

# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2012 IN YORK

The York Guardian asked several residents and community leaders about what their hopes are for the community in 2012. Here are their responses:

## ■ MATT BRUBACHER

Community engagement co-ordinator for Unison Health and Community Services

With the Jane Street Hub celebrating its one-year anniversary this year, Matt Brubacher said he's looking for more resident groups to use the hub, located at Jane Street and Trethewey Drive.

"In the new year, we're looking into bringing new groups in. We got community spaces that groups can use, maybe a homework help club," he said. "And we're looking for new ideas. They can approach us and talk to us about them."

The hub offers a wide range of free services in the Weston and Mount Dennis community through the seven organizations housed under its roof, which are Unison Health and Community Services, Macaulay Child Development Centre, North York Community House, Yorktown Family Services, COSTI Immigrant Services, Midaynta Community Services and Toronto Public Health.

Brubacher said they would welcome any new programs that would benefit the community.

## ■ BARBARA STONE

President of Mount Dennis Community Association

The Mount Dennis Community Association is hoping to continue its momentum into 2012 with more active participation from residents to carry on the initiatives that began in the neighbourhood this past year.

"I want to see more residents participate in a wide variety of activities, whether it's doing com-

munity clean-ups, fishing in the pond, planting a community garden or attending a community kitchen event," Stone said.

"That would be my dream for 2012."

## ■ MAGGIE KNAP

Executive director of York West Active Living Centre

Serving older adults in the community for 30 years, York West Active Living Centre plans to continue promoting healthy independent living.

"One of our goals in 2012 is to engage 100 of our members, welcoming friends and families, too, to participate in the Toronto Challenge June 29," said Maggie Knap.

"Each participant can decide for themselves whether they want to walk one, five or 10 kilometres. It is a fabulous event to have fun with friends and family, raise funds to keep the cost of programs affordable and to motivate people to initiate a personal fitness program."

But being a part of Weston Village, Knap said the organization also has a broader goal to help revitalize the community with residents and other community groups.

"Looking forward in 2012, the residents of Weston have been presented with a unique opportunity to kick-start a long-needed revitalization of the Weston Village core by working with City of Toronto urban planners, the Province of Ontario, Metrolinx and representatives of all levels of government," she said.

"Love it or hate it, the rail link is here to stay. Working together we

## Community leaders wish for new and improved services, continued momentum, and political attention



Artwork/TCN

Weston has a 'unique opportunity to kick-start a long-needed revitalization of the Weston Village core.'

can realize our collective goals."

## ■ YASMIN HAQ-KHAN

Community planner for Social Planning Toronto (York office)

In the diverse and under-served community of York South-Weston, Yasmin Haq-Khan said Social Planning Toronto is preparing to do more for the

local immigrant population in the neighbourhood.

"One of the major things we are hoping to do for the local immigration partnership project in York South-Weston, which Social Planning Toronto is taking the lead, we have agreed to hold in middle to end of March, an entrepreneurial fair for newcomers," Haq-Khan said.

She added that with York South-Weston being

one of the poorest ridings in the province, Social Planning Toronto is advocating for the city to provide more support for low-income residents.

"In January with all the budgets coming up, we are hoping that enough people in our community are able to speak or put pressure on the local councillors to vote the right way," she said.

"They should be voting for things like the Hardship Fund and not voting against it."

## ■ IRIS FABBRO

Executive director of the North York Women's Centre (now located in York)

The North York Women's Centre (NYWC) is looking forward to building on projects it launched this year, Iris Fabbro said.

"It has been an exciting year for all of us at NYWC and, as we approach the end of 2011, our thoughts turn to the future and how we can best respond to both existing and emerging community needs," she said.

The centre, which moved from North York to York last year and serves women in both communities, has been providing free programs for women for more than 20 years, Fabbro said.

In 2011, the centre conducted two important initiatives: a project identifying the safety concerns of women, and a community needs assessment, which has already resulted in some new and exciting programs, she added.

"Our staff and volunteers have worked hard to create a vibrant and welcoming community space. I am very proud," she said.

The centre is looking forward to the programs it

has planned for next year, including salsa classes, yoga, arts and crafts and workshops focussing on health and wellness.

Those are in addition to the services the centre has traditionally provided to the community such as life skills, support groups, family law legal advice and violence prevention initiatives, Fabbro said.

## ■ DAVE BENNETT

CSAC vice-chair of St. John the Evangelist Catholic School

The St. John the Evangelist Catholic School community will be campaigning in the spring for provincial funding of a new 600-student school building rather than just an addition to the current school.

There is already an addition to the school built in 1954, said Dave Bennett, adding the gym only holds 198 students.

Construction of a new school building could coincide with the Metrolinx construction of the Weston air-rail link (ARL) tunnel slated to begin in July.

"The ARL tunnel will move the setback boundary 60 feet allowing the board to create a more efficient new building, which is required for our small 1.84-acre site," Bennett said.

"The board has decided to relocate all students this September to the former Brother Edmund Rice high school at Davenport and Old Weston Road. We will move in September, but funding is not guaranteed. A new larger school will create a better community allowing neighbours to be classmates."

Bennett wanted to encourage the community to join the campaign by emailing [st.john.evangelist@hotmail.com](mailto:st.john.evangelist@hotmail.com)

— Clark Kim with files from Lisa Queen

— Visit [insidetoronto.com](http://insidetoronto.com) to see similar features from other parts of the City of Toronto.