



This Week in the Annex:

June 08, 2022

Cedar Basket Re-Opens

Your canny reporter decided to pre-empt a potentially long wait on election day by attending the advance poll at the [Native Canadian Centre of Toronto](#) (NCCT) at 16 Spadina Road. And besides being able to get the deed done in record time, we also were delighted to discover that the Centre's [Cedar Basket Gift Shop](#) has recently re-opened after a long, COVID-induced closure.



The Centre may have an Indigenous focus, but true to its sign and website, all are welcome – and no more so than by Siera Hancharyk, newly hired Assistant Manager of Cedar Basket.

Siera's story makes her a perfect fit for the NCCT. She is originally from Wiikwemkoong First Nation on the unceded land of Manitoulin Island but was raised in Sault Ste. Marie. During that period, she says that she was in touch with her traditions and culture, attending ceremonies and powwows and visiting with all her relations. And as a natural outcome, she was also almost fluent in speaking Anishnaabemowin (Ojibwe).

All that changed about the time she turned fifteen when she moved to Toronto. Over the years she found jobs in food and beverage management, rising even to the position of manager at Wine Rack stores. But, as she told us, "I wasn't happy, and I didn't feel fulfilled. There was something I was missing."

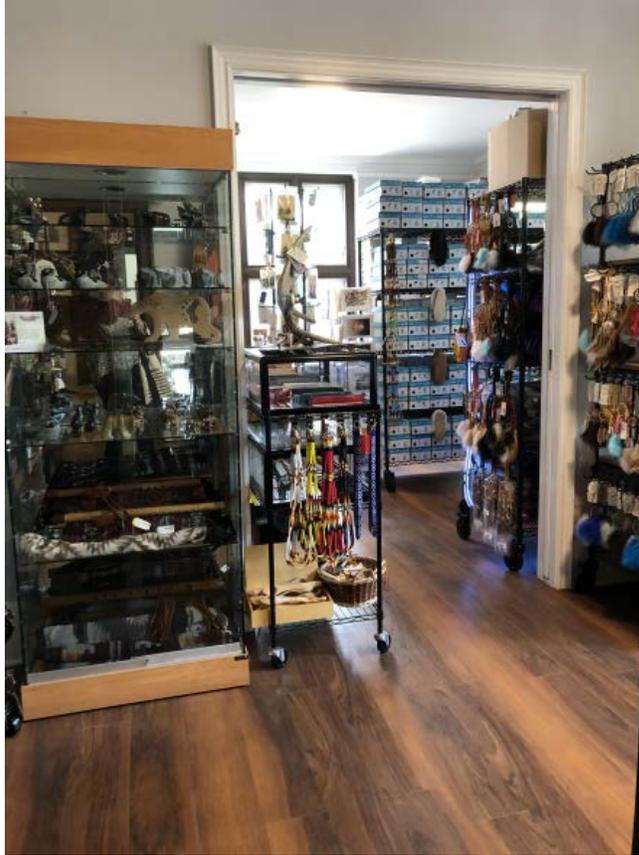
Reconnecting with Native Roots

One day she spotted the job opening at NCCT on Facebook. She was not at all confident of winning the position. "To be honest I didn't think I was going to get it. I thought there was absolutely no way; I don't know anything about native arts and native artists, I have lost a lot of my culture, I am a reconnecting Native."

But we're not at all surprised that she did, in the end, secure the job. Her energy and enthusiasm and openness are matched only by her sales savvy (we walked out with an armload of treasures).



With an irresistible twinkle, Siera demonstrates just a few of the stylish moccasins on offer. (ARA Board Secretary Micky Fraterman swears by their quality and comfort.) But these are just the tip of the merchandise iceberg. There are gorgeous jewels and cards and clothing and foodstuffs, all exquisitely hand-crafted by First Nations, Métis, and Inuit artists and artisans.



The shop has a small footprint but is a jam-packed treasure trove of high-end goods.



As you might expect, there are exquisite examples of jewellery and bead work for sale.



But the inventory is equally practical as decorative.



So if you're looking for that unique gift for someone or (why not?) for yourself, there's a source right here in the Annex.

You'll find Siera's enthusiasm is infectious. As she says, "I am absolutely thrilled and learning something new every day. I'm connecting with those in my community, even discovering new cousins every day! I look forward to seeing what else it will bring me."

Can we suggest more customers from the 'hood?



As it gets up and running, Cedar Basket has slightly curtailed hours. For the moment you can shop there between 9:30 and 4:45 weekdays. But that will change soon. And in the meantime, if those hours don't suit, you can always head to the [e-version and shop online](#).

Notes and Queries

On the Move

Davenport Road between Dupont and Bedford was comparatively quiet this past weekend as workers accomplished the perilous task of dismantling the crane from the Freed building at number 346. A recent report ([you can read it here](#)) challenges the belief that we lag in housing starts. In fact, for the seventh straight year in a row, Toronto has far exceeded 14 other major North American cities in the number of active construction cranes it hosts. And while the Freed crane has been hustled off to a new site, you can be sure more are about to take its place in the skyline along the Davenport corridor.



The operation closed Davenport to traffic for two full days and involved a host of workers, trucks, and flatbeds. [A video of the action](#) gives you a sense of the logistics involved.

And the Band Played On

We caught Rory 'Gus' Sinclair of the HVRA [officially piping in](#) last Wednesday's inaugural Farmer's Market just moments before the thunder rolled. As the [second video of the day](#) makes clear, the Market carries on regardless of the weather. (Happily the deluge lasted for only about 20 minutes.)

Even this early in the season there were a dozen or so vendors on hand offering a wide range of goods, from fresh Ontario strawberries to organic baked goods to craft beers to baskets of shitake mushrooms. So why not go down there this afternoon to check out the action? You'll find the stalls assembled on the Green P lot on Borden just a smidgen south of Bloor.

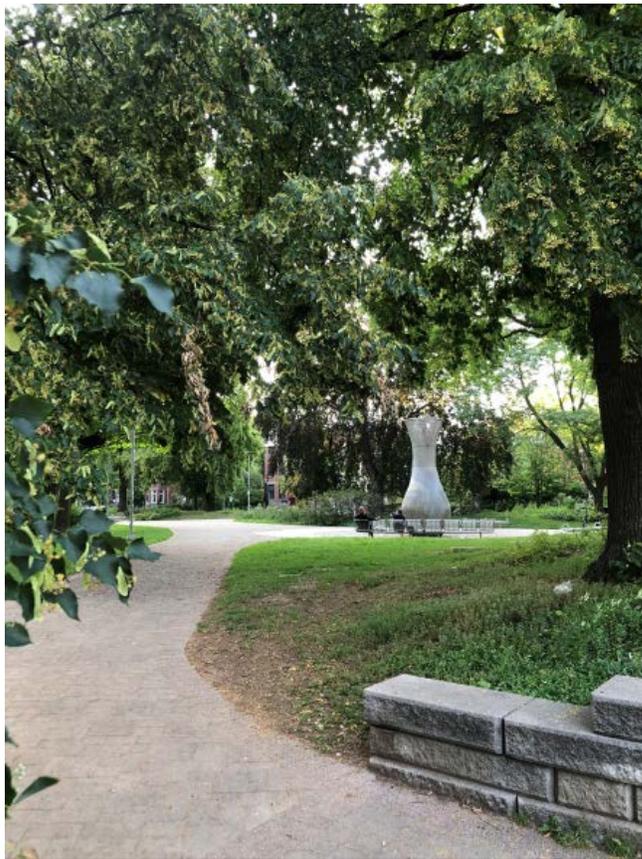


And while we're talking about the Market, if you have somewhere you can display a lawn sign to advertise the venture, organizers would be grateful. Just fill out [this request form](#) and they'll do the rest.

The Tree Survey Has Begun

ARA members stepped up last Fall to donate more than \$5500 towards a tree survey of the Annex. And now Terri Chu is pleased to announce that the survey has begun. Two University of Toronto Forestry students have been hired to lead the data gathering. So if you see individuals with tablets and surveying equipment, don't be alarmed. They'll be taking stock of all neighbourhood trees, including the ones in your back yard if you have one.

Terri also notes that updating the database is a massive job that requires additional volunteer help. If you'd like to learn more about our urban forest, then why not sign on [by clicking here](#)? You'll be tasked with measuring tree height and width and learn how to identify different species. The perfect excuse for getting outdoors! And a prime opportunity for students who need to accumulate volunteer hours for school.



If you needed convincing as to the importance of our tree canopy you should watch this webinar [Using Technology to Talk about Trees](#) hosted last month by the Arbor Day Foundation. The proven measurable impact of urban forests on health is an eyeopener.

A Thousand Words

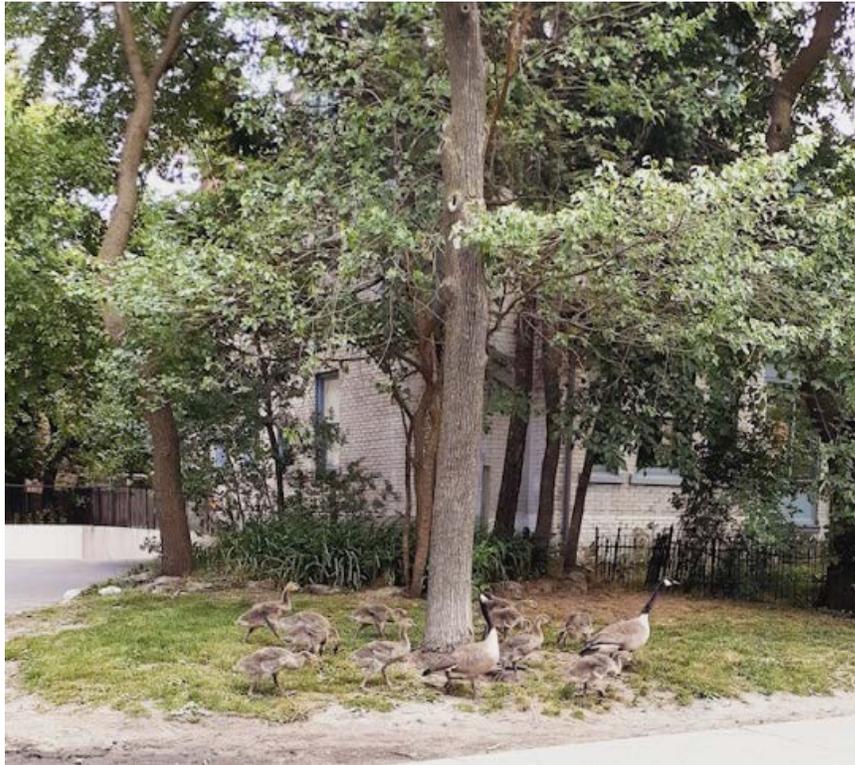
It's one thing to write about a confident coyote's daylight stroll down Admiral Road as we did last week. It's quite another to actually see it in action. A shout out to ARA member Daniel Bain who forwarded to us [Scott McFarland's](#) image of the canine on the move. And thanks, too, to Scott for permission to publish.

Since then, residents have reported other sightings – this time in Sibelius Park. In fact, it looks very much as though the critter has taken up permanent residence in the 'hood. So it bears repeating. To report a coyote sighting, call 416-338-PAWS (7297), or email animalservices@toronto.ca or fill out an [online form](#). And for practical advice on how to react when you encounter one, [click here](#).



What Were the Parents Thinking?

Micky Fraterman was caught off guard last week as she drove past Brunswick at Barton. She was impatient with the slowpoke truck that dawdled in front of her until she spotted the cause of the delay. A pair of Canada geese were shepherding their gaggle of a dozen or so goslings across the road to who knows where. As Micky noted, there was no water nearby, and Taddle Creek is long gone (at least on the surface). Fingers crossed our resident coyote was far away on the other side of Spadina.



The Annex Residents' Association is a volunteer organization of residents committed to improving and preserving the distinctive character of our neighbourhood. Our strength depends on our base of support in a well-informed community.

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The Annex Residents' Association