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Your community newspaper

# THE CENTRETOWN BUZZ



About 40 community members showed up at Plouffe Park on Sunday, September 2, for a Back-to-School event organized by the Plant Pool Recreation Association. Members of the PPRA, the Dalhousie Community Association, #SavePlouffePark, and parents of students at École Louise Arbour participated in the festivities to officially reopen the renovated basketball court in the park. They also discussed solutions to the conflicts posed by the city proposal to build a school on the current location of Plouffe Park. Those with their hands on the ribbon are (l-r) former Somerset Ward councillors Catherine McKenney and Diane Holmes, and current councillor Ariel Troster. Read more about the Plouffe Park issue on pages 4 and 10-11. CHARLES AKBEN-MARCHAND/THE BUZZ



A public meeting on Sept. 25 at Jack Purcell CC will discuss how 330 Gilmour could be repurposed. ROBERT SMYTHE/THE BUZZ

## A meeting place for Centretown?

Erwin Dreesen  
 Family Essex, a Carleton University student and Centretown resident, has written a Masters of Architecture thesis about the former Board of Education Administration building at 330 Gilmour Street.

the building could be saved and repurposed at a public meeting this month.

330 Gilmour has sat empty for over 20 years, neglecting its potential as an asset to Centretown and Ottawa. Many fear that the complete lack of upkeep is slowly

Essex will discuss how

continued on page 7 Outstanding

## Land trust ramps up saving affordable housing

Alayne McGregor

The Ottawa Community Land Trust (OCLT) is taking its first steps to ensuring some housing stock stays affordable in Ottawa.

It has just bought its first small apartment building, has plans to buy several more in the next year, and will be asking residents to invest in its acquisitions.

The land trust is a non-profit which buys up rental units with the aim of ensuring that their rents stay affordable. Its aim is to pay its costs and generate some income to buy more buildings and development land for further affordable housing – as opposed to profit-generating real estate investment trusts (REITs).  
 “In a context where rents

are going up and when buildings are sold, frequently new actors will raise rents to whatever the market will bear,” said OCLT Executive Director Mike Bulthuis. The land trust purchases buildings to remove them from this speculative real estate market and to ensure tenants are not displaced by high rents.

He said that the OCLT used successful community land trusts in other parts of Canada, including Toronto and British Columbia, as examples, but each land trust is a bit different because they respond to local context.

Councillor Jeff Leiper recently arranged for “Section 37” funds in his ward to be given to the OCLT to help finance a six-unit apartment building on Kirkwood Avenue – the OCLT’s first

acquisition. These funds came from developers whose projects were approved for increased height or density in exchange for providing community benefits.

Councillor Ariel Troster said she was looking into moving some Section 37 funds in Somerset Ward from public realm improvements (which she said are already well-funded) into affordable housing. This could be used to help the OCLT buy a building in her ward: for example, a rooming house to be used for supportive housing, or a low-rise building. This would preserve buildings with moderate rental prices – and also could preserve heritage properties.

“[Bulthuis] already showed me one property but it got snapped up pretty

quickly, so I’m actually keeping an eye on the market. Of course, the reason the land trust needs easy access to capital so that they can move quickly if they need to.”

Bulthuis said the OCLT has been primarily looking at acquiring existing low cost affordable rental housing because it was a “perceived gap.” Other non-profits had been building new affordable housing, but less attention had been given to preserving existing rental housing.

It envisions itself as a

continued on page 9 Land

### We’ve changed

Notice something different? The Centretown BUZZ has a new masthead, emphasizing our links to our community. We hope you like it.

September 15, 2023 — Vol. 28, No. 8

# THE CENTRETOWN BUZZ

AT THE HEART OF OTTAWA SINCE 1995.

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Ottawa, ON  
K2P 2K4  
Phone: 613-565-6012

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## 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 October 13, 2023. Deadline for ads and submissions: October 2.  
ISSN 1204-1604

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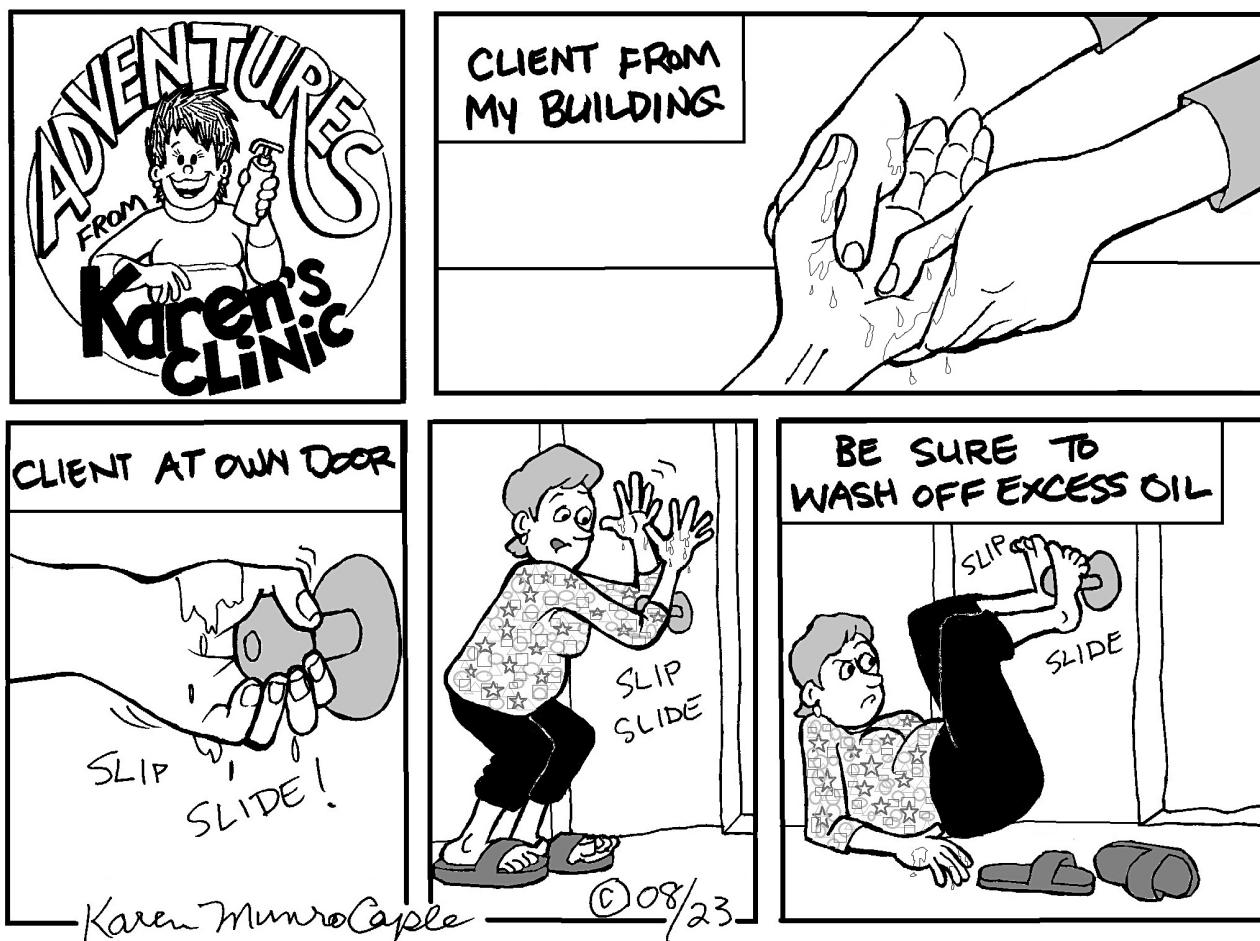
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The Centretown BUZZ is published by The Centretown BUZZ Board of Directors, a group consisting of community members representing all residents of Centretown.

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## Adventures from Karen's Clinic, by Karen Munro-Caple



## Mastodon: a truly social medium?

Charles Akben-Marchand

The first time I realized Twitter could be useful was the August 2009 trial of Ottawa Mayor Larry O'Brien, when then-*Ottawa Citizen* reporter Glen McGregor posted live Twitter updates from the courtroom.

I discovered that I could pop in occasionally and read up on the latest developments. The permission that *The Citizen* got from the court set a Canadian precedent: allowing live tweeting from trials is now commonplace.

Since then, Twitter, renamed X by its new owner, Elon Musk, "has become highly toxic and partisan and civil discussion isn't really possible any longer," McGregor told *The BUZZ*. He said he uses Twitter far less now.

Similarly, Facebook and Google blocking news content in Canada demonstrates the risks of relying too much on tech behemoths.

Under Musk, Twitter has lost many features that made it useful and usable. It used to be that anyone could visit my Twitter profile and see all of my tweets, but now you can only see them if you log in with a Twitter account (though you can view individual Tweets without logging in).

Other Twitter features recently lost include automated posting (such as OC Transpo bus cancellations), the ability to block hostile accounts, and the use of third-party apps.

### Moving to Mastodon, but which one?

Some people want to recreate the sense of community they once felt on Twitter. To this end, a few months ago, I

followed my friends by creating a Mastodon account. (I did not consider other services like BlueSky or Threads.)

The hardest part (and it's not that hard) of joining Mastodon is choosing a server, or "instance." Lots of people I follow are on generic instances such as mastodon.social, mstdn.social, or mstdn.ca.

Each instance has its own house rules, but the decentralized model means that you can follow people even if they're not on the same instance as you. Think of it like how you can send an email to a hotmail.com address even if you don't have a hotmail.com account yourself.

The Ottawa Weather Records account, which I used to follow on Twitter, has a Mastodon account at @YOW\_Weather@ottawa.place. As you can tell from the username, @YOW\_Weather is on a local instance called ottawa.place, which you can access by typing "ottawa.place" into your web browser. If you're not logged in to ottawa.place, you can see this account by visiting [https://ottawa.place/@YOW\\_Weather](https://ottawa.place/@YOW_Weather)

Similarly, you can find me at [urbanists.social/@Centretowner](https://urbanists.social/@Centretowner), and I can follow @YOW\_Weather@ottawa.place even though I don't have an ottawa.place account myself.

### Starting out

Andrew Dunham (@andrew@ottawa.place), an administrator on the ottawa.place instance, has a standard greeting for new users on that instance. He points out that you can browse a timeline of "local" posts by people on the ottawa.place instance, or a "federated"

timeline that includes posts on other instances.

As with any new platform, starting out can take some time to adjust. As Human3500 (@human3500@ottawa.place) posted, "Twitter took time to figure out and Mastodon is no different."

He also suggests that you use and follow hashtags, such as #OttBike for cycling related posts, and try accessing your Mastodon account with different apps, which may have different features than the default web interface.

I found it very similar to Twitter but with an "edit" button and a higher character limit. If you want to say something, type it in the box at the top of the page and click "Publish." If you see something you like posted by somebody else, you can click the star on the post to favourite it, or click the square arrow icons to "boost" it, which makes the post appear in your feed.

So far, governments and officials have been slow to join Mastodon and post official updates there, but politicians will go where the people are, and government accounts eventually follow. For the same reason, they'll probably still have accounts on X.

### What to do with that old Twitter account?

If you're already established on X/Twitter, I suggest you put your new Mastodon handle in your bio or in a pinned Tweet. Many of your contacts will have done the same, and you can use this to find them on Mastodon.

Kitchissippi Ward Councillor Jeff Leiper said, "I joined Twitter in the beginning and it was a fun social media platform where smart,

funny people talked about the things I was interested in." Since becoming a councillor, and especially after the pandemic, he's stopped using Twitter, "since it's become a cesspit of anger, arrogance and trolling. ... I still have my Twitter account and periodically revive it when I need to get out some important communications." His office still has a Twitter account, @KitchissippiOtt.

Leiper joined Mastodon with a private account, which he only uses for social purposes; he doesn't post anything relevant to his position as a councillor.

"It's well-moderated and while the content is occasionally challenging, it's generally being posted by smart, interesting people. It's the stuff I want to see when I'm off the clock. ... In practical terms, that means my account is mostly my daily ride videos and Wordle score, and I use it mostly to read interesting content by others."

Leiper says he struggled a bit at the start, but he "just stuck with it and did a lot of googling to figure it out."

Follow *The BUZZ* on Mastodon at [nonprofits.mastodon.host/@centretown\\_buzz](https://nonprofits.mastodon.host/@centretown_buzz)

## Correction

In the print edition of the August *BUZZ*, we misspelled Erin Maher's surname, and misidentified Parkways for People (page 16). We also incorrectly said that the Freedom Convoy occupation occurred in 2021 instead of 2022 (page 10). These mistakes were corrected in the online edition. We apologize for them.

# Skyline: Two approaches to city building – loud or quiet

Robert Smythe

Is what's proposed for the abandoned Greyhound property on the southern boundary of Centretown an example of what King Charles has called "a jostling scrum" of big buildings crowding together?

You can decide now that the Brigil Construction's other shoe has dropped.

When the company bought the former Greyhound bus terminal on Catherine Street in 2021, it made some mighty big promises. With its recent filing for an up-zoning, the adjacent diminutive residential neighbourhood can start to digest exactly what they had in mind.

This full block of Queensway corridor was to be transformed by Brigil into a multifunctional "hub of luxury rental condos, office space, hotel buildings, neighbourhood restaurants, and specialty stores" (see the [March 2021 BUZZ](#)).

Previously, the city had rushed to complete a theoretical sub-plan of urban design and built form regulations that would more than quadruple existing height limits to 27 floors and encourage an adequate amount of development potential. This was as a result of the 2013 Centretown Community Development Plan for a band of high-rise apartment towers along Centretown's southern edge, and the property's imminent sale by Vancouver-based Crerar Holdings.

In its final form, the latest scheme is destined to be the largest single project built in Centretown to date. Brigil has unveiled plans for three towers at 40 storeys, 35 storeys, and 26 storeys to sit atop a continuous six-storey podium wall fronting Catherine Street, changing up materials along its length for "visual interest and distinction." Quadrangle Architects Limited of Toronto are responsible for the design.

When fully built out, this would deliver a staggering 1,032 units, with a breakdown of 55 percent one-bedroom, 40 percent two-bedrooms, and five percent three-bedrooms. At this point the mix of non-residential uses is unspecified.

The design will require amending the Zoning By-law and Official Plan to permit two of these tower heights.

Some nearby residents have suggested that this could result in a bonus noise barrier to Queensway traffic, although they might take a look at the resulting shadow studies' impacts on their streets to the north.

The minimum 25 percent open space on the northeast corner at Arlington Avenue that was a condition of the last rezoning will be respected, although less of the "park" that was originally contemplated, and more of a hardscaped public plaza.

From the outset, this developer has been unusually active with its public engagement strategy – hosting no less than four extensive "Visioning Workshops" with selected community representatives and assorted experts; three separate site visits and briefings for the former and current Somerset Ward councillors; meetings with City of Ottawa Planning staff; and an initial consultation with Urban Design Review Panel.

Yet for all of this, the Centretown Community Association voiced its objection to the proposed towers in [their most recent CCA Report in last month's BUZZ](#).

The developer is now entering the statutory phases of their application: formal "heads-up" notifications to the community association, posting the plans on-line, a possible community information session, and public hearings of the Urban Design Review Panel and City Council's Planning Committee following the legal public notifications.

Of passing interest the company's agent in this matter is John Moser, the former general manager of the City of Ottawa's Planning Department. Moser retired from the



Brigil Construction aims for the sky at the old Greyhound site. (Quadrangle Architects/City of Ottawa Development Information Files)

city, and after a cooling-off period, became the COO and vice-president of planning at the GBA Group, which is headed by Graham Bird, a city councillor of long ago.

This means due diligence in jumping through the city's many procedural hoops. But at the end of the day City Council will have to determine if it likes the product that has emerged from this more-than-two-year process.

One of this project's key planning rationales has been the manufacture of a whack of new residential units in one project, fulfilling the city's and the province's optimistic but currently lagging targets for building more housing faster.

Will it come at the cost of forsaking genuine livability and human scale, or be a development that's a little more cozy but sacrifices some units? It seems like a Hobson's Choice.

### ...And now for something completely different

A few blocks north on Kent, between James and Gilmour Streets KATASA groupe+développement of Gatineau, Quebec, are proposing a more modestly scaled project for a large tract of land that enjoys three street frontages. In another triple threat, it appears to be Zoning By-law compliant, Official Plan compliant, and Heritage Conservation District compliant.

Unlike their neighbour Taggart Construction, which is seeking a shiny 30-storey attention-grabbing tower across Gilmour Street on property with exactly the same zoning, this development group has chosen not to avail itself of the City of Ottawa's cockamamie Landmark Buildings Policy (see [the August 2022 BUZZ](#) for more on the policy).

This nine-storey residential building will be built on the site of the current Kent Medical Building and its sprawling parking lot. It will contain 218 residential units of various sizes from studios to three-bedrooms, but the bulk of them will be one-bedrooms. The ground floor apartments will have walk-out terraces.

There is to be a total of 1,472 square metres of amenity space (which is a lot), parking for 161 vehicles in two levels of underground parking, and facilities for 110 bicycles. A 171 square metre commercial unit will face Kent Street.

The design of the building, by Neuf archi-



Groupe KATASA's development on Kent Street between James and Maclaren. (Neuf architectes/City of Ottawa Development Information Files)

tectes, could be described as safe and tastefully conventional with a defined tripartite division of a two-storey base, five-storey mid-section, and two-storey cap in brick and precast. For comparison's sake, KATASA just completed the JADE apartments at Somerset Street West and LeBreton Streets in Chinatown.



Groupe KATASA's development on Kent Street between James and Maclaren. (Neuf architectes/City of Ottawa Development Information Files)

The site plan's landscaping deserves particular attention. The Z-shaped building footprint cradles a recessed court and wide setbacks from the three public frontages that allow for a generous row of street tree planting. The proposed development also includes the dedication of a small park at the southwest corner of the site at Kent and James.

They're calling this "Kent Square," which might end up being the apartment building's name too. While it is to be a POPS (a Privately Owned Public Space, which the City of Ottawa is notoriously bad at monitoring), this will at least add desperately needed greenspace to a neighbourhood starved of parks.

### A development that doesn't break things

For some time, our city planners have been encouraging us to trust them as they break the rules by making startling "Big Moves," a term stolen from the City of Toronto. They say that for a great city we need to break the china.

To date, that breakage has left nothing more than jagged shards. It's reassuring that some developers are willing to just sit down and pour a nice cup of tea.

# 50 years of rapid transit in Ottawa

Charles Akben-Marchand

Rapid transit in Ottawa celebrates its 50th anniversary this month.

In 1973, talks of a full rapid-transit system were still in their infancy. But on Monday, September 24, brand new bus lanes opened on Rideau Street, under the watchful eye of 14 police officers offering warnings to motorists for the first couple of weeks.

Shortly after, on October 8, 1973, exclusive bus lanes opened on Albert and Slater between Elgin and Bronson for the morning and afternoon rush hours. This sped up 71 buses on 19 routes.

Also in October, 1973, interprovincial transit got a bump with the launch of an Ottawa-Hull “bus loop” that

was “backed by a \$500,000 NCC subsidy.” This included “an experiment whereby the transfers of each system are accepted by the other,” recognizing the rise of federal office buildings, including the new Place du Portage complex.

The opening of these new bus lanes were coordinated with changes to traffic in LeBreton Flats, which took effect when the Portage Bridge opened in November, 1973. By 1976, a busway connection between the intersection of Preston and Wellington (now Albert) to the Ottawa-River Parkway would be built, allowing suburban OC Transpo bus routes to use the Ottawa River Parkway prior to the construction of the Western Transitway parallel to Scott Street in 1984.



OC Transpo buses temporarily returned to the reserved bus lanes on Albert and Slater Streets this summer when the LRT was again down for repairs. E1 buses were introduced to go directly from downtown to the two ends of the LRT line — like the pre-LRT express buses — and were so popular they continued for several weeks after the LRT resumed. ALAYNE MCGREGOR/THE BUZZ

## You still have time to comment on 1010 Somerset

Alayne McGregor

You still have time to comment on the controversial 1010 Somerset concept plan.

Last week, the September 8 deadline on the [Engage Ottawa page for the project](#) was removed, allowing further comments. The Dalhousie Community Association (DCA) has asked that the page be left open until Thanksgiving.

The DCA is mounting a strong campaign to rethink the plan so that the new location of École Louise Arbour is not in the current location of Plouffe Park, and is encouraging residents to comment. (See the stories and commentary in the August *BUZZ* and on pages 10-11 of this issue.)

Ward Councillor Ariel Troster told *The BUZZ* that she had not been consulted about the placement of the school

or the concept plan before its release.

“I’ve been very clear that I don’t think our community should have to choose between a very well-loved sports field/park and a school. They’re both desperately needed. I have told the city I think it’s a nonstarter.”

She noted that hundreds of new family-size apartments will be built soon near there in the new Ottawa Community Housing (OCH) Gladstone Village development, and that Plouffe Park is the only greenspace in the neighbourhood. She also emphasized that the new school needed to be built quickly because of the poor condition of its temporary building, which lacks a gym and a library.

Troster promised there would be at least two public meetings this fall before consultation ends, and said she was also meeting with the mayor’s office to

“look at possibilities.”

“I think we can go back to the drawing board and make the site work for everyone. It’s a pretty big site. We can figure it out.”

She raised the possibility of increasing building heights or moving the school to the OCH lands.

DCA President Catherine Boucher told *The BUZZ* that the association is working with the Louise Arbour parent council to find a solution that both saves the park and finds a new location for the school. Both had information tables at an event in the park on September 2.

Boucher said that, when the sale of the federal government land was first announced, the French public school board had said the school would be located in Gladstone Village, not in the park. She suspected this may have changed because of changes in provincial funding.



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# Save the date! The walk for the community food centre returns October 1



Walkers enjoyed the sunshine and raised funds in the 2022 walkathon. *LORNA KINGSTON/CCSAC*

Patricia Marsden-Dole  
**H**igh food prices, rising rents, and the general cost of living are a worry for all of us right now.

For some in our community, these issues decide what we eat and where and how well we live.

Our Centretown Community Food Centre (see the [story in the August BUZZ](#)) tries to supply clients once

a month with three to four days worth of groceries. Much of this food is donated by the 22 member churches of the Centretown Churches Social Action Committee (CCSAC), the body that

founded the emergency food centre 45 years ago.

Several Centretown churches are founding members of CCSAC and have continually supplied food, donations, and especially volunteer help in bagging groceries, soliciting donations, and helping clients with referrals to support services when necessary.

You can help too, by walking and raising funds in the annual Walk for the Centre on October 1.

CCSAC began in 1978 as an “emergency measure” that was expected to be needed for a couple of years, but has turned into one of the busiest of the city’s food banks. With the pandemic and its after-effects on the economy and inflation, it has been seeing a large increase in demand.

That means more food is needed to meet that demand.

The centre serves not only Centretown but also the Glebe, Old Ottawa South, and Old Ottawa East. It recently moved from 507 Bank Street to 370 Catherine Street.

The walkathon is CCSAC’s major fundraiser, and highlights for the public the serious food insecurity faced by many people in central Ottawa. It’s also an afternoon community event for the family.

Starting and ending at City Hall, it opens by highlighting the work of the centre throughout the year. Then the Sons of Scotland pipers will encourage walkers to set out – across Laurier Avenue and into Confederation Square.

So save the date – Sunday, October 1 – and plan to

come out to support the Centretown Community Food Centre and better food security for all in our neighbourhoods. Events get under way at 1:30 p.m., and the walk will start just after 2 p.m.

People are encouraged to donate online at [www.centretownchurches.org/walkathon](http://www.centretownchurches.org/walkathon) but there will be a registration table available where on-site donations can be made. Tax receipts are provided.

Bring a friend, or bring your pet – all are welcome! Organizers are encouraging walkers to take photos as there are prizes for the best pictures. More information is available at [www.centretownchurches.org](http://www.centretownchurches.org).

Let’s make this year’s Walk for the Centre the best one yet!

## Horizon Ottawa appeals election audit

Alayne McGregor

**H**orizon Ottawa has launched a legal appeal against a city audit of its campaign in last fall’s city election.

In July, the city’s Election Compliance Audit Committee ordered an audit of Horizon’s campaign, on the basis that the group violated election finance rules by starting to publicize an event (HorizonFest), and thus spending funds, before it registered as a third-party advertiser. (See [the story in the August BUZZ](#).)

The committee is independent of city council.

In its application to the Ontario Superior Court of Justice, Horizon argued that the decision was unreasonable, and “made despite an absence of credible and compelling evidence of a violation.” It said the committee “explicitly relied on merely a reasonable suspicion of a violation,” whereas the Ontario Municipal Elections Act requires “reasonable grounds.”

Horizon Ottawa’s lawyer, Ryan Durran, told *The BUZZ* that “reasonable grounds” are defined in common law and is “a matter of common sense, where there are reasonable and probability-based grounds to believe there was a violation as opposed to merely a suspicion.”

The application also argued that the specific publicity materials were exempt from being considered expenses because requesting donations was an incidental, not a primary, activity at HorizonFest. The act allows an exemption for the costs and promotion of events where soliciting donations is incidental.

Horizon Ottawa is a prominent municipal advocacy group in Ottawa, which has campaigned on issues including increasing affordable housing, reforming the police, improving transit, and removing developer influence in planning decisions at City Hall. In the 2022 city elections, it endorsed a slate of councillor, mayoral, and school board candidates and encouraged volunteering for those candidates, as well as raising donations directly for its election advertising.

Durran said the act requires the city audit process to be paused while the appeal is being heard. He said he would shortly be sending documents spelling out Horizon’s arguments more fully to the city and to Edward Phillips,

the person who originally laid the complaint. The city and Phillips will also have a chance to respond.

He said it wasn’t yet known when the appeal would be heard.

Third-party advertisers are relatively new in city elections, only having been introduced in 2018. If a person, group, or corporation wants to advertise in any broadcast, print, electronic, or other medium in order to promote, support, or oppose a candidate or a referendum question in an Ontario municipal election, they must register as a third-party advertiser and are subject to a maximum \$25,000 spending limit. An advertisement is defined as both traditional ads as well as materials such as brochures or lawn signs.

They cannot raise or spend any money on third-party advertisements that will appear during an election in the City of Ottawa until they have registered with the city and opened a bank account exclusively for the election campaign.

During the 2022 election campaign, now-Mayor Mark Sutcliffe’s campaign asked the city clerk to investigate Horizon Ottawa on several issues, including whether it was a violation of the act for Horizon to offer to train candidates and campaign staff. The Sutcliffe campaign argued this would be an in-kind donation to candidates’ campaigns. The city clerk said it was not his role to investigate, but rather that of the Election Compliance Audit Committee, which only sits after the election.

Last month, Ottawa City Council passed a motion from Councillor Allan Hubley asking for clarification of the act’s provisions about third-party advertisers, including:

- who is responsible for enforcing third-party advertising provisions;
- how complaints made during the campaign period should be investigated and judged;
- reviewing spending limits for third-party advertisers;
- removing the ability for corporations and unions to donate to third-party advertising campaigns;
- permitting the city to develop tools to enhance the provision that candidates not direct or otherwise co-operate with third-party advertisers;
- or alternatively allowing cities to opt out of third-party advertising in their elections.

Six councillors, including Ariel Troster, dissented on allowing opting-out.

## New Ottawa urbanism book club meets this month

Derrick Simpson

**A** group of Centretown residents have created a new monthly book club to discuss how to build a more affordable, safer and more sustainable Ottawa.

The Ottawa Urbanism Book Club will hold its inaugural meeting on September 26 from 6:15 to 7:15 p.m. in room B125 of the Main branch of the Ottawa Public Library, 120 Metcalfe Street.

The first book discussed will be *Strong Towns* by Charles L. Marohn, Jr., a book of forward-thinking ideas on how to build financially sustainable and safer cities through smarter and simpler design.

Marohn is a land-use planner and municipal engineer who uses his professional experience to make the case for building cities and towns with people in mind, and to question the status quo of car-centric sub-

urbia. (*Strong Towns* was [reviewed in The BUZZ in August, 2022](#).)

All are welcome to attend the meeting, including those who have not read the book but have an interest in Centretown and the City of Ottawa. There will be many avid readers at the first meeting, happy to share their knowledge and love for our city.

To RSVP (not necessary but appreciated) or for more information, email [derricksimpson15@gmail.com](mailto:derricksimpson15@gmail.com)

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# BYWARD BARKET

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## Want a better city? It starts with children

Cassie Smith

We can all agree that children are our future. But the ways they experience the world, and the opportunities they are provided or excluded from in childhood, shape their future in ways that are often overlooked.

This disconnect is apparent in the ways we build cities and transportation systems.

A growing moment tied to the idea of child-friendly cities is called Kidical Mass ([kidsonbike.org/](http://kidsonbike.org/)). Inspired by the bike protest Critical Mass, Kidical Mass events reclaim space in the city for kids. They often feature bright colours, decorations, music, and kids having one of the most fun bike rides of their lives surrounded by other children.

First held in Oregon in 2008, Kidical Mass rides have now occurred around the world. In May 2023, more than 150,000 people participated in a weekend of activities in more than 500 locations.

On September 24, Kidical Mass Ottawa will hold its first event for children and adults, as part of the next worldwide action week.

### Why do children need car-free alternatives?

Car-centric cities and societies generate disastrous

amounts of greenhouse gas emissions that should make us all concerned about our future.

They have also created a “backseat generation.” Many kids now experience the world mostly from the backseat of a vehicle – limiting their exposure to the world, social connections, exercise, and independence.

In his book *Urban Playground*, researcher Tim Gill identified the independent roaming radius of four generations from the same family, each at eight years of age: great-grandfather six miles, grandfather one mile, mother ½ mile, son 300 yards. We are excluding children from experiencing the world. And when children and youth feel like they can’t travel on their own it creates more pressures on families and more car trips.

Solutions exist, so that cities consider the needs of children and families in planning and transportation.

Melissa and Chris Bruntlett are parents with two children who moved from Canada to the more child-friendly country of the Netherlands. In their book *Curbing Traffic*, they share the dramatic changes in their lives after the move. They suggest that limiting cars by providing bountiful cycling and walking connections,

car-free and car-light streets, and low-speed limits are essential to creating a child-friendly city.

### Parents can demand safer streets

Of course, the Netherlands is known for its cycling culture, but this isn’t because their cities are inherently different. Their streets were also overrun with cars until the 1970s. Part of what led to their new direction was a call to make cities safer for children.

Parents and community members banded together to demand safer streets for kids in a movement called “stop de kindermoord” which translates to “stop child murder.” This group said “enough is enough” and demanded better. The movement was a critical part of the transformation of the Netherlands from a car-dominant society to one that supports all types of transportation.

We can demand this type of action here too. While we may be decades behind the Dutch, we can benefit from what they have learned and build a city of the future that doesn’t ignore children but allows them to live their own healthy, safe, fulfilling, and independent lives.

This will mean more investments in transit, sidewalks, and mobility lanes



A Kidical bicycle parade (“Fahrradkorso”) in Flensburg, Germany (photo by Katrin Storsberg/Kidical)

(for bikes, scooters, and mobility devices), and taking space away from cars.

These investments produce substantial returns in lower health care, road repair, and collision costs. Like the Netherlands, many cities are establishing school streets, closing these areas to cars to make school zones safer for children. Others are converting on-street parking to active transportation routes or dedicated transit lanes.

Importantly, all of these

actions to reduce automobile trips lead to fewer greenhouse gas emissions, and air and noise pollution.

They also often provide cities with more space for trees and plants.

### Ottawa event open to all

The Ottawa event will take place on Sunday, September 24, from 9:30 a.m. to noon. It will include a slow bike ride on Queen Elizabeth Drive and fun activities before and after. We invite

everyone to join us and help build cities that support kids and families today and for decades to come.

The event is co-hosted by Bike Ottawa ([bikeottawa.ca](http://bikeottawa.ca)), For Our Kids Ottawa-Gatineau ([www.forourkids.ca/ottawa\\_gatineau](http://www.forourkids.ca/ottawa_gatineau)), and School Streets Ottawa ([schoolstreetsottawa.ca](http://schoolstreetsottawa.ca)).

Registration and more information about the Ottawa event can be found at [bit.ly/kidicalmassottawa](http://bit.ly/kidicalmassottawa) or any of the host groups’ websites.



## MEMORY CARE AT AMICA THE GLEBE

Amica The Glebe, a senior lifestyles residence, is pleased to invite you to an engaging discussion hosted by Memory Care Coordinator Jennifer Beninato.

Enjoy refreshments as you learn all about Memory Care at our residence, including the differences between other levels of care, what to expect, and how meaningful a move can be for families and caregivers.

We’d love to answer any questions you have about Memory Care at Amica.

Monday, September 25 | 10:30am-12:00pm  
RSVP to LA or Luisa at 613-233-6363 by September 22

# AMICA

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Tamara Lich outside the Ottawa Courthouse on the first day of her trial. ALAYNE MCGREGOR/THE BUZZ

## Lich, Barber trial brings back the horns

Alayne McGregor

Blaring truck horns returned to Centretown on September 5 – but only in a single room in the Ottawa Courthouse.

The joint trial of “Freedom Convoy” organizers Chris Barber and Tamara Lich opened that day. The two are both charged with mischief, obstructing police, and counselling others to commit mischief and intimidation for their roles in the protest. Barber is also charged with counselling others to disobey a court order.

The convoy took over much of Centretown for more than three weeks in January and February, 2022. In his Public Order Emergency Commission (POEC) report, Justice Paul Rouleau noted that “most of the downtown protest sites had average daytime noise levels of 90 – 110 decibels in the first week.” He wrote that he heard testimony of a “general state of lawlessness” downtown and “residents feeling threatened and being harassed by protesters.”

The Crown opened its case with an 11-minute compilation of scenes from throughout the convoy protest, beginning with trucks loudly blasting their horns. The 38 clips were compiled from police bodycams, video cameras, and drones.

In his opening statement, Crown prosecutor Tim Radcliffe argued that Lich and Barber, with others, engaged in an unlawful protest, shutting down roads, obstructing police efforts, and interfering with downtown residents’ enjoyment of their property. They counselled coming to and remaining in Ottawa, including their “Hold the Line” rally. They also exercised control and influence over the placement of vehicles, he said.

Radcliffe emphasized that the trial was not about the public policy the demonstrators sought to change, or about their political purpose (against vaccine mandates and passports). “What is at issue is the means they employed, not the ends, and whether it was lawful or not.”

Referencing the injunction the City of Ottawa received against the protest, he noted that the judge in that case said “there is an ample evidence that the respondents’ current actions and flagrant disregard for the city bylaws go far beyond exercising their right to protest.

“She also said freedom of expression, like all other Charter rights, is not an absolute right, nor an unqualified one. The Charter does not give any person the legal right to unlawfully trample on the legal rights of others.”

Barber’s lawyer, Diane Magas, objected

to the Crown calling the events an “occupation,” saying it didn’t meet the legal definition of occupation “under the authority of a hostile army.” Lich’s lawyer, Lawrence Greenspon, supported Magas, saying that “the true sense of that word has far more serious implications and consequences for the people who have been historically or are right now victims of it.”

Justice Rouleau did refer to an “occupation” several times in his POEC report.

Magas argued that Barber “did nothing else but to lawfully protest and actually assisted police enforcement in moving vehicles throughout the time of the demonstration on several occasions. In addition to that police officers were going to my client for assistance and my client did assist in that fashion.” Because he was arrested Feb. 17, he did not aid in counselling the events of Feb. 18-20, she said.

Greenspon reserved his right to make an opening statement later. Responding to the Crown’s comments, he said that, “In a contest between constitutionally protected freedom of assembly and freedom of expression, and property rights that are not constitutionally protected, there is no contest.”

The trial is scheduled to last for at least 16 days in September and mid-October. The Crown said it expected to call 22 witnesses and table more than 100 exhibits. However, even on the first day, the schedule started slipping as the defence asked for more information and context about the exhibits.

Greenspon gave notice on the first day that he would seek to have the Crown precluded from calling nine witnesses: residents (including Zexi Li), business owners including from the Chateau Laurier, and an OC Transpo employee. Greenspon argued that an admission made by the two defence teams that the convoy was disruptive would cover the witnesses’ testimony. As of press time, the judge had not yet ruled on this submission.

The first day of the trial attracted about 40 people to the courtroom. Some arrived more than an hour before the scheduled time; when Lich arrived with her lawyers, she chatted with and hugged several of the spectators. However, many were journalists, not convoy supporters; when the judge asked for a show of hand as to reporters who would appreciate being able to record the proceedings for note-taking, a large number of hands went up.

Lich and Barber elected to be tried by judge alone, without a jury. Ontario Court Justice Heather Perkins-McVey is presiding.

## Most downtown toilets are hidden

GottaGo! Campaign

It’s hard to imagine that the capital city of any other rich developed nation has only two stand-alone public toilets – but that’s what Ottawa offers our one million residents and 10 million annual visitors.

Our two stand-alones are on Parliament Hill and in Major’s Hill Park. There are, however, many other toilets at public buildings, funded from our taxes.

But these have no exterior signs indicating that washrooms are available.

Here is a list of these locations. Keep it handy when you are downtown.

- Parliament Hill: Wellington Street, near the West Block
- Major’s Hill Park: North

end of park, just south of Murray Street

- City Hall: 110 Laurier Avenue West
- Ottawa Public Library: 120 Metcalfe Street
- ByWard Market: 55 ByWard Market Square
- Arts Court: 2 Daly Avenue
- National Arts Centre: 1 Elgin Street
- National Gallery of Canada: 380 Sussex Drive
- Tourist Information Kiosk: 90 Wellington Street
- Ottawa Art Gallery: 10 Daly Avenue or 50 Mackenzie King Bridge
- Supreme Court: 301 Wellington Street
- Library and Archives Canada: 395 Wellington Street
- Bank of Canada Museum: 30 Bank Street

- The Mint: 320 Sussex Drive

One of the best of these, in our opinion, is on the ground floor at Ottawa City Hall. But, as with the others in the list, no one would ever know. Even our city council cannot install a “Public Toilet” sign on its own building.

There are also public toilets in commercial buildings such as the Rideau Centre. Many coffee shops – Bridgehead, Tim Horton’s, and Starbucks – also provide access to their toilets to non-customers. Please help them by making a purchase, if you can afford it.

The GottaGo! Campaign ([gottago-ottawa.ca](http://gottago-ottawa.ca)) advocates for safe, accessible and easy-to-find public toilets in Ottawa.

## “An outstanding example of architecture”

continued from page 1 leading to “demolition by neglect.”

Looking past its current condition of boarded up windows, peeling paint, and overgrown shrubbery, the complex is an outstanding example of architecture in Centretown – the original 1922 building and its 1956 and 1963 additions, which harmoniously blend in with the original, communicating the site’s phased history through its built form.

An application for protection under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act has been filed with the city (see [The Buzz of October 14, 2022](http://The_Buzz_of_October_14_2022)).

Essex’s thesis thoroughly documents the heritage value of the complex and then works through a proposal of how it could be repurposed for the benefit of the Centretown community. Her thesis can be accessed here: [curve.carleton.ca/4bec6d01-e1d2-4181-985c-fa72ccdf9aab](http://curve.carleton.ca/4bec6d01-e1d2-4181-985c-fa72ccdf9aab)

She will present a brief site and building history and her proposal at a public meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, September 25, at the Jack Purcell Community Centre on Elgin Street.

The meeting is sponsored by the Centretown Community Association. All are invited!

*Erwin Dreessen is a long-time community activist, now living in Centretown. He writes on Substack.com.*

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# Pride parade attracts thousands of new participants



Participants in the Capital Pride Parade made it a celebration — and even played volleyball, skated, or danced while marching — while still referring to issues like AIDS and trans rights.

ALAYNE MCGREGOR/THE BUZZ



Alayne McGregor

Ottawans responded to increased anti-transgender and anti-gay rhetoric this year by showing up in record numbers for the 2023 Capital Pride parade.

Capital Pride spokesperson Callie Metler said the parade attracted more groups and, in particular, more participants than in 2022. More than 200 groups took part compared to 185 in 2022. The number of people walking, riding, dancing, or playing volleyball in the parade increased from 7500 to almost 11,000, with each contingent attracting more people.

The parade took almost three hours on Sunday, August 27 to wend its way past locations in Centretown, she said. *The BUZZ* watched the parade for more than two hours at Elgin and Laurier, and saw enthusiastic and large crowds along the route, waving and cheering parade participants. There was a generally happy vibe.

Metler said Capital Pride estimated that there was a 50 percent increase in parade

spectators, as well as in its street festival on Bank Street on August 26 and 27.

“The infrastructure we have been using to its fullest extent. We definitely noticed the growth and are so glad to see it.”

There has been “a lot of conversations about rising hate” in the queer community, Metler said.

“This year especially many more people were encouraged or empowered to come out to show support to combat that hate. Taking the space to celebrate and having a good time and joining the community that way. I think that’s why people responded in droves.”

There were a wide variety of groups in the parade from both large and small businesses from Amazon to Saunders Farm; hospitals and community service groups; social groups such as dancers or volleyball players; and an association protesting anti-gay laws in Iran. Federal departments including the Armed Forces had large contingents, as did the City of Ottawa, including Mayor Mark Sutcliffe and Councillor Ariel Troster. In

the political party section, *The BUZZ* saw the Liberals, the NDP, and the Greens, but not the Conservatives.

The Capital Pride Parade Grand Marshal this year was local transgender activist Fae Johnstone. Johnstone also led the separate Ottawa March for Trans Rights downtown on August 25.

That march filled almost two blocks of Laurier Avenue West, with people holding signs saying “Protect Trans Kids” and “Gender-affirming care saves lives,” and chanting “Trans rights are human rights.” The Centretown Community Health Centre contingent displayed signs saying the centre welcomed trans, two-spirit, and gender diverse people.

Before the march, Jade Peek, the director of operations for Kind Space (an Ottawa centre which supports oppressed sexual orientations and gender identities), said the stakes had never been higher for transgendered people. “It’s hard to see the increase in hate in the last few years.”

Johnstone told the crowd that the “very existence” of trans people has been threatened in the last three years. Politicians are using the anxiety and rage caused by hard economic times and turning it against trans children and youth, she said.

On the other hand, Tara Sypniewski, the founder of the Ottawa Trans Library, said that “sometimes progress is slow, but we’ve come a long way.”

## Somerset West Community Health Centre Annual General Meeting



CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

Our 2023 Annual General Meeting will take place on Wednesday, September 20.

Please register at [www.eventcreate.com/e/swchc-agm-2023](http://www.eventcreate.com/e/swchc-agm-2023) or by emailing [info@swchc.on.ca](mailto:info@swchc.on.ca)



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**PARK LAYOUT PLAN**  
**PLAN D'EMPLACEMENT du PARC**

The draft plan for Norman Rochester Park (City of Ottawa)

## DCA pushes for more in new park

Alayne McGregor

Centretowners are getting a new park for free as part of the Canada Lands Booth Street Complex – but what goes in it is being constrained by the city.

We're told "it has to be just passive stuff that doesn't require any staff to do anything," said Dalhousie Community Association (DCA) president Catherine Boucher. That eliminates wading pools, toilets, and drinking fountains. Splash pads are still allowed because they can be automatically turned on and off.

"Basically they don't want to staff it and therefore it won't necessarily serve all the new people who are going to live there." The new Booth Street Complex will include both businesses and housing, bringing thousands of new residents into the area, she pointed out.

The DCA was told that adding a dog run would require more garbage pickup; adding a community pollinator garden would mean having to put in mulch each year, she said.

In the summer of 2022, DCA members met with city staff to plan the new Norman Rochester Park, and submitted a three-page letter of suggested amenities. Boucher said that none of these was included when the park's design was posted on Engage Ottawa this summer.

The small park, to be built at the corner of Rochester and Norman Streets, is being paid for by Canada Lands. This summer's consultation indicated it would include shade structures, a small basketball key, a splash pad, and a children's playground.

A survey, which ran from June 22 to July 22, offered two playground designs. Kevin Wherry, the city's manager of Parks and Facilities Planning, said 76 percent of the responses preferred the second design, which included a solo spinner, a playhouse, and several play structures.

The city also received comments on the park related to concern about undesirable gatherings due to its location; support for additional recreational amenities; concern over lack of greenspace in the neighbourhood and the park; as well as shade and space for water infiltration, he said.

The DCA letter proposed adding a public washroom, which it noted was particularly needed during large events like Italian Week and the Tulip Festival. It also recommended a drinking fountain, watering facilities

for plants and a pollinator garden, large trees, a dog run park, more waste bins, seating that encouraged conversation, swings in the play area, and more space for sports including pickleball and ping pong.

Councillor Ariel Troster told *The BUZZ* that there was still time to include some of the DCA's suggestions into the park. "I agree that that we can do a lot more interesting things with that park and we have a pretty generous cash-in-lieu of parkland fund in the ward."

The final plan for the park has not yet been drawn up, she said, and her office is consulting with the DCA. "I think you can expect to see some more amenities in that park once we're done with it. I really like some of their ideas."

Wherry said construction of the park would start in 2024 "at the earliest."

## Interim solutions sought to improve community safety in Somerset Ward

Alayne McGregor

Councillor Ariel Troster is asking a community health centre to fill in the gap on community safety as the city brings a new non-police pre-crisis intervention team into operation.

The intervention team and non-police crisis line is a pilot project which will act as an alternative to calling 9-1-1 when people struggle with overdoses or mental health challenges. It was approved by Ottawa City Council in July and will become active next summer.

It will only initially be working in one neighbourhood, but Troster expected Somerset Ward to be high on the list to be chosen.

However, "what we heard from people is we need something now," so she has asked local community health centres what they need to fill in gaps in outreach and drug programs.

The Somerset West Community Health Centre (SWCHC) has extended its outreach coverage to other areas when needed, but "they're overwhelmed right now." Troster's office has asked the SWCHC what funding it would need to extend those services throughout the rest of the ward "to make sure that key parts of the neighbourhood, including Bank, Elgin, and Sparks Streets and the surrounding neighbourhood are protected."

She plans to have those funds included in a 2024 budget request for more front-line resources in the ward, regardless of which area is chosen for the pilot. These workers could deescalate situations, and help with neighbourhood safety and cleanliness and general neighbourhood relations and public health, she said. She is also pushing for more budget funding for supportive and affordable housing to reduce homelessness.

"The sense that I get is that it would really help free up our local police officers to take care of more concerning incidents if we had more of those outreach resources on the ground which do work very well in the catchment areas where they're involved."

These concerning incidents include two

violent assaults on passersby in Centretown last month. On August 21, two people were stabbed at the corner of Bank and Gloucester Streets and were taken to hospital in critical condition. James Gemmill was later charged with attempted murder, assault with a weapon, assault causing bodily harm, and weapons possession.

On August 30, two women were taken to hospital with non-life-threatening injuries after they were struck by a man wielding a blunt metal weapon on Wellington near Kent Street. A 31-year-old man was charged with several violent offences, including robbery and assault with a weapon. Police would not release his name, saying he was a "vulnerable person," which could include someone with mental illness, developmental delay, or other illness or emotional disturbance.

Troster said the frightening assaults have led to a sense of unease in the neighbourhood, especially compounded with other "upsetting incidents that people are speaking about."

On August 9, Troster and MPP Joel Harden hosted a meeting on community safety which attracted about 200 people in person and about another 100 online, she said.

"There was a really wide swath of the community that came there: business owners, people from community associations, as well as a lot of everyday neighbours. We were quite pleased with the attendance. I actually wasn't surprised – there are a lot of people who are interested in this conversation."

Residents are concerned about security, and the rate of minor crimes has gone up, she said. "There's a lot of crimes of desperation that are happening and a lot of unmet needs when it comes to hunger, poverty, addiction, and the homelessness and overdose crises. These have really come to a head after decades of social failure, and the issues are just much more visible."

She said that she and Harden would be releasing a report in the next month on the meeting and follow-up actions.

## Land trust ramps up saving affordable housing

**continued from page 1** social enterprise, he said, without long-term government subsidies. "So our goal is to build models where our portfolio of housing can become self-sustaining."

The OCLT will own the properties, but not manage them day-to-day. "Our goal is to

establish a portfolio to manage these assets over the long term, but then to partner with existing nonprofits and co-ops."

The Kirkwood property will be partially financed through a line of credit, Bulthuis said. In order pay off that loan and buy more properties, it will launch

a community bond campaign this fall. It hopes these "Housing Forever" bonds will raise \$1.6M to establish a revolving fund for the continued acquisition of multi-unit residential properties.

"We're trying to raise funds and develop the tools that will enable us to buy at least two or three properties within the next year," Bulthuis said. "Our plan is to offer very fair financial returns but at the same time a recognition that those those bonds will help sustain a social impact in the community."

While the OCLT will be offering affordable rents, they will not be deeply affordable. The city report on the Kirkwood property notes that its current rents are 63 percent of average market rent. That will continue for current tenants, but will rise to 80 percent if new tenants move in.

Bulthuis said 80 percent of AMR would be the maximum, but it was important to have high enough rents to keep the project viable: "the cost to service the mortgage and to service the debt are non-negotiable." He also noted that there won't be huge jumps in rent.

## News shorts

### Queensway ramp and street closures

At the very last moment, the Percy Street Queensway overpass rapid replacement that was supposed to happen in mid-August was cancelled. We queried MTO last week for a new date, but hadn't heard back by press time.

However, we did get a notice that the eastbound Kent Street Queensway off-ramp will close, as of September 15 until December 22, for work on retaining and noise barrier walls and sewer and other roadwork. The detour will involve taking Isabella to Metcalfe and then going back via Catherine.

### Zoning is important - learn more

The city's zoning bylaw is where all the nice words in its plans about land use actually meet reality. This fall, the current zoning bylaw is set to be completely rewritten to fit the new Official Plan and new provincial legislation.

You can learn much more about

the new bylaw at public meetings this month: the central-area session will be at City Hall (Jean Pigott Place, main floor) on Wednesday, September 20 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. There will also be an online session at the end of the month. More info at [engage.ottawa.ca/zoning](https://engage.ottawa.ca/zoning)

### Dundonald splash pad designs released

The two possible concepts for the splash pads in Dundonald Park are now finally up for comments at [engage.ottawa.ca/dundonald-park](https://engage.ottawa.ca/dundonald-park). The deadline as of press time was September 15, but Councillor Ariel Troster said she would try to get more time for this survey.

In August, a petition with 229 signatures was filed at Ottawa City Council asking the city to boost the funding designated for upgrading Dundonald Park and explore possibilities of creating a comprehensive plan aimed at enhancing the park. Troster said that she was accepting ideas for further park improvements, and would consolidate those into a cohesive plan and take it back out for public consultation later this year.

### Another pedestrian/cycling bridge may open this fall

The Chief William Commanda Bridge received its official opening last weekend, and another pedestrian/cycling bridge may soon follow.

Work recently resumed on the Rideau River Pedestrian Bridge – which goes from Carleton University over the river to NCC pathways in Vincent Massey Park – including paving, drainage, and electrical work. The steel truss structure for that bridge was lifted into place in July, 2022, and then work stopped.

Michael Morgan, the director of the city's rail construction program, told the Light Rail Subcommittee on August 29 that the bridge is nearing completion and might be opened this month.

When *The BUZZ* asked for reasons for the delay, Morgan said that "seasonal and environmental periods limited construction activities. Further, prioritization of construction in other areas of the project was required to advance the overall O-Train South extension work."

## Somerset Ward report: making our parks more people-friendly

Ariel Troster

People in Centretown care about our parks and have a lot to say about what to do with them. That is the overwhelming message I received from residents this summer, whether it was about the new splash pad that will be built in Dundonald Park, or the plans for the new 1010 Somerset development and Plouffe Park nearby.

It's no wonder we care so much about greenspace in our downtown core, because there is so little of it. Somerset Ward only has 20 percent tree coverage. Experts say that we need 30 to 40 percent to combat the urban heat dome effect and cool our neighbourhoods.

This summer, the Ward 14 team went on a bike tour of Centretown parks with city staff to start brainstorming ideas on how we could revive and renew public

spaces. So far, our shortlist includes misting stations, water fountains, better lighting, more comfortable seating, and covered shade structures when possible.

At St. Luke's Park, the basketball court is up for a complete renewal, and we have been working with the basketball community to ensure that the court meets players' needs.

At Dundonald Park, the splash pad is only one addition that we are looking to make. We have reached out to community associations and park users for other suggestions. Making the walking paths more accessible is a key priority. But we also know that our community needs open greenspace that can remain flexible for a variety of uses, including picnics, concerts in the park, toddler story times, and pick-up sports. If you have ideas about what you would like

to see in Dundonald Park, please reach out.

The proposed new development at 1010 Somerset has been generating some controversy. While I am absolutely thrilled to see that new recreation facilities, a French public school, affordable housing, a potential arts hub, and sports fields will be coming to West Centretown, I share the community's concerns about the proposed placement of the school in the middle of Plouffe Park.

To be clear, I know that French-speaking students are desperate for a new school building, as the one they are temporarily located in is in a serious state of disrepair. Ensuring a safe learning environment for these kids is a top priority. But I also don't think we need to sacrifice a well-used park in order to build the school. The site has plenty of room for both.

I encourage you to fill out the Engage Ottawa survey at <https://engage.ottawa.ca/1010-somerset> about the project and share your perspective. It is important that the city get this right.

Here's hoping that the weather stays mild this fall, so we can continue enjoying the treasured parks in Centretown – and keep dreaming about how to make them even better.

Ariel Troster is the city councillor for Somerset Ward and can be reached at [Ariel.Troster@ottawa.ca](mailto:Ariel.Troster@ottawa.ca)

## Letter: All for naught: the shell game at Plouffe Park

Of the almost \$2.85M that the city shelled out to the federal government to acquire 1010 Somerset, 99 percent came from the city's cash-in-lieu-of-parkland accounts.

The city recreation department's current plans propose that a new park of less than one hectare be built seven or 10 years hence. In exchange, the recreation department proposes that the existing 0.9 hectare that is Plouffe Park be eliminated as early as next year.

So for \$2.85M of monies intended for creating new additional parkland, the community will wait for a decade – without any park – to get no more park space than it has now.

What a deal!

Gerri Dumouchelle



Imran Kaderdina will coordinate the DCA's Save Plouffe Park campaign.

## DCA report: Plouffe Park dominates an agenda full of challenges

Ed McKenna

### A Challenging Fall Agenda

The Dalhousie Community Association regular board meeting on August 24 was anything but regular. The DCA returned from summer break to face a challenging agenda and an immediate call to action.

### Plouffe Park Back-to-School Event

A gathering in the park on a beautiful sunny day was the start...

On September 3 in Plouffe Park, the DCA participated in an event organized by the Plant Pool Recreation Association (PPRA). Really, it was three events in one, reflecting the challenges of the year ahead.

First, it was a ribbon-cutting for the new basketball court at the Plant Recreation Centre. As the PPRA continues to support the development of the centre, we're reminded that this remarkable facility was almost lost in the 1990s, but was saved, and then restored in 2004, through community action.

The back-to-school event also served as a gathering for residents determined to save Plouffe Park, which may be lost in the city's new redevelopment plan for 1010 Somerset West.

And the event provided an opportunity for parents and guardians of École élémentaire publique Louise-Arbour on Beech Street to promote an early start for the construction of a new French language school, which is a part of the city's redevelopment plan.

### #SavePlouffePark

Just as in the 1990s with the Plant Pool, community action is needed to ensure the preservation of Plouffe Park. Learn more at [www.ottawadalhousie.ca/save-plouffe-park/](http://www.ottawadalhousie.ca/save-plouffe-park/).

Challenging times sometimes demand an extraordinary response. At its August meeting, the DCA, for the first time in more than a decade, decided to allocate funds from its planning reserve budget to help with the campaign to save the park.

Imran Kaderdina, who lives around the corner from the park, will coordinate the

campaign. You'll be seeing and hearing a lot from volunteers this fall, as the DCA and our partners push to ensure the community takes part in decision-making about the future of Plouffe Park and the 1010 Somerset project.

### French Public Education Matters

One of the first steps in the campaign is to reach out to parents and guardians of École Louise-Arbour. At the back-to-school event, the information tables for #SavePlouffePark and the new French-language school were side-by-side.

Will the city proposal to build the new school over Plouffe Park divide the community?

As the parents state on their website, [frenchpubliceducationmatters.com](http://frenchpubliceducationmatters.com), "the proposed development plan should not force the community to make a choice between two essential public needs: a public park and a desperately needed building for hundreds of children in our community..."

### Traffic and Tall Buildings


There were other issues on the August meeting agenda, each with its own challenges. The Mobility Committee reported that the Chaudière Crossing will reopen to full inter-provincial traffic September 29. What impact will this have on residents in the Booth Street corridor?

On Monday afternoon, September 18, you may spot members of the Public Realm Committee on a bike tour of Dalhousie with Councillor Ariel Troster. They'll be looking at city land with potential for parks development. Funding is available to improve our parks and add to their number.

And we've been informed by the city that the zoning bylaw and official plan will be amended to allow a nine-storey building at 27 Balsam. The DCA's Planning Our Neighbourhood Committee had opposed the proposal as an over-development of the site, which introduces a mid-rise building in an established low-rise residential neighbourhood.

Please join us for our next meeting on September 28, and check out our website: [www.ottawadalhousie.ca](http://www.ottawadalhousie.ca)

Contact: [president@ottawadalhousie.ca](mailto:president@ottawadalhousie.ca)

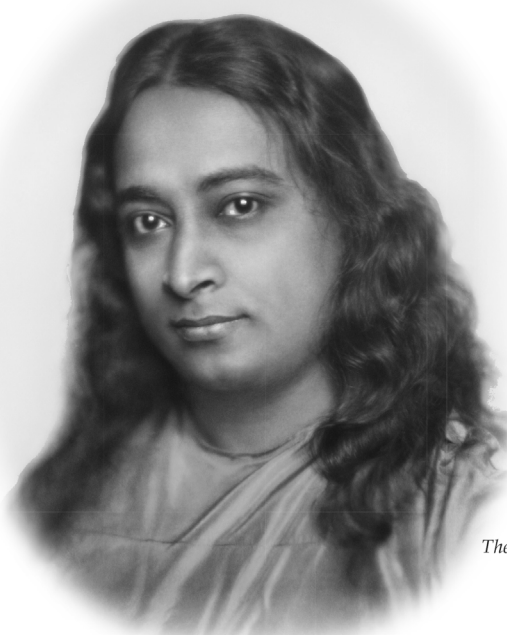


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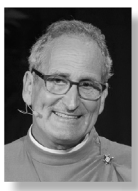
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## Letter: the city's short-sighted vision for 1010 Somerset

**O**ur family are long time users of Plouffe Park and the Plant Pool Recreation Centre.

We were elated that the PPRC was being enlarged with additional park space added for our community, which is sorely lacking in parks per capita. The city's Official Plan ensured existing facility and soccer field would be maintained, with minimal disruption during development. Development would be focused on the 1010 Somerset site, leaving our hard-fought-for and well-used park alone.

Now we see that our park is being sold, paved over, and moved to make way for a school and day care.

This might seem an improvement for our community if we are indeed gaining more park space, and might be if you could snap your fingers and have all the work completed immediately. Sadly, this cannot be done, and our families and children will have no field space for (a conservative estimate) 10 years!

Plouffe is unique in Wards 14 and 15; it is the only one with a field/soccer field, basketball/volleyball court, splash pad, and climbing/play structures all adjoining each other – thereby allowing a parent with multiple children to watch them playing in different areas at the same time.

This is the only field in our neighbourhoods where children can kick or throw a ball around, where any-age pick-up games can happen, where people can access an outdoor rink space for free, and where well-used summer camps and drop-ins for low-income families and seniors take place.

The rates of food/housing insecurity in both wards are high. Families who are expending all that they have on basic survival can ill afford to access other playing fields outside of their neighbourhood.

Supporting this proposal, as it stands, is accepting the 10-year displacement of one group of families in need (current users) with another group that has options. The city should consider the needs of all of its citizens, not only the ones with the loudest voices and/or deepest pockets.

This plan as it stands is essentially a Renoviction! Ten years is a whole generation for the children who currently use Plouffe Park. Their childhood gone.

This community fought long and hard to ensure that our families had a safe field to get fresh air, to run, tumble and play in – to ensure a healthy environment for families that have little access to open play spaces.

Consider other options, such as:

- **attach the school to the new Gladstone Village development**, which makes more sense for continuity. This would be better for traffic flow and create less conflict with already existing park users.

- **Take stock of underutilized school properties** before paving over an existing well-used park. The school boards can build partnerships with each other to address their inefficiencies.

- **Other city space:** we understand that for financial gain, the city wants to give developers prime areas, and thus is motivated to cram as many special-interest groups onto the 1010 property as possible. We do understand the maintenance issues with Plouffe, but safe and open recreation is needed for our wards continuously, not down the line some time.

In closing, we have nothing against the French school board and hope that they do find a solution to their problems. We understand that their current facility is substandard, but the solutions to their problems should not come at the cost of prioritizing their needs over the needs of other equally deserving families. To do so is displaying privilege.

By supporting this plan as it is laid out, you are taking a much-needed facility away from the people who currently use it and are saying “these other families are more important than yours ...but don't worry, you will get another place to run in 10 years.”

Ann and Brad Hutchings



DCA President Catherine Boucher (left) discusses the 1010 Somerset development and the concerns re Plouffe Park with MPP Joel Harden during the September 2 event in the park. A #SavePlouffePark information table was set up next to a table run by parents of students at École élémentaire publique Louise-Arbour.

CHARLES AKBEN-MARCHAND/THE BUZZ

### Comment

## Sports won't be accessible if Plouffe Park is sold

**R**esidents of Little Italy are passionate about soccer. Thousands of children have learned to play soccer on the two soccer pitches in Plouffe Park, where local soccer clubs have operated camps for decades.

A child just needs shoes and a ball to play soccer. For lower-income families, it's an affordable sport for their children. Those without a vehicle find it challenging to travel outside Little Italy to play soccer. Families become friends standing on the sidelines at Plouffe Park watching their children play. Soccer also leads to part-time jobs for our youth as coaches and referees with local soccer clubs.

The same goes for the newly revitalized basketball court in the park. Youth just need shoes and a ball to play basketball. This court fuels the dreams of our youth to play professionally. With new lighting, thanks to former councillor Diane Holmes, and no neighbours to complain, youth can play until 11 p.m. – and they do.

In winter, Plouffe Park hosts a full-size skating rink and children's skate “puddle” flooded by community volunteers. The Plant Recreation Centre (PRC) was built to include a skate room and the water hose bib for flooding ice. These rinks are magical to skate at night, especially with the new energy-efficient lighting. Free skates and equipment are

available in the skate room, thanks to the Plant Pool Recreation Association. This is another affordable sport available to families.

Locating the soccer pitches, the basketball court, and the rinks in the park immediately adjacent to the PRC was smart. In an emergency, PRC staff members are trained in First Aid/CPR and the defibrillator. The PRC is air-conditioned in case of heat stroke and has family washroom facilities. Parents/caregivers are able to watch one child play soccer or basketball while entertaining the younger siblings on the nearby play structures at the same time.

The city's plan to sell Plouffe Park for the development of a school is a bad knee-jerk reaction and will be costly. It's understood that another school may be needed for the thousands of new residents planned for the Ottawa Community Housing (OCH) towers to be built on this property. The school was supposed to be built on the OCH property on Gladstone Avenue.

OCH is now refusing to allow the school be built on its property. Apparently, this school needs to be built in Somerset Ward, and the city is proposing the school be built on the Plouffe Park soccer pitches.

The city's concept plan does show the soccer pitches, basketball court, and rinks relocated, at an unknown later date, to another location farther away

from the PRC. This plan does propose that the city build a small fieldhouse next to the relocated basketball court at an unknown later date.

However, city fieldhouses built next to sports fields are not staffed so no First Aid/CPR, and doors are locked so no bathroom access. This fieldhouse would need to include a skate room, water hose bib, and washroom at a cost to the city. The new soccer pitches and basketball court will also need outdoor lighting at the cost to the city. All these features are already available at the PRC, which is why it was efficient and cost-effective to build Plouffe Park next door.

The loss of Plouffe Park with its soccer pitches, basketball court, and rinks for an indefinite period will rob the community of affordable sports. What will be the effect on our children, youth, and families without this access for an indefinite period of time?

Will Little Italy lose its passion for soccer?

Check out the concept plan at: [engage.ottawa.ca/1010-somerset](https://engage.ottawa.ca/1010-somerset) Please tell the city planners and your city councillor what you think of this bad idea to sell Plouffe Park.

Send emails to [1010somerset@ottawa.ca](mailto:1010somerset@ottawa.ca) and [Ariel.Troster@ottawa.ca](mailto:Ariel.Troster@ottawa.ca)

Lorrie Marlow  
Plant Pool Recreation Association  
Recreation Association of Hintonburg

**Councillor | Conseillère**  
**Ariel Troster**  
Quartier Somerset Ward

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## The Climatarian: change happens through community networks

Cathy Woodgold

“Social networks are everywhere,” says Per Espen Stoknes in *What We Think About When We Try Not To Think About Global Warming*, making the point that that’s what we need in order to address climate change.

Whether at an event or informally, getting together tends to raise optimism. From time to time, we subtly influence each other, developing habits such as re-using containers and shifting food choices.

Changing our behaviour feels empowering and leads to subtle shifts in priorities, ultimately leading to shifts in voting patterns, major decisions about renewable energy, and other larger changes for our climate.

There’s lots of community in Centretown. I was just at the Elgin Street Farmer’s Market (on Sundays 9 a.m.

to 1 p.m. just south of Jack Purcell Community Centre) put on by the Centretown Community Association.

I like being able to talk directly to the farmers selling the local produce. I bought a curly cucumber of a type I’ve never tried before, and found it crunchy and delicious. I often run into people I know at the market, and enjoy the music and art.

I find that activities at the Frank Street Bee and Butterfly Garden are a great way to meet people and have fun. I attended an herb walk there where herbalist Abrah Arneson led us from one end of the garden to the other, talking about the medicinal properties of the plants as we made our way along.

The garden was in full bloom and bees were out pollinating the colourful flowers in the summer evening light. We learned that rose petals can be used on wounds, that the leaves ease loose stools, and that a tea can be made

from the roots; that golden-rod flowers are high in flavonoids; that dandelion can act as a diuretic; along with many other pieces of herbal information.

Another group, the Snails collective, explores the idea of degrowth, while acknowledging that as a society we need more of some kinds of goods. They meet, often in Centretown, to chat about a variety of topics.

Organizations not primarily focused on the environment are setting up climate change committees and making environmentally friendly decisions.

It has been estimated that there are over one million organizations worldwide working toward ecological sustainability and social justice, and that these groups collectively form the largest social movement in the history of the Earth.

When we participate in local community, we’re part of something big.



The Frank Street Bee & Butterfly Garden is in a series of large planters along Frank just east of Bank Street. Its beds, tended by volunteers, contain a wide range of plants beloved by pollinators. On July 26, herbalist Abrah Arneson spoke at the garden’s annual Herb Walk, explaining the uses (and occasional dangers) of many of the plants in the garden beds.

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## First person account: birth and death in print

Marit Quist Corbett

At the moment I enter the downtown photo store, my phone buzzes in my pocket. I check, because this is

an important day: the day my latest grandchild will be born.

I’m trying to fill the time while waiting for news. And there it is...“We’re in the operating room! It’s getting real!”

The expectant parents, swathed in yellow gowns and caps stare at the lens, a tentative smile on their faces. As far as I know, everything is under control. A planned Caesarean section. A surgeon they both trust. I’ll have a couple of hours to do what I came to do, printing some photos for them of the time before children, their wedding (so modest in the time of COVID-19), their adventurous life together, and the early days of pregnancy.

The store has three machines that can instantly print your shots. At least, that is the theory. Today, two of them are out of order. These beasts are delicate and temperamental.

I line up behind a couple of youngish guys in shorts who are printing photos of their holiday, or maybe a night on the town. They’re laughing at memories, pointing out silly poses.

Behind me, there are a few more people anxious to do their work. An older woman, dressed in tights and a swanky shirt I envy, and a mother holding a small child by the hand. They have their USB sticks or phone in hand, ready to print.

The two guys finalize their choice of pictures, getting the size, the lighting, and the balance just right. Finally, they step away, happily flipping through the photos of sun and fun – and

then it’s my turn.

I drop my bag beside the machine, plug in my USB and start going through the files – reams and reams of memories, choosing sizes and quantities. This one? The one where they’re looking into each others’ eyes? Or the one beside the lake, where they beam at the camera, tired and tanned? Should I crop? Enhance? Rotate? So many choices!

While making my decisions, I keep an eye on my phone. Has it happened yet? The chat is silent. Nothing yet.

I continue to edit, aware at the same time that the older woman behind me is gently making her presence known. There’s something about the air pressing up against your back, your neck prickling with tiny insistent stabs – you just know there’s someone in a hurry behind you. I turn around, apologetically.

“I’m sorry,” I say, acting the perfect Canadian yet also showing my excitement. I’m convinced that, of all the people here today, I have the most interesting reason for being there.

“I’m just trying to get these photos printed for my kids. They’re having a baby today. They’re at the hospital now.”

I anticipate a sympathetic response. Some joy. Some curiosity. And then comes her answer, delivered simply and without the emotion it might merit. It blows me away.

“It’s OK,” she says. “It’s just that I’m on my way to my husband’s funeral and we haven’t got the pictures for the display printed. I thought someone was in charge of that, but apparently we had

some wires crossed.”

I don’t know whether she feels the calm she projects. How can she say these words, so devastating, in such a matter of fact way? I search her face, and find her grey eyes steady and sad.

My work is done and I step back to let her pass. She moves forward to instruct the machine. I imagine her poring over albums or files, selecting the picture that most accurately captures the image she wants to retain, the one she wants others to see. She busies herself at the machine, plugging in the USB, clicking and adjusting.

People around us have taken notice. There are a few more customers waiting now. They, the store owners, and the staff are all aware of the little drama being played out on this stage.

The machine begins whirring, a sign that the picture is being printed. As soon as it pops out of the slot and drops into the catch basin, the woman picks it up and shows it to us.

“This is my husband.”

The photograph shows the profile of a smiling man, perhaps in his late fifties. He’s full of life and full of joy, and his eyes are kind. We tell her it’s a beautiful photograph. We tell her he looks so kind.

She nods and walks over to the cash to pay. I do the same.

At the door we say goodbye, wishing each other well. She, preparing to say farewell to a life-long companion. And me, preparing to welcome a new human into this world.

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# What's on this month, in Ottawa and beyond

Tony Wohlfarth

The fall season kicked off on Labour Day. This month there are many live musical performances, including City Folk at Lansdowne Park, which got underway on September 13 and continues to September 17.

**ByTowne Cinema (325 Rideau St.)**

*Scrapper* is a poignant and hilarious feature length film about Georgie, a precocious 12-year-old. As the film opens, Georgie (played by Lola Campbell) lives in a council flat in London following the death of her mother. Her life is carefree as she manages to raise herself, until her father, Jason (Harris Dickinson), whom she has never met, arrives one day and tries to parent her. They scrap and gradually form a tenuous bond which is incredibly poignant.

Directed by Charlotte Regan, the film won the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival in January. It's screening from September 15-18. Running time: 1h24m. For times and tickets, check: [www.bytowne.ca](http://www.bytowne.ca)

**Mayfair Theatre (1074 Bank St.)**

*Golda* is a docudrama starring Helen Mirren as Golda Meir, Lior Ashkenazi as military chief Elazar, and Liev Schreiber as Henry Kissinger. Meir was the prime minister of Israel during the 1973 Yom Kippur War, which was precipitated when Syria and Egypt invaded the Middle Eastern country on its holiest day. Two aspects of *Golda* draw a lot of scrutiny. The first is the incredible amount of makeup and body armour. The second is the fact that Meir was a chain smoker and is depicted smoking constantly. The film is directed by Guy Nattiv and premiered at the Berlinale in February.

Screening at the Mayfair until September 14. The run may be extended. Running time: 1h40m. Show-times/tickets: [mayfairtheatre.ca](http://mayfairtheatre.ca)

**Library & Archives Canada (395 Wellington)**

The Ottawa International Writers Festival presents two free events at the LAC. On

September 28, Michelle Good launches her book *Truth Telling* with host Karen McBride. And, on October 2, Haley Robinson hosts a reading with Angela Sterritt from her book, *Unbroken*. Tickets at: [writersfestival.org](http://writersfestival.org)

**Radio Hull (106.5 FM)**

Until October 5, Radio Hull is airing its third edition of original programming and special events that highlight local artists.

For a preview: [www.daimon.qc.ca/en/portfolio/rh3een/](http://www.daimon.qc.ca/en/portfolio/rh3een/)

**Ottawa International Animation Festival (OIAF)**

From September 20-24, you can catch the best animated films from around the world at the OIAF. Details and tickets: [www.animationfestival.ca](http://www.animationfestival.ca)

**Bytown Museum**

A special exhibition at the Bytown Museum highlights the impact of fires on the capital. This very topical exhibition is on until April 7, 2024. Open from Friday to Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tickets and audio guides at: [bytownmuseum.com](http://bytownmuseum.com)



Grace Petrie (credit: Moments to Media)

**National Arts Centre (1 Elgin St.)**

Broadway Across Canada returns to the NAC on November 14-19 with the musical *Hairspray*. Tickets at: [nac-cna.ca/en/event/34565](http://nac-cna.ca/en/event/34565)

An array of live musical talent will also be presented through September and October. Highlights include:

- September 15: the Great Lake Swimmers, a five-member rock band from Wainfleet, ON;
- September 21: Grace Petrie, British folk singer who performed at the Edmonton Folk Music Festival in August;
- October 5: London, ON singer/songwriter Ken Yates;
- October 11: British-born sitar player Anoushka Shankar;
- October 12: Quebec's Gabrielle Shonk;
- October 13: the incomparable Lyle Lovett and John Hiatt.

Tickets and show-times: [www.nac-cna.ca](http://www.nac-cna.ca)

**Queen Street Fare (170 Queen St.)**

On September 16 at 7 p.m., it's *Beatles versus Stones: The Greatest Show That Never Happened* and on September 27 at 7 p.m., it's *Jazz Nite with Pete Woods*.

Tickets: [queenstfare.ca](http://queenstfare.ca) and follow links.

**Southminster United Church (15 Aylmer Ave.)**

Doors Open for Music features late summer jazz with the Michel Delage Quartet on September 20 at noon with Petr Cancura (sax), Garrett Warner (guitar), Chris Pond (bass), and Michel Delage (drums). Freewill offering. More information at: [doms613.com](http://doms613.com)

**Red Bird Live (1165 Bank St.)**

The lineup includes Ian Tambllyn and Chloe Laberge on September 16; Les Stroud performs on September 22.

More info/tickets: [redbirdlive.ca](http://redbirdlive.ca)

**City Folk 2023**

City Folk wraps up the summer festival season with concerts at Lansdowne Park until September 17 with Kaleo and Hozier, and a Salute to Ray Charles.



A scene from *Topless-The Musical*

Tickets at: [cityfolkfestival.com](http://cityfolkfestival.com)

**National Day of Reconciliation**

The annual holiday on September 30 marks the National Day of Reconciliation (Orange Shirt Day). Activities are planned from September 25 to 30 to mark this historic event and more activities are being added, so check the website for updates: [www.nctr.ca](http://www.nctr.ca)

**Out of Town**

**Edinburgh Fringe Festival**

The festival wrapped up on August 28. Highlights included *Topless – The Musical* with Holly Lovelady, who takes the audience on a musical tour on board a topless London transport bus. Hilarious and informative. In *The Celine Dion Experience*, Jasmine Alice gives an incredible performance as Dion in the musical retrospective.

**London Podcast Festival**

This podcast festival includes some exceptional content available for streaming at: [kingsplace.co.uk/whats-on/london-podcast-festival](http://kingsplace.co.uk/whats-on/london-podcast-festival)  
Tony Wohlfarth is an Ottawa-based freelance film and entertainment writer.

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# Pollinators preparing for winter



This caterpillar has spun a cocoon in which it will live until next spring, while changing into its final moth form.

DINAH ROBINSON/THE BUZZ

continued from page 16 like fuzzy bees. Their legs and mouth parts don't come in contact with the pollen because they are so elongated. Moths have shorter legs than butterflies and they do spread more pollen as a result.

While their larval stage (i.e., caterpillars) are often considered pests because they eat our plants, they are the most important source of food for birds. Adult moths and butterflies are beautiful creatures that also provide important ecological services. Most adults feed on nectar, fruit sap, and even dung and decomposing stuff. Some do not feed at all as

adults.

It can be difficult to distinguish a moth from a butterfly. At rest, a moth will usually fold its wings down the back. A butterfly will usually hold its wings open or upright. Moth caterpillars often have hairy bodies and spiked protrusions. Butterfly caterpillars are generally smooth. Both go through a complete metamorphosis. Butterflies form a chrysalis from the skin of the caterpillar. Moths form a cocoon from silk.

Moth species significantly outnumber butterflies, with over 11,000 moths and just 800 types of butterflies

in North America. Estimates of world-wide numbers range from 150,000 to 500,000 total moth species.

### Did you know – plants change colours to attract moths?

A Chinese study looked into how some plants try to increase pollination by changing colour to attract butterflies during the day and moths in the nighttime. It confirmed different pollinators were attracted to different colours.

The flowers of Chinese Honeysuckle change from white to pink to red to attract various types of pollinator. The white flowers at night

led to the highest fruit set, demonstrating that moths contribute more to the reproductive health of the plant than its daytime pollinators.

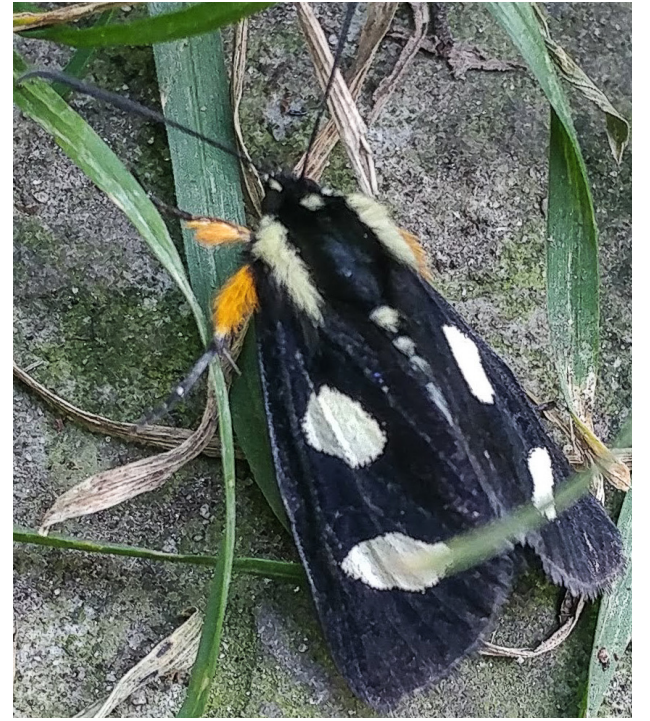
### It's planting season in the park

As you walk through Dundonald Park, you will notice many beautiful varieties of flowers. Different shapes and colours attract different pollinators.

Moths, like butterflies, generally prefer plants with many flowers close together, flat surfaces they can rest on, and tubular-shaped flowers to match the longer proboscis. Shades of pink and red are favoured by diurnal moths, white and yellow by nocturnal ones.

The Dundonald Park Gardening Group has some white roses and a pink clematis ready to be planted. Evening primrose would be a good addition too.

It's best to plant most trees and shrubs in the fall. Early flowering bulbs can



This Langton's Forester moth holds its wings down its back while at rest, one of the things that distinguishes a moth from a butterfly.

DINAH ROBINSON/THE BUZZ

also be planted now. If you don't have your own space to plant a garden, you can stop by to enjoy the work of the CCA volunteers who maintain the park gardens – or stay and help.

The Dundonald gardening group meets on Thursdays from 4 to 7 p.m. and Sundays from 2 to 4 p.m. You can also contact [Bytownbees@gmail.com](mailto:Bytownbees@gmail.com) if you are interested in joining.

# Residents look for ideas to improve Centretown's climate resiliency

Darlene Pearson

What risks does Ottawa face from the climate emergency? What response can we make at an individual, community, and city level?

That's what 40 residents discussed in June at a Community Dialogue on Climate Resiliency at the McNabb Recreation Centre. The dialogue was co-hosted by the Centretown and Dalhousie Community Associations.

The timing was uncanny. Canada was in the midst of its worst wildfire season on record, with climate change playing a significant enabling role. The ensuing smoke caused the air quality indexes for Ottawa to be off the chart. July was to be the hottest month on record worldwide. Three tornadoes touched down in Ottawa this summer. A heavy downpour in August caused flooding in the city and region.

The dialogue was organized around the different climate hazards which reflect the reality of what Ottawa is already experiencing: more rainfall, extreme weather events, extreme heat, and changing seasons.

**Increased rainfall:** Participants called on the city to create more greenspaces; de-pave where possible and replace with permeable pavement or soft landscaping; ensure infrastructure is built or modified to withstand flooding; incentivize green roofs and other rain-absorbing infrastructure. At the individual level, property owners should be encouraged to install rain gardens; replace hard surfaces with soft landscaping; and install backwater valves, among other proposals.

**Extreme weather events:** The city could improve communications for extreme weather; create a network of refuge centres for such events; bury power lines; incentivize local renewable energy generation and micro grids; and update building codes to incorporate climate resilience requirements.

**Extreme heat and changing seasons:** city suggestions included creating more city pocket parks, greenspaces, and community gardens; planting more trees and maintaining them; enhanced support for home retrofits; green or white roofs; requiring parking lots to have solar panels, trees, and bioswales; and establishing a citizens' climate action committee reporting to city council. Individuals could plant trees, or join a community garden, or install ceiling fans and other home retrofits.

**Common concerns:** All discussion tables noted the negative health impacts of climate change on both humans and the environment, as well as the disproportionate impacts on vulnerable/marginalized populations. Support networks to check on neighbours and vulnerable people during and after extreme weather events are needed, they said. All groups also acknowledged the importance of climate advocacy at the individual and community level, especially the importance of community action to form networks to educate and help their residents in emergencies.

This dialogue was one of 11 dialogues organized across the city by CAFES (Community Associations for Environmental Sustainability). The results of all these dialogues will help inform the draft Climate Resiliency Strategy that the city plans to release later this year.

The report from the Dalhousie and Centretown Climate Resiliency Community Dialogue can be found on the CAFES website at [cafesottawa.ca/climate-resiliency-community-dialogues-final-report/](http://cafesottawa.ca/climate-resiliency-community-dialogues-final-report/)

The annexes of the report have links to the resources used in the workshop, including many of the city's documents on initiatives to enhance climate resiliency, such as the Rain Ready Program, Residential Plumbing Protective Program, Trees in Trust Program, and the Community Emergency Took Kit.

Participants hope that the many ideas they shared will be reflected in the city strategy.

If you could not attend the dialogue and wish to have your say on Ottawa's climate future, visit the Engage Ottawa page at [engage.ottawa.ca/climate-resiliency](http://engage.ottawa.ca/climate-resiliency).

Feel free to use the ideas in the dialogue report or to add your own!

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CCA report

Jack Hanna

Fall Festival on Saturday, September 23

The annual Fall Festival returns to Dundonald Park, at Somerset and Lyon, on Saturday, September 23, from 10 to 2.

There's lots for kids, including a variety of crafts and hands-on art tables, courtesy of the CCA and the Ottawa Art Gallery. The ever-popular read-aloud is at 10:45; the book is *Jamilah at the End of the World*. Magician Mark Montreuil is on at 11:30. As always at CCA festivals, there's free popcorn.

For adults, there is live music, live theatre, and information booths on everything from pollinators to bike maintenance to early childhood. The Ottawa Outdoor Gear Library will be there, along with the Ottawa Wildflower Seeds Library.

Curious about your community association? There will be a slew of CCA groups, from the guerrilla gardeners to the heritage group working to create new heritage districts.

The rain day is Sunday, September 24.

The festival is sponsored by the CCA and the Centretown Community Health Centre.

Explore new heritage district in west Centretown

The CCA is working with city officials to create a new Heritage Conservation District (HCD) in the area between Kent and Bronson. The big challenge for the CCA is to recommend where exactly the boundary of the new HCD should be drawn.

The CCA is in the midst of a series of leisurely Saturday afternoon walking tours to experience the streets of this area and discuss whether particular city blocks should be included in the HCD or not. The two remaining walks are the Saturdays of September 16 and 23. The walks begin at 2 p.m. from Dundonald Park. More information: [jack.2014@icloud.com](mailto:jack.2014@icloud.com)

New heritage district for the Golden Triangle

This autumn, the CCA will propose a new Heritage Conservation District (HCD) for the Golden Triangle.

A series of Saturday afternoon walks to set a proposed boundary for the proposed HCD will take place in October.

For information, email: [jack.2014@icloud.com](mailto:jack.2014@icloud.com)

"Welcome Wagon" for new neighbours

The CCA, along with Councillor Ariel Troster and the John Howard Society (JHS), is collecting donations to create welcome baskets for residents moving into the soon-to-open supportive residence on Lisgar near Bay.

Donations will be accepted at the CCA table at the Elgin Street Market on the Sundays of September 24 and October 8, from 9 to 1. They are looking for donations of socks, undies, pyjamas, house coats, and slippers (sized M, L and XL); and hygiene items such as shampoo, conditioner, body wash, loofah, bars of soap, and bubble bath. They also need bath towels, coffee mugs, travel mugs, reusable water bottles, laundry baskets, and cleaning supplies. Gift cards to Dollarama or Tim Hortons would be terrific.

The residence will provide supportive housing for women experiencing homelessness, with a focus on Indigenous women. For more information: [edavis@jhsottawa.ca](mailto:edavis@jhsottawa.ca)

Hearty vegetables at Elgin Street Market

With the arrival of autumn, the tables at the Elgin Street Market are stacked with hearty root vegetables such as potatoes, carrots, and beets. But lettuce, kale and onions still are available.

The market, held on Sundays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Boushey Square at Elgin and Waverley, has a number of new vendors. Treat yourself to a big cookie from Je Suis Sweets. Torshi offers picante pickled vegetables. And there is the art of Victoria Dark Illustrations, featuring warm, engaging prints of local architecture.

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# MPP report: Poverty, homelessness, and addiction are community issues

Joel Harden

Frustration with poverty, homelessness, and addictions came to a head in our city a few weeks ago, as Councillor Ariel Troster and I hosted a tense meeting on community safety at City Hall.

For some time, Ariel and I have been hearing increased concern with homelessness, drug use, overdoses, and erratic behaviour in our downtown core.

Readers of this paper will know these are not new concerns. Ottawa was the first city in Canada to declare a housing and homelessness emergency in January 2020. We were also among the first to see a local movement emerge in 2017 – Overdose Prevention Ottawa (OPO) – that offered a safe space for neighbours who use drugs.

OPO's work galvanized the public's concern around the often toxic, poisoned drug supply that is still killing people. That led to more government investment in community harm reduction, and the expansion of services. But, for two years, I heard that far more needed to be done.

Then COVID-19 happened. Progress stalled as people were told, for good reason, to isolate from each other. The rate of overdoses increased, a trend that continues to climb.

In May 2023, Ottawa Public Health

reported 117 ER visits for drug overdoses, the highest rate since July 2020. The Ottawa Police says it has responded to 966 overdose calls in 2023, a 163 percent increase from 2022 (and these calls, to be clear, come from all over the city).

Things are tough out there right now.

Many homeless neighbours don't feel safe. Some are sleeping on our streets in broad daylight (after staying up all night) because they encounter violence from others if they fall asleep, or if they access our shelter system. They feel like their lives don't matter as they await the moment when a poisoned drug supply ends their life. This is their reality.

Many downtown residents and small business owners also don't feel safe. They've had windows smashed or petty thefts. Some report fraught encounters with people who lash out when asked to leave a store, or to move on from a doorstep. This is their reality.

Next steps

So where do we go from here?

Here's where I'm at based on what we've heard:

1. Poverty, homelessness and addiction are community issues. This is a critical first principle that can harness the empathy we need to encourage action from all levels of government, and all residents of our city.

2. We must keep talking, even when we disagree. The extent of suffering on our streets is so acute that we can assume the worst in each other, or how genuine our commitment is to community safety. Let's not do that. Everyone cares about safety.

3. Let's be led by evidence, and well-funded public and community services. Our city is fortunate to have resources which many other communities go without. We have trained mental health nurses, social workers, first responders, street health experts (including many with lived experience of homelessness and addictions), and community groups. They do incredible work, but on strained budgets with limited staff.

At our meeting this week, Ariel talked about the city's decision to create a new mental health crisis team, staffed with non-armed responders, and also new supportive housing options. The Ford government has funded an additional year of an after-hours, peer-support harm reduction program based at the Somerset West Community Health Centre. This is good news.

Stay tuned as well for local updates on community work, because we can't just wait for new public investments to keep us safe. We can keep talking, keep organizing, and foster community safety at a local level. Every action matters.

## MP report: community spirit at the Ottawa Centre Cup

Yasir Naqvi

In August, I was thrilled to host my annual Ottawa Centre Cup and Community BBQ in partnership with the St. Luke's Bulls Basketball Team.

I absolutely love this event, as it's a fantastic opportunity to highlight our local basketball teams, partner with community organizations, and bring our community together, while enjoying a great BBQ.

The OC Express came back stronger this year and beat the long-reigning champions and home team St. Luke's Bulls with a score of 53-49. We also got to highlight local youth basketball teams including Christie Lake Kids and the Ottawa Shooting Stars, as well as community organizations Ottawa Community Housing and CAFES Ottawa. For those who joined us, I hope you had the chance to enjoy burgers, hot dogs, and ice cream from the Merry Dairy – one of my favourite parts of the event!

Ottawa Centre Cup is also an opportunity to highlight how much the St. Luke's basketball court is loved by its community. Over the years, this has been a place where the St. Luke's Bulls and youth teams come together, and a place where community is built.

St. Luke's court getting repairs

For the last few years, the court has been in need of repairs and safety upgrades,

including improved lighting and a more even surface. We were pleased to be joined by Somerset Ward Councillor Ariel Troster and Mayor Mark Sutcliffe who shared some big news: the City of Ottawa will fix the court at St. Luke's Park next summer.

This announcement has come after months of important advocacy from the St. Luke's community and others. I'm very excited about the new court that will serve the St. Luke's community for years to come.

Thank you to the amazing volunteers and to our long-time partners, the St. Luke's Bulls and the Ottawa Basketball Network for helping us organize this fantastic event and keep the tradition alive. The community support is what makes this event special.

Federal cash benefits

As summer winds down, I look forward to returning to the House of Commons. The cost-of-living increase has hit families hard, and affordability continues to be top of mind for Ottawa Centre residents.

Whether you are a student saving up for the next semester, a parent buying back-to-school items, or a worker who is paying rent, it is very hard right now to make ends meet.

Our federal government has been working hard to put money back in your pocket through targeted programs including the Canada Child Benefit, Canada Workers



Yasir Naqvi with basketball players in the Ottawa Centre Cup (photo provided by Naqvi's office).

Benefit, the Climate Incentive Rebate, and more.

Earlier this summer, families across the country saw an increase in their monthly Canada Child Benefit payments to keep in line with inflation.

This year, close to 10,000 parents in Ottawa Centre will receive an average of \$5,783 through the Canada Child Benefit. Additionally, our government has expanded support for low-income workers through the Canada Workers Benefit, which has topped up the income of over 4.2 million Canadians. Through this program, over \$7 million has gone towards Ottawa Centre

residents alone.

Finally, over \$36 million has been paid out to Ottawa Centre residents through the Climate Incentive Rebate, a program that is not only supporting the fight against climate change but is also putting money back in the pockets of Canadians.

We want to ensure that all Canadians have the resources they need to succeed. As always, my community office is here to help.

If you have questions about these benefits, or need other assistance related to federal programs, please call us at 613-946-8682, or email [Yasir.Naqvi@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Yasir.Naqvi@parl.gc.ca)

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# Pollinators prepare for colder days, longer nights



The mourning cloak butterfly is one of the few species which overwinter as an adult, in leaf litter and crevices of bark. Most butterflies overwinter as larva or pupae. *DINAH ROBINSON/THE BUZZ*

Dinah Robinson

**F**all is just beginning and pollinators are already getting ready for winter.

The monarchs have started their migration to Mexico. Hummingbirds are feeding voraciously in preparation for their long flights to Central and South America. Bumblebee and wasp colonies are breaking up. After creating a new queen who will hibernate until next

spring, the existing colony dies off before winter.

Honeybee queens are laying fewer eggs as the colony size shrinks from the summer peak of around 50,000 to its winter size of about 10,000.

The winter bees are being reared now. They will need to survive six to eight months, unlike the summer foraging bees' six weeks of life. Commercial beekeepers who specialize in pollination services are transporting their hives to

their home locations.

That transport can lead to accidents. At the end of August, five million bees hit the highway near Burlington, Ontario. A pickup truck was hauling colonies of bees which tipped onto the road from the open trailer. Several local beekeepers came to help rescue the spilled bees and had the majority cleaned up within a few hours. Hive boxes were left near the scene of the accident

in an attempt to capture the remaining bees.

While there are moth species that migrate, many are able to survive winter here. Some will hibernate, buried or wrapped in leaf litter; others overwinter in the last stage of life as a pupa.

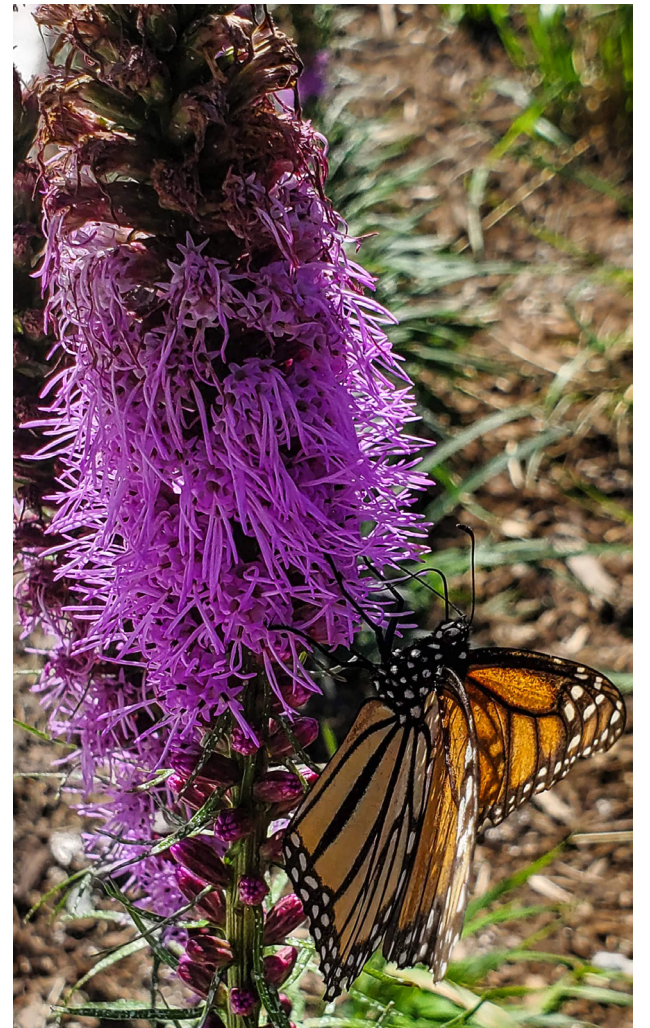
That's why it's so important to leave the leaves. If you must rake them off your lawn, you can use them to cover your garden beds. You will still be maintaining habitat for moths, butterflies and other native pollinators. It is also good, free mulch.

## Appreciating nighttime pollinators

As the days get shorter, there are more opportunities to see nighttime pollinators, as we continue to take advantage of spending time outdoors. Bats and moths are most active at night and in the shadows of dawn or dusk.

Light pollution at night can interfere with their ability to navigate, find food, and survive. In the daytime, insects orient themselves based on where the sun is located. At night, they find their way based on the position of the moon.

Outdoor lighting can mimic the appearance of the moon and moths will fly toward that porch light again and again, trying to find the other side. They will eventually perish. You can avoid this by installing a motion



A monarch butterfly fueling up for its long trip on nectar from blazing star. *DINAH ROBINSON/THE BUZZ*

sensor so the light only turns on as needed.

Not all moths are night owls. The Clearwing Hawk moth is an example of a daytime moth you might observe in August. Another daytime moth is the Sphinx moth.

Both can hover in place while drinking nectar and have a long proboscis, similar to hummingbirds. They also fly at speeds greater than 50kph.

*DINAH ROBINSON/THE BUZZ*

## Moths and butterflies are vital pollinators

Butterflies and moths are not considered efficient pollinators, but they are still vital pollinators of many flowering plants in the wild, our parks and yards.

The majority of Lepidoptera are unable to feed on pollen. Their body shape and lack of hair on legs and body mean they don't collect it

*continued on page 14 Pollinators*

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