

Fall 2008

Volume 6, Number 2

Harbord Village Residents' Association

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This newsletter is produced twice a year by the Harbord Village Residents' Association (HVRA) serving the part of Toronto bounded by Bathurst, Bloor, Spadina, and College. See Page 8 for more information about HVRA or visit www.harbordvillage.com where this newsletter can be found in glorious colour.

Message from the Chair of the HVRA Board

Dear members of this fine Harbord Village community:

Again I have to report the HVRA board has outdone itself this past half year in producing some seriously wonderful new projects.

The Treeing the Village group has completed the inventory of the trees in Harbord Village, a massive task that required the work of just under 100 volunteers. In addition, the group has embarked on an ambitious task of tree-planting in rear yards and is working on a scheme of having members of Harbord Village 'adopt' trees in public spaces with a view to tracking



health and making sure there is adequate water for the trees. It is an extraordinary initiative by any measure, and I am pretty certain it has not been duplicated on this scale **by a residents' group anywhere.**

The Farmers' Market has proved to be a roaring success. We have had weekly markets [Wed. 3-7 p.m.] in the Green P parking lot south of Bloor between Borden and Lippincott. The food one can buy simply cannot be beat in terms of flavour and freshness and variety. Prices are perhaps slightly higher than your supermarket, but the quality is worth the **difference, plus it's great to see**

the same faces every week bringing their wares, so much **so they've become "our" farmers.** And I see the way our community comes out, interacts, meets, greets and schmoozes. Every one of those encounters makes us a stronger community.



As you all know, we had to cancel the Fall Fair this year for the first time in 16 years. Hurricane Ike was threatening us with 100 mm of rain, so we thought it best not to waste HVRA resources taking a chance that we would lose some \$1,500 on non-refundables.

With the many donations from our local merchants, we will hold the traditional Fall Fair silent auction at a new event, the Pumpkin Festival on Harbord Street, on November 1.

*Your chair guy
Rory 'Gus' Sinclair*

HVRA Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, October 21, 2008, 6:30 for 7:00 p.m.,
Kensington Health Centre, 25 Brunswick Avenue

Meeting to end at 9:00 sharp

See Page 2 for more details



Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, October 21, 2008, 6:30 for 7:00 p.m.,
Kensington Health Centre, 25 Brunswick Avenue



- 6:30 – 7:00 Meet, greet, catch up on your membership dues
- 7:00 – 7:20 Area caucuses and election of area representatives
- 7:20 – 7:30 Caucus reports
- 7:30 – 8:15 HVRA reports. Election of Officers for 2008-2009
- 8:15 – 8:30 Councillor Vaughan – State of the Ward and City, and Q and A
- 8:30 – 9:00 Special Topic: Meet the Village Arborist, and Q and A

The AGM will be asked to ratify:

- 1: The creation of the new board position of Communications Director. (This position would be responsible for the development and use of the *systems* whereby HVRA communicates with its members and others—chiefly the website and newsletter—with the types of system to be used and the content of communications being as directed by the board.)
- 2: The adoption of the HVRA protocol for dealing with new applications for restaurant patios in our community. (Copies of this one-page document will be available at the meeting. It is also at the HVRA website at <http://www.harbordvillage.com>.)

The meeting will end promptly at 9 p.m.



The photos of our Farmers Market on this and the next page were taken by Harbord Street resident Wendy Smith. The Market is held every Wednesday, 3-7 p.m., until October 29, at the Borden-Lippincott parking lot just south of Bloor.



HVRA's Farmers Market First Season



More of Wendy's Farmers Market photos are at the HVRA website: <http://www.harbordvillage.com>



Your Pumpkins on Harbord Street on November 1st

“Our hope is that 200 lit pumpkins will grace sidewalk tables on both sides of the street from Brunswick to Spadina.”

Now's the time to buy a pumpkin from local merchants and think about the design you might carve into the front of it. That way, after celebrating Halloween, you'll be able to bring your carved pumpkin to Harbord Street, 5-6 p.m., to participate in The Great Harbord Street Pumpkin Festival.

In this, the first year of the festival, HVRA will supply the candles and the Harbord Business Improvement Association (HBIA) the tables. Our hope is that 200 lit pumpkins will grace sidewalk tables on both sides of the street from Brunswick to Spadina. If the City turns off the low-hanging

street lights, and local residents leave their porch lights off, the effect of the lit pumpkins will be alluring.

Spearheading the effort has been the HBIA's Neil Wright. He's arranged for notables such as Molly Johnson and Christie Blatchford to create designs for large celebrity pumpkins that will be carved by Central Tech students and placed on each corner. Local restaurants will feature pumpkin on their menus.

Between 5:30 and 9:30 on Saturday, November 1, invite

your friends and family to join you for a stroll on Harbord Street.

We'll need lots of volunteers to set up tables on Saturday afternoon to receive and light the pumpkins, stand watch over each of our 50 tables between 5:30 and 8:30, and finally, bag the pumpkins for composting that night. If you can help in any of these ways, please contact me at tim@greenteacher.com or 416.960.1244 at your earliest convenience.

Tim Grant

Silent auction at the pumpkin festival on Harbord

The day after Halloween, Harbord Street will be hosting a special Pumpkin Festival that will literally light up the street.

One of the best parts of this evening will be a silent auction, with the same wonderful prizes that would have been bid on at the recently cancelled Fall Fair.

The silent auction will be held in the Art Gallery at Robert and Harbord [formerly the front room for Hutoshi's Hair and Skin Care].

We have many wonderful donations from our local merchants that we can still put up for auction. Here are some of the goodies:

Gift certificates for meals at Messis, Mount Everest, Mel's,

Kilgour's, Ferret and Firkin, Tati [wine], 93 Harbord, Harbord Room, Harbord House, The Boulevard, Insomnia.

Additional items include gift baskets, books, massages, hardware, videos rentals, a jacket from Ms. Emma, clothing, tattoos, a tabla drum, bike tuneup, lube and oil change for your car and much more.....In all, 50 items!

Come out and help us make up for the loss of revenue from the Fall Fair by supporting this event... and get some cool stuff in the bargain.

The auction will start around 7 p.m. and run till 9 p.m.





Harvesting Harbord Village fruit

There are a surprising number of apple, pear, cherry, peach and apricot trees in our downtown neighbourhood. A few date back to the 1880s when the area was reportedly full of small orchards. Besides fruit trees, we also have dozens of grape arbours that produce heavily each September.

Some of this bounty is picked and consumed—by humans and wildlife—but much of it falls to the ground and rots.

A new community group, Not Far From the Tree, sees this as a community-building

opportunity. Their volunteers will pick your fruit, leave you with one-third, keep one-third for themselves and donate the remainder to a food kitchen or shelter.

To offer your tree or volunteer to be a fruit picker, contact Laura Reinsborough at 416.908.3022, notfarfromthetree.org@gmail.com or visit www.notfarfromthetree.org.



Gail Littlejohn displays fresh pears harvested from a tree on Robert Street

Village arborist starts work

If you're looking for a reliable tree care company, we have some good news.

After interviewing many recommended tree companies, HVRA's Treeing the Village committee selected Bruce Tree Expert Company (www.bruce-tree.com) in August to be our village arborist.

Apart from providing a full range of tree services, the company has a long history of improving urban forests and an impressive educational focus.

They are already providing a variety of services on the properties of participating households at a discount rate.

Apart from the savings, with the assistance of Bruce Tree Experts, we can all be confident that neighbourhood trees will have the care they need.

To sign up for a free inspection, contact Bruce Tree Expert Company at 416.252.8769 or contact@bruce-tree.com.

You can also meet and ask questions of Ian Bruce, the company's owner and chief arborist, who will be speaking at HVRA's AGM on Tuesday, October 21st (see Page 2).

Register with your Harbord Village address to enjoy their discounted services. If they can visit a number of properties in the neighbourhood in one day, **you'll avoid paying additional travel costs.**

Note that the company can also provide advice and care on trees located on the city-owned portion of your front yard, if you fill out a city form in advance of having the work done.

And this winter, they will

conduct a safety audit of all the trees in the neighbourhood.

If you have any questions, contact me at 416.960.1244 or at tim@greenteacher.com.

Tim Grant, chair, HVRA's Treeing the Village committee



Can you dig it?
Bruce Tree Expert Company is our new village arborist.



Let's hear it for the solaristas!

Two years of dedicated effort by members of the Downtown West Solar Energy project have resulted in 40 system installations, including 13 photovoltaic systems and 27 solar hot water systems.

Six of our participants have gone solar in a big way, purchasing both PV and hot water systems.

It's estimated that the solar hot water systems are now generating approximately 104,000 kW-hrs equivalent of energy and displacing 36 tonnes of carbon dioxide annually.

The PV (i.e. solar electric) systems are generating approximately 30,000 kW-hrs of electricity and displacing 29 tonnes of carbon dioxide annually.

Installing solar panels on your

house isn't just good for the planet – **it's good for the soul**, as these project participants and Harbord Village residents attested:

"Getting my solar panels was the single best decision I have made in my life. It is unequivocally thrilling to be able to help the planet. We solaristas are bound to the solar system and each other in a powerful and moving way! Thanks Downtown West," said Sue Dexter.

"I am amazed at how happy it has made me just to order a solar hot water system. It makes me feel as if I am moving in the right direction. It makes me very happy to know that my neighbours are organizing to help me in this way and to relieve me of all the confusion and doubt that prevented me from investigating on my own," said Harriet

Friedman.

While the project has been a great success, project activity has slowed to a trickle, so we have decided to wind down the project.

Thanks are due to the entire Downtown West team, including the homeowners who have purchased systems, our hard-working committee members, all local residents who came to meetings to learn about solar energy systems for their homes, our fine vendors Solera Sustainable Energy and Goldwater Solar Systems, and our bright and shiny co-chairs Tim Grant and David Booz.

If you want more information, you can still refer to the HVRA website at www.harbordvillage.com and the OurPower website at www.downtownwest.ourpower.ca. If you have any questions, contact David Booz at 416.806.2669 or Tim Grant at tim@greenteacher.com.

May the sun continue to shine!

David Booz



Homeowner Bob Haskett is a proud solarista



Backyard trees for only \$20!

Last spring, some of your neighbours received a tree worth \$100-\$200 for only \$20! Thanks to funding from the Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation, you too can receive one or more trees for your backyard for the same price. Our volunteers will even plant your tree for you on Saturday, October 25th, if you need help.

To obtain a backyard tree this fall, contact Samiha Sayed at samsayed@aol.com or 416.531.8651 no later than September 26th. While we will try to obtain any native tree species you want, the following ones are recommended as well adapted for city growing conditions:

LARGE (may grow to 16 metres high): American Basswood (Linden), Ginkgo, Ken-

tucky Coffee Tree, Red Oak, Black Locust

MEDIUM (10-15 m): Black Cherry, Bur Oak, Northern Catalpa, Ruby-Red Horse Chestnut, Sweet Gum, White Spruce

SMALL (<10 m): Serviceberry, White Cedar

For more details about each of these trees, visit <http://harbordvillage.com/trees>.

Planting more trees will help us increase our lovely tree canopy, improve the environment by cleaning the air, and reduce storm water runoff that overloads storm sewers. Please encourage your neighbours to take advantage of this offer.

Volunteers needed! Contact Samiha Sayed if you'd like to

join our committee or plant trees on October 25th. We can use all the help we can get!

Tim Grant



To celebrate the many backyard trees they planted, our volunteers enjoyed a fine meal at the Harbord House.

Tree mapping in Harbord Village

If you like trees, you can now go on a tree ride around Harbord Village, courtesy of Google Maps.

The trees page of the HVRA website (www.harbordvillage.com/trees) contains a set of links that will zoom you down from space into the HVRA treetops and give you a lot of information along the way.

The summer 2007 inventory does that for about half the blocks in the neighbourhood, and the summer 2008 inventory will soon complete the picture — thanks to the work of HVRA volunteers and the two U of T Forestry graduate students who guided their work and compiled the data.

Each tree on the Harbord Vil-

lage map shows up as a pushpin with a "bubble" note about the tree's species, size and condition.

The notes follow Professor Andy Kenney's Neighbourhood system for tree analysis.

For your tree ride, you need first to download the free Google Earth software from <http://earth.google.com/>. Install it and open it in a window of its own.

Open the HVRA Trees page (www.harbordvillage.com/trees) in its own window and scroll down a couple of screens until you see the link saying "Google Earth Maps." Click on it to see a list of maps. The ones there now represent the 2007 inventory. The 2008 maps will soon appear to complete the set.

Choose a map and click on it. Google Earth will take over to open it for you, zooming you down towards the globe at until you start to recognize the grid of HVRA streets, speckled over with the Neighbourhood pushpins.

Each file represents a block, numbered according to Julie's system for dividing up the neighbourhood, and each pushpin represents a tree.

Click on the pushpins to read the notes.

Many thanks to the volunteers and the Forestry students, Julie Keller in 2007 and Louise Potts in 2008.

Margaret Procter

"Each tree on the Harbord Village map shows up as a pushpin with a "bubble" note about the tree's species, size and condition."



This issue of the HVRA Newsletter has been edited by Jane Auster. Layout: Richard Gilbert.

HVRA Board 2007-2008

| | | | |
|------------|---------------------|----------|---------------------------|
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| Treasurer | Leslie Thompson | 924-6393 | lthompson@lesrisk.com |
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| SC | Bachir Rabbat | | berber@sympatico.ca |
| SE | Tim Grant | 960-1244 | tim@greenteacher.com |
| SE | Wendy Duff | 929-1488 | wendy.duff@utoronto.ca |

Membership stuff

- *Already a member?* Thanks. In particular, sincere thanks to all of you who have honoured us with your Supporting and Fanatic memberships, which have supported many of the new initiatives we've undertaken.
- *Haven't had a chance to renew?* Now's the time. Simply fill out the renewal slip on our back page and post it with your cheque.
- *Not yet a member?* Now's the time! Meet your neighbours,

have some fun and perhaps devote a few hours to something you want to improve. No time to spare? We understand. But by simply joining, you'll add your name to the ever-growing roster and help make HVRA's voice even better heard at City Hall.

- *Ideas for how to grow our membership, and strengthen connections?* Please contact membership secretary Katrina McHugh at kmchughc521@rogers.com.

HVRA Membership & Renewal Form

Thanks to everyone who renewed for 2007-8. Not a member yet? Know someone who should be a member? Please join -- to help us continue building a great neighbourhood!

2008-9 HVRA Membership

Please mail to:

Harbord Village Residents' Association

P.O. Box 68522
360A Bloor Street West
Toronto, M5S 1X1

Please check one:

- Voting Member (individual) \$5/one year; \$10/two years
- Supporting Member (to support HVRA activities)..... \$20/one year; \$40/two years
- Fanatical Member (to really support HVRA activities!)..... \$50/one year; \$100/two years



Please make your cheque payable to the Harbord Village Residents' Association and include:

Name.....
Address.....
TelephoneEmail.....