

This Week in the Annex: **August 10, 2022**

Funday Feedback

The steamy weather couldn't keep folks away: Several hundred people turned out last Friday to participate in the "Funday" sponsored by teams from Toronto Community Housing and Cota. (And before you ask, we tried but couldn't track down the origin or meaning of this not-for-profit's name: lost in the mists of time, according to staff.)



Its name may be inscrutable, but [Cota Health](#) has been working for almost half a century in Ontario to help individuals negotiate life crises. Currently it's partnering with Toronto Community Housing's revitalization team to provide in-house, in-person supports for the residents at 250 Davenport pictured above.

Whether it's help with an eviction notice, or aid for mental health issues, or access to resources like grants and food, or connections to employment opportunities, Cota is ready to act.



David from Cota and Felicia from Toronto Community Housing were the moving forces behind this year's Funday activities, organizing speeches and music, games, and even a raffle. More of a door prize, really, raffle ticket holders had a chance to win one of two giant baskets chock full of food basics.

A Co-op Food Store on Pears?

While "Fundays" are a long-standing tradition at 250 Davenport, this one was designed not only to celebrate the opening of the newly built POPS park that the general public is warmly invited to use, but also to canvass participants for their thoughts on future program initiatives.

Of general community interest was a survey regarding a Co-op Food Store that Councillor Layton, TCHC, Cota, and others, are hoping to establish at 138 Pears Avenue.

This project is still in the planning phase, part of which involves conducting a needs assessment to determine what foods and goods such a store ought to prioritize. The survey is open to anyone in the community, so if you are

interested in the prospect of a local Co-op Food Store right here in the Annex, then do contact [Councillor Layton's office](#), either for more information or to offer your support.



Kathy personally cooked and then served multiple pans of creamy vegetable pasta to accompany the burgers and hotdogs barbecued on site.



Marcus and Cassandra were ready with supplies to paint young faces. (And again, before you ask, we declined the opportunity despite their cajoling.)



Some residents of 250 Davenport have called the building home for decades. Residents Karen and Swanee have lived there for more than 55 years between them. They took the time on Friday to share memories and bask in the music and company.

It really was a lovely party. Thanks due to all involved.

Voices of Reason

During the first year of the pandemic we relied heavily on long-time Annexionian, Dr Cornelia Baines (Epidemiologist and Professor Emerita, Dalla Lana Faculty of Public Health) to provide our newsletter readers with reliable information as scientists scrambled to understand that new enemy – COVID-19. Obviously, we're now much better informed. But as health restrictions lift and we seek a return to life as we knew it, it's good to review the lessons learned.

Saying that she agrees wholeheartedly with her colleague's advice, Dr Baines very kindly sent us the words of wisdom from one of the great heroes of the past two years – Dr Bonnie Henry. Many are worth repeating:

The Wisdom of Dr. Bonnie Henry

- 1. We may have to live with COVID-19 for months or years. Let's not deny it or panic. Let's not make our lives useless. Let's learn to live with this fact.*
- 2. Washing hands and maintaining a two-meter physical distance is the best method for your protection.*
- 3. If you don't have a COVID-19 patient at home, there's no need to disinfect the surfaces at your house.*
- 4. Packaged cargo, gas pumps, shopping carts and ATMs do not cause infection. If you wash your hands, live your life as usual.*
- 5. COVID-19 is not a food infection. It is associated with drops of infection like the 'flu. There is no demonstrated risk that COVID-19 is transmitted by food.*
- 6. You can lose your sense of smell with a lot of allergies and viral infections. This is only a non-specific symptom of COVID-19.*
- 7. Once at home, you don't need to change your clothes urgently and go shower! Purity is a virtue, paranoia is not!*
- 8. The COVID-19 virus doesn't hang in the air for long. This is a respiratory droplet infection that requires close contact.*
- 9. The air is clean: you can walk through the gardens and through parks (just keeping your physical protection distance).*

10. *It is sufficient to use normal soap against COVID-19, not antibacterial soap. This is a virus, not a bacteria.*
11. *Wearing a mask for long periods interferes with your breathing and oxygen levels. Wear it only in crowds.*
12. *Wearing gloves is also a bad idea; the virus can accumulate into the glove and be easily transmitted if you touch your face. Better just to wash your hands regularly.*
13. *Immunity is greatly weakened by always staying in a sterile environment. Even if you eat immune boosting foods, please go out of your house regularly to any park/beach. Immunity is increased by EXPOSURE TO PATHOGENS, not by sitting at home.*
14. *Be smart and stay informed! Live life sensibly and to the fullest.*
15. *Be Kind, Be Calm and Be Safe!*

Sincerely, Dr. Bonnie Henry

Notes and Queries

The Corn Fest is a GO!

Grateful thanks to those generous readers who responded to our earlier plea for volunteers to help stage the annual Corn Fest. And when Pastor Elaine Poproski's wrote to say that she could assemble a group of about 10 people from Walmer Road Baptist to help in whatever way necessary, we knew that the event could likely be a go.

We've set the optimal date – the afternoon of **Sunday September 18**. Alas, the decision is not wholly ours to make. It rests on both the cooperation of Mother Nature and the generosity of the corn farmers who have provisioned the Fest in past years. We'll keep you posted.

If you have access to a car and would be willing to tote equipment, that would also be much appreciated. Just write to info@theara.org with the subject line: "Have Car, Will Travel" (or something like that 😊) and we'll gladly accept.



Butterfly Haven

A shout out to Annex gardeners who plant with kindness and environmental responsibility in mind. One of our regular contributors captured the following image of an (increasingly rare) Monarch butterfly feasting on thoughtfully planted milkweed. According to [The Spruce](#):

*Without milkweed plants, there can be no Monarch butterflies—it's as simple as that. Plants in the milkweed *Asclepias* family are essential to adding the chemical to Monarch larvae that make them unpalatable to predators.*

To learn more – both about available varieties of milkweed and about other plants favoured by Monarchs that you might consider planting, [read the full Spruce article](#).



Say Hello to Quincy

We celebrated the launch of a Purolator hub at Spadina and Bloor in the July 21 issue of this newsletter. Capturing the worthies in a celebratory photo op is all well and good, but it's nothing like seeing the zero emissions end of service in action. That's why we were delighted to catch Quincy on his rounds on St. George last Wednesday. He says that yes, this is his permanent beat. So now you know who to thank for pedalling your parcels safely to your door.



Free Trees for the Planting

This month's [Green 11 newsletter](#) is packed with information of interest to Annexonians. There are reminders regarding the LEAF seminars we told you about in our [July 27 newsletter](#). There's information about a peer support group for Ward 11 residents interested in retrofitting their homes to address climate change. And there's notice that the Community Canopy program is back for the fall and [registration for free trees](#) is now available.

We quote from the press release:

*The City of Toronto has partnered with the Arbor Day Foundation to connect Toronto residents with free trees through an innovative online mapping tool that takes the guesswork out of where to plant a tree on a specific property. Through the Community Canopy Program residents can use the software interface to identify the ideal planting location that will maximize the air, water, energy, and carbon benefits of their tree. **Registration closes September 4, 2022***

NB: Since there's a limited supply of trees available, you'd be best to act quickly if you want one.



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