



Issue Twenty **THE** Spring 2026

SKELETON PRESS

NEIGHBOURHOOD CARE

ATTENTION WRITERS & ARTISTS

We invite pitches for articles related to the neighbourhood and welcome new and experienced writers. Send us your idea (max. 150 words). Most articles are maximum 800 words. We pay \$0.30 a word (\$240 per 800 words). We also welcome new illustrators and photographers and pay market rates. Please email inquiries along with samples of your work to skeletonpresseditor@gmail.com.

DISTRIBUTION SITES

Skeleton Park, Kingston Community House (99 York St.), The Elm Café (303 Montreal St.), Home Base Housing (540 Montreal St.), Novel Idea (156 Princess St.), Something Else Records (207 Wellington St.), Kingston Community Credit Union (18 Market St.), Daughters General Store (63 John St.), Next Church (89 Colborne St.), BSE Skateboard Shop (225 Princess St.), Coffee Way Donuts (472 Division St.), and Free Little Libraries in the Skeleton Park neighbourhood

MANDATE

The *Skeleton Press* was initiated by the Skeleton Park Arts Festival to create a free print publication that captures the vibrancy and diversity of the neighbourhood. We are interested in how print media can communicate and build relationships differently than digital publishing, and in how the act of consuming and distributing the physical object can build community. We hope copies of *The Skeleton Press* will be passed from hand to hand, sparking conversation with neighbours over the fence or at the corner store, and strengthening our sense of place and each other.

Thank you to our supporters.



STAFF

CO-EDITORS

Anne Thériault
Greg Tilson

ART DIRECTOR

Vincent Perez

CONTENT ORGANIZER

Mark Stoller

COVER ILLUSTRATION:

Abby Nowakowski

ILLUSTRATED ICONS:

Pierre Collet-Derby

COPY EDITORS

Dawn Clarke
Jane Kirby
Catherine Marcotte
Gord McDiarmid
Mark Stoller
Jamie Swift
Anne Thériault

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We are interested in your thoughts and opinions about stories that appear in *The Skeleton Press*, and we invite you to contribute by writing a letter to the editor. Letters may be edited for clarity and space considerations.

SEND EMAIL TO:

skeletonpresseditor@gmail.com

VIEW OR DOWNLOAD PAST ISSUES AT:

skeletonparkartsfest.ca/the-skeleton-press

AND TRADITIONAL MAIL TO:

The Skeleton Press

PO BOX 222, Kingston Main, Kingston, ON K7L 4V8

We'd like to thank those special benefactors who have committed to substantial and ongoing donations. Currently, these donors are: **Adam & Maggie Newman/Hogan, Katleen Norman, Jonathan Rose, Cam-Rog Enterprises, and Devon Tremblay.**

WORDS BRING DOWN WALLS.

kingston WRITERSfest
kingstonwritersfest.ca

MICHELLE GOOD
Eliza Sunshine

“Sometimes I feel that I wasn’t born at all, rather sculpted and formed by the storms of my grandmother’s life.”

An Evening with Michelle Good as we celebrate her long-anticipated new novel, *Eliza Sunshine*.
Hosted by Shelagh Rogers.
With special guest Kym Gouchie.

LodgePole Arts Alliance *This event is a co-presentation with Lodgepole Arts Alliance*

National Truth and Reconciliation Day
Wednesday, September 30, 2026
Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts

Queen's University, THE ISABEL BADER CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, Canada Council for the Arts, Conseil des arts du Canada, KINGSTON, Downtown Kingston, Canada, ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL, CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO, Ontario

Care BY ANNE THÉRIAULT



When my son was younger, I used to joke that “be careful” was my most useless admonition; I said it so often that he probably just tuned it out. In my older and wiser years, I think the same is probably true for a lot of other words that involve the word care: caregiving, caretaking, self-care, daycare, healthcare. We know what these things mean as discrete terms, of course, but we can forget that at their centre is this act of tending to something with a sort of reverent watchfulness.

As you’ve probably already guessed, this issue is all about how the people in our neighbourhood take care of each other. It contains several pieces about the travails of parenting: Maddi Andrews writes about childcare for artists, Hazel Taylor-Quick offers advice on parenting teenagers, Tante Talia counsels new mothers on how to care for themselves, and Rebecca Hall gives us a glimpse into her upcoming book about what it means to be a mother (and, more broadly, a caregiver) under capitalism.

Speaking of parenting, parent and child duo Alan and Andrea Gummo have written an excellent pair of articles about civic care. In a similar vein, Daria Jüudi Hope has contributed a thoughtful and stirring essay about what it’s like to run for public office—based, of course, in her experience running as the local NDP candidate in the last federal election. Naz describes some of her favourite films about teachers (perhaps our most under-appreciated caregivers), Jennifer Ashton writes about mental health first aid, and Hilbert Buist writes about taking care of our turtle neighbours. It’s a real stacked deck of a masthead!

Caring is a radical act, though it’s not a particularly cool one. In a world where cruelty is glamorized, and apathy has a certain cachet, being nice to each other feels like wearing a pair of sensible shoes: you know you should, your mother would probably approve, but people might make fun of you. I think that caring for others can sometimes make us feel uncomfortable because it reminds us that we, too, have times when we require care. And there’s nothing that makes us want to lash out quite like the thought of not having our needs met.

This issue is full of examples of the practical ways that we show up for each other in and around Skeleton Park—but, on another level, it’s also a celebration of the ways we allow ourselves to be vulnerable enough to receive, and give, care.

**Help us put meat on the bones:
Support *The Skeleton Press***



We love bringing *The Skeleton Press* to you every few months. But operating with a skeleton crew on a skeleton budget isn’t always easy. Currently, funding comes through funds awarded to the Skeleton Park Arts Festival (SPAF) by several granting bodies. But the publication has no independent source of income and relies heavily on volunteers. You can help by donating to SPAF, a charitable organization that can issue tax receipts. To get started, visit canadahelps.org/en/charities/skeleton-park-arts-festival or scan the adjacent QR code.

Align your money with your values!



Kingston Community Credit Union has been **locally owned** and **operated**, proudly serving Kingston for **over 65 Years**

KCCU 795 Gardiners Road 613-384-5555 18 Market Street 613-549-3901 1201 Division Street 613-531-6056 kccu.ca

WHAT’S INSIDE

Around Town

From the Margins to the Pit
BY **DARIA ADELE JUÜDI-HOPE**4

Something in the (Municipal) Water
BY **ALAN GUMMO**5

Troubled Waters: Clean-up of Kingston’s Inner Harbour Going Ahead
BY **VICKI SCHMOLKA**6

Mixed Use, Density, and the Sidewalk Ballet:
An Urbanist Neighbourhood Report Card
BY **ANNE THÉRIAULT**8

Giving Care

Care Under the Clock
BY **REBECCA JANE HALL**10

How to Get Dressed as a New Mom
BY **TANTE TALIA**12

Starting a Chain of Trust
BY **CAITLIN NEWEY**13

Growing Pains
BY **HAZEL TAYLOR-QUICK**14

The Dinosaurs Among Us
BY **HILBERT BUIST**15

The Crossword: For All I Care
BY **HALEY SARFELD**16

Care and the Community

Studentification in Skeleton Park
BY **DAVID MCDONALD**17

What Does It Mean to Care for Your Community?
BY **ANDREA GUMMO**18

Mental Health and Substance Use Safety at Community Events
BY **JENNIFER ASHTON (LIESEN)**20

A Neighbour’s View: Affordable Housing Needs Care to Succeed
BY **JO REYNOLDS**21

Closing Streets, Building Connection
BY **KATIE FIZZELL**22

Buy Nothing, Build a Community
BY **MEREDITH DAULT**23

The Arts of Caring

This Be The Verse
BY **SADIQA DE MEIJER**24

Comics
BY **JON CLAYTOR & ANI CASTILLO**25

Caregiver Portraits
BY **LCVI CREATIVE ARTS STUDENTS**26

The Clearing
BY **MARNEY MCDIARMID & CLELIA SCALA**27

Momo and Mim in the Dark and Light
BY **VINCENT PEREZ & ABBY NOWAKOWSKI**28

Holding the Whole Artist
BY **MADDI ANDREWS**29

Moving with Care
BY **ERIN BALL & MAXIME BEAUREGARD**30

The Hotel Wolfe Island: A Labour of (Local) Love
BY **TOM CARPENTER & HUGH CHRISTOPHER BROWN**31

In Conversation with Hannah Georgas
BY **JAY MIDDAUGH**32

A Class Act: A Teacher’s Favourite Films About Teachers
BY **NAZ**33

From Grant Hall to Skeleton Park: The Expanding Story of Fat Goose
BY **HEIDI WALLACE PATENAUDE**34

FROM THE MARGINS TO THE PIT

STORY BY
**DARIA ADÈLE
JUÜDI-HOPE**



“

Something is lost when people with deep roots in a community see elected roles as meant for “someone else.”

PICTURED: Kingston City Hall Council Chambers

I’ve always been passionate about issues like housing, education, and public policy—especially when they intersect with health. But for most of my life, I was political from the margins, by which I mean that I worked on those issues from outside the political system. During recent federal and provincial elections, though, some of my friends, colleagues, and neighbours invited me to move a little closer: to share my insider perspective on health systems, to lend a hand with platforms, to knock on doors. In 2025, I went a step further and ran as a federal candidate, learning firsthand what it means to see my name on a ballot.

I suspect there are many people in this neighbourhood who can relate to how I used to be. They donate, they volunteer, they read up on issues, they talk about politics over coffee, but they stop short of imagining themselves on the ballot or at the council table. They participate, but they stay just outside the formal structures of power.

But something is lost when people with deep roots in a community see elected roles as meant for “someone else.” Our government loses the grounded knowledge that comes from navigating the city on a bus with a stroller, or from working nights at the hospital and then trying to sleep through daytime construction. They lose the insights of those who know what it is to live paycheque to paycheque, or to advocate for a family member in a system that does not always listen.

As another municipal election approaches this October, perhaps you would consider stepping away from the margins and into what I like to think of as the pit, the place where we are fighting it out for the future of our communities. After all, municipal politics is where so many of the decisions that shape our daily lives happen. Zoning bylaws determine what gets built on the next block and whether there will be room for truly affordable housing. Transit and cycling plans decide how safely and effectively we can move through the city with our kids, our elders, and our groceries. Local budgets affect how we respond to homelessness, how we maintain our parks, and how seriously we take climate commitments.

What does it look like to run for office? First, you must learn how the systems work: the way City Council operates, what committees there are, what priorities and needs your neighbours have. You must gain an understanding of the role and responsibilities of the position for which you wish to run. Then, during the campaign, you will knock on doors, ask questions and listen to people—really actively listen, care, and remember to circle back if you don’t have an immediate response to people’s questions.

If you win, the work changes shape but not character. Municipal elected officials take their place around the table, but they also take on less visible work, like emails about overflowing garbage bins, phone calls about dangerous intersections, late-night reading of reports, and early-morning meetings before work. They sit on committees and boards, trying to balance city-wide priorities with district-level realities. They become points of contact and accountability, not just symbols.

For someone like me, with a background in health-care and education, that description is both daunting and familiar; it sounds a lot like what many of us do every day, just concentrated and formalized. We already advocate for neighbours, navigate complex systems, and hold institutions to account. Running for office, and serving if elected, would simply mean doing those things with a different set of tools and responsibilities.

Still, not everyone will want to move into the pit. Politics, particularly municipal politics, brings the work much closer to home, to the streets where you buy your groceries and pass your neighbours’ kids on their way to school. The pit can be messy. It is very much public. It can be exhausting and occasionally bruising. It is entirely legitimate to decide that this season of your life cannot hold that kind of commitment.

There are also practical barriers to running for public office. Who can afford to run is not just a personal question, but a political one. Kingston’s City Councillors earn \$45,000—not exactly a livable wage. It is also important to consider the evening meetings, the many reports, the constant flow of calls and emails, and the emotional labour of hearing directly about people’s fears and frustrations. For many prospective candidates without savings, a partner’s income, or flexible work, it is a hard calculation.

But even if you never see your own name on a ballot, you hold another kind of power: you can help decide whose name does appear there and what they are expected to stand for. To that end, you could rally early behind a potential council or mayoral candidate whose values and lived experience reflect the neighbourhood you know. You could host a small gathering so neighbours can meet the candidate you support. You could offer graphic design skills, childcare, a warm meal, or a list of questions from your street for potential councillors. And, of course, you could, and should, vote.

As for me, the encouragement I received during recent election cycles no longer feels like a polite compliment that I can ignore. Instead, it feels more like a challenge: if I believe that people with my background and experience belong in the rooms where decisions are made, am I willing to be one of those people? Having run once as a federal candidate, I do intend to continue working in the pit, but my calling feels increasingly local—in our streets and parks.

I know that I’m not alone in feeling pulled toward the work of municipal politics. Many of us who have spent years on the margins of formal power are starting to imagine ourselves in different roles; as candidates, as campaign organizers, as neighbours who ask more of the people who seek our votes.



DARIA ADÈLE JUÜDI-HOPE is a Registered Nurse, educator, and social justice advocate currently completing her Nurse Practitioner graduate program. Holding a Master of Public Health from Queen’s University, her extensive clinical experience ranges from acute hospital care to serving remote Indigenous communities across Northern Canada. Deeply committed to health equity, Daria combines her frontline healthcare expertise with active community leadership, having recently represented Kingston and the Islands as a federal candidate.

A new Kingston water and sewer provider? What about Utilities Kingston?

Late last year the City floated the idea of setting up a new company to deliver water and sewer services. They called it a Municipal Service Corporation or MSC.

It would be a shell company to hold the assets and liabilities of the City's water and sewer utility. City Council would have no control over its operating and capital budgets, or over its borrowing.

Public reaction has not been supportive. Council should say no.

Everything that's been said against it is true. Everything that's been said in favour of it is ... something else: the familiar preachings of evangelists of market fundamentalism.

The City's constantly-changing story about why we need an MSC has been hard to follow. First it was needed due to unprecedented growth, with the City up against its debt ceiling. Now it's needed because of backlogged repairs and there's plenty of room to borrow more. To add to the confusion, there's been a lot of parsing of the word privatization.

How did we get into this mess? Did we splurge on too many hockey rinks, airports, bridges, and swimming pools in the post-amalgamation frenzy to make Kingston great again? Do we need an MSC so we can splurge on a convention centre? Is it really a mess at all?

There's a bigger question that's been hiding in plain sight. What about Utilities Kingston? Utilities Kingston (UK) has implicitly admitted to incompetence. A new governance structure is needed, it says, to restore affordability. But does that really solve the problem? How has long-term planning been allowed to go AWOL at UK?

Let's be clear about a couple of things.

UK is not a public utility in the usual sense of the term. It's a numbered company that operates as "Utilities Kingston". It was set up under corporate, rather than municipal, legislation. It has its own CEO and its own Board of Directors.

In the usual telling of the story, the relationship between the City and UK is described as a partnership. Remember the chummy billboards over the downtown "Big Dig" a few years ago, the boards that said it was a City and UK partnership project? They say the partnership ensures coordinated effort. And since the utility is wholly owned by the City, accountability and oversight are also ensured.

According to the storytellers, it works just fine!

The real story is a bit different. We have issues with UK.

They're disconnected from us (structural issues).

- * UK is connected to the City by a service agreement. A service agreement is open to disagreement, and a weak link compared to a management connection. Coordination is transactional, rather than a given.

- * UK is wholly owned by the City of Kingston, but there are no members of City Council on the Board of Directors. This is because, as the CEO of UK recently explained to Council's Environment, Infrastructure, and Transportation Policies Committee, members of Council lack the skills needed to manage a public utility. What investor in their right mind would agree to 100% ownership and 0% of the vote?

- * The citizens of Kingston are UK's owners, but they are referred to in UK's public-facing communications as customers. Role confusion in advertising reveals the mindset and emphasizes the disconnect.

They meet in secret (accountability issues).



STORY BY
ALAN GUMMO
ILLUSTRATION BY
BENJAMIN NELSON

Something In The [MUNICIPAL] Water



ALAN GUMMO has retired from senior positions in public administration (municipal sector) with specializations in city and regional planning, and corporate and community strategic planning. He's still preoccupied with making democratic government work better, delivering better decisions in the public interest.

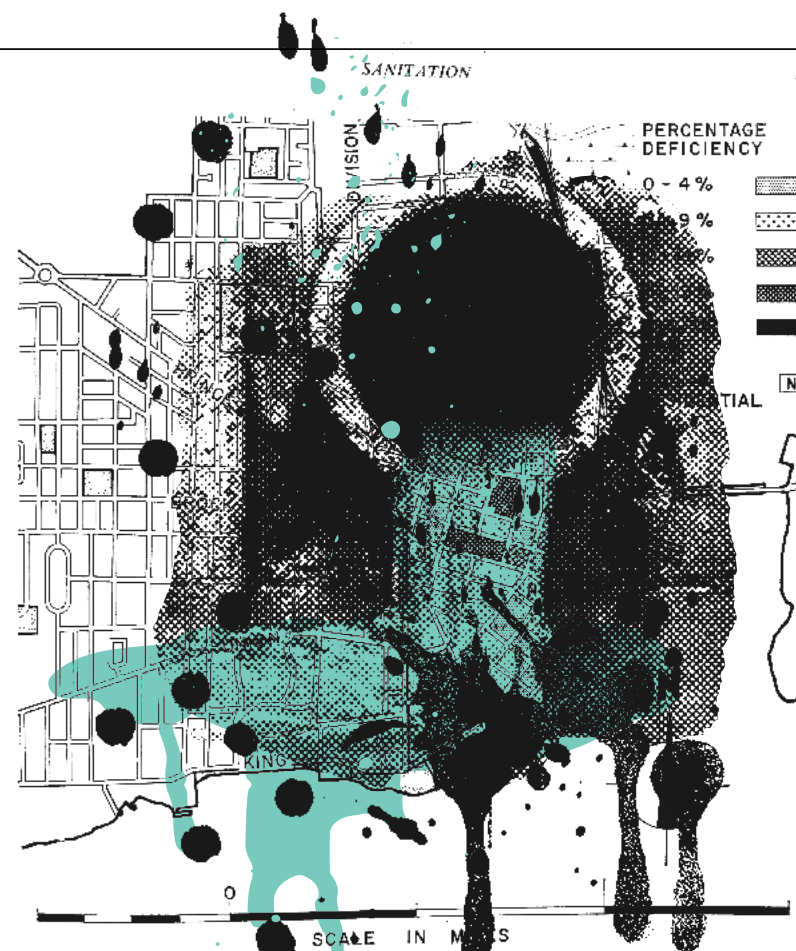


ILLUSTRATION NO. 45—MAP 12—SANITATION DEFICIENCIES IN DWELLINGS. The map is based on standards suggested as a minimum for a housing unit. The table and map shows where any serious deficiencies in sanitary accommodations occur. Poorest conditions occur again near the downtown Shopping Area and near Rideau Street.

- * Board of Directors documents are not shared with the Mayor and Members of City Council. A traceable accountability chain does not exist.

- * Board meetings are not open to the public. Nor are they livestreamed. In fact, the public never gets to check in.

- * Because Board meetings are not public, the Board documents—agendas, minutes, reports and so on—are treated as internal governance materials and are not shared publicly.

They hide behind a privacy wall (transparency issues).

- * Documents related to governance structure and Board processes are not proactively shared publicly. Some internal documents may be subject to disclosure through freedom of information requests, but UK's discretion over disclosure further undermines transparency.

They're out of control (oversight issues).

- * Since Board documents are not shared with the Mayor and Members of City Council, there is no effective oversight.

- * The Mayor and members of City Council attend only UK's Annual General Meeting as shareholder representatives. Performative attendance at an annual event does not replace regular oversight. Ask any shareholders' rights advocate.

There's good reason to be unhappy with this arrangement. So why do we have it?

Ted Hsu, MPP, let the cat out of the bag when he said in an enthusiastic online post that an MSC would, "allow infrastructure financing and management to be kept at arm's length from municipal politics."

That is, out of the reach of City Council, and out of the reach of the citizens. That statement applies equally to UK. In fact, it was applied to UK when it was founded.

It means, in the obscurantist code of neoliberal newspeak, creating opportunities for real estate investors and developers to have preferred access to and influence over decisions involving infrastructure, out of sight of public scrutiny.

The counter to Hsu's proposition is that fresh drinking water and environmentally sustainable sewage treatment are too important to place beyond the reach of our local government. And since UK is a monopoly supplier of water and energy, proper oversight is simply prudent governance.

UK should be positioned accordingly.

Instead of setting up an MSC, bring UK into the City's organizational structure. Think of a public works department that reports to a standing committee of Council. Put it back into the hands of City Council. That is, our hands.

TROUBLED WATERS

Clean-up of Kingston's Inner Harbour Going Ahead

STORY BY

VICKI SCHMOLKA

ILLUSTRATION BY

VINCENT PEREZ

VICKI SCHMOLKA was a city councillor from 2006 to 2010. She is on the Board of Friends of Kingston Inner Harbour

Transport Canada's plan to dredge the Inner Harbour came to public attention in April 2021. A staff recommendation on the April 6th Kingston City Council agenda asked Council to approve a possible \$10 million City contribution for the clean-up of the City-owned water lots in the Inner Harbour. The City's water lot clean up was to be included in the Federal government's \$71 million Inner Harbour clean-up project.

At the meeting, a presentation by a Queen's University professor shocked Council, staff, and members of the public. He said dredging the Great Cataraqui River would be "catastrophic." Dr. Jeffrey Giacomini spoke to Council as a professor of chemical engineering, mechanical engineering, and physics, as well as a Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in rheology. His expertise is the physics of flow.

His words were carefully chosen and blunt. "If you dredge the sediment left behind by a tannery, the sediment that nature has taken care of, has immobilized in a paste-like substance... you will resuspend that into the water of the river. And that's not just going to create a problem on the day of the dredging, this is going to continue for years to come. What nature has taken years to pack away at the bottom of that river, in a special form, is going to be disrupted and it's going to be like starting over again. It's like re-opening the tannery."

Council did not make a financial commitment that evening, agreeing only to continue working with the Federal Government. Since then, there have been presentations by the Federal project team at the City's Environment, Infrastructure and Transportation Policies Committee without any further Council decisions. The project continues to evolve.

What is at the bottom of the river?

Due to the contaminants from the long-defunct Davis Tannery and other sources buried in the river bottom, Kingston's Inner Harbour is one of approximately 24,000 sites for which the Federal Government has responsibility. Clean-up measures for the Inner Harbour have been funded and are expected to be carried out.

Why? Because the Inner Harbour sediment includes heavy metals consisting predominantly of arsenic, chromium, copper, lead, and mercury, as well as PAHs (Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons) from coal, crude oil, and gasoline, and PCBs (Polychlorinated Biphenyls). PCBs are human-made compounds that were used in electrical equipment and as a lubricant. They were banned by the Federal Government in 1977 because of their unwelcome health effects.

Despite how it all sounds, the Federal Government says there is no reason to panic. The Federal Government's "Kingston Inner Harbour Sediment Management Project" website is reassuring. "There is no health emergency or need for urgent action," it says. It does warn people not to eat any fish caught in the Inner Harbour and, if possible, not to touch the river bottom. It says "Most recreational activities in and around the harbour, like boating, kayaking, rowing, and hiking, are safe if skin contact with sediment is minimized or avoided... If sediment does contact your skin, simply rinse it off and wash your hands before eating."

What is the clean-up plan?

In March 2026, the project team held online meetings with representatives of Indigenous communities and with a number of community groups that have been following the clean-up project. Attendants of this meeting were told that the clean-up plan has been scaled back to focus just on the west side of the river, where most of the contamination has been found, particularly in Anglin Bay and close to the shore by the Woolen Mill, the Kingston Rowing Club, and the former tannery lands. Dredging and capping will focus on the west side areas with the highest contamination, leaving the rest of the river alone. Capping means spreading a layer of organic material on top of the contaminants that are already being held in place on the river bottom.

The first river clean-up work will be a pilot project in front of the former tannery site. It is a small area what will be used to test the clean-up methods and study the results. The idea is to put a curtain around the pilot area to separate it from the rest of the river, and to remove fish and wildlife from inside

the curtained-off space. The contaminants thus far identified in this area are not the kind that would dissolve in the water and so can be kept within the curtained area for removal. Dredging, capping, and de-watering are planned for the test site along with on-going real-time water quality monitoring. The idea is to use this area to check the effectiveness of the clean-up methods.

The project team is also planning work in the area alongside Anglin Bay, which has the highest concentration of PAHs from coal and tar wastes, limited vegetation, and a nearby marina. The proposed clean-up methods are dredging, capping, and "enhanced natural recovery (ENR)". The goal is to keep these contaminants from drifting further into the river.

What do people think of the new clean-up plan?

The need for the clean-up remains a disputed issue. Mary Farrar, the long-time and only recently retired president of Friends of Kingston Inner Harbour, has, over the years, spent weeks combing through the technical reports and sending comments to the project team. She continues to question study conclusions about the risks to humans of not doing the clean-up work being labelled as "moderate." She says they are actually "low" and that the project team has assumed that people will be eating fish from the Inner Harbour, even though there is a long-standing fish advisory in place. They have also assumed that people will be standing in the water or wading for hours. "The shoreline is shallow, weedy, and unsuitable for swimming. People do enter the water briefly to get in and out of kayaks or canoes. That's all," according to Farrar. She says that the classification of risk as "moderate" is a critical point for the project to proceed.

Retired Queen's University sociology professor Dr. Mary Louise Adams (School of Kinesiology and Health Studies) agrees with Farrar. Adams wrote to the Minister of Transport in December 2025 criticizing the limitations of the impact assessment work that had been done to date. "The project team has yet to conduct any social science research on how the site is used by people or how it could be used by people in the future", she says. She concludes "The project team has likely over-estimated the actual risk of the contaminants to human health and has likely under-estimated the impact the decontamination project itself could have on community members."

Another retired Queen's University professor, Dr. Peter Hodson (Environmental Studies), has done extensive research on contaminants and their effect on fish. His review of the project documentation is that it is "typical of the 'state-of-the-art' of ecological risk assessments of the 1970s and 1980s, focussing on a very limited array of species at risk and ignoring the larger ecological context of the Inner Harbour." He points out that "there appears to be an abundance of wildlife, including birds (e.g., swallows, kingfishers, terns, herons, egrets, eagles, ospreys, swans, ducks), mammals (muskrats, beavers, otters), reptiles and amphibians that inhabit or visit the Inner Harbour to feed and reproduce," and he questions why "Transport Canada has not assessed the risks of sediment contaminants to the health, reproduction, and abundance of these iconic species, nor the risks of engineered remediation."

The impact of clean-up work on all species is also top of mind for Chris Hargreaves, Chair of the Kingston Field Naturalists' Conservation Committee. He has been following the file for years. He was not convinced by what he heard at the briefing in

March 2026. He says, “We remain very concerned about the wildlife that will suffer during the clean up operations and continue to be skeptical about the need for this expensive dredging project.”

Another area of concern is the destination of the contaminants that will be removed from the river. The late Laurel Claus-Johnson, a well-respected Mohawk Elder and community leader, posed the question (to Council at that April 2021 meeting), “What kind of neighbours are we when we send our waste elsewhere?” She said this was a “moral question.” Moral or factual, the project team still has not said to where the toxic waste will be trucked.

How does the housing development project proposed for the tannery lands affect the clean-up plan?

Yet another issue is the impact that the proposed housing development on the tannery lands will have on the levels of contamination in the river. In July 2025, the Ontario Land Tribunal published its decision on the tannery lands: Yes, development may go ahead. No, the wetland portion of the property may not be capped.

Kerry Hill, a biologist and director of No Clearcuts Kingston, studied the reports on the contamination trapped in the soil of the former tannery site. She worries that any development action on those lands—cutting the trees, bulldozing the area, etc.—will release contaminants. Of particular concern is the chromium, a by-product of the tanning process which is inert when in the ground. When it comes in contact with oxygen, however, it becomes a different and highly toxic variant. Hill reports that “I asked about the effect of the tannery development on the Inner Harbour clean-up and didn’t get an answer.” Hill worries that, “They’re not listening to us at all.”

What’s next?

Before any work begins in the Inner Harbour, the government will have to publish a Detailed Impact Assessment and invite comments from the public. At this time, a draft report is expected in the fall of 2026, and the pilot project and Anglin Bay work are scheduled for 2027.

At the end of the project, as the project team currently plans it, there will still be contaminants present in the river bed and contaminants will still be coming into the river from onshore roads, storm-water pipes, and other sources. The March meeting attendants were told, “It is not a total clean-up.” The goal is to reduce the areas of highest contamination to acceptable levels and keep it that way.

It is clear that there are a number of Kingston residents who are keenly interested in the future of the river and will be watching carefully for the next project updates.



The Kingston Inner Harbour Sediment Management Project website supplies background documents, videos, and FAQs. Visit kihproject-projetpik.ca/Home/SiteBackgroundEN



HISTORICAL SOURCES OF CONTAMINATION IN KINGSTON'S INNER HARBOUR

- 1 **Belle Landfill**
PCBs
- 2 **Davis Tannery and Frontenac Smelter**
Chromium Lead
- 3 **Industrial Park**
Mercury and Arsenic
- 4 **Coal Gasification Plant and Rail Yard**
PAHs
- 5 **Ship Building and Maintenance**
Copper and Tributyltin



“We remain very concerned about the wildlife that will suffer during the clean-up operations and continue to be skeptical about the need for this expensive dredging project.”



MIXED USE,

STORY BY ANNE THÉRIAULT
ILLUSTRATION BY FLORIANA EHNINGER-CUERVO

DENSITY, & THE SIDEWALK

BALLET An Urbanist Neighbourhood Report Card



ANNE THÉRIAULT is a neighbourhood scribbler with bylines at the *Walrus*, the *London Review of Books*, *Longreads*, and many other outlets.

If urbanism had a patron saint, it would be Jane Jacobs; if it had sacred texts, they would surely include her book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. Though it was published sixty-five years ago and is, as the title suggests, about America, much of what she wrote can be applied to Kingston today.

Even if you're not familiar with the name Jane Jacobs, you've almost certainly felt her influence. Her work has inspired several generations of urban planners and grassroots activists, and has consequently helped shape modern cityscapes. You can also find her touch in unexpected places—for example, Sesame Street's co-creator Joan Ganz Cooney used her work as a template for creating an ideal yet realistic urban setting. If you've ever wished you could hang out on those brownstone stoops or frequent Mr. Hooper's store, that's partly because of Jacobs.

Closer to home, Jacobs' legacy can be seen in Jane's Walks, urban tours held each year around her birthday in early May and led by local guides. (Several of this year's walks were led by Skeleton Press contributors, including Hilbert Buist and Jamie Swift.) This initiative began in Toronto after her death in 2006 and has since spread internationally; Kingston has been hosting Jane's Walks since 2015, and they've proved so popular that last year organizers doubled the number of walks available.

To get an idea of how Jacobs' ideas play out locally, I spoke with John Grenville and Joan Bowie, who helped bring Jane's Walks to Kingston and who continue to organize the annual event.

"Jane Jacobs came out of Toronto, but was originally from New York City, where she honed all her community activism and her thinking about what made a good city," says Grenville. "She was sort of an amateur city planner, but also a thinker, and she was able to put things together in a logical way for people to understand."

The fact that Jacobs was an amateur was key to her popularity; while she didn't have a college degree or training as an urban planner, her lack of academic jargon helped her connect with a general audience. She wasn't someone who thought about cities theoretically, but instead based her ideas on what she observed day to day in New York City's Greenwich Village while raising a family there in the 1940s and 50s. (In fact, her critics often dismissed her by calling her a "housewife".)

Jacobs was galvanized by her observation of certain initiatives peddled as "urban renewal", which she argued actually led to urban blight—things like high-rise government housing projects that didn't solve any of the problems of the slums they replaced and instead created new problems of their own; the construction of urban expressways that fragmented inner city neighbourhoods; the sprawl of bland, cookie-cutter suburbs. To her, the people behind these initiatives seemed intent on destroying the elements that make city neighbourhoods work.

With that in mind, in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Jacobs identified four conditions that make for a thriving neighbourhood: primary mixed uses, short blocks, a diversity of building ages, and density. And while she made it clear that she was writing about big cities (the "great" in the title is a double entendre), these can still be a useful lens through which to view any urban community. So how does ours measure up?

Primary Mixed Uses

"Jane thought mixed use neighborhoods were important," says Grenville. "Just like a farmer should never be growing just a single crop, because it can be wiped out tomorrow, she thought that neighborhoods should have a variety of uses. They shouldn't be a monoculture."

While the Skeleton Park area is mostly residential, it does have a sprinkling of beloved small businesses like Daughters General Store, the Elm Café, and Pizza Monster, as well as veterinary offices, pharmacies, and a dentist. Grenville, who grew up on Barrie Street, also notes our wealth of corner stores and mentions that one of the Jane's Walk organizers is considering doing a tour of local corner stores.

One of the issues that Jacobs was passionate about was the idea that streets are for everyone, not just cars. Grenville points out that having neighbourhood retailers and restaurants can help reduce car dependency by putting necessary goods in walking distance. Correspondingly, this can help lower the number of delivery drivers on our streets, which have drastically increased since the COVID pandemic.

"Speaking of which, you can actually have your Amazon packages delivered to my local corner store" says Bowie. "So there's another good reason to have corner stores, because [they can help prevent] packages being stolen off porches."

Short Blocks

Jacobs believed that long blocks limited how pedestrians could get from point A to point B, confining them to a single, unvaried path. Short blocks, by contrast, are the spice of life: they give pedestrians the chance to explore more of the city, visit new businesses, and encounter different people. It's also just nice to have the option to easily change up your route!

Our neighbourhood is blessed with many short blocks and interesting, twisty-turny streets, so I think we get full marks on this one. Not every community in Kingston is so fortunate, and the more suburban you get, the longer the blocks tend to be. However, Bowie points to several neighbourhoods in the east end that have short blocks and scenic paths that make walking enjoyable.

Diversity of Building Ages

Jacobs was not against urban development, but she was against new for the sake of new, writing: "Old ideas can sometimes use new buildings. New ideas must use old buildings."

One of the reasons for this was her observation that when entire blocks were razed to make way for new development, construction costs translated into higher rents, which then drove out many of the original residents. The new residents tended to be similar in terms of socioeconomic class, employment, and background, which Jacobs argued pressured everyone to conform to being the "right" type of neighbour (which further led to ostracization of anyone who didn't exactly fit the profile). Similarly, a lack of diversity in businesses on a block can suck the life out of the streets.

Bowie worries about this type of homogeneity in some of the apartment buildings that are exclusively geared towards students, saying, "The problem is, with a lot of these new buildings, they want everything self-contained [so that residents have to leave as little as possible] ... I'd be really interested to know what Jacobs would think of the community-building in these high rises, because I'm sure there is some—but of course, those of us who don't live in those buildings will never see it, because we're not going up to be social on the fifth or sixth floor."

When your building contains every amenity you need, that can have the effect of removing the community from the streets and placing it entirely into the private arena.

On the other hand, a certain preciousness about preserving old buildings at any cost can hold a city back from being able to change and grow, which is a different type of deathknell.

Density

Jacobs believed that one of the keys to a successful urban neighbourhood was density: a higher concentration of people living not just in single family dwellings, but also in townhouses and apartment buildings.

Concentration serves several purposes. For one thing, more people means better support for those local businesses. For another, Jacobs believed that the key to ensuring community safety lay in having as many people as possible keep an informal eye on the streets, writing that, “The safety of the street works best, most casually, and with least frequent taint of hostility or suspicion precisely where people are using and most enjoying city streets voluntarily and are least conscious, normally, that they are policing.”

But in order to have the kind of mutual accountability that Jacobs saw in Greenwich Village, neighbourhoods need people out and about at various times of day.

“[I see that with] Providence Care and how much traffic that generates on the streets, not vehicle traffic, [but] people walking on the streets at all hours of the day and night,” says Grenville. “And Jane Jacobs saw that as being an important part of not having that monoculture, where there are only people walking on the streets when they’re on their way to or from work or school. It makes for safer streets and it keeps the streets more active and more livable than if there were only people on the streets at night, or only people on the streets at certain times of the day.”

This forms an important part of what Jacobs called the sidewalk ballet: the unconscious choreography of the streets as people move through this shared space, greeting each other, making room for each other, watching out for each other. I see it every morning and afternoon when kids flow in and out of Central Public School, or when acquaintances bump into each other at The Elm, or when adults in the park keep a casual eye on all of the kids there, not just their own. Our neighbourhood’s excellent grasp of the sidewalk ballet is one of the things I love most about it.

Grenville, Bowie and I end our conversation by discussing what Jacobs might make of Kingston in general, and this neighbourhood in particular.

Grenville thinks that she would like the city overall, though she might be critical of the urban planning (or lack thereof) in the more suburban areas. Bowie agrees, and adds that Jacobs would probably want to see more services like medical and dental offices, grocery stores, and other necessities in neighbourhoods outside of the downtown core to make them less car-dependent.

But when it comes to our neighbourhood?

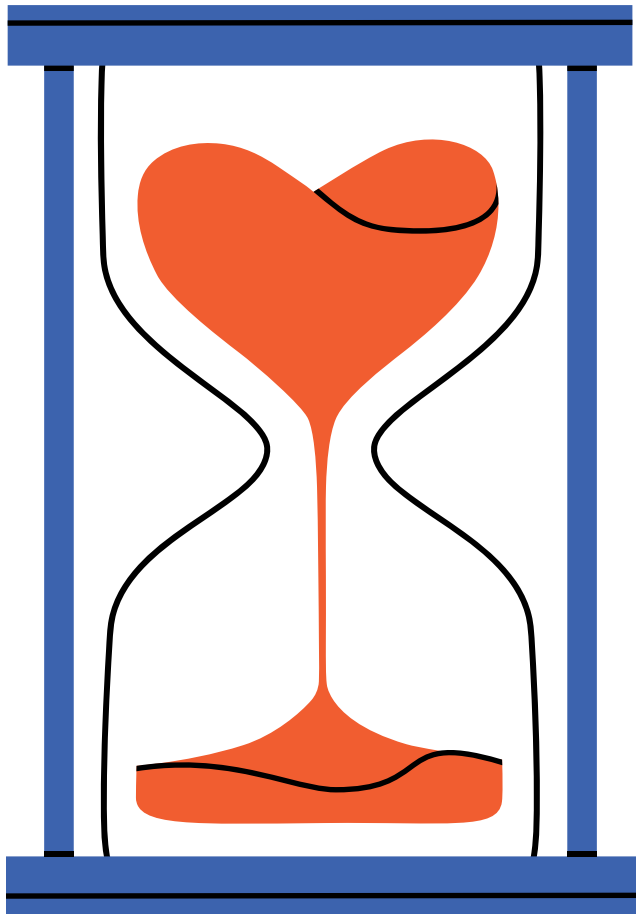
“I think Jane Jacobs would look at Skeleton Park, honestly, and see that as a place that she’d like to live in,” says Grenville.

Bowie agrees, noting the role the park itself plays in creating a vibrant neighbourhood: “The communal park land that Skeleton Park has ... it’s a place where people can go, where they don’t have to be in somebody’s house, or they don’t have to be in a gym on the sixth floor of a high rise. I think that that’s really important.”



66

Just like a farmer should never be growing just a single crop, because it can be wiped out tomorrow, [Jacobs] thought that neighborhoods should have a variety of uses. They shouldn't be a monoculture.



CARE UNDER THE CLOCK

STORY BY
REBECCA JANE HALL
ILLUSTRATIONS BY
VINCENT PEREZ



REBECCA JANE HALL lives on Colborne Street with her partner, two children, and two cats. She appreciates all the ways in which her care time intersects with that of her neighbours in Skeleton Park.

It's 8:45 am.

My children and I file out the door, waving silent goodbyes to my partner, Nico. Nico sits at our kitchen table, one eye on us, one eye shifting between a morning Zoom call and a text chain about the play structure in Skeleton Park. Outside, our boots crunch in the snow; we pause so I can tuck Fern's mittens into her jacket. We begin our short walk down Colborne Street to Central Public School, but stop again to pet Lucy the Labrador, enjoying her morning walk before her humans leave for work. Now in minute five of our two-minute walk to school, we stop once more when Hattie spots her friend, Elise. Elise's grandparents walk her to school because her parents are teachers and must perform the daily magic trick of ensuring their children arrive at one school at the same moment they begin teaching at another.

We arrive at the schoolyard, and smile as Sharon breezes by, leaving the busy, caring world of Redan Street for another day at the busy, caring world of KEYS. I hug Hattie and Fern goodbye. As I leave the school grounds, I see a friend across the street. Her four-year old has rejected his walk to school and is lying, spread-eagle, on the sidewalk. She holds her baby on her hip as she tries to coax her son to standing. He takes off one boot and throws it onto the road, then the other. I catch my friend's eye and she smiles, shrugging hopelessly. I move to help her, to run across Sydenham and rescue the rejected boots. But now it's 9:00 am. I teach a class at Queen's at 9:30 am. I have just enough time to speed-walk to campus, collect my notes and boot up the classroom audio, with the angels on my side. I hesitate. She waves me off, mouthing, "Don't worry, it's fine!". It isn't fine, really. But she understands. It's not that we don't care. We just don't have the time.

I write from within a care crisis, expansive and intimate. Across Canada, emergency room visits are so unwieldy that people choose to tough it out at home, and, in Kingston, a full 5,000 people are on waitlists for a family doctor. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the devastating care gaps for the elderly in our country, but the "return-to-normal" has not brought with it any remedy. Meanwhile, our intimate caring duties—tending to kin, home, community—are at once contained and overflowing, in perpetual collision with our paid working hours.

We call this a care crisis, and crisis it is. Crisis is the right word when care is thrust to the edges of our ledgers and our days, relentlessly underpaid and undermined. For years, I've had a book about this crisis knocking about my brain. But the more I thought about the care crisis, the more I rebelled against the framing. I thought about my daily school drop-offs, the softness of Fern's tiny fingers as I pulled on her mittens, the giggles as Hattie bounded into the yard to find her friends. These moments are stressful, but not because of their content; they're stressful because of their constraints. I feel pinched when I am checking in with teachers over the schoolyard fence because my mind is parsing through neglected emails in my inbox. I feel harried as I hug Hattie and Fern goodbye because I feel guilty; guilty for moving too quickly with my loved ones and moving too slowly to get to work. I live in perpetual temporal overlap – working and caring all at the same time, but still, it is not enough. My time is not enough, but more than that, the time we, collectively, give to the work of care, the life-making that builds and sustains us, is not enough.

What happens when we reframe the caring crisis as a temporal crisis, a scarcity of time experienced as a scarcity of care? How might this change the way we understand our own time and the care we do, and the alternate, better timelines we imagine? In my world, time scarcity, or time poverty, is at the tip of everyone's lips. I ask anyone how they're doing—Sara, who comes to babysit our kids in the middle of her exam week; Kacey, who I see first at school drop-off, then hours later, serving at Northside—and the answer is always the same. "I'm good, but, you know, busy!" A phrase repeated to the point of banality, and yet it is far from banal. They are busy. So am I, dizzyingly so.

And while we glorify it, ignore it, normalize it as though humans have been responding to the dreaded "ping" of their inbox since time immemorial, time poverty is a major social problem. It is a social problem that has, contra the dreams of techno-utopians, gotten worse, not better, in the digital age. Almost one hundred years ago, John Maynard Keynes predicted that, by the new millennium, people in the Global North would only need to work three hours per day to meet our needs. The century following Keynes's prediction was filled with visions of leisurely futures, from the playful domestic robots of the Jetsons to more sobering images of humans served and coddled to the point of obsolescence. But, while we may finally live among robots who can curate our playlists and grocery lists alike, paid and unpaid working hours haven't dropped markedly in a century and people are reporting feeling busier than ever.

Time, or at least, human time, is a way of measuring and structuring life. The clock, as we use it, is both metaphor and mechanism for our economy; a tool that is easy to mistake for the master it serves. Because time, our time, sits at the heart of economic growth. At the root of capitalism, the economic system through which we all live, is our labour time: we are paid for units of time dispensed, and our productivity is measured by what is achieved in that time. And so, our time must be efficient and accelerating, measurable and measured, endlessly quantified.

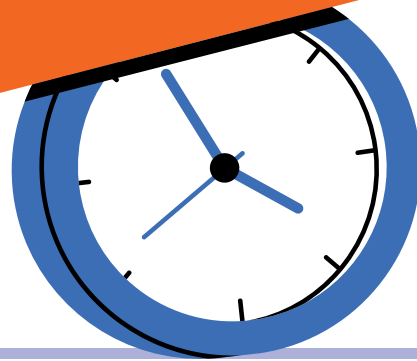
Care evades these imperatives. Care is unwieldy and circular. At its best, it is slow. So the feeling that our lives with their intimate messiness just don't fit—that our love, our commitments, our unruly

bodies, and our patient but pained planet are spilling out of the calendar boxes allocated to us—is no accident. It is not a cultural quirk or an individual failing. Instead, we are feeling our care time, our life-time, hitting up against the compulsions of capitalist time. This is the crisis: not all that we tend to, but the demands on our time that make these ministrations so difficult.

In other words: the problem is not you, it's capitalism. The ill-fit between care and the clock can help to explain why care is so consistently underpaid, even when we say it's the thing we value most. In Canada, the hourly wage of an early childhood educator is a full \$10 less than trade workers with a similar level of education and experience. The same is true of our informal exchanges, where we tend to pay teenagers less for babysitting than we do for snow removal.

But certainly, this is not because we don't care about care. We do! And we want to take care of each other. We want to see children in well-funded schools with well-paid teachers; we want our neighbour who needs a knee replacement to get a knee replacement; and we want our elders to live in places where they can age with grace and love. We care about care, but our commitments to caring for one another clash with the compulsions of capitalism. This clash helps to explain our current caring conditions, but it is also a source of hope. In this ill-fit between care and capitalism, we can find the seeds of living otherwise, both in our day-to-day lives as they are now, and in what we might imagine.

“



The ill-fit between care and the clock can help to explain why care is so consistently underpaid, even when we say it's the thing we value most.

Care matters a great deal for most of us. And we spend an awful lot of time caring. So why not insist that this time is valuable—so valuable, in fact, that other timelines ought to bend towards care? To truly centre care would require a complete reworking of our economic system. But just as a clock set to the measure of our lives would be multiple, so, too, are the roads to getting there. No one can do it all and none of us can do it on our own. But care, in its intimacy, offers agency in the meantime, in the everyday.

I return, in my imagining, to my slow-fast morning routine. Along that protracted, two-minute walk down Colborne Street, I see care time protected and extended between and beyond households. The longer I linger in those two minutes, the more possibility I see in the place that we live and the people with whom we share it, and the more I am reminded that we already live in Care Time.

■ This article is an adapted excerpt from the book, *Life Time: Care Under the Clock*, which will be published by McClelland & Stewart in 2027.

HOW TO GET DRESSED AS A NEW MOM

BY **TANTE TALIA**

STORY AND
ILLUSTRATION BY
TALIA ACKER

Gentle Readers of Skeleton Park,

It has come to my attention that there are new mothers in this neighbourhood who are struggling with the very idea of how to put on clothes that are not pajamas. I am not a new mom these days, but I can clearly recall sitting on the couch with my five-day-old baby, really wanting to take us out and about, and not understanding how to do that anymore. Almost fourteen years have since passed, and I feel that I have sufficiently recovered (at least enough to be in a good position to give some basic advice). So from top to toe, here are my tips for the new mother who is struggling with leaving the house and wearing outside clothes again.

Hair

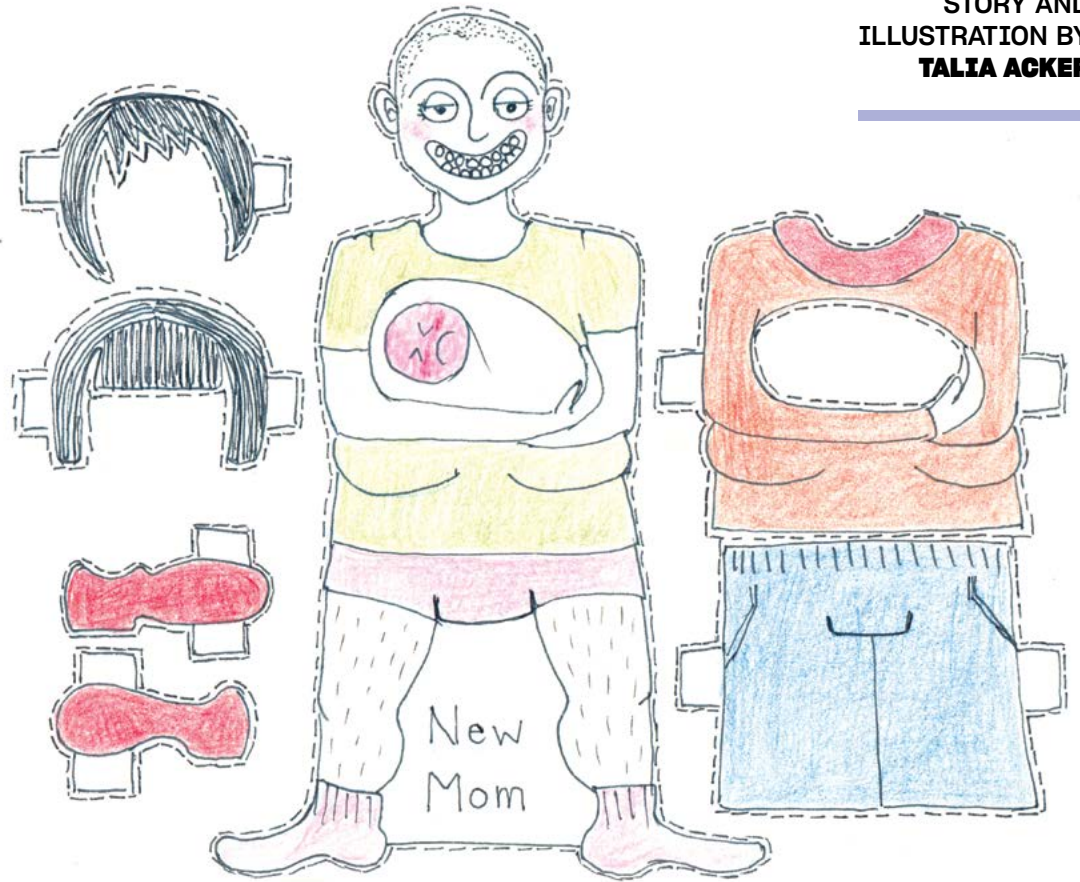
Enjoy your luscious pregnancy hair for however long it lasts (I have no recollection—for the record, nobody told me this would happen, and nobody told me it would then unhappen). Once it starts to fall out, panic and cut it all off. Your hair has been up in a messy bun (not the chic kind, the untidy and dirty kind) since the baby was born anyway. Let it go! Good options for a new mom hairstyle include: the choppy, asymmetrical bob, the Playmobil Pageboy, the full Grace Jones/Sinead O'Connor/angry Britney Spears.

Face & Skin

You will need to develop a new approach to skincare, something that involves one hand plus water. Make-up will only get smeared immediately and further emphasize any scary hormonal feelings that course through you. If you are tired of smelling like sour milk, you can apply patchouli liberally because everyone and their aunt is wearing patchouli and sometimes it's nice to fit in, isn't it?

Jewellery

Much like the Amish people are said to eschew buttons so the devil won't have anything to hang onto, you will have to forego most jewellery for awhile, unless you want a baby tearing your earring off for fun. This will also save you from having all of your gold and silver chucked joyfully into a body of water. The notable exception is jewellery that is essentially made to be a safe, wearable chew toy for a teething baby: a colourful necklace made of felted organic wool balls, for example.



Top Half

Before having a child, I babysat for a friend with two children who has since gone on to have six more, and this is how she handled breastfeeding and clothing: “I cut two lines in an old t-shirt and I wear that under my sweater.” I remember thinking that this sounded awfully utilitarian, but that is exactly what “working breasts” require. Please throw the term “working breasts” into the face of anyone who dares to question you breastfeeding in public. If it is winter, often the easiest way to get around is to wear your baby in front with a huge winter coat on top. This way it is possible to still look fully pregnant for an extra six months.

Bottom Half

Another thing nobody told me was that I would spend years being leaky in one way or another after pushing a new life into the world. Thick pads (reusable cloth ones are more comfortable) are helpful during these incontinent years, as is wearing a menstrual cup as a kind of bladder support. You'll need sturdy, high-cut briefs to hold the whole operation together. Apparently the long-term solution to this issue is to do a lot of kegels until your pelvic floor is strong as an ox again. That is exercise, invisible exercise at that, and therefore not my particular maternal domain. (Maternal is the feminine counterpart to avuncular; collecting unusual words actually is in my domain).

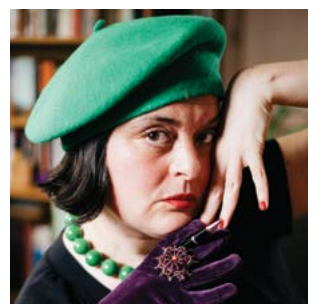
Footwear

Think flat, then think even flatter. Think shoes that actually make you look shorter than you are because they are so wide. Think no laces, no buckles, nowhere for the devil to catch a free ride. There are a couple of kinds of shoes that are weirdly popular, omnipresent even, and maybe you have snubbed them until now because you don't want to look exactly like everyone else from the ankles down—well, it is high time to get over that. These shoes are popular because they are comfortable, and have no tricky mechanisms. No one has time for any of that, especially not the new mother.

In conclusion, gentle readers, we know it takes a village to raise a child, but we must remember it also takes a village to support the new mother. Should you spot one on the street, hair askew with a bit of banana smeared on her forehead, don't get your regular-sized knickers in a twist. Just politely point out the smear and tell her she looks amazing.

66

We know it takes a village to raise a child, but we must remember it also takes a village to support the new mother.

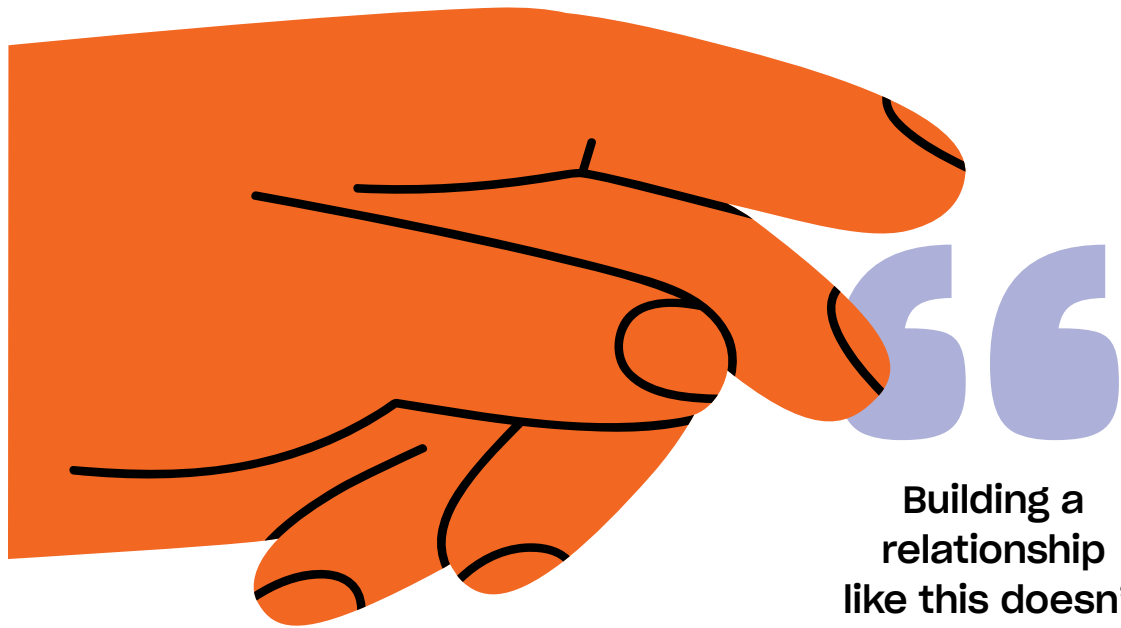


TANTE TALIA has been a mother for almost fourteen years. It is by far the bravest thing she's ever done.

STARTING A CHAIN OF TRUST

Caregiving Outside the Box

STORY BY
CAITLIN NEWEY
ILLUSTRATION BY
VINCENT PEREZ



Building a relationship like this doesn't cost anything but time and patience, and can create a bridge to more formal types of care.

The word “caregiving”

probably conjures up specific ideas for most people: tending to a child, or an elderly person, or someone recovering from an illness or injury. When you hear the word “caregiver”, you might picture a parent, or a personal care worker, or a babysitter, or a nurse. But while those are certainly examples of caregiving, I'd like to challenge the notion that giving care is limited to specific situations and performed by specific people. The reality is, care can be administered by anyone at any time.

In the approximately 18 months I've spent cooking for folks living in and around Belle Park, I've come to develop a relationship with a middle-aged man named Carson*. Carson is affable, witty, and university-educated; he comes from a solid family background, with a medical doctor for a father and an RN for a mother.

Carson also has a long and “well-practiced” history of drug use, and has been using crystal meth for the past dozen or so years. Regardless of the method of consumption, there are many awful side effects of crystal meth, including the fact that it takes a serious toll on your immune system; cuts or scrapes that would otherwise resolve quickly and easily become open wounds that take months to heal, if they ever do. This can result in serious infections and, in worst case scenarios, amputation of the affected limb.

Since well before we met, Carson's legs have been swollen and red, occasionally developing sores. Once we'd established a trusting relationship, I started casually but frequently suggesting that maybe we might take a trip to the hospital together to get his legs looked at; every offer was met with polite resistance. I've learned, through conversations with multiple people, that visits to the emergency room aren't always straightforward for people living with addiction. I don't mean this as a slight against medical professionals, merely as a statement of fact: sometimes drug users perceive a lack of empathy from hospital staff, which can lead to fear and mistrust when it comes to accessing healthcare.

However, early in the new year, Carson's legs reached a state which caused him great pain, and he finally acquiesced to getting help. However, he was still extremely hesitant to go to the hospital. Because of his history of drug use and his lack of a family doctor, he was able to see a nurse practitioner at the Street Health Centre (SHC) on Barrack Street. So one day Carson and I met up at the lunch tent in Belle Park, and together we drove to the SHC.

Carson allowed me to accompany him into his actual appointment. The nurse practitioner, like all of the SHC staff with whom I've interacted, was warm, gentle, and patient. He did not press Carson about the obvious cause of his leg wounds, and when Carson did disclose his use of crystal meth, the information was met with absolutely no judgement. While with the nurse practitioner, Carson and I discussed Catalyst, a local incentive-based program to help those addicted to crystal meth get off the drug. Carson is tired of his lifestyle and wants to change, and so he had an intake appointment for the program and, at the time of writing, is currently awaiting an admission call. To note: although crystal meth creates no physical dependency, it is HIGHLY addictive—this means that getting sober relies solely on the user's willpower, unlike substances such as opioids or nicotine, which have medically-developed aids to assist with quitting (for example, methadone or nicotine patches).

I'm so thrilled at the path Carson is on, and proud of the part I played in it. At the end of the day, all I really did was make one phone call, and drive one person to one place, which may not sound like much—however, I can assure you that these relatively simple actions have made a difference to Carson. I know this because he told me so himself, sharing with me that he has not had someone care for him like that in a very long time. He's not the only one who feels that way; indeed, Carson's story is one of many similar ones of which I could have written.

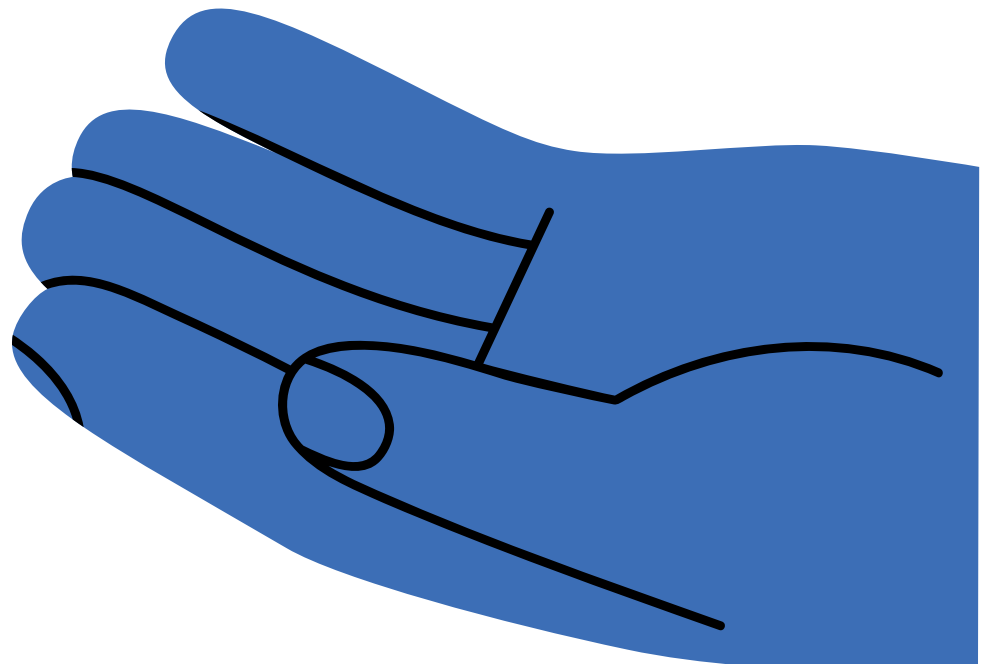
And while the specific things I described in this article might be small, they're all part of a bigger picture. Cooking for the people in Belle Park has enabled me to start building mutual trust and connection with people for whom these things are a rare commodity. Building a relationship like this doesn't cost anything but time and patience, and can create a bridge to more formal types of care, like healthcare and addiction programs. As an added bonus, I know that if I can start that chain of trust and care, if I can reach down and help someone up, they can then in turn help someone else up, who can help someone else, and on we go until “caregiving” isn't relegated to specific professions or demographics, but instead spreads to giving care to all of those around us.

I see this as a new way forward, and I think we can do it. Together.

*A pseudonym was used by his request



CAITLIN NEWEY is a many-talented, compassionate being who lives in the Kingscourt neighbourhood.



GROWING PAINS

STORY BY
HAZEL TAYLOR-QUICK

“

It's a form of care rooted in harm-reduction, where they're putting faith in their child to grow, rather than to comply.

HAZEL TAYLOR-QUICK

is an 18-year old zine-maker, canoe-tripper and chicken-enthusiast. In life, they enjoy savouring the mundane, from the beauty of dust bunnies, to the first sip of warm tea, to the final notes of a good song.



ur childhood evolution is a well documented one. Infants. Toddlers. Preschoolers. Pre-Teens. Teenagers. We can attest to the markings on door frames, exclamations of how much we've grown and what young adults we are turning into. Just as we're changing at the fastest rate of our lives, the task of parenting an ever-evolving person also requires a gradual shift of its own. Figuring out how to parent a near-adult seems to be one of the hardest transitions to pull off smoothly.

But I'm a teenager myself, not a parent, and I only just moved out of the house (which I'll admit does bring a new perspective on the weirdness of one's upbringing). So I'll call this article speculative non-fiction, as I yammer on about parenting, while having never done it myself.

I'm not completely in the dark though; when I started this article I was tasked with bringing the "teenage perspective" to parenting, and I interviewed dozens of teenagers on their thoughts. Initially, I was trying to get funny, quotable lines that I could gather into a comedic piece. When I worked at a summer camp,

one kid told me that when she becomes a mom, she wants to be "like Batman." You know, the classic maternal figure: Batman. But when I asked my peers what advice they'd give future parents, or what they'd be like as adults, I was met with long pauses, and then, "I'd want to support my kid in whatever they do", or "no matter what mistakes they make, I'd want them to know I love them." They all seemed to give me genuine, thoughtful answers, informed by their current frustrations with teenage-hood.

Where were my punchlines?

So I tried asking thought-provoking questions: where are the sources of tension? What kind of relationship do you think you will have with your parents as an adult? What would be the most challenging part of parenting?

Answers to these typically fell into one of two categories: clichés or hyper-specific insights that, if published, would certainly be defamatory.

Here's the gist of the rifts (without damaging any of my friends' relationships): us teens feel like we're treated like children. Technology. Tattoos. They are sending mixed messages. Piercings. Partners. *If you want to be treated like an adult, start acting like one.* Independence. *They don't trust me.*

But the interviews also clarified a common parenting tactic in moments of tension: appealing to parental authority. It's acceptable, if not necessary, for parenting a preschooler, but if you try that on anyone over the age of ten, you risk damaging your relationship while trying to protect them. I've watched parents set ultimatums for their kids, relying on financial, emotional, or material power. But the choice to die on a hill and hurt the relationship, rather than let their kid make a mistake, seems to backfire more frequently the older we get.

I was lucky in this regard. My parents rarely, if ever, did this. I don't remember when I started calling my parents by their first names, I think it was before first grade. But rest assured, I have been told it's weird. In fact, I only continue to learn how abnormal my anarchistic parents' approach to parenting was. I recently realized that intentionally lowering the power differentials in parent-kid relationships was not fundamental to many teenagers' experience.

I think it's because of my parents' ability to make the transition so smoothly to my teenage years that they are able to support me so thoroughly. They trusted their kid, not that I wouldn't make mistakes, but that I am resilient enough to learn from the consequences. It's a form of care rooted in harm-reduction, where they're putting faith in their child to grow, rather than to comply. Make sure you go pee after sex. Don't mix Tylenol and alcohol. They won't burn any bridges over a given decision, which allows them to stay as supportive adults. I trust them.

There are innumerable words for the phases of childhood, yet there are remarkably few for distinguishing the stages of parenting. Gendered equivalents, and a couple of synonyms like "caregiver" and "guardian" are all that we're working with. But parenting an infant isn't the same as being a parent to a 30-year old. Even between the beginning and end of high school, the task changes with the kid. It's a challenge to detransition from being responsible for your child's wellbeing, and tethers often break in these teenage years as both kid and parent change how they relate to each other.

Unfortunately, there is no call to action for new vocabulary, no step-by-step guide or hyper-specific insights to spark debate here. There are only fragments of observations and a thank you letter to my own parents. You guys nailed it.

THE DINOSAURS AMONG US

STORY AND
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
HILBERT BUIST

PICTURED: Eastern Musk Turtle



HILBERT BUIST is a part-time pastry cook at Pan Chanco Bakery, part-time nature guide at Wintergreen Studios and assists in land restoration projects.



I am standing on the shore of Kingston's Inner Harbour watching two male apex predators grapple in the shallow marshy waters. Sharp claws lock boney armour; long spiny tails cut the air. Massive heads sway back and forth. Gaping hooked beaks snap viciously. The water roils. Two dinosaurs fight for the best territory and the best females. It is spring and the snapping turtles have awakened.

The oldest ancestor of turtles was Eunosaurus, a lizard-like creature with a small head and wide body, who lived 260 million years ago. Snapping turtles appeared in the late cretaceous period, 90 million years ago, along with tyrannosauruses, triceratops and velociraptors. When a cataclysmic asteroid killed three quarters of all animals, the snapping turtles were spared. Their survival was likely due to their relatively small size—and low metabolic rate—allowing them to endure long periods of low oxygen and food. Today, in their annual brumation, snapping turtles survive six months of ice, water, and mud. Little has changed.

But snapping turtles aren't the only modern-day dinosaurs found in the Inner Harbour. Five of Ontario's eight native turtle species are found here: Blanding's, Common Snapping, Eastern Musk, Northern Map and Midland Painted. Of these five, Blanding's is considered a threatened species, while snapping, musk, and maps are species of concern. Only the painted turtle is not at risk in Ontario, though it is listed as a species of concern across Canada.

Having survived millions of years of evolution, continent formation, extinction events, and glaciers, how is it that turtles have ended up as species at risk?

The problem is us.

The challenges turtles face include: habitat loss due to urban expansion and fragmentation, changes to shorelines, road mortality, harvesting for the pet trade and human consumption, boat propeller mortality, fishing bycatch, pollution, and climate change. Urbanization brings turtles and predators closer together. Dogs, coyotes, skunks, crows, and raccoons prey on eggs and hatchlings. It's tough to be a turtle.

Snapping turtles do not begin to breed until they are between 15 and 20 years old. It is only by beating great odds that one will grow to sexual maturity and lay eggs. Josef Beeby says, "So how many eggs does a snapping turtle need to lay to get just one baby to

survive to adulthood? About 1,400." Slow maturity and high predation of young means it could take 59 years to replace one adult turtle.

One warm rainy day in June, I followed a female snapping turtle along a gravelly trail at a painfully slow pace. Thirty minutes had already gone by. To my relief, she stopped and began to dig. But she decided this was not a place for a nest, and moved once more. Two metres and twenty minutes later she began to dig again. After an hour she had dug the perfect nest and began to lay eggs. With her back claws, she carefully felt each descending egg. I knelt, entranced by the care of ancient motherhood with sharp digger claws. This would be the only moment of tenderness she would experience for her offspring. Without even turning to look at the eggs, she filled the hole and slowly walked back to the harbour. Her motherhood ended here. After two or three months, assuming the eggs are not eaten, the hatchlings would make a perilous journey, without the mother's protection. I marked the location of the nest to return later so it could be protected from predatory animals.

The turtles in Kingston have a new threat. The federal government's sediment management project (SMP), slated to begin in 2027 for the Inner Harbour, will see dredging or capping of contaminated sediment. The plan calls for changes to the shoreline, as well as the shallow waters where turtles live, hunt, and overwinter.

The SMP has engaged a study into the turtle population for the last three years. Media services for Transport Canada says the data are set to be released this fall. "This additional data collection is required to refine measures taken in order to mitigate potential effects to turtles and also assists to determine where future dredging and capping may take place."

HOW TO HELP AN INJURED TURTLE

- 1 Ensure that they are injured and the injury is new—look for fresh blood
- 2 Don't assume they are dead just because they are not moving
- 3 Don't remove unharmed turtles from the area
- 4 Take them to a local vet that participates in our trauma program or directly to Sandy Pines
- 5 Do not give them food or put them in water
- 6 Carry in a well-ventilated container with a lid
- 7 Record the precise location where you found them
- 8 Even dead turtles may have eggs to recover in May–July

Find out more at [TurtlesKingston.com](https://www.turtleskingston.com)

Having the odds stacked against them, how can turtles survive human interference?

The solution is you!

Learn all you can about turtles. Ask questions! Get involved! In Kingston, two organizations support and advocate for turtles: Friends of Kingston Inner Harbour and Turtles Kingston.

Last year, Turtles Kingston reported, "Our downtown Kingston monitoring site had its best year yet with 100 turtle nests protected by 16 volunteers!" This year you could be one of those volunteers. Plan to take part in their annual Turtle Awareness Day on Saturday May 30 at 10 am at Lake Ontario Park.

Save a turtle! Save a dinosaur!

For All I Care



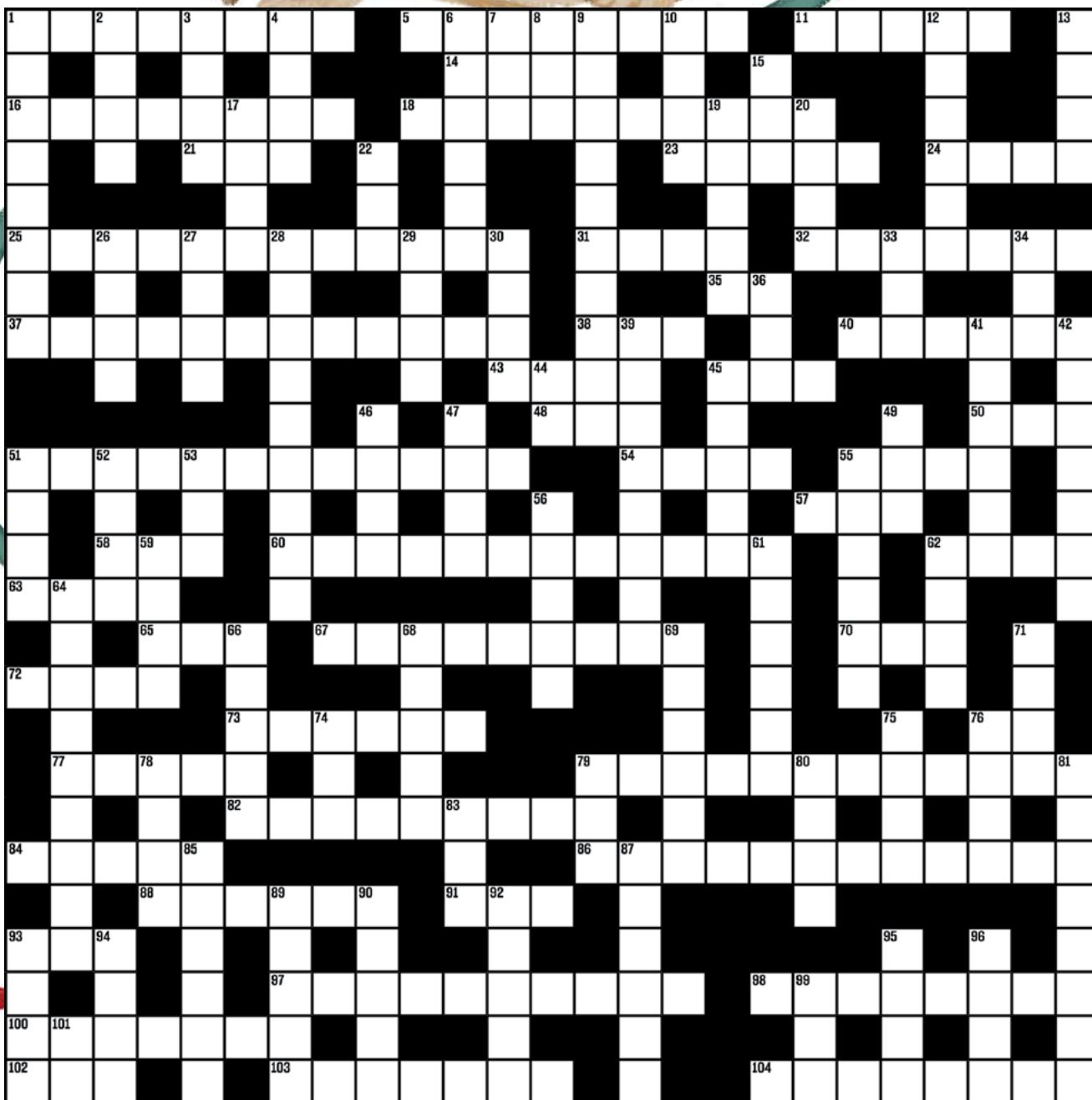
PUZZLE BY **HALEY SARFELD**
ILLUSTRATIONS BY **JILL GLATT**

ACROSS

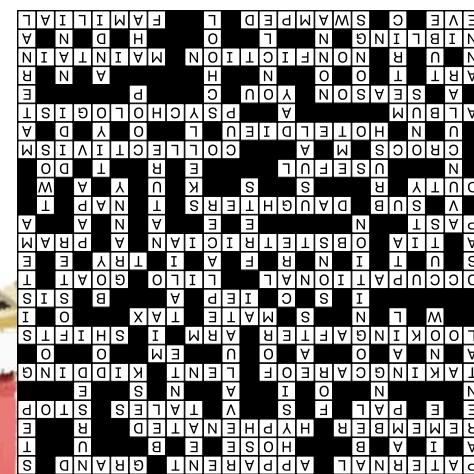
- 1 Fatherly
- 5 We thought having kids would be easy, but the challenges soon became ____
- 11 Thousand, colloquially
- 14 Garden-watering apparatus
- 16 Recollect
- 18 Surname Taylor-Quick, for example
- 21 Buddy, friend
- 23 My grandfather loves to tell tall ____
- 24 "____! In the Name of Love"
- 25 Per Bachman-Turner Overdrive, ____ business requires working overtime (3 words)
- 31 This spring, I'll stop borrowing things from people and not giving them back; it's the vice I'm giving up for ____
- 32 Joking, goofing around
- 35 Dorothy's auntie
- 37 Synonym for 25 across (2 words)
- 38 "Can you lend me a hand?" "I'll lend you a whole ____"
- 40 Petticoats or work hours
- 43 Check ____
- 45 A vacancy ____ could help mitigate the housing crisis
- 48 Spec ed documentation, in brief
- 50 Feminine counterpart of bro
- 51 Type of therapist who can help with day-to-day activities
- 54 Stitch's adoptive sister
- 55 Could be a nanny or a kid
- 57 Don't ____ my patience
- 58 Spanish aunt
- 60 Doctors who specialize in pregnancy and childbirth
- 62 Britishism for stroller
- 63 It can be difficult to move ____ a traumatic event
- 65 Teacher's replacement
- 67 General store on Patrick Street
- 70 Little snooze
- 72 Obligation
- 73 Handy, helpful
- 76 To-____ list
- 77 Comfortable shoe brand favoured by hospital workers
- 79 When the people own the means of production
- 82 Hospital at the heart of downtown Kingston (2 words)
- 84 A place for keeping photos before the advent of the smartphone
- 86 Mental health professional with a PhD
- 88 Summer, for example
- 91 Second person singular pronoun
- 93 Wherefore ____ thou Romeo?
- 97 Genre of Rebecca Hall's upcoming book featured in this issue
- 98 Keep up
- 100 Gender-neutral neologism for your sibling's kid (not to be confused with taking a little bite)
- 102 Mother of 4 down
- 103 "Want to take a break from work and walk the K&P trail with me?" "I can't, I'm ____"
- 104 Related to being related

DOWN

- 1 Gender-neutral anagram of 1 across
- 2 If we had but world enough and ____
- 3 Accessible entryway feature
- 4 Biblical figure whose brother took care of him, so to speak
- 6 Practitioner of sports medicine, for short
- 7 ____ goes the weasel
- 8 What's left after a fire
- 9 Assess again
- 10 Tidy or interesting
- 12 Breastfed
- 13 Jane Fonda's ____ Aerobics
- 15 The Fresh Prince of ____-Air
- 17 I trim my own fringe; it's better ____ for your buck
- 19 French or German aunt
- 20 NPR's Tiny ____ Concerts
- 22 All ____ one and one ____ all
- 26 Leia: "I love you" Han: "I ____"
- 27 Could be made of keratin or carbon steel wire
- 28 A steampunk-sounding word for thinking
- 29 Don't waste your grocery budget on Uber ____
- 30 Fillable paperwork
- 33 Frequent paternal exclamation on The Simpsons
- 34 Mike Myers' sardonic 90s catchphrase
- 36 ABBA jukebox musical, Mamma ____
- 39 Vegan egg ____? A vegan egg could never do her job!
- 41 ____, Shea, & Sudac
- 42 Music education organization affiliated with Queen's
- 44 Water-guzzling technology, for short
- 45 With 19 down, the Skeleton Press' own agony aunt
- 46 Local Juno-nominated band, The Glorious ____
- 47 "What's the difference between ignorance and apathy?" "I don't know and I don't ____"
- 49 Princess Street shoe store, Heel ____
- 51 Ontario's financial aid program for higher education
- 52 Ford's latest attacks on 51 down
- 53 Acronym for organizers of school fundraisers and events
- 55 What's a Queen's business student's favourite apple? ____ Smith!
- 56 What a guitar does when it's worried
- 59 Size of the spider that climbed up the water spout
- 61 CBC program first hosted by David Suzuki, The ____ of Things
- 62 Madonna hit, "____ Don't Preach"
- 64 Uncleish
- 66 I started taking dental care more seriously after a ____ with gingivitis
- 68 Typical
- 69 Skeleton Park's even sillier nickname, ____ Pelly
- 71 Terrible toddler stage
- 74 Paramedic, abbreviated
- 75 Filipino uncle
- 76 Older sister/cousin in Hindi
- 78 It's our responsibility; the ____ is on us
- 79 You can't pour from an empty one
- 80 Home for a chicken
- 81 My mum's sister's kid is my ____ cousin
- 83 ____light Savings Time
- 85 Canadian indie band and measuring system
- 87 Fishy gathering
- 89 Primary didactic tools of Sesame Street
- 90 Strega ____
- 92 French uncle
- 93 Skeleton Press co-editor, or Matthew and Marilla's charge
- 94 Long hollow cylinder
- 95 "____ will always love you" (2 words)
- 96 Guardian of 54 across
- 99 Exclamation of realization
- 101 Uses 94 down to administer fluids, medication, or blood, for short



HALEY SARFELD AND JILL GLATT are your local cruciverbalist/illustrator dream team.



STUDENTIFICATION IN SKELETON PARK

STORY BY
DAVID MCDONALD



It's no secret that Kingston, like many places in Canada, lacks sufficient affordable housing.

“

But much work remains to be done, and it will take considerable political will in the face of a provincial government that consistently favours developers.

It's a complex problem with many layers, but I'd like to focus on two interconnected elements that disproportionately impact neighbourhoods in the city's core, including our own: housing for students and for long-term residents.

Neither are new problems. For more than half a century, Queen's University has been enrolling more students than it can house. The situation was particularly bad in 1968, when the institution couldn't accommodate all first year students in its residences; Queen's wound up renting a motel and a school bus to shuttle students back and forth. That same year, *The Queen's Journal* reported that several upper year students were unable to secure any housing at all; one of the students interviewed slept on the floor of a co-op after unsuccessfully pursuing 125 housing listings. Others, according to Queen's historian Duncan McDowall, slept in the library and showered at the gym.

In the years since, Queen's has failed to adequately address the situation, even as it increases enrollment—its student population has doubled to 34,000 over the past 25 years, with post-secondary students now accounting for about 20 per cent of Kingston's inhabitants. The lack of housing near and on campus has forced students to move into neighbourhoods further afield. And the circle is widening.

All of this has led to something called studentification, a term that only academics could come up with. It describes what happens when large numbers of post-secondary students move into a neighbourhood, changing the way it looks, feels, and functions.

Rapidly rising rents and property prices are one concern, as homes are converted into student rentals, with landlords charging what the market will bear. High-rise developments on Princess Street have taken some pressure off existing downtown housing stock, but communities continue to be overwhelmed by this growth. The Kingston Whig Standard reported in January that Kingston now has the sixth highest average rent in Canada, and in the past year the average monthly rent for a one-bedroom unit has increased by 14.3 per cent to \$2,000. By contrast, rents in major urban centres across the country dropped during the same time period.

Other concerns associated with studentification in our city are noise, parking shortages, and overcrowding. As some of our neighbourhoods have become monolithic student districts, families have been pushed out and public schools forced to close. Some remaining residents feel out of place in their own neighbourhoods, with an increase in businesses and amenities that are predominantly catering to students. This isn't an issue unique to Kingston, of course. Waterloo and London are two other Ontario cities where students have changed the character of residential neighbourhoods, while Nottingham (UK), Boulder (US) and Melbourne (AU) illustrate studentification's global nature.

The City's response to growing demand for student housing seems to be to let developers build whatever they want, wherever they want. This increasingly includes student-purpose buildings. A 14-storey student tower is going up at Queen and Barrie Streets, and there is a request for by-law amendments to allow a 16-storey student dormitory one block south on the former Blockbuster site that's currently officially zoned for four storeys.

We are told that “any housing is good housing” because of Kingston's relatively low vacancy rates. This argument does not hold water. Developers converting old-stock homes to student housing are increasingly absentee financiers with no roots in the area. This is even more pronounced with student-purpose high rises. These firms take prime land and municipal resources while driving up the costs of housing for students with market-based pricing. They do not contribute to affordable housing, nor do they build public amenities, off-loading the costs of things like park improvements onto the City and full-time residents.

While student housing (or lack thereof) has been a long-standing issue in Kingston, it's recently been gaining more attention from politicians. Kingston and the Islands Member of Provincial Parliament Ted Hsu spoke about it in the legislature at Queen's Park last December, saying, “It's no surprise that studentification, expansion of a homogeneous student housing area around post-secondary institutions like Queen's, has been pushing families out directly contributing to urban sprawl.”

In early February of this year, Kingston City Council passed a motion to develop a Student Housing Strategy, which will work to improve student housing through zoning tools, density permissions, built-form guidelines, and partnerships with public institutions, and the private sector. This is something that's been called for by all five neighbourhood associations adjacent to the Queen's campus. “A student housing strategy is about building community and partnership,” says Sydenham District Councillor Conny Glenn, who brought forth the motion. “Post-secondary institutions, the City, developers, and neighbourhoods all have a role to play. Kingstonians want a more affordable, balanced housing market and recognizing student constituent housing need is an important part of achieving that goal.”

But much work remains to be done, and it will take considerable political will in the face of a provincial government that consistently favours developers.

One proposal is to focus on high-rise student-purpose buildings on or immediately adjacent to the campus. This would protect our diverse, vibrant downtown. Toronto Metropolitan University has done this, using money from the Build Ontario Fund to invest in affordable student housing on their campus. Yet Queen's and the City of Kingston have been hesitant to embrace this creative approach; hopefully that will change.

This is a complicated and emotive issue that will require careful thought and investment. In the meantime, it's okay to fight for safe, affordable housing for long-term residents while resisting the effects of studentification. We are all better off with a plan that addresses both concerns simultaneously.



DAVID MCDONALD
is a long-time resident of Skeleton Park.

PICTURED: Proposed high-rise building for the corner of Clergy and Queen Streets. Rendering via Campus Suites Urban Design Study, City of Kingston documents.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO CARE FOR YOUR COMMUNITY?

Informed and engaged citizens are integral to the planning process

STORY BY
ANDREA GUMMO
ILLUSTRATIONS BY
GRACE DIXON

As an urban planner,



ANDREA GUMMO is a Registered Professional Planner with over 15 years' experience in provincial and municipal government. Now consulting, she specializes in land-use policy, development applications, heritage conservation and inclusive public participation.

I think one of the most meaningful ways to show care for your community is by engaging with planning processes, learning about these processes and the values that underlie them, and providing your informed input to decision makers. Not only does this participation support and guide change in the built form of our community, it strengthens our shared democracy and builds community connections.

When I was contemplating going to planning school at Queen's University, the deciding factor was the ethical basis of the profession. As a second-generation planner, I knew that it could be a challenging but rewarding calling. But what really helped me make up my mind up was the code of ethics that all professional planners agree to follow. Like so many of my neighbours here in Kingston, I wanted to make a positive difference in my community because I care.

In Ontario, the code that regulates registered planners is called the Code of Practice. The primary responsibility in the code is to the "public interest". This means that planners are duty-bound to recommend what is best for everyone, as a collective. The Code says:

"Members have a primary responsibility to define and serve the interests of the public. This requires the use of theories and techniques of planning that inform and structure debate, facilitate communication, and foster understanding."

The Code continues, "Accordingly, a Member shall: (1.1) practice in a manner that respects the diversity, needs, values and aspirations of the public and encourages discussions on these matters".

This means not only that a planner must consider what is in the public's best interest, but that they must communicate with the public to verify or challenge those assumptions. They must seek out information and input from members of the public. Planners are required to "encourage discussion", and therefore are not permitted to shut down dialogue or debate.

The Code also compels members to "identify and promote opportunities for meaningful participation in the planning process to all interested parties."

This means that planners must seek out opportunities for communicating with the public, and that simply checking a box is not enough. Public participation must be meaningful. In my experience, this requires some back-and-forth, and it takes time.



When I work with citizen groups, the first thing I usually hear is some version of: "We don't want to be NIMBYs, but..." followed by multiple legitimate, well-reasoned concerns about planning issues. Concern for one's neighbourhood and community is not NIMBYism, despite the definition in the Canadian Oxford Dictionary as "a person who objects to unwanted groups or developments appearing in his or her neighbourhood." NIMBY, which stands for "not in my back yard", implies that an objector is wholly self-interested in a way that opposes the public interest.

Of course, it is entirely possible for a neighbour to object to a proposal on public interest grounds. Most of the citizens who I've worked with over the course of my career have had an excellent understanding of this bigger picture, and have actively advocated in its favour. Oftentimes, it is the people who care about a location that provide the most in-depth understanding of its best use. The people who live in a neighbourhood know what makes it special, why they choose to live there, and what changes could potentially threaten its sense of place.

Owing to the wide dissemination of her ideas around urbanism, Jane Jacobs is popularly recalled as a planner. In fact, Jacobs was a community advocate and a vocal critic of the planning profession's approaches in the 1960s. The goals that planners were trying to achieve then often had an undue negative impact on communities, and the built form of cities. One such goal was called "urban renewal", which involved the razing and rebuilding of neighbourhoods that amounted to an extreme form of government-imposed gentrification, resulting in the displacement of communities and the loss of heritage character. Now, in planning, we think that she was right and we are grateful for her advocacy and her impact on the profession.



“In the planning world, there is no “us versus them”. Planning is a collaborative process.”

The use of the term NIMBY, often a way to shame people for advocating for their communities, has had a chilling effect on public participation. Such derogatory terms become a way to polarize community debates into “us versus them”. In the planning world, however, there is no “us versus them”. Planning is a collaborative process.

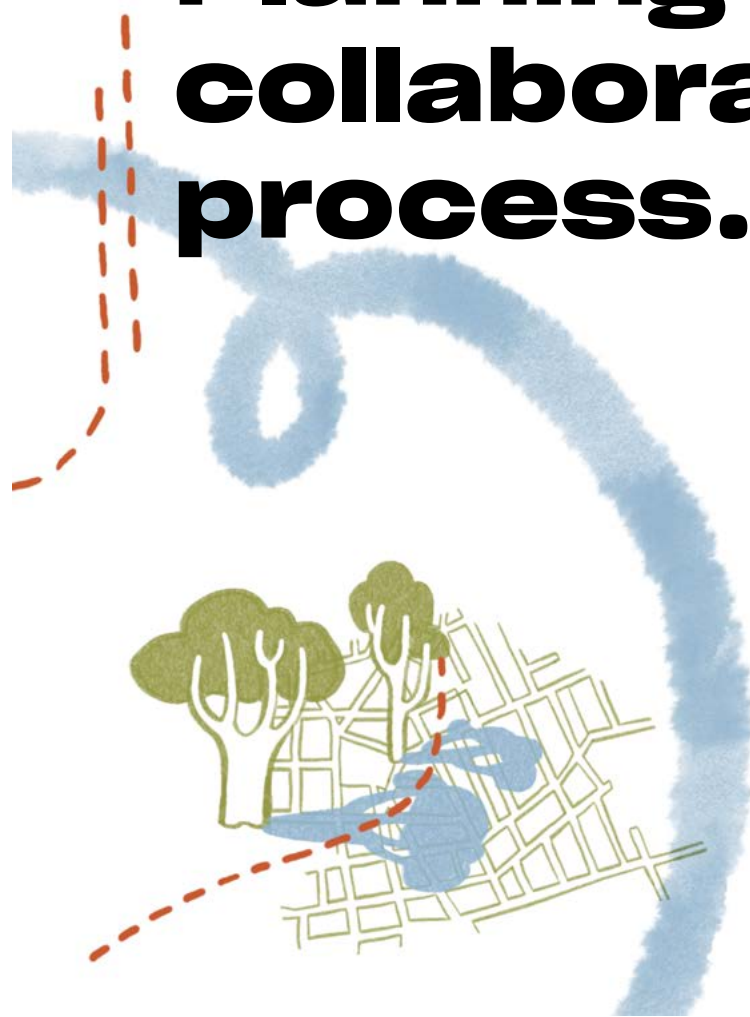
The City of Kingston Public Engagement Charter states that “the involvement of Kingston residents in the City’s decision-making process is vital to democracy.”

This is true, and it has never felt so true as it does in today’s contentious North American political landscape. Our Canadian democracy is a foundation on which all of us build our lives, but it is not guaranteed. It requires regular maintenance and care, and must be continually strengthened to ensure principles of accountability, transparency and openness are upheld.

It is imperative that people engage with the decision making process, that people are informed and aware of how decisions that affect their communities are made, and that they are able to seek out good information to support their voting decisions at election time. Our next municipal election is this fall, on October 26, 2026.

In the new and revised edition of “Kingston: Building on the Past for the Future” by Osborne & Swainson, published in 2011, the late Dr. Brian Osborne concludes this excellent book with some questions:

Concerned citizens in the 1980s were bothered about civic decisions made in the 1950s and 1960s, decisions that led to aesthetic and social imbalances. What judgement will the citizens of the mid-twenty-first century make of the leaders and planners of the next decade? Did they, in adequate ways, consider the future? *And did we, the citizens of this place, participate effectively in helping them make those decisions?*



Just as planners are responsible for facilitating meaningful public participation, citizens are responsible for informed engagement. Over the course of my career, I’ve noticed that the most effective participants tend to have the following in common:

They are informed. These citizens ask questions, seek out information, and spend time understanding complicated processes that they may be encountering for the first time.

They are open to new perspectives. These citizens listen, take in new information, trust but verify responses from public bodies, and consider the bigger picture of the common good.

They are respectful and persistent. It can help to consider that when the process is working as it is supposed to, there really are no “sides” in the planning process, just different viewpoints working together for better outcomes. It can take patience and persistence to ensure consultation is undertaken meaningfully, especially when processes stretch over long time periods.

Through the public’s engagement in planning processes, I have seen public participation lead to strengthened community connections, and greater education and awareness of civic issues. I have seen people’s quality of life increase due to better decision-making that considers diverse viewpoints. I have seen democratic principles of accountability, transparency and openness protected and strengthened.

As a planner, I am thankful for the Skeleton Park community’s awareness, engagement, and care while participating in planning processes intended to manage change in the neighbourhood. I hope that this will continue, that more people will become involved, and that we can all work together to care for our community.



A NEIGHBOUR'S VIEW

Affordable Housing Needs Care to Succeed

PICTURED: 381 Bagot Street

STORY BY **JO REYNOLDS**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
BIANCA CINDRIC-MYERS

“

**Too often,
housing policy
is shaped
by market
demand rather
than human
need.**



JO REYNOLDS (they/them) lives in the neighbourhood with their family, where you'll find them out walking their dog Juno, or stopping to chat with neighbours. They volunteer with the Friends of Providence Commons working group and the Kingston Community Foundation, spending their days in community finance and social innovation working with communities to realize big ideas.

I have been following recent media coverage about the chronic challenges at 381 Bagot Street, a social housing building labelled “Trauma Tower” by one of the residents in a CBC article published on December 16, 2025; she described spending winter nights in her car because it didn't feel safe to come home. This is just one of many distressing tenant stories, and it's clear that there are serious issues at play, yet I am concerned by the tenor of this reporting and believe the situation calls for deeper understanding.

381 Bagot sits across from the Artillery Park Aquatic Centre and is run by the Kingston Frontenac Housing Corporation (KFHC). It looks pleasant enough from the outside, with a warm red brick exterior and well-sized balconies. But police were called there more than 360 times in 2025, making it the residential address with the highest number of calls in the city. These figures are striking, but they are a symptom, not a story in themselves; they reveal a serious lack of adequately-funded supportive care for people with complex mental health and addiction needs. Human struggles are unfolding in hallways, stairwells, and in the building's apartments, leading to situations escalating without the right interventions.

It is important to acknowledge the fear and unease experienced by tenants and nearby residents. Safety is a fundamental need, and communities rightly expect responses that protect everyone. But lasting safety cannot be achieved through enforcement alone. When housing is not adequately supported by health and social services, homes can become sites of repeated crisis rather than places of stability. We can and must collectively do better.

The good news is that there are some promising models that show how housing and supportive care can work better together. In Ontario, organizations such as Indwell and Flourish, which build and operate affordable and supportive housing, demonstrate how af-

ordable housing paired with on-site health and social supports can create stability for people with complex needs while improving safety for residents and neighbours alike. Free resources, like the Institute of Southern Georgian Bay's Affordable Housing Toolkit, are available to communities and demonstrate the value of local collaboration, shared learning, and community-led solutions. Toronto's Dunn House is Canada's first social medicine housing project and was developed in partnership with Toronto's University Health Network, whose president and CEO, Dr. Kevin Smith, describes it as “integrated with social services ... integrated with health care ... [and] integrated with economic supports and behavioural supports.”

These approaches reinforce an important point for Kingston that when housing, health, and community partners work together, and when solutions are shaped by local context, better outcomes are possible for everyone. Any effective response must also centre the voices of people with lived experience who bring valued insights. When people are meaningfully involved in shaping solutions, supports are more likely to be effective and trusted.

It is important to recognize the dedication of the City of Kingston and the professionals working across housing, health, and social services who are grappling with these challenges daily. Many are testing new approaches, building partnerships, and working across silos in an effort to respond more effectively. An example of an integrated services model of shared care offered by the City of Kingston is the Queen Mary Road project, which aims to create a systems approach to support residents living in the transitional housing program; it brings together primary healthcare, transitional housing, and community-based programming that is committed to the social determinants of health. This project is in partnership with Home Base, which currently operates 96 units in their Adult Supportive Housing program across fourteen Kingston locations and is a lead organization for One Roof, a community centre with wrap-around services supporting youth in the community.

Too often, housing policy is shaped by market demand rather than human need. A safe and decent place to live is a human right, yet housing instability remains, something that's deeply stressful and often traumatic. Access to housing is frequently beyond an individual's control, shaped instead by inadequate wages, policy choices, and gaps in public supports. When healthcare is inaccessible, addictions are untreated, and poverty deepens, there are consequences not only in individual lives but across the entire community.

As a neighbour, I want safe streets, secure homes, and a community where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. I believe if we use our collective imaginations we can change how we improve our systems. We'll do better with sustained investment in public services that uphold dignity and share responsibility across systems and governments.

These grinding issues are not inevitable. They're not someone else's problem. With people willing to vote and stay involved, we can add pressure on political leadership. Provincial and federal governments share responsibility for housing, health, and social care. They must be pressed to act with urgency and better coordination. The path forward is not to turn away, but to lean in together.

Perhaps the KFHC put it best in their statement for a followup article published by the CBC on December 18, 2025: “Landlords cannot replace clinicians. Eviction is not treatment. Policing is not care. Without sustained provincial investment... these situations will continue to repeat themselves across Ontario.”

Affordable housing matters. Supportive care matters. And every person living in our community deserves both.

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE SAFETY AT COMMUNITY EVENTS

STORY BY **JENNIFER ASHTON (LIESEN)** ILLUSTRATION BY **VINCENT PEREZ**



66
Remain alert to your environment, look after your and your neighbours' well-being, be aware of support and services available on-site, identify and connect with friendly SPAF volunteers to help guide any concerns.

Community events like the Skeleton Park Arts Festival (SPAF) are fun for everyone involved, but they can contain unique stressors that impact how people might experience them. Large crowds, loud noises, bright lights, and intense weather conditions have the potential to increase sensory discomfort, overstimulate, and overwhelm the nervous system. This could lead to feelings of anxiety or panic, racing heart, shortness of breath, confusion, agitation, fatigue, dysregulation, disorientation, or difficulty coping—not things you want to experience during a fun summer outing!

Substance use can add another layer to an already complex scenario, exacerbating physical and mental health challenges. While many community gatherings, including SPAF, encourage a substance-free family-oriented atmosphere, it is, of course, impossible to prevent attendees from consuming controlled substances prior to their arrival or when they step away from the event site. So these substances can still impact people in the event space, even when they're formally discouraged.

All of this is why mental health literacy is important when it comes to community events, and thankfully there is increasing understanding of this fact. Everyone should have some knowledge about understanding, preventing, recognizing, and addressing mental health and substance use concerns – this is essential for promoting the safety and well-being of all participants. It's also beneficial for events to have professionals and volunteers on-site who are trained in recognizing and offering assistance for anyone experiencing psychological or substance-related distress.

As part of an ongoing mental health initiative, SPAF is invested in increasing accessibility of services for vulnerable and underserved persons, so that every community member feels welcomed and supported at the festival. That's why for this year's festival, SPAF has partnered with Addiction & Mental Health Services - Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox, & Addington (AMHS - KFLA), a local non-profit organization that delivers integrated community-based mental health, addiction, and housing services.

Being present at community events like SPAF allows organizations like AMHS - KFLA to engage in conversations, share information, and offer resources that aim to reduce stigma around mental health and substance use, which are key to

advancing awareness in our community. The AMHS - KFLA crisis team will be easily identified by agency signage and logo-embossed t-shirts, to ensure efficient communication and responsive action. Festival-goers, volunteers, or anyone sharing the space are encouraged to reach out to ask questions, connect with resources, and access immediate support.

There's also the Canadian Ski Patrol - Frontenac Zone, who have worked with SPAF for many years to support physical safety throughout the festival weekend. Trained patrollers can be found on-site in a bright red tent located at the north end of the park; they're available to administer first aid support for anyone in need. Michelle Kehoe, Ski Patrol Special Events Director, has worked with SPAF for many years and recognizes the important impact the festival has on the community. Kehoe, who encourages services, education, and support to reduce stigma associated with substance use, has also previously volunteered with festival programming held at the Integrated Care Hub (ICH), a local resource offering low-barrier access to basic-need services, resting space, and other supports.

Another hand on deck is Jill Glatt, SPAF Volunteer Coordinator and Board President; she works closely with the Board of Directors and staff to ensure that the festival is able to meet the increasing needs of the community. Glatt recognizes that heat, lack of shelter, dehydration, sound, and activity may contribute to a person experiencing distress; knowing the signs and offering a welcoming presence, active listening, compassionate and non-judgemental understanding, and connection to resources work to mitigate mental health concerns. She's encouraged by the dedicated involvement of valued community partners and volunteers, and their availability to respond promptly and effectively.

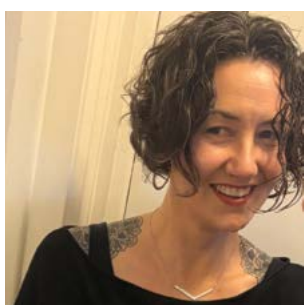
These important partners share a collective vision of compassion, respect, equality, and accountability for delivering supports that foster empowerment and contribute to positive health and well-being for all. They are committed to providing inclusive, accessible, and collaborative programming at SPAF that serves the diverse needs of all Katarokwi / Kingston community members.

In addition to all of this, the 2026 festival will feature a calming tent: a quiet space away from loud noise and overwhelming crowds to rest, decompress, regulate, and recharge. The tent will include soft lighting, comfortable seating, and calming sensory items and activities. Calming zones at community events support mental well-being, prevent sensory overload, provide shelter from the elements, build connections, and promote inclusivity, thereby enhancing attendees' experience.

On-site mental health support and calming spaces at festivals promote crisis prevention and intervention, and positive mental wellness; they also build resilience, reduce stigma, and provide mental health and substance use resources and connection to services. This work, done by agencies and SPAF volunteers collaborating throughout festival planning and programming, reinforces best practice for community events.

How can you help? Remain alert to your environment, look after your and your neighbours' well-being, be aware of support and services available on-site, identify and connect with friendly SPAF volunteers to help guide any concerns.

Robin Witzke, Clinical Program Manager of Crisis & Intake Services at AMHS - KFLA, notes that music and the creative arts can be helpful tools in supporting positive mental health. So let's start from that encouraging baseline and do our part to promote a safe and happy festival for all.



JENNIFER ASHTON (LIESEN) is a Registered Psychotherapist in Kingston, a resident of the Skeleton Park neighbourhood, and SPAF volunteer.

The Skeleton Park Yard Sale and Block Party reimagines neighbourhood streets as impactful community spaces

September 20th was a special day in the neighbourhood last fall, as members of the community hosted the first annual Skeleton Park Yard Sale and Block Party. You probably noticed the positive energy flowing through the streets as neighbours listened to the sound of climate activists marching to the beat of the Goat Steppers, set up tables to sell pre-loved goods, congregated with old friends on Charles Street, met new ones, and took in the food, music, and activities available. The event offered creative ways to celebrate sustainability, civic action, and the arts, all while growing and strengthening community connections.

So how does an event like this come together? Well, it was a true merging of the minds as neighbours gathered for impromptu dinners in the park, attended neighbourhood association meetings, coordinated with Skeleton Park Art Festival (SPAF) staff and board members, and exchanged emails and messages.

As she reflected on the origin of the event, Kate Thomas, Coordinator of the McBurney Park Neighbourhood Association, explained how the power of neighbourhood connection really came alive for her and others at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when live music events were performed on local porches. It was the desire to keep those connections alive that planted the seed for a larger block party.

Around this time, Kate had also been chatting with Nico Koenig and other members of the Association about the idea of a community-wide yard sale. To help close down the neighbourhood's streets and secure the funds to help make the event happen, Nico brought up the idea of applying for the City of Kingston's Neighbourhood Activation Fund (NAF). As word of the event planning spread, local volunteers with the Elizabeth Fry Society of Kingston, based on Charles Street, shared that the organization was also planning a yard sale in late September, and asked if the events could be connected.

As Kate noted, the ball kept rolling from there. "It was brilliant to see local businesses stepping up [and] agencies diving in to help across generations of people. It was wonderful to hear people [adding] on yoga, games, pop-ups, [and a] movie night. The March for Climate Action was a great energy booster. The appeal [of the event] was in the sparks of energy—it happened spontaneously."

When Nico sent a call out for anyone interested in helping bring these events together, the response was impressive. Around twenty neighbours soon gathered in Elizabeth Fry's W.E. Hub meeting space to plan their next steps. During the meeting, ideas flowed, people volunteered to follow up on tasks, and the next thing we knew, a date had been set, Nico had secured the NAF, and street captains had volunteered to start promoting the event across the neighbourhood.



KATIE FIZZELL (she/her) lives in the Skeleton Park neighbourhood. She and her family are grateful to live in such a vibrant and supportive community.



PICTURED: Graphic for 2026 Skeleton Park Yard Sale and Block Party by Ted Sheppard

Reflecting on the day, Nico shared why he believes so strongly in the power of closing streets, explaining how it makes space for people to wander, exchange, and meet others without pressure: "Whenever I think about what's going wrong in the world, the building block of a solution is always to build more relationships in a community. So, whatever we were doing, it was important that we were just doing something, anything, together."

As part of this exchange, neighbours learned more about the work the Elizabeth Fry Society does to build resiliency and support women in our community. After participating in the Yard Sale and Block Party, Taylor Ward, W.E. Hub Program Coordinator, shared that they had "raised just over \$1000 through food and item sales, raffle draws, and donation boxes," explaining that the money raised would help support women in the community, allowing the Society to "provide monthly meals, educational workshops, and creative activities."

One of the best parts of the event was how the themes of the day seemed to evolve organically. The Seniors for Climate Action Now brought us civic action in the name of building resilient and sustainable communities that can resist the status quo and fight for climate and social justice. Yard sales and vintage clothing pop-ups reinforced the ethos of sustainability by encouraging people to think about how their used items might find a new life. And many of the food vendors who came out were ones that prioritize local farmers and sustainable food systems in their businesses.

These themes were underpinned by the understanding that resilient communities are built upon relationships, ones that are fostered through opportunities to connect with others and learn more about ourselves. The event fostered this crucial understanding in many ways. Neighbours wandered and chatted with each other, playing games and blowing bubbles, taking part in free yoga classes (thank you Surf Shack!), and reconnecting with themselves with the help of local Reiki practitioner and burnout prevention coach Skylar van Rossem. Joy spread throughout the neighbourhood as kids and adults of all ages moved and swayed to the surf and soul sounds of local band Carlo. And of course, for those needing to decompress and relax after an exciting day, the final wander back to Skeleton Park for the longstanding tradition of a SPAF-hosted movie was a wonderful way to end the day in community.

The impact of the event was real. New connections were made, climate action was highlighted, local businesses and organizations were showcased, and streets were reimagined as social spaces.

■ Save the date for the next Skeleton Park Yard Sale and Block Party on September 26, 2026. Have questions? Ideas? Want to get involved? Contact skeletonpark@gmail.com.

BUY NOTHING, BUILD A COMMUNITY

STORY BY
MEREDITH DAULT
ILLUSTRATION BY
JASPER WICKE

“I see people finding the perfect thing, which is so fun to watch. The whole thing feels so nice.”



The response to that first event was immediate. Looking across that crowd, Avery, who founded the plant-based catering company, Knifey Spooney, with her partner Rad Cowan, felt nothing but pride and gratitude for those who had helped her to bring her vision to life.

“I saw friends and neighbours greeting each other, kids losing it when finding out everything was free—actually, people of all ages frequently have the same reaction when finding out the whole point is no money—and kids parting with treasured toys, but getting to feel the joy of seeing them find new homes,” she recalls.

This volunteer-led event now happens nearly every season, with Next Church donating their space, and members of the community donating good quality, clean items that they no longer need. Her favourite thing remains seeing people find something they absolutely love and leaving without spending a dime. “I see people finding the perfect thing, which is so fun to watch. The whole thing feels so nice.”

Avery found her “perfect thing”—a pair of golden Triceratops bookends—at an event that was held after the sudden death of her teenaged child, Kale, in an accident in January 2025. As a young child, Kale, who was involved in organizing the first Buy Nothing event, had carried around a treasured companion dinosaur called Buckbeak. Avery says the bookends became “gilded twins” to that earlier dinosaur. “Finding [them] brought back such warm memories for me, it felt like a love letter from beyond,” she says.

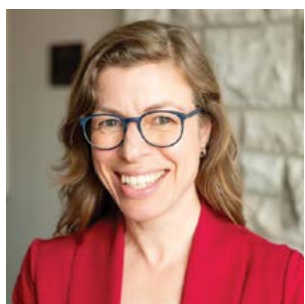
abi lyon wicke, Avery’s fellow co-organizer and a longtime fan of sharing economies, says it’s a feeling of hope for the future that keeps her coming back.

“It’s very hopeful to be in a space where we can all witness that we really can make a difference, take care of one another, meet needs, and build relationships through events like this,” she says. Lyon wicke recalls a recent event where she helped someone sort through a huge pile of bedding and curtains to help her find what she needed to facilitate a blanket exercise, designed to support reconciliation, with a group of Indigenous law students at Queen’s University. “It’s beautiful to see how one community-building project can feed into another and another and another.”

Like Avery, Lyon wicke believes that it is more important than ever to work together against consumerism and a culture that regularly conflates wants with needs. “We need to build each other up in practical and relational ways by getting together and sharing resources, rather than independently buying more and more,” she explains. “We need to eliminate fast fashion and all its appalling ramifications in terms of exploitation of people and the planet as well as garbage generation and pollution. And we need to meet people face to face, get to know them, work with them, share time and space and resources, in order to strengthen our communities.”

Avery wants people to know that building a better world takes all kinds, and that everyone can make a difference. “Start with what you’re good at: it takes all kinds of people and skills in the revolution. Second, we buy way too much stuff and we need very little of it. Buy quality items, less often. And then third, get to know your neighbours. We are all in this together.”

■ To learn more or to get involved, contact knifeyspooneykingston@hotmail.com



MEREDITH DAULT is a writer, stilt-walker, and dancer who has lived in the Skeleton Park neighbourhood for a decade. She regularly wanders the streets and parks with her dog, Frida.

A Buy Nothing event is frequently described as being “like a yard sale, but free”, though this doesn’t quite capture the magic of those put on by an informal neighbourhood collective at Next Church. At their December 2025 event, piles of puzzles teetered next to DVDs, books, and rolls of wrapping paper seeking new homes, while stacks of clothes, stuffed animals, and home appliances also sat waiting to be claimed. An on-site mending station made it easy to repair or modify anything that needed a bit of TLC, and there was also free vegan food available to anyone with an appetite, along with a guest DJ, and plenty of grateful smiles.

Growing in popularity around the world, anti-capitalist Buy Nothing events are designed to welcome people from all walks of life, enabling them to share what they no longer need with members of their communities. Co-organizer Christina Avery’s initial desire to host an event for the Skeleton Park neighbourhood sprang from her own feeling of helplessness in the face of capitalism’s inequities, environmental destruction, and the endless, devastating war in Gaza. It was coming on Christmas in 2024, and she wanted to find a creative way to free herself and her community from the mindless consumption that often accompanies the holiday. But it wasn’t just about the stuff. Avery also felt moved to create an event that would enable her neighbours to connect, with a mind towards building a more supportive, equitable society.

“We were hoping that people in our neighborhood would hear about it, first and foremost so that they could meet each other, share, and build support networks in our community,” she explains. She was particularly thinking of those setting up new households or precariously housed, new to the city, or simply hungry for “an alternate way of existing in community.”

Ablation

Everything broke this February:
our car, the stove, the dishwasher,
the coffee grinder, my anger—
most of all my anger, waves breaking
white over the kids,

and this morning my youngest says,
mommy are you mad at me? are you
sick of me? and the sleet that painted
the sky yesterday is today's

treacherous sidewalk. Later, when
I walk the dog, I balance on the snow
piles that used to be fluff. Everything
hard as concrete: I have to remember
it is only water holding
me up.



SARAH YI MEI TSIANG

is a poet and children's writer
living in the swamp ward.
Her newest picture book,
When the Clouds Came was
released on March 16.

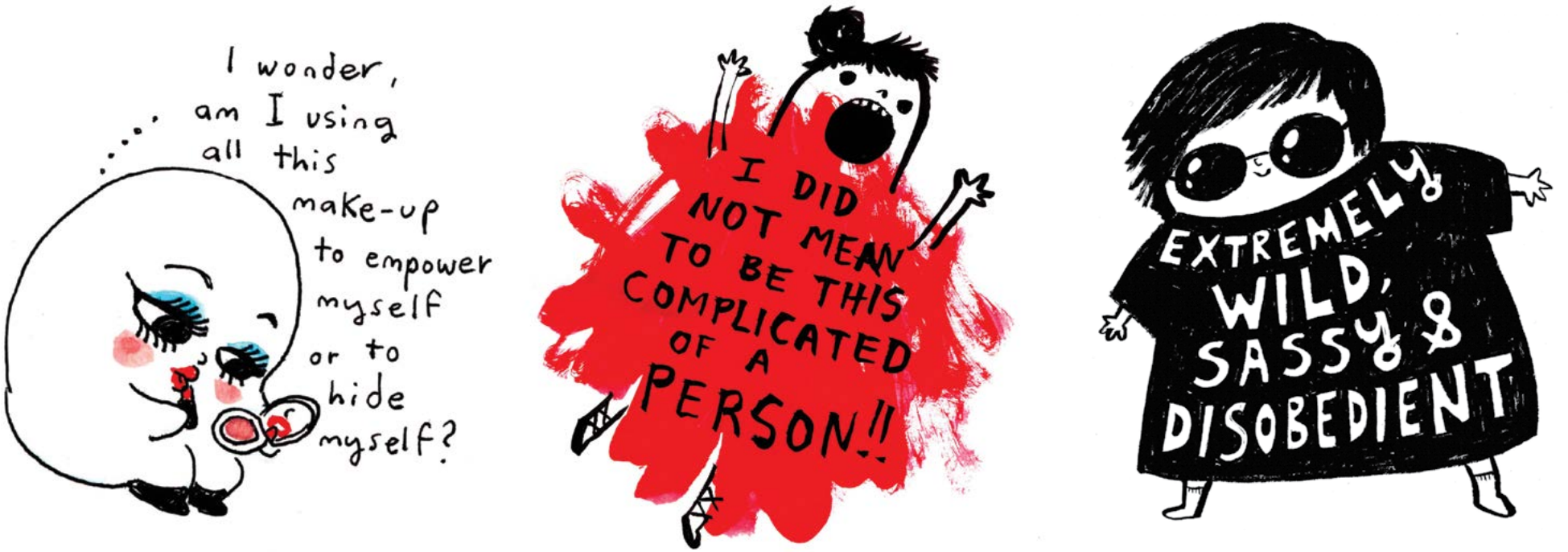
This Be The Verse is *The Skeleton Press's* poetry page. Each issue features an original poem by a local poet, selected (or occasionally written) by Kingston/Katarokwi Poet Laureate **SADIQA DE MEIJER**. Submissions are open for the next issue. Please send up to three poems for consideration to ygkpoetlaureate@gmail.com.

NOWHERE

An excerpt from *Nowhere*, a graphic novel by Jon Claytor, in which 12-year-olds Joel and Charlie find moments of compassion in a town full of monsters.



JON CLAYTOR Book Launch for *Nowhere* (Goose Lane Editions) with Ian Roy, author of *Astrid*, *Aghast* (Gaspereau Press) / Novel Idea (156 Princess St.) June 3, 7:00pm / Free admission, wine and cheese



ANI CASTILLO Exhibit on display indefinitely at the corner of Princess and King Streets / On Instagram @anicastillo

Schmaltz & Pepper at the Isabel



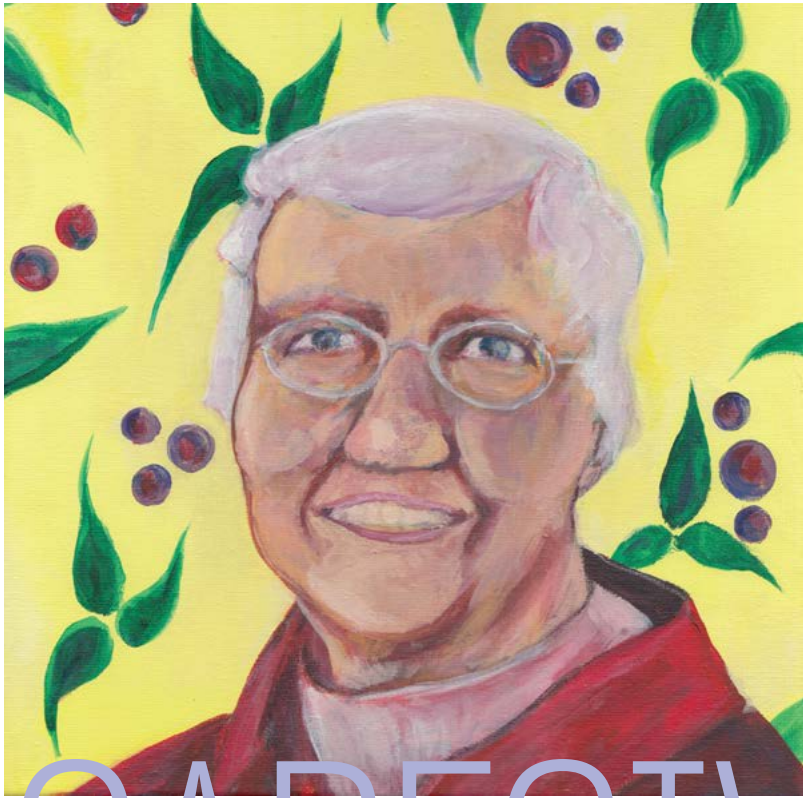
Monday, June 15, 2026 at 7:30pm

Schmaltz & Pepper fuses klezmer, jazz, and classical into bold, high-energy performances. Featuring GRAMMY and JUNO-recognized artists, this must-hear ensemble is redefining contemporary Yiddish music.

Tickets: queensu.ca/theisabel

Tickets from \$35





SISTER PAULINE

TEXT BY **JAMIE SWIFT**
ILLUSTRATION BY **ELISE COOK**

A Sister of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul and former General Superior of that Kingston-based community of religious women. Sr. Pauline has decades of commitment to peace and social justice issues. She is the recipient of the YMCA Peace Medal and Honorary Canon of the Anglican Diocese of Ontario.

CAREGIVER
PORTRAITS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
**LCVI'S CREATIVE
ARTS STUDENTS**

CREATIVE ARTS at LCVI is a three credit, full-day, immersive Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) program for students interested in a career in Art & Design or in further honing their skills as an artist. Assignments in Creative Arts have been developed to meet the requirements for post-secondary applications and provide students with opportunities to build a competitive portfolio and engage in community art events. Creative Arts is open to all grade 11 and 12(+) high school students in Kingston.

Email Tonya Corkey at corkeyto@limestone.on.ca to learn more about this one-of-a-kind opportunity. Limited spots remaining for the Fall 2026 semester.



**LORIE YOUNG &
BRODRICK GABRIEL**

TEXT BY **KAMRYN MARSH**
ILLUSTRATION BY **LWAY LWAY HTOO**

It is always a true gift to run into Lorie. She always greets me with a warmth and depth that soothes my heart. I am so grateful to Lorie for her organizing, advocacy, and care work as a community leader to end the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit People (MMIWG2S+). She has supported so many women and children to heal, survive and thrive after escaping abuse and/or incarceration. She is a kind and generous spirit whose singing, compassion, artisanal creations, and ceremonial offerings have enriched me.

Brodrick has cared for his community in such a variety of rich and profound ways: sharing ceremonies, grass dancing, drumming, advising on caring for Indigenous ancestors, listening deeply to and recording hundreds of testimonials of residential school survivors, making traditional ceremonial items from rawhide and natural materials, and facilitating men's healing circles. Brodrick's skill set and knowledge is a vast archive of Indigenous craftsmanship, ceremonies from nations across Turtle Island, and true stories of surviving genocide. Despite the heaviness, Brodrick is light-hearted; his stories, jokes, and laughter are always a comfort.

MARY HUGGARD

TEXT BY **SOL CASTAÑEDA**
ILLUSTRATION BY **CAMILLE GIASSON**

Mary Huggard is Director and Facilitator of Parent and Child Programs at Mulberry Waldorf School in Katarokwi-Kingston. She has been facilitating Parent and Child groups every year since 2001. Mary is one of the main reasons families choose Mulberry Programs—not only because she is such a welcoming and kind person, but also because of her generous approach as an educator and for her wonderful daily routines for children, filled with songs, folktales, and independent play. She is continuously encouraging new friendships for both children and adults, while providing ongoing invaluable advice for other caregivers.



SIMON SMITH

TEXT BY **KATE THOMAS**
ILLUSTRATION BY **ISLA WALKER**

We call Simon our Tree Guy, he knows every tree in Skeleton Park on a first name basis. He refers to each tree with affection and talks about them with respect. Simon is responsible for developing and implementing plans to maintain McBurney Park's long-standing grove, and works closely with the City to design and augment the forest canopy. He is known to quietly nurture, groom, and plant native species of trees for the education and enjoyment of the whole neighbourhood. Every year he organizes a work bee to top up mulch around all the smaller trees, dressing them in their spring best to protect them. Simon is a humble man who lets the trees speak for themselves, unless he is asked a question, then he shares amazing stories about the history and connections of the trees that shelter us and all the animals of the park.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY
JACKIE HALL
PHOTOGRAPHY

THE CLEARING



THE CLEARING is an installation by Kingston artists Marney McDiarmid and Clelia Scala.

In this work, the artists transform a shipping container from an object that represents global trade and goods into a peaceful and nature-inspired environment that encourages visitors to slow down, reflect, and connect.

The installation includes a poem by Sadiqa de Meijer, sound design by Matt Rogalsky, and an exterior mural by Lee Stewart.

The installation is supported by City of Kingston Arts and Culture Services and is aligned with the City of Kingston's Public Art Strategy and priority projects to deliver public art and arts-based activations in the Rideau Heights neighbourhood.

**MOMO & MIM
IN THE DARK
AND LIGHT,**

excerpted here, is an eventful book with text, printing and art direction by Vincent Perez and illustration by Abby Nowakowski.

I've been awake for a while, I think—I'm not sure. I can't tell time. The moon is a blank clock.



I've been awake for a while, I think
— I'm not sure, I can't tell time
The moon is a blank clock.



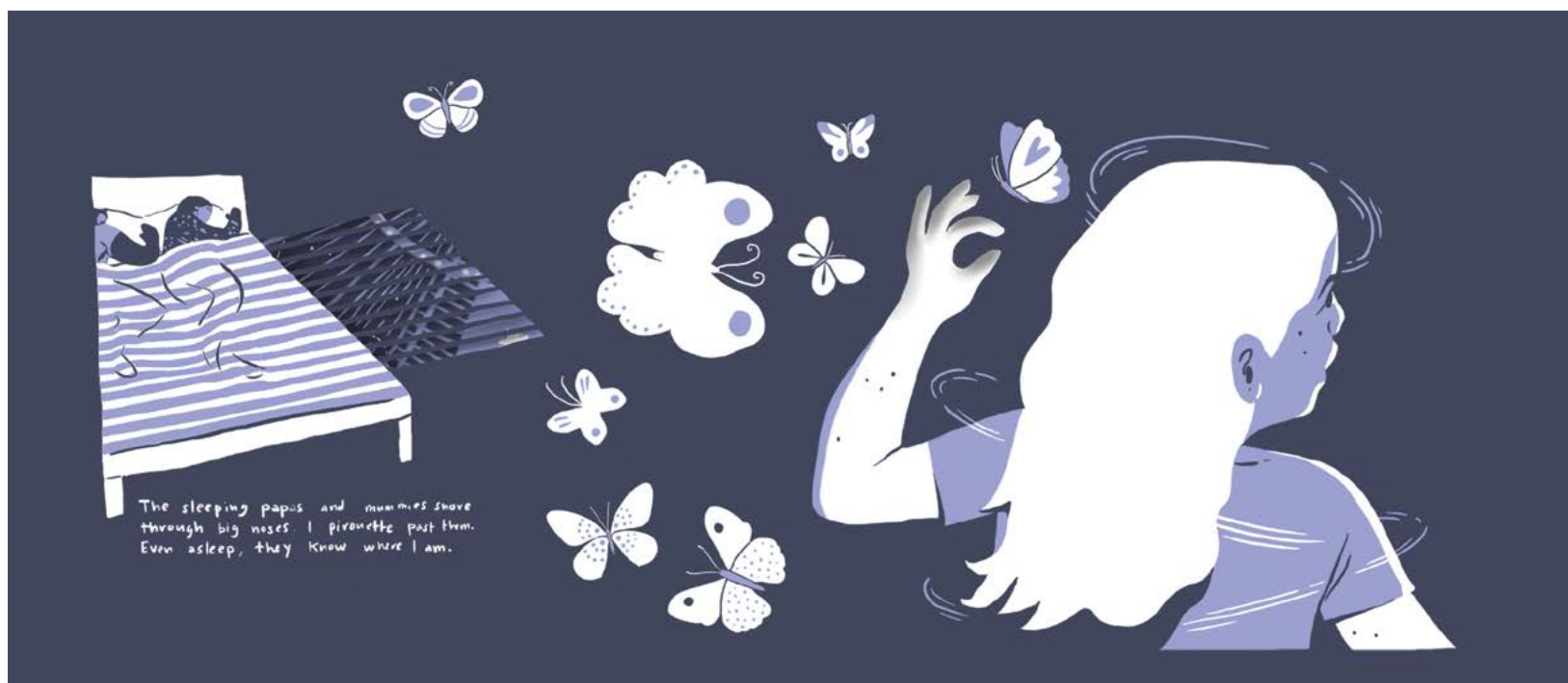
I must step lightly in the dark.
The cat is playing dragon at the
gates of my popsicle stick castle.
Fables unfold in the inky quiet.

I must step lightly in the dark. The cat is playing dragon at the gates of my popsicle stick castle. Fables unfold in the inky quiet.

The first fingers of light guide me forward. They comb the fairgrounds. They slip through the squinting shutters.



The first fingers of light guide me forward.
They comb the fairgrounds.
They slip through the squinting shutters.



The sleeping papas and mummies snore through big noses. I pirouette past them. Even asleep, they know where I am.

The sleeping papas and mummies snore through big noses. I pirouette past them. Even asleep, they know where I am.

ABBY NOWAKOWSKI

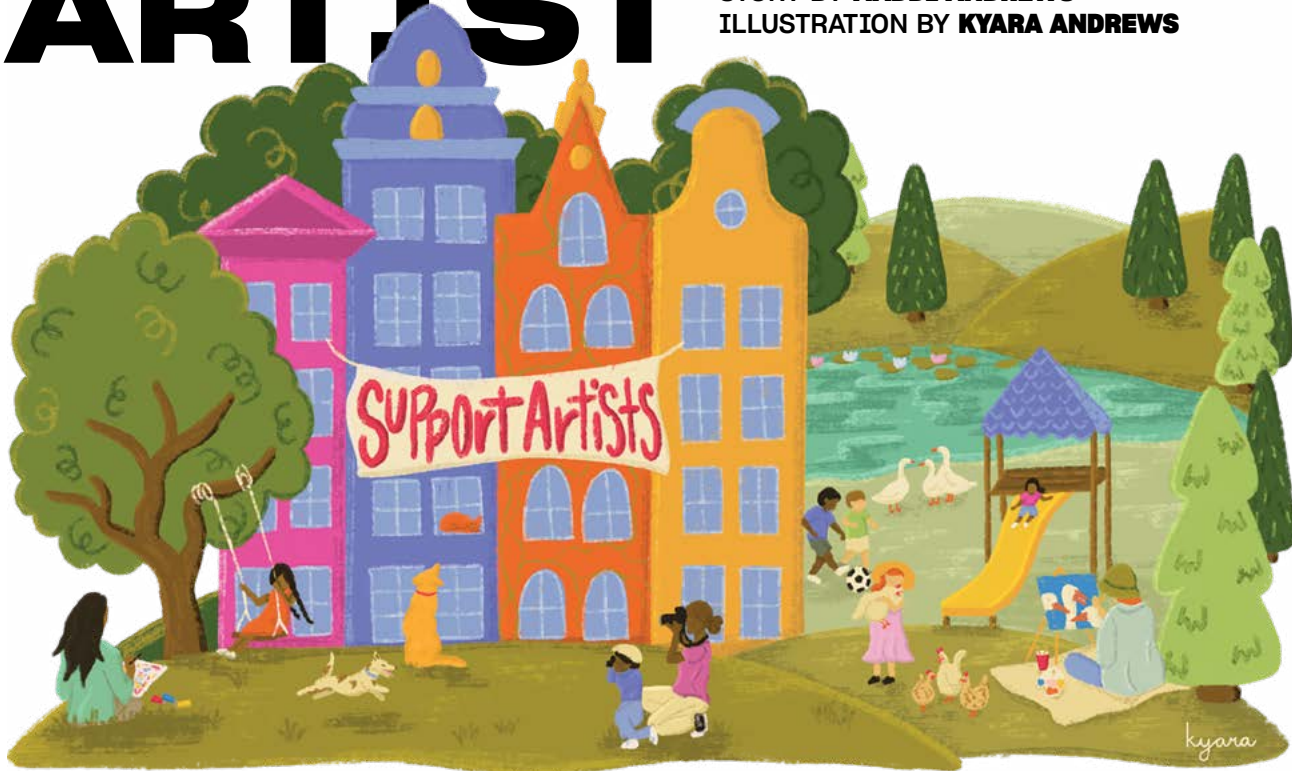
is a queer artist and based in the wetlands of Central Frontenac between the Mississippi and Tay River watersheds. Through printmaking, textiles, illustration, and handpoke tattooing, they spread advocacy for mutual aid, share folk stories, and work to contribute to the collective creative building of sustainable futures.

VINCENT PEREZ

is a designer and printmaker living in Kingston, Ontario.

HOLDING THE WHOLE ARTIST

STORY BY **MADDI ANDREWS**
ILLUSTRATION BY **KYARA ANDREWS**



Housing, income, & community care



Ultimately, what's needed is the very inclusion of dedicated artist workspaces in affordable housing projects from the outset.

We live in times of crisis

—from housing, to the cost of living, to climate, to healthcare—and in these moments, we turn to our artists and cultural producers to find hope and make sense of the uncertainty. But like all of us, artists are feeling the pressures of working under capitalism and facing increasingly urgent needs. So the question becomes: how do we take care of the artists in our community?

Recently, the Kingston Arts Council published *The Artist Prosperity Project*, a research initiative that sought to understand the economic realities of local artists in Katarokwi/Kingston, and the systemic barriers shaping their practices. The project confirms that artists are not immune to the cost-of-living crisis. Fifty-seven percent of respondents reported total personal incomes below \$40,000 a year (for comparison, a national survey conducted in 2024 reported fifty-one percent of artists earning a personal income below that threshold). Artists who participated in the project identified a lack of paid opportunities and financial instability as the two greatest barriers impacting their work.

To help foster stronger working conditions for local artists, our community can support them by purchasing their work and hiring them through fair payment models. Each year, the Canadian Artists' Representation/Le front des artistes canadiens (CARFAC)—an advocate for a socio-economic climate that supports the visual arts in Canada—publishes recommended fee schedules for professional artists. Their schedules cover exhibitions, copyright royalties, presentations, and more. Following the CARFAC's framework when inviting an artist to lead a workshop or reproducing their artwork in printed materials helps ensure they are fairly compensated for their time and labour.

In addition to fair payment models, stronger rent control and access to affordable housing are critical issues for artists. As the *Artist Prosperity Projects* highlights, artists consistently express concern about the availability of affordable housing and studio space. After all, their ability to produce their work is deeply shaped by broader economic and social forces.

Luckily, the City of Kingston has identified this as a strategic priority, noting in its 2023-2026 Strategic Plan that it aims to “explore opportunities to create new spaces for artists and the creative community, including subsidized live-work spaces for artists that consider underutilized City sites and land.”

Kingston is no stranger to artist live-work spaces, and many of us may remember the Artel. Opened in 2006 and operated for 10 years at 205 Sydenham Street, the Artel was a vibrant artist accommodation. The space was an experimental partnership between local artists, Modern Fuel Artist-Run Centre (now Cultivate Art Commons), and Keystone Property Management. One of the Artel's goals was to ensure emerging artists were not lost to larger art markets in Toronto and Montreal by offering affordable accommodations and access to presentation space in Kingston. It was a strong example of a grassroots model applied to artist live-work spaces.

Ultimately, what's needed is the very inclusion of dedicated artist workspaces in affordable housing projects from the outset. As a community, we can collectively advocate for their inclusion as the City of Kingston and other non-profits develop new affordable housing initiatives. Ensuring artists are considered from the beginning will help create more sustainable, inclusive communities. Contacting your City Councillors is a tangible way to make sure artists are part of these important conversations.

Since artists are most often self-employed or working freelance, it is also crucial to recognize that they frequently lack institutional support when they take on caregiving responsibilities. When running your own business, there are few external safety nets, such as parental leave or supportive colleagues. And in some cases, support for caregiving artists may be limited at home as well. Being an artist requires a great deal of hustle, and having the time, energy, and resources to hustle is a privilege that does not extend to many.

In a recent conversation, local artists Jane Kirby and Sumera Khan shed light on the challenges of being caregivers and artists. Kirby highlighted the difficulty of scheduling, noting that most performances and teaching opportunities take place in the evening, a time slot that can be especially challenging for caregivers, as it limits available childcare options. As Kirby shared, there is a persistent assumption that an artist is someone who can put their life on hold when an exciting opportunity arises—whether that means engaging in ten straight days of rehearsal or leaving home to participate in a residency. That kind of flexibility is often not available to a caregiving artist.

Khan also noted the challenge of time. The days of uninterrupted creative work disappeared when she became a mother; now, creation happens in short bursts between naps, school, and other activities. For Khan, many residencies feel inaccessible because they fail to consider that an artist may have caregiving responsibilities. Too often, these opportunities are designed for artists who can prioritize their practice above all else.

Kirby also described how we often see a drop-off in performance artists as they age. Although this is commonly assumed to be a result of the physical demands of the work, in reality, it is far more closely tied to low pay, difficult working conditions, schedules incompatible with caregiving, and the assumption that artists do not have conflicting responsibilities or priorities to manage. Over time, these conditions become unsustainable, leading to the loss of the voices and perspectives of mature performance artists.

So what can we do to support artists in our community? At the institutional level, we can value process over constant output, recognizing the invisible labour happening behind the scenes that can slow or interrupt a professional creative practice. We can provide flexible timelines where possible, create child-friendly spaces, host events at caregiver-inclusive times, and even offer caregiving stipends. We can invite artists to disclose barriers to production—including caregiving—and adopt evaluation criteria that prioritize quality over quantity and process over output.

We need to hold the whole artist in view, consider every facet of their lives—from where they live to how they support their families. Our cultural producers help us make meaning in uncertain times, share vital messages, foster connection, and heal. They are essential members of our community who deserve our care, advocacy, and meaningful support.

Special thanks to Jane Kirby and Sumera Khan.



MADDI ANDREWS is an Artist, Art Administrator, Art Historian, and Art Educator based in South Frontenac. She can most often be found looking at birds, reading, or walking her Aussiedoodle Remy.

MOVING WITH CARE

STORY BY **ERIN BALL & MAXIME BEAUREGARD**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **BENJAMIN LAIRD**

How two circus artists find strength in slowing down

66

IMAGE DESCRIPTION: A family portrait of Maxime and Erin smiling, sitting on a couch in bright and vibrant outfits. Between them is a pile of plushies of various sizes. Leaning against the couch are Erin's prosthetic legs and Maxime's forearm crutches.

As two Disabled people, this way of living and touring allows us to take the time we need to go from one place to another and to function, instead of forcing ourselves to fit systems of urgency.

ERIN BALL (ze/zir) is from Katarokwi, and is a white, double below knee amputee and long-time circus artist who has performed with SPAF in the past and is thrilled to be back. Ball, an agender feminine-presenting human, typically uses prosthesis and sometimes uses a wheelchair or other mobility devices.

MAXIME BEAUREGARD (they/them) was born on the traditional territory of the Abenaki/W8banakiak peoples called Wigw8madensisek (colonially, Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec). They are a white, joyful Autistic+, transgender, nonbinary human who sometimes uses forearm crutches or a walker. Beauregard is a circus artist with a background in contemporary dance.

■ *AuDHD refers to Autism and ADHD. Erin uses it as an identity term—ie. an AuDHD person rather than a person with AuDHD. Autistic+ refers to Autism and co-occurring neuro-nonconformity/neuro-divergence (someone whose brain cannot conform to disabling systems/someone whose brain differs from the standard).



WE

—Maxime and Erin—are partners both in life and our artistic practice. Erin is a white, agender, AuDHD* double below-knee amputee and a long-time circus artist, and Maxime is a white, Autistic+, transgender nonbinary movement artist who experiences chronic pain. Together, we form InterComplementary Journeys. We work interdependently, using our strengths to complement each other as performers, coaches, choreographers, producers, accessibility consultants, and workshop facilitators. We strive to empower multiply marginalized Disabled artists, advocating for Disability-led art, challenging discriminatory industry norms, and striving to create more accessible/welcoming spaces. Our work aims to reach as many people as possible with innovative artistry brought wherever we go.

In 2024, we participated in a pilot project on slow touring with Ontario Presents to explore resisting urgency by finding more sustainable ways of touring. We found alignment with practices of slowing down and intentionality, which allowed us to nurture long-lasting reciprocal relationships with local communities, reduce the climate impact of our travels, and create a way of living more congruent with our access needs and values. The pilot project was so successful that we continued slow touring full-time, staying in each place for a longer period of time and connecting with community, rather than just doing one show and then leaving. As two Disabled people, this way of living and touring allows us to take the time we need to go from one place to another and to function, instead of forcing ourselves to fit systems of urgency and to go through accessibility barriers while traveling through airports. We also bring our home with us in the form of a trailer, which allows familiarity and guarantees a living space that is accessible to us, as opposed to having to deal with the uncertainty surrounding inaccessible accommodations. We are both very excited that our journey is bringing us back to your neighbourhood and community!

Our aerial hoop duet “Interdependence” that will be presented at SPAF 2026 celebrates love and care. It is an excerpt from the show InterComplementary Elements, a Disability-led immersive accessibility relaxed experience, rooted in a queer disabled love story. The show shares how we flourish together in a queer disabled interdependent artistic and romantic relationship, and how we continue growing and thriving with the support of community.

Many artists, consultants, creative coaches, and the Festival of Live Digital Art supported and contributed to this ever-evolving show. It is a multi-disciplinary artistic work that incorporates aerial arts, dancing, and innovative forms of creative accessibility, with many ways of experiencing/receiving the performance. Creative accessibility strives to keep the functionality of accessibility, while taking into consideration creativity within the arts to give more options for what type of accessibility could enhance each artistic project the most. For example, there is embedded creative description throughout “Interdependence,” with the aerialists conversing with each other, incorporating both storytelling and creative accessibility around what is happening visually. The script for this aerial act was done in collaboration with Blind consultant, Amy Amantea, to strive for accessibility that is both interesting and functional for as many people as possible. Some folks who have experienced this type of work are calling it “radio circus”!

In the aerial hoop duet, we are both in the air, suspended from a swing set-like structure called an aerial rig. Attached at the top of the rig is a metal ring the size of an adult hula hoop, hovering a few feet above the ground, constantly spinning as the artists move. Erin sits at the bottom of the hoop. Below, Maxime hangs upside down by a foot between Erin’s short “leggies.” In the creative description Erin says, “Like so many discoveries together, I’m surprised that this shape works. I still can’t believe that you can hang upside down by a foot between my short legs. You feel unexpectedly solid underneath me as we spiral, like the world whizzing by, pushing us to partake in capitalist ways, but together we trust ourselves and find our flow.” We both take turns helping each other up the aerial hoop. Maxime makes their way above the circular hoop at the top, while Erin moves inside the structure. Maxime replies, “I love how we take turns supporting each other. Knowing that we are in this together gives me strength to pull myself up.”

The story relays our journey supporting each other through life, navigating barriers, and complementing each other’s strengths. Lindsay Fisher of Creative Connector, an online arts hub for the Deaf and Disabled community, calls this kind of connection a “reciprocal relationship.”

“When we commit to building relationships rooted in compassion, communication, experimentation, and repair, collaboration becomes transformative,” says Fisher. “It creates possibilities none of us could have done alone and it reminds us to stay connected to one another in a world that seems determined to pull us apart.”

In our piece, the aerial hoop represents barriers in the world; a hard fixed structure. Attendees at our performance might laugh, learn, feel welcomed, and connect with others in meaningful ways. Our performances strive to welcome people as they are and include access notes with information about an access table, ASL interpretation, scripts, seating options, and notes on the physical space where the performance will take place. Audiences will not be put on the spot.

We are so excited to connect with you at SPAF 2026 to co-create a space that strives to welcome everyone to be themselves, experience communal care, and hopefully find joy together!

WHILE WHO WE WOLFE ISLAND

A Labour of
(Local) Love

STORY BY
**TOM CARPENTER &
HUGH CHRISTOPHER BROWN**



PICTURED: Hotel Wolfe Island

People could reasonably ask, “Why would anyone purchase a hotel during a pandemic?”

Especially a small, somewhat derelict, out-of-the-way hotel whose more recent successes had relied on the vanishing market for draft beer sales and revelry. Not only would the business-case argument be complicated, we would not have been competent to make it. Fortunately, since we really like our neighbourhood and the island on which it’s located, we started with a simpler question: “How does one protect a really useful community asset, including publicly accessible waterfront, through this challenging global moment?”

And in case saying “protect” sounds a bit dramatic, know that the others in line to purchase the property after a couple of years on the market included a developer with plans for lakeside condominiums, a trailer park businessman, and a drug dealer who showed up claiming he had enough cash in his car to do the deal on the spot.

So, we bought the General Wolfe Inn at the end of 2020 and renamed it The Hotel Wolfe Island.

We didn’t know that the challenging “moment” we were in would continue for years, as the pandemic dovetailed with transportation crises that included new ferry terminals in Kingston and Marysville, the new ferry itself with its myriad problems, and having to use the “Winter Dock” for four years. We also didn’t know as much as we know now about how to run a restaurant, multiple music venues, and a marina. But by the time we closed the deal, we did know that our instincts had some merit. The banks would gladly have loaned us money to flip the property or to build those condos ourselves. Any version of “make the money and run” would have been fine. As Zita Cobb (of Fogo Island Inn fame and our long-time advisor) puts it, for bankers “there’s no economic downside to destroying a community”. But a business premised on local employment, local food sources, community waterfront space and support for the arts... that was a no go. We ultimately purchased the hotel with loans from Frontenac Business Services and local investors who, you might say, had the courage of our convictions.

Starting out, we both had skill sets and experience that neither of us figured applied to being hoteliers: writing and building things (Tom), and music (Chris). Those were the basic assets we brought to a sense that Wolfe Island needed its civic space, and to the goal of creating economic activities that contribute rather than take away.

As to how it all unfolds, another quote from Zita Cobb: “Artists are the opposite of magicians. Magicians make things disappear; artists make things appear.” Cobb’s insight is that by drawing positive attention to a place, art (including music) brings activity and prosperity in its wake. To that end we have now booked several hundred nights of live music over the past five years—everything from nearby high school bands, to up-and-coming groups (who, months later, are playing major halls), to jazz luminary Bill Frisell, who supports the Hotel by including us on tours that literally span the globe. We’ve hosted dance and art shows and drama and movie premieres. And the food program now boasts the legendary Brad Long as Executive Chef. There is a Farmers’ Market where the condos would have been.

Very fortunately, we have had more than just our own skill sets to help make the hotel a success. The entire venture, which has now involved so many local tradespeople, food producers, managers, bookkeepers, artists and maintenance people—and invaluable local customers—continues to demonstrate that all experience is relevant and can be applied to local concerns.

Does all of that work? Yes. And the transportation crisis is coming to an end. Wolfe Island is once again a 17-minute ferry ride from downtown Kingston, and The Hotel is a five-minute walk from the new year-round Marysville Terminal.

Against the backdrop of the current state of the world, where centralization and the selling of everything has led to such seeming disaster, making the effort to overcome local challenges remains worthwhile.

We invite you to come enjoy the waterfront and the amazing food, to take in the ever-changing art on the walls, to stay in the rooms, and to enjoy the music that blesses us from around the globe.

“

Against the backdrop of the current state of the world, where centralization and the selling of everything has led to such seeming disaster, making the effort to overcome local challenges remains worthwhile.

TOM CARPENTER has been a writer and editor with *Harrowsmith* magazine, *Equinox*, *Cottage Life* and *Canadian Geographic*.

HUGH CHRISTOPHER BROWN is a record producer and musician who has toured the world with everyone from the Tragically Hip and the Barenaked Ladies to B.B. King.

PICTURED: Hotel Wolfe Island



In Conversation with HANNAH GEORGAS

STORY BY **JAY MIDDAUGH**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **DAVEY PENTECOST**



JAY MIDDAUGH is a filmmaker, musician, and former middle-school basketball coach.



Hannah Georgas is building community again.

Early in our wide-ranging phone conversation she advises me to visit a friend's business in her newly-adopted hometown of Belleville: "Small Scale Bread—you've got to go there. They've got amazing coffee. If you're on your way to Toronto, just pop in there. You'll be like, 'Oh gosh, why haven't I been here before?'"

Listening to the award-winning musician talk about her love for the local businesses and natural beauty in Belleville, it's easy to understand why she's happily settled there.

When Georgas noticed a lack of arts programming in Belleville, she and her partner Sean Sroka made plans, getting in touch with the City and the Quinte Arts Council. The result was the Beautiful View Music Festival, which launched last summer with an impressive lineup including Julie Doiron, Hayden, and Kingston's Julia Finnegan.

"We were like, 'Let's start a little bit smaller and start a multi-venue festival in unconventional spaces and spaces that are meant for live performance. That took so much work, but when we did it last September, I was blown away by the community and how much people want to come out and just help and support things like this,'" says Georgas.

The festival is named after a song from her acclaimed 2023 album *I'd Be Lying If I Said I Didn't Care*, but it has a nice coincidental relationship to the town that hosts it: Belleville is French for 'beautiful town'.

Inspired by her experience performing at the world-renowned Newport Folk Festival (of Bob-Dylan-going-electric fame), Georgas aims for a similar reputation of taste and quality, saying, "Our hope is that we can build something like that, where people are going to come to it and know that they're going to find their favourite new artist."

With the bar set so high, selecting artists for the Beautiful View Music Festival was personal. "What my partner and I were really trying to pull off was music we're genuinely both fans of."

Having done the festival circuit many times, Georgas has an insider's knowledge of what artists are looking for when they show up to a gig: a show that looks great and has been promoted well, with tons of people in attendance. She wants to make sure she creates that experience for the people coming to play at her festival.

66

Having done the festival circuit many times, Georgas has insider's knowledge of what artists are looking for when they show up to a gig. She wants to make sure she creates that experience for the people coming to play at her festival.

I asked Georgas how a successful artist's business model has changed since the release of her 2010 debut album *This Is Good*.

"It's changed so much, selling physical copies [used to be] the way to make revenue. I think it is a lot about radio, because [of] sound exchange royalties and writing your own music. There's stations like the CBC and Sirius Radio, those things actually pay you and give you support."

Artist obligations have also changed in the age of social media. Publicists want artists to capture and share so much of their lives, which is something that doesn't come naturally to Georgas.

She's come to realize that what she does share has to feel authentic and comfortable, or it won't be any good. To that end, when it came to promoting *I'd Be Lying If I Said I Didn't Care*, she bucked the trend of endless short-form social media posts and instead collaborated with a number of videographers in the UK to create full-length music videos for nearly all the tracks.

"I was so blown away by this one videographer named Joe Conner, he's made music videos for Harry Styles and Ellie Goulding and Coldplay and he was like, 'I would love to make a music video for this ridiculous affordable price. You go onto one bridge in London, and I'll go onto another bridge, and I'll zoom into your eye from like a mile away, and we'll just play around in the busy bustle of the city and make some cool shit.'"

That video, for Georgas' song "This Too Shall Pass", was shot with a minimal crew and budget, and is a real testament to what people can create through a collective effort.

"That's another thing about community—there's so many people that just are up for doing stuff out there because they want to make cool things and it's more about that."

This past spring, Georgas went on tour opening for Matt Beringer, something else that came about because of relationships forged through the arts community; she had previously toured as a supporting vocalist with Beringer's band The National and recorded an album with his bandmate Aaron Dessner.

"I found out through my agent that he was doing dates and I just put my name in the hat," says Georgas.

The band she took on Beringer's tour will be coming with her to Kingston this June, when she'll be headlining the Skeleton Park Arts Festival. Come see them play at 7:30 pm on Saturday, June 20th, and experience the remarkable Hannah Georgas in person!

■ This conversation was edited for length and clarity



A CLASS ACT

PICTURED: Film still from
The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie

STORY BY NAZ

**Although I am not a mother,
there are a great many children
under my care.**



NAZ is a member of the Cinema Society of Kingston. She is grateful to be able to work with children every day and hopes to continue doing so for the rest of her life.

Us teachers, dear reader, are in the business of changing lives. People are an amalgamation of all the teachers they have had, both good and bad. Teachers hold a profound influence over a young person's life, and we must wield this power with caution. A good teacher makes all the difference, even if their methods sometimes have unintended calamitous effects. Below is a list of my favourite movies exploring complex teachers and the impressions they leave on their students. Open up your notebooks; let's begin.

The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie (1969)

Based on the electric novel by Muriel Spark, this film is set in 1930s Edinburgh at an all-girl's school called Marcia Blaine. It stars the indomitable Maggie Smith as controversial and fashionable teacher Miss Jean Brodie. Each year, she selects a few pupils to be part of her Brodie set, whom she takes on field trips to museums and elaborate picnics in the park. She discusses her love life, touts Italian Fascism, and encourages each of them to find the talent that sets them apart as elegant ladies of society. She repeats, "Give me a girl at an impressionable age, and she is mine for life." This sometimes has tragic consequences, not unlike the influence other teachers have on this list. Her peculiar pedagogy elicits concern in headmistress Mackay, who looks for an excuse to rid her school of Miss Brodie. At the end of the film, one of her own set betrays her. Filmed in gorgeous Technicolor splendor, this movie is sure to leave an impression, as all the best teachers do.

Mr. Holland's Opus (1995)

Certainly the cheesiest film on this list, yet also a charmingly predictable tearjerker. It features Richard Dreyfuss as a reluctant music teacher who agrees to teach only because he hopes to have time to compose his own music outside school hours. However, as Bill Meister, the newly befriended gym teacher mourns: "I can't remember the last time I had that was free." Mr. Holland quickly grasps the

demands of teaching; he begins to resent his time-sucking position and the students who seem impossible to inspire. Over time, he learns to employ rock n' roll in his classroom to get the students' attention. And then a miracle happens: they have fun. What began as a temporary stint turns into a passionate, lifelong career. The film spans multiple decades, beginning in the 1960s and ending in the 1990s, and we see Mr. Holland working diligently on his original symphony throughout. When the music program is cut due to unfair funding reasons and he is forced to retire, his students perform an unforgettable grand gesture, the likes of which every teacher hopes for if we were being honest with ourselves. This movie is for the whole family; grab some popcorn and sing along to Stevie Wonder, The Kingstons, and John Lennon.

Dead Poet's Society (1989)

Although easily my favourite film on this list, I wrestled with including it due to its popular and beloved nature. However, that may be all the more reason to write about it. Maybe it has been years since you've watched it; perhaps your days have been filled with the humdrum monotony of life and you have forgotten to suck its marrow. Reader, I urge you to watch it again! In the immortal words of John Keating, played by the wonderful Robin Williams: "Medicine, law, business, engineering, these are noble pursuits and necessary to sustain life. But poetry, beauty, romance, love, these are what we stay alive for." This film has everything you could desire: a brick boarding school set against stunning

autumnal backdrops, poetry read aloud by moonlight in hushed reverent tones, a baby-faced Ethan Hawke that began a lifelong crush...

Ahem, where was I? John Keating, an English teacher, imbues his students with a love of literature that spurs them on to create meaningful lives instead of merely sleepwalking through their existence. This film contains tragedy, but its beauty will haunt you for a lifetime.

Stand and Deliver (1988)

Although I'm certain the other fictional teachers on this list were heavily inspired by ones in real life, this is the only movie here that is based on a true story. It follows Jaime Escalante, played by the talented Edward James Olmos, a mathematics teacher with an impressively bad comb-over. He teaches working-class students at a struggling school in East Los Angeles. There is a sharp contrast between the elite boarding school settings of some of the other films on this list and this one, where the students worry about affording to live.

He embarks on a quest to improve the school's overall test scores by training his students to pass the AP calculus exam, despite the administration balking at his idea. This heartfelt story encapsulates how radical it can be to have a teacher believe in you, especially when you do not believe in yourself. This film might inspire you to try some math problems for fun; proceed with care.

It strikes me that all of the teachers on this list are forced to resign from their schools due to their unconventional teaching methods. They produce students who think for themselves, who desire more than they have been told they are allowed, and these teachers are feared as a result. We owe our favourite teachers a debt; our greatest responsibility is to seize the day and make our lives extraordinary.

FROM GRANT HALL TO SKELETON PARK

The Expanding Story of Fat Goose

STORY BY
**HEIDI WALLACE
PATENAUE**

PICTURED: Holly Gilmour at Fat Goose Craft Fair/Skeleton Park Arts Festival



Kingston-based **HEIDI WALLACE PATENAUE** is a graphic designer, artist, and crafter with a passion for creativity and community arts. You can view her artwork on Instagram at @heidicrafty.

IF YOU LIVE IN THE SKELETON PARK NEIGHBOURHOOD

—or anywhere in Kingston—it’s likely you’ve heard of the Fat Goose Craft Fair. For nearly two decades, it has marked the beginning of the holiday season, signalled by its artful poster appearing in Novel Idea’s window each November. It’s the place you plan to meet friends and family for inspired holiday shopping, and where, year after year, Grant Hall fills with local talent, community spirit, festive energy, and sometimes even a little live music.

For many, Fat Goose has become a ritual. They bundle up against the cold, step into a room humming with conversation, and inevitably run into familiar faces—neighbours, former classmates, artists they’ve been following for years. Children tug at sleeves, elders linger over conversations with makers, and first-time visitors quickly sense that this is more than a market.

The Fat Goose Craft Collective creates an inclusive venue for craftspeople of all disciplines to exhibit and sell their work, while offering the public access to affordable, high-quality handmade goods. Rooted in a not-for-profit, volunteer-driven model, the Collective began in 2009, when a group of like-minded artists and makers recognized a need for more engaging and accessible venues for local craftspeople to showcase their work. At a time when many were struggling to find spaces that valued process, originality, and connection, Fat Goose emerged as both practical and aspirational.

Since its inception in 2011, the Collective has curated what has become one of Kingston’s premier holiday craft fairs, attracting an ever-growing number of applicants and patrons. The fair is renowned not only for its quality, but for the care with which it is organized and sustained.

Over the years, the arts and craft market world has changed dramatically, as online vendors have reshaped how people buy and sell artisanal work. In this fast-moving landscape, Fat Goose has remained something rare and enduring. Its longevity isn’t rooted in chasing trends or popularity, but in staying grounded in meaningful connection between artists and audiences. That consistency—along with a deep respect for craft and genuine care for the people behind it—is what makes Fat Goose truly unique.

Having been personally involved with Fat Goose for several years, I’ve seen the dedication the Collective brings to craft. The care, thoughtfulness, and mutual respect that members show to one another and to the artists sets a high standard in the arts community. Being around this group has made me a better creative. There is constant learning, quiet mentorship, and a shared belief that good work, done with integrity, matters.

The fair is juried to ensure work is regional, original, diverse, and crafted with care and skill. This approach supports both emerging and established makers while maintaining a standard that visitors can trust. Beyond supporting artists, the Collective is deeply committed to community impact: half of the door fees from every event are donated to local charities. Thousands of dollars have been contributed over the years to organizations such as the Food Sharing Project, the Integrated Care Hub, and the Kingston Youth Shelter, reinforcing the connection between art and community.

For many years, members of the Collective have also worked alongside the Skeleton Park Arts Fest (SPAF), as it became clear early on that the two organizations share core values—and largely the same audience. Partnering on the artisan market portion of SPAF has been a natural fit, and for the past few years this collaboration has become a meaningful and much-anticipated part of the Fat Goose calendar.

During SPAF weekend, the neighbourhood comes alive. Music drifts through the streets, porches become gathering places, and the artist market weaves seamlessly into the broader celebration. The partnership offers a chance to reconnect with familiar artists while welcoming new voices, and to introduce SPAF to a wider network of art-minded makers who may be drawn to Kingston to participate—or simply to enjoy the festival’s unique energy. Accessibility and inclusion are central: barriers are lowered for first-time vendors, and artists at all stages of their careers are encouraged to share space and learn from one another.

What makes SPAF special is the range of artists it brings together. Watching the learning, exchange, and quiet encouragement between artists is a joy, and a reminder of why these spaces matter. The weekend is filled with music, conversation, and the unmistakable buzz of the neighbourhood at its best. Connections are made. Memories are formed. And with June 20–21 just around the corner, anticipation is building once again—not just for another market, but for another opportunity to gather, support artists, and celebrate creativity in all its forms.

Visitors are warmly encouraged to walk through the artist market, discover a treasure, strike up a conversation, and learn something new. See you in June!

Follow Fat Goose Craft Fair on Instagram @fatgoosecraftfair

 Downtown
Kingston.ca

Road Trip

MUSIC FESTIVAL

PEACH PIT
GABRIEL JACOBY
KASADOR · KATIE TUPPER

MARIEL BUCKLEY · TINY HORSE

ABSOLUTE TREAT · PINER

O GREEN

09/12/2026 * KINGSTON ON

LEARN
MORE





2026 Festival Program

Summer Solstice Weekend, June 19-21, 2026

All SPAF Programming is FREE ADMISSION



LOCAL FOOD VENDORS

PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN WATER BOTTLE & UTENSILS FOR A WASTE-FREE FESTIVAL

LEAVE YOUR CAR AT HOME BICYCLE VALET PROVIDED

7:00AM - 5:00PM Daily

"Love Letter to Skeleton Park" an exhibition by Callia Silverton (The Elm Café, 303 Montreal St)

Abby Nowakowski artwork June 19 - 21 (Main Stage & throughout park)

"Circus of Dreams | Studio Artists (H'art Centre: Inclusive Arts for All Abilities)" exhibition ongoing (Southeast corner of Skeleton Park)

f Skeleton Park Arts Fest
@ @skeletonparkartsfest
skeletonparkartsfest.ca



Program subject to change



FRIDAY JUNE 19

7 - 9pm Walks of Life Open Mic hosted by Abbie Louise (Next Church, 89 Colborne St)

Scan QR code for registration:



SATURDAY JUNE 20

In Skeleton Park

7:30am Yoga by Jeb Thorley with music by Dave Barton (North end of Skeleton Park)

10am - 5:00pm Fat Goose Craft Fair Department of Illumination, supported by Mulberry Waldorf School (Side Stage 2) Community Info Booths

10am Opening Ceremony (Main Stage)

11am Birdbone Theatre accompanied by Sistema Kingston (North of the Main Stage, towards Balaclava St)

12pm Genticorum co-presented by Centre Culturel Frontenac (Main Stage)

1pm Square Dance with Genticorum, Teilhard Frost & Friends led by Tom & Lauren from Lost at the Junction supported by La Bella Beauty Spa (Main Stage)

2pm Solstice Games (Side Stage 3)

2pm InterComplementary Journeys co-presented by Creative Connector and H'art Centre: Inclusive Arts for All Abilities (on grass by Balaclava St)

3pm Kingston Voices Rock Medicine Choir conducted by Matthew Campbell (Main Stage)

4pm Forty Seven Teeth (Main Stage)

5pm Witch Prophet (Main Stage)

6pm RAW Taiko supported by Sumac Centre (on grass in front of Main Stage)

7:30pm Hannah Georgas (Main Stage)

9-11pm Sounds on Sydenham Street

Piner + Anna Robertson, Dee Presscot (from Forty Seven Teeth) + Witch Prophet + Hannah Georgas. emceed by Moira Demorest w/ moderated discussions co-presented by Downtown Kingston and Kingston Music Office (Side Stage at the corner of Sydenham St and Princess St)

SUNDAY JUNE 21

In Skeleton Park

7:30am Yoga by Jeb Thorley with music by Dave Barton

10am - 5:00pm Fat Goose Craft Fair Department of Illumination, supported by Mulberry Waldorf School (Side Stage 2) Community Info Booths

10am Birdbone Theatre (North of the main stage, towards Balaclava St)

11am Porch Jazz Parade Featuring: The Goat Steppers

11am Miranda Ceara & The Odd Fellows Orchestra (342 Sydenham St)

12pm Clifford, Cassells and Morrison (137 Bay St)

1pm Carlo (Main Stage)

2pm InterComplementary Journeys co-presented by Creative Connector and H'art Centre: Inclusive Arts for All Abilities (on grass by Balaclava St)

2:30pm Siaka Diabate (Main Stage)

3pm OS Project (Main Stage)

4pm Wyatt C. Louis co-presented by LodgePole Arts Alliance (Main Stage)

5pm Piner (Main Stage)

6pm Closing Ceremony (Main Stage)

