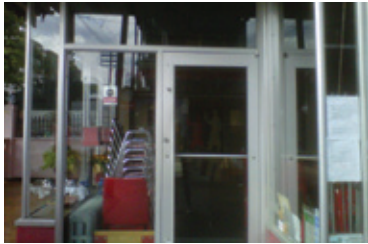


News & Views

A NEWSLETTER FOR BIA STAFF AND BOARDS | October 2012 | Vol. 3 No. 8

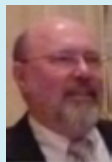


SAFETY TIP

Sometimes a tip seems too obvious to warrant its suggestion, but here's proof. Go out on the main street of your BIA and see how many businesses do not have a visible street number on or near their door. Why is that? No explanation seems possible. But, the importance of it is undeniable. When a Police presence is called or needed, the crew needs to detect a number quickly. Make it easy for them, as well as taxis and of course, potential customers, to find all the businesses in your BIA. And visible does not mean subtle. BIG bold numbers are best.

IN MEMORIAM

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of **Michael Comstock** on Sept. 22. Michael was Past President of TABIA and founding member and Past Chair of the St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA. A celebration of his life is being planned.



Kudos to Celebrate Yonge! (see p. 2)

SECOND ANNUAL AWARDS NIGHT COMING NOVEMBER 13



By John Kiru, Executive Director, TABIA

Recognition is good. In fact I've heard many people say it's as good as a raise. Let's face it, at our BIAs, we are more apt to hear the concerns and complaints than the praise, however faint! So we're making some time to heap on the praise!

We want to recognize the significant accomplishments of a number of BIAs. From the feedback we received last year about the event, we know it resonated with you. Your achievement awards are prominent in your offices or on your websites. And that's where they deserve to be.

It's also an excellent opportunity to network with others. We know you love to do that since you told us that in our recent communications survey and last year following the event. This will be the best opportunity for you to mix and mingle with your colleagues, key Board members, staff and City Councillors. Of course, we'll also have some great food

The award format will be similar to last year. You'll mingle, our generous sponsors will have a chance to describe their services and then we'll hand out lots of awards. And then you can mingle some more!

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KUDOS!

This regular column recognizes significant accomplishments taking place in our BIAs. This month we highlight **Downtown Yonge** and its four-week street festival. Let us know if you've got a story to tell!

CELEBRATE YONGE!

The four-week experiment is now over, but by all accounts it was a success even before it began on August 16. The idea to transform Yonge Street between Queen and Gerrard into a series of inviting public spaces arose from the need for a specific vision for the development of Yonge Street. A fire gutted the Empress Hotel, an historic landmark on Yonge in Jan. 2011 and highlighted the need to create a vision for the future of the street. The BIA consulted with noted architects, planners and its visionary councillor, Kristyn Wong-Tam, to determine ways to bring excitement back to the street. They did their research and saw that eliminating two lanes of traffic, even at peak times, would not even slightly hamper the traffic flow but could actually energize the street. And that's just the start of what they had in mind.

They dreamed up 11 aptly named themed areas where people could have fun, relax or eat. These areas had names like The Funway, to embrace larger than life outdoor games; The Gallery, to appreciate bike-themed art; or even The Gateway studio that featured the work of local artists. Almost half of the themed areas had outdoor patios to complement their nearby restaurants, and the serious event programming happened on weekends.

FANCIFUL PLANTERS ARE USEFUL AS WELL AS DECORATIVE

Adding to the decorative aspects of this festival, CUPE Local 27, Carpenters' Union, created temporary wooden street barriers in the shape of decorative planters. In an amazing win-win solution, the Union didn't charge the BIA for construction because their apprentice carpenters had a great vehicle on which to practice and the carpenters had a chance to help build this community. From this arose the Live Green Planter Box Challenge – a competition for landscapers from across the province with many imaginative creations emerging from the boxes.

In a praiseworthy editorial, *The Toronto Star* noted that the “blossoming of buskers, benches and flower planters will create a welcoming space, an urban oasis where busy urbanites and tourists alike can slow down, smell the flowers and enjoy the fun.” They concluded that “it was a great opportunity to celebrate the history and character of a very special street.”

According to Communications Manager Abigail Gamble, it was a great experience and one in which the merchants' reactions were most enthusiastic. She said that the BIA worked with them before the program got underway, to make sure they'd be onside. Once the program was over, she said the BIA thought it had been the best engagement of members that the BIA had ever undertaken.

The BIA will be assessing the project amongst all its different publics – both online and from personal encounters – to see where they go from here. Even if it was only a one-time event, it's forever changed how we look at that great old street.



SECOND ANNUAL AWARDS (cont.) NEW AND DIFFERENT THIS YEAR

Although much will be the same, this year you will be able to nominate your own BIA for an award. Only *you* know how much effort something took, how many mountains were moved, and what happened as a result of your efforts. So, we're hoping you will tell us *as soon as you can* (before mid-Oct.), with examples or descriptions that back up your claim.

Of course, you may even want to nominate another BIA in the Applause category. Is there someone who has given you a great deal of assistance, mentored a staff member or responded to your needs? For sure you'll know.

Looking forward to seeing you there!

ON THE MOVE

James Robinson, from Downtown Yonge BIA after 11 interesting and exciting years leading the BIA as its Executive Director to London, England as Head of Place Management at the Heart of London Business Alliance.

Laura Schaefer, from the Queen West BIA as its Executive Director for the past three years. Laura's now in San Francisco, catching up with various family members.

Let us know the changes within your BIA at detsten@Toronto-bia.com

PROFILE: THE EGLINTON WAY BIA

ACTIVE BOARD

Maureen Sirois was instrumental in helping the Eglinton Way BIA get started 25 years ago, and except for a “sabbatical” when her second child was born, she’s still as active as ever and has been serving as Chair for the last five years. She was a product of the merchants’ association that preceded the BIA, “but the BIA gave us the tools to do our job better,” she says. For the last 30 years she has been running a family business called Eva’s Accessories that’s been on Eglinton W. for 54 years!



Nowadays, she has nothing but praise for her Board. “It’s an amazing group of people,” she confesses. “Everyone works in the spirit of cooperation. It doesn’t mean we always agree.” She knows you can’t impose a mall mentality on merchants who are such independent individuals, so listening and being democratic are the best ways to reach consensus, she says.

Staff coordinator Monique Drepaul who has been with the BIA for nearly a year is also delighted to work with this six-member Board. She says that even though they all make a major effort running and marketing their individual businesses, they still find time to contribute to the Board. While there are no specific committees on this Board, everyone is involved in everything.

MID-SIZED, WITH UNIQUE SHOPS

The BIA is mid-sized, encompassing nine blocks on Eglinton St. W., not far from Yonge St. between Oriole Parkway and Chaplin Crescent. The attractive art-deco inspired gateway, the former Eglinton Theatre (now the Eglinton Grand) which is now used as a venue for various events and a connection to the belt-line trail from the Chaplin Crescent side are the most unusual features of this BIA.

“You can’t impose a mall mentality on merchants or tell everyone to be open late. We are independent merchants!”

Monique adds that the 200 businesses are a unique mix “from haute couture to regular sushi places.” Added to this mix are quite a few spas, salons and fitness facilities and the places that are truly one-of-a-kind. Monique says that people routinely come to this BIA to get what they can’t find anywhere else.



EVENT-FULL

The BIA doesn’t go in for big events but ones that are modest and appropriate. They hold a sidewalk sale in June, a holiday event in mid-December and a “spaluscious” event in April. The Board wants to expand and improve their events to encourage more people to either discover or re-discover the area.

Given that an Eglinton-Scarborough Crosstown LRT will be coming to Eglinton W. in the coming years, the BIA has been in talks with Metrolinx to make sure they keep the aesthetics of the street intact and continue to emphasize a “Shop Eglinton” mentality. Although the line might not be completed before 2020, there’s still much advance planning already underway.

Both Monique and Maureen say they are most proud of the BIA’s beautification efforts, which include the gateway. The latest projects, which added spectacular flowers to the existing planters, have been widely admired. And 27 new banner poles gave the BIA a more consistent appearance.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Monique Drepaul, Coordinator | Maureen Sirois, Board Chair
Tel: 416-487-3294 | Email info@theeglingtonway.com | www.theeglingtonway.com



UPCOMING EVENTS AND DATES TO KEEP IN MIND

HERE’S THE INFO YOU NEED NOW, FOR YOU, YOUR BOARD AND YOUR MEMBERS

Third Tues. of each month-TABIA inter-departmental meetings
City Hall, from 2-4 p.m. These are great sources of information on the latest news coming from City Hall or issues affecting BIAs. Questions? Contact Patricia at TABIA at 416-263-3229.

Enterprise Toronto – free programs and seminars for business people.
www.enterprisetoronto.com/index.cfm?linkid=99&linktype=mainlink&fromurl=boxes&content_id=2580

AT THE BIAs

Sept 29 and 30 – The King East Design District Exhibition, from Yonge to Parliament. Experience the art of design, first hand. Passports available.
www.kingeastdesigndistrict.com

Oct. 12-Nov. 1- Yonge Lawrence Village 8th Annual Village Artwalk, celebrating local artists in the community. www.yongelawrencevillage-bia.com

Oct. 24-31-Church Wellesley BIA Halloween – lots of the wickedly weird including pumpkin carvings and block party. www.churchwellesleyvillage.ca

Oct. 25-Nov. 4- Bloor-Yorkville Bia Beautylicious – Indulge in spa and wellness packages. www.bloor-yorkville.com/beautylicious

Nov. 1- 5th Annual Harbord Street Pumpkin Festival.
www.harbordvillage.com/pumpkinfest

LET US KNOW ABOUT YOUR UPCOMING EVENTS.

Send details to Patricia at TABIA who will publicize it on the TABIA website and share the info with *News & Views*. info@toronto-bia.com

NEWS TO USE FOR BUSINESS OWNERS AND MANAGERS

YOUR OPINIONS MATTER!

If you're dreading the arrival of food trucks into your neighbourhood, or if you think they'd make a great addition, we need to hear back from you. A few weeks ago, Patricia sent your BIA a survey to find out your opinion of them. If you haven't weighed in yet, it's not too late or you can ask Patricia to email you another copy. Also consider letting your councillor know how you feel



about this issue since Council will be discussing the issue soon and needs to hear if you think food trucks, who pay no property taxes, can rightfully commandeer business away from eateries that do.

WALKING TOURS

Every BIA has something unique. Open up your eyes to what's in your 'hood and then make up the most interesting walking tour you can and post it on your website for downloading. If you're short of talent, you could hire some students to put it together for you, complete with all the photography.

Here's an example from a Winnipeg BIZ that's not extraordinary in what it has to offer, but it becomes fascinating once you delve deeper.

www.corydonbiz.com/walkingtour.html

MARKETING COMPENDIUM: QR CODES AND MORE TO OFFER

Last month we told you that TABIA was offering free QR codes to BIAs for their website. It's a trend that many Canadians have embraced because their smartphones can pickup the codes and then instantly connect them to your website. You can put your code on posters or virtually anything. Get in touch with Liana at lling@toronto-bia.com to get yours now!

BIA SUPPLIERS AND GIVEAWAYS

TABIA is building a list of Suppliers which you can find on our website under *Suppliers*. These are companies that assist to sponsor TABIA and provide quality services to BIAs and BIA members. Please bookmark this page as the list keeps growing. We would like to formally welcome these new suppliers:

- **The Original Flag Store** is ready to help promote your BIA and attract the attention to shoppers, diners and tourists through motion and vibrant colours. <http://www.theflagstore.ca/store/business-improvement-areas/>

- **Wipe Out** provides graffiti removal, gum removal and power washing sidewalks, grout and tile cleaning (sealing), and water washable anti-graffiti coatings for any surface. The first five BIAs to contact them will receive a free tag removal. Call Paul Maynard at 905-532-9849 or 905-399-4457 to take advantage of this offer.

- We welcome **Wave Accounting**, an online 100 per cent free accounting service created for small businesses and entrepreneurs. They have a special partner program for accounting professionals. Visit their website at www.waveaccounting.com and share Wave Accounting with your members.

- **Promotional Opportunities for BIA Members** - There are still affordable opportunities to be listed as a Supplier on the TABIA website and to advertise in the upcoming printed Resource Guide. Please contact Liana Ling, TABIA's Marketing Consultant, for full details. lling@toronto-bia.com



TABIA AT THE EX

Invited back to represent TABIA at the CNE on August 28, Patricia and her volunteers could have easily distributed hundreds and hundreds of BIA branded items. They handed out all that they had of the popular Bloor West Village shopping bags, over 600 City of Neighbourhood maps, lots of greenTbiz information and "Not Far from the Tree" pamphlets.

If your BIA would like to participate next year, start thinking about it now. It's a great way to promote your BIA and your community, so either plan to print up additional bags or posters or anything that identifies your BIA, or send extras you presently have to Patricia. Suggested amount: between 500-1,000.

STAR BIZ CLUB

The *Toronto Star* Business Club caters to small and medium sized businesses. Each week there's a case-study featuring a Canadian company fighting to overcome a unique business challenge, along with expert advice, articles, videos, white papers and Q&As.

Businesses can have weekly discussions online and in-person at Star events. It's one of the many benefits of membership, which also includes access to exclusive deals, contests, and a leading online business directory.

New and current members have a chance to win a \$50,000 ad campaign in the *Toronto Star*, so join the contest at www.starbusinessclub.ca/contest and become a member... for free!

TABIA Staff

Executive Director: John Kiru

Office Manager: Patricia McCarrie

Special Projects Consultant: Faiza Ansari

Communications Advisor and Newsletter Editor: Deborah Etsten

Marketing Consultant: Liana Ling



Contact TABIA at info@toronto-bia.com or 416-263-3295.

Website: <http://www.toronto-bia.com>

TABIA Board Executive

President: John Wakulat, *Roncesvalles Village BIA*

Past-President: Alex Ling, *Bloor West Village BIA*

Secretary: Paul Dineen, *Cabbagetown BIA*

Treasurer: Henny Varga, *The Kingsway BIA*

Vice-Presidents: Amy Chow, *The Danforth BIA*
and Lionel Miskin, *Kennedy Road BIA*

Board Directors (BIA Board Chairs or Members)

Christena Chruszez, *Bloor-Yorkville BIA*; Harbhajan Dhillon, *Emery Village BIA*; Beverly Don, *Yonge Lawrence Village BIA*; Jeff Gillan, *Corso Italia BIA*; Jacques Jones, *Bloorcourt Village BIA*; Dan Glazier, *Crossroads of the Danforth BIA*; Darryl Kaplan, *Baby Point Gates BIA*; Tony Louie, *Chinatown BIA*; Don Panos, *St. Clair Gardens BIA*; Carl Porritt, *Long Branch BIA*; John Scheffer, *Lakeshore Village BIA*; Spencer Sutherland, *Queen St. West BIA*

Board Directors (BIA staff):

Lynn Clay, *Liberty Village BIA*; Keith Denning, *Roncesvalles BIA*; Grace Russo, *Little Italy BIA*; Robert Sysak, *West Queen West BIA*