
CHAMPLAIN SPEAKER



April 2007

Vol. 27, No. 4

Spring cleaning at the river and park



We'll clean up Champlain Park, the riverbank that runs through our neighbourhood, and the woods where people walk dogs.

Date: Sunday, April 27

Time: 9:30 a.m

Meet at the fieldhouse door near the skating rink entrance (north side of the building) to check in with the coordinator and to pick up a donut, bagel, and cup of coffee. The AA group will be meeting in the main part of the fieldhouse that morning.

You need to supply your own rake or shovel, and sturdy yard gloves.

For more info, please call Don Monet at 613-728-1750.

Community Association

Co-chairs: Lynne Bankier (729-0955)
and Craig Wells.

Vice-chair: Glenna Patrick

Treasurer: potter (728-4980)

Secretary: Vacant (Lynne filling in)

Planning: Amy Kempster (722-6039)

Membership: Debra Huron (722-8048)

Neighbourhood Watch: Michael

Cheng (722-3344), Patrick Mates,
(722-4120) Neil Robertson (729-5439)

Fieldhouse co-ordinator:

Laurie Fagan (728-1945)

Rink co-ordinator:

Greg Doswell (722-7705)

Adopt-a-Riverbank co-ordinator:

Don Monet (728-1750)

TEENS AT WORK

Jessica (**babysitting**) 728-8413

Morgan (**yard chores**) 728-6530

Kym (**babysitting**) 729-5439

Paul (**yard chores**) 728-2583

Nick (**computer help**) 798-7652

Joey (**babysitting**) 728-5792

Elisabeth (**Bilingual babysitting**)
722-0454

CHAMPLAIN SPEAKER

Editor: Debra Huron 722-8048

dhuron@sympatico.ca

Proofreading: Becky Rynor

Delivery Chief: Kelly Egan

On-line edition: To receive a monthly
e-mail with a PDF of the newsletter,
contact Alexander Smith



Carriers: Kay Young, Terri
Blanchard, Sandy Milne, Philip
Cutfield, Patrick Mates, Rita Palin,
Laura Robin, Becky Rynor, Jim Hay,
Wendy Huculak, Heather Pearl, Ann
Potter, Emma Morris, Linda Steele,
Nancy Leigh-Smith, Benjamin
Holland, Marlene Kells, Thomas and
Meredith Lauzon, Kelly Egan.

The *Speaker* is produced monthly
with the generous support
of the Ottawa Citizen.



Local couple offers music @ home

Sometimes, people come up
with the best ideas in the world.

As recent graduates into the
fourth decade of life, Cathy Bennett
and Bob LeDrew were looking for
a way to enjoy live music without
having to go to local bars. "I was
finding that when we'd go out to
see live music, we'd be waiting
till 10 p.m. for the performance to
begin. I just didn't have the stamina
to stay awake," Cathy admits.

So Cathy and Bob have
plugged into a North American
trend that involves hosting house
concerts. They invite musicians to
their spacious sunroom, sell tickets
on-line, offer non-alcoholic drinks
and light snacks to the audience,
and send everyone home before 11
p.m. when the City's noise by-law
comes into effect.

"Our friends with kids really
like this idea because it means they
can hire a babysitter and be home
shortly after 11 p.m.," says Cathy.

The couple calls their venture
Bobcat home concerts.

The couple's home on
Northwestern Ave. features a 26
x 15 ft. sunroom that is easily
transformed into a concert venue.
In February, when she turned 40,
Cathy's home birthday party fea-
tured live performances by Susie

Vinnick and Tony D. In March,
the couple sold tickets to about 30
people who wanted to see and hear
David Gogo (a musician whose
recent CD was nominated for a
Juno).

The April concert with local
heroine, Lynn Miles, sold out in
four days. "It's been really simple,"
says Cathy. "If a musician is going
to be in town and they have a free
night, and if they like the intimacy
of this kind of setting, then this is
a way to play to small group and
make a couple hundred bucks as
well."

Tickets sell for between \$20
and \$25. Since word got out that
Bob and Cathy are hosting house
concerts, more than 30 managers
have sent CDs to the couple, hop-
ing that their charges will be slated
into one of the concerts.

Bob is a hobby musician, while
Cathy, who grew up in Cape Breton
as part of a family that played lots
of music finds that her role is in the
audience: "I just appreciate music."

If you'd like to attend a concert
in a candle-lit room with stars shin-
ing through the skylights, check out
Cathy and Bob's website at www.bobcathouseconcerts.blogspot.com

—by Debra Huron

Noticeboard and upcoming events

1. Vendors needed for Elmdale's Art and Garden Sale

Elmdale School's 4th Annual Plant and Art in the Garden Fair will be held **Sunday May 27th** in Champlain Park from 10 a.m. till 2 p.m. Nurseries will be selling flowers, veggies and herbs. Artists will be on hand with copper fountains, twig furniture, recycled tin, and garden chandeliers. Other features include live music, delicious homemade food, and a demonstration of glass mosaics.

If you know someone who would like to be a vendor, call 728-1945 or 728-5891.

2. Membership Drive

A door-to-door membership drive for Champlain Park Community Association will begin **in early June** and last for a few weeks.

Thanks to a number of willing canvassers, it looks like the entire neighbourhood will be canvassed this spring. If you already bought a membership for 2006-2007, your name will have been crossed off the list. No one will knock on your door.

If you are new to the neighbourhood, be prepared for a canvasser to ask if you'd like to become a member of the Community Association. Cost is \$7 per family and \$5 if members of the household are seniors.

3. Community Garage Sale

Champlain Park will once again host a neighbourhood Garage Sale, along with the Island Park Garage Sale, on **Saturday June 2**. The rain date will be **Sunday, June 3**. May's edition of the Champlain Speaker will have more details.



4. Federation of Citizens' Associations of Ottawa Carleton

The next board meeting of the FCA—the Federation of Citizens' Associations of Ottawa-Carleton, will be held **Thursday May 3** at 7:15 p.m. at the Champlain Park Field House. Each member association is invited to send two delegates. Observers are always welcome. Visit www.fca-fac.ca to see the agenda.

Some items on FCA's agenda this spring include:

- On Saturday April 28 from 9 a.m. the FCA will be holding a weekend workshop entitled *Your Community and Traffic* at Greenboro Community Centre, 363 Lorry Greenburg Drive.
- The FCA has been invited to nominate representatives to the Public Consultation Group for a study on interprovincial crossings. The first meeting is Thursday April 26. The question of transportation links across the Ottawa River has important implications for every neighbourhood in the city; FCA will be at the table and will provide regular updates on this study as it progresses.

Amy's Corner



by *Amy Kempster*
722-6039

- Tree Reforestation program (\$447,000)
- Museum Sustainability Strategy (\$740,000)
- Arts Investment Strategy (\$1.5 million)
- Nine adult crossing guards and two new teams for the Youth on the Move program (\$100,000)
- Recommendations to improve financial controls from Ernst and Young (\$265,000)

The budget provides for an increase in Capital Budget authority of \$651 million, including:

- \$318 million for renewal of City assets
- \$271 million for growth-related capital work
- \$62 million for strategic initiatives

New Election System for Ontario?

The Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform of Ontario will soon decide whether to stay with our current "first-past-the-post" system or adopt a new system called Mixed Member Proportional. Along with the Chair, George Thomson, the Assembly includes one member chosen randomly from each riding in Ontario. The member for our riding of Ottawa Centre is Tara Currie. If the Assembly decides that we should adopt the new system, we will all get a chance to vote on that decision during a referendum that will be held at the same time as the next provincial election (October 10, 2007).

What is the Mixed Member Proportional system, you may ask? Apparently, in that system voters get two votes on a single ballot: one for a local candidate and one for a party. If a party wins fewer seats than its percentage of party votes, candidates from that party's list (published before the election) are elected to compensate for the difference, thus ensuring that the share of party seats it wins is roughly equal to the percentage of party votes it garners.

For further information on the Assembly and its deliberations go to www.citizensassembly.gov.on.ca or www.tvo.org/citizensassembly.

City Budget: The final city budget brings a 0.3% tax rate to fund the increased police services. This was achieved by using the surplus from last year and some reserves.

"Council voted to maintain all City services and to fund the following service improvements:

- Francophone Day Care spaces (\$765,000)

As part of the budget, Council approved \$46.7 million in sustainable reductions and budget reduction targets to the operating budget, as proposed by staff. Council voted to limit a transit fare increase to 2% and implemented inflationary increases to other user fees (1.7%). In order to achieve a zero percent tax increase, Council voted to use \$23.5 million from the 2006 budget surplus and \$8.3 million from the Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve Fund." (from the City's web site)

Calculation of City Taxes: Taxes are calculated by multiplying the tax rate for the specific tax class by the assessed value, which for 2007 is the value on Jan. 1, 2005. Questions about the fairness of the assessment system have been raised and various solutions suggested by all three major parties. None of the solutions suggested seem to me to really solve the problem, since part of the problem is what type of costs are allocated to property taxes and what to other forms of revenue. Should there be property taxes at all might be a question; or should municipalities get some or all their tax revenue from the income tax? If there are to be property taxes, on what should they be based? If use of city services is considered, the two-car garage family might be assessed more than the one-car family; the three bathroom house more than the one-bathroom house, etc. Factors such as these which may change with additions or improvements but otherwise remain stable are different than the fashions which make one area suddenly more desirable than others in the city. Thus, they could be assessed at a higher amount.

The volatility of the current system is one of its main problems and the solutions suggested have tried to address that factor by limiting it in some fashion. If you have suggestions or opinions on this topic, why not write up your opinion for the Champlain Speaker?