



NEIGHBOURS OF HIGH PARK

AN EXCLUSIVE NEIGHBOURHOOD MAGAZINE SERVING THE COMMUNITY OF HIGH PARK & RONCESVALLES

MAY 2016



MEET MEGHAN MORRISON, CATCHING DREAMS

 Best Version Media 

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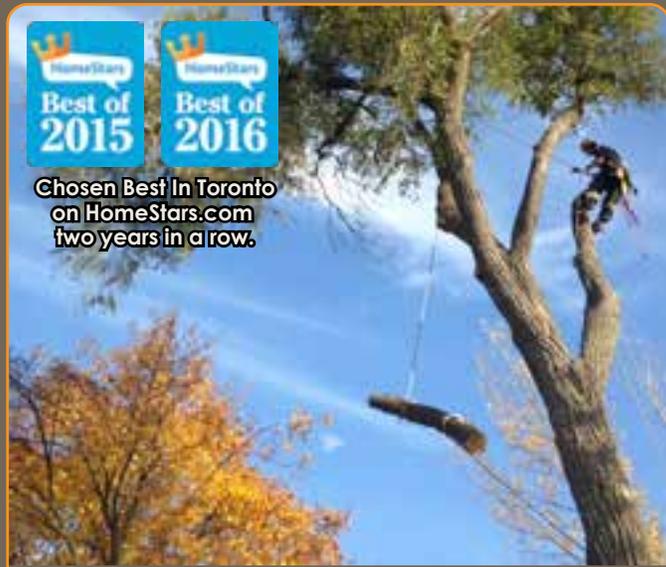
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Joseph Michael Howarth has been a freelance photographer for over 10 years, starting his company, Joseph Michael Photography, in 2005. He photographs everything from weddings and corporate head shots, to sports, arts and culture, including Toronto's 2015 PanAm Games and the Hot Docs Documentary Film Festival. He is excited to be a part of the Neighbours of High Park team.

DEAR RESIDENTS,

You all must be very excited this month has arrived, the unofficial start of cottage season and patio openings.



We also have the opportunity to celebrate Mother's Day. Have you thought about any special gift ideas? Special dinners? If you have any stories to share with us, we would love to hear them!

Thanks for all your great feedback. I love to hear how you are keeping all the issues since we launched.

We are bringing local to the next level, and we are happy to hear from you!

Warm Regards,
Cecilia Tripp, Publisher, ctripp@bestversionmedia.com

Well, we made it through that crazy April with surprise snow and winter boots! Welcome, May—we're so happy to see you! It's time to get outside. Visit the zoo, bike on trails, enjoy the smell of flowers and the Spring weather with barbecues and friends!



In this month's issue, we hear from Sonya Ditekrist, High Park zoo-keeper, as she shares the fun trials and tribulations of running a zoo. We also hear from Meghan Morrison, local musician and business owner, who travelled here from Nova Scotia to make her dreams come true. Read how she lives fully on the dreamer's edge. Dr. Lakshmi Jain invites us into her office at Cherry Blossom Dentistry for a cozy glimpse into their patient experiences. Afarin Radjaei-Bokharai shares an entertaining story about the world of real-estate negotiations, and why she loves helping her clients on their white-knuckle, home-buying rides. And Home Smith business owner, Annie McDonald shares simple tips to freshen up our living spaces this Spring.

It's a fun issue – we hope you enjoy it. Have a great May everyone, and Happy Mother's Day to all the High Park moms! We hope you get spoiled silly.



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FEEDBACK/IDEAS/SUBMISSIONS:

Have feedback, ideas, or submissions? We are always happy to hear from you! Deadlines for submissions are the 1st of each month. Go to www.bestversionmedia.com and click "Submit Content." You may also email your thoughts, ideas, and photos to nhenderson@bestversionmedia.com.

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Toronto School District...416-397-3000
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All submissions are due on the 1st of every month for the following month

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MEET MEGHAN MORRISON, CATCHING DREAMS

• BY NICOLE HENDERSON

MEGHAN CAME TO TORONTO AT THE END OF 2008 WITH ONE DESIRE IN MIND—TO PURSUE MUSIC. BEFORE HER MOVE TO TORONTO, SHE LIVED IN HEAD OF ST. MARGARET'S BAY, NOVA SCOTIA, A WHOPPING COMMUNITY OF NEARLY 700 PEOPLE ACCORDING TO WIKIPEDIA!

Growing up, sports was her first love. She was a competitive figure skater and coach for 13 years. As a figure skater, one of the things Meghan loved most about the sport was the intertwining of music with movement. This passion for movement and sport put Meghan on track towards a career in health. She attended the University of Maine at Presque Isle wanting to become an athletic trainer and, eventually, ended up completing a Master's degree in applied health science research at Brock University. As it's turning out, however, her career's playing out a different 'note'...

Not everyone may have known, but the love of music—of performing music—was always inside Meghan. Alone, she used to sing out loud through her daily routines, from the shower to the kitchen, she was humming music. As a kid, Meghan took a year of piano lessons before abandoning the hobby, and she even played oboe in the school band for a few years. But it wasn't until she was in University, studying health psychology, that her inner 'music muse' started making its way out into the public again. After moving to St. Catharines, the ideas for musical lyrics that had been buzzing in her head for years decided to come out. And above all, her brother and musical role model, Evan, inspired her the most.

Through her brother, she found the courage to start singing. She began voice lessons. Despite the initial work honing her voice, Meghan was thrilled. "It was as if I was uncorking a certain element of myself that had been bottled up for a long time," she shared. Her first live performance was a duet with her brother. The two of them started an alternative rock band together called *Purl of Surf*. Evan was already a guitar player and, because they needed one, Meghan became the bass player. (What grit!) They began playing cover songs and Evan's original songs until, a couple years in, Meghan had the courage to introduce some of her own. From there, they started collaborating more as songwriters and added her songs to their set. The journey began.

Following her gut feeling, she moved to Toronto to explore music after completing her studies. Not knowing where it would lead, she still looked for work in her field, hoping to back her musical aspirations with a Masters level income. It didn't take long for her to realize that such a pursuit was slowing her down and taking focus away from the real reason she came to the city. So she took up a series of minimum wage jobs that didn't require the same kind of commitments as an academic career, and lived the starving artist life while learning the ropes in a new industry.

After volunteering at a Canadian Music Week conference, she was inspired to start a webcast of online performances to connect musicians who moved to Toronto (like her) with their friends and family back home. During these informal online webisodes, musicians would take turns performing, interacting with viewers in the chatroom, answering interview questions and contributing to a collaborative, fine art piece. No longer a starving artist, Meghan wanted to give back and decided to auction off the show's original art pieces to raise money for the Toronto food bank (an organization that she benefitted from, and was very grateful for, during her transition into the artist life). Knowing that not all of her friends would have enough money to outbid others on the original pieces, and that there were a finite number of pieces, Meghan decided to make custom buttons that featured pictures of the art pieces. That way, anybody could participate in the night's activities, contribute to the cause, and take home a replica of the art in exchange for a small donation.



With so many art pieces to choose from and not being able to predict how many units she would need, Meghan decided it would make more sense to produce them on demand at the event. But to do that, she would need a button making machine. After doing some research and a crowdfunding campaign, Meghan wandered down to *Critical Buttons* and bought her portable hand press from Clive, the owner. Little did she know this determined pursuit would be yet another life synchronicity.

Following the success of the fundraising event and the public knowledge of Meghan having a button maker, all her friends started coming to her with orders (buttons are a very popular merch item for bands). And eventually, following her good instincts, Meghan left her soulless minimum wage job and took a chance at pursuing buttons. That process later resulted in Meghan doing some contract work for Clive (her materials' supplier at *Critical Buttons*) in 2011, when the company's e-commerce website was first launching. The name of the web-store: People Power Press.

That ecommerce site really changed everything. Less than a year later, they moved to The Junction and occupied the back of the old *Lavishy* building, in search of more space and better accessibility. Two years after that, Meghan was offered a partnership in the company and, last summer, they took over the store front.

In Meghan's early days working with Clive it was usually just the two of them, bringing someone else in from time to time when things got busy. Now, just three years into the new location, their business has rapidly grown to a staff of 15 to 20 – and, to boot -- most of their team members are artists, like Meghan and Clive. Meghan shared her great satisfaction with their approach to staffing, explaining, "What I'm now able to offer them is what this place offered me: Some steady income in a creative work environment that is supportive and sensitive to the flexibility developing artists need while they are establishing themselves and their own businesses as artists."

Having lived in many different parts of Toronto, and being exposed to a wider range of artists, mentors and approaches to music, Meghan physically moved to the Junction neighbourhood a year ago while her music artistically evolved from the ever familiar pop/rock form into a more progressive singer-songwriter style. Acoustic in nature, her newer works lean towards an alternative folk sound. Meghan writes her own music and co-writes with others. Recently, doing more



collaborative work than ever before, she's really enjoying the process. "You never know what's going to happen," Meghan shared.

When asked what comes first, the words or the melody, Meghan responded, "The melody often comes first for me, or in tandem with the lyric. I usually finish the melody and lyrics first, and put instrumentation to it later." She added, "Sometimes, the inflection and intonation of the words will inform a melody too."

Living in Toronto, Meghan finds a lot of visual art very musically inspiring. For example, an art installation by fellow Junction area artist, Tara Cooper, was featured in Toronto's *Nuit Blanche* festival during Meghan's early days in Toronto. The piece drew Meghan in so deeply she felt the need to write a song about it. Once written, she was offered an opportunity to do a cross-promotional video with *TrueAxe Custom Guitars*. Feeling called to make this opportunity happen, but not having the funds to do it, she ended up selling her busking amp to finance her share of the production costs.



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Fast forward to last year, Meghan took part in the Artist Entrepreneur program run by Canada's Music Incubator at Coalition Music. Coalition Music, a well-known artist management company for lots of big-name, Canadian musicians, was approached by one of their artists looking for an act for an event they were organizing. Videos of all the program participants were forwarded for perusal, and the one Meghan sold her busking amp for was the very one that caught the artist's attention!

That artist is well-known Canadian musician, Raine Maida, lead singer of 'Our Lady Peace.' While the initial performance opportunity didn't work out, Maida later invited Morrison to be the supporting act for Moon Vs Sun (a new collaborative project by Maida and wife, Chantal Kreviazuk) at The Mod Club in Toronto. With the powerhouse musical couple having been huge influences on Meghan over the years, it was a double dream come true. She was blown away. In reflecting on the biggest, concentrated audience she has performed in front of to date, Meghan shared this about her experience, "It was so much fun! The energy of a space like that really feeds the music..."

Living in the Junction neighbourhood, Meghan is able to enjoy walking to the shop. She fancies the neighbourhood because it reminds her a lot of being back home on the East Coast. Meghan embellished, "It's close to everything you need, has a great small business community, and is full of young families and dogs. It feels like a small town in the big city." As a business owner, she added, "A lot of the business owners know each other and there is lots of interactivity—it's a very vibrant, friendly neighbourhood."

When asked to share a few of her favourite, neighbourhood spots, she started with 'Humble Beginnings,' raving about its scrumptious, veggie wraps and live acoustic music on Saturdays. Next was 'The Sweet Potato,' a grocery store with an excellent selection of food to eat, dogs to pet, and free hugs to collect. Gregarious staff-member, Angelica, will give a warm hug to any open customer... or at least Meghan has never seen her turn anyone away. She encouraged, "Anyone that is going by The Sweet Potato should just go in and say hi to Angelica and get a hug. She's always full of them ... and smiles!" Meghan's last, local favourite is 'Buddha Pie.' She doted, "Buddha Pie is hands-down the best pizza in Toronto. It's soooooo good, everything (including the hot sauce) is made from scratch by the owner, and he's a super entertaining guy too!"

Meghan lives from her soul and follows her guts. Through this philosophy, she is creating her life. It's as though the pieces of her life fit together in such a way, leading naturally—one after the other—to her next adventure. As I shared this out loud, Meghan shared, "When you see most of life as an art project, that becomes easy to do. Even business, for me, is another art project. It's a very creative process."

With a desire to bring all of an audience's senses into a live performance, her new EP, Elementals, will be released alongside a folk fantasy, performance art concert. This will be done in collaboration with other like-minded musicians, fine artists, immersive theatre performers, dancers, and video based artists in the Toronto region. **A crowdfunding campaign is currently being organized to raise funds to help with the development of the experimental project and to sell advanced tickets. Any artists who are interested in being part of the production are welcome to contact Meghan on her website. At the time of writing this article, Meghan was also competing in the 2016 'CBC Searchlight Contest,' a national event geared towards finding Canada's next big music act. If she has advanced to the next round at the time of publication, she would love for you to help her out by voting for her song, 'Echo.'

Meghan's love of music and life philosophy have taken her on quite a ride. She mused about life, saying, "It would be nice to see a world where everyone can go to their day-to-day jobs and feel good about it. For me, it's important we're not living to work at the shop. We're working to live (as the old adage suggests). We may not do everything perfectly all the time, but we do our best and figure it out as we go." From what I can tell, that's exactly what Meghan's doing. Living life, catching dreams.

**To learn more about Meghan's crowdfunding campaign, check out her website <http://www.meghanmorrisonmusic.com/elementals>. To vote for Meghan in 'CBC's Searchlight Contest,' visit her entry page on their site <https://www.cbcmusicsearchlight.ca/entries/70892>



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CHERRY BLOSSOM DENTISTRY, A FAMILY AFFAIR



BY NICOLE HENDERSON

Dr. Lakshmi Jain joined Cherry Blossom Dentistry as an associate in 2007, taking over the business in 2013. She rebranded the business with a focus on family. “When we treat patients, we want to get to know them, and minimize the feeling of it being clinical,” she explained.

Dr. Jain always knew she wanted to do something in healthcare, helping people. Dentistry appealed to her because of the flexibility it provides as a career, allowing for personal time to have a family with her husband, Hani. Family has always been very important to her. Both customers and staff are treated like family, with one team member having been with the business for over 20 years.

The Cherry Blossom team thrives on making patients feel welcome and cared for. When you first walk in, Lola at reception welcomes you with refreshments. Children can enjoy colouring and reading in the ‘Kids Corner’ until it’s their turn. Children visiting for the first time even receive a certificate awarding their ‘first time at the dentist.’ Once in the chair, Mona and Alma help patients feel at ease by turning on the TV to their favourite program, and finding out if they have any questions or concerns to bring up with Dr. Jain. Mila, her experienced hygienist, always takes time at the end of each cleaning to review home care, ensuring patients know how to continue on the right track towards healthy teeth and gums. The whole team builds relationships with their patients over time, ensuring their utmost comfort every step of the way. The interaction with her patients is what Dr. Jain enjoys most about her job. She meets every patient and, with great care, helps them overcome any fears or anxieties. Dr. Jain shared a story about one patient that was once so frightened, she refused to enter Dr. Jain’s office alone—her husband had to be with her. But over time, and with several visits, she was able to go by herself, engaging in her dental care without further anxiety.

The mother of two little girls herself, seven-year-old Sofia and three-year-old Sarafina, Dr. Jain finds it particularly important to build excitement with children around visiting the dentist. Laughing, she confided, “My girls were treated almost as soon as they were out!” Most adults, she has found, have often had bad experiences at the dentist in childhood. In some cases, these bad experiences have been passed on to their children. To reverse that potential ‘fear cycle,’ she encourages her patients to bring their babies in early, even if it’s just for a ride in the big chair. At her office, children will get a sticker and a toy from the treasure box as they hang out waiting for their parents, or after their own treatment. “It really does make all the difference in their beginning experiences,” she shared. “For both adults and children, the *relationship* is crucial to getting them to come in more regularly.”

When patients come in for the first time, they receive a full assessment, with a thorough look at their gums and teeth. They will even get pictures taken of their mouth with an intra-oral camera. “The camera is great for getting patients involved in their own care,” Dr. Jain explained.

Her aim is to educate her patients, showing them that a lot of dental care is preventable—that they don’t just have to come in when they’re in pain. She enjoys taking care of families in her clinic, and the funny stories that sometimes occur. Once, a staff member’s husband came in for a check-up, bringing along their three-year-old son. The son was invited in to observe his Dad’s treatment. As soon as his Dad opened his mouth for Dr. Jain to begin, the first words out of the boy’s mouth were, “Dad, that’s disgusting!” Needless to say, his dad (and the attending staff) was both embarrassed and amused.

In conclusion, Dr. Jain wanted to leave this message with the High Park community: “Anyone who decides to come in and give us a try will be welcomed as part of our family. We will address your fears and concerns, and help you achieve your goals for dental health.”

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Dr. Jain gets some help from her kids



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PET OF THE MONTH

REBEL By Jennifer Jackson

Rebel is very honoured to be featured as May's Pet of the Month!

Rebel is a Maltipoo and is 2 years old. She has always come to work with me - previously in a private equity office and now at Home Smith. She has worked so hard to behave well in the store and to not approach clients unless they approach her.

So far so good... she's learning. She loves the neighbourhood - one day she even decided to go out on her own and ended up at Mabel's... She walked right in like she owned the place!

Good thing her collar introduces her and has my number. One of her favourite spots in the store is in the front window looking out on-o the street - it's a nice sunny spot in the afternoons and she loves all the attention from people walking by. I see people stopping to snap her picture all the time.

Most of the time she's in her bed behind the counter, but absolutely loves it whenever anyone stops by to say hello to her... she's all about the love.

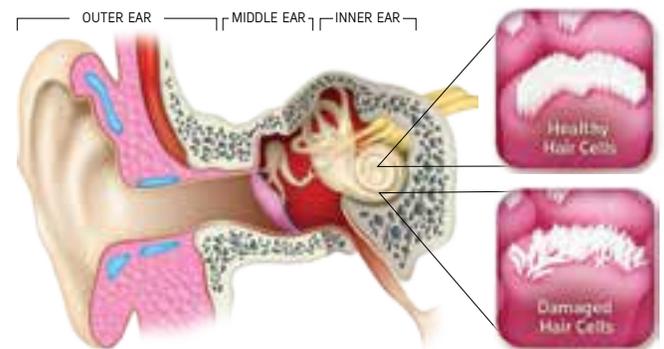
One of my 'not-so-favourite' places for her is on our beautiful vintage wool rugs. She knows when she's been caught in the act! It's not allowed... but I can't really blame her for loving the comfy spot. And she blends in so well, it's hard to tell that she's there!

So I guess you could say that Rebel both lives and works in the neighbourhood. We live on Indian Grove and she works most days at the store on Roncesvalles - greeting clients (when allowed) and generally making Home Smith a happy place... We do, however, give her weekends off.

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[1] CampaignForBetterHearing.org/Research

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

EVERY SATURDAY IN MAY • 11:30AM-2PM

LLAMA PEN ACTIVITIES

@High Park Zoo

Visitors can get up close to some animals in the Llama Pen. Visitors can feed and pet the llamas (Honey and her friends) and interact with other animals such as chickens and rabbits.

COST: Free

CONTACT: www.highpark.org

MON., MAY 2 • 7-9PM

SEASONAL SENSATIONS: MOTHER'S DAY PACKAGE

@Cookery, 303 Roncesvalles Ave.

Planning to show Mom how much she means to you? Join us to learn a brunch menu that will surprise and delight her. Elegant, but low stress with lots of do-ahead items. Make Quick Pecan Sticky Buns, Herbed Eggs and Smoked Mozzarella in Phyllo Cups, paired with Spicy Roasted Bacon and Gingered Asparagus Salad. A perfect way to celebrate her day!

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CONTACT: 647-478-3873

SAT., MAY 7 • 5-7AM

DAWN CHORUS WALK

@High Park Nature Centre

Early birds will be flocking to High Park at the crack of dawn. Quietly hike to a secluded spot in High Park to hear the chorus of birdsong as the sun rises. Tons of songbirds will be passing through as spring migration will be under way and Toronto is on a bird superhighway. Bird watchers will be on hand to help us identify some of the birds we hear. There will be coffee. Please check www.highparknaturecentre.com for updates as the event will be cancelled in the event of heavy rain or wind.

CONTACT: High Park Nature Centre, 416-392-1748

SAT., MAY 7 • 1:30-3:30PM

NATURAL BEAUTY TIPS - YOUNG LIVING WORKSHOP

@2111 Dundas St. W.

Presented by Marilyn Cicuttini – Young Living Essential Oils

CONTACT: 647-347-4433, <http://www.womenonthemove.club>

WED., MAY 11 • 8-11PM

BOARDS & BROUHAHA'S COMEDY/GAME NIGHT

@2111 Dundas St. W.

Drink, laugh and play games with BoardAgain's comedy/board game night.

COST: \$10 (\$5 may go towards a purchase of a game.)

CONTACT: <http://boardagaingames.com>

THUR., MAY 12 • 9:30AM OR 6:30PM

BREATHE: MAKING YOUR BREATH WORK FOR YOU

@2111 Dundas St. W.

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CONTACT: spacelogixca@gmail.com

SAT., MAY 14 • 1:30-3PM

FAMILY NATURE WALK

@High Park Nature Centre at the Forest School, 1873 Bloor St. W.

Get outside and explore nature in High Park with your whole family! Grandparents, parents, teens, children and babies alike will love this chance to discover the natural wonders in High Park's incredible savannahs, woodlands and wet-lands. Please remember to dress for the weather. Good shoes/boots are recommended.

COST: \$2-5 donation appreciated

CONTACT: High Park Nature Centre, 416-392-1748

MON., MAY 18 • 7:00PM

FREE SEMINAR: DUTIES OF ESTATE TRUSTEES

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CONTACT: rsvp@mmslawyers.com

THUR., MAY 19 • 9:30AM OR 6:30PM

SPACE SAVING TECHNIQUES

@2111 Dundas St. W.

CONTACT: Women on the Move, 647-347-4433

SAT., MAY 21 • 10AM-6PM

ECHO BEACH MARKET

@909 Lakeshore Blvd. W. (next to the Molson Amphitheatre)

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SAT., MAY 21 • 1-4PM

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ADVENTURES OF A REAL ESTATE BROKER

BY AFARIN



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She sat across from me in the conference room, husband on the right. All arms crossed, all faces frowning. Talk about a hostile environment.

The husband held my eyes as he spoke the first words. "We are interviewing three agents. Can you justify your commission, and convince us why we should choose you? What makes you better than the other two, or anyone else for that matter?"

As I opened my mouth to respond, he jumped in, "By the way, you should know that, as a developer, I know real estate. I know *your type*. I've heard it all before so, please, tell me something new." "Well," I began, "I have done this for 26 years. I know the market really well, and I will—" He interrupted, "Okay yes, we know, that's why you're lucky enough to be interviewed."

I straightened in my chair, smiling. I looked at the wife, a bright woman with a curious gaze, clearly told not to speak. The husband, hostile with nerves and the fear of making the wrong choice.

Cut to yesterday evening, our favourite wind chill of -40. *I love snow, but this is insane*, I think to myself as I struggle to see the road ahead. I make out my clients, two small figures huddled beneath the porch light, a young couple waiting to head over to a bidding war.

As we drove, I explained how this works, how many other agents there were. I answered their questions. Before we got out, I held their hands, made them laugh, calmed their fears. We peered into each others eyes, and I told them, "If I think you should stop, then you need to stop. Get excited, but not too excited." Fast forward 6 hours. It's 1 a.m., and the battle to win this house for our clients is between myself and another agent. We are both exhausted.

You see, winning a bidding war isn't always about the price. It's actually about knowing human psychology. What to wear, how to walk, what to say, how to treat the listing agent, what to say to your clients, when to smile, when to be dead serious. You gotta know your stuff, but you also have to know human nature. And that comes with 26 years of practice. The moment arrived. Our final offer. As I returned to the table from my last visit with my clients in the car, she rolled down her window and called after me, "Just get it, Afarin. We need this. Please." "I will get it" I responded, turning to face her, "but I will not let you pay more than what I know it will appraise for. Just go \$1,000 higher. That's the final offer. Just trust me."

I got the offer and made my way back to them. Taking a seat in the passenger's side, pen and paper in hand. "Are we doing the right thing?" She asked, about to sign. Hm...What is my "type" now? I replied, "I can tell you based on my research how much it will go up. I can tell you based on Real Estate what might happen. But, will you be happy? No house will make you happy. You make yourself happy, regardless of where you are." Maybe I should have taken up a career in philosophy...

I looked into her eyes, held her hands, and said, "Thank you for honoring me with such trust and friendship. I don't take it lightly. This is your first step in building a life for your family, and the ultimate decision is yours. Take ten minutes, take an hour. Whatever you do, don't rush. They will wait."

I stepped out of the car into the snow, and left the couple alone to think. I was freezing, cursing myself for dressing for the boardroom and not the snowstorm. I hadn't eaten since noon, but I loved them. I wanted the best for them, and if they needed an hour, I would oblige.

After six minutes, the window rolled down with a signed deal. We got the house. I came running back – screaming, "We won!" They both got out of the car and we made a circle, all at once hugging, screaming, laughing and jumping up and down. Now *that* is my type. It's moments like that which make me get up and do what I do.

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WHAT'S IT LIKE TO BE A HIGH PARK ZOO-KEEPER?

BY NICOLE HENDERSON

I meet with Sonya Ditekrist on a Thursday morning, entering the quiet, sunny sanctuary of her barn-scented, tree-bridling, High Park zoo workplace. So much nature and peace in the middle of the city! And this is Sonya's work environment every single day...



Since she was little, Sonya always knew she wanted to work with animals and, after graduating from the University of Guelph in zoology, she earned the best job ever working as a zoo-keeper at Toronto's High Park.

A typical day for Sonya starts at 6:30 am. In the stillness of the morning she begins, checking the stalls to make sure all animals are accounted for. The rest of her day is filled with feeding, cleaning and maintenance work. There is constant maintenance to take care of at the zoo, and the staff are always brainstorming ways to avoid structure damage while ensuring animal welfare.

There are three zoo-keepers in total. And together, they work in a routine that ensures all required, daily tasks are covered. Animals are given enough food to last the whole day, and their stalls and flights (peacock cages) are cleaned as they're fed. Sometimes a big clean can take between three-five hours to complete! All three of them abide by the first rule of zoo-keeping— *always shut the gate behind you!* Sometimes by following this rule, caught-up in their serene routines, they've accidentally locked each other in the stalls. (Personally, I can think of worse punishments...)

As a zoo-keeper, you're always keeping a close eye on the animals as you're going about your daily routines, remaining aware of where the animals are and what their daily behaviours are. For example, when the animals are happy, they will be playful and run around. When they are afraid, they will appear skittish with big eyes. When they're not well, they may move away when approached, or hang back instead of eating breakfast. (They love their herbivore pellets so, if they don't want them, something may be wrong.) And when the bison bull, Jasper, makes a serenading tone, he is preparing to spend some quality time with his cow girlfriends. If you miss that special pitch, you may be in for a surprise.

As Sonya recounted to me, she was once caught unaware of Jasper's serenading intentions. Cleaning his stall as per usual, she suddenly looked up to find herself being charged by Jasper, her usually amicable friend. Running for the fence as fast as she could, she was able to hop out of Jasper's (bee-lining) sprint towards her. Abruptly he stopped, staring at her safe on the other side of the fence.

Such events are very rare, but memorable enough to keep you respecting the animals' cues and behaviours. Mostly, however, the zoo-keepers have very friendly, almost 'familial,' relationships with the animals they care for. Sonya nursed a lot of the animals as babies, and they remain very affectionate with her as full-grown animals. Her favourites, Luna the Llama, and Noel and Aurora the reindeer, quickly trotted to her side, nuzzling into her as she entered their cages. They call Noel *the unicorn* because she dropped one antler.

This is Sonya's favourite part of the job—the interaction with the animals. "Once you work with them, they're your babies!" Sonya shared. As I walked into the Llama cage with her, I quickly experienced what she meant. These lovable, dough-eyed creatures—cute and curious—welcomed our human affection. When asked if there was any animal she wished they could get at the zoo, Sonya thoughtfully answered, "We're working to re-introduce wallabies. We've had them before, and that would be a nice addition."

I finished asking Sonya if there was any advice she wanted to share with zoo visitors. Smiling, Sonya shared these tips:

- Please don't feed them
- The animals tend to enjoy people that are a little quieter
- If you have time, sit & observe the animals (that's the best way to learn about them)

So there you have it—another way to fall in love with our glorious High Park. By visiting the wonderful animals and staff at the High Park zoo!

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Flower Power

By Trisha Hiatt



Delve into this simple science experiment that is used to demonstrate transpiration.

All the materials needed in order to do the experiment are:

1. White flowers such as carnations
2. A vase or jar with water
3. Food coloring



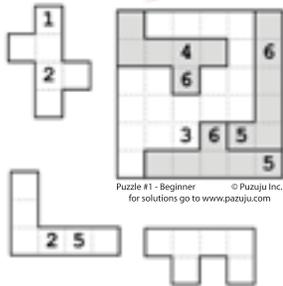
STEP 1: Trim the flowers at the stalks.

STEP 2: Fill a vase or jar with water and add some food coloring of your choice.

STEP 3: Put your flowers in the water and wait. Typically you can see the effects within just a few hours!

Wa-la! Your flower has some power. Or did the flower do anything at all? The reason this happens is because of something known as the transpiration stream. This is the movement of water up the stem of a plant (xylem) from root to leaf when water is lost from the plant due to evaporation occurring at the leaves. Water is absorbed by the root and moves through root hair cells via the process of osmosis. It then moves into the xylem vessel which is the tube that carries the water up the plant. Plants are not like us with a pumping mechanism that pushes our blood around, so water moves up the vessel by adhesion (being attracted to the side of the vessel) and cohesion (water molecules being attracted to each other). Therefore, when water evaporates from the top of the leaves, it changes the pressure in the vessel and pulls the column of water to replace the water lost. The best way to consider this is to imagine you have a thick shake—the straw can't carry the shake up it, but if you suck from the top, you change the pressure and force the shake up the straw. It moves in a column because the molecules are attracted to each other. (www.science-sparks.com).

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Puzzle #1 - Beginner © Pazuju Inc. for solutions go to www.pazuju.com

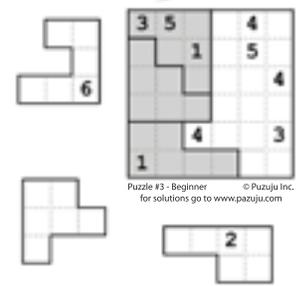
How to Play

- 1 - Rotate and insert the free game pieces, into the square playing board, such that they fit perfectly - no overlap of individual squares or numbers.
- 2 - Fill in the empty squares with numbers 1 to 6, so that each number appears once in each row, column & in each shape.

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STYLING YOUR HOME FOR SPRING

BY ANNIE MCDONALD

What does spring mean to you? For many of us, the signs of growth and renewal that we see in nature after a long winter spark the urge to transform our homes, replacing the warm and cozy with the refreshing and light.

Windows fly open, weekends are spent in the garden or the park, bottles of cold rosé are kept at the ready. The extra daylight feels like a gift - although sometimes a double-edged one, as it exposes the dark corners that we've overlooked all winter. And despite our desire for an overhaul, the truth is that we'd sooner be outside enjoying the beauty of the season than indoors, discontented with our decor.

The good news is that a full overhaul is rarely required. All it takes is some skillful editing, a little refreshing, and a few judicious additions - and your home will feel as renewed as you do on those first warm days.

Here are my three top tips - a stylist's secrets to bringing spring into your home.

1. Lighten up. Strip your soft furniture of all of the throws, blankets, and layers that helped get you through the winter (and whatever you spent it binge-watching). Put your throw pillows aside for the time being. Pack away the velvets and wools.

2. They call it "spring cleaning" for a reason. Now that you've pared the layers away, things may look a little grimmer than you'd like. In addition to the usual seasonal scrub, this is the time to remove and clean slipcovers, if you have them, and shake out your rugs.

Spot clean your walls and touch up the paint. And while you are at it, book a window cleaning service. No single change makes more of an impact in your home (and improves your outlook - literally) than having your windows sparkling.

3. In with the new. Clean does not have to mean austere, and spring is the time for joyful, easy pieces with a touch of the unexpected. Think white linen pillows embellished with sequins, or a beautiful porcelain vase in an unexpected colour. Bring in a touch of whimsy with inexpensive prints or your child's artwork, and stock lightweight, sorbet-hued throws in abundance for those cool evenings when everyone is reluctant to come inside.

You'll know you have it right when you find yourself relaxing in the same rooms that you couldn't wait to get out of when the weather first turned. Add a few bunches of fresh flowers, some good wine, and your favourite people, and the best of this beautiful season will be yours!

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Annie McDonald is an interiors stylist and creative director at Home Smith. Her expert eye and passion for details have shaped homes in Toronto's West End for the past decade, and her work has been featured in Toronto Life, the Globe and Mail, Chatelaine magazine, and on HGTV.

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COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING

Friends of High Park Zoo is seeking additional foundations to join the *Honey Family Foundation Match Initiative* in support of improving the Zoo's Llama Pen. For the fifth year in a row, *Friends of High Park Zoo* has launched its *Honey Family Foundation Match Initiative* thanks to the continued generous support of the *Honey Family Foundation*. This year, the *Honey Family Foundation* will match donations up to \$10,000 that are made to Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation (on behalf of High Park Zoo) by July 17, 2016. We are seeking to bring onboard additional foundations who will match donations up to \$15,000 during the same period.

The funds raised during the match initiative will help improve the Zoo's Llama Pen. This pen is a particularly special feature at the Zoo because volunteers open the gates and allow visitors to pet and feed the llamas every weekend and statutory holiday from 11:30 am to 2 pm starting in April until October.

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