

WIGWAMEN
INCORPORATED

Wigwam to Wigwam

Your "House to House" News

Social Housing Reform Act Brings Changes

It has been one year now since the City of Toronto took over the responsibility of administering non-profit housing, and implemented a variety of changes that affect all tenants paying rent-geared-to-income. These changes were made in accordance with the Social Housing Reform Act (SHRA) 2000. The following is a brief run-down of some of the issues that affect you as a tenant:

- It is extremely important that you report any changes in your household's income or the number of people living in your house, within 10 business days. Any changes must be reported in writing to the Tenant Relations Officer/Terrace Manager. Otherwise, your subsidy will be cancelled.
- If you are absent from your unit for 120 days or more, you will lose your subsidy, unless you are absent for valid medical reasons.
- If you could be eligible to receive income that you are not currently receiving, you are required to apply for it.
- If your household income changes, your rent will be recalculated. If your rent is being lowered, the change will come into effect on the first day of the next month. If you rent is increasing, the change will come into effect on the first day of the second month.
- If you are over-housed (more bedrooms than people), you will be required to transfer to a smaller unit, if one is available. If one is not available with Wigwamen, you will be required to apply for a transfer with Toronto Social Housing Connections. You will not be asked to move until a unit of the right size is available.

If you have any questions about these changes, please call Tenant Relations Officer Jodi Hetherington, and she will be pleased to help you in any way she can.

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General Manager's Report

Looking back over my reports since September of last year, it's evident to me how the ongoing design and development of our new affordable housing project at 20 Sewells Road has come to dominate my reports. And while, given the scale of the project, that's understandable, it's important to acknowledge that there are many, many other things happening at Wigwamen. Here are just a few of them...

Home Visit Tenders:

We've awarded tenders to two contractors to complete work outstanding at our west end units from our last set of home visits. Work is expected to be completed by the end of May, and home visits are expected to begin in the west end at the beginning of June. Tenders for work to be completed in our east end units are expected to be issued in the next couple of weeks.

Hiring of Terrace Manager:

Residents at the Terrace know that since Terrace Manager Nicholas Mercredi's departure at the end of February, Tenant Counsellor Jodi Hetherington has been doing two jobs for Wigwamen, fulfilling all of her usual responsibilities at our head office, and working part-time at the Terrace. Wigwamen has advertised aggressively in search of qualified applicants for the position, and our four-person hiring panel is just concluding the hiring process. We hope to have our new Terrace Manager in place by sometime in June.

New Aboriginal Housing Support Centre Counsellor

As you'll see later in this newsletter, Wigwamen is fortunate to have hired Rozella Johnston as our new Aboriginal Housing Support Centre Counsellor. Originally from Cape Croker First Nation, Rozella comes to us with a background in community development and restorative justice, and played a leadership role in the establishment of M'Wikwedong Native Resource Centre in Owen Sound, as well as a Native Women's Group. Welcome, Rozella!

Aboriginal Peacekeeping Unit:

Though Wigwamen tends to focus on housing issues, we've made an exception in our response to the treatment of the Aboriginal Peacekeeping Unit by the Toronto Police Service, joining with eight other Aboriginal organizations to protest both the dismantling of the unit, and the Police Service's lack of communication with the community around the issue. On Monday June 2nd, we intend to join others in a meeting with Chief Julian Fantino to make it clear that the Aboriginal community deserves better.

Meeting with Toronto Aboriginal Agencies Network:

Recently, Wigwamen was offered an opportunity to make a presentation to the Toronto Aboriginal Agencies Network about Wigwamen, the Aboriginal Housing Support Centre, and 20 Sewells Road (what can I say—I had to slip it in there somehow). Rozella Johnston and I came away impressed by the knowledge and commitment of everyone at the meeting. Many thanks to Larry Frost, and all who attended!

20 Sewells Road Building Development Fund

Donor Recognition

Wigwamen would like to acknowledge the most recent contributors to the development of our 92-unit affordable housing project at 20 Sewells Road:

Ojibways of Sucker Creek First Nation for its donation of \$100

Serpent River First Nation for its donation of \$100

and:

M. Dimauro Construction Ltd.

our most recent **PLATINUM DONOR**, for its contribution of \$5,000

Thank you for helping make affordable housing in the city a reality!



Zero Balance Club

Congratulations to all our winners of the Zero Balance Club:

Nicole Young, Gary & Teresa McKay, Ines Alvis & Isa Askarizadeh, Suzette Darby, Tina Neshkawa, Cindy Jacko, Daisy Hahnfeld, Paul Kornidesz, Samantha Cote, Judy Miller, Evelyn Letourneau, Ken King, Colbertha Robinson, Valerie Garrison, Sandra Neshkawa, Mary Howk, Elizabeth Wemigwans, Kathrena Green, Josephine Millette, Gail Thomas, Fred & Olive Wesley, Alex MacInnis, Hella Von Dehn, Sheila Wyldes, Norma Cote, Janet Bellefeuille, Dorothy Stewart, Lee Harper, Beverly Cote, Mary Chakasim, Maryanne Morningstar, George Toth, Linda Wilson, Agnes Sagetcheway & Brenda Folz.

Thank you for being such responsible tenants!

Knowing Your Maintenance: Garbage & Recycling

We occasionally receive complaints about tenants' improper disposal of garbage and recycling around buildings and on the street. Here are some do's and don'ts from the City of Toronto that you may want to keep in mind before your next garbage day.

DO...



...place your recycling items away from your garbage so collectors can see them easily and avoid mistakes.

...flatten and tie all cardboard into 2' x 2' x 1' bundles.

...store garbage in rodent proof containers between collections.

...put bulky items such as furniture, sofas and mattresses out with your regular garbage.

...place your garbage and recycling at the curb no later than 7 a.m. on your pick-up day.

...put rolled, cut and tied carpeting out for garbage collection.

DON'T...

...put syringes or household hazardous waste out for garbage or recycling collection.

...put loose or broken glass in your garbage or blue box. Please ensure that it is wrapped and placed in a container clearly marked "GLASS."

...place your garbage or recyclables out in cardboard containers.

...tie your lid to your garbage can.

...put soil or sod out for garbage collection.

...put garbage out in several shopping bags

or kitchen catchers. Please use garbage bags or rigid containers in good condition.

The following provides a brief guide on what you can and can't put out in your recycling box:

RECYCLABLE:

- Glass bottles and jars used for food and drinks, rinsed with lids removed.
- Plastic bottles and jugs with the recyclable symbol on the bottom, such as soft drink and detergent bottles. Make sure that they are rinsed and the lids are removed.
- Metal cans used for foods and drinks. Put the loose lids inside the can and pinch it shut after rinsing.
- Aluminium foil containers such as pie plates, baking pans and take-out food containers, all rinsed well.
- Household paper including junk mail.
- Paper products such as egg cartons, toilet paper rolls and bags.
- Gift wrap and cards with any ribbons removed.
- Boxboard boxes such as cereal, tissue or detergent boxes.
- Newspapers and telephone books.
- Magazines and catalogues.
- Books, both hard and soft cover.
- Pizza boxes, liners removed and cleaned of food remnants, bundled up.



NON-RECYCLABLE:

- Plastic products such as margarine or yoghurt tubs, pails and toys.
- Metal coat hangers, pots or batteries.
- Aluminium foil wraps and bags (i.e. potato chip bags).
- Tissues, waxed papers and foil gift wrap.

- Brian Taheny, with files from the City of Toronto

Terrace Community Kitchen

Wild Rice Risotto

Ingredients:

100 g. wild rice and amboria rice, mixed and washed
350 ml vegetable stock, condensed
30 g. leeks, sliced
30 g. onion, sliced
30 g. celery, sliced
5 g. fresh rosemary sprigs
15 g. shallots
30 g. butter

In a heavy sauce pot, saute shallots, celery and leeks in butter and then add the rices. Blend and add just enough stock to cover. Bring to a simmer and keep moist by adding just enough stock.

Cook for a total of 45 minutes. Remove and let stand covered for 5 minutes. Finish with parmesan and serve with butter.

Sage and Onion Bannock

Ingredients:

4 cups flour
1 cup vegetable shortening
1 tbsp. baking powder
1 tsp. salt
1 1/4 cups warm water
1 tsp. sage
1 tbsp. chopped onion



Carefully mix all ingredients together. Form into a single ball and dust with flour, then form into portions.

Bake at 350 degrees F for 15 - 18 minutes.

*Source: David Wolfman of
"Cooking with the Wolfman,"
www.cookingwiththewolfman.com*

Traditional Foods: They're Good For You!

A study by McGill University's Centre for Indigenous Peoples' Nutrition and Environment (C.I.N.E.) has found that individuals who eat a combination of traditional and market foods are healthier overall than those who obtain their meals exclusively from the grocery store.

Some of the nutritional benefits of traditional foods that the researchers cite are: fewer calories, less saturated fats, more iron and more zinc.

Another benefit is the physical exercise associated with a hunting and trapping lifestyle—not to mention great taste, cultural fulfillment and low cost!

One warning to keep in mind, however, is that our modern North American lifestyle has created a high level of pollution which has contaminated some of the traditional food supplies of Native people.

**20 Sewells Road
Building
Development
Fund Donors**

Platinum Donor:

Pro-Con Construction

Gold Donor:

Adams, Masin & Tilley,
LLP

Thanks also to:

St. Barnabas
Catholic Church

Trinity - St. Paul's
United Church

Aboriginal History: Birch Bark Biting

Birch Bark biting is a unique indigenous art form, practiced and perfected by the Ojibway and Cree hundreds of years ago. This art form consists of folding birch bark several times and then biting designs into the triangle shaped wedge that remains.



Traditionally this art form was only done by a few members of each tribe. Often contests would be held amongst biters to see who could make the best design. The designs were primarily created for pattern use on traditional leather clothing. Today, this art form is being done by very few people at all, and with the exception of some enthusiastic revivalists, it is in danger of becoming a lost art.



The process begins with finding a suitable piece of bark. This is not an easy task, as the bark must come from a tree that is both young and supple. Once located, a good piece of bark will yield about five or six usable sheets. Natural blemishes in the bark itself can make it useless, as visible flaws could ruin the overall appearance of a piece. For this same reason, large works are rare.

Once the artist has found a suitable piece, it must be separated into layers, which requires time and patience. After the precision folding of the bark, the artist traces the design with his or her fingernail. Now it's time to start biting. By using the eye tooth and varying the pressure of each bite, the biter can shade and texturize the design on the birch bark.

When unfolded, the bark reveals beautiful symmetric representations. For the most part the works depict wildlife themes, such as dragonflies (right), bees, frogs or flowers (left).

Interest and appreciation for this unique and complex art form is increasing worldwide, and those few artists who still practice it are often able to make a living selling their works to museums and collectors.

The pieces displayed above were created by Saskatchewan's Cree Elder, Sally Milne, who is recognized as one of Canada's foremost Native birch bark biters.

Source: www.northweb.sk.ca

Household Hints: Spring Cleaning for the Garden

Now that the snow has finally melted and we're starting to see some sun, many gardeners will soon be out and about preparing for the upcoming summer season. Taking some time to work on your garden now will pay off this summer when your garden comes to full bloom. Here are three steps to help get your garden on its way.

1. Tidy Up

To start off, walk around your garden. You will probably find that the dry, grey stalks and stems of last year's perennials are looking a little sad. With a pair of clean, sharp garden shears, cut them to the ground to make way for new growth. This is also a good time to tidy up shrubs and vines.

If you protected your garden beds with a winter mulch of leaves, carefully rake them off to allow the soil to warm up more quickly. Toss the leaves onto a compost heap where they'll turn into a nice dark compost that can be applied to the garden in the fall or

next spring.

2. A Spring Tonic

Feeding your plants a spring tonic means more blossoms and healthier plants come summertime. The best tonic for plants is compost. Its nutrients are released slowly, giving your plants a steady supply of food all season long.



Topdress your flower beds with a thin layer of compost, working it around (but never over the crowns of your perennials and shrubs), using a three-pronged cultivator or garden trowel. This is also a good time to fertilize roses and rhododendrons. Use a fertilizer specially formulated for these flowering shrubs, preferably a slow-release type that gradually adds nu-

trients to the root zone of the shrubs. Roses also benefit from a topdressing of well-composted manure, which is readily available from nurseries each spring.

3. The Finishing Edge

Once you've freshened up your garden beds by pruning, clipping and topdressing, it's time to give them the finishing touch. You can create a sharp, clean edge between your flower borders and the lawn by using an edger (a half-moon shaped, long-handled tool) to dig a shallow trough a few inches wide along the length of the garden. To keep the edge straight, use a board to guide you. This will create a nice clean effect for your flowerbeds.

Source: www.mochasofa.com



Fraud & Identify Theft: Protect Yourself!

Fraud or identify theft can happen to anyone. Fraud is a criminal activity wherein somebody is deceived or cheated out of money or merchandise. Identity theft occurs when someone gets hold of personal information such as your Social Insurance Number, and uses it to impersonate you for the purpose of financial gain, such as applying for credit. The following tips from the RCMP, the Canadian Bankers' Association and the Government of Canada may be able to help protect you against fraud:

Credit Cards & Bank Cards:

- Carry only the personal documents that you need on a day-to-day basis, including credit cards.
- Never lend your credit cards or bank cards to anyone.
- Report lost/stolen cards to your financial institution immediately.
- Cancel all cards that you don't use.



Passwords & PINs:

- Avoid passwords and PINs that are easily guessed.

- Memorize your PIN and passwords: never write them down and carry them with you.
- Never reveal your PIN or password to anyone else. You should never be asked for this information by a financial institution or merchant.



Cheques and Statements:

- Review all of your monthly bank statements as soon as you receive them to ensure that all transactions are accurate and were made or authorized by you.
- Keep your personal cheques in a safe place.
- Never give anyone a blank cheque with your signature.
- Close all inactive or dormant accounts.
- Shred or tear up bills, receipts and other printed documents containing personal information and account numbers before throwing them in the garbage.
- Check your mail to ensure that all bills arrive on time in sealed envelopes.

Debit Card and ABM Transactions:

- When making direct payment purchases or transactions at an ABM, always try

- to swipe your own card.
- When entering your PIN, try to prevent anyone else from observing the number.
- Always check the amount on your receipt after completing a transaction.
- If a debit card transaction doesn't go through, ask the merchant for a cancelled receipt.

Social Insurance Number:

- Financial institutions, brokerage houses and employers require your SIN. Be cautious when giving out your SIN to other types of organizations. Make sure that their purposes are made clear to you.
- Don't carry your SIN card with you in your wallet or purse. If lost or stolen, this piece of information can leave you extremely vulnerable to identify theft. Keep the card in a safe place.
- If your SIN is lost or stolen, notify the police and the government (Department of Human Resources Development Canada) immediately.

Source: TD Financial Group

Who's Who at Wigwamen: Rozella Johnston

Wigwamen is pleased to introduce its newest employee, Rozella Johnston. Rozella joins the Wigwamen team with responsibility for the continued development and operation of the Aboriginal Housing Support Centre, which was designed to assist Aboriginal families and individuals experiencing housing difficulties. Rozella provides various counselling and referral services for the Centre's clients such as temporary housing options, assisting in avoiding evictions, and general advice on making ends meet. She is also responsible for coordinating a series of workshops and support groups of interest to Aboriginal tenants.

Rozella originally comes from the Saugeen Ojibwa Territory on the Bruce Peninsula. She was born and raised on the Cape Croker First Nation and later moved to the City of Owen Sound. Since then, she has lived throughout the Grey/Bruce area while raising her three children. Rozella's background lies in Community Development and Restorative Justice Models. She has assisted in bringing recognition to the social, economic, cultural and justice issues in the City of Owen Sound, an effort which resulted in the establishment of the M'Wikwedong Native Resource Centre in Owen Sound, as well as a Native Women's Group. She has been invited to join numerous working groups to provide an Aboriginal perspective on issues that affect the community and continues to strive for effective approaches that address these issues.

Rozella enjoys reading, campfires and storytellers. She also enjoys her many plants and watching a good movie once in awhile.



Did You Know? Aboriginal Population Statistics

- The population of Aboriginal Seniors in Canada grew by 40% between 1996 and 2001, due to an increase in life expectancy.
- One quarter of Aboriginal people in Canada can conduct a conversation in a Native language.
- The percentage of Aboriginal people in Canada is on the rise, at 4.4% of the total population in 2001.
- Of all countries with an indigenous population, Canada has the second highest percentage of Native peoples, only behind New Zealand, where the Maori are 14% of the total population.
- The Aboriginal group showing the largest increase in population was the Metis, who constituted 30% of the Aboriginal population in 2001.
- Almost half of the Aboriginal people in Canada lived in urban areas in 2001.

Source: www.turtleisland.org

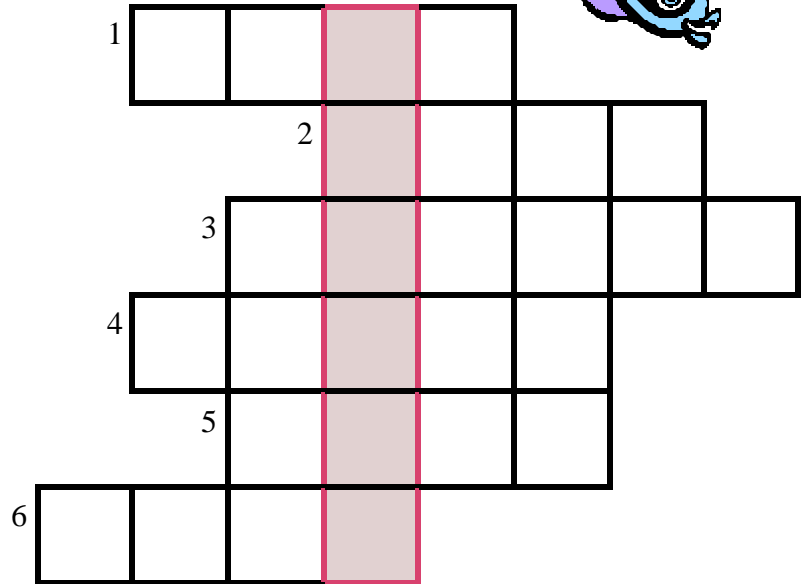
Crossword

Write the word for each clue.

Then read the letters in the box to answer the riddle.



- 1– a water animal
- 2– a walkway
- 3– part of a tree
- 4– carry
- 5– part of a foot
- 6– opposite of short



Riddle:

I come after winter.

What am I?

Fill-in-the blanks!



Keep your mouth _____ by brushing your _____ carefully at least twice a day and _____ once a day to reach the areas between your teeth and _____. Wear a _____ when you are playing sports. Don't eat _____ between meals. Visit your _____ regularly for a _____ and a cleaning to help keep your _____ healthy for life!



Source: Canadian Dental Association

See Page 11 for the Answers!

Book Review

Firedancers

By Jan Bourdeau Waboose
Illustrated by C.J. Taylor



Firedancers is a colourful children's story book about a young Aboriginal girl whose trip to an island with her grandmother connects her to her ancestry.

The little girl, who is only known by her grandmother's nickname for her--'Fast One'--is the narrator of the story. Her grandmother is 'Noko,' which is the Anishinawbe word for 'grandmother.'

One night, Noko takes Fast One out to Smooth Rock Island, where they have been many times before but never at night. Fast One is scared by the unfamiliar noises and the shadows that play on her fears of the darkness.

As she and Noko sit by the dancing fire, however, Fast One discovers many hidden stories from her ancestors, and soon she is no longer afraid. In awe, Fast One sees the smoke from the fire change shape and take on forms. The dancing of the forms is accompanied by the beautiful rhythm of drums and the sound of moccasins pounding against the ground. Fast One and Noko join in celebration with their ancestors.

In addition to this book being beautifully written and illustrated, it also teaches a pivotal lesson about the strength that lies in the link between young people and their elders and ancestors.

- Melanie Brown

Terrace Happenings

- There are several upcoming vacancies at the Terrace and we are looking for possible new tenants. If you have a friend or family member who is Aboriginal and aged 59 or over, please encourage them to apply. The vacancies are not expected to last long, so act now!
- Welcome to our newest tenants, Rosena Wells and Russell Oke. We hope you enjoy your new home!
- A very happy Mother's Day this May 11 to all the mothers at the Terrace!
- Our deepest sympathies go out to the friends and family of Allan Mann, who passed away on April 25.
- Tenants are kindly reminded not to feed the pigeons and squirrels, as it encourages them to return.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ **Crossword Answers:** ★

★ 1. Fish 4. Bring ★

★ 2. Path 5. Inch ★

★ 3. Branch 6. Long ★

★ Riddle: SPRING ★

★ **Fill-in-the-Blank Answers:** ★

★ Healthy; Teeth; Flossing; Gums; ★

★ Mouth guard; Sugary snacks; Dentist; ★

★ Checkup; Smile. ★

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Toronto Council Fire's Prenatal/Nutrition Programs

If you are pregnant, you may want to consider this supportive program which focuses on teaching healthy life skills during pregnancy and providing postnatal support to mothers. Services provided by the program include:

- One-on-one support
- Hospital visits
- Food bank
- Clothing, Toy and Book Program
- Referrals and letters of support
- Parent relief
- Library program
- Prenatal and postnatal classes
- Workshops



If you would like to learn more about the program call (416) 360-4350, Ext. 225

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*A Housing Project for
Native People*

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Note to Tenants



**Please be advised that all
Wigwamen offices will be
closed on Monday, May 19
for Victoria Day.**