

3. Our Municipal Representatives

Ana Bailão, City Councillor for Ward 18, Davenport. We offer our rather belated congratulations to Ana Bailão who became our representative on City Council following the October 25 municipal election. Ana has a longstanding connection with our community and has pledged to represent the views of her community at city hall. She welcomes comments, suggestions, and feedback from us, her constituents. For our part, we have a duty to keep her informed of our views and concerns. So, we should not hesitate to contact her regarding issues of importance to us.

Contact information: talk to Ana at the Abrigo Centre (Suite 104) in Dufferin Mall every Saturday morning between 10 and 12 – no appointment necessary.

Telephone her office at: 416-392-7012. Here is her website: www.anabailao.ca

We also offer our congratulations to our school trustees:

Maria Rodrigues, Public School Trustee, Ward 9, Davenport. 416-397-3069;
maria.rodrigues@tdsb.on.ca

Barbara Poplawski, Separate School Trustee, Ward 10, Toronto. 416-512-3410;
barbara.poplawski@tcdsb.org

4. A Fairer Voting System.

In the last federal election, just 59% of eligible voters in Canada cast a ballot (53% in our riding of Davenport), the lowest voter turnout in Canadian history. One main source of frustration is that winning candidates regularly receive less than 50% of the votes in their ridings; moreover, even when a majority government is elected, more often than not it receives less than 50% of the popular vote. The result is that the majority of us, the voters, are disappointed by most election outcomes.

Does Canada actually have representative democracy? In the 2008 federal election:

- the New Democratic Party attracted 1.1 million more votes than the Bloc Quebecois, but our current voting system gave the Bloc 49 seats, the NDP 37;
- 940,000 voters supporting the Green Party elected no one, while fewer Conservative voters in Alberta alone elected 27 Conservative MPs;
- in the prairie provinces, Conservatives received roughly twice the votes of the Liberals and NDP combined, but took seven times as many seats;
- as in the previous federal election, a quarter-million Conservative voters in Toronto elected no one and neither did Conservative voters in Montreal.

This is not true democracy. Historically, Canadians have usually been ruled by majority governments that the majority voted *against*. Canada is one of the few major nations still using the first-past-the-post voting system. Most democracies scrapped this winner-take-all system last century. Why? Because it fails to provide representation for all voters and it usually fails to provide legitimate majority rule. In other words, winner-take-all voting subverts the basis of representative democracy.

Today more than 80 countries use fair voting systems, often called “proportional representation”. Fair voting systems have many variations but the core principle is the same: to get as close as possible to treating every voter equally, or in other words, to create true representative democracy.

When each vote has equal value, election results are proportional. A party that receives 40% of the votes will receive close to 40% of the seats in the legislature, not 60% or more. A party which receives 20% of the votes will win close to 20% of the seats, not 10% or none at all.

[The facts above are from Fair Vote Canada. For more thought-provoking information about proportional representation check out their website: www.fairvote.ca]

5. Rankin Crescent Residents – Information and Issues

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Monday, May 2 – Federal Election Day

Thursday, May 5 – Neighbourhood Safety Walk with Ana Bailão focussing on Wallace and Campbell.
Meet at Angel's Café at Symington and Wallace at 7 p.m.

Saturday, May 28 – Rankin Crescent Yard Sale

LOCAL ISSUE:

Dog Poop. Some Rankin Crescent residents have expressed concern about the poor ethics of some of our neighbourhood pet owners. Although most pet owners are careful to scoop the poop and dispose of it properly, a minority have allowed their pets to defecate on private property (i.e. our front yards), and also in Rankin Park and in the boulevard area on the west side of Rankin between Wallace and the laneway. In some cases, the poop was scooped and bagged, but the poop bags were simply dumped. Besides being an environmental issue, this is a health and safety concern, especially since many young children are living on our street. If you own a pet, please act responsibly every time. It is not acceptable to allow your pet to poop or pee or trespass on private property. The law requires that pet owners pick up after their pets. If you see a pet owner who is not picking up after their pet, speak to them to encourage them to comply with the municipal bylaw, and if the pet owner refuses, get as much information as possible and contact the authorities. Note that Toronto Waste Management asks pet owners to put pet poop into plastic bags which should then be placed into your green bin for composting.

GARDROSE HOMEOWNER INFORMATION:

Garage Door Spring. One homeowner on the northern half of Rankin reported that the spring in his garage door broke not so long ago and had to be replaced. They are supposed to last for 10,000 lifts. Other Gardrose homeowners will likely experience this sooner or later.

RANKIN CRESCENT BUSINESSES:

If you operate your own small business out of your home, and would like to inform other Rankin Crescent residents of the expertise and services that you provide, please inform us. In the next issue, scheduled for later this spring, the Rankin Crescent News will profile Rankin Crescent home businesses. Most of us prefer to patronize local businesses, but in many cases we are unaware of their existence. Here is the first example:

Shiatsu by Sachiko. 209 Rankin Crescent. As some of you know, Sachiko operates her Japanese shiatsu therapeutic massage business out of our house. Sachiko is a fully-trained and experienced shiatsu massage therapist licensed by the City of Toronto. She has a portable massage table and, if you prefer, she will go to your home to provide massage therapy in the comfort of your own home. She is currently offering a 10% discount to Rankin Crescent residents, as well as a discount for first time clients. Contact Sachiko at: 416-539-8558 or ShiatsuBySachiko@yahoo.co.jp

ITEMS TO GIVE AWAY:

Weather King central air conditioning unit. Here at #209, we still have our original Weather King central air conditioning unit to give away. Presumably it is the same low quality unit installed by Gardrose in all of their houses from #158 to #225. Although it has been disconnected, to the best of our knowledge it is still in normal working order. Even if your unit is working fine, it may be useful for parts in the likely event of a future breakdown. If no-one wants it, we will have it properly removed and recycled later this spring or summer. [See contact information at the end of this newsletter.]

Child Safety Gates. We also have child safety gates which we no longer require. They are designed to fit the staircases in our house at #209, and, as a result, may fit well in other Gardrose-built houses. [See contact **information** at the end of this newsletter.]

