are "special" and "iconic." However, these aesthetic qualities are not further defined in the plan and are left up to interpretation.

Taggart is failing to honour the trade-off offered by the Landmark Buildings Policy. The policy allows a developer to utterly ignore district zoning, development guidelines, and neighbourhood character, in return for creating stunning architecture. It's intended to be an incentive for a developer to put up buildings of awesome, world-renowned design.

– and build up to 27 storeys – in return for creating buildings that are "special" and "iconic." However, these aesthetic qualities are not further defined in the plan and are left up to interpretation.

The proposed skyscrapers are not in the least "iconic." They are just tall blocks with balconies, the sort of thing one sees everywhere in Ottawa and other cities. The architecture is very plain and pedestrian, not at all "landmark."

Taggart is failing to honour the trade-off offered by the Landmark Buildings Policy. The policy allows a developer to utterly ignore district zoning, development guidelines, and neighbourhood character, in return for creating stunning architecture. It's intended to be an incentive for a developer to put up buildings of awesome, world-renowned design.

Instead, what's proposed

is not even interesting architecture – just massive, thoroughly ordinary towers.

If the 267 O'Connor skyscrapers go ahead as proposed, the Landmark Buildings Policy ceases to be a trade-off that gains great architecture for Ottawa. It becomes instead a breathtakingly powerful weapon allowing developers to simply ignore Ottawa's development regulations and policies. Developers will put up ordinary-looking skyscrapers in neighbourhoods that were never supposed to have skyscrapers.

Two "Plain Jane" towers at 267 O'Connor would be a devastating blow to the character of Centretown. The city needs to insist the developer do the right thing and build towers that are architecturally magnificent – or a whole lot lower.

All drawings from City of Ottawa Development Application files.



WE'RE READY
to help your child explore

Register Now for Kindergarten
ocdsb.ca/kindergarten



OTTAWA-CARLETON
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



Please wear your mask!



SVP portez votre masque!

Catherine McKenna

M.P. for Ottawa Centre | Députée pour Ottawa-Centre

Constituency Office | Bureau de circonscription :

Telephone | Téléphone : 613-946-8682

Email | Courriel : Catherine.McKenna@parl.gc.ca

Somerset Ward: toward better, faster snow operations

Catherine McKenney

How can we improve our winter operations, especially our sidewalk clearing?

The winter of 2018 was brutal. Repeated freeze/thaw cycles, heavy snow, and freezing rain meant that our sidewalks were often dangerous to navigate and impossible for those with disabilities or who use assistive devices.

I heard from many residents that they simply could not venture outdoors for weeks due to the poor conditions of our sidewalks.

That is unacceptable. Together with my urban city council colleagues, we held a very well-attended public meeting to demand changes.

Last year, we saw some improvements, including new ice breaking equipment, many changes to procedures such as clearing sidewalks on a 24-hour basis, instead of only at night, and a repositioning of our winter main-

tenance teams to better focus on the downtown.

The city also committed to reviewing the standards. The Winter Maintenance Quality Standards Review Project page has been live on Engage Ottawa, engage.ottawa.ca/wmqqs, since November 17 and many residents have already taken the opportunity to ask questions about the review.

Anyone who wants to provide feedback on the proposed changes to the Winter Maintenance Quality Standards will have that opportunity in January through the virtual workshops and the online survey.

However, if you have current, specific, winter maintenance concerns, please submit a service request online (or send me a message) so that the city is able to track your inquiry and follow-up.

The City's winter maintenance quality standards (WMQS) dictate when staff and equipment are mobilized to begin clearing the streets, sidewalks, and winter cy-

cling network to keep drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists safe. The current WMQS were adopted in 2003 and a great deal has changed since then.

One example, which I use often, is that the city's sidewalks are prioritized based on how much vehicle traffic their adjacent roadway has. That means a road like Carling Avenue, which carries a lot of cars but not many pedestrians, has the sidewalks cleared sooner than Lisgar Street in the downtown, which has relatively fewer cars but far more pedestrians. I want to see this changed so that our downtown residential sidewalks are cleared sooner.

City policies and plans have evolved, and there are many new and improved transportation options. This has resulted in a shift away from single drivers in vehicles to increased use of public and active transportation (walking, biking, roller blading, etc.).

Between now and early 2021, the WMQS Project Team will be reviewing and developing new options for winter maintenance and they want to hear from you! For more information on the WMQS Review Project and ways to get involved please visit: engage.ottawa.ca/wmqqs And have a Happy New Year!



Snow Moles auditors have reported having to walk on the road because of blocked or icy sidewalks, or no sidewalks at all.

STEPHEN THIRLWALL/THE BUZZ

Snow moles: Ottawa's feet on the ground to report snow and ice problems

Alayne McGregor

There's that sudden feeling of instability. You've stepped onto a patch of slippery, pebbled ice and your feet are slipping. Or your bus stop is blocked by a wall of snow and you're losing your balance trying to climb it.

Don't just turn the air blue. Fill out a Snow Moles form and complain productively!

Snow Moles is a project of the Council on Aging (CoA) – but its organizing team is looking for pedestrians of all ages to evaluate how safe Ottawa's sidewalks and paths are, and how well they have been cleared this year.

The project, now in its fourth year, will run from January to the end of March. It asks people to walk in their neighbourhood, particularly after a snow or freezing rain storm, and to fill out a detailed audit form to evaluate how well the city responded. The forms are compiled into weekly statistical reports by a Carleton University student, and regular updates are sent to the City of Ottawa.

The program aims to identify the "challenges and serious impacts of winter weather on Ottawa pedestrians, especially on older populations and those using mobility aids, raise awareness and identify common themes and concerns."

You can find the form at coaottawa.ca/snowmoles. You can complete it online or print it out and mail it in. Photos are also welcome.

Unique in Canada?

Janet Luloff is the chair of the Age-Friendly Pedestrian Safety and Walkability Subcommittee of the Council on Aging, which runs the Snow Moles campaign. She said it's the only winter walking audit program they know of in Canada and like-

ly North America, and possibly around the world. "We haven't heard or seen in any of our research this type of a program."

In 2020, the program received reports from 195 volunteers—particularly from central Ottawa. Sixty-four percent were seniors and 76 percent were female. 36 percent used ice grips on their boots; 10 percent used walking poles; nine percent used a mobility aid.

Do one or many audits

Luloff said volunteers are welcome to do just one audit or many. They can check the same area several times or check different areas. "You can do as many or as few as you want. For some getting out every day is easy. For others who maybe having to use a cane or other mobility aids or even be in wheelchairs, they may not go out quite as often."

The project also wants to hear from parents about how well they can navigate strollers, from children about barriers getting to school, or how difficult it might be to wheel a cart to the grocery store, she said.

A professor in the Carleton University School of Social Work has also assigned his students to do Snow Moles audits this year as part of their classwork, she said, which will "really bolster our data collection" and could provide input to improve the campaign for next year.

69% report icy sidewalks

Each year, the project has produced a final report summarizing volunteers' experiences. In 2020, 69 percent of volunteers reported slippery/icy sidewalks, 62 percent said sidewalks were not well sanded or salted, and 48 percent said sidewalks weren't adequately plowed. 56 percent walked on roads because there was no sidewalk or pathway, and 15 percent said that their closest bus stop was not accessible. 68 percent stated that fear of falling kept them from going out to walk, and 51 percent had fallen while walking in the past two years.

Problems to look for

What should you look for on your Snow Mole walk? The CoA suggests

- high snowbanks that limit visibility at street crossings
- unsafe and icy sidewalks, especially if impassable for people using mobility aids
- bus stops which are inaccessible due to ice and snowbanks
- ice rutting and thick ice on sidewalks
- school zones, community centres, bus stops, seniors' homes, and roads with no sidewalks where freeze/thaw cycles can result in ice buildup that is difficult to remove and dangerous to walk on
- lack of sand or salting, or where sand or salt is dumped in a clump in one area and not spread out.



CENTRETOWN
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Support your community
Sign up or donate today

www.centretowncitizens.ca

SUBSIDIZED* SPACES ARE AVAILABLE!

HEADSTART NURSERY SCHOOLS

Nutritious Food and Play-Based Learning for children

15 months - 4.8 years

FREE TRANSPORTATION PROVIDED

Locations at 755 Somerset St. W. & 429 Parkdale Ave.

For more information, call us (613) 235-7561

*Parent does not have to work or go to school to qualify



Joel Harden

MPP, Ottawa Centre

Our office is here for you with:

- Monthly Town Halls
- Canvasses
- Community Organizing
- Help Accessing Government Services (such as housing, ODSP/OW, healthcare, OSAP etc.)

Connect with us and let's get organized!



Joel Harden
MPP / Député provincial,
Ottawa Centre

109 Catherine St. / rue
Catherine
Ottawa, ON K2P 0P4

P: 613-722-6414
E: JHarden-CO@ndp.on.ca
www.joelharden.ca



Central Ottawa had the largest number of Snow Moles in 2020 (graphic by Council on Aging)



Centretown Community Association report

Jack Hanna

Learn about the vaccine rollout in Ottawa

How will the COVID-19 vaccine rollout unfold in Ottawa? What's likely to happen in the local battle against the pandemic in the coming months?

Ottawa's Deputy Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Brent Moloughney, speaks on Tuesday, January 19, at the CCA's annual general meeting. His topic: *COVID-19: The Next Six Months*.

As well, Dr. Moloughney will take questions from the audience.

Everyone is welcome to join the AGM Zoom call, starting at 7 p.m. To obtain the Zoom link contact: jack.2014@icloud.com

CCA's AGM January 19

Hear about the association's recent accomplishments and plans for the next year at its AGM on Tuesday, January 19.

The AGM will elect the

CCA president for 2021. Shawn Barber, who has been president for two years, is standing for re-election. Six directors will also be elected to the CCA board.

Any CCA member is eligible to run for these positions; to indicate your interest, email jack.2014@icloud.com

The AGM will include brief reports on the CCA's many and diverse activities.

The CCA's volunteer gardeners had an extraordinary summer. A crew of some two dozen people transformed the garden beds in Dundonald and St. Luke's Parks.

The CCA's Trees & Greenspace Committee organizes festivals in parks, and advocates to preserve mature trees and the urban tree canopy.

The Anti-racism Working Group fosters respect for diversity.

A CCA group lobbies government and works with local stores to reduce the use of single-use plastics.

The Planning Committee advocates for good building design, affordable housing, the preservation of heritage buildings, and better transit, walking and cycling. It frequently works with developers, politicians and city staff, and presents to city council committees to win improvements to the design of big buildings.

Neighbours helping neighbours

The CCA's Centretown Support Network helps folks facing challenges during the pandemic. Volunteers fetch groceries, deliver meals, chat via phone, and provide other sorts of assistance.

If you could use a hand, contact the CSN at support@centretowncitizens.ca or 613 518-3908.

Deck the park

CCA volunteers put up holiday ornaments, many of them homemade, on the trees and shrubs of Dundonald Park. Enjoy!

City bylaw to ban "ghost hotels", for now

Alayne McGregor

The City of Ottawa is proposing a temporary bylaw amendment that would make "ghost hotels" illegal, following up on its 2019 decision to crack down on Airbnb rentals.

On February 11, the city planning committee will consider the amendment. It will only allow a person to rent out a dwelling unit for less than 30 nights if it is their principal residence. This would make it illegal for someone to rent out multiple units, or units they don't normally live in, as temporary accommodation for the travelling public.

This would be in force within Ottawa's urban boundary; fewer restrictions would be placed on rentals in rural areas. It would also not affect bed and breakfasts, hotels, or cottage rentals or vacation apartments. It would be in effect for a trial period of three years.

City staff are asking for comments on this proposal by January 31 at <https://devapps.ottawa.ca/en/applications/B9400F/details> City Council mandated the bylaw change in November 2019, as well as requiring all those providing short-term accommodation to register with the city.

Councillor Catherine McKenney was one of the

drivers behind this amendment. "It was incredibly important that we stem the growth of these short-term rentals and the conversion from long-term rentals, especially in the downtown, and then reverse some of this into long-term rentals."

Anecdotally and through some research, "we knew we were losing a substantial number of rentals. And it was growing."

They noted that the 2019 council decision immediately stopped the growth of short-term rentals. "Landlords were no longer converting [apartments] and evicting people, [which had been] happening at an alarming rate. I stopped hearing from people who were being asked to exit."

The current pandemic has also reduced the demand for short-term rentals, McKenney said. "Our vacancy rate went from 1.8 percent to probably between five and 10 percent. It certainly did help correct the rental market in the city. Any time you have a surplus you will see less pressure on rent increases over time."

This is "a very strong policy that will also be fair to homeowners," McKenney said. "If you own your home or your unit, you get a registration number from us. You have to prove that you live there, that it's owner-occupied, and you can rent it out if you go away for three months, or if you're a student and you leave [for the summer], or it's a unit in your home that you share an entrance with."

It then becomes easy for bylaw officers to check rental sites for registration numbers and find those being rented out illegally.

They expected the bylaw will "continue to stem the conversion. It has already put many of those units back on the market. For two years, walking around West Centretown, you never saw anything that was for rent. Almost immediately [after the 2019 decision] every few blocks you would see a For Rent sign.

"In the long run, it will certainly be fairer for people who need to rent in the city. It is better not to have 'ghost hotels' operating unmanaged in the middle of a residential neighbourhood. It means our tourism industry and hotel industry will be positively

affected as well."

Airbnb rentals have become particularly controversial after a fatal shooting at a multiple-unit Airbnb on Gilmour Street in January 2020. But complaints about their effects on neighbours and the neighbourhood are longer-standing.

A [2019 report by fairbnb.ca](https://www.fairbnb.ca), a coalition of Canadian groups including tenants, landlords, and hotel/B&B operators, concluded the problem was primarily caused by commercial operators who "make a business out of turning homes into hotels, creating nuisance as well as health and safety issues within residential neighbourhoods and condo buildings."

These ghost hotels "contribute to housing shortages and accelerate rent increases," the report said.

Using Airbnb data gathered in February 2019, it determined that the problem was particularly noticeable in central Ottawa: Somerset (Centretown) and Rideau-Vanier wards were "more deeply saturated with ghost hotels, relatively speaking, than Toronto's waterfront area." Out of 2,830 Ottawa listings, 560 were in Rideau-Vanier and 424 in Somerset ward.

In Somerset ward, "59% of these listings are operated by commercial hosts, who control 63% of Airbnb inventory and generate 82% (or \$4.8-million) of Airbnb's estimated revenue."

The report recommended a yearly cap of 90 nights rental, which it estimated would require Airbnb to delist about 1,328 properties in Ottawa, and 269 in Somerset Ward (of which 243 were entire homes turned into ghost hotels).

ACORN, an advocacy group supporting low- and moderate-income families, is a member of fairbnb.ca. Blaine Cameron, the chair of ACORN's central Ottawa chapter, said they supported limiting Airbnb to principal residences, as well as the registry of short-term rentals.

However, he said he was disappointed that the city didn't go further and also require a registry of long-term rentals to better track the health of the rental market.

This bylaw may free up more housing in Centretown, he said. However, "there's no guarantee that these new units will be affordable."

MPP report: a gov't at sea over long-term care

Joel Harden

On December 9, the Ford government recessed the Legislature until February 16.

As 2021 approached, one could identify a sense of hope and possibility. Vaccines were arriving, and people could imagine a post COVID-19 future.

But, in just a few days, the picture has dramatically changed. Instead, we see evidence of a government at sea, in literal terms for some of its former cabinet ministers. They are missing in action when people need them the most.

COVID-19 cases have now reached all-time highs in Ontario, and a third of long-term care (LTC) homes are in outbreak. The rollout and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines has been hampered at best, or damaging at worst.

Over 60 seniors have recently died at Tendercare, a for-profit LTC home in Scarborough. On January 3, I heard the searing testimony of Reed Zhao. He lost his grandmother the previous day at Tendercare, who complained of being

refused water.

Sheila Yakovishin, a personal support worker from Windsor, Ontario with over 30 years seniority, died three days ago from COVID-19 at a for-profit LTC home. This happened as Ontario sits on tens of thousands of COVID-19 vaccines.

Where is the Ford government? Dr. Vivian Stamatopolous, one of Ontario's LTC experts, likens the Tendercare outbreak to a "downed plane". But there has been no government response. We hear brief expressions of concern, but nothing by way of focused action.

This is a "call in the military" moment but we see no urgency from the premier's office. Instead, we've seen astounding decisions in the wrong direction.

Recently, we learned the Ford government is withholding information from its hand-picked Long-Term Care Commission and awarding former Premier Mike Harris – widely seen as the architect of profiteering in LTC – with the Order of Ontario for 2020. This beg-

gars belief.

LTC residents are dying, and some are still in wards with three or four to a room. LTC workers are still working short, still lacking appropriate PPE, and terrified of losing their lives or infecting their families.

What explains this situation? To me, it is the cozy relationship between for-profit LTC homes and the Ford government. At least five top Ford staffers have worked as lobbyists for private LTC in recent months. Clearly, the piper is calling the tune.

We can't let Premier Ford muddle his way through this moment. The Ontario Legislature must be reopened, and a plan of action must be announced immediately. We must demand better for seniors, people with disabilities, and workers in LTC.

Join us on the evening of January 25 for a virtual town hall streamed on our Facebook page about the state of LTC, and what must be done to change it. You can register for the event at [joelharden.ca/townhall](https://www.joelharden.ca/townhall)

Centretown Ottawa Counselling Practice
Dr. Andrew C. Watson, BA (psych), M.D., CCFP

- Adult (18+) individual counselling
- Focus on people who have been affected (past or present) or concerned with another's alcoholism or drug addiction
- Stable concurrent disorders/problems welcome: e.g. complex PTSD, depression, childhood trauma/neglect
- Non-OHIP, private practice

drandy224@gmail.com

LOOKING FOR A GOOD HOME?

[ccohousing.org](https://www.ccohousing.org) | 613.234.4065

Linda McQuarrie
 Sales Representative

Direct: 613.219.5996
 Office: 613.725.1171
lindamcquarrie@royallepage.ca
www.lindamcquarrie.ca

ROYAL LePAGE
 Team Realty

Cycle Salvation rejuvenates both bikes and people



A view through the window of 473 Bronson, showing some of the bikes which Cycle Salvation has refurbished for sale.

BRETT DELMAGE/THE BUZZ

Alayne McGregor

Cycle Salvation, which both brings used bikes back to life and assists people to get back into the workforce, will remain in Centretown in 2021.

For the last 12 years, the social enterprise has shared the building at 473 Bronson at Gladstone with the re-Cycles Community Bicycle Shop. But while [re-Cycles has found a new location](#) which it will announce soon, Cycle Salvation ([Cyclesalvation.org](#)) is staying put for now.

This month, Cycle Salvation manager Rob Robitaille said, re-Cycles is moving out and Cycle Salvation is refitting the building with new workbenches and other infrastructure. “We’ve always shared everything half and half, so they’ll be leaving half the parts behind, taking half with them.”

The two organizations both accept donated bikes and refurbish them for sale, but have different ways of operating as well as separate inventories of bikes. re-Cycles is run by volunteers and also (non-pandemic) operates a DIY bike workshop; Cycle Salvation administers a job-training program which fixes bikes.

Both groups have said that the impetus for their divorce was that the building was sold to new owners. “It seemed like a good move for [re-Cycles] to go, and an interesting opportunity for us to go into the future into something a little bit different,” Robitaille said.

Robitaille, who started with Cycle Salvation a year ago, said he got along well with re-Cycles staff, and there were no conflicts about the use of the space.

“Not particularly, no. That seemed to work beautifully because we had different time frames. They were more interested in running the building in the evening for DIY programs and we were here in the daytime for our job-training program.

“It was a very good marriage.”

One more season

Since the new owners are not yet ready to renovate 473 Bronson, Robitaille said, “it looks like we’ll do at least one more season here [on a month-to-month basis].”

In the longer term, Cycle Salvation is looking for a larger space, preferably in Centretown, in order to create a hub which it could share with other social enterprises. “But all that’s very early days, and there’s a lot of work to do to pull that all together.”

Busy repairing bikes for sale

Because of the lockdown, the organization is currently not selling bikes, but it is accepting donations. At least 70 percent of the donated bikes can be refurbished and sold. The remainder are disassembled to provide parts or metal for recycling.

And its staff are fixing bikes. “In the winter, we’re building bikes like beavers because it’s hard to keep up when spring comes. We sell so many bikes in the spring we can barely keep up.

“All the bikes that we sell are brought back up to a standard that they would be when they were new. We won’t allow a bike to leave the shop that’s not safe. Any part that’s worn out on the bike is replaced. Anything can be repaired on the bike is repaired back to original factory state. The wheels are trued; any spokes that need to be replaced are replaced. Everything is oiled and reconditioned to make the bike run well. There’s a complete multi-point check system we go through on every bike.”

Launching people back into the workforce

This is Cycle Salvation’s 16th year in operation. Operating under the umbrella of the Causeway Work Centre, it has two goals: to rescue and refurbish used bikes, and to reintegrate people into the workforce and help them

lead better lives. Many of its staff are individuals referred by Causeway, who have “experienced barriers to employment including mental illness, poverty, homelessness, and other challenges.” Its work is supported by grants and by bike sales.

In 2020, 12 people participated in the program, Robitaille said; some stayed and some moved on.

Cycle Salvation has a core group of mechanics, he said, some with eight years of experience. They train new staff, a process which can take “a solid six months before [the new staff are] confident to be working on their own on a bicycle. It’s a much different experience than building a new bike out of a box, because here you have to use a lot of skills to understand what the bike requires and you have to use a bin of used parts in some cases. It can be quite intuitive to figure it out sometimes.”

The bikes they work on can be 20 or 30 years old with older technology. But Robitaille said that often the older bikes are “much more resilient. The newer, more expensive bicycles are very finicky and somewhat delicate, we find, whereas the older bikes take a beating and we clean them up and as long we recondition the parts well, they work beautifully. They’re really overbuilt in a lot of ways.”

A beginner starts by scrapping an old bike: “that’s a good way of getting acquainted with the nuts and bolts of bikes. It’s almost a reverse process. Taking a bike apart gives you a lot of knowledge about how the bike functions.

“Then they start with easier safety’s, and they’re always paired with another mechanic when they first begin making their own bikes. Then all their work is inspected by someone with a lot more experience.”

Staff come and go, many to other jobs or back to school, but all “relaunched back into the world” with

added skills. They gain good general work experience in the shop, he said, “knowing how to have a job and be accountable to a schedule, and just the different parameters of working with other people. It’s a great experience for youth particularly, to get an idea of what that’s like if they haven’t been employed successfully before.”

At least three Cycle Salvation graduates have become permanent bike mechanics, Robitaille said. But the course is not actually designed to create mechanics, primarily because there’s not many job openings and it’s a very seasonal business. The program is “more about creating job skills in a general sense, and about being part of a team.”

Once the lockdown ends, Cycle Salvation expects to sell bikes outside in the laneway by the shop, as it did in 2020: bringing out possible bikes for people to test-ride and accepting payment by cash or card.

When they’re open, they’ll also help with immediate repairs (e.g. fixing a flat or a chain) to help cyclists get home. They may expand this repair service soon, he said.

Robitaille said Cycle Salvation’s bike prices usually range from \$150 to \$450. “And then there are special cases: we’ve had some lovely bikes. I think the most expensive bike we sold last year was just under \$1000. It was a beautiful custom, hand-built racing bike.

“It was a lovely donation! In fact, they donated four bicycles. All four of them were just beautiful: different bikes for different purposes but they were all very nice. The generosity of the general public never ceases to astonish us, honestly.

“I just can’t wait for COVID to be over so we can be open to the public again. It’s so nice to have people in the shop with us. We miss that part of it a lot. We’d like to be a community bicycle shop and help people stay on the road and keep them pedaling.”

People, profits, and planet

Cycle Salvation has a triple bottom line, he said, “people, profits, and planet. We’re here to help people have a better life and we’re here to help the planet by keeping bikes out of the landfill and on the road.

“And we also need the profits because we’re not fully funded. We do have to keep ourselves going as a business as well. We have to juggle those three bottom lines all the time. It’s quite a challenge, but it’s the most enjoyable job I’ve ever had.”

What’s on(line) this month in Ottawa

Tony Wohlfarth

2021 began with another lockdown, as non-essential stores and cinemas were forced to close on Boxing Day to contain the second wave of the coronavirus.

Sadly, the province-wide shutdown advanced the closure of the iconic **ByTowne Cinema**, as it was required to abandon its final week of “best of” in-person film screenings. The ByTowne has said it will try to reschedule that final-week series to late January or early February if pandemic restrictions are not extended and other conditions can be met. See [bytowne.ca](#) for more details.

A Man Called Ove (via Hoopla)

Sweden is a country of spectacular beauty and stellar social cohesion. *A Man Called Ove* is a feature length Swedish film which is now streaming (for free) via Hoopla, with your Ottawa Public Library (OPL) card.

Ove is a 59-year-old widow. Ove (played by Rolf Lassgård) lives in a community housing complex and takes pleasure in enforcing its myriad rules. Notoriously grumpy, Ove yells at his neighbours and is more feared than liked. He patrols the laneways looking for trouble.

Two softer aspects of his life come into focus early in the film. Ove grieves for his wife, Ida. He is also lonely, attempting suicide on two occasions, which brings him into contact with Parvaneh (played by Bahar Pars), an Iranian-born neighbour who happily shares her diverse cuisine. Flashbacks reveal how Ove met his wife, how his career ended, and fond memories of his estranged neighbour. He visits Ida’s grave regularly, while competing with his neighbour about whether Volvos are better cars than Saabs.

A Man Called Ove is set and filmed in the town of Trollhattan, north of Gothenburg, during the fall and the winter.

The film is based on a novel by Fredrik Backman. Backman also wrote the script. Its director, Hannes Holm, is a 58-year-old Swedish film director.

I loved watching *A Man Called Ove*. The film melds the issues of aging and diversity into a touching gem of a film. Lassgård is a very talented 65-year-old actor with some 70 TV and film roles over his career. Released theatrically in 2017, the running time is two hours.

A Man Called Ove was

nominated by Sweden for a best foreign language Oscar in 2017; it is *that* entertaining. That same year, the film was also nominated for an Oscar for best makeup and hairstyling.

National Arts Centre (NAC)

The NAC (1 Elgin) pivoted to virtual performances in December. For January, the NAC is streaming more live musical performances with Blakdenim (January 22) and Connie Kaldor (January 30). Both performances go live at 8 p.m.

The NAC has figured out how to do live streaming without sacrificing sound quality, lighting, or the quality of moving images. For tickets and other information, check out: [nac-cna.ca/en/calendar/list/2021/01](#).

The National Museums

The three national museums are physically closed due to the lockdown. All of them are relying on virtual exhibits. Here is a guide:

The Canadian Museum of History has online exhibits on public pensions and the history of Medicare in Canada: [historymuseum.ca/exhibitions/online-exhibitions/](#)

The Canadian Museum of Nature is streaming videos of its current exhibits: [https://nature.ca/en/plan-your-visit/what-see-do/our-exhibitions](#)

The Canadian War Museum is also streaming videos and stills from its collection: [www.warmuseum.ca/museum-at-home/](#)

The Ottawa Historical Society (OHS)

The OHS holds monthly events via Zoom. Last November, the OHS heard about the renovations on Parliament Hill. A video of the presentation can be accessed at: [historicalsocietyottawa.ca/resources/videos](#)

On March 3, at 7 p.m., the OHS is scheduled to hear from Charlotte Gray. Check back for registration information.

Heritage Ottawa

Heritage Ottawa is also holding its events via Zoom. On January 20, there is a presentation about the history and architecture of 180 Wellington Street. Advance registration is required at [heritageottawa.org/events/gold-snakes-mother-insurance-preservation-wellington-building-mosaic](#)

Tony Wohlfarth is an Ottawa-based freelance film, arts and entertainment writer. He participated in two NAC virtual performances in December as a guest of the NAC.

A compassionate approach to dying, loss, and grieving

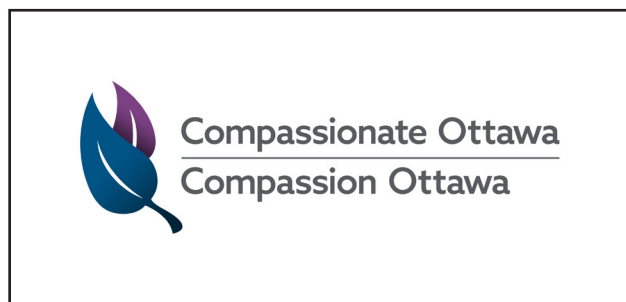
Stephen Thirlwall

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed our experience of dying and grieving, especially in terms of visiting the dying and holding funerals during this pandemic that requires social isolation and distancing ourselves from others.

In North America, and increasingly throughout the world, as extended families decline, we have turned death and dying over to our health and medical care systems, and we pay for the best external services we can afford (e.g., live-in care, care homes). However, this is often inadequate and not always appropriate. There are other options available such as palliative care.

Compassionate Ottawa (compassionateottawa.ca) is a volunteer care organization that “supports and empowers individuals, their families and their communities throughout life for dying and grieving well.”

It was formally established in 2017, when “four dozen representatives of a wide cross-section of community and health care provider organizations met to explore the idea of Ottawa becoming a compas-



sionate community for palliative care.” A grass roots community-based vision and mission statement were drafted and priorities set. By building a funding base, the organization has hired staff, recruited volunteers and developed programs in advance care planning with schools, faith communities and others. They now run a series of highly informative workshops.

In the United Kingdom and several other countries, well-developed compassion-based programs have existed for a while.

The workshop experience

To present some basics on this compassionate approach to care for the dying, I took a one-half-hour workshop called *Conversations with Leaders*. The workshop host was Mary Lou Kelly, a recently retired professor from Lakehead University with extensive palliative care experience, especially

with indigenous peoples and long-term care homes. The main speaker was Allan Kellehear, a university professor at Bradford, England. He is a member of Compassionate Communities UK and founded Palliative Care International.

Guiding principles for grief

Kellehear presented several clear guiding principles regarding death, dying, loss and our grieving responses.

1. **Dying and life-limiting situations are commonplace.** Deaths occur and happen all around us and in all concentrations of population (urban centres, suburbs, towns).

2. **Each death affects not only the person dying but also directly impacts those most closely around them,** both before and after the death. Dying and grieving are processes. While there are instantaneous deaths, most take place over a period of time that,

for many, can be a matter of years. Grieving for some might take a lifetime.

3. **Everyone must bear some responsibility** by participating in care of a dying person. Palliative care has a 95 percent rule. For five percent of the time, doctors, nurses, counsellors or social workers spend time with the dying person. Family, friends and colleagues can take up some of the time, but there can still be a significant amount of time when the dying person is alone and doing nothing.

This can lead to increased loneliness, depression, anxiety, anger, loss of work, family breakdown and so on. Similar things can happen to a grieving person disconnected from others.

4. **Education, training and open discussion of the issues are badly needed,** as well as sharing experiences with death. Often, those who have experienced deep grief are the best coaches. Conversations about death and grieving within families and among friends and communities are important, so that we can all appropriately respond during different stages of dying.

5. **It’s also necessary to deal with our reality today** and adjust our practices ac-

cordingly. For example, today most people live in cities, life expectancy is much longer so there are more elderly. Better health care is available, people are very mobile, our populations more diverse and much more.

6. **Facing death and great loss are also part of our collective communal and social lives.** As we have witnessed, pandemics, natural and environmental disasters, and wars greatly multiply the numbers of those who die and the losses we bear. This leads to collective loss.

To cope, our society has to develop a better integrated system of exchange between three partners: organizations/institutions (businesses, hospitals, schools, etc.), community (social services, faith groups, cultural groups, etc.), and individuals. Constructive dialogue between these parties is needed, and decision-making must be

step by step and flexible so that it can be altered through a process of occasional review and revision as conditions change and best practices emerge.

7. **Compassionate care requires emphasizing our social relationships, as well as providing basic comfort, transportation, and help with groceries and chores.** This involves engaging in regular dialogue and service with those who are dying, listening carefully to them, asking critical questions, and encouraging them, so that proper care is given and their wishes for after they die are fulfilled.

Coping with life implies coping with dying, since death is part of everyone’s life cycle. The need for compassion, empathy and care for others never ends, whether we are in the midst of peaceful times, or war, or a pandemic such as we are experiencing now.



Justine Bell
 School Trustee
 Zone 10 Somerset/Kitchissippi
justine.bell@ocdsb.ca
 613-858-2275




Join online and **SAVE 10%** on a New CAA Plus® or Premier® Membership*

GetCAA.ca



* Applicable taxes extra. Offer valid from January 1 to January 31, 2021 to residents of North & East Ontario who purchase a new CAA Primary Plus or Premier Membership (including RV) and select the Auto-Renewal payment option. Promo code WEB10% must be entered at checkout to qualify. Offer is not valid on previously purchased CAA Primary or Associate Memberships, Corporate Memberships, renewals or upgrades. Offer cannot be combined with any other promotion or discount, including Associate and Corporate Memberships. Offer only applies to purchases made at caaneo.ca. Other restrictions may apply.

Snippets of joy in Dundonald Park

Marit Quist-Corbett

As I make my way through the snow, slowly forging a squiggly trail on my skis, I hear a voice from across the street: “Fresh powder!”

I recognize her. Nicky, who sings on the corner of Somerset and Bank or Elgin in all kinds of weather, whose voice makes my heart leap in summer when I know the tune.

“Yeah,” I shout back. “People pay big money for this.” She waves and is on her way.

As I continue my circuit around Dundonald Park, I smile to myself. Mission accomplished. I force myself out every day to walk, to breathe a little outside air, even though it’s grey out, even though I can’t drop into Art House Café for a coffee.

I know I’ll feel better when I get back home. I know I’ll feel as if I have connected, in a small way, with some other humans. Many days that connection happens in the park. The park never disappoints. You can always find a friendly soul, a smile, a short conversation.

On my next cross-country adventure, I repeatedly pass two young guys, sitting on one of the benches, in serious conversation. When I approach, they cheer me on

“You got this! Keep going!”

And again, my heart sings.

Today, as I enter the park, my eye is caught by the glinting of a star. The sun has come out today and makes the whole place look more inviting, more cheerful. It highlights decorations – stars, bells and even coloured streamers – someone placed on the trees and bushes of Dundonald Park.

“Someone, some good soul did this,” I say to myself. “I wonder who?”

A few minutes later, I get an answer. I notice two people taking the decorations down, carefully wrapping them up.

I thank them for their efforts and ask their names. They introduce themselves – Barbara, Jack – and tell me that they’re part of the Centretown Community Association.

I go home feeling lucky and buoyed by the knowledge that joy still exists, that snippets of joy link us and will get us out of the dark and into spring.



Volunteers decorating Dundonald park for the holidays: above: Stuart Kinmond hangs one of his homemade stars made from scrap tin; top: Marnee Manson and Meghan Walsh; bottom: Brian Beaven (dark coat) and Kyle Hanna (red coat). Photos by Stephen Thirlwall, except bottom right by Jack Hanna and page 1 photo by Barbara Sibbald.