

Monsoon Journal

A parfait media publication

21ST YEAR IN CIRCULATION | NOVEMBER 2026







OLIVIA CHOW WINS SECOND TERM AS TORONTO MAYOR

VOTERS BACK HER VISION FOR A MORE AFFORDABLE, INCLUSIVE AND STRONGER CITY





Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow has won a second term in office, securing a decisive victory in the October 26, 2026, municipal election. The result gives Chow another mandate to lead Canada's largest city as it faces mounting challenges involving housing affordability, homelessness, public safety, transportation, and the rising cost of living.

Chow defeated her principal challenger, former city councillor Brad Bradford, by a substantial margin, receiving **532,201 votes, or approximately 54.2 per cent** of the total, compared with Bradford's 404,013 votes, or approximately 41.1 per cent.

The City of Toronto officially certified the election results on October 29, confirming Chow's victory and bringing the mayoral contest to a close. A total of 989,990 ballots were cast across the city.

The outcome represents a significant endorsement of Chow's leadership and her promise to continue building a Toronto that is more affordable, compassionate, inclusive and accessible to residents from all walks of life.

A decisive victory after a closely watched campaign

The mayoral election attracted considerable attention, particularly during the final weeks of campaigning, when Bradford appeared to narrow the gap between himself and the incumbent.

A total of 54 candidates appeared on the mayoral ballot, but the campaign ultimately developed into a contest largely centred on Chow and Bradford.

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The two candidates presented different approaches to Toronto's future.

Chow emphasized affordability, affordable housing, social programs, public transportation and the protection of essential municipal services. Bradford, meanwhile, focused heavily on public safety, traffic congestion, municipal spending, cleanliness and improving Toronto's economic competitiveness.

Despite the competitive campaign, Chow emerged with a comfortable lead, demonstrating that a majority of participating voters preferred continuity in municipal leadership.

In her election-night victory speech, Chow thanked Toronto residents for placing their confidence in her once again.

She promised to listen to residents regardless of their backgrounds, beliefs or neighbourhoods and emphasized that serving as mayor meant representing everyone, including those who voted for other candidates.

Bradford congratulated Chow following the announcement of the results and expressed his hope that she would succeed in her second term.

A campaign centred on affordability and everyday concerns

Affordability emerged as one of the defining issues of the 2026 election.

Like many major cities across Canada, Toronto continues to experience significant pressure from rising housing costs, expensive rental accommodation, grocery bills and the overall cost of living.

Chow made these concerns central to her re-election campaign. She promised to protect essential city services while expanding affordable housing opportunities and strengthening programs designed to support lower-income families.

Among her campaign commitments were:

- More affordable housing: Increasing the supply of affordable rental homes and expanding supportive housing for vulnerable residents.
- Free school lunches: Supporting a city-wide school food initiative to help families manage rising food expenses.
- Affordable public transit: Improving transit affordability, including measures to benefit frequent TTC riders.
- Safer neighbourhoods: Expanding youth violence-prevention programs and strengthening community safety initiatives.
- Support for renters: Continuing efforts to protect tenants from unfair evictions and renovictions.

These commitments formed an important part of Chow's message to voters, particularly families, students, seniors, newcomers and residents struggling with the increasing cost of living.

Building on her first term as mayor

Chow's re-election also gives her an opportunity to build on the achievements and initiatives of her first term.

She originally became Toronto's mayor in June 2023, following the resignation of former mayor John Tory. Her election was historic: she became Toronto's first woman of colour and first Chinese-Canadian mayor since the city's amalgamation in 1998.

During her first term, Chow negotiated a major financial agreement with the Ontario government, helping address some of Toronto's long-standing financial pressures. The agreement also transferred responsibility for the Gardiner Expressway and Don Valley Parkway to the provincial government.

Her administration introduced measures affecting public transportation, housing, library services and neighbourhood programs.

However, her first term was not without controversy. Property tax increases, homelessness, traffic congestion and the condition of public spaces attracted criticism from some residents and political opponents.

Bradford made these concerns important parts of his campaign, arguing that Toronto needed stronger action on congestion, crime and municipal spending.

Chow's victory suggests that, despite these criticisms, enough voters believed her administration deserved more time to deliver its priorities.

A changing city council and a new political mandate

The mayoral contest was not the only important development in the October election.

Toronto's 25 municipal wards also elected their representatives, bringing

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PUBLISHER'S DESK

What the 2026 US Midterm Elections means for Canada and Canadians

By Harrish Thirukumaran

"Let's all get behind Michele Tafoya in Minnesota. She's running a great race. Don't allow them to play with the Votes after the race is over. The Federal Government will be watching closely."

"We got to flip that circuit breaker, bring some accountability to this government."

The first quote is attributed to current US Republican president Donald Trump who posted on his social media platform, TruthSocial, in reference to the Minnesota Senate race. It has become a highly competitive race in the 2026 US midterm elections for the US Congress. This was reported by the Hill Times.

The second quote comes from former US Democratic president, Barack Obama, who uttered the plea, while campaigning in Michigan for US Senate Democratic candidate, Abdul El-Sayed. This was first reported by FirstPost. Both quotes are simplistic in their messaging but are symbolic in demonstrating the fierceness and highly competitive nature that these elections have proven to be for the US. They have had a unique impact on Canada given the state of US-Canada relations now. The US Congress is comprised of two chambers that make up the legislative branch of Government in the US: the House of Representatives and the Senate. The midterms are an important component in the US electoral system because control of the Senate can determine the sorts of presidential appointments to cabinet, the courts and senior posts in federal agencies. The party that controls the House can also launch impeachment proceedings and has the power to initiate budget bills. All of this was reported by CBC News, and I recommend readers to delve into their reporting and other outlets to stay informed on these developments. They will matter to us, which I will get into later in this article.

Trade and US Electoral Politics:

The US midterm elections take place on Tuesday, November 3, 2026, and they are widely reported to be considered the most consequential for not only the American citizen, but, at the same time, Canada in terms of trade and tariffs. Canada over approximately the last 20 months has been in an escalating trade war with the US. Tariffs and counter tariffs have been imposed throughout various key Canadian and US industries including steel, aluminum and automobile manufacturing.

It has been relentless with the current US presidential administration pushing full steam ahead through sheer executive authority power and a Republican-controlled Congress against Canada, with the country fighting back. However, this could change on November 3. The US Democratic Party is favoured to win the House and, increasingly, the Senate according to recent polling data delivered by the Election Forecast Tracker from Kevin DeLuca, an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Yale University.

The Potential Outcomes from the 2026 US Midterm Elections:

Accordingly, the forecast tracker pins Democratic control of the House at 82% of the 435 seats and the Senate at 61% of 100 seats.

There are three possible outcomes that could emerge from the election results:

• Democrats with the House whereas Republicans hold down the Senate. In relation to Canada, this could mean a greater number of congressional investigations into presidential actions and scrutiny over tariffs and increased pressure on the Trump White House to negotiate with Canada.

• Democrats win both chambers of Congress resulting in even stronger oversight over trade, spending, and appointments. It could possibly improve Canada's negotiating position in trade talks with the US, but Trump would still have executive authority and veto over congressional power.

• Republicans keeping both chambers means there would be ongoing continuity in the administration's trade agenda with fewer organizational obstacles. However, several tariff-affected Republican states could seek relief from the current administration's trade agenda.

Whatever the scenario, it bears some considerable weight on the lives of Canadians like you and I. Canadians are experiencing various effects of the trade war whether it could be through job loss or insecurity or increased prices on certain goods and services in our economy. The election could shape how trade will impact our lives and the Canadian government's posturing on these matters with the current US presidential administration.

US Midterms can Improve US-Canada Trade Negotiations, but not Completely Reverse Tariffs

Moreover, Reuters has reported that the US and Canada are working to negotiate a potential deal to relieve the duties up to 50% on Canadian steel and 25% on autos ahead of the midterm elections.

Now though, it is important for readers and other Canadians alike to know that the negotiating environment may change, but it would not automatically result in the trade war ending. Major news outlets foresee that the election can turn the tides on certain tariffs in the trade war but that is in addition to developments like the negotiations on steel and automobiles between Canada and the US ahead of the elections.

Analysis and Conclusion

It is critical to highlight that this reporting is still speculative and feeds into the prediction business that is emblematic of US electoral politics and other elections for that matter in US and internationally. In the end, we will not know the full impact and consequences until election day on November 3. However, either way it seems safe to say that that based on the ongoing commentary leading up to the elections, trade will change in some way for both countries with it likely being a relief in some tariffs for both sides.

While Canadians cannot control the outcome of a foreign election in the US, one way to involve oneself in the ongoing trade dispute is to write to your federal representative in Parliament. This can be a way to get your voice out and advocate for a trade position that provides relief and support to Canadians as they handle rising costs. Furthermore, if you have relatives living in the US who are eligible voters, encourage them to exercise their democratic right to vote to make their participation known. This contributes to helping ensure proper checks and balances on their government regardless of which party comes out as the victor.

There are also opportunities for individual Canadians and those with tariff affected businesses to submit comments on the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA) through the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR). Additionally, another opportunity is contacting U.S. congressional offices to explain how tariffs affect cross-border industries, family businesses and communities.

It is recommended that you use official contact channels, identify yourself accurately as a Canadian, and focus on verifiable economic impacts rather than electoral campaigning.

Since congressional offices generally prioritize communications from their own constituents, a response is not guaranteed. You can also work with community organizations and chambers of commerce to showcase evidence on how the trade war is impacting businesses and individual Canadians' economic security in your town or city. Overall, the 2026 US midterm elections are proving to be increasingly competitive and influential in US history as well as Canada in terms of its diplomatic relations with the US. There are three outcomes of the election which will have an impact on trade with Canada. However, there are opportunities to influence trade talks with the US without interfering with their midterm elections itself. While the elections may not spell out an end to the trade war, we may see it dialed back considerably based on the future composition of the US Congress and the ongoing behind the scenes work between the executive administrations of both Canada and the US.

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CANADA NEWS

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several new faces to City Hall while returning a number of experienced councillors.

Among the notable winners were Diana Chan McNally in Parkdale–High Park, Sara Ehrhardt in Toronto–Danforth, Mike Layton in University–Rosedale and Nate Erskine-Smith in Beaches–East York.

The election demonstrated that Toronto's political landscape continues to evolve, with housing, homelessness, public services and affordability remaining important issues for residents.

For Chow, working with the newly elected council will be essential. Although the mayor has significant influence over the city's direction, many important decisions require cooperation and support from councillors.

Her ability to build consensus, manage competing priorities and maintain constructive relationships with the provincial government will help determine how successful her second term becomes.

The challenges ahead

While the election victory represents a major political achievement, the real test of Chow's leadership begins now.

Toronto faces several interconnected challenges that will require sustained attention and considerable financial resources.

Housing affordability remains one of the city's most pressing concerns. Thousands of residents are struggling to find reasonably priced accommodation, while homelessness continues to put pressure on shelters and community support organizations.

Public transportation is another major priority. Residents want reliable TTC services, reduced delays, better connections between neighbourhoods and improvements to the overall commuting experience.

Traffic congestion also remains a significant concern for motorists and businesses. Construction projects, population growth and the increasing demand for transportation infrastructure will require careful planning.

Public safety, neighbourhood cleanliness, economic development and support for small businesses will also be important measures of the administration's performance.



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Chow will need to balance these competing demands while maintaining responsible municipal finances and ensuring that taxpayers see tangible results from their contributions.

A victory that carries responsibility

The 2026 election results send a clear message about Toronto's political direction.

By returning Olivia Chow to office with more than 532,000 votes, residents have given her a fresh mandate to continue pursuing her vision for Canada's largest city.

Her victory over Brad Bradford was not simply a personal political success. It was also an opportunity to demonstrate that a city government can address economic challenges while maintaining a strong commitment to social inclusion, public services and community well-being.

Bradford's concession speech, in which he expressed his desire to see Chow succeed, also offered an important reminder that political disagreements should not prevent elected representatives from working towards the common good.

Toronto is a diverse city with different communities, economic circumstances and political opinions. Its success depends on finding common ground and ensuring that every neighbourhood has an opportunity to prosper.

Chow has promised to represent all residents, regardless of whom they supported during the election.

Her second term will provide an opportunity to turn those promises into meaningful improvements in people's everyday lives.

For Toronto residents, the expectation is straightforward: a city that is more affordable, safer, better connected and more welcoming for everyone. The election is over, but the work of building that Toronto is only beginning.

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JULIE ATKINSON receives the best type of support during one of her chemotherapy treatments—puppy love from Max, a support dog visiting MSH.

HOW TO SAVE A LIFE

A routine cancer screening provided the early detection Julie Atkinson needed.

BY GLYNIS RATCLIFFE

When Julie Atkinson turned 50 two years ago, she knew the milestone came with a set of instructions, so to speak: schedule a mammogram and a colonoscopy. And while some people avoid these routine cancer screenings—possibly due to misconceptions and fear—Atkinson, a Child Life Specialist who had worked at Oak Valley Health's Markham Stouffville Hospital (MSH) for 29 years, was all in.

"It's just worth getting all the checks you can, so you can be preventative if there is anything," she says.

In February 2025, Atkinson, who also lives in Stouffville, went into her mammogram appointment at MSH with no concerns. However, the next morning, the hospital called to request that she come in for a follow-up ultrasound. When the radiologist saw something suspicious, she recommended a breast biopsy.

Dr. Crystal Pallister, a general surgeon at MSH's Gale & Graham Wright Breast Health Centre, brought her in soon after to share the news: Atkinson, it turned out, had breast cancer. "As soon as Dr. Pallister said it's breast cancer, it hit me that, holy smokes, I'm on the other side of the care spectrum now," she says.

In her mind, there was never any question regarding where she'd go for treatment. "I knew right away that I wanted all my care at MSH," she says, noting the importance of being able to access high-quality treatment so close to home. "I just knew they were going to take really good care of me."

EARLY DETECTION IS BEST

Atkinson was smart to go to her first mammogram, rather than waiting until she found a lump. Although her breast cancer subtype was aggressive, doctors caught it early enough that treatment was straightforward: she underwent a partial mastectomy in March 2025 to remove all the cancer, then completed chemotherapy, radiation at a partnering hospital and a targeted pharmaceutical therapy that ended 13 months later. A later diagnosis could have meant more intensive treatment or extensive surgery, had the cancer spread.



DR. MATEYA TRINKAUS, one of MSH's medical oncologists, encourages all women who are screening age to get regular mammograms.

According to Statistics Canada, the median age at which women are diagnosed with breast cancer is around 62 years old. However, early-onset cancers—generally defined as cancers diagnosed before age 50—are on the rise across North America, and recent studies show that breast cancer rates have risen steadily for decades in Canadian women under 55. Unfortunately, nearly a third of Canadian women who were screening age reported not getting a mammogram in the past three years because they didn't think they needed one.

Dr. Mateya Trinkaus, Atkinson's medical oncologist at MSH, has observed this trend, as the demand for cancer care at the hospital grows each year. It's one of the reasons she's a big proponent of preventative cancer screenings.

Trinkaus encourages women to know their family history, be familiar with how their breasts feel and to start getting mammogram screening by age 50—sooner if there is a family history, or other risk factors for breast cancer. She also encourages patients to avoid processed foods, limit alcohol, quit smoking and exercise daily.

"We have never been better at curing breast cancer, and that starts with early screening and detection and positive lifestyle changes," she notes.

THE CAREGIVER'S TOOLBOX

In her 29-year career as a Child Life Specialist at MSH, Atkinson has supported countless children and their families as they navigate the stress, uncertainty and emotions that come with illness, medical procedures and treatment. So, when it came time to tell her own two teenagers, Avery and Cooper, that she had cancer, she and her husband, Adam, drew on that same Child Life approach.

"We've always been very open and honest with our kids," she says. "They had lots of questions, and we made sure they felt included and supported throughout my breast cancer journey."

Transparency is sometimes the best source of comfort for family members, says Atkinson, which is why her husband and kids were with her each time she rang the bell at MSH's The Shakir Rehmatullah Cancer Centre to celebrate the end of a treatment stage. Her kids also accompanied her to clinic appointments so they could see everything firsthand and meet the team caring for their mom.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BED

Going from practitioner to patient was surreal for Atkinson. However, from the moment of her diagnosis, she says she felt seen by her care team. Although they were friends and colleagues, they recognized her needs as a person.

"I was a health care professional, and I was also navigating fear, uncertainty and the challenges that come with breast cancer," Atkinson says. "Their compassion, expertise and unwavering support reminded me why I have always been proud to work at MSH."

Whether it was the volunteers who offered her warm blankets and snacks during treatments at the chemotherapy clinic, members of the wellness committee sending her messages to see if she needed anything or the presence of the hospital support dog, Max, Atkinson felt cared for at every step of the process.

Last year, the MSH Cancer Centre saw close to 500 new breast cancer cases and completed 7,656 chemotherapy sessions. Thanks to the generous support of the community, the centre is now being renovated, with three new chemotherapy chairs added to accommodate increasing patient volumes. That support also helped fund more advanced equipment for diagnostic imaging, like the MRI breast coil and an automated breast ultrasound, to aid with earlier breast cancer detection.

As she returns to work at the hospital this fall, Atkinson reflects on the new perspective she's bringing to her role, thanks to her experience as a patient. She also underscores the importance of going for these cancer screenings as soon as you're eligible.

"Knowledge is power," she says. "If they find something, you can figure out what's next. If everything is fine, now you have peace of mind." ■

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDIT: DAVID WHITE

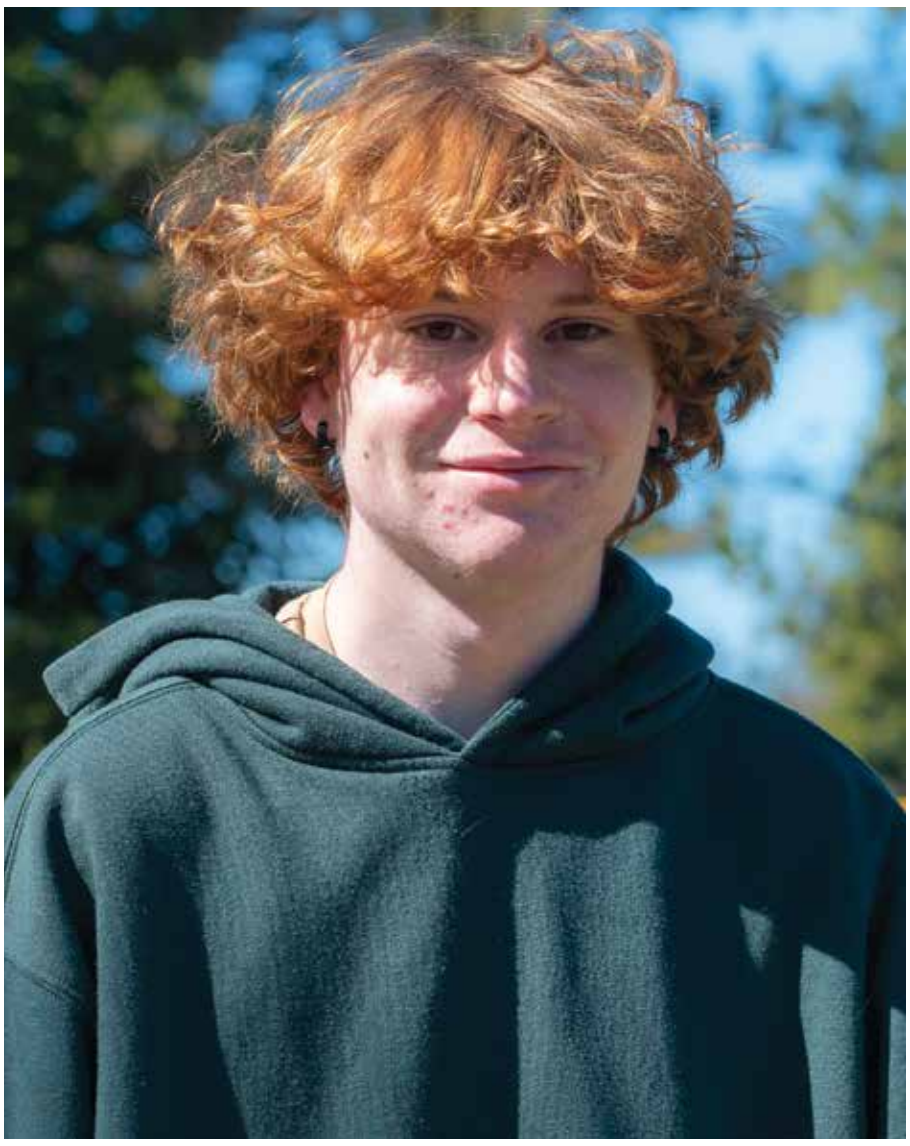
HEALTH & WELLNESS

Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation

CLOSE TO HOME

A new inpatient mental health unit for children and youth will provide community-level support at Oak Valley Health's Markham Stouffville Hospital.

BY GLYNIS RATCLIFFE



LUTHER WOOD received treatment for his OCD through the child and adolescent mental health outpatient program at Markham Stouffville Hospital.

Everyone has done something, unintentionally or not, to hurt another person and later felt guilty about it. When Luther Wood felt as if he'd wronged someone, his guilt took on a life of its own, dominating his thoughts as he replayed the incident over and over. "I was terrified that I was causing hurt to somebody else," says Wood, now 18. "I would feel an overwhelming sense of guilt in my life as a little kid."

These types of intrusive, seemingly never-ending thought cycles are a hallmark of obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), which, in hindsight, Wood can see traces of all the way back to his early childhood. Whether it was a rough-and-tumble session with his brother or an untoward thought about a friend, he couldn't stop himself from dwelling on it, mentally punishing himself for what would be innocuous to anyone else.

OCD is typically portrayed in pop culture as compulsive organizing or handwashing. In reality, the worst part is those unprovoked thoughts, which often drive the sufferer to perform repetitive behaviours to stop them.

"I just thought that was kind of who he was," explains Luther's mom, Julia Wood. "I didn't at all understand the deeper level of the emotional and mental burden."

OUR MOST VALUABLE RESOURCE

Luther is far from alone in his mental health struggles. The Canadian Institute for Health Information estimates that approximately 20 per cent of Canadian children and youth (ages three to 17) have a mental health disorder, while an estimated 400,000 Canadians have been diagnosed with obsessive-compulsive disorder, according to the Canadian Psychological Association.

Right now, Ontario's health system is unable to keep up with the growing demands of this population. The only way to do so is to ensure more hospitals have both outpatient and inpatient units. That's something Oak Valley Health's Markham Stouffville Hospital (MSH) has committed to recently with its announcement to build a six-bed youth mental health inpatient unit to accommodate more patients requiring intensive, long-term treatment.

Dr. Rustom Sethna, Oak Valley Health's Chief of Psychiatry, has witnessed this youth mental health crisis first-hand during his 33-year tenure, and it has made him the hospital's fiercest advocate for the inpatient unit. "There's a critical shortage of inpatient beds dedicated to this demographic, which leads to long wait times, increased emergency department visits and just inadequate care," he notes.

UNTENABLE WAIT TIMES

Luther managed his undiagnosed OCD for most of his childhood, until he hit his teens – which coincided with the first pandemic lockdowns – when things took a turn for the worse. Soon, his compulsions impacted his ability to complete schoolwork and function normally in his daily life.

"I was in a constant state of really severe anxiety," he says. "Feeling like a terrible person all the time and being unable to fix it by myself, no matter how hard I tried."

His parents, after realizing that something serious was happening with their child, took Luther to their family doctor who immediately identified his symptoms as OCD. While anxiety-reducing medication gave him some relief, it didn't work for long.

Thus began the arduous journey of finding an effective treatment plan, an all-too-common problem according to Children's Mental Health Ontario. The organization reports that as of 2020, 28,000 children and youth were on wait lists for mental health treatment across the province, with wait times extending as long as 2.5 years in York Region. "We needed something sooner than that," says Julia.

A LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

Luther's OCD turned out to be too complex for the community adolescent counsellor he tried, so his family doctor referred him to MSH. There, a psychiatrist could oversee his medication treatment while he attended weekly appointments with a social worker.

The outpatient program was the perfect fit for Luther and his parents, offering a combination of therapy and education for the entire family. However, for those who arrive at MSH's ED in crisis and need admission for more intensive treatment and observation, it's an entirely different journey.

"If we determine the child cannot return to their home or community, we place them in a hold in our ED in one of our mental health suites," explains Dr. Sethna. "They're held there, usually supervised by security guards, until we find a suitable child and adolescent treatment facility in the GTA that's willing and able to take them."

The new Child and Adolescent Mental Health Inpatient Unit at MSH will provide a specialized environment and individualized treatment plans designed for today's youth. Offering care for children and adolescents within their community will keep families closer, making recovery and reintegration into everyday life easier. With generous support of the community through Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation, and a $500,000 donation from Hyundai Canada to kick-start a $3.1 million fundraising project, the hospital plans to break ground for the new unit in a few years, pending government approval. "Every child needs to have access to high quality, affordable and culturally competent mental health care in our diverse community," Dr. Sethna adds.

As for Luther, after two years of treatment, his medical team felt he had the tools needed to manage his symptoms and live a full life. He's now in his first year of linguistics at Wilfred Laurier University and can't believe how far he's come.

"I feel like a completely different person." ■



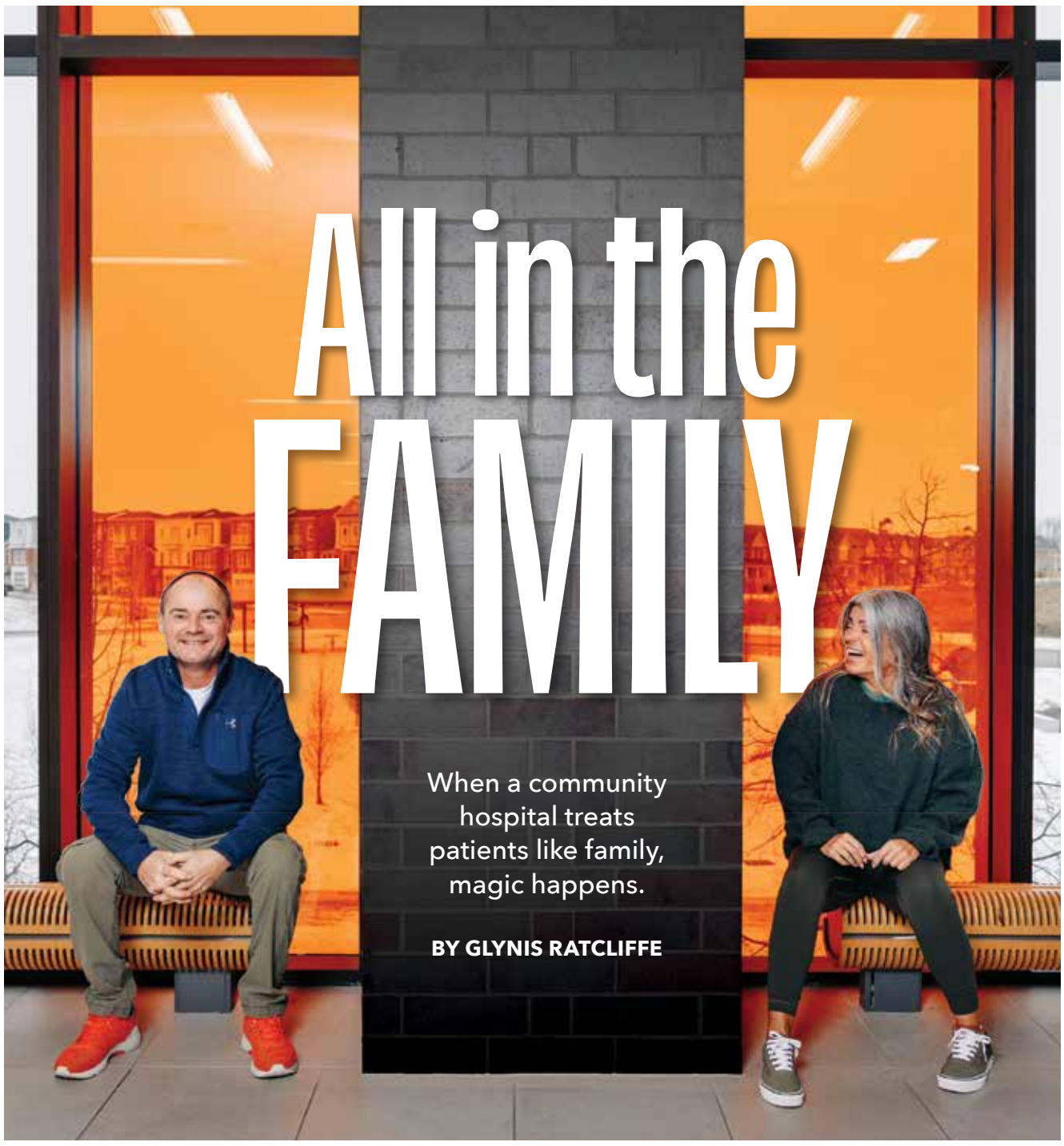
"There's a critical shortage of inpatient beds dedicated to this demographic, which leads to long wait times, increased emergency department visits and just inadequate care."

DR. RUSTOM SETHNA Chief of Psychiatry, Oak Valley Health

TIM FRASER (DR. SETHNA)

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation



All in the FAMILY

When a community hospital treats patients like family, magic happens.

BY GLYNIS RATCLIFFE

TERRY SILIMANIS and his sister, Elaine Makos (right), attended chemotherapy appointments at Markham Stouffville Hospital in 2024.

Like many people, Terry Silimanis tried to ignore the physical discomfort he was feeling for as long as possible. However, in November 2023, after more than a year, the then 49-year-old road construction worker lost a significant amount of weight, found blood in his stool and knew it was time to see a doctor, even if he wasn't happy about it. "I don't like hospitals. If I needed stitches at work, it was basically some tissue and electrical tape," he says with a laugh.

The results of Silimanis's colonoscopy revealed the source of his symptoms—a tumour in his rectum. He was immediately referred to Dr. Sam Babak, a medical oncologist specializing in gastrointestinal cancers at Oak Valley Health's Markham Stouffville Hospital (MSH). Further tests and imaging confirmed it was Stage 4 colorectal cancer that had spread to his liver.

"That was a complete shock to us," says Silimanis's sister Elaine Makos, who has served as his advocate and support throughout treatment.

According to the Canadian Cancer Society, approximately 25,000 Canadians were diagnosed with colorectal cancer in 2024. What's more, scientists around the world have been tracking an increase in colorectal cancer rates for people under the age of 50.

BY THE NUMBERS

69

Canadians are diagnosed with colorectal cancer every day.

SOURCE: CANADIAN CANCER SOCIETY

Although a Stage 4 cancer diagnosis sounds terrifying, advances in treatment and more precise surgical capabilities mean an improved outlook for many patients. "Generally, Stage 4 cancer is not curable, however that doesn't mean it's terminal," explains Dr. Babak. "In colorectal cancer, when we combine different treatment methods, we can cure some of these patients, especially ones that have limited disease spread."

In the case of Silimanis, the cancer had only spread to his liver, making him exactly the type of patient Dr. Babak is referring to.

A MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

In January 2024, Silimanis's care team—which included Dr. Babak, who oversaw chemotherapy, a surgeon for the tumour in his rectum, another surgeon for his liver, a social worker, a nurse navigator, radiation specialists at another hospital and more—worked together to determine the best course of treatment. He potentially required surgeries for two different organs, radiation to reduce the size of the tumour, and chemotherapy to stop the cancer from spreading.

The appointments at MSH became something both Silimanis and his sister looked forward to because of the level of care offered by nurses and support staff in the cancer centre. There, he received chemotherapy in the Systemic Therapy Suite—which also offers immunotherapy and other supportive cancer treatments—in a private patient bay, complete with his own television.

"Honestly, they made chemo enjoyable for him," says Makos. "If you had questions, they weren't afraid to answer. If you wanted a hug, they'd give you a hug. They were like family."

The continued expansion of MSH's cancer centre, which is made possible by the community's generous support through Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation, is vital for delivering compassionate care to this growing region.

COLLECTIVE EFFORT

Not every community hospital has access to the wide variety of advanced treatments and surgeries needed for complex cancer cases. While MSH has an exceptional team of oncologists and surgeons, diagnosing certain cancers and providing the most effective treatments available can be challenging. To bridge that gap, in November 2023, MSH became the fourth cancer centre to partner with the Princess Margaret Cancer Care Network. "The collaboration has enhanced our ability to refer patients to comprehensive survivorship programs, obtain second opinions and refer patients to clinical trials," notes Dr. Mateya Trinkaus, another medical oncologist at MSH.

Within Canada, the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre (PMCC) offers unparalleled access to clinical trials. Ultimately, the goal is to co-partner with PMCC to run some of these trials with joint monitoring, drug administration and patient assessments in Markham.

"Travelling to Toronto is a major obstacle for many patients," adds Dr. Trinkaus. "We hope this goal becomes a reality in the near future so patients can have access to that groundbreaking research closer to home."

A FUTURE OF POSSIBILITIES

After a course of chemotherapy, Silimanis underwent radiation to shrink the tumour as much as possible to save his sphincter and rectum. Unfortunately, due to a lack of response to the treatment and the symptoms he was experiencing as a result of the tumour's location, radiation was cut short.

"I basically hit rock bottom doing radiation," he says. "But that's how you show your colours and bounce back. I just said, 'Screw it, do the surgery.'"

In August 2024, Silimanis had an operation to remove the cancerous tumour, his rectum and one foot of his colon. He also had a colostomy—a surgical procedure to cut an opening in the large intestine for stool to drain from your colon and out of a hole in your abdomen into a bag. While the recovery process has been challenging, Dr. Babak has been impressed with his progress. The next step is an MRI and CT scan of his liver to determine how much additional surgery is possible.

"I think he's going to have a good outcome," Dr. Babak says. "I'm just giving him everything possible to get there."

Silimanis knows Dr. Babak and the rest of the MSH team are rooting for him, too. "He cares. They all care—they know me by name at the clinic, and we joke around every time I'm there. It feels like home now." ■



DR. SAM BABAK treats Oak Valley Health patients who have a wide range of cancers, including colorectal cancer.

SHLOMI AMIGA (TERRY SILIMANIS AND ELAINE MAKOS)

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation

A HEARTBEAT AWAY FROM home

A cardiac event abroad led Dr. Henry Solow back to the hospital he helped shape.

BY GLYNIS RATCLIFFE



DR. HENRY SOLOW walks across the helipad of his trusted community hospital.

The top of a six-storey waterslide at a resort in a foreign country is an especially terrifying place to experience cardiac arrest. That's where Dr. Henry Solow, a 35-year veteran haematologist-oncologist at Oak Valley Health's Markham Stouffville Hospital (MSH), was when his heart stopped in January 2025. Thankfully for Dr. Solow, his son was just ahead of him on the platform.

The Greater Toronto Area–based physician heard his father collapse and immediately sprang into action. He performed CPR and then used the resort's automated external defibrillator to bring his father back to life, before brain damage could occur.

THE DOCTOR BECOMES THE PATIENT

Dr. Solow was rushed to a nearby hospital in Nassau, Bahamas, where medical staff confirmed he was no longer in immediate danger. An echocardiogram revealed the likely reason his heart stopped: severe aortic stenosis due to an undiagnosed heart condition called bicuspid aortic valve disease. However, the local hospital wasn't equipped to perform further tests and recommended he return to Canada. He and his family knew exactly where he needed to be.

"Going to a downtown hospital didn't even enter my mind, because MSH is my home," Dr. Solow explains. "I spent 35 years working there, and it's really like family — it's a community. I knew they would look after me."

Oak Valley Health established a cardiac care partnership with Unity Health Toronto in 2024 that gives patients access to advanced cardiac procedures, with streamlined care and communication between hospitals. The result is that community members can go to their local hospital and trust they'll get world-class care, no matter what they need.

"Our patient population has grown exponentially, and it's skewing older," Dr. Paul Hacker, Oak Valley Health's Lead Cardiologist, explains. "Most cardiac patients end up needing an intervention, so these partnerships are critical for us to be able to provide care to patients closer to home."

Dr. Solow arrived at MSH by air ambulance at 2 a.m. the following morning, where he was admitted to the Cardiology Unit. Later that day, Dr. Russell Fernandes, the attending cardiologist, was shocked to see a colleague become his patient.

"I saw 'Henry Solow' on the email, and I figured he was referring a patient," he explains. "Then I looked again and said, 'Wait a minute, they're talking about him.'"

BORN THAT WAY

The aortic valve usually has three leaflets that close after the heart pumps blood into the aorta. In Dr. Solow's case, he was born with only two, which can lead to a narrowing of the valve (stenosis) and cause the heart to work harder.

Valvular heart disease, which is the umbrella term for Dr. Solow's condition, affects approximately 2.5 per cent of Canadians. While symptoms may be non-existent when the disease is mild, if aortic stenosis develops and remains undiagnosed and untreated, it can lead to stroke, heart failure, blood clots or, as Dr. Solow experienced, cardiac arrest.

Dr. Fernandes performed tests on Dr. Solow to ensure he was stable and to confirm the diagnosis. "With this cardiac condition, you have to be very careful with how you administer treatment, because there can be complications if you're too aggressive," Dr. Fernandes notes.

CONTINUITY OF CARE

As part of the cardiac partnership with Unity Health Toronto, Dr. Solow was transported downtown to St. Michael's Hospital for an angiogram, and a stent was inserted in one of his arteries to improve blood flow. One of the many benefits of this partnership is the seamless integration of patient health information, no matter where they are.

Dr. Solow returned to MSH the same day to recover and a week later, he underwent a transcatheter aortic valve implantation (TAVI) to repair his bicuspid aortic valve. During the TAVI, a replacement valve was inserted through a catheter and implanted inside the existing valve.

In spring 2025, MSH opened its new Cardiac Device Clinic to service patients with implanted pacemakers. It's part of Oak Valley Health's long-term strategy to advance the hospital's cardiac program in the coming years. The stepwise plan would enable cardiologists to implant pacemakers and more advanced devices, and perform angioplasties, cardiac catheterization, and cardiac ablations, among other procedures, says Dr. Hacker.

With a 32 per cent increase in cardiac patients since 2019 and a projected population of 500,000 by 2030, this is one of the many ways MSH is stepping up to provide better cardiac care as the community grows.

Dr. Solow continued his recovery from the TAVI at MSH, was released after three days, and returned to work one month later.

"Going from doctor to patient to doctor was nothing," Dr. Solow insists. "I was just touched, because half the hospital came to see me: doctors, nurses from my clinic and other wards, lab staff. It was nothing short of exceptional." ■



DR. FERNANDES was the attending cardiologist when Dr. Solow arrived at MSH.

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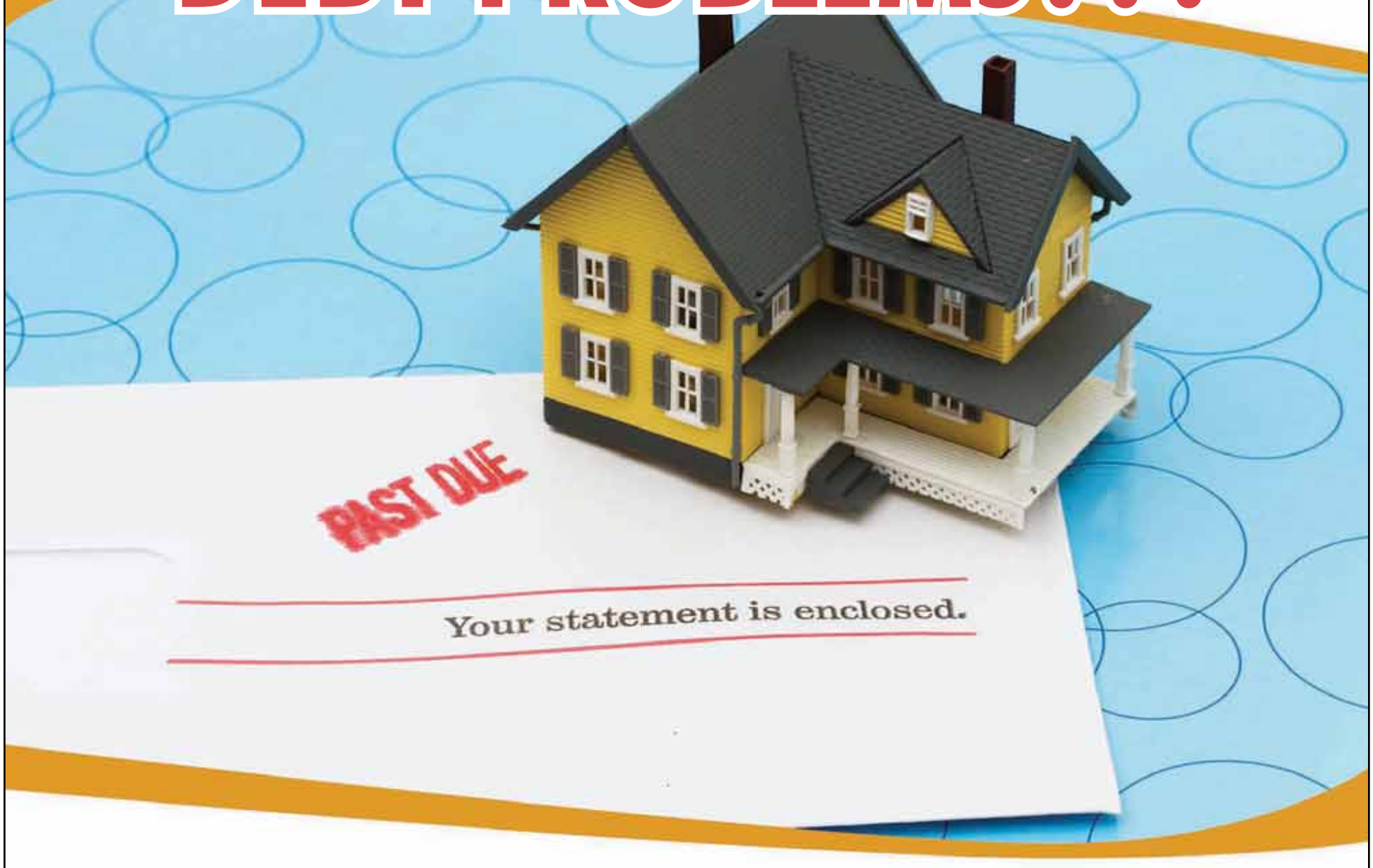
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SHN delivers safest hospital care for second consecutive year

BY: NICHOLAS SMITH, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS, SHN

Scarborough Health Network (SHN) has achieved the lowest hospital harm rate among Ontario's large community and teaching hospitals. The result is based on the latest data from the Hospital Harm Project, a collaboration between the Canadian Institute for Health Information and Healthcare Excellence Canada, which measures unintended harm to inpatients that could potentially have been prevented through evidence-informed practices.

"Becoming Ontario's safest hospital network for the second consecutive year is not by chance. It reflects what is possible when purpose, accountability, and continuous improvement are embedded across an organization," said David Graham, President and CEO, SHN.

The Hospital Harm Project tracks preventable harm in healthcare and medications, hospital-acquired infections, patient accidents, and procedures. The harm rate is the number of affected patients per 100 hospitalizations. For 2025-2026, SHN had a harm rate of 1.9, compared to the national large community hospital and teaching hospital rates of 5.2 and 6.7, respectively; and national hospital rate of 5.8. This means that patients experience harm at SHN between two to three times less than at comparative hospitals in Ontario and around the country.

SHN has achieved these leading harm rate results while responding to Scarborough's rising healthcare demands, which are growing at a



pace unmatched elsewhere in the province. Scarborough not only has one of Ontario's most complex communities with a higher burden of chronic illness, it has also seen the fastest growth in emergency department visits among a population with more than 100,000 residents without a family doctor.

"Despite the growing demands on our health network to meet our community's needs, SHN has never compromised on our commitment to delivering exceptional quality care and patient safety. The plans we have put into action and practice are sustaining and making the difference," said Graham.

"Quality and Patient Safety" is one of the key pillars of SHN's Strategic Plan 2024–2029. This is further reinforced through clear targets in closely aligned corporate scorecard and Quality Improvement Plan, and performance is continually tracked from the frontline to the Board of Directors.

"Every patient deserves safe, high-quality care every time they come to SHN. This achievement reflects the commitment of our teams to delivering evidence-informed care, continuously improving how we work, and placing patient safety at the centre of every decision," said Glyn Boatswain, Executive Vice-President, Clinical Programs, and Chief Nursing and Allied Health Professionals Executive.

"This success belongs to our clinicians, professional staff, and support teams who work every day to prevent harm and improve patient experience. By listening to patients and families, learning from data and outcomes, and strengthening care practices, we are creating safer care for the diverse communities we serve and advancing our goal of zero preventable harm."

Key priorities for ensuring safe patient care include establishing coordinated clinical practice, timely information, and reliable processes to prevent the occurrence of harm, such as pressure injuries, falls, and infections. One example is tiered huddles—brief, focused check-ins that occur at different levels of the organization—which create a structured, supportive way for healthcare teams to communicate. This helps to quickly escalate concerns and drive quality improvements in real-time.

SHN's delirium strategy also demonstrates how teams are addressing potential harm through prevention, early identification, and

consistent care. Delirium prevention bundles, standardized assessments, and reduced use of benzodiazepines and sedatives help protect older adults from avoidable harm. Updated order sets, provider education, and patient resources also promote safer sleep and anxiety management during hospital stays.

Additionally, SHN is part of a hospital-led research project on delirium that is exploring an AI-powered tool and electronic medical record data to identify high-risk patients who may benefit from targeted prevention.

SHN is leveraging technology with barcode medication administration scanning. Staff scan barcodes to confirm the right patient, medication, dose, route, and timing, while automatically documenting each step in the electronic medical record through the Epic clinical information system. Together, this technology and standardized practice help reduce medication errors and support safer, more reliable care.

That commitment to leveraging technology to improve care and safety was recognized in August when the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society awarded our organization Stage 7 of the Electronic Medical Record Adoption Model. The designation places SHN among the first large, multi-site hospital systems in Ontario to achieve the highest international benchmark for digital health excellence.

SHN's focus on quality and safety has also been recognized through several national designations. In the summer of 2025, SHN achieved Quality Improvement Status as a Choosing Wisely Canada Hospital for reducing unnecessary tests and treatments and became the third organization in Canada recognized as an Age-Friendly Health System by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement for its commitment to care for older adults.

While achieving the lowest harm rate for the second year in a row marks an important milestone in delivering the safest care, SHN remains focused on the work ahead. This includes continuing to analyze performance data, share learnings across teams, and invest in practices and technologies that help prevent harm. The *Love, Scarborough* campaign helps accelerate this work by funding investments that enhance the exceptional quality care for our community.

Doing more with dialysis: A renewed patient experience at SHN

BY: MELODY KESHISHIAN, COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR, SHN

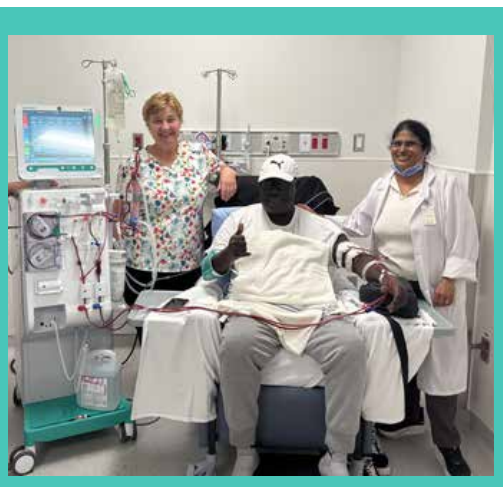
For the thousands of patients who receive dialysis through Scarborough Health Network's (SHN) Regional Nephrology Program each year, it is more than a simple treatment, it is a way of life.

Supported by donors through the *Love, Scarborough* campaign, SHN completed the largest dialysis redevelopment in its history, a project dedicated to creating larger, more private, and more modern dialysis units at the Centenary and General hospitals, co-designed with patient and community input.

The new units provide a renewed experience of comfort, safety, and dignity for patients like 70-year-old Scott Spence-Lee, who has lived with kidney failure since 2018, and who was one of the patients who helped SHN choose the new hemodialysis technology for the units.

"The new space is more private, more modern, and much more conducive to treatment. It is a comforting space," Scott shared.

"I love my nurses and care team."



Read Scott's story:

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation

SANATAN MANDIR CULTURAL CENTRE CELEBRATES $111,000 RAISED FOR MARKHAM STOUFFVILLE HOSPITAL



Representatives from Sanatan Mandir Cultural Centre (SMCC) present a cheque for $111,000 to Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation – L-R: Mayor Frank Scarpitti, City of Markham, Nayna Thakkr, Parinda Purohit, Matteo Paolucci, Coordinator, Community Relations & Events, MSH Foundation, Allan Bell, VP, Community Relations & Corporate Partnerships, MSH Foundation, Sanjivbhai Bhatt, President, SMCC, Mahesh Chokshi, Event Chair, SMCC Walkathon, Koki Patel, Pankaj Shah, President Elect, SMCC, and Haresh Mehta, Event Co-Chair, SMCC Walkathon.

Sanatan Mandir Cultural Centre (SMCC) proudly presented a cheque of $111,000 to support Oak Valley Health's Markham Stouffville Hospital (MSH) during a special ceremony held on October 18, a date selected to mark the celebration of Navaratri.

The funds were raised through the SMCC Charity Walkathon, that took place on September 13. Approximately 300 participants, sponsors, and volunteers came together for a successful day of fundraising to advance patient care at MSH.

"We are incredibly proud of what we have accomplished together through the SMCC Charity Walkathon," says Mahesh Chokshi, Event Chair, Sanatan Mandir Cultural Centre Charity Walkathon. "This achievement would not have been possible without the generosity of our participants, sponsors, volunteers, and everyone who contributed. It is a privilege to come together for such an important cause and give back to a hospital that means so much to our community."

MSH serves one of the fastest growing and most culturally diverse regions in Canada, and the demand for care continues to grow. Government funding alone can't cover all the hospital's priority needs. Funds raised through community initiatives like the SMCC Charity Walkathon help provide leading-edge equipment and technology, while strengthening programs and services that respond to the needs of patients and families. "We are honoured that Sanatan Mandir Cultural Centre chose MSH as the beneficiary of its Charity Walkathon for the first time this year," says Allan Bell, Vice President, Community Relations & Corporate Partnerships, MSH Foundation. "Partnerships like this are vital to our hospital's future. We thank SMCC for investing in our community's health and well-being."

Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation exists to enable the growth of Oak Valley Health's Markham Stouffville Hospital by raising funds and awareness for its ongoing priorities and needs. Donations from the community fund life-saving medical equipment that helps to ensure the delivery of first-class health care at MSH.

SPECIAL FEATURE

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SPECIAL FEATURE

Aviation & Airlines

PERMISSION, COMMISSIONS AND OMISSIONS OF / BY AIRBUS

By: Kane Siva



When Timber merchant, business magnate and founder of Boeing company, William Edward Boeing in 1916, started his Pacific Aero Products Company, renamed in 1917 as Boeing Airplane Company, he would have never, never envisaged that there would be formidable competitor mushrooming in Toulouse, France, called Airbus Consortium, in 1970, a joint venture initially between France and Germany, later Spain & England joined hands to make it a powerhouse for aircraft building. This is the birth of a great European Aviation industries. I remember the initial reaction from Boeing was to scoff it off. But Airbus had already mapped out their future unknown to Boeing.

The first commercial aircraft to fly with Analog "Fly -by -Wire, FBW, system was the Supersonic Concorde in 1969 using Analogue system. Airbus bagged the credit of being the first to fly a commercial aircraft built with Digital Fly-by-wire and control stick, and with Flight Envelope Protections to enhance safety. This Indigenous aircraft A320, debut was in 1988. French Engineer and test pilot Bernard Ziegler of Airbus who served as Airbus's Senior Vice President of Engineering introduced an innovative flight system to commercial airlines, replacing traditional physical cables and pulleys with electronic signals and computers, with Airbus 320. Ziegler also developed a system that prevents the pilot from stalling the aircraft accidentally, Flight Envelope Protection System and Airbus, and Ziegler took commercial aviation to a new level. I consider this as the Permission the global aviation community bestowed on Airbus.

Now let us analyze the commissions and the omissions. From its infancy Airbus rode in great strides and drew Ire and Fire from Boeing. It became a thorn in the flesh for Boeing. Airbus and Boeing were competing to capture the market with their products. Airbus was not a dominant force at the beginning; they had a market share of 18% only in mid 90s. Airbus's head of the sales team John Leahy was a bold and cocky New Yorker, from Queens, who started his life as a "Checker Cab Taxi driver", never took "No", as an answer, completed his education, an MBA, obtained his Commercial Pilot and joined Piper aircraft industries as a Marketing executive, but never sold a single aircraft during his tenure, and had a good knowledge of aircraft and its functions. Moreover, the management at Piper aircraft was highly taken when reading a reference from Chuck Yeager, the famous test pilot, US Airforce, who was the first to fly at supersonic speed Mach1. John Leahy could "Sell Coal in Newcastle, anytime and always. In mid-80 when Airbus was expanding its market to north and south America, John Lehay Joined the sales team in 1985 as he had a quite knowledge American and North American markets. He joined Airbus North America, as it was then called, and it covered U.S. and Canada. With in 3 years at Airbus John was named head of US and Canada sales team. John had an uncanny sales approach. America has been the turf of Boeing from its inception. John Lehay used all his tactics to penetrate the American market, Boeing fortress, and was not an easy task. The real breakthrough came in 1986 when Leahy managed to strike a deal to sell A 320 to Northwest Airlines (now defunct). Leahy was a ruthless and an aggressive salesman. He pitched to Northwest, if it agreed to buy 100, A320, he would sell at an attractive price and Northwest agreed, but later Northwest suggested to Leahy, that initially they would buy 10 aircraft, but at the price quoted for 100 aircraft. The management at Airbus was not happy at all with this proposal. Leahy was being the shrewdest salesman, convinced the then CEO, Jean Pierson to sell and Airbus went ahead with the deal. This was the breakthrough Leahy wanted in the heart of the American markets. Boldened by his mastermind sales strategy, Leahy followed this approach with other airlines, especially with American Airlines. It was then said in this fashion: The legendary "400 aircraft deal" tied to Airbus's Master salesman John Leahy and American Airlines deal, refers to two deeply intertwined milestones in aviation history. This record breaking 2011 American Airlines split order and the eventual corporate consolidation that established American Airlines as the largest operator of Airbus aircraft in the world and Airbus for selling 400 aircraft. Then other airlines followed suit and used this approach to place orders for Airbus aircraft. Once the management played into the hands of Leahy s business and sales acumen, Pierson was solidly assured that Leahy would sell many aircraft for Airbus and they never had a turning back.

Its's noteworthy to mention at this juncture when Leahy joined in 1985, they had a market share of less than 18% and in 2018 when he left, Airbus market share was more than 55%. Now let me discuss the modus operandi behind all this success which has some or many gray areas. This was an Air War literally, fought on corporate boards.

In corporate business certain persuasion is done to entice customers worldwide and it is legal within certain limits. But it looks like Airbus exceeded its limits by a wide margin based on the convictions and the judgement delivered in UK Courts on bribery charges in 2020. On 31st January 2020, Airbus agreed to pay a record of 3 billion Sterling Pounds in penalties after admitting it had paid huge bribes to land contracts in 20 countries. The UK Guardian Newspaper, quoting Guardian, "Airbus, Europe's largest aerospace multinational, is to pay a record of 3 billion British Sterling Pounds in penalties after admitting it had paid huge bribes to land contracts in 20 countries and this as an "endemic corruption" within Airbus, and this was serious". Allison Clare of the Serious Fraud Bureau told the court, Airbus paid bribes in Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Taiwan and Ghana between 2011 and 2015. The court summed it up this way: The judges declared that for nearly a decade or more, Airbus used a network of secret agents, intermediaries and shell companies, to pay large scale backhanders to officials in foreign countries, to land high-value contracts. The judges minced no words, declared that the corruption was "grave, pervasive and pernicious". This was a heavy-handed indictment. I believe it is high time that Airbus turned a new page

Aviation & Airlines

SPECIAL FEATURE



in its corporate sales practices. It is a real shame that an innovative consortium entity resorted to all these practices instead of allowing its aircraft to speak for themselves. The competition must be healthy and not cut-throat. Airbus surpassed Boeing in great style with great aircraft and increased its market share. Boeing s downfall came with the 737 Max crashes, since the management knew that MCAS was having issues, but this was kept away from customers. In my view Airbus should have promoted their products on the strength of their quality rather than paying backhanders large sums of money.

I like to emphasize there is a fine line between lobbying, commissions and bribes and its legality. Also, it lies in its transparency and intention. since I read an online statement by an official related to aviation on this matter elsewhere, contrary to what I perceive. Lobbying is a legal, regulated attempt to influence public policy through information and campaigning or advocating for it. Bribe is an illegal act involving a direct exchange of value, (Quid pro quo) to corruptly influence an official's actions. You can classify a Commission as a legitimate act, agreed contractually to pay for services rendered by a third party, but paying it to a government official or high individuals associated with the project to secure the deal can be termed as hidden "commissions" and can be portrayed as "kickbacks or bribes". A bribe is an illegal payment in any country I believe. Airbus used this modus operandi in many countries to sell and in our great Canada too. Canada's Airbus affair refers to allegations of secret commissions paid to then Prime Minister Brian Mullroney and other members of his ministry in exchange for then-crown corporation Air Canada's purchase of large number of Airbus Jets, 32 in total A 320 aircraft. Brian Mulroney denied all the allegations and filed a defamation suit against the Canadian government. I knew it was settled out of court, but my contention is this: Airbus's tentacles never spared anyone or any government and this is saddest episode in the history of Airbus, if I may phrase it. Airbus killed many people and establishments figuratively by this episode without crashing any Airbus aircraft. Many people, who were backhanders and dealers saw their life was crushed or crashed.

Let us understand or highlight the moral and ethical behaviors of these practices to the business world at large and this falls in line as Airbus's omissions.

Airbus industries are undoubtedly the largest European Aerospace, operates in a highly volatile and competitive market, producing military, defense and commercial aircraft and established itself, if I am permitted to say, produced almost flawless aircraft, and even if there were any flaws, never hesitated to do a 360 to acknowledge and fix it. With these glowing tributes, Airbus executives practiced a real secretive and hidden corporate culture, of operating their business through secretive management operatives outside the board of management. This action involved various shell companies, financial institutions and other formats, so these actions will not be traced back to the Airbus management team. This operation was done out of France. CEO was Tom Enders, was fully aware of this, but I believe they could not pin it down to him, but he resigned eventually.

Whatever the morals Airbus management team believed or used at that time, certainly it completely eroded its corporate status as a great commercial aircraft designer and producer. Not only this, but also, it brought lots of calamities worldwide in certain government institutions, political establishments resulting in bribery investigation and people were jailed for their corrupt behavior that was especially induced by Airbus.

It is left for the readers to judge the merits of these corrupt practices and deliver their own judgement.

In a competition or a race, we run to win, but not at any cost. This should be the inherent Motto in all walks of life.

My submissions, on these commissions and omissions ends in/ with a passion, quoting Henry David Thoreau, "How to Win - Keep up the fires of thought, and all will go well…. You fail in your thoughts, or you prevail in your thoughts alone".



K.N. Sivagnanasunderam (Blue)
Former Flight Operations Officer, Air Ceylon Ltd.
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SPECIAL FEATURE

WORDS OF PEACE

EXCERPTS FROM THE BOOK "BREATH" BY PREM RAWAT

A VALUABLE GIFT



You, me, everybody in this world, we judge ourselves. 'How am I? What degree do I have? How big is my house? How many cars do I have? How many clothes do I have? How many rings do I have? How much do I have in my bank account?

We are somebody else. And we say 'I wish I was like that. That is what I want.

But can you judge yourself with a different scale? It is called 'the scale of life'. Then you will see the most magnificent of gifts comes to you; the gift of breath.

Even if you live up to be a hundred years old, that is only 36,500 days.

It is not very much! How important it is that every day needs to be in contentment. Understand the value of every breath that comes into you.

Breath is necessary, so it has been removed from your supervision.

ACCEPTANCE

Accept that simplicity. Accept that joy in your life. Everyday take a step closer to this existence. Everyday becomes a true disciple of this breath.

When this breath comes into you== it just did nobody can say

'I have been breathing for sixty years. So, it is okay if I don't breathe for six hours.' No, it is not okay. Each breath is needed. Everyday joy and peace need to be accepted felt, understood.

Be an apprentice. Learn something from life. every single day, because life is giving you the opportunity to learn. The value of each breath is being taught. The value of this existence is being taught.

SPECIAL FEATURE

Essentials of "Perinpa Veedu" or Eternal Bliss



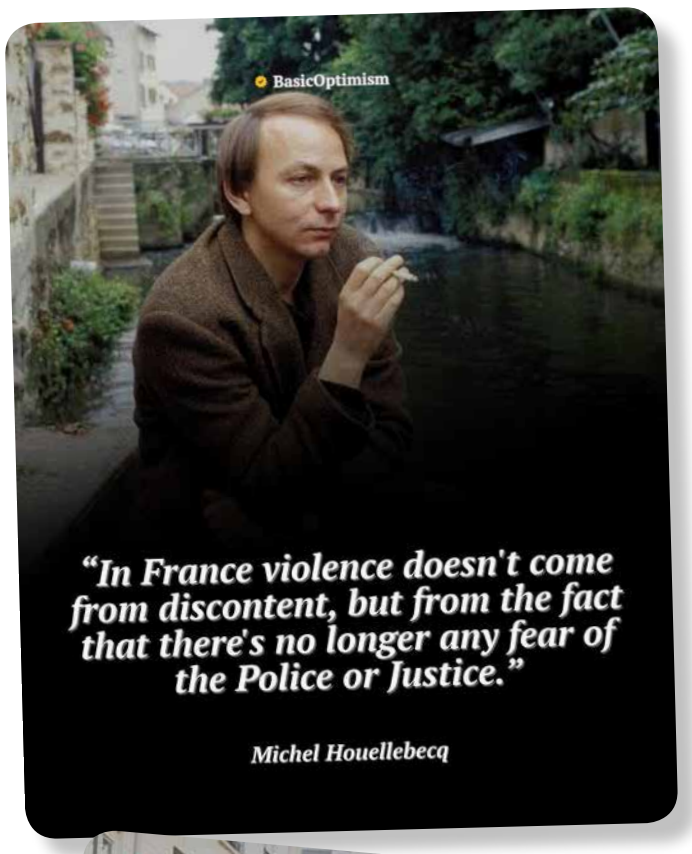
By: J A Rajah

1. It is the eternal happiness one enjoys when one completes his/her life on earth.
2. In other words, it is heavenly life. The glory of God shines there.
3. Heaven is a wonderful place full of beauty and grace.
4. The streets are of gold in that radiant land.
5. Saints of all nations go there.
6. The walls are of Jasper with twelve foundations.
7. There is rest from our toil and life without care.
8. The gushing River of Life is flowing there.
9. The Father and the Son reign from the height of Mt. Zion there.
10. The Lamb's Book of Life of those who enter is kept there.

Awwayar declared that when one overcomes the joys and cares of this world, he becomes fit to enter the "Perinpa-Veedu"- Home of Eternal Happiness.



BY THULASI MUTTULINGAM



Speaking of developing artistic creativity in Jaffna, I bought that wall clock for Rs.15000 at a travelling Malaysian hawkers in the Nallur Festival recently.

Two youths stopped by and demanded to know, "You bought a clock for Rs.15000 when you can buy one locally for Rs.5000?"

Yes, because the decor is worth the extra price.

They are both artistic but thus far hadn't realised they could make a living through art.

"If that's all it takes, we can set up a factory to make decorative household items at an extra markup too."

Sure, you do that.

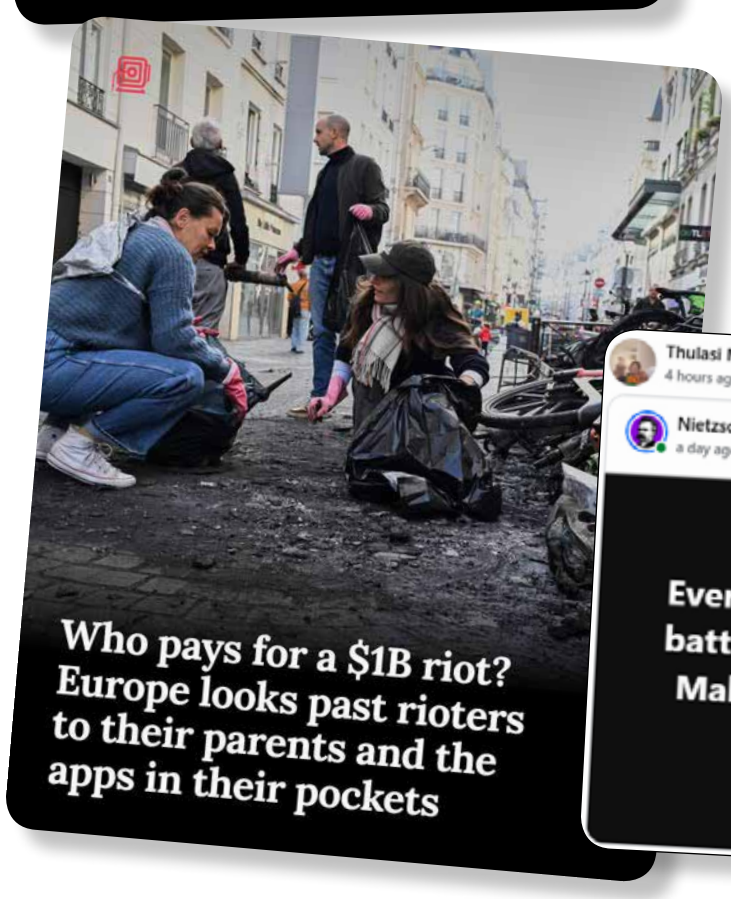
I'll buy them

As for the wall murals, a senior economics academic paying hefty money to individually coach his top students for IELTS, stopped by while the young Jaffna artist was at work one day and said, "well that's nice and all, but what's going to put rice on your plate?"

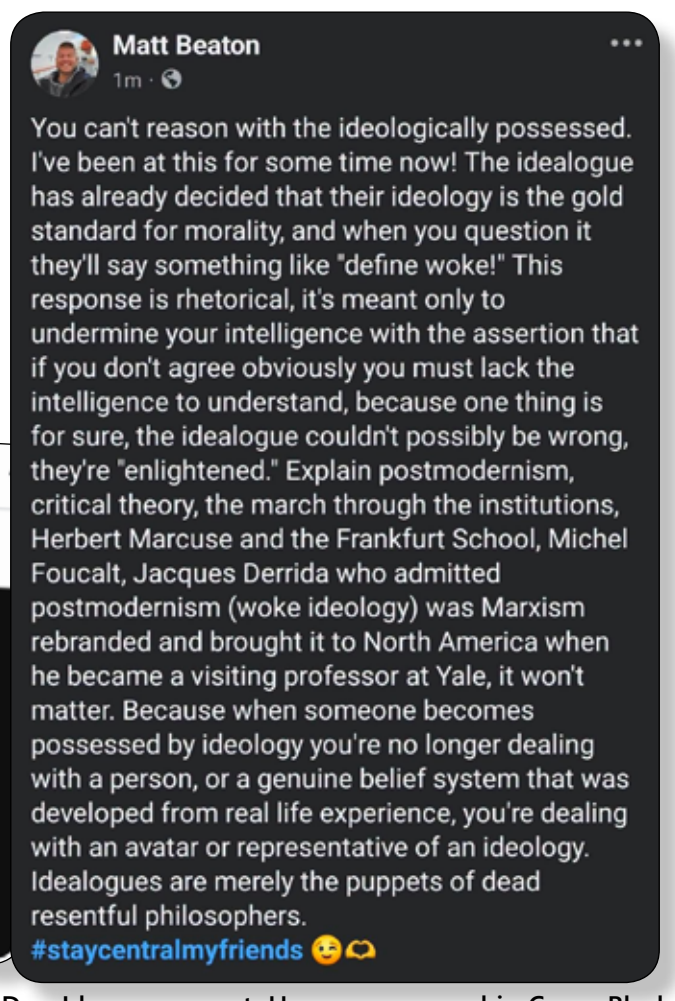


I told him I was paying her more than his top graduates could hope to earn in their first jobs.

Yes, art pays!









This is One Eared Bob. He was the most Alpha Dog I have ever met. He was our guard in Camp Black Cloud, Ghazni, Afghanistan. He was the leader of the pack of wild dogs that surrounded our FOB. He subdued any other dog that challenged his leadership by putting them in a belly up position and standing over them with a deep menacing growl filled with intent if the subdued dog tried to defy him. I never saw a single belligerent dog stand up to him successfully.



He somehow knew which dogs were friendly to humans and which ones were not. He allowed friendly dogs to enter our area and refused entry to the ones that were dangerous.

We did not train him to do this. One Eared Bob did not accept training. One Eared Bob did whatever he wanted to do. Yet, somehow, he attached himself to us and voluntarily gave his service without any human guidance.

The first time I met him, I was introduced by another soldier at the FOB, who would soon be leaving for another assignment.

The second time I met One Eared Bob was a few nights later. It was dark that night, no moon at all, not even a sliver. In Afghanistan, the nights are much darker because of the absence of light pollution. I was walking from my b-hut to our TOC when I heard the menacing growl and sensed it getting closer very quickly. The next thing I knew, Bob was an inch away and sniffing me, snarling, teeth bared, his one good ear laid back. I felt my life would be over in about half a second, so I said, "Bob, It's me. Remember me boy?". I put my hand out letting him sniff it, all the while hoping he wasn't going to rip it off my arm. He stood up, pushed me slightly with his paws, grunted and walked away. I was so relieved. He could have ripped my throat out in a second. I now realized how important it was to introduce One Eared Bob to anyone who came into our camp.

It's been 20 and a half years since I left Camp Black Cloud and I always think of my teammates and the personal connections we made. I am sure Bob is gone now, and when I remember our time in Afghanistan, I think of Bob, too. He was a part of our Team. He warned us when someone was approaching our gate and protected us from intruders, both human and animal.

I am forever grateful to have met One Eared Bob. I know, wherever he is, dog paradise or dog heaven, whoever is there with him is well protected. Good boy Bob. Well done. See less

SPECIAL FEATURE

TAKING TAMIL TO THE WORLD, BRINGING THE WORLD TO TAMIL



Dr. T. Sankara Saravanan Shares Insights on International Book Fairs and the Global Future of Tamil Literature in Toronto. The rich literary heritage of Tamil and opportunities to introduce its literature to a global readership were the focus of an engaging meeting and discussion titled *“Ulakeḷām Tamizhosai”* (Let the Sound of Tamil Resound Across the World), featuring Dr. T. Sankara Saravanan, an educator, writer, translator, and Tamil scholar. The event was held at the Canadian Tamil Congress office on October 20 2026, bringing together members of Toronto’s Tamil literary community to discuss international publishing, translation, and the future of Tamil literature.

Dr. Saravanan shared insights from his participation in major international book fairs, highlighting the importance of building relationships between publishers, securing translation rights, and creating opportunities for Tamil literary works to reach readers across languages and countries.

International Book Fairs: Beyond Selling Books

Dr. Saravanan traced the historical development of the Frankfurt Book Fair, discussing its connections with the growth of printing and the circulation of Bible editions. Over time, book fairs evolved into major international gatherings featuring a wide range of publications, from children’s books to fiction and other literary works.

Today, the Frankfurt Book Fair is one of the world’s leading publishing events, bringing together publishers, authors, literary agents, translators, and other industry professionals. Its international reach has earned it comparisons with the Olympics of the publishing industry.

Tamil publishers have participated in the fair for many years. Pioneering publishing houses, including Kalachuvadu, have helped introduce Tamil publications to international audiences. Dr. Saravanan noted that he had participated in Tamil Nadu Government initiatives to promote Tamil literature abroad and had attended the Frankfurt Book Fair over the past four years. He also highlighted the Bologna Children’s Book Fair in Italy, a major international gathering dedicated to children’s books and publishing.

One important distinction between local book fairs and major international publishing fairs is their commercial focus. While local fairs primarily enable readers to purchase books, international publishing fairs place considerable emphasis on negotiating translation and publishing rights. These agreements allow books published in one language to be translated and released in another, helping literary works reach new markets and cross linguistic and cultural boundaries.

The Frankfurt Book Fair runs for five days, with the first three generally focused on publishing professionals and industry representatives, followed by two days open to the public. Beyond business negotiations, the fair also celebrates literature and its diverse cultural traditions.



These photos were taken when Dr. Shankar Saravanan delivered a speech on the topic ‘Tamil Around the World’ at the Canadian Tamil Congress office on October 20, 2026.
- Courtesy Padaiyal Media.

Tamil Literature on the World Stage

A central theme of Dr. Saravanan’s presentation was the need to showcase Tamil’s ancient heritage and continuing literary vitality at international book fairs.

Although Tamil is one of the world’s oldest living classical languages, many of its literary works remain relatively unfamiliar to international readers. Expanding translation opportunities and building relationships with foreign publishers are therefore essential to increasing Tamil literature’s global visibility.

The Tamil Nadu Government has undertaken initiatives to promote Tamil books internationally, including supporting translation and facilitating connections between Tamil publishers and their counterparts in other countries. Dr. Saravanan noted that countries such as Germany, South Korea, and China have established programmes to support the translation and international circulation of their literary works.



Dr. Saravanan was introduced by Mr. Sivan Ilangko. The event was attended by several writers and Tamil enthusiasts.

In a similar spirit, Tamil Nadu has been organising its own international book fair. The three-day event provides a platform for Tamil publishers to meet international publishers, explore translation opportunities, negotiate publishing rights, and establish partnerships.

The guiding principle behind these efforts is “Taking Tamil to the World, Bringing the World to Tamil.” This vision encompasses both introducing Tamil literary works to international readers and making world literature accessible to Tamil readers through translation.

Can Tamil Novels Find a Wider International Audience?

The discussion in Toronto turned to the challenges facing Tamil fiction in its quest for wider international recognition.

Dr. Saravanan expressed concern about the limited global visibility of Tamil novels and encouraged Canadian Tamil writers and publishers to consider translating their works into English and subsequently into French. Such translations could introduce Canadian Tamil literature to wider readerships and make it more accessible to international publishers.



He cited the works of acclaimed Tamil novelist Perumal Murugan as an example of how translation and international publishing can help Tamil literature reach

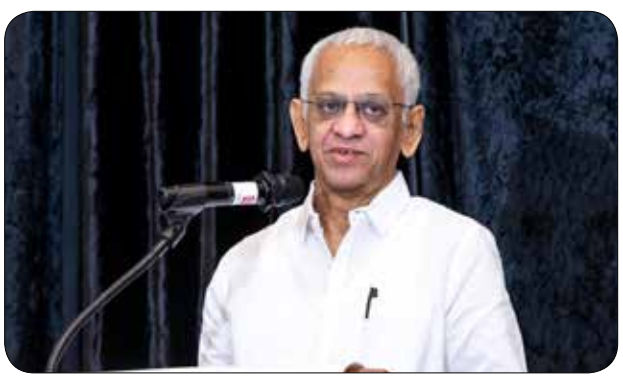
Please see pages 25...

SPECIAL FEATURE

TAMIL LITERARY GARDEN HONOURS LITERARY EXCELLENCE AT 26TH ANNUAL AWARDS GALA IN TORONTO













Tamil Literary Garden (TLG) celebrated its 26th annual awards gala in Toronto on October 18, honouring distinguished writers, scholars, translators, and emerging student talent for their contributions to Tamil literature and cultural heritage. The gala featured renowned Tamil writer Professor Perumal Murugan as the chief guest.

The evening's highest honour, the A. Muttulingam Iyal Viruthu (Lifetime Achievement Award), was presented to Trotsky Marudu (Maruthappan Trotsky Marudu) in recognition of his distinguished contributions to the Tamil cultural and artistic landscape.

Several other literary awards were presented in recognition of excellence across diverse fields. B. Thirusenthalai (India) received the Fiction Award, while two Non-fiction Awards were given, to Thooku Selvam (India) and to Dr. Sankara Saravanan (India). The Poetry Award went to Sivarasa Sivakarunakaran (Sri Lanka), and Dr. Geetha Sukumaran (Canada) received the Translation Award.

Student Scholarship Awards Reintroduced

A notable highlight of this year's gala was the reintroduction of TLG's student scholarship awards, reaffirming the organization's commitment to encouraging young people to engage with literature and explore their cultural heritage.

The awards were based on more than 200 essays around the world, written on the theme, "Reading to Discover My Cultural Identity." Rishi Sriskanthan of Whitby, Ontario, won first prize. Two Second prizes were awarded to Thiruvathirai Nithusa of Kandawalai, Kilinochchi, Sri Lanka, and to Adarsh Narayanan of Breinigsville, Pennsylvania.

The return of the student awards provides a platform for young people to reflect on the relationship between reading, cultural identity, and their place in an increasingly interconnected world.

Promoting Tamil Literature on the Global Stage

Established in Toronto in 2001, Tamil Literary Garden is a registered Canadian charitable organization dedicated to promoting and advancing Tamil language, literature, and scholarship. Over more than two decades, it has developed an international presence, connecting writers, scholars, translators, educators, students, and readers across geographical and cultural boundaries.

Through its annual literary awards, TLG recognizes outstanding achievements in creative writing, non-fiction, poetry, translation, and lifetime contribution. Its awards have become prestigious distinctions within the Tamil literary community, celebrating both established literary figures and individuals whose work enriches the language and its literary traditions.

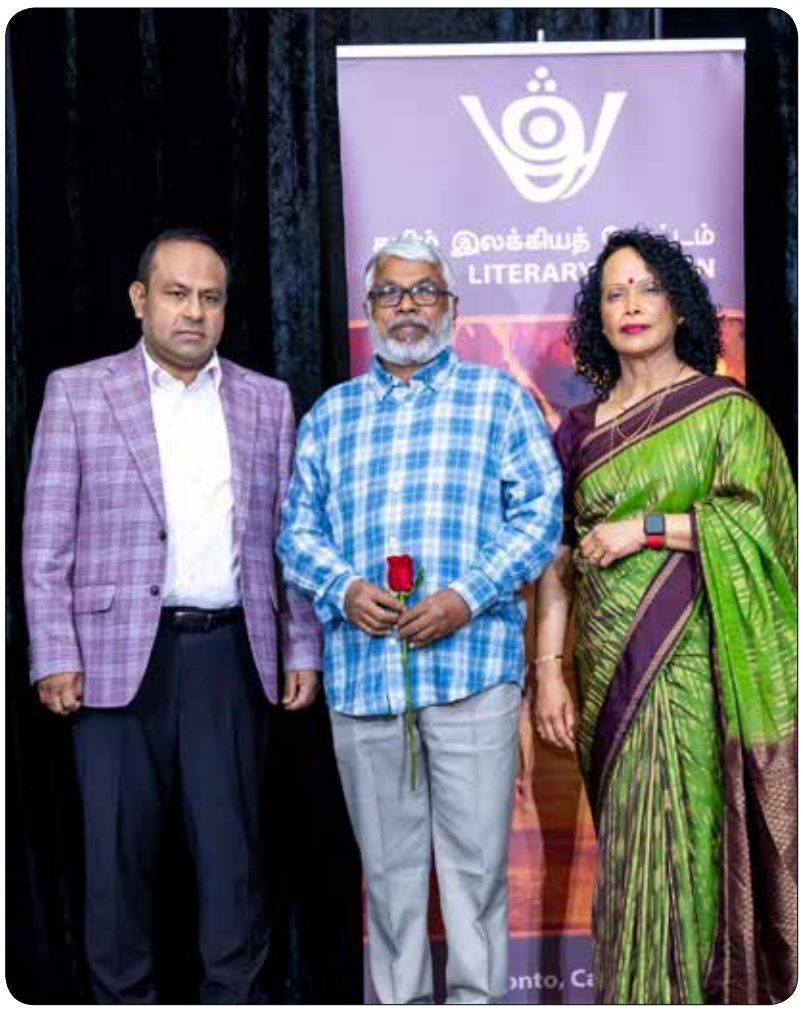
By honouring distinguished contributors while encouraging the next generation of readers and writers, Tamil Literary Garden continues to play an important role in sustaining Tamil's rich literary heritage and expanding its reach to audiences around the world.

The 26th annual awards gala served as a celebration of literary achievement, cultural continuity, and the enduring power of reading and writing to connect generations and communities through the Tamil language.

The Directors of Tamil Literary Garden consist of Prof. Venkat Venkatararamanan, N.K. Mahalingam, S.J. Ramprashan, Appadurai Muttulingam, Selvam Arulanandam, Thirumurthi Ranganathan, Dr. R. Cheran, Sivan Ilangko and Raja Mahendran.

SPECIAL FEATURE










Continue from pages 23...



readers beyond its original linguistic boundaries.

The discussion also raised a practical question: Why is it difficult for novels published in Canada or Sri Lanka to be exported to India and distributed there commercially?

Participants expressed concern about obstacles that prevent Tamil books published in different countries from reaching readers in India. Dr. Saravanan indicated that he would raise the issue with officials of the Government of India.

The exchange underscored the importance of improving distribution networks, addressing barriers to cross-border book sales, and strengthening cooperation among Tamil publishers in India, Sri Lanka, Canada, and elsewhere.

For Tamil literature to expand its international reach, translation alone may not be sufficient. Sustainable publishing partnerships, effective distribution systems, financial support, and access to international literary networks will also be essential.

Dr. T. Sankara Saravanan: An Educator Dedicated to Tamil

The event was organised by Mr. Sivan Ilangko, who also introduced Dr. Saravanan to the audience. Mr. Ilangko initiated and led the campaign to establish the Chair in Tamil Studies at the University of Toronto Scarborough and holds leadership positions in several community organisations.

Dr. Saravanan is an educator, writer, translator, and Tamil scholar whose professional work encompasses education, translation initiatives, and academic publishing. He has contributed to translation projects associated with the Tamil Nadu Textbook and Educational Services Corporation and has been involved in initiatives associated with the Chennai International Book Fair and events connected with the Jaipur Literature Festival. He teaches Tamil language and literature, as well as Indian history, to students preparing for India's civil services examinations. He currently serves as Principal of the All India Civil Services Coaching Centre (AICSCC), Tamil Nadu Government.

Although he holds a doctoral degree in veterinary science, his deep interest in Tamil has led him to devote considerable effort to promoting the language and its literature internationally. Through his participation in major book fairs in Frankfurt, Sharjah, and Bologna, he has helped highlight Tamil literary works and translation initiatives on the international stage. His literary contributions have also received recognition in Canada. Dr. T. Sankara Saravanan received the Best Non-Fiction Award for 2025 from the Tamil Literary Garden for his book *Vaigarai Vasagan Padhivukal*. This recognition further reflects his contributions to Tamil writing and literary discourse.

His professional journey represents a distinctive combination of academic expertise, commitment to education, and dedication to the promotion of Tamil.

A Collective Effort to Advance Tamil Literature

The Toronto gathering provided an opportunity to reflect on both the achievements and the challenges involved in bringing Tamil literature to a wider international audience.

The discussions highlighted the important roles that writers, translators, publishers, cultural organisations, and governments can play in strengthening Tamil's international presence. They also emphasised the need for greater cooperation among Tamil literary communities across national borders.

Translating more Tamil novels into English, French, and other languages could open doors to new readerships and publishing opportunities. Stronger distribution networks and sustained international partnerships would help ensure that translated works reach readers and remain commercially viable.

The vision of taking Tamil to the world while bringing world literature to Tamil readers offers a meaningful framework for these efforts. With continued collaboration and investment, Tamil literature can gain greater visibility in the international publishing industry while preserving and extending its remarkable literary legacy.

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Sritharan Thurairajah CLU, CHS

Simple Solution in a Critical Situation

SPECIAL FEATURE

HER GREAT LOVE



Kumar Punithavel

The title Kurunthokai literally means collection of short ones in Tamil. Traditionally in Sangam literature we have eight anthologies called Ettuthokai. Kurunthokai is one of them. The poems in this collection have between 4 to 8 lines except two which have nine lines. It is believed these poems were written between 100 and 300 common era. Though there are thousands of poems in Sangam literature, there is only one poem composed by Thevakulathar the author of this poem. The name Thevakulathar in Tamil, literally says he is from Theva community. The poem is narrated in the form as if the heroine expresses the great love, she has towards her lover to her friend who had criticized the hero for not coming and marrying her. However, the heroine realizing her lover was eavesdropping from the other side of the fence, and will be overhearing what she was saying, decided to use the opportunity and convince him of her great love. She started by describing the physical description of her love followed by the emotional aspects of her love.

She starts her description by saying, that her love was bigger than whole wide earth and was tall, as high as the sky;

Larger than the earth, and higher than the sky,

நிலத்தினும் பெரிதே, வானினும்
உயர்ந்தன்று,

Next, she wants to express how deeply she loved her lover by comparing her love to the deep ocean,

So deep like ocean cannot be measured,

நீரினும் ஆரளவின்றே, சாரல்

Now she wants to describe the emotional effect of the friendship she has on him by saying it to be sweet like the sweet honey collected on the sloping terrain from the Kurinji flowers by bees on the mountain. Kurinji is a blue coloured flower that blooms once in twelve years in the western hills.

My love to him is sweeter than honey collected

By the bees from the sloppy mountains,

From dark stemmed Kurinj flowers.

கருங்கோல் குறிஞ்சிப் பூக் கொண்டு
பெருந்தேன் இழைக்கும் நாடனொடு நட்பே.

Larger than the earth, and higher than the sky,

So deep like ocean cannot be measured,

My love to him is sweeter than honey collected,

By the bees from the sloppy mountains,

From dark stemmed Kurinj flowers.

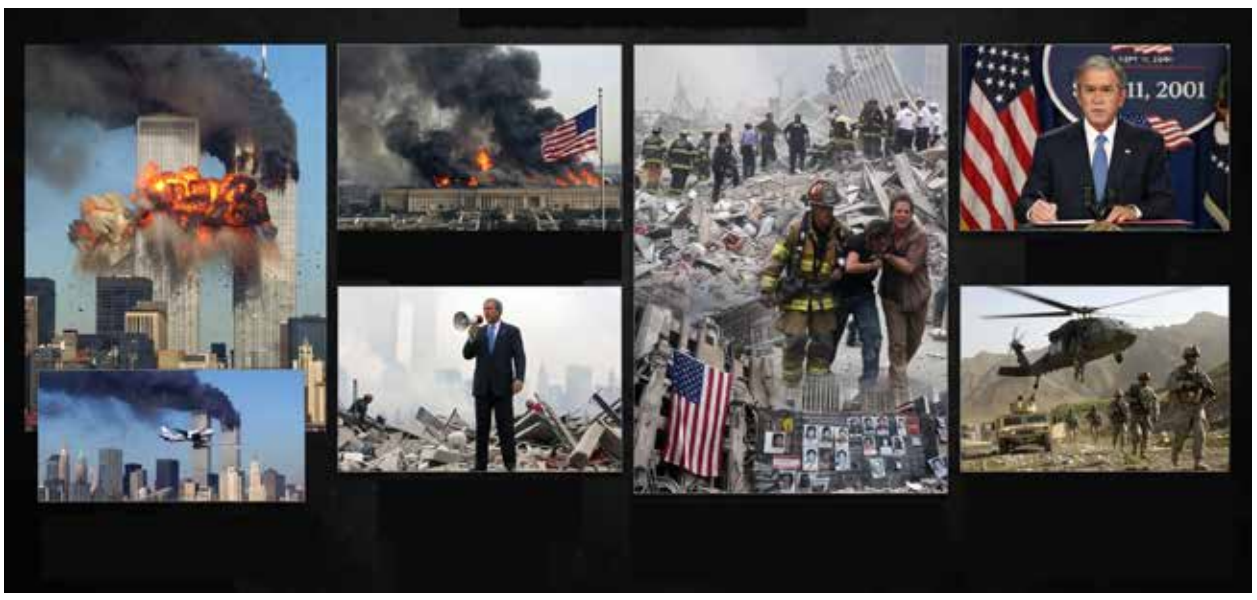
நிலத்தினும் பெரிதே, வானினும் உயர்ந்தன்று
நீரினும் ஆரளவின்றே, சாரல்
கருங்கோல் குறிஞ்சிப் பூக் கொண்டு
பெருந்தேன் இழைக்கும் நாடனொடு நட்பே.

In those ancient times in Tamil Nadu there were not many facilities for writing. They used Palmyra leaves to write on, using metallic scrawls. Recent radiometric dating from archeological sites in Tamil Nadu has shown that use of iron in the region began over 5300 years ago. They had to be brief in whatever they wrote. One could see so much information condensed in four lines. These short poems have lasted for more than two thousand years, still drawing the attention of the reader.

SPECIAL FEATURE

INCIDENTS THAT CHANGE THE WORLD INSTANTLY

By: J A Rajah



In the blink of an eye, incidents can change our lives forever. Emotionally charged moments, whether positive or negative, become imprinted in our consciousness. Incidents like the assassination of the US President John Kennedy on November 22nd, 1963, for instance, are such a key example. Such powerful moments touch us as individuals, and they leave an indelible mark on an entire community or nation or the whole world. But as modern society becomes more fragmented, we realize that such collective memories seem far less common. September 11, 2026, will mark the 25th anniversary of the shocking day when 19 members of the Islamic terrorist group al-Qaeda hijacked four commercial airliners, killing 265 passengers on those planes and more than 2,700 in the buildings struck by the crashing aircraft. While the attacks were aimed at the United States, 372 nationals from 61 countries were also victims. United Kingdom (67), Dominican Republic (41), India (41), South Korea (28), Canada (24), and Japan (24).

A. The Attack on WTC – New York :

Workers were rushing to their offices on what began as a typical Tuesday morning in lower Manhattan, the commercial hub of New York City. Delivery workers on bicycles shuttled their cargo along car-clogged streets. Shoppers and tourists filled the sidewalks. Suddenly, at 8.46 a.m., the deafening sound of a crash came from above. An aircraft had slammed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center (WTC). The building caught fire, and everyone was trapped inside. People did not realise what happened. It was a mystery at first. News networks were carrying the shocking live image of the burning tower. They never believed that a commercial airliner flying thousands of feet above the WTC towers, or any small plane flying at low altitude in the nearby Hudson River Air corridor, would have damaged the tower so extensively. While television commentators were speculating on-air, a jetliner sped into view and crashed into the WTC's South Tower, causing a massive fireball to emerge as the plane cut through the building. Instantly, one thing was clear-whatever was happening was no accident.

B. The Challenge to US Pride and Power :

It was the advent of the second plane, sharking in low over the Statue of Liberty; that was the defining moment. Until then, Americans thought it was a serious aviation disaster in history; then they realised the fantastic vehemence ranged against them. One crash might have been an accident, but two crashes had to be a pattern, a plan. Americans were made to see their position in the world. However, it took some time for all the details to emerge clearly. The al-Qaeda terrorists that morning had ordered two commercial jets scheduled from Boston to Los Angeles: American Airlines Flight 11, which crashed into WTC North Tower, and United Air Flight 175, which crashed into the WTC South Tower. Two other planes joined in the attack: Los Angeles-bound American Airlines Flight 77, which was hijacked and crashed into the Pentagon building in Washington, D.C and United Airlines Flight 93, which also was steered toward the District of Columbia before its passengers attempted to wrest control from hijackers, who then crashed the plane into an empty field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. In a little more than two hours-from 7.59 a.m.; when flight 11 took off, to 10.03 a.m., when Flight 93 plowed into the ground- a small band of terrorists deeply wounded USA's pride and power.

C. The Effects of the Disaster and the counter Actions Taken by US:

Estimates suggest that more than 20 million Americans were watching live television on the morning of September 11th, 2001, when they saw Flight 175 crash into the South Tower. By that evening, more than three-quarters of American households had seen the video footage of the towers falling to the ground. Yes, the incident of September 11th made the people realise that the world would never be the same. The nation was challenged and fragmented,

US President George W. Bush signed into law the USA PATRIOT Act on October 26, 2001, giving the federal government increased power to conduct court surveillance on American citizens; the US military had already begun to deploy troops to fight terrorist cells based in Afghanistan.

More than 7,000 soldiers would go into Afghanistan and Iraq, and as many as 50,000 would come home seriously wounded. But unlike those in the Vietnam War, the thousands of soldiers who died after September 11 were volunteers, and their deaths did not spark such protests as did the deaths of Vietnam draftees. To the average American, the greatest effect of terrorist attacks was felt at home in the form of increased security measures, especially around travel. Many have forgotten the incidents of September 11 and the Kennedy assassination that shook America. The World Trade Center in New York City has been rebuilt, and construction is nearing completion. Today's media has both expanded and fragmented. News is available around the clock from a multitude of television channels and from myriad websites, podcasts, radio broadcasts, and newspapers.

D. The Incidents in The World At Large :

With such media fragmentation as exists today, some of the small segments of society may go unnoticed by the wider society. Similar incidents have taken place in other countries too, like India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Nigeria., The Sri Lankan assassination of its former Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike heralded a new era of women leaders in world history. Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike became the first woman prime minister. The ethnic riots increased the island nation's inner strife. Many minority Tamils left the country and settled in foreign countries like India, Canada, the U.K., Australia, Norway, and Switzerland. The relocation of people from their land of birth became a global phenomenon. There is intermingling of cultures. People hop from one country to another. Skin, language, and culture do not divide people. Humanity and humanness remain solid. The world is one.

"Yaathum oore, yaavarum kelir, theethum, nanrum, pirar tharara vaara" - ***Purananooru.***

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Krithejan Karunakaran *(Grade 8)*

We have had tests since we were in kindergarten and we will continue to have tests until the end of our schooling. I do not see a difference as to why we should not have exams in high school. Exams have many benefits such as making students study for their grade, students will be ready for the next year and to see if the students understood the unit.

First, doing exams gives teachers an understanding of what the students learned and where they are at. This could be helpful for both students and teachers to see where students are at to help them improve for the next year. Once students get their exams back, students can look over their mistakes and improve.

Second, exams help students understand the material and be better prepared for the next year. Doing final exams in high school could prepare students for university or college. Exams also help students review their material they did throughout the year.

Third, doing exams helps students improve their skills. This could be helpful for students in the future. It teaches students to review their notes by rereading it and asking the teacher questions that they may have.

Fourth, final exams encourage students to care about their grade and to be more determined to go to university. This is because in grade 11 or 12, you will send your marks to the university. If there are no final exams, what would they see and determine for your grade? Also, exams are very important because there are many exams to do in university to doing them in high school and elementary school will help you prepare.

In conclusion, doing exams is helpful and important for all students. It helps you prepare for the next year, teaching you studying skills, and universities can determine your grade.

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By: **Chef Nate**

NATE'S CUISINE

The Vegetarian Spectrum

VEGAN

Vegans eat a plant-based diet containing fruits, vegetables, grains, nuts, seeds, beans, and pulses. They do not consume meat, fish, shellfish, insects, dairy, eggs, or honey.

VEGETARIAN

A vegetarian is a person who does not eat meat, poultry, or fish and instead subsists on plant-based foods like vegetables, fruits, grains, and nuts.

LACTO-OVO VEGETARIAN

Excludes all meat, poultry, and seafood, but includes dairy products and eggs.

LACTO-VEGETARIAN

Excludes meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs, but includes dairy products.

OVO-VEGETARIAN

Excludes meat, poultry, seafood, and dairy products, but includes eggs.

PESCATARIAN

Excludes meat and poultry, but includes seafood, dairy, and eggs.

FLEXITARIAN

Follows a mostly plant-based diet but occasionally includes small amounts of meat, poultry, or fish

Albert Einstein

supported vegetarianism in principle for most of his life, though he only adopted a strict meat-free diet during his final years. Near the end of his life in 1954, he noted that a vegetarian diet could significantly benefit human health and Earth's survival, remarking that man was "not born to be a carnivore"

Vegetarian celebrities



Amitabh Bachchan, Amir Khan, Shahid Kapoor, Anushka Sharma, Sonam Kapoor Ahuja, Rajinikanth, Madhavan, Kamal Haasan, Dhanush, Suriya, Trisha, Tamannaah
Woody Harrelson, Joaquin Phoenix, Stevie Wonder, Ricky Gervais, Pamela Anderson, Paul McCartney

Countries with the highest percentage of vegetarians

- INDIA 20 % 39 %
- MEXICO 19 %
- BRAZIL 14%
- TAIWAN 13.5
- ISRAEL 13%
- AUSTRALIA 12.1 %
- ARGENTINA 12 %
- SWEEDEN12 %
- FINLAND 12 %
- AUSTRIA % 11%
- UNITED STATES 6 TO 8 %
- GERMANY 6 TO 8 %

Key drivers behind vegetarian diet

Religion & Culture

In Countries like India and Taiwan, vegetarianism is deeply anchored in spiritual principles like ahimsa (non-violence) found in Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism.

Health & Ethics

In Western and Latin American nations (such as Germany, Australia, and Brazil), growth is largely shaped by animal welfare concerns, personal health, and flexitarian habits.

Environmental policy:

Nordic countries like Sweden and Finland actively promote plant-based shifts to cut carbon emissions and support sustainable.

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Oil a 9x13-inch baking dish.

2. Place the mushrooms, red pepper, zucchini, and onion on the baking sheet. Drizzle with olive oil, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and toss to coat. Spread evenly on the baking sheet and roast for 20 to 25 minutes, or until tender and browned around the edges. Reduce the oven temperature to 400°F.

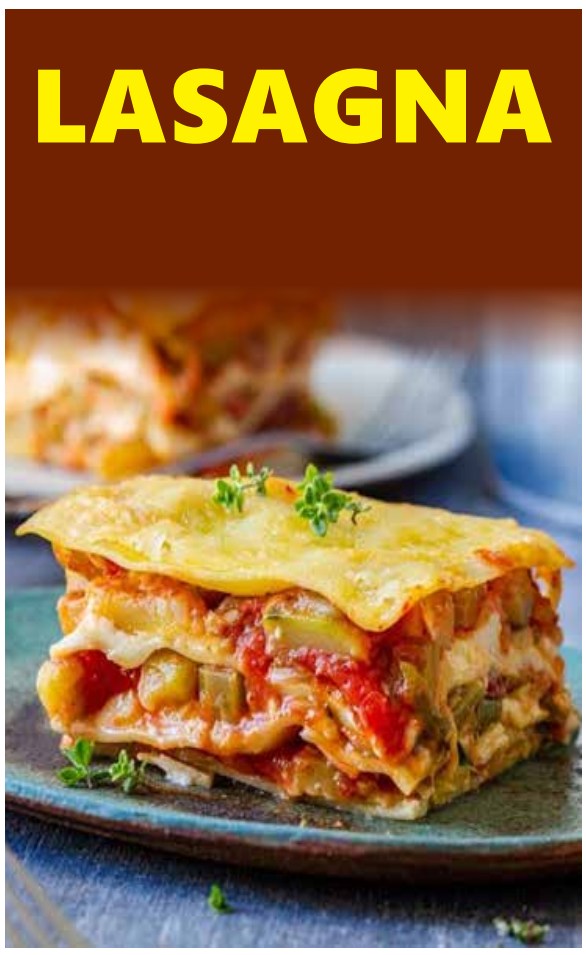
3. Meanwhile, cook the noodles.* Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and prepare the lasagna noodles according to the package instructions, cooking until al dente. Drain and toss with a drizzle of olive oil to prevent sticking.

4. Make the ricotta filling: In a large bowl, stir together the ricotta, garlic, lemon zest, salt, and several grinds of pepper.

5. Assemble the lasagna. Spread 1 cup of the marinara sauce at the bottom of the prepared baking dish. Top with a layer of noodles, followed by half the ricotta mixture. Spread the ricotta in an even layer, then arrange half the spinach evenly on top. Top with half the vegetables and dot with ⅔ cup of the remaining marinara sauce.

6. Repeat with another layer of noodles, followed by the remaining ricotta, spinach, vegetables, and another ⅔ cup sauce. Top with the remaining noodles.

7. Spread the remaining ⅔ cup marinara over the pasta, then evenly sprinkle with the mozzarella and pecorino cheeses. Bake in the 400°F oven for 30 minutes, or until the cheese is browned and bubbling. Let stand for 20 minutes before garnishing with fresh basil or parsley, slicing, and serving.



Prep Time: **40 minutes**
Cook Time: **50 minutes**
Total Time: **1hour hr. 30minutes mins**
Serves **8**

Extra -virgin olive oil

- 8 ounces cremini mushrooms, stemmed and quartered
- 1 red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 medium zucchini, cut into ½-inch pieces
- ½ medium yellow onion, cut into ½-inch pieces
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 15 lasagna noodles
- 3 cups marinara sauce, 24 ounces
- 3 cups fresh spinach
- 2 cups grated low-moisture, part-skim mozzarella cheese
- Fresh basil leaves or chopped fresh parsley, for garnish

Ricotta Filling

- 3 cups whole milk ricotta cheese, 24 ounces
- 3 garlic cloves, grated
- 2 teaspoons lemon zest
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 teaspoon Freshly ground black pepper

Notes:

*I recommend using regular lasagna noodles here. They are more tender than no-boil noodles in the final lasagna. However, if you prefer to use no-boil noodles, make these adjustments:

- No-boil noodles tend to be shorter than regular lasagna noodles. Instead of counting noodles, expect to use about ¾ of a 1-pound box.
- Change the bake time: Cover the lasagna and bake for 40 to 50 minutes, or until the noodles are tender, then uncover and bake until the cheese is browned and bubbling.

For vegan lasagna, replace the ricotta mixture with this vegan ricotta. Skip the cheese on top. Bake, covered, until the pasta is tender and the lasagna is heated through, 30 to 50 minutes at 400°F

Enjoy!

COMMUNITY WATCH

RICHMOND HILL UNOFFICIAL 2026 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS RESULTS



Mayor Elect – David West

Unofficial results for the City of Richmond Hill's 2026 Municipal Elections are now available.

In the elections, 44,604 voters cast their ballot, representing an increase of 3,457 votes compared to the 2022 Municipal Elections. More than 80 per cent of ballots were cast online. The overall voter turnout was approximately 27.98 per cent.

The Term of Office for the next Council is four years, starting November 15, 2026 and ending on November 14, 2030. Eligible voters have elected a Mayor, two Regional and Local Councillors, six Ward Councillors and School Board Trustees.

Once certified by the City Clerk and Returning Officer, Richmond Hill's official 2026 Municipal Elections results will be available online on RichmondHill.ca/ElectionResults. The official results will be announced as soon as they are available.

For the complete list of unofficial results, visit *RichmondHill.ca*.

QUOTE

Once again, our team at the City of Richmond Hill has successfully planned and delivered a smooth and secure municipal election. I'm proud of our collective efforts to ensure that we provide all eligible voters in our community with an accessible, convenient and enjoyable voting experience.

- Stephen Huycke,
City Clerk and Returning Officer

Mayor
David West

Regional Councillors
Godwin CHAN
Godwin CHAN

Councillors

Ward 1
Carol DAVIDSON

Ward 2
Scott THOMPSON

Ward 3
Castro LIU

Ward 4
Simon CUI

Ward 5
Karen CILEVITZ

Ward 6
Michael SHIU

Trustee – York Region District School Board - Wards 1, 2 and 4
Robert KOLOSOWSKI

Trustee – York Region District School Board - Wards, 3, 5 and 6
Carol CHAN

Trustee – York Catholic District School Board
Joseph DIMEO
Maria IAFRATE

Conseiller (ERE) Conseil Scolaire Viamonde
Hanane JAOUICH-DIAKITÉ

Conseiller (ERE) Conseil Scolaire Catholique Monavenir
Christella BASOSILA LOME

MARKHAM

COMMUNITY WATCH

UNOFFICIAL RESULTS FOR 2026 MARKHAM MUNICIPAL ELECTION



Mayor Elect – Frank Scarpitti

Unofficial election results for the 2026 Markham Municipal Election are now available.

The successful candidates for each contest are listed below. Vote counts for each candidate can be viewed on Elections Markham's Election Results page. Note: All results are unofficial until certified by Markham's City Clerk. Official results are expected to be certified later this week and posted online.

Markham City Council

Mayor - Frank Scarpitti

Regional Councillor
Amanda Yeung Collucci
Don Hamilton
Jack Heath
Jim Jones

Ward 1 Councillor - Keith Irish

Ward 2 Councillor - Ritch Lau

Ward 3 Councillor - Marina Antonoglou

Ward 4 Councillor - Karen Rea

Ward 5 Councillor - Andrew Keyes

Ward 6 Councillor - Kenneth Li

Ward 7 Councillor - Nimisha Patel

Ward 8 Councillor - Isa Lee

York Region District School Board

Trustee, Wards 1 & 8 - Cindy Hackelberg

Trustee, Wards 2 & 6 - Joyce Chen

Trustee, Wards 3 & 4 - Ed Law

Trustee, Wards 5 & 7 - Michael Chen

York Catholic District School Board

Trustee, Wards 1, 2, 3 & 6 - Simon Ho

Trustee, Wards 4, 5, 7 & 8 - James Bush

Counseil scolaire Viamonde
Conseillère / Conseiller, York
Hanane Jaouich-Diakité*
Elected by acclamation / Elu(e) par acclimation

Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir
Conseillère / Conseiller, York
Christella Basosila Lome - 136*
(Markham vote totals only)
Ibrahim M. Elias – 84*
(Markham vote totals only)

This office is elected by the combined vote totals across all registered French Public voters in York Region. Unofficial and official results will be announced by the City of Vaughan at vaughan.ca/elections.

Visit ElectionsMarkham.ca for the latest and most reliable information about the 2026 Markham Municipal Election.

About Elections Markham:

Elections Markham is an independent, non-partisan division of the City of Markham responsible for delivering City Council and local school board elections, by-elections and referendums. Markham is a leader in multi-platform election services, being Canada's first city to vote online and maintaining one of North America's largest and longest-running remote online voting programs.

About Markham:

Markham, an award-winning municipality with over 370,000 residents and the largest of nine communities in York Region, is home to over 650 corporate head offices and more than 1,500 high tech and life science companies. Markham is a leader in attracting foreign direct investment with more than 234 foreign companies located in the City. Founded in the 1790s, today Markham is Canada's most diverse community and enjoys a rich heritage, outstanding community planning and services, and a vibrant local economy.

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3rd FLOOR



SOLACE JAFFNA



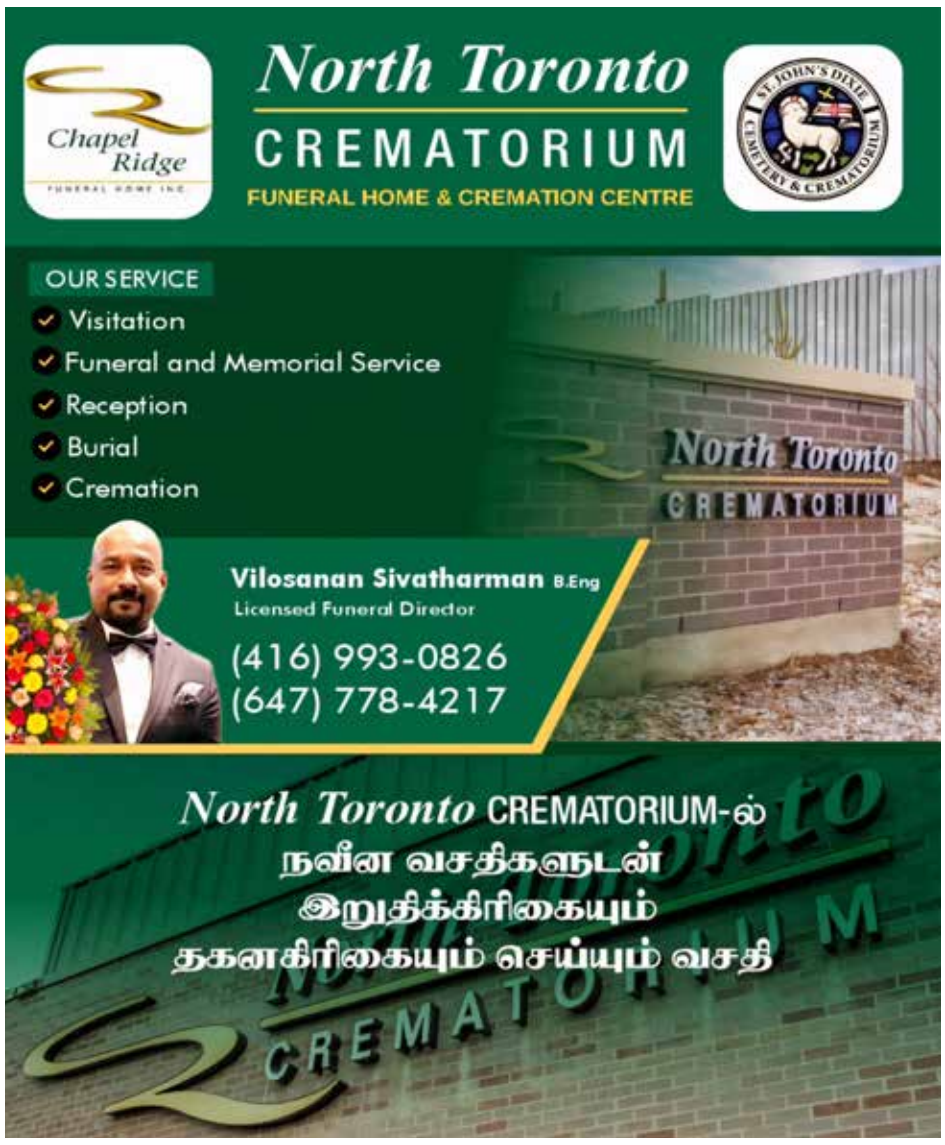
Two Bedrooms Unit
- Two Bedrooms
- Living Area
- Kitchen
- Two Washrooms
- Private Balcony

COMMUNITY WATCH

Durham Tamils Association Celebrating 26 Years Of Serving Our Tamil Community

The Durham Tamil Association has proudly served the community for 26 years and remains dedicated to supporting our members, youth, and seniors. We continue to offer a variety of activities almost every day, providing something for everyone, from children to seniors. This milestone would not have been possible without our amazing volunteers, who selflessly give their time and energy to serve the community. DTA is truly grateful for your ongoing support. Additionally, the DTA Tamil School continues its mission by offering Tamil language classes to our students, fostering a connection to our cultural heritage for the next generation.







FAMILY KARAOKE NIGHTS ON FRIDAY

Join us for every Friday night for family fun and music at our Family Karaoke Night! Bring your vocal talents as we gather for a memorable evening filled with laughter, singing, and bonding. Whether you're a seasoned performer or a first-time singer, there's a song for everyone to enjoy. We will provide your favorite tunes so get ready to create lasting memories.

Don't miss out on this amazing opportunity to come celebrate your talents.



DTA'S SENIORS:

DTA is keeping our seniors fully occupied with multiple activities and programs. DTA is here to support you in any way. If you want to participate in our programs, please check our monthly calendars. Please register for virtual Seniors programs at durhamtamils.org. Thank you to our fantastic volunteers who do not expect anything and are serving the community voluntarily. DTA is truly grateful for your continued support.

THANK YOU TO DTA'S ANNUAL SPONSORS

DTA thanks our annual sponsors Computek College of Business, Healthcare & Technology. **Nava Wilson LLP. Chapel Ridge Funeral Home & Cremation Ctr, Shilo Financial** and all our sponsors for your continued support throughout the year. If you are interested in being annual sponsor please reach out to the below contacts.

For more information on all DTA's Community Support Programs and Sponsor contacts

please visit: ***www. DurhamTamils.Org***

Tel 905.428.7007 ***(Unity Is Strength)***

COMMUNITY WATCH

NEW BOARD ELECTED AT CANADIAN TAMILS' CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce
கனேடிய தமிழர் வர்த்தக சம்மேளனம்
Chambre de commerce des Tamouls canadiens

2026-27 Board of Directors

Elected October 31, 2026



New Board of Directors for 2026/2027

The Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce (CTCC) held its Annual General Meeting on October 31, 2026, electing Vithu Ramachandran as its new President for the 2026–27 term.

The incoming Executive includes **Darshan Sritharan** (EVP), Shobika **Santhalingam** (VP Internal Affairs), **Chandran Ramakrishna** (VP Finance), **Karan Kanagasabai** (VP Membership), **Kayan Kanesalingam** (VP External Relations), **Thiru Gobiraj** (VP Marketing, Communications & Data Management), and **Ari Ariaran** (Past President). **Rubendran Janendran, Nathan Thiyagarajah, Suven Poopalasingam,** and **Mahen Singarajah** join as Directors.



New President for 2026/2027, Vithu Ramachandran

The new Board has set three priorities for the term:

Members — enhance the membership experience so it delivers real value for Tamil-Canadian business owners. A refreshed member value proposition, launched with the 2027 membership cycle, will anchor new programming across networking, mentorship, and business development, with clearer pathways for new entrepreneurs to plug into the Chamber.

Systems — build the financial, operational, and digital infrastructure the organization needs to run on more than volunteer heroics. A new digital membership platform, standardized procedures for recurring programs, and a monthly financial dashboard will give the Board and the membership a clearer view of how the Chamber operates.

Sustainability — build the financial sustainability model a modern non-profit Chamber needs. Working in partnership with the Chamber's longtime sponsors — who have carried the organization for decades — the Board will diversify the funding base through tiered sponsorship, program partnerships, grant funding, and new revenue streams to prepare the Chamber for the next generation. "We have an organization in good shape, thanks to the outgoing Board and the sponsors who built this foundation," Ramachandran said. "The next twelve months are about enhancing what works, strengthening what's already built, and preparing the Chamber for the generation coming up behind us."



Members of CTCC at AGM

COMMUNITY WATCH

BRAMPTON

BRAMPTON ANNOUNCES UNOFFICIAL RESULTS FOR 2026 MUNICIPAL ELECTION

Voters elect a Mayor, Regional Councillors, City Councillors and School Board Trustees.



Mayor Elect - Patrick Brown

Municipal Election | October 26, 2026

The City of Brampton is announcing the unofficial results of the 2026 Municipal Election for the offices of Mayor, Ward/Regional Councillor and School Board Trustee.

The unofficial number of voters who cast ballots was 123,133. The unofficial voter turnout was 28.77 per cent of eligible voters.

Mayor
Patrick Brown

Regional Councillor
Wards 1 & 5
Paul Vicente

Wards 2 & 6
Michael Paul Palleschi

Wards 3 & 4
Martin Medeiros

Wards 7 & 8
Rod Power

Wards 9 & 10
Sukhman Sangha

City Councillor
Wards 1 & 5
Rowena Santos

Wards 2 & 6
Navjit Kaur Brar

Wards 3 & 4
Dennis Keenan

Wards 7 & 8
Taran Chahal

Wards 9 & 10
Harkirat Singh

EP Trustee – Peel District School Board
Wards 1 & 5
Kathy McDonald

Wards 2 & 6
Chris Campbell

Wards 3 & 4
Jot Dhaliwal

Wards 7 & 8
Karla Bailey

Wards 9 & 10
Khushpal Singh Power

ES Trustee – Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board
Wards 1, 3 & 4
Anisha Thomas

Wards 2, 5 & 6
Darryl Brian D'Souza

Wards 7, 8, 9 & 10
Andrea Baronowski

FP Trustee – Conseil Scolaire Viamonde
Pierre Gregory

FS Trustee – Conseil Scolaire Catholique MonAvenir
Genevieve Grenier (Acclaimed)

MISSISSAUGA

COMMUNITY WATCH

Mississauga announces unofficial results for 2026 Municipal Election

Voters elect a Mayor, Ward/Regional Councillors and School Board Trustees.

Municipal Election | October 26, 2026

The City of Mississauga is announcing the unofficial results of the 2026 Municipal Election for the offices of Mayor, Ward/Regional Councillor and School Board Trustee.

The unofficial number of voters who cast ballots was 191,166. The unofficial voter turnout was 33.9 per cent of eligible voters.

Mayor

Alvin Tedjo was elected Mayor with 74,479 votes, representing 38.9 per cent of ballots cast.

Ward/Regional Councillor results

The following candidates received the highest number of votes and are the unofficially elected Ward Councillors:

- **Ward 1 Councillor**
Stephen Dasko received 11,458 votes
- **Ward 2 Councillor**
Tom Ellard received 4,434 votes
- **Ward 3 Councillor**
Chris Fonseca received 8,760 votes
- **Ward 4 Councillor**
John Kovac received 12,643 votes
- **Ward 5 Councillor**
Natalie Hart received 7,331 votes
- **Ward 6 Councillor**
Joe Horneck received 13,308 votes
- **Ward 7 Councillor**
Lucas Alves received 4,460 votes
- **Ward 8 Councillor**
Matt Mahoney received 14,007 votes
- **Ward 9 Councillor**
Martin Reid received 11,758 votes
- **Ward 10 Councillor**
Sue McFadden received 15,787 votes
- **Ward 11 Councillor**
Brad Butt received 10,099 votes

School Board Trustees

The following School Board Trustee candidates were either acclaimed or received the highest number of votes.

School Board Trustee English Public

- **Trustee English Public**
Charles Corey (Wards 1 and 7) received 9,021 votes



Mayor Elect – Alvin Tedjo

- **Trustee English Public**
Brad MacDonald (Wards 2 and 8) received 11,589 votes
- **Trustee English Public**
Vince Cerullo (Wards 3 and 4) received 12,553 votes
- **Trustee English Public**
Susan Benjamin (Ward 5) received 6,643 votes
- **Trustee English Public**
Jill Promoli (Wards 6 and 11) received 14,157 votes
- **Trustee English Public**
Jeff Clark (Wards 9 and 10) received 17,045 votes

School Board Trustee English Separate

- **Trustee English Separate**
Mario Pascucci (Wards 1 and 3) was acclaimed
- **Trustee English Separate**
Lucita Gonsalves (Wards 2 and 8) received 4,179 votes
- **Trustee English Separate**
Stefano Pascucci (Ward 4) was acclaimed
- **Trustee English Separate**
Thomas Thomas (Ward 5) received 2,434 votes
- **Trustee English Separate**
Luz del Rosario (Wards 6 and 11) was acclaimed
- **Trustee English Separate**
Bruno Iannicca (Ward 7) received 3,127 votes
- **Trustee English Separate**
Brea Corbet (Wards 9 and 10) received 4,342 votes

School Board Trustee French Public

- **Trustee French Public**
Pierre Gregory (citywide) received 646 votes

School Board Trustee, French Separate

- **Trustee French Separate**
Jennifer Green-Frank (citywide) was acclaimed

SPECIAL FEATURE

GANGOTRI TEMPLE
UTTARKHAND, INDIA

Compiled by Kidambi Raj

INTRODUCTION

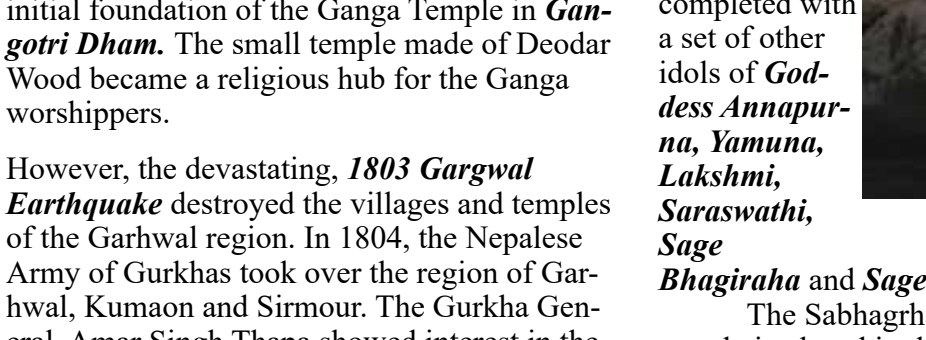
Gangotri is one of ***Chota Char Dham Yatra*** (four small divine places). The other three are, Kedarnath, Badri and Yamunotri. Gangotri Dham is located at a height of about 3,100 m on the Himalayan range in Uttarkashi district of Uttarakhand, holds a very special place in the hearts of Hindus. Amid all the natural beauty and grace which the mountains and the altitude of the place affords, what makes Gangotri one of the holiest places is its intimate connection with River Ganga (the Ganges).

Ganga Maa (mother), the much revered deity of Hindus, originates from the Gangotri glacier at Gaumukh which is some 18 km from the Gangotri town. It is said that Ganga came to earth in order to wash away the sins of King Bhagirathi's ancestors. From the time of mythology to the present time, Ganga River has always been a sacred source of purity for the mankind. Coning to Gangotri for a religious tour is not only a religious duty but a spiritual calling too.

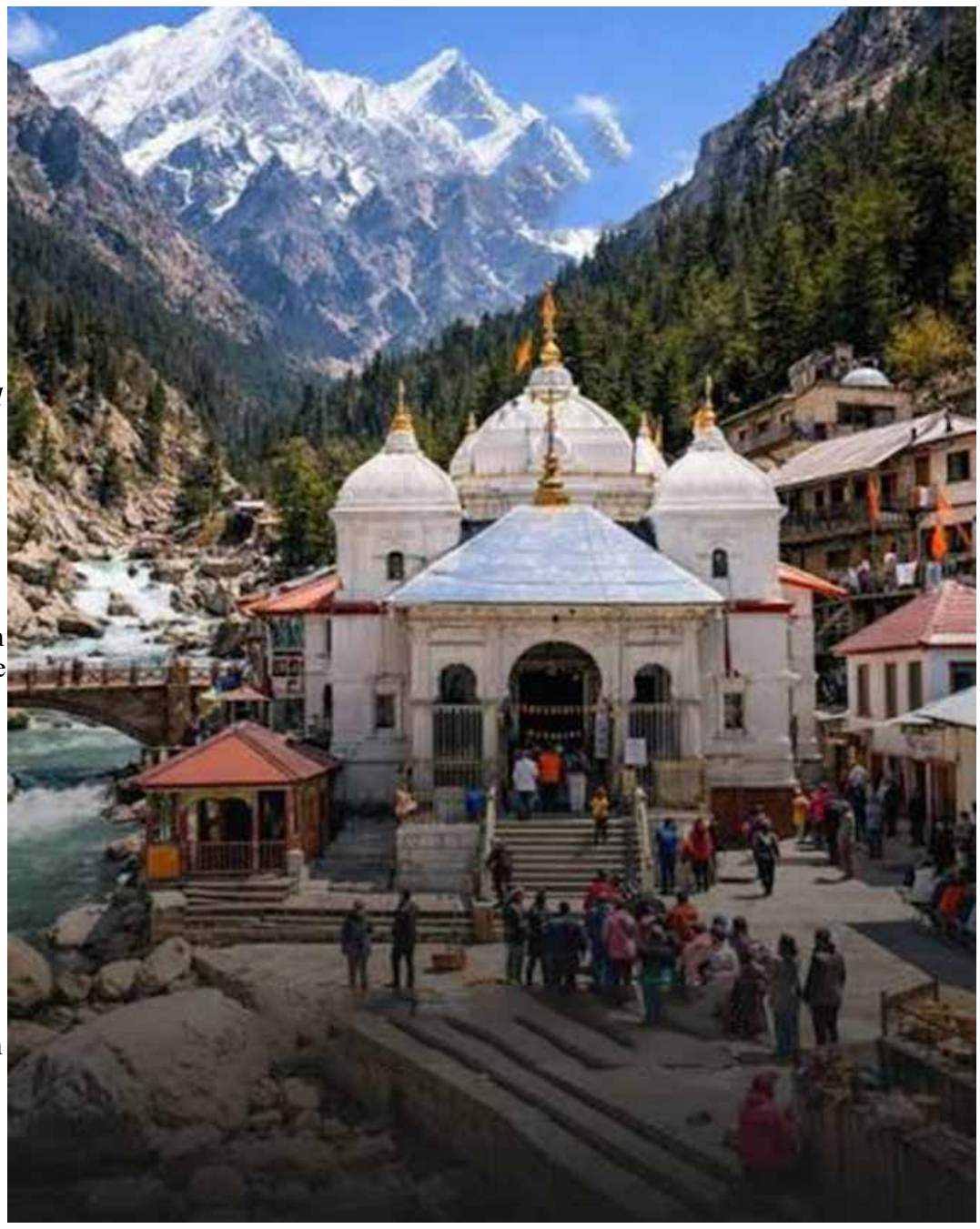
GANGOTRI DHAM

The history of Gangotri can be traced back to the medieval India, when the Vedic philosopher, Guru Adi Sankaracharya, arrived at Rishikesh, Uttarakhand, on his mission to spread Hinduism. As per ***Garhwak ka Itihas*** by Harikrishna Raturi, Ai Sankaracharya laid the initial foundation of the Ganga Temple in ***Gangotri Dham.*** The small temple made of Deodar Wood became a religious hub for the Ganga worshippers.

However, the devastating, ***1803 Gargwal Earthquake*** destroyed the villages and temples of the Garhwal region. In 1804, the Nepalese Army of Gurkhas took over the region of Garhwal, Kumaon and Sirmour. The Gurkha General, Amar Singh Thapa showed interest in the temple. He took it upon himself to renovate the earthquake hit villages of Gangotri. Amar Singh Thapa arranged funds for the construction of Gangotri Dham Temple and road leading to it. The new temple was made using ***White Granite*** ,with Shikharas made in the Nepalese Katyuri style of architecture. In addition to this, Thapa ordered the construction of three to four huts for the pilgrims to stay. These major reforms by the Gurkha leader have significantly contributed to the popularity of the scared site, across the country. Later, in the 1890s, the then Maharajah of Jaipur, ***Swami Madho Singh II,*** renovated the Gangotri Temple in ***Nagar Style*** of architecture, giving it a more finished look.



Fun Fact: Maharajah Swami Madho Singh II, holds the Guinness Book of World Records for the ***Sterling Silver Urn,*** weighing 345 kg, which he used to transport ***Ganga Jal*** (Ganga water) to England



ARCHITECTURE

The present Gangotri Dham Temple is made in Nagara Style and has five Shikharas approximately 20 ft. in height. The Garbha Griha of the temple consists of ***Golden Ganga*** on a raised platform completed with a set of other idols of ***Goddess Annapurna, Yamuna, Lakshmi, Saraswathi, Sage Bhagiraha*** and ***Sage Adi Shankara.***

The Sabhagrha or mandapa of the temple is placed in the front, for the devotees to pray and assemble during the festivals. The temple compound houses a statue of Adi Sankaracharya to commemorate his significant contributions to promoting the ***Char Dham Yatra.*** The Gangotri temple compound has four more temples dedicated to ***Hanuman, Shiva, Ganesha*** and ***Bhagirata.***

LEGEND BEHIND GANGOTRI

According to the legends, it is said that King Sagara, the great grandfather of King Bhagirath slayed the demon on earth. In order to proclaim his supremacy, he decided to stage an Aswamedha Yagna. During the yagna, a horse was supposed to be let loose to go on an uninterrupted journey across empires. In the course of events, Indra the supreme ruler feared that he might be deprived of his celestial throne if at all the yagna got completed. Using his celestial powers, he took away the horse and privately tied it in the ashram of Sage Kapila, who was sated in deep meditation.

As soon as King Sagara's agents realized that they had lost track of the horse, King allotted his 60,000 sons the task of tracking the horse. While the king's sons were on a hunt for the lost horse, they came across the spot where Sage Kapila was meditating. They found the horse tied next to him, out of fierce anger they stormed the ashram and accused the sage for stealing the horse. Sage Kapila's meditation got disrupted and out of fury, he turned all the 60,000 sons into ashes just with his powerful glance. He also cursed that their souls would attain moksha, only if their ashes get washed by the holy waters of River Ganga, which was then a river, seated in heaven.

It is said that Bhagirath, the grandson of King Sagara in order to free his ancestors performed rigorous penance for a 1000 long years to please Ganga to come down to earth. Finally his efforts bore fruit and River Ganga was pleased by his devotion and was ready to descend to earth.

Another legendary tale states that when River Ganga agreed to descend to earth in response to Bhagirath's prayers, its intensity was such

SPECIAL FEATURE



that the entire earth would have got submerged under its water. To save the planet earth from such demolition, Lord Shiva caught River Ganga in His locks. To please Lord Shiva, Bhagirath again meditated for a long time. On seeing Bhagirath's immense devotion, Lord Shiva being pleased, released River Ganga in the form of three streams , one of which came on earth and came to be known as Bhagirathi River. As soon as Ganga's water touched the ashes of Bhagirath's ancestors, the 60,000 sons rose from eternal rest. The stone on which Bhagirath is believed to have meditated is known as ***Bhagirath Shila***, which is located fairly close to Gangotri Temple.

HISTORY OF GANGA

As per the legend, King Bhagiratha prayed and stood on one leg for 5,500 years to persuade Goddess Ganga to descend to earth and wash off the sins of his ancestors, freeing them from Sage Kapil's curse. Impressed by his dedication, Lord Vishnu allowed Ganga River to land from Heaven to Earth. But, due to the turbulent nature of the river and the damage it might cause, Lord Shiva had to intervene. He directed Ganga to strike His head before descending, cautiously absorbing the tremendous force and protecting Earth from destruction. This legend is supported by the submerged Shiv Ling perched inside the Ganga Temple.

It is believed that the river washed the ashes of Bhagirath's 60,000 ancestors and made the land fertile and pious. Bhagiratha guided the flow of the Ganga across India, where she split herself into many tributaries. This is why, as per Hindu legends, the river is called Bhagirathi at the origin. The spot where King meditated is called ***Bhagirath Shila,*** placed near the main temple. It is said that the Pandavas performed ***Dev Yagna*** at Gangotri Dham after defeating the Kauravas in the battle of Kurukshetra, to atone the deaths of their relatives.

SIGNIFICANCE FOR HINDUS

The Hindu devotees consider the Holy river Ganga, as a Mother, Goddess and a Protector. Gangotri Dham, being home to Ganga's source, holds supreme significance as a pilgrimage site. The origin of the Ganga River in the Gaurmkh Glacier is 19 km from the Gabotri valley, where it is called ***Bhagirathi.*** As per legends, when the Ganga river descended on Earth, it carried ***Ten Rare Vedic Yogas.*** These ten astrology calculations, redeem the devotees of their sins, when they soak themselves in the holy river on the occasion of Ganga Dusera. The pilgrims visit Gangotri, every year, for a ritualistic dip in the holy water and offer their prayers to Goddess Ganga. The ***Ganga Jal*** (Ganges water) is said to have healing powers and is a source of salvation. They called the water near ***Bhagirathi Shila*** and take it to the ***Rameswaram Temple*** in Tamil Nadu. It is believed that the Gangotri Dham Yatra is successful and complete, only after offering the Ganga Jal (brought from the Bhagirati) on Shiv Ling of Rameswaram.

BEST TIME TO VISIT

The best time to visit the Gangotri Temple, is from April/May to June and September to October/November. Monsoon brings very real danger of landslides, floods and other problems while winters are characterized with heavy snow and freezing temperatures.

PLACES NEARBY TO SEE

- ***Underwater Shiv Ling:***
  A Shiv Ling made from natural rock is submerged under water and is easily visible in winter when the water receded. It is said to be the place Lord Shiva sat on while he tied Ganga in His matted hair. Dividing it into 7 streams, Shiva saved earth from the massive force of Devi Ganga.
- ***Gaumukh and Tapovan:***
  To witness the holy birth of River Ganges at Gaumukh, one can take a picturesque and exciting trek surrounded with peaks and soaring peaks . One can further trek to Tapovan which is about 4 km from Gaukukh. Tapovan has meadows, beautiful flowers and incredible views of surrounding Himalayan peaks such as Shivling and Bhagirathi. Tapovan is also a base camp initiating a number of mountaineering tours.
- ***Bhairon Nath Temple in Bhairon Ghati:***
  Some 10 km downstream from Gangotri, near the point where Jadh Ganga (also called Jhanvi River) merges with Bhagirathi, lies the temple of Bhairon Nath. As per a legend, Bhairon Nath was chosen by Lord Shiva as the protector of the region. Every visit to the Gangotri Temple should be followed by a visit to the temple of Bhairon. Moving about 3 km from Bhairon Ghati, one can reach Lanka Chatti to witness one of the highest river bridges of the region; the bridge over the River Jhanvi is quite a spectacle in its own right.

HOW TO REACH

- ***By Air:***
  Jolly Grant Airport, Rishikesh Road, Dehradun is the nearest to Gangotri. Can hire a Cab or get a bus from here.
- ***By Train:*** Regular trains to Haridwar and Dehradun are available at all times of the year. Can hire a ca or get a bus from here.
- ***By Bus:***
  Gangotri is connected with motorable roads and buses and taxis from important destinations like Rishikesh, Dehradun, Uttarkashi and Tehri Garhwal are easily available.







SPECIAL FEATURE

YAMUNOTRI TEMPLE, UTTARAKHAND, INDIA



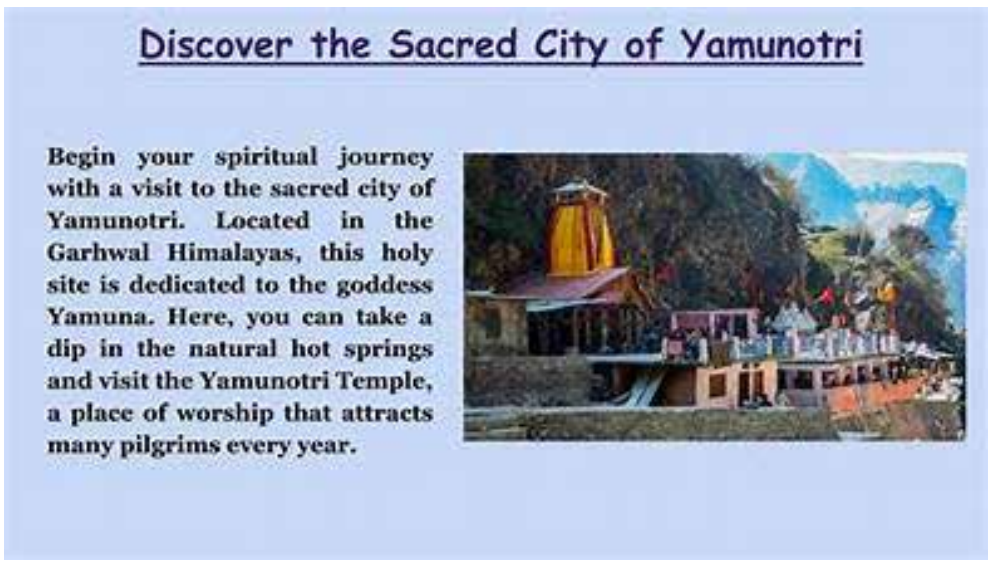
Compiled by Kidambi Raj

INTRODUCTION

Yamunotri also called ***Jamnotri*** is the source of the Yamuna River and the seat of Goddess Yamuna in Hinduism. It is situated at an altitude of 3,293 metres (10,804 ft) in the ***Yamunotri,*** Garhwal Himalayas and located approximately 150 kilometres (93 mi) North of Uttarkashi, the headquarters of the Uttarkashi district in the Garhwal Division of Uttarakhand, India. It is one of the four sites in India's Chota Char Dham pilgrimage. The sacred shrine of Yamunotri, source of the river Yamuna, is the westernmost shrine in the Garhwal Himalayas, perched atop a flank of the Bandarpunch mountain. The chief attraction at Yamunotri is the temple devoted to the Goddess Yamuna and the holy thermal springs at Janki Chatti which is 7 km away

YAMUNOTRY DHAM

Situated on the western side of the Garhwal Himalayas, in the Uttarkashi district of Uttarakhand, lies the holy place of ***Yamunotri.*** About



3,293 m above sea level, Yamunotri stands proudly with its enormous mountain peaks, glaciers and gushing waters of Yamuna. River Yamuna, the second most sacred river in India, originates at Yamunotri, making it one of the pilgrimage sites in the Chota Dham Yatra in Uttarakhand.

The venerated Goddess Yamuna is said to be the daughter of ***Sun*** and the twin sister of ***Yama*** (the god of death). In Vedas, Yamuna is called **Yami** (lady of life). A bath in the sanctified waters of Yamuna is said to cleanse all sins and protect from untimely or painful death. Such strong associations in Hindu mythology, Yamuna Devi gets place in the high ranks of divinity.

The sacred shrine in Uttarakhand opens for the pilgrims on April 19, 2026, on the auspicious occasion of ***Akshya Tritya.***

ORIGIN OF YAMUNA RIVER & ASSOCITED LEGENDS

The River Yamuna originates from Yamunotri glacier, which rises up to 6,315 m above sea level, and lies against a steep slope just below the top of the Kalind peak. From there, Yamuna comes down into ***Saptarishi Kund*** and from there gushes southwards in a series of waterfalls. To the west of the Kalind Parbat is located Bannderpoonch, which is a dominant mountain in the central Himalayas area of Garhwal and divides the watershed of Yamuna from that of the Ganges. Coming out of Kalin Parbat, Yamuna is also known as ***Kalindi***.

As per the legend, Lord Hanuman doused the fire from his tail after burning Ravana's Lanka in the chilly waters of Yamuna at Banderpooch. That is why, the peak is called Bander(monkey) Pooch (tail) – monkey's tail.

Another legend sees Yamunotri as the hermitage of ancient sage Asit Muni. The Muni used to bathe both in Yamuna and Ganga, but in his old age he couldn't travel to Gangotri. Realizing his problem, a stream of Ganga started to flow beside that of Yamuna.

LEGENDS

According to Hindu legend, Sage Asita had his hermitage here. All his life, he bathed daily both in the Ganges and the Yamuna. Unable to go to the Gangotri during his old age, a stream of the Ganges appeared opposite Yamunotri for him.

Sangya is the birthplace of the Yamuna in the Champasar Glacier (4,421 m) just below the Banderpoonch Mountain. The mountain adjacent to the river source is dedicated to her father, and is called Kalinda Parvata (Kalinda is an epithet of the sun god Surya).



HISTORY OF YAMUNA RIVER

The actual source of Yamuna River lies in the Yamunotri Glacier, at a height of 6,387 metres (20,955 ft), near the Bandarpunch peaks in the Lower Himalayas and is dedicated to goddess Yamuna. It crosses the states of Uttarakhand, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and later Delhi before merging with the Ganges at Triveni Sangam, Prayagraj.

The actual source, a frozen lake of ice and glacier (Champasar Glacier) located on the Kalind Mountain at a height of 4,421 m above sea level, about 1 km further up, is not frequented generally as it is not accessible; hence the shrine has been located on the foot of the hill. The approach is extremely difficult and pilgrims therefore offer puja at the temple itself.

SPECIAL FEATURE

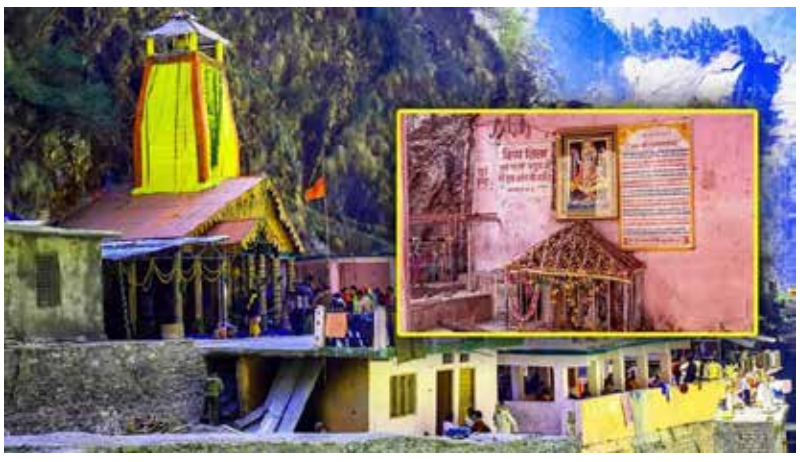
YAMUNOTRI TEMPLE

Yamunotri Temple is situated in the western region of Garhwal Himalayas at an altitude of 3,235 metres (10,614 ft) near the river source. The temple was built in 1839 by Sundarshan Shah who was the king of the cultural center of Tehri. There was a small shrine at the site prior to the construction of the temple. The Divya Shila and Surya Kund are located near the temple. The Yamunotri Temple, on the left bank of the Yamuna, was constructed by Maharaja Pratap Shah of Tehri Garhwal. The deity is made of black marble. The Yamuna, like the Ganges, has been elevated to the status of a divine mother for the Hindus and has been held responsible for nurturing and developing the Indian civilization.

There are hot water springs located close to the temple. Surya Kund is the most important. Near the Surya Kund there is a rock called Divya Shila, which is worshipped prior to offering worship to Yamuna. Devotees prepare rice and potatoes, tied in muslin cloth, to offer at the shrine by dipping them in these hot water springs. The cooked rice is taken back home as ***prasada***.

The holy abode of Goddess Yamuna is situated near the foot of Kalind Parbat (peak) and on a side of Banderpoonch Parbat. Nestled in the intimidating Himalayas, Yamunotri temple is believed to be constructed by the King of Tehri, Naresh Sudarshan Shah in 1839. One of the Chota Char Dham pilgrimage sites, the stunning setting of the temple is enough to fill the hearts of the devotees with wonder. Yamuna river jets down from one side of the temple which houses Goddess Yamuna in the form of a ***Black Marble Idol***. Ganga Devi too finds her place by the side of Yamuna in ***White marble.***

The temple of Yamuna closes its portals as winter approaches on ***Yama Dwitiya*** (second day after Diwali on Bhai Dooj). Devi's location in winter is in Kharsali village, where she reaches in a palanquin and remains the entire period of winter. On Akshaya Tritiya (April/May), the Goddess comes back to grace Yamunotri again. Both the closing and opening ceremonies of the Yamunotri shrine are brought about with celebrations, elaborate rituals and vedic chants.



Yamunotri Temple

Architectural Marvel

Yamunotri Temple showcases a unique blend of traditional Garhwali and Tibetan architectural styles. Perched at an elevation of 3,293 meters (10,804 feet) above sea level, the temple's design is adapted to withstand the harsh mountain



climate. The structure is constructed primarily of wood and stone, reflecting the rich cultural heritage of the region.

The temple's outer facade is adorned with intricate carvings and sculptures of deities, mythological creatures, and floral motifs. The wooden shikhara (spire) is a prominent feature, showcasing the skilled craftsmanship of local artisans. The use of wooden panels and stone slabs enhances the temple's durability and aesthetic appeal.

Inside the Temple

The Yamunotri temple demonstrates a unique combination of traditional Garhwali and Tibetan architecture. The temple sits on the top of the mountain at an elevation of 3,293 meters (10,804 feet) above sea level, and its design is adapted to the severe mountain environment. The structure is made mainly of wood and stone to bring out the cultural richness of the local people.

The outer wall of the temple is embellished with many carvings as well as sculptures of Gods, mythical animals, and blossoming floral patterns. A focal point of the design is the wooden shikhara (spire) that demonstrates the craftsmanship of local artisans. The application of wood and stone blocks makes the temple both durable and beautiful.

Sanctum Sanctorum: The most important part of the Yamunotri temple is the Garbha Griha where the principal deity of Goddess Yamuna is enshrined. The image of goddess Yamuna is made of black marble and it is embellished with jewels. Disciples visit this holy place to chant their prayers and show their devotion to the deity.

Puja Rituals: Within the temple, the priests conduct ordinary puja (ritual worship) practices to venerate the deity. Pooja rituals comprise a poetic expression of mantras and the submission of flowers, incense, and lamps to become one with the Divine. The sound of bells, the aroma of incense, and the soft allure of oil lamps contribute to creating a sacral and meditative atmosphere.

Spiritual Ambiance: The inside area of the temple echoes the aura of faith and respect. Pilgrims often sit in silent meditation and participate in groups singing bhajans (bhakti poetry) while giving due respect to the divine powers in the temple.

Holy Water: Next to the temple is the Surya Kund, a natural thermal spring setting where the sacred water is heated by the geothermal energy of the earth. People who visit these hot springs normally take a dip in the water before they proceed to the shrine for this is believed to clean the soul. Surya Kund water is also cooked along with the rice and potatoes which are served as Prasad during the temple rituals.

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS

- ***Surya Kund (The Pond of the Sun):*** Very near the Yamuna Devi temple there are many hot water springs; the most significant among them is the ***Surya Kund.*** It holds the boiling hot-water as it emerges from the crevices in the mountain. People boil rice and potatoes by tying them in a cloth (preferably muslin cloth) and consider them a Prasad (religious offering) from Goddess Yamuna.
- ***Divya Shilla (The Divine Stone):*** It is a reddish-brown rock near the Surya Kund which needs to be worshipped before offering reverence to the main deity, Yamuna Maa (mother). According to Skanda Purana, with a mere touch of the sacred rock, one can attain spiritual liberation.

BEST TIME TO VISIT

Yamunotri remains cold almost throughout the year, while in summers it becomes a little pleasant. Winters here are too cold, making it difficult for the travelers to explore this place. In the monsoon season, Yamunotri features heavy rainfall again causing a little bit of disruption while journeying to this place. Summer season is considered the best season to witness the true beauty of Yamunotri. If one wishes to discover its rare culture, then they should visit this pious place during festivals like, Basant Panchami and Phool Devi.

HOW TO REACH

ROUTE:

Rishikesh – Narendra Nagar – Chamba – Tehri – Dharasu – Brahmkhal – Barkot – Hanuman Chatti – Janki Chatti – Yamunotri.

- ***By Air:*** Jolly Grant Airport, Rishikesh Road, Dehradun, is the nearest airport to Gangotri. From here hire a cab or get a bus.
- ***By Train:*** Regular trains to Haridwar and Dehradun are available at all times of the year. Hire a cab or get a bus from here.
- ***By Bus:*** Motorable roads end at Janki Chatti and it is from here that a tough trek of up to 6.5 km to the holy shrine of Yamuna Devi. One can take ponies or palanquins to save oneself to Rishikesh, Dehradun, Uttarkashi, Tehri and Barkot. To relieve the hardship of the journey. Buses and taxis are available from important destinations like Rishikesh, Dehradun, Uttarkashi, Tehri and Barkot.

COMMUNITY WATCH

THE CITY OF Waterloo

WATERLOO CO-OP STUDENTS DELIVER RESULTS TO LOCAL BUSINESSES

Communitech's AI@Work program pairs student teams with local businesses to drive results and uncover new career possibilities

By Meg Vander Woude,
University Relations



When Bilal Alberzreh started his studies in Systems Design Engineering, he didn't expect to work for a construction company like Musselman Excavating — but that's where he spent his latest co-op term.

In May, he joined students in the AI@Work program, an initiative led by Communitech that pairs student teams with local small- and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) to create practical, high-value artificial intelligence (AI) solutions.

As part of this unique work term, Alberzreh says he gained significant experience and skills he wouldn't have found with other employers.

"I came in expecting the interesting part to be AI," says Alberzreh, who worked as a Product Manager on the Musselman team. "It turned out to be sitting close to a business and working out what's actually worth building."



Bilal Alberzreh

AI tackles excavation paperwork

Musselman Excavating files utility locates for three operating companies. Before excavation can begin in Ontario, companies must request locate approvals from up to 10 utility providers to identify underground infrastructure. Coordinating and replying to these requests was a manual process that had to be completed before a locate expired.

Over the course of a work term, Alberzreh's team created a custom AI solution that saved time for the coordinator handling requests and generated responses before a locate expires, preventing construction jobs from stalling.

Dishita Chawla, a fourth-year Computational Mathematics student, worked as a Software Developer on the Musselman team. She describes their final product as a "human-in-the-loop AI platform." The platform monitors the email inbox and extracts project information from various documents. Then, it organizes and calculates information in a dashboard for the coordinator to review.

"Active processing time went from 15 to 25 minutes per ticket down to roughly one minute," Chawla says. "Package assembly went from 15 to 20 minutes to about two."

It's a great example of the value students can bring to co-op employers and showcases the results that Communitech hoped to achieve through the AI@Work initiative. After just one term, students like Alberzreh and Chawla have created AI solutions that local SMBs wouldn't otherwise have access to.

Faster quotes for custom-made furniture

Kanika Prajapati, a third-year Management Engineering student, took the role of Product Manager for Hauser Industries, a furniture manufacturer that often creates custom products for clients. Hauser has operated in Waterloo Region for more than 75 years. Thanks to its extensive business knowledge and experience, the company has intricate formulas to help create pricing estimates. Prajapati's team created an AI quoting engine that reduces manual work with these formulas and generates estimates more quickly and consistently.

"The quoting team can now input product specifications, and the engine uses previous products to output an approximate quote," Prajapati explains.

Prajapati says the AI engine cut Hauser's quoting times in half. Since its implementation, Hauser employees have found additional uses in their daily work. The company has already decided to hire another AI@Work team next term with a new challenge to solve.

More than a typical co-op term

Prajapati, Alberzreh and Chawla all agree that the AI@Work experience provided a level of ownership that's rare in many co-op terms.

"You get the opportunity to own an entire tool end-to-end and see its impact on the day-to-day workings of a business," Prajapati says.

"Experiences like AI@Work are exactly what we want co-op to make possible," says Shabnam Ivkovic, Director of Industry Relations, Co-operative and Experiential Education.

"Students are given real problems,



Kanika Prajapati

real responsibility and the opportunity to create something that makes a difference for a real business. At the same time, they're discovering that AI isn't limited to traditional technology roles — it can be applied in almost any industry. That combination of meaningful work and career exploration is incredibly powerful for students."

"If you had asked me in April where AI was going to matter, I'd have said software, finance, health care," Chawla says. "I would not have mentioned construction, manufacturing or any of the other industries I encountered through AI@Work. This term opened my eyes to the number of opportunities there are for AI in these industries. I would love to continue exploring them and finding new problems to solve."

Students also benefited from their exposure to smaller businesses.

"I saw how mid-market companies have the same problems as large enterprises, and none of the internal software teams," Alberzreh says. "That's not a technology gap, it's an access gap, and it's much bigger than I understood before this term."

The AI@Work program continues this fall, expanding opportunities for students and businesses to collaborate on the next generation of AI-driven innovation.

THE CITY OF Waterloo

COMMUNITY WATCH

LESSONS FROM AN ECONOMIST

Waterloo alum Jennifer Lee shares six lessons on navigating uncertainty, broadening your perspectives and making sense of a changing economy

By Angelica Marie Sanchez,
University Relations



For Jennifer Lee (BA '91), understanding the economy has always started with curiosity. As a child, she remembers peering over the kitchen table as her father studied stock market tables in the daily newspaper. His explanations of how markets worked sparked an early interest in finance that eventually led Lee to study economics at the University of Waterloo.

More than three decades later, curiosity remains central to her work as Senior Economist and Managing Director at Bank of Montreal (BMO) Capital Markets. Amid trade tensions, shifting markets and constant headlines, she has learned that making sense of uncertainty means asking fundamental questions: What is happening, why does it matter and what might come next?



Jennifer Lee

From challenging assumptions to preparing for the unexpected, Lee shares six lessons for navigating change and making informed decisions when the path ahead isn't always clear.

1. Don't let the headline tell the whole story

Headlines are constantly changing, and even Lee admits it can be difficult not to get caught up in the daily noise. But one headline or economic indicator rarely tells the whole story.

Lee points to Canada-U.S. trade tensions as an example. While tariffs initially raised fears that Canada's trade-dependent economy could fall into recession, businesses have had time to adapt and develop alternative plans to navigate changing conditions.

From an economist's perspective, the lesson is to look beyond the immediate reaction and consider how businesses, governments and consumers are responding before drawing conclusions about what comes next. For individuals, that means keeping the latest headlines in perspective and focus on the factors you can control, including your own financial circumstances.

2. Prepare for the unexpected, don't try to predict it

While headlines can change quickly, Lee's next lesson is to be prepared when circumstances do too. She recommends planning early and considering scenarios that could affect your finances. What happens if someone in your household loses their job? What if an unexpected expense arises?

Lee compares the approach to "stress testing" in banking by considering how changing circumstances could affect financial plans. As her mother used to remind her, "not every day is a sunny day." The goal isn't to predict exactly when the rain will come, but to be prepared when it does.

3. Never assume today's reality is permanent

Being prepared also means recognizing that the assumptions behind our plans can change. Before COVID-19, for example, cross-border workers had little reason to imagine the Canada-U.S. border could suddenly close. Today, shifting trade relations are once again challenging expectations.

For businesses, Lee says flexibility and diversification of customers and suppliers can help them withstand economic shocks. Individuals can apply a similar principle by planning for different scenarios and seeking professional financial advice, particularly when making long-term decisions.

"Everyone is going to struggle, unfortunately," Lee explains. "But the ones that will emerge stronger are the ones that have flexibility built into their strategies."

4. Look for patterns, not just numbers

Economists examine countless indicators to understand the bigger picture, but employment is one Lee watches closely because jobs influence consumers' ability and confidence to spend. By comparing multiple employment indicators, a bigger sample size, Lee looks for patterns to better understand what is really happening in the economy.

"At the end of the day, it's consumers that are driving the Canadian economy," Lee says, noting consumer spending accounts for roughly two-thirds of economic growth. That makes the health of the job market an important window into consumer confidence and the overall health of the broader economy.

5. Keep asking questions, and get uncomfortable

One of Lee's most enduring lessons came from her first mentor, Dr. Sherry Cooper, one of the first female chief economists on Bay Street: never be afraid to ask questions.

Watching Cooper openly ask questions when she didn't know the answer taught Lee that curiosity isn't a weakness or a sign that you don't belong in the conversation. If you're wondering something, chances are someone else is too. Asking questions can challenge assumptions, uncover what you might be missing and ultimately lead to a better understanding.

It is also very important to get out of one's comfort zone. She credits BMO's current Chief Economist, Douglas Porter, with pushing her to get out and be uncomfortable, which helped build her confidence in public speaking.

6. Look outside your own perspective

Curiosity also means being willing to consider viewpoints beyond your own. Whether assessing economic conditions or understanding how people are experiencing them, Lee values seeking different perspectives and remaining open to ideas that challenge her thinking.

For her, looking at an issue from multiple angles can reveal something that might otherwise be missed. Just as economists consider more than one indicator to understand the economy, broadening your perspective can lead to a fuller understanding of the world around you.

Lee has carried that curiosity throughout her three-decade career at BMO Capital Markets, becoming known for her expert analysis on the U.S. economy and commentary on global financial markets and economic activity. Recently, Focus Economics named Lee among the top 73 economists worth following in 2026 from its global network of more than 1,200 analysts. She also regularly shares her insights through media appearances, including as a frequent guest on Bloomberg.

Beyond her professional work, Lee is passionate about making complex financial and economic topics more accessible. Through financial literacy and economic education, she helps audiences better understand the forces shaping the economy and what they can mean for everyday life.



Lee with the Honourable Brian Tobin (middle), Vice Chair of BMO Financial Group, and the Honourable Scott Brison (right), Vice Chair of BMO Wealth Management, during a panel discussion at the 2026 BMO Government Reserve and Asset Managers conference.

BUSINESS / FINANCE

Winter Is Coming... Is Your Home Ready?



By: Senthooran Punithavel

Every year in Canada, we know winter is coming. It isn't exactly a surprise.

Yet somehow, the first really cold morning arrives and we're shocked that the car won't start, the driveway is covered in snow, and that garden hose we meant to disconnect is now frozen solid.

When it comes to your home, a little preparation before winter can save you a lot of frustration, and potentially a lot of money.

As someone who works in insurance, I've seen enough claims over the years to know that winter has a special talent for finding the one thing you forgot to take care of. So before you settle in for a few months of complaining about the weather, here are a few things worth checking around your home.

Start with the outside

Before the temperature really drops, take a walk around your property.

Disconnect your garden hoses, shut off exterior water lines where possible, and drain them. Leaving a hose connected may seem harmless, but trapped water can freeze, expand and potentially damage the plumbing inside your home.

While you're outside, look up.

Check your eavestroughs

and downspouts for leaves and debris. Water needs somewhere to go when snow and ice start melting. Make sure downspouts are directing water away from the foundation rather than depositing it conveniently beside your basement.

Your foundation is many things. A swimming pool shouldn't be one of them.

Take a good look at your roof

You don't necessarily need to climb onto your roof, and depending on your balance, I would strongly encourage you not to.

Instead, look for missing or damaged shingles from the ground or have a qualified roofer inspect it. Check flashing around chimneys, vents and skylights, and watch for signs that water may already be getting in.

Once winter arrives, snow accumulation and repeated freezing and thawing can make small roofing problems considerably bigger.

Inside the attic, look for signs of moisture and make sure insulation and ventilation are doing their jobs. Heat escaping through the roof can contribute to ice damming, where melting snow refreezes near the roof's edge and prevents water from draining properly.

Water is remarkably persistent. If it can't go where it's supposed to, it will usually find somewhere you really don't want it to go.

Don't forget the furnace

Your furnace is about to become one of the hardest-working appliances in your home.

Change or clean the furnace filter and consider having your heating system serviced if it hasn't been inspected recently. It's much easier to deal with a furnace problem in October than at 2 a.m. on the coldest night in January.

If you have a fireplace or wood-burning appliance, have the chimney inspected and cleaned when necessary.

And while you're thinking about heating, check your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms too. Test them and replace batteries where required.

These aren't glamorous home improvements, but neither is standing outside in your pajamas while the fire department checks your house.

Find your main water shut-off

Here's a simple question every homeowner should be able to answer:

Do you know where your main water shut-off valve is?

If the answer is, "I think it's somewhere in the basement," now is the time to find it.

If a pipe bursts, knowing how to shut off the water quickly can make an enormous difference in the amount of damage.

Also pay attention to plumbing in colder parts of the house, especially near exterior walls, crawlspaces and garages. Insulating vulnerable pipes can help reduce the chance of freezing.

Seal up the drafts

Walk around your windows and exterior doors on a cold or windy day. If you can feel cold air coming through, you're probably paying to heat the neighbourhood.

Weatherstripping and caulking are relatively inexpensive fixes that can improve comfort and help reduce heat loss.

Also check exterior doors, garage doors and basement windows. Small gaps don't look like much, but collectively they can make your heating system work much harder.

Prepare for the weather we pretend won't happen

Keep a decent snow shovel and ice melt handy before the first major storm. Not after the forecast causes everyone in Toronto to rush to the hardware store at exactly the same time.

If you use a snowblower, test it before you need it.

It's also worth keeping flashlights, batteries, phone power banks and some basic emergency supplies at home in case of a winter power outage.

And if you're heading somewhere warm for a winter vacation, don't just lock the door and disappear. Arrange for someone to check the property and keep the heat at an appropriate temperature. It's also a good idea to review your insurance policy because requirements for homes left unattended can vary.

Finally, review your insurance

Winterizing your home isn't just about preventing problems. It's also a good reminder to make sure your insurance still reflects your home today.

Finished the basement? Added an expensive renovation? Installed a fireplace? Made other major improvements?

Let your insurance advisor know.

The worst time to discover that something wasn't properly accounted for is after you've had a claim.

A little prevention goes a long way

Most winter preparation isn't difficult or expensive. It's really about taking a couple of hours now to avoid potentially spending days dealing with frozen pipes, water damage or emergency repairs later.

Make yourself a checklist, walk around the house and get it done before the real cold arrives.

Because winter in Canada is inevitable.

Being surprised by it every single year is optional.

About Author
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THE AMARA INN

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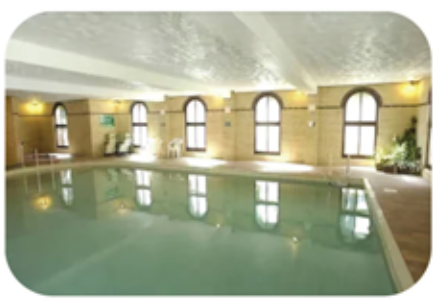






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- Room Service
- Casabelia Elegance,Savory Indulgence at Our Cuisine & Bar





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www.thequeensroadhotel.com

DISCOVER THE ISLE OF WIGHT



The Isle of Wight is an island off the south coast of England which, together with its surrounding uninhabited islets and skerries, is also a ceremonial county. The county is bordered by Hampshire across the Solent strait to the north, and is otherwise surrounded by the English Channel. Its largest settlement is Ryde, and the administrative centre is Newport.

The Isle of Wight has a land area of 380 km2 (150 sq mi) and had a population of 140,794 in 2022, making it the largest and second-most populous English island.



Located just off of the south coast of England, our island is only 2 hours door-to-door from London via ferry or hovercraft, making it the perfect year-round destination to explore with family and friends.

If you want to discover things to do, accommodation to suit all tastes and budgets, walking and cycling routes, food and drink, plus how to travel around our island, then look no further.

England in miniature, there's always plenty to do here whatever the season.

And for the best ferry deals, be sure to check with your accommodation provider.





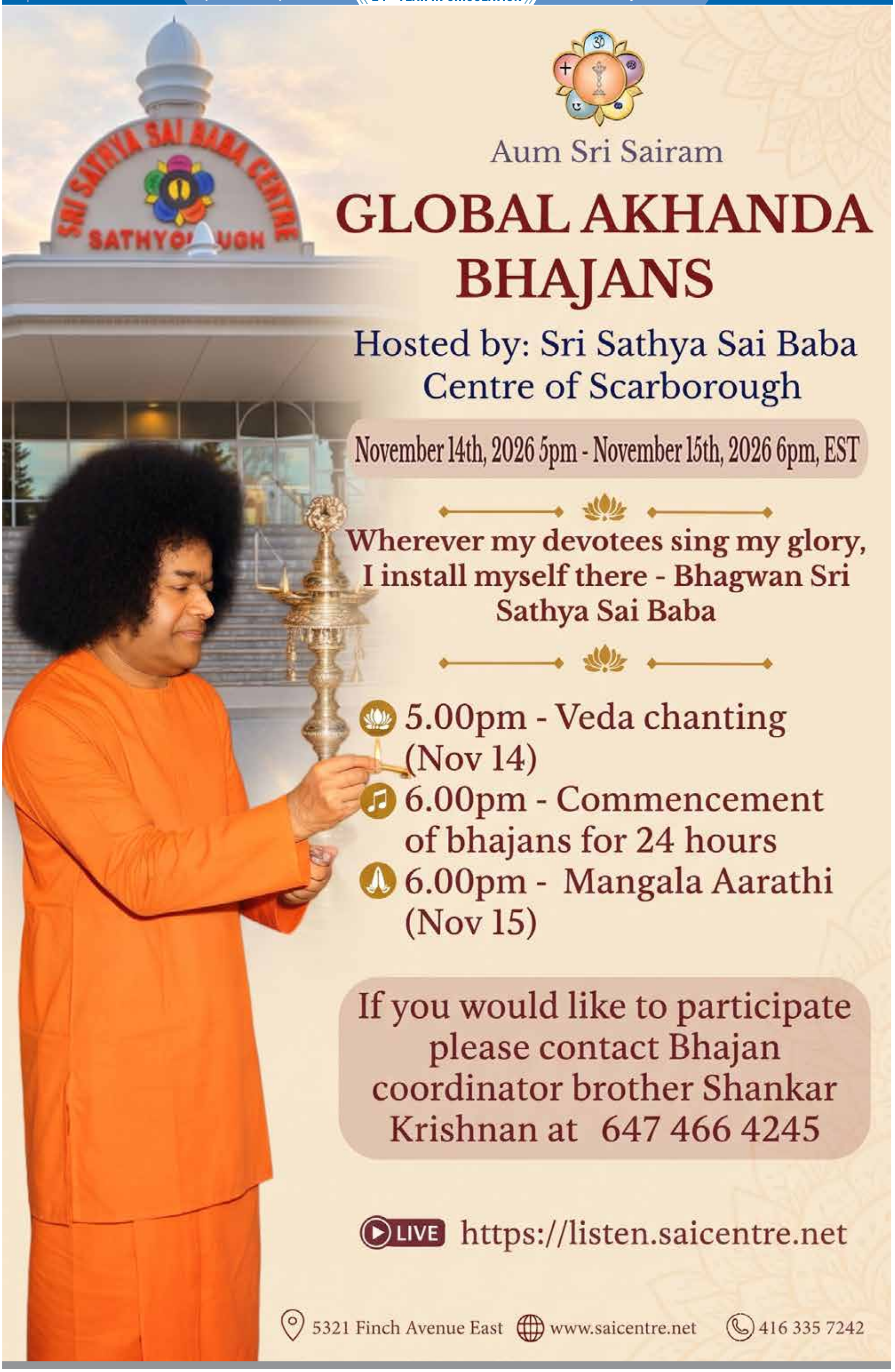






Our island,
is your **island.**

We **can't wait** to
welcome **you.**



Aum Sri Sairam

GLOBAL AKHANDA BHAJANS

Hosted by: Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Scarborough

November 14th, 2026 5pm - November 15th, 2026 6pm, EST

Wherever my devotees sing my glory, I install myself there - Bhagwan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

- 5.00pm - Veda chanting (Nov 14)
- 6.00pm - Commencement of bhajans for 24 hours
- 6.00pm - Mangala Aarathi (Nov 15)

If you would like to participate please contact Bhajan coordinator brother Shankar Krishnan at 647 466 4245

LIVE https://listen.saicentre.net

5321 Finch Avenue East www.saicentre.net 416 335 7242


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A parfait media publication
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இனிய தீபாவளி
நல்வாழ்த்துக்கள்!
"May this Deepavali bring your family
good health, happiness, and many more
years of celebrating side by side."
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