

# 'I WILL BE DEAD BY THEN'



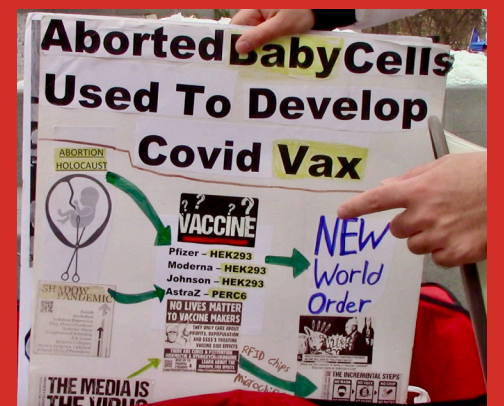
ANDRE LA ROSA-RODRIGUEZ

Carol Beaver, 84, asked placement coordinators how long it would take to have her 87-year-old husband transferred to the same LTC campus she lives in and was told up to four years.

**NEED FOR FOOD  
DONATIONS RISE  
AS INSECURITY  
FEARS GROW  
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**'ANTISEMITISM  
PREVALENT'  
THROUGH ANTI-  
VAX PROTESTS  
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ANDRE LA ROSA-RODRIGUEZ

Jim McLeod, 83, at Fairview Mennonite Home in Cambridge, Ont., fighting to be reunited with his wife. The Ontario government has yet to respond.

## Separated senior couples face 'heartbreak' trying to reunite

**Emma Posca**  
News Reporter

Carol Beaver is struggling to cope with being separated from her elderly husband Bob. They are among the many seniors across Ontario separated from their spouses as a result of limited Long-Term Care beds.

"This is a heartbreak that those in power do not understand," she said.

Under the provincial government's Bill 7, More Beds Better Care Act, elderly patients who can be transferred out of the hospital and into long-term care homes are placed on a waitlist for an available bed.

Depending on availability, the patients can be transferred up to 70 kilometres away while waiting for their preferred care campus.

Four seniors at Fairview Mennonite Home in Cambridge, Ont. have exhausted their options by trying to reunite with their spouses who were placed on different long-term care (LTC) campuses.

When Beaver, 84, asked placement coordinators how long it would take to have her 87-year-old husband Bob transferred to the same LTC campus as she is in, she was told about three or four years.

"I'll be dead by then," Beaver said.

Long-term Care Minister Paul Calandra and Health Minister Sylvia Jones announced at a media conference on Sept. 14, that these

new guidelines for long-term care placement could be a solution for the LTC for the first time in decades.

"It keeps [patients] closer to home, ensures that there are a multitude of options that are presented to the patient in long-term care so that they can make that choice," Calandra said at the conference. "They will stay at the top of the waiting list for their home of preferred choice."

But Beaver said that it's "a great, great frustration," because she has to travel 25 minutes to see Bob every day.

"I go because I want to go, if I see a smile on his face, that's why I go," Beaver said.

She said if she and her husband were on the same campus, she would be able to help take care of him more often.

Janine Laurence, another senior at Fairview Mennonite Home, who is also living apart from her husband Tony, said he would sometimes refuse care from personal support workers and only respond to her instead.

"If he was here at Fairview, I could go three times a day and feed him, I could do his care," Laurence said. "It wouldn't phase me, I would really love to do it."

Laurence said the caretakers at her husband's care home are "marvelous" but she can't say they are overworked and understaffed.

The Ontario Nurses Association

(ONA) said in August that the bill violates rights. The association believes it does not address the real issue in long-term care, which comes down to the understaffing of nurses and health care professionals.

"Transferring patients without consent during the pandemic was meant to be an emergency measure, but Bill 7 normalizes this practice in dangerous ways, with grave implications for patients' rights and health outcomes which could suffer as a result of isolation and stress," ONA President Cathryn Hoy said in the release.

Jim Potts also sees the effect understaffing has on his wife Shirley at the long-term care home she is in. He said that sometimes he has to push the help button for Shirley because she refuses to. And then they wait for someone to come "when they can."

Potts held back tears when he told Et Cetera how difficult it was to watch his wife refuse help from caretakers because of her dementia.

"It's emotional, it's frustrating," he said. "I'm sure [being separated is] repeated many times in our community and in our province."

Thousands of seniors are on waitlists for a room in long-term care homes in the southern Ontario region, according to a fact sheet published by the Ontario Health Coalition.

Jim McLeod, 83, has done everything he can think of to be reunited

with his wife, Joan.

He has sent multiple letters to Calandra and Premier Doug Ford expressing the difficulties he faces but has received no response. McLeod has spoken to various news organizations like CTV Kitchener, Waterloo's The Record newspaper, and TVO to have his story heard but nothing has changed.

He sent letters to more than 80 MPPs asking them to support NDP MPP Catherine Fife's bill that enshrines the right for couples to be together in long-term care homes but he is still separated from Joan.

McLeod feels like there is "just no empathy" from people in power.

Working with Fife has been a good experience, he said. She invited McLeod and the CEO of Fairview Mennonite Home, Elaine Shantz, to the legislature when Fife presented her bill, the Till Death Do Us Part Act, for the first time in December 2019.

"I don't think they realize the heartache it causes seniors," McLeod said. "My only wish would be that I could stand up in the legislature and say, 'ladies and gentlemen, what would you do if your spouse, or your parents, or your grandparents were in the same situation?'"

"There wouldn't be any banging of the desks, there'd be silence," he said. "That's the problem."

### ETC •

Humber Et Cetera is the Humber College journalism program laboratory newspaper. It is created by second and third year journalism students. Et Cetera serves to inform the Humber community and give its readers well rounded coverage on the things that matter to them.

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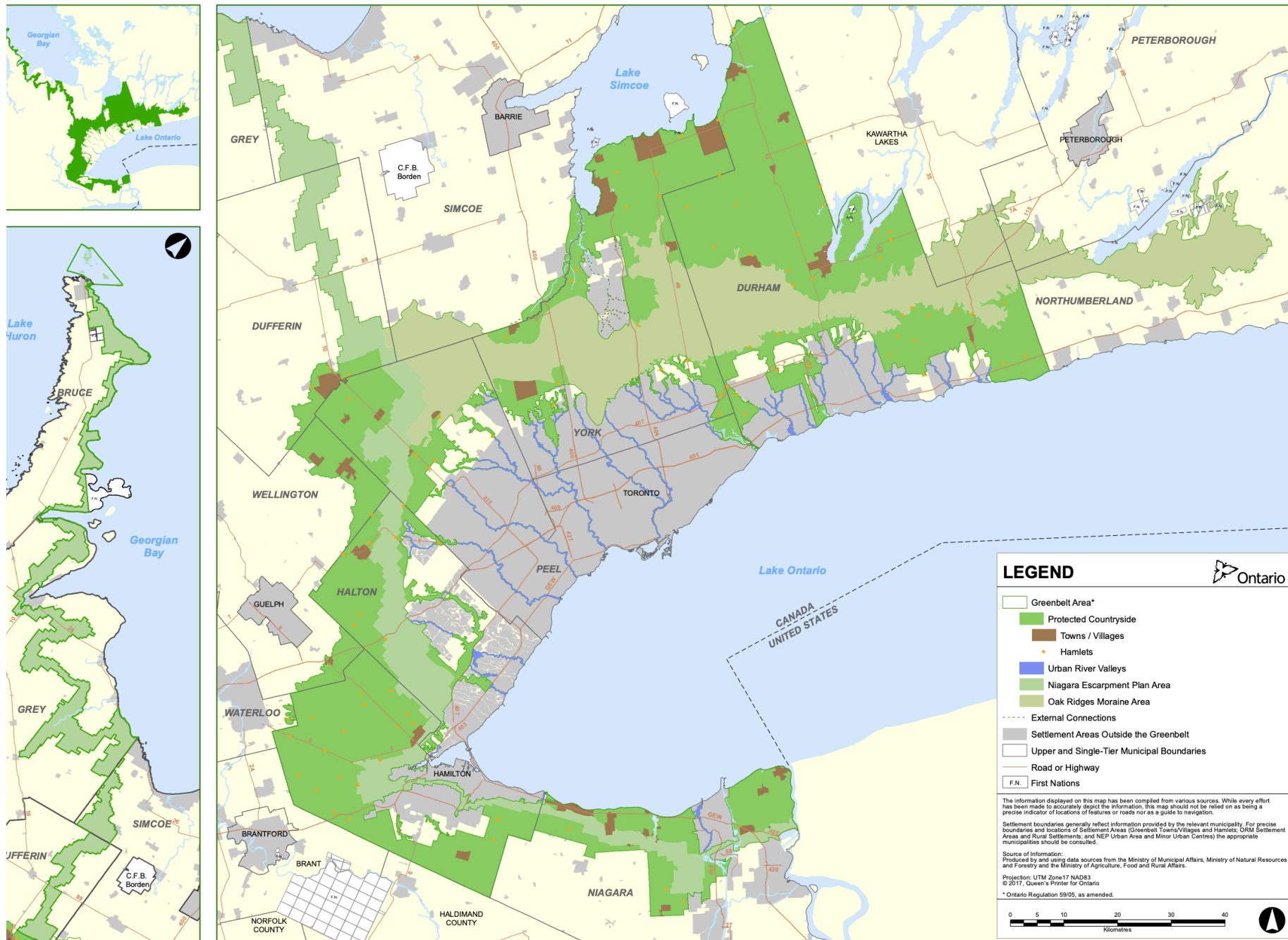
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#### BACK PAGE PHOTO

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greenbelt

Schedule 1:  
Greenbelt Area

GREENBELT

Several groups, including two non-profit organizations and a lawyer, have called for an examination into the Greenbelt changes, in statements addressed to the Ontario Provincial Police.

# Calls for Greenbelt investigation by OPP are growing

**Julian Arwen**  
News Reporter

Several groups, including two non-profit organizations and a lawyer, have called for an examination into the Greenbelt changes, in statements addressed to the OPP.

In an open letter to OPP Commissioner Thomas Carrique and Deputy Commissioner Chuck Cox, professor emeritus of law at the University of Toronto and lawyer Patrick Macklem called on the provincial police to open an investigation into recent developments regarding the Greenbelt.

"I, alongside many Ontarians, am particularly concerned by recent media reports that show that wealthy land speculators stand to benefit immensely from the government's proposal to open the Greenbelt for development," Macklem said in a statement.

"Since at least 2018, many of these speculators purchased large tracts of Greenbelt-protected land

and have donated significant funds to secure the election of public officials who are currently responsible for the Greenbelt's development," Macklem said in the letter to the OPP.

Pamela King, president of the Coronation Park Residents Association representing southwest Oakville, said her community shares Macklem's objection in particular for the redevelopment plans, because they will impact their community.

"I think there's a lot of anger out there to Ford government because people understand how important protecting the Greenbelt is," she said.

King said people understand this is the farmland that feeds Canadians, that "the wetlands and green spaces that clean our drinking water protect us from flooding, the places that we love to spend time with our family."

She said that in the letter, Macklem cites a 2006 ruling by

the Supreme Court of Canada that spells out the "elements of offence."

"When you read those elements, you can understand how, in the opinion of how people are feeling in the general public, that this particular situation seems to fit the bill," Macklem said.

In addition to Macklem's letter, two other groups have joined the call for an investigation.

In a joint press release, Democracy Watch, a non-profit democratic reform advocacy group, and Environmental Defence, a Canadian non-partisan environmental advocacy group, called on the OPP to investigate the events unfolding around the Greenbelt for similar reasons to Macklem and King.

"The Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that it damages our democracy if a situation even appears to raise questions about the integrity of a government policy-making process and that law enforcement must be strict and strong to prevent this damage,"

said Democracy Watch co-founder Duff Conacher in the media release.

Conacher, raised concerns echoed by King where he said, "given the Greenbelt policy change smells badly, the OPP must investigate."

Tim Gray, executive director of Environmental Defence, said that the "removal of thousands of acres of legally protected farmland, forests and wetlands from the Greenbelt threatens us all."

"A government doing so in a manner shrouded in secrecy that appears to benefit a select group of property owners, including recent purchasers, needs to be thoroughly investigated by the OPP," he said.

Political opposition party leaders are also getting involved. Macklem has campaigned in the riding of Parkdale-High Park for the Ontario Green Party and party leader Mike Schreiner agrees with his concerns regarding the Greenbelt. "The fact that 15 parcels of

Greenbelt land that the province is opening for development," said Schreiner, more than half of them purchased since Doug Ford's government was elected.

"Even though Premier Ford has explicitly stated on multiple occasions that they are not going to allow development on the Greenbelt, these people still purchase this land," he said.

Indeed, Schreiner has called for the Integrity Commissioner to investigate and is hoping that Macklem's concerns are investigated by police. "I'm hoping that both will give serious and due consideration to the request because I think it's really important that we clear the air," Schreiner said.

"These appear to be pretty shady deals and I think the public has a right to know whether their government is acting in the public interest for acting to further a few people's private interests," he said. At this point, no official investigation underway.



ANDRE LEAL

For more than three months, Canada has been suffering from a shortage of medicine for children resulting in overflowing emergency rooms and higher cases of respiratory infections.

## Health minister announces children's medicine shipments

**Andre Leal**  
News Reporter

Flu season is here and many children will eventually need some sort of medicine to fight off illness.

However, a lengthy medicine shortage has left parents with very few treatment options.

According to the federal government's website, several products are running low in stores due to an "unprecedented demand." Some of these products include children's Tylenol and Advil.

Dr. Fernando Spencer, a physician at Shouldice Hospital located in Thornhill, noticed the same thing.

"The reason for that is the increase of respiration infections when the time gets colder so the demand increased significantly," he said.

Spencer, a father of an 18-month-old son, had to deal with the shortage of medicine.

He told Humber's Et Cetera he's had to deal with patients that need these medicines for their kids and he also had to deal with not being able

to buy medicine for his son, Lucca.

From his experience, Spencer said that kids' hospital occupancy has increased because more children are suffering from respiratory infections. Unsurprisingly they are getting infected interacting with other toddlers at school or daycare centres.

Parents are forced to miss work

to take care of their kids while these kids have to miss some learning time.

Spencer said parents may not be able to stay home with their kids while they are sick and it is important for the kids to go to school and daycare.

"They learn a lot. My child goes to daycare and we see new words

and new skills," he said.

At a news conference on Nov. 25 in Ottawa, Federal Health Minister Jean-Yves Duclos announced a new shipment of medicine would be coming to Canada in the next few weeks.

Duclos said that in addition to the one million bottles of several different medications that had

been sent earlier, there will be an additional 500,000 bottles delivered over the coming weeks.

"This is exactly the type of news that Canadians want to hear," Duclos said at the news conference.

Spencer said the experience of this medicine shortage really opened up a scary perspective for parents.

"You think that you are in Canada, a first-world country and that you're going to be safe from this and actually you are not," he said.

Should parents go through this crisis again, Spencer said he recommends parents have their kids get the flu shot if they can and avoid any unnecessary interactions.

Spencer also suggested giving kids with fevers a cold sponge bath. He admitted that it would be uncomfortable for little ones, but it can really make a difference.

When consulting with pharmacists about this matter, Spencer said that they seem very confident in these new shipments and that everything will fix itself.



THE CANADIAN PRESS

Chief Public Health Officer of Canada Dr. Theresa Tam, left to right, Deputy Chief Public Health Officer Howard Njoo and Health Minister Jean-Yves Duclos speak during a press conference in Ottawa on Friday, Nov. 25, 2022.



UNIVERSAL IMAGES GROUP

Child suffering from Sleep Apnea, wearing a respiratory mask. The Continuous Positive Airway Pressure Machine (CPAP) is a device that pumps air through a tube attached to a mask that straps to a user's face.

## Worldwide CPAP shortage continues to affect Canada

**Julian Arwen**  
News Reporter

People suffering from sleep apnea are waiting longer for their life-saving machines. Machines are being recalled because of the possibility of soundproofing foam disintegrating and cancerous materials entering the devices' air pathways.

Sleep apnea is a disorder that causes people to start and stop breathing in their sleep, often caused by unhealthy weight gain and obesity.

According to the Canadian government webpage on chronic diseases, this can lead to further complications later in life such as a higher risk of heart attacks, strokes, motor vehicle accidents and depression.

The Continuous Positive Airway Pressure Machine (CPAP) is a device that pumps forced air through a tube attached to a mask that straps to a user's face. This forced air helps regulate oxygen in the lungs and is a common treatment for sleep apnea. Those with sleep apnea will have to wait longer for their specific Philips CPAP machine to put themselves at further risk.

According to the Philips website, the machines were recalled when it was noticed that a polyester-based foam that reduces noise and vibration began to break down. Philips

Respironics is recalling affected devices manufactured between 2009 and April 26, 2021.

While the end to the shortage of these machines is not known, Philips estimates it could be in 2023.

Philips and the U.S. FDA say the injuries can be life-threatening, cause permanent impairment, and may "require medical intervention to preclude permanent impairment."

Philips Respironics said it has received several complaints about black debris and particles within the airpath circuit. The resulting medical conditions that Philips has received reports about include headaches, upper airway irritation, coughing, chest pressure and sinus infections.

"The potential risks of chemical exposure due to off-gassing include headache/dizziness, irritation (eyes, nose, respiratory tract, skin), hypersensitivity, nausea/vomiting, toxic and carcinogenic effects," Philips Respironics said in its media statement.

Laurie Davis, a clinical manager at Westpark Healthcare Centre in Toronto, said the shortage will end depending on replacement speed.

"I mean, the equipment that was recalled, there are some changes that have to be made to parts in the equipment and that all depends on how quickly the company can turn that around," Davis said. Invest-

ment advisor Mike Monette, a 58-year-old Canadian who uses a CPAP machine after he was diagnosed with sleep apnea nine years ago, said the problems relating to getting a good night's rest can be rough.

"The challenge is you're constantly waking up," Monette said. "Because you stopped breathing after a while, your body awakens you so that you start to breathe again."

"Depending on how serious the apnea is...I mean, I was having 30 or 40 episodes an hour, which sort of meant you're not really getting any sleep," he said.

Monette said his CPAP has a microchip inside that helps track his sleep.

"So, I can go back and get a report of the history of my sleep report history. And I can go back and there is a one month to three months and a one year history about how well I slept and what my sleep score was," he said.

Davis said one of the factors that can help mitigate the effects of sleep apnea is changing certain daily and night routines. This includes reducing alcohol consumption, losing weight and sleeping on your side rather than your back.

"We would tell people to try and do things from a lifestyle perspective," she said. "To help mitigate how much sleep apnea you're having at night."

## College locals waiting to see what court ruling on Bill 124 means for workers

**OPSEU Local 563 and OPSEU Local 562 remain hopeful that the Ontario Superior Court decision remains intact.**

**David Madureira**  
News Reporter

An Ontario Superior Court struck down on Nov. 29 a provincial law that limited provincial workers' annual wage increases to one per cent.

The province had adopted the bill to "ensure that increases in public sector compensation reflect the fiscal situation of the province."

This entailed the prevention of collective bargaining for wage increases of more than one per cent. This infringed on an employee's right to freedom of association under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Fredy Mejia, chair of Humber College's support staff OPSEU Local 563, told Humber's Et Cetera he's concerned about the effects of the wage limit on college employees.

"When I learned about Bill 124, I immediately became concerned because of the thousands of frontline employees," Mejia said.

He said he supported the court's decision as the law "was a clear message against the broader frontline workers. It was scary. Little hope, because it came from such a high level."

The Superior Court's decision to strike down the law is largely seen as a victory for the province's frontline workers and education workers alike.

But Mejia says the fight isn't over yet as the province intends on appealing the court's ruling.

"Now that the bill has been (struck down), we hope that the government will do the right thing and accept the wrongdoings by not filing an appeal," he said.

"But in the end, we know that Bill 124 was wrong and has already affected thousands of frontline workers whose collective agreement was ratified with only one per cent of salary increases," he said.

According to data gathered by the Ontario College of Teachers, Canada's largest self-regulatory body in the country, Toronto's

early career unemployment rates have gone down significantly since 2014 to about four per cent of what they were previously.

Mejia said workers are now second-guessing within this shortage.

"I attribute this shortage of workers to the fact that workers are now looking at what is in it for me from an employer," he said. "When they don't find a position that is suitable for their needs and wants, they must move on."

Miloš Vasić, chair of OPSEU Local 562, Humber's Faculty Union, told Et Cetera about the kind of conditions part-time and partial-load teachers face. Part-time faculty work six hours or less per week while partial-load teachers are limited to between seven and 12 hours per week.

"It's really egregious stuff that happens for contract faculty," he said. "I mean, the colleges, they're addicted to contract labor and contract teaching. And none of this stuff is, you know, the wages they are not livable wages."

He said about three-quarters of all faculty are either part-time or partial load, and contracts are renewed each term, Vasić said.

Bill 124 cut into the income faculty is earning and because of the reliance on part-time and partial-load faculty "in terms of the conditions, and this has to do with Bill 124 (and) what's happened through the pandemic and inflation is that we really need to rethink how... how people live, and how people are paid," he said.

Vasić urged for a call to action as faculty are being paid less and less.

"Traditionally, the benchmark for...for wages of professors was halfway between university profs and high school teachers," he said.

"We've slid, like both full-timers and contract faculty have slid far closer to high school. Now that needs to be addressed," Vasić said.



NIA CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

A three-dimensional drawing of Toronto's NIA Centre's expansion as Canada's first professional Black arts centre, to be completed in early 2023, it creates a platform for Black artists.

## NIA Centre will be a 'beacon' for Black artists

**Andre La Rosa-Rodriguez**  
News Reporter

Ontario's Poet Laureate Randell Adjei is hopeful the newly renovated NIA Centre for the Arts will unify Black communities in Canada.

"We as a diaspora have many voices," he said. "There's many different experiences that we have. We're everywhere."

"There's an opportunity to see one another's art. Hopefully, it can be a space where all of us have a platform," Adjei said.

The Toronto Arts Centre announced in late 2020 it would be turning the building into the country's first multi-disciplinary professional arts space dedicated to showcasing all art forms from the African diaspora.

The organization has raised nearly \$15 million to be able to fund the project and it is set to be completed in early 2023. Located on Oakwood Avenue in the Little Jamaica neighbourhood, also known as Eglinton West, it was founded to help create alternate pathways for Black youth to rediscover themselves through the arts.

"NIA has done a lot for me with some programming that I did 10 years ago that still to this day I benefit from. They taught me so much," Adjei said about a mentorship program at the centre.

"But I can't imagine being 12 or 13 years old and knowing that a space like that exists and then having the opportunity to then create more, be there, or watch a play and see other artists," he said.

Michael Brathwaite, co-chair of

the NIA Centre, said the organization's goal is to become a central hub for Black artists. With the expansion, the expectation is that artists will be able to collaborate and work together.

He said the centre will create a "capacity for arts to become a professional career."

"This is a fulfilment of the vision that's over a decade in the making. I think we have the ability to be the beacon that showcases Black artists," Brathwaite said.

Brathwaite said the centre will thrive in Toronto because of its multicultural landscape. Language, religion, belief, sexual orientation and culture are all factors he feels would make it difficult for different artists to collaborate in another city or country.

"The Black community here is so diverse in itself – it's not a monolith," he said. "There's different aspects of the Black community and it unlocks a creative potential that isn't possible anywhere else in the world for Black people."

Part of the centre's commitment to providing space for any art form is to meet the needs of each individual artist. Adjei said a friend, who is a photographer, doesn't necessarily have the same needs as him.

He said the pandemic changed the landscape of what artists need so that they can be successful and the "next important step" is to create resources that address the business side of being an artist. Adjei hopes the centre will have "consultations" to address future goals.

With the arts centre looking to create a collaborative environment,

he noted the importance of having a unified voice in the artworks they create because the Black community needs allies.

"Our art informs how others see us," Adjei said.

"We do need people outside our community to understand our

lived experience and I know art is one of those ways that breaks down the barrier to understand someone else's lived experience."

However, he said NIA is more than just an arts centre and its legacy is about what the building represents to the Black community.

"It's gotta be known that it's not just a Black arts centre on the west end or just some arts centre," Adjei said.

"I think it's got to be known as a space that really belongs to us. It's got to be known as a space that is really of us, for us, by us."



ONTARIO PARLIAMENT EDUCATION

Ontario's Poet Laureate Randell Adjei expects the new NIA centre to help unify Black communities in Toronto.

# Humber's Eco Closet event returns after pandemic hiatus

**Eric Reid**  
News Reporter

The second-year fashion arts and business students at Humber College's North campus worked for weeks to organize this initiative, allowing students and community members to come together for an afternoon of shopping and networking.

Donations were made at various on-campus locations, with proceeds going to the local Youth Without Shelter charity in the Jamestown area of North Etobicoke.

"The event originally started, I believe, in 2019," said Avery Romanelli, a student in the Fashion Arts and Business program. "That was the first year, and then with COVID-19, it got shut down for a while.

"I believe it was our teacher Jennifer Reitano's idea back then to continue with the event this year since we were able to get back into

it," Romanelli said.

Students, faculty, and supporters returned to the event after the COVID-19 hiatus.

"Some of the supporters and people involved are students, other teachers, IGNITE, the Office of Sustainability, Youth Without Shelter and then a lot of the Humber services like security, our food services and others that volunteer as well," Romanelli said.

Second-year student Yasmin Gomez led the project and was tasked with overseeing the planning and execution of the event. Students worked in smaller groups representing teams such as risk management and social media.

"Even if you are not a fashion student you can come out for the day, because who doesn't love shopping," Gomez said.

Fashion Arts and Business student Nadine Hesham was in charge of promotion and is continuing to work on future initia-

tives. The group will be together again to work on fashion initiatives after the winter break.

"Next semester, our final semester, we are supposed to have a fashion show, so hopefully we can try to incorporate something related to sustainability with that," Hesham said.

"Maybe we can do a fashion show using recycled items or reused materials," she said.

"I think it would be fun to see that and then to see where our efforts are going to go - to the use of that shelter."

Hesham explained that fashion students use social media to educate Humber communities about sustainability.

"Our sponsors are Humber's Office of Sustainability. We have collaborated with them and it is also an educational platform for student resources," she said.

There are numerous ways Humber students and others can



CASSIE WALKER

Humber's Eco Closet 2022 event returned to North campus to promote a day of fashion to contribute to the Youth Without Shelter charity.

contribute to sustainable fashion after the Eco Closet event.

It can be an initiative such as going through their old clothing

and donating items, paying attention to the drying and washing instructions stated and also being a conscious shopper.

# Spirit of Christmas shopping returns to Toronto

**Niko De Ciantis**  
News Reporter

It has been two years since the start of COVID-19 and after two Christmas seasons in lockdown, people are ready to return to some sense of normalcy.

The Toronto Eaton Centre is filling up with shoppers as Christmas approaches.

Debra Bernardi, a shopper at the mall, said she's happy to be shopping for gifts and believes the Christmas spirit has returned to the community.

It's not just the Eaton Centre. Malls across Ontario have eased restrictions on the capacity stores are allowed and people are returning in a heartbeat.

This is largely due to the number of Torontonians who got vaccinated over the last two years.

A report by the Ontario Ministry of Health indicates that 83.6 per cent of Toronto residents have received at least two COVID-19 vaccine doses as of Dec. 1, 2022.

"My whole family has received at least two COVID vaccines, as well as our annual flu shot. People across Ontario know that if we wanted to get back to normal, this is what needed to happen," Bernardi said.

However, it seems Ontarians aren't as in a hurry to get booster doses as an Ontario Ministry of Health report shows that only 54.1 per cent of Toronto residents have received a third dose.

With second-dose protection



NIKO DE CIANTIS

Customers returned to malls across Toronto, including the Eaton Centre. COVID-19 restrictions have eased and retailers are seeing more customers pass through the halls of the mall compared to the last two years.

running out, many residents may be at risk of stronger or potentially deadly symptoms in the case of infection.

The latest surveillance report done by Public Health Ontario shows that there have been 4,533 reported cases of COVID-19 in Ontario from Nov. 20 to Nov. 26.

These numbers are nothing compared to the thousands of cases last year. However, it's still

important to consider getting a third dose. Particularly because of the limited testing available to residents and not everyone meeting the qualification for free PCR tests, cases could be underreported.

Many stores in Toronto have been preparing for this year's Christmas season.

For the last two years, businesses have struggled because of the lack of customers, especially around

the holiday season.

YVES Rocher, a personal care store located in Eaton Centre, is thriving from the rise in shoppers over the last few months.

Mohammad Ismael, an employee at YVES Rocher, said during COVID-19, many businesses just like theirs found it difficult to keep the doors open simply because there weren't enough customers.

This year, things have started

turning around and the customers have returned with a bang.

Vincy Caddel, a loyal customer at YVES Rocher, said even though she loves the store, she never felt safe enough to come back to the mall until now.

"People are definitely less scared now and we have been seeing really good numbers so far. Things are definitely starting to go back to normal," she said.

Black Friday was a huge opportunity for many stores to increase business and that is exactly what happened at YVES Rocher.

"Black Friday was insane," Ismael said. "There were people everywhere and we had no time to even stop for one second. It was great for our business and many other businesses inside the mall."

When it comes to businesses being prepared for the sudden demand for products, YVES Rocher and many other stores inside the Eaton Centre had it covered.

Ismael said his business had been preparing in advance for this Christmas season because they knew that the demand would be there as things returned to normal.

With Christmas only a few weeks away, many will be rushing to get all of their Christmas shopping done.

"There is no better feeling than going Christmas shopping downtown after two years and really feeling the Christmas atmosphere again," Caddel said.



CANADIAN PRESS/JASON FRANSON

Alberta Premier Danielle Smith addresses the children's medication shortage in Edmonton last Tuesday. Alberta secured five million bottles of children's acetaminophen and ibuprofen.

## EDITORIAL: Alberta's Sovereignty Act affront against Indigenous People

Danielle Smith has served as Alberta's premier for only a few months and has already managed to anger, insult and disregard many marginalized and racialized communities here in Canada.

Since assuming the role of premier and taking office, Smith has pushed hard against the federal government and has gone as far as saying she is fighting for Albertan sovereignty.

According to Merriam-Webster's dictionary, "sovereignty is supreme power, especially over a body politic." The keywords that need to be pointed out here in that definition are "supreme power." I'm not sure, she or Albertans truly understand the gravitas associated with those words.

In the Alberta legislature on Tuesday, Smith equated Alberta's fight for sovereignty and autonomy with the federal government to that of First Nations in Canada, when responding to NDP questions about her sovereignty act and Indigenous consultation.

"The way I've described it to the chiefs that I've spoken with is that they have fought a battle over the last number of years to get sovereignty respected and to extract themselves from the paternalistic Indian Act," Smith told house members Tuesday.

"We get treated the exact same way by Ottawa," she said. "They interfere in our jurisdiction all the time and we are looking forward to pushing back and being treated exactly like Quebec.

"We get treated the exact same way by Ottawa."

Those words are simply daft. Indigenous Peoples in Canada have suffered atrocities at the hands of this country for over a century, atrocities she cannot possibly equate to the frustration she may feel in a relationship with a powerful centralized government.

Our constitution is clear. There are powers divided between the federal and provincial jurisdictions.

According to the Canadian government website, "The powers of Parliament enumerated in ss. 91 and 92 (10) of the Constitution Acts, 1867 to 1982, concern matters of national interest." Those interests include, but are not limited to "national defence, citizen-

ship, direct or indirect taxation and works connecting provinces; beyond boundaries of one province; within a province but to the advantage of Canada or more than one province," the website said.

The one to highlight from the list above is the last point concerning matters that are beyond the boundaries of one province. To put it as simply as it can be, when something benefits the whole, the federal government has the right to act.

According to the website, "the exclusive powers of Provincial legislatures enumerated in ss. 92, 92(A) and 93 of the Constitution Acts, 1867 to 1982, concern matters of a local nature." Those inter-

ests include, but are not limited to, "prisons, hospitals, municipalities and education."

During question period on Wednesday in the Alberta legislature, Opposition NDP Indigenous Relations critic Richard Feehan, asked Smith to apologize for her comments linking the Sovereignty Act or "Bill 1" to the atrocities faced by Indigenous peoples in Canada.

"Does the premier understand the harm her comments create when she minimizes [the] abuse of First Nations [that] they have faced throughout Canada's history and they're still fighting now?" Feehan asked.

Smith has come under fire from First Nations chiefs across the country and particularly in Alberta for not consulting them on her recently introduced legislation that has since passed a third reading last week. The chiefs have called for it to be withdrawn, but Smith reiterated that the bill promises treaty rights will be respected.

"We won't be withdrawing Bill 1," Smith said.

Bill 1 declares Alberta will fight for what it considers its powers under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, but treaty chiefs say those powers would endanger their rights and agreements with the federal government.

Earlier Wednesday, Smith held a previously scheduled meeting with Treaty 6 chiefs. However, the chiefs quickly reiterated in a news release their opposition to Bill 1.

"It was clear from our discussions that Premier Smith does not understand treaty or our inherent rights nor does she respect them," the chiefs said.

"The premier will not dictate how we will be consulted. We point her once again to the duty to consult to learn more about how to engage and work with us appropriately," they said.

Smith doesn't understand the gravity of this legislation nor the disrespect associated with naming it the "Sovereignty Act." If she truly wants to respect Indigenous people in Canada she'll rethink this legislation and educate herself more seriously on the matter.



UNSPASH/GALEN CROUT

Smith has come under fire from First Nations chiefs across the country and particularly in Alberta for Bill 1.



# OPINION: Online hate is changing reality television



**Carter Roy**  
Arts Editor

Reality television became popular in the mid-to-late 2000s with shows like *The Simple Life*, *America's Next Top Model* 16 and *Pregnant*. But as the years pass, many look back on these shows today and see them as toxic.

Take *The Real Housewives of Orange County*, a show created in 2008 centred around the rich and fabulous lives of southern California women. The show took off and became a success because of the opulent lifestyles and drama between the friend group.

It also birthed the entire *The Real Housewives* franchise on the BravoTV Network, expanding to other cities like New York, Miami and Atlanta.

In the first few seasons of the 2010's franchise addition, *The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills* (RHOBH) fans tuned in to see why, for example, in the iconic scene of Kim Richards lashing out at Lisa Rinna at a charity dinner party. The show was dramatic, fun and many bonded over it.

When these same situations happen on the show today, fans immediately get on social media to send hate to whoever their favourite cast member is arguing with.

Online hate towards cast members over the last few seasons has gotten so bad that at this year's Season 12 reunion of RHOBH, executive producer and reunion host Andy Cohen spoke directly to the camera, breaking the fourth wall, to address fans spreading hate.

"I am not alone in saying how appalled I am at what's been happening on social media," Cohen said. "You can love our cast, you can love to hate our cast if you want, but only in the spirit of entertainment. It's a TV show everybody, there is no room for this kind of hate and Bravo unequivocally condemns it."

This was said after a long discussion and montage of hate com-

ments each cast member received throughout the season, specifically Garcelle Beauvais, the first Black cast member of the Beverly Hills franchise and whose 15-year-old son was sent anonymous and extremely racist hate messages.

Hate spews in real life, too. At this year's BravoCon, an annual fan event put on by Bravo, the network that airs many reality TV shows and celebrates all shows and stars from the network, RHOBH cast member Lisa Rinna was booed while entering the stage for her cast panel.

The booing came from fans who want her off the show because they see her as someone who stirs up unnecessary drama. However this opens the question, isn't that why we watch these shows?

We have seen cast members come on the show and be the main storylines of the season. But once they see fan hatred and judgment, cast members returning the following season tend not to be as entertaining.

They aren't their true authentic selves because of the online hate sent to them and fear being "cancelled" by fans.

We tune in week after week and season after season to see what's



EVERETT COLLECTION

Kim Richards would make her first appearance in season 1 of RHOBH.

going on in these people's lives and the drama within friend groups. That's why these shows blew up after all because the audience loves the drama.

Super fans are taking the storylines and shows far too seriously. If cast members are getting death threats and hate comments towards their families, the fun of

the shows is being taken away.

We as fans who don't send hate are hopeful that the bullying stops. Reality stars are people too and deserve our respect.

I hope that moving forward we can get back to enjoying these shows as our weekly pleasures and the cast can continue to give us iconic television.



BRAVOTV.COM

Cast photo of the current Season 7 of *The Real Housewives of Potomac*, who have shared they have together and individually, received online hate throughout their time on the show.

# Brampton food bank prepares hampers as food insecurity grows



JEFFREY CUHNA

Joanne Hopkinson, with Knights Table in Brampton, prepares gifts for clients. She said demand has doubled this year. Study shows that there are increases in food bank donations.

## Jeffrey Cuhna News Reporter

Bruce Hubbert walks into the gathering hall of a food bank with a smile on his face. The area has been transformed into an assembly line overflowing with hygiene packages and boxes of yet-to-be-sorted donations.

Proudly wearing a Knights Table t-shirt, he points to the line and says “they need the help.”

Hubbert, a retired vice president of a family-owned lard manufacturing company and a Brampton resident, volunteers at the Glidden Road facility twice a week. He drives a branded food truck that delivers pre-packaged hot meals to the unhoused, seniors and Ukrainian refugees in the city facing food insecurity.

And he’s busy.

Every Tuesday and Thursday, Hubbert is out delivering 150 meals.

“When I first started doing it about a year and a half ago, I was doing about 70 to 80 meals per week,” Hubbert said. His busiest stop is at Wellington and Main Streets, in Brampton’s downtown core, where “they come running,” he said, with people waving him down by name.

A study by Food Banks Canada reflects the increased aid Hubbert is experiencing in its 2022 HungerCount report.

It found that a growing number of Canadians are seeking help from food banks, up 35 per cent from

2019, the highest percentage of use measured in Canadian history.

The report indicates those on social assistance programs are falling further into poverty because of rising food and housing costs, Food Banks Canada CEO Kirstin Beardsley said.

“Food banks are facing uncharted challenges as turbulent economic conditions continue to exacerbate and deepen systemic inequities,” Beardsley said.

More than ever, seniors and employed racialized communities are accessing food banks, with student usage jumping 2.4 per cent from 2021 according to the report.

The Knights Table has been addressing the need for food insecurity in Brampton since 1990.

It was founded by Cecil Peter and the Knights of Columbus 9235 — a faith-based fraternal organization — after Peter noticed a man rummaging through a garbage can

looking for food.

Since then, it has grown into the biggest and only multi-food charity service open every day of the year in the city with a small full-time staff and more than 3,200 volunteers.

The charity’s program administrator, Joanne Hopkinson, moves

and Walmart.

The donations are sorted and spread across the Region of Peel, in partnership with the Brampton Food Sharing Network. Hopkinson said demand this year is high.

“Our client numbers are increasing by two-fold,” she said, seeing new clients come into the food bank daily. While usage at the Knights Table is up, Hopkinson said the charity is “not getting those much-needed donations like we used to.”

She attributes the donation shortfall to people in the community losing their jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic or simply not having anything extra left to give due to inflation.

Food Banks Canada said that establishing a minimum income floor, building more affordable housing, supporting low-income workers and addressing supply chain issues will assist in combating food insecurity.

Beardsley said the report is “a devastating wake-up call for all people living in Canada” and is calling on the government to implement its call-to-action recommendations.

The Knights Table is currently preparing for its Holiday Hamper

program, which gives families in need one month’s worth of groceries, a kit to prepare a holiday dinner, toys, clothing and small appliances.

“When you see the moms come in and load those two big boxes of groceries into the car and then they come and they pick out the toys and take those away, they’re in tears,” Hopkinson said.

The HungerCount report said that in 2022, children accounted for 33.1 per cent of food bank clients.

“They’re just so grateful that they can now give their children a Christmas,” Hopkinson said.

To help ease any stigma, the food bank is implementing a change in how it distributes grocery items to its clients.

They are building on a system that allows people to “shop” for items instead of receiving a box of goods they may not like or use due to religious accommodation.

Hopkinson said this is where financial donations can go further, allowing them to work with grocery partners to purchase items on an as-needed basis and pay for extra warehousing space and support outreach initiatives.

As the clinking of cans and chatter fills the room, Hubbert chuckles gratefully. He’s a volunteer ready for the long haul.

“It makes me feel good at the end of the day,” he said. Hubbert said he will continue to serve the community with hot meals.

“As long as I’m able to,” he said.



JEFFREY CUHNA

A sign to the Food Bank location run by Knights Table in Brampton.

about in the cramped warehouse, greeting every volunteer by name. It’s filled with food donated by the community and corporate sponsors, including Canadian Tire Jumpstart, Tim Hortons, Costco



TYREIKE REID

Housing activists show their signs in support of the National Housing Day rally at Toronto's David Crombie Park in November. Residents have to wait long for affordable housing.

# Toronto housing crisis an ongoing issue

**Tyreike Reid**  
News Reporter

Tahnee Pitter-Duncan lives in a transitional shelter with her two-year-old daughter. The 25-year-old single mother said she first became homeless in 2019 when she was pregnant.

Despite these circumstances, she hasn't been given a subsidized housing unit by the city of Toronto. "Being in a shelter gave me priority but they told me it means nothing at this point because of how long the waitlist is," Pitter-Duncan said.

There are currently 81,000 people on the Toronto Community Housing subsidized housing waitlist, according to the city of Toronto's latest report.

The city said applicants could face wait times ranging from seven years for a bachelor unit, to 10 years or more for larger-sized units.

However, wait times can be significantly shorter for people who are in priority conditions.

According to the city, priority conditions can include applicants who are homeless.

Despite being homeless, Pitter-Duncan still awaits the day she is offered a subsidized housing unit.

Pitter-Duncan said this makes her question if she and her daughter will be housed promptly.

"It's really sad to know that like

people are coming saying that they've been on the waitlist since 2010," she said.

"So, like what does that mean for us?"

Homeless shelters have been offered as a temporary solution, but many could experience trouble getting into the system due to shelters being in high demand.

According to the city's central intake data, the average daily number of shelter occupancy reached 8,240 in October, the highest so far this year.

As a result, this caused a strain on the shelter system.

The city's central intake data reported that the daily number of callers unable to be placed in shelters in October reached a high of 186.

Meanwhile, the daily number of callers placed in shelters in October reached 18.

Although many who are experiencing homelessness are looking to shelters for assistance, Pitter-Duncan said the shelter system still brings more issues.

"Shelters don't provide the necessary means to help people transition from being homeless and if anything can cause them more trauma than they originally started with," she said.

Community and crisis response worker Diana Chan McNally said safety was a key concern when evaluating the shelter system.

"Honestly, it is not safe,"

McNally said. "I wouldn't go into it as someone who does this work, I wouldn't live there. I would live outside."

McNally said the shelter system is particularly unsafe for minority groups.

"Because don't think that white supremacy and ableism and transphobia don't exist in the shelter system," she said.

The city of Toronto released its Winter 2022/23 action plan to accommodate those who are experiencing homelessness.

The city said in a news release it will add 230 new additional spaces to the shelter system and also activate 60 additional spaces at warming centres across the city during periods of extreme cold weather.

This comes after the city released its 2020 to 2030 housing action plan. The decade-long plan promises to build 40,000 new affordable rental homes across the city.

However, housing advocates and community workers urged the city to apply alternative measures to help ease the effects of homelessness.

Housing advocate group Shelter and Housing Justice Network Toronto organized a rally on Nov. 22 to mark National Housing Day.

Organizers made a list of demands for all levels of government, which includes building 90,000 subsidized housing units to address the growing waitlist.

Housing advocate and community organizer John Clarke spoke at the rally and criticized housing efforts being made by the city.

"We have to demand truly affordable housing, and that means getting back to a fight for social housing," Clarke said. "We want a commitment to house people adequately and decently at rents they can afford."

In response to the city's action plans McNally said housing supply was not the leading factor causing homelessness.

"It's not a supply issue. Yes, we do need more housing but it's not just that," she said.

"It has to be rent-controlled, it has to be accessible, people have to be able to afford it and sustain it."

McNally said that when addressing the issue of housing affordability, other barriers need to be considered.

"Barriers aren't just about you know, being homeless, they're about accessing any kind of services and supports within broader society, employment, education, et cetera," she said.

Dwight Howard, operations manager at Horizons for Youth homeless shelter in Toronto, said these barriers can also lower access to mental health support.

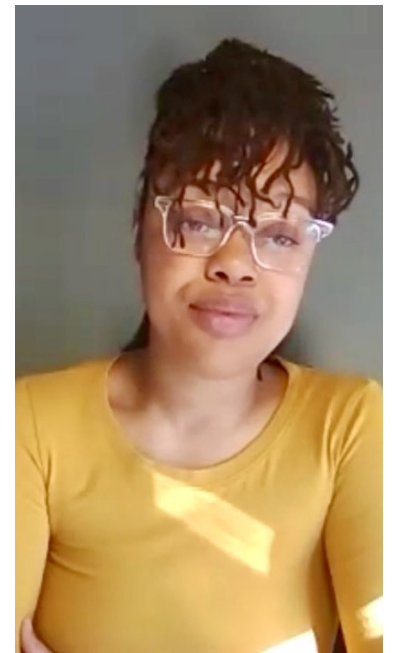
"We've seen an increase in I think addictions and mental health. So, it's a new set of challenges for our shelter," Howard said. "And you know, we've had to hire a mental

health and wellness person."

Pitter-Duncan said housing is a good starting point, but governments need to invest more in education, job training, and support services to effectively reduce homelessness.

"We would see a lot more people within the next decade transition and get better," she said.

Looking ahead, Pitter-Duncan said she hopes to one day be able to provide that support by mentoring youth and single mothers.



TYREIKE REID

Tahnee Pitter-Duncan, 25, lives in a transitional shelter with her two-year-old daughter and expects to wait years for subsidized housing in Toronto.



JAMES WESTMAN

Anti-vaccine protestors march north from Queen's Park toward Bloor Avenue on Nov. 19, 2022, in protest of vaccinations. However, protestors have more of an antisemitic message.

# 'Antisemitism prevalent' through anti-vax protests

**James Westman**  
News Reporter

Protesters of public health mandates have been continuing to rally at the equestrian statue of King Edward VII on the north lawn of Queen's Park weekly, and at times their message is more antisemitic than anti-vaccine.

"Here's pictures of what happened at Auschwitz, taken by the Red Cross," said Yve, a speaker at the rally on a bright and unseasonably warm Nov. 5 who didn't give his full name.

"Ok, Auschwitz. Ok – supposedly how terrible it was – they had swimming pools, they had theatres," he told the crowd of about 25 people.

For many of these demonstrators, the main target of their ire is now globalists, Klaus Schwab, the World Economic Forum [WEF], and a "new world order" – each an antisemitic code term.

"Comparisons to the Holocaust and Nazi persecution of Jews in the anti-vax movement have been prevalent pretty much from the beginning," said Dan Panneton, director of allyship and community engagement at the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies.

The comparison by protesters in Canada and the U.S. of their experiences to the historical experience of Jews in the Holocaust is obviously antisemitic, Panneton said.

But that may be more a product

of the fact that the Holocaust is the dominant moral metaphor in our society, he said.

Panneton said he views such comparisons, as "a combination of either ignorance, people who literally don't understand how bad what happened was and are comparing their own experiences to it," or protesters "deliberately being provocative to draw attention to themselves."

There is a distinction between this kind of antisemitism and the "hard antisemitism" of many of the figures in the anti-vaccine movement, he said.

"There's a lot of figures we know who are using the anti-vax movement as kind of a fig leaf. They're actually far-right activists who are looking to spread other kinds of ideological standpoints," Panneton said.

These activists are using the self-proclaimed "Freedom convoy" and protests at Queen's Park as a bridge-building opportunity, pretending to be there for vaccine freedoms, he said.

"But in reality, what they're trying to do is add antisemitism to the stew," Panneton said.

John Davies, a protester attending the Queen's Park rally on a frigid Saturday two weeks later, said mask mandates were a training exercise to instill fear in society.

The WEF, the globalists, and "the cabal" are the ones putting out this fear, he said.

Behind the WEF, Davies said,

are "Rothschilds, Rockefellers, Bilderberg Group, there's all kinds of them. They're rich guys, right?"

Dan Collen, a hate speech researcher at the Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre, said these types of conspiracy theories are deeply intertwined.

The WEF conspiracy theories are "one giant web, similar to QAnon, similar to conspiracies about George Soros, similar to conspiracies about the Rothschilds or Rockefellers," he said.

In what Collen terms the COVID-conspiracy movement, antisemitic conspiracy theories are often the first ones to be proposed. But there are all kinds of hatreds that can overlap, depending on the specific narratives, he said.

Conspiracy theories, such as those about the WEF, which "spread like wildfire" throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, became more prominent once anti-vaccine messages started to lose their effectiveness, Collen said.

The first reason for this decline is simple: most of the mandates got lifted. The second reason is that a lot of the predictions about health complications and deaths that the vaccines would cause did not come to fruition, he said.

"So, they need ways to rebrand it," Collen said. Fortunately for the COVID-conspiracy movement, as anti-vaccine messaging lost its momentum, the movement had been "positioning a lot of conspiracy theories before that

allowed a vast variety of narratives to go through them."

An Abacus survey of 1,500 Canadians conducted in May found that 20 per cent of respondents believe it is definitely or probably true that "the World Economic Forum is a group of global elites with a secretive strategy to impose their ideas on the world."

A further 37 per cent thought it was possibly true or were not sure either way.

Avery, a regular speaker at the rally, did not want to give his surname. He carried a sign with phrases including, among others, "Abortion Holocaust," "Shadow Pandemic" and "New World Order" with bolded arrows connecting them.

The alleged imminent new world order is "going to be like a one world government that basically follows Klaus Schwab's and the WEF's agenda 2030, which is government control," Avery said.

In recent years, many people have come to understand George Soros is an antisemitic dog whistle, referring to Jewish billionaires. Klaus Schwab has since become a stand-in for that, Panneton said.

Furthermore, the "new world order" language is alarming, he said.

"If you just scratch the surface," of new world order conspiracy theories, "it's antisemitism all the way down," he said. "We're basically dealing with a refurbished version of the protocols of the

elders of Zion."

Collen said many neo-Nazi and white power groups would say that "anything can be chalked up to a Jewish plot if you kind of try hard enough."

Elon Musk recently reinstated Andrew Anglin's Twitter account, editor of the neo-Nazi site the Daily Stormer.

"I think even in the Daily Stormer guide, Andrew Anglin wrote [something] like no matter what, if you can blame something on the Jews, do it," Collen said.

Here in Canada, anti-vaccine and convoy leaders such as Pat King, Chris Sky, and Christopher James Pritchard have engaged in Holocaust revisionism and denial, he said.

According to the Toronto Police Hate Crime Service Unit, which tracks hate crimes on a calendar year basis, antisemitism has been the most reported hate crime in Toronto five years in a row.

"We had two years of Covid, we had plenty of people exercising their dictatorship – their little Hitler – inside them," said DJ Omari, the emcee of the sunny Nov. 5 rally, apparently devoid of self-awareness and apparently lacking awareness of the irony in his charge.

In the plain light of day, Yve, standing at the bottom of the statue of an English king, shot his right arm up and forward, palm down, fingers straight, not to salute the monarch, but a man who murdered six million Jewish people.

# Tighter rules on firearms needed, say widows of officers

**Scott McLaughlin**  
News Reporter

Shelley Atkinson has now spent more years as a widow than she did as a married woman.

Her husband, Windsor Police Senior Constable John Atkinson, who was working undercover, approached two young men suspected of being involved in a drug deal outside a convenience store on May 5, 2006. He had noticed a bulge under one of their shirts that he suspected was drugs.

One of the suspects pulled out a handgun and shot Atkinson in the face, killing him instantly.

He was just 37 years old.

“He was so wonderful. I lost my best friend,” Atkinson said. “He was a good cop, but an even better husband.”

For her, his death is a reflection of the continuing rise in gun violence in Canada, something the federal government is now taking steps to curb that trend. Criminal use of firearms in Canada has increased by 42 per cent since 2013, according to Statistics Canada. In 2020, there were more than 8,000 incidents involving gun violence.

The federal government has recently tabled several bills regarding the sale of guns in response to this rise in gun violence.

The federal government introduced additional regulations to Bill C-71, An Act to Amend Certain Acts and Regulations about Firearms, on May 18. This bill expands background checks to applicants’ entire lifetimes and requires an

application for Authorization to Transport.

“We are taking action to keep Canadians safe from gun violence,” said Marco Mendicino, Canada’s Minister of Public Safety. “To that end, we are bringing into force common-sense regulations that strengthen public safety through validated ownership, transparent business records keeping and license verification prior to purchasing a firearm.”

In addition to the amendments to Bill C-71, the Trudeau government also recently proposed multiple changes to Bill C-21.

Those changes took effect on Oct. 21, 2022, and placed a freeze on the sale and transfer of all handguns within Canada.

Since then, more measures have been proposed but not yet implemented, that would restrict ownership of certain shotguns, hunting rifles and even some antique cannons.

Existing gun laws in Canada also include the Criminal Law Amendment Act, which was put in place in 1977. The law banned many guns, including automatic weapons, as well as sawed-off shotguns and rifles.

Anyone who owns a gun must possess a Possession and Acquisition Licence (PAL).

However, not everyone thinks these steps are going to keep Canadians safe or get illegal firearms off the street.

Tony Sotera, owner of the gun store Guns N Ammo in Barrie, Ont., feels these new regulations

were motivated more by political aspirations than by reducing gun violence.

“It’s a farce that the government is using to perpetrate legal gun owners,” Sotera said. “These crimes are not being committed by people who legally own and register guns.”

“Owning a gun is a privilege in Canada, not a right. And gun owners want to hold onto that privilege.”

Sotera said that ultimately these laws affect his bottom line more than doing anything to get guns out of the hands of criminals. His solution would be to stop guns from crossing the border.

In 2020, 70 per cent of all traceable guns used in Ontario gun crimes were originally from the United States, according to data from Ontario Police’s Firearms Analysis and Tracing Enforcement Program.

Sonja Plunkett, another SOLE member, has seen first-hand through her work with the group the pain that gun violence can bring. Her husband, Constable Robert Plunkett, was killed in while working undercover for York Regional Police in 2007.

“Obviously there’s a huge concern. Especially being in a police family you worry,” Plunkett said. “You worry what’s going to come of this.”

“There needs to be stricter laws, there needs to be a better way to track where guns are, who has them, who should and shouldn’t have them,” she said.

“Whenever you hear the news of

a police officer dying in the line of duty, you immediately think back to what happened to you,” Plunkett said. “My thoughts immediately go out to the friends, family and colleagues of that officer.”

“It’s a very, very difficult journey,” she said.

Plunkett said there are many people who are responsible gun owners and use them for what they were meant for, including hunting.

“But there’s far too many guns in the hands of people who have no business having a gun, let alone an automatic weapon,” she said. “And it’s taking its toll on police officers, but it’s also taking its toll on communities in general.”

“Something has to change,” Plunkett said. “I believe that starts with enforcement. There needs to be tighter restrictions on guns in general in Canada.”

“We need to send a message that it’s not okay to engage in violence,” she said. “It’s not okay to kill other people.”

Former OPP officer Brenda Orr agrees Canada needs to stop the flow of guns coming across the border from the United States.

“A lot of these firearms that are killing police officers, as well as regular individuals, are illegal firearms,” Orr said. “I know it’s not the gun that kills people, but without the gun, they can’t shoot somebody.”

Orr, a founding member of Survivors of Law Enforcement (SOLE) and whose husband, OPP Constable Dave Mounsey, died when his cruiser crashed responding to

a call in 2006, agrees that better background checks will make it more difficult for people with criminal backgrounds to obtain guns. However, she’d like to see even tougher gun laws.

Atkinson is also a member of the non-profit organization that started to support spouses and families of officers who died in the line of duty.

From 2019 to 2021, there were a total of six police officer deaths in Canada. But in just the past four months alone, five names were added to police memorials across Canada.

Four victims were in Ontario: South Simcoe Constables Devon Northrup and Morgan Russell during a domestic dispute; York Region Constable Travis Gillespie by a suspected impaired driver; and Constable Andrew Hong, in an unprovoked attack. All were shot to death.

The fifth was in B.C. when Burnaby RCMP Constable Shaelyn Yang. She died after being stabbed during a call to a transient camp.

Members of SOLE feel they have a unique perspective and a unique responsibility to speak out about gun violence in Canada.

More than 16 years after her husband died on duty, Atkinson continues to fight for stricter gun control in Canada.

“This is Canada. People have to realize we can’t just make this acceptable,” she said. “We can’t just turn the TV on and say, ‘Oh, it’s another death.’ Something has to change.”



NATHAN DENETTE/CANADIAN PRESS

The casket of SSPS Constable Morgan Russell is placed in a hearse following a joint funeral service in Barrie, Ont., on Oct. 20, 2022 after a shooting in Innisfil, Ont., on Oct. 11, 2022.

# Canadian figure skaters found pandemic lockdown difficult

**Krystal Yeung**  
News Reporter

Canadian Olympian Gabrielle Daleman, who won a team figure skating gold medal in the 2018 PyeongChang games, said the past two years overwhelmed her and she had to shut it out.

The 24-year-old lost her beloved grandma, suffered injuries, was attacked by body-shaming comments and, after all her work, wasn't picked to go to her third Olympics.

It all happened within two years, those ghost-like COVID-19 years when the world had to reset to battle the pandemic. And the memories of the time brought tears to her eyes.

"I just feel like I cannot handle it," Daleman said.

She wasn't the only one who didn't know how to navigate through the pandemic.

Newly-retired Canadian figure skater Joseph Phan said he was struggling with an on-going bad knee injury throughout COVID and a move to a new city, which eventually forced him to bow out of competitions.

Phan, who was the 2016 national junior champion and medalled in the 2018 world junior championships, received plasma-rich platelet injection treatment for the knee but said a tear to his tendon remains.

He said he was dealing with the injury while trying to adapt to his new city of Toronto and it took the Montreal-native a year and a half to feel comfortable at his new skating club and Toronto.

His club, the Cricket Club, invited mental health specialists to help skaters, but he was still depressed, he said.

"I just wanted to enjoy skating again," Phansaid. "But I never really found that spark again."

Figure skating coach Andrew Evans said none of his students were motivated during the pandemic.

"It's an open-ended thing," he said. "Maybe it would be a week, maybe it would be six months, we don't know."

"I kept on telling the kids, when you can't be motivated, at least be disciplined to show up and go through the motions," Evans said.

Public health measures were strict, but skaters endured them to keep training. Phan said his club managed to get ice time for their skaters at an early stage, but with tons of restrictions.

Skaters must wear their masks all the time, and it's uncomfortable and sweaty, Phan said.

"I was pretty lucky," he said. "My friends weren't able to skate and train."

The scramble for ice time was more than common.

Richmond Training Centre figure skater Howard Leung said they had to share a one- or two-hour session at the Scotiabank Arena with other clubs.

"Not everyone gets to do programs because you have 15 people, 20 people on the ice at the same time," he said.

Yet, the distance between Richmond Hill and Scotiabank Arena wasn't far when compared to Evans's case.

Mississauga-based Evans said he "was driving from Etobicoke to Brantford" and then "from Brantford to Nottawasaga and then Nottawasaga back down."

He said he's driving six hours daily.

All the driving was done to find ice, Evans said.

His students, pair skaters Brooke McIntosh and Benjamin Mimar, said athletes had to get creative with their training during the initial lockdown.

Mimar said he used weights to simulate the elements on his own as pair skaters couldn't meet each other.

Skaters also had online jump classes, stretching classes and cardio workouts, McIntosh said.

However, Leung said the one-hour online fitness classes couldn't recreate the cardio needed for figure skating. Leung said his body got heavier and the weight messed with his jumps.

"My loop, I had it consistently before," he said. "But I lost it."

Daleman did her physical conditioning at home, but things weren't easier. She said physiotherapy wasn't as accessible because there were immunity restrictions.

COVID-19 set people apart physically, but technology pulled them together digitally. Evans said the ZOOM app linked him to people from 25 countries.

"The fact that someone's across the world no longer matters," he said. "We found some absolutely amazing coaches from across the world with way more experience than us."

Evans said the initial lockdown, where training was exclusively online, emphasized to him the effectiveness of off-ice training. He realized that students could continue to jump off-ice for 45 minutes without getting injured, he said.

Evans then doubled or tripled



Gabrielle Daleman, who won an Olympic gold medal for Canada in 2018, makes a power pose during her gala program during the 2022 Skate Canada International at the Paramount Fine Foods Centre in October.

the amount of off-ice training with a bunch of Canadian champions out last year.

COVID also introduced virtual competitions, some liked it and some hated it.

Phan said his virtual experience in the Skate Canada Challenge was less nerve-racking because it was less like a competition. Skaters competed with no crowds, no cameras and no judges.

"I'm more of an alone person," he said. "It stresses me out so much, so in a way, I like competing when there's less people."

But skaters had to wait a month to get their scores, which was odd to him.

Daleman said the wait refrained skaters from doing replacements — which are linked to the program score — right away. She said virtual competitions also stripped away the authentic competition

experience.

She said skaters couldn't feel that adrenaline and nerves in virtual competitions and she missed that. It impacted her growth as an athlete.

Daleman wasn't the only one who missed the authentic experience.

Leung said unlike in-person competitions where skaters warm up with other competitors, they had a six-minute session of their own.

He said seeing others landing amazing jumps would motivate him to do better, but that's not offered in virtual competitions.

The motivation also came from chants from the crowds, which empty arenas couldn't offer, he said.

McIntosh, who made her Grand Prix debut with Mimar in front of a home crowd, said the energy

from the audience kept her going.

"It's always nice to see little kids coming to watch our event," Mimar said. "They start to like the sport as much as us."

Some kids sparked an interest in figure skating and some athletes passed the torch and moved on.

"I have been through basically top and back for thousands of times," Daleman said. "If anyone knows how it's to be at the top, then go to rock bottom, I am one of those people."

She said it was the love for the sport that fueled her through everything.

"I was literally born to be a figure skater," she said. "I was born on my favourite figure skater's birthday and my middle name is Shae, after Shae-Lynn Bourne, which is my mom's favourite figure skater."

"I'm just not ready to let go," Daleman said.



HUMBER ATHLETICS

Humber Hawks second-year guard Romeo Osas-Joshua, dribbles up the court in a 97-70 win over Redeemer Royals where he scored 16 points and grabbed 11 rebounds in 29 minutes.

## Hawks fly into Christmas break riding four game win-streak

**Jacob Tye**  
Sports Editor

Hawks guard Romeo Osas-Joshua is proud of his team's record for the season and believes good things are still to come.

"I'm very proud of the position our team is at right now," he said. "Six and three with a young team and winning the last four, we are just trending upwards, and even with missing a few guys this semester we should be happy at where we are at."

The Hawks look formidable so far this season with a 6-3 record and four straight wins. Their most recent win was a 80-73 win over Niagara college earlier this month.

Osas-Joshua has been a difference maker on the team, placing second on the team in scoring with

14.7 points and averaging 25 minutes a game. He credits the team's success to head coach Omar Mills.

"He's been a great coach on and off the court, pushing us not only on the basketball court but also in school," Osas-Joshua said. "I really appreciate the effort he puts in to try and make us successful people in the future."

Mills is coming off a national title win after his first season as head coach with the Hawks. This year's team looks different than the previous, with new players and transfers. Osas-Joshua feels the team needs to adjust but will succeed in the end.

"Last season we had a bunch of guys that played for Humber in the past so they knew what it took to play at this level but now with a bunch of new guys, there is a lot of teaching being done and Omar has

done a wonderful job this year and our record shows that," he said.

With a four-game winning streak, Humber has started to close the gap with George Brown, Durham and Mohawk, all having impressive 8-1 records.

One of the newcomers to this squad is former Lakehead power forward Jamani Barrett and he believes this team can keep up and can stick with anyone.

"Our team looks nothing like the first semester, we're reloaded with pieces from transfers, ineligible and injured players," he said. "We're going to look a lot different and back-to-back nationals has always been the goal, but we mainly take it game by game."

Due to eligibility issues, Barrett has only seen action in one game but will look to be a difference

maker in the future.

"Humber has so many resources to help you achieve success," he said. "It's great and has everything I could ask for and the opportunity to compete for a national title."

The Hawks return to the court on Boxing Day during a Vancouver road trip where they will play B.C.-based Langara College and Capilano University in exhibition play.

First-year power forward Taujh Motiki-Stephens is looking to spend his Christmas break working out and perfecting his craft.

"Just trying to get better at certain skills so that when I come back I still have those skills and get back to having fun on the court," he said.

The Scarborough native began the season as a starter but unfortunately began to transition into

a role player. He still averages an impactful 14.4 minutes a game for the Hawks. He maintains a positive attitude and credits the team's success to playing "unselfishly" and thinks they will continue to build on their hot streak.

"It just took us to play together for a little bit to get used to it and build chemistry," he said. "The more games we play, that chemistry is going to build and we'll start to win more games."

They look to come back in emphatic fashion and continue their hot streak when they return to OCAA action on Jan. 11 versus the Conestoga Condors. The Hawks' last loss was to the Condors 83-81 in early November. They are looking to redeem the loss and continue their winning ways on the hunt for another national



AP PHOTO/RODRIGO ABD

Lionel Messi is the heart of Argentina as he is a inspiration to millions with murals of the soccer player being painted all over the country in support before going into World Cup final.

## OPINION: 'Qatar proved that money doesn't result in beauty'



**Jack Albanna**  
Sports Editor

In just two days the FIFA World Cup will have the final chapter of its 2022 tournament written in the history books as defending champions France look to upset Argentine fans' dream of watching their captain and hero Lionel Messi lift the glorious prize.

It was a World Cup that was filled with mixed feelings and emotions from both football fans and casual viewers.

Going into the tournament, my expectations were low and doubtful, mainly because it was the first time a World Cup would be held in late fall.

I tried to remain positive, but I just couldn't build up that thrill and excitement I always had before a World Cup started.

All I wanted to feel was the childhood adrenaline of watching elite football during a warm summer afternoon.

I can confidently say the lack of passion was evident in Canada.



CANADIAN PRESS

Argentina during a training session at Qatar University Training Site on Dec. 15 ahead of their World Cup final matchup against France this weekend.

During the World Cup, I grew up seeing countless cars with flags of the nation motorists supported flapping above their windows, but that didn't exist this time out.

There wasn't a buzz that gave fans a reason to be excited for a mid-season tournament, which was a shame considering the significance of this World Cup is far superior to others.

As Canadians, we got to watch our beloved men's team represent us on a global stage for the first time in 36 years. It was also the rumoured last dance for many legends, including the colossal giants Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi.

It is not meant to be an insult to the host nation, but Qatar did not

give fans what they craved.

The incredibly expensive prices of traveling to Qatar, the strict laws the nation set for the World Cup and not to mention the stadiums built upon the deaths of migrant workers over the past several years are all reasons which drove fans away from the nation.

There has been suspicion of "paid actors" who pose as fans to compensate for the lack of travelers and the lackluster atmosphere was evident from the beginning.

ESPN reports Qatar spent at least \$220 billion on this World Cup, which is more than twice of what the previous eight hosts spent combined.

They call it the beautiful game

for a reason and Qatar proved that money doesn't result in beauty.

I caught myself wondering how on earth there are so many empty seats at a World Cup?

In the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, we saw passion and constant singing, in South Africa's 2010 edition we were amazed by the deafening sounds of the vuvuzela, yet in Qatar, the loudest thing I've heard is stadium music.

Looking back at how far we've come, I can't count on one hand how many thrilling games we had because there weren't many.

Even the quality of goals doesn't compare to what we've been spoiled with in the past, apart from Richarlison's stunning bicycle kick

in Brazil's opening game.

And sure, who doesn't love an underdog story where the unexpected unfolds before our eyes, and yes we got to see that this year but perhaps it was too much. Morocco's defensive style of football and Croatia's inability to pose any threat to Argentina gave us a very boring duo of semi-final matches.

I do believe this final match is an excellent matchup and it could easily surpass the terrible final we had to watch in Russia 2018. But it does bother me that both teams' opponents on their way to the final are not one of the World Cup champions, specifically Argentina.

Although I do think Argentina will prevail and defeat France.



## HAWKS FLY, WIN FOUR STRAIGHT



Hawks guard Romeo Osas-Joshua scores 16 points in 97-70 win over Redeemer Royals where he snagged 11 rebounds in 29 minutes. Humber begins Vancouver road trip on Dec. 26

**FIGURE SKATERS  
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