

This Week in the Annex:

March 22, 2023

Bloor Goes Green

There was a raw wind. It was cold. It was cloudy. But that couldn't dampen the spirits as more than five thousand celebrants marched along Bloor and down Yonge to Queen in last Sunday's St. Patrick's Day parade.

In case you missed it and want the *Reader's Digest* version, we did the legwork for you. The following images are courtesy of ARA member **Victor Gauthier** who braved the cold to keep us company and wield his professional camera to capture the scene. As for the accompanying amateur cell phone videos – he's not to blame. But if you click on those embedded links you'll at least get a kinetic flavour of the day.



Even the parade marshal put on his best leprechaun – though that index finger in a splint had us worried that [the unicycle wasn't always rock solid](#).



Toronto Fire Services led the way with [hundreds of firefighters](#) playing, marching, and riding along the route in gleaming vintage fire engines.



It wouldn't be a parade without music. And of course there were several [proper pipe bands kilted and bearing bagpipes](#).

But the most Irish band of all must have been this [mobile leprechaun drum kit](#).



There were several charitable causes represented, including the Daily Bread Food Bank and the Shriners, [who more than got into the fun](#).



It's St Patrick's Day. There simply had to be a reference to beer – so [along came the pedal pub.](#)



Indeed, it was a day when everyone was Irish and out for a good time. Even [the Japanese dancer troupe was](#) decked out in the green, white, and orange in honour of St. Paddy.



And of course it wouldn't have been complete without [some Irish setters and friends.](#)

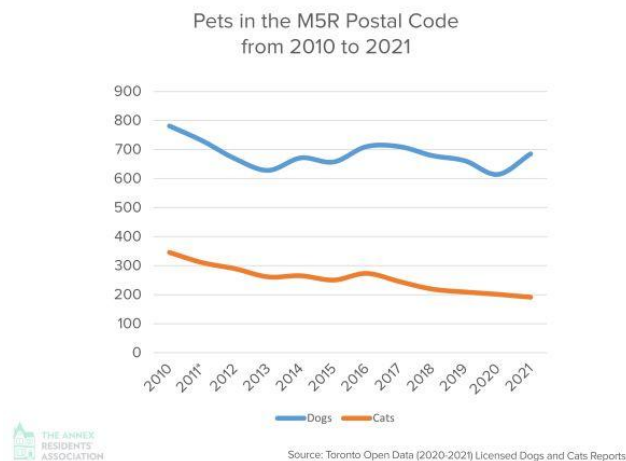


So there you have it. 'Twas a fine thing. 'Twas grand. It was a whale of a time. Maybe you'll go catch it in person next year?

The Annex by Numbers

Are you, like us, convinced that the canine population in the Annex has exploded over recent years? Then you're about to be surprised.

While it's true that the number of dogs did show a bit of an uptick between 2020 and 2021 (totally understandable in light of that popular lockdown exercise of walking the family pooch), Alex Topp actually discovered a general decline in pet ownership – that's for both canines and felines – over the past ten years. And the decline holds true, not only in the 'hood but across the entire city.



That's pretty counter-intuitive given that the human population has grown over that same time period. So the situation is worth teasing out.

"If I were to guess why this might be," mused Alex, "it's because most new developments are condos, therefore it's harder to own a pet. And also more single-unit buildings are being converted into multi-unit buildings."

While that's quite true, for the more cynical among us the adage of *bad data in, bad data out* also springs to mind.

The chart in this instance is based on the number of **licensed** pets in the Annex. Licensing costs anywhere from a low of \$7.50 (for a neutered cat belonging to a

senior) to \$60.00 (for a dog whose parts are intact). What's more, the tag issued to a licensed pet must be renewed on an annual basis.

We wouldn't be surprised if some residents were unaware of this [by-law](#) and consequently hadn't registered their pets. And then there are also quite probably others who have chosen to ignore the rules altogether. Whatever the reason, we suspect there are quite a few Annexonian pets living under the legal radar and therefore not captured in the official stats.

That said, Alex's second point is well taken. "The growth in condos highlights the importance of having public dog parks/parks in general. It means that those without yards can still keep family pets."

Notes and Queries

Meet n' Eat Report

Many thanks to our organizer-in-chief, **Tija Dirks**, for hosting a convivial evening. In fact, we were all having such a lovely time that no one, not a single person, took pictures. Can you believe it? No cell phones were whipped out to record the fettucine al pesto or one of those perfectly fired pizzas. There was just rampant conversation, wonderful re-connections, and a truly good time had by all 36 Annexonians who crammed into the back of Famosa last Wednesday night for our inaugural post-Covid neighbourhood Meet n' Eat. It's clear we've got to do it again really soon. And next time, trust us, we'll remember to take pictures!



Jean Sibelius Upgrade

Councillor Saxe has uncovered a fund of unspent cash specifically earmarked for upgrades to Jean Sibelius Park. Seems there's just enough money to purchase some high-end adult outdoor fitness equipment – perfect for parents and sitters and teens who otherwise sit idly by while watching the younger ones at play. If you're interested and would like to have a say in this initiative, then plan on meeting with the Councillor and other residents at 4:00 pm on **Sunday April 2**.

We'll confirm the details next week.



Snow Snow Go Away

No matter how much you might like the stuff, we're pretty sure you'll agree that it's time for the snow to be gone! That's why we were heartened last Thursday to see City workers finally attacking the grim remains of that last big storm. The operation to extract and cart away the slushy mass [went pretty well on Dupont](#). But the clearing at Spadina left us somewhat bemused. In watching [this lengthy video of vehicles](#) attacking the snow at the northwest corner you can't help but wonder, wouldn't four workers armed with shovels do a more efficient and less environmentally costly job?



April 1st Rally

It may be April Fool's Day, but it's unfortunately no joke: tenants are increasingly under attack as rents in unprotected buildings skyrocket and both renovations and demovictions abound. That's why the Federation of Metropolitan Tenants' Association (FMTA) is coordinating a series of actions next month to highlight tenants' rights. You're asked to show your support by attending the meetings on

Saturday April 1st that will include a gathering at 145 St. George St. Watch next week's newsletter for details.



Ko van Klaveren Remembered March 30th

We wrote about the unexpected loss of one of our long-standing Board members – Ko Van Klaveren – in [this newsletter last January 11](#). His passing has left a major hole in our ranks. For those who wish to honour his memory, Ko's wife, Christine, has arranged a Celebration of Life to be held on **Thursday March 30th from 5:30 to 7:30 pm**. Intended to be an informal get together and a chance to share a few memories, the event will be held in the Terrace Room of the [Gardiner Museum](#) at 111 Queen's Park. Everyone is welcome.





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