

the

Reckoner

of Marc Garneau C.I.

Chatting With the President

by EMMA WAI



Photo: Laura Lu

The Reckoner sat down with 2017-2018 SAC President Lisa Wang to discuss her presidency, election, and goals for the year.

Last year, Lisa became the SAC President by default, automatically winning as the only candidate for the position. She admits there have been some light-hearted jokes around how she became President, but insists that none of it has phased her or her presidency. “Fundamentally, I don’t think it has affected me. I’m really grateful for my position and I take it very seriously. I didn’t come in to the position thinking it would be an issue, and it hasn’t been.” If anything, she says, it has made her work harder. “It’s motivated me to work hard and show people it’s not because I was the only person that I was elected, but that I actually deserve this position and I want to make a difference.”

If Lisa’s work so far is of any indication, there should be little doubt of her dedication. Two months in, SAC has already held multiple pep rallies, coordinated apparel sales, chosen the Grade Representatives, and released the clubs budget. “There’s a lot of plans we still have yet to do and we have plans in the coming weeks, but I am really happy with all we’ve accomplished in just the past two months,” Lisa says. “I feel like we’ve done a lot.”

She points to the changes made to T-shirt and senior sweater sales. Unlike previous years, SAC chose to design the apparel them-

selves, with input from the apparel company’s professional designers, due to historically low participation from the student body in design submissions. It has worked out well, she says: apparel sales are taking place significantly earlier than in previous years, and this year’s sweater has embroidered letters, a feature SAC has wanted to include for some time. Regarding the concern over the resulting \$7 increase in price, Lisa said, “For most people, they are going to buy senior sweaters anyways, and we just wanted to up the quality a little. Embroidery was something that a lot of students seemed interested in, so we wanted to deliver on that.”

Another major change that Lisa has already implemented—fulfilling one of her more ambitious platform promises—is a school-wide house colour system. SAC has already put the system in use and awarded points to houses through Spirit Week in late September. With it, SAC hopes to increase student spirit and engagement in school events and break down divides along program or grade lines. Explaining the thinking behind the initiative, Lisa says, “I want to show the rest of the student body that you can really interact with any student you want. Barriers of grade or program really don’t mean much.”

There have been some less prominent changes as well. Lisa mentions the increased teacher

engagement in SAC endeavours. “This year we wanted to get teachers more involved. This year, T-shirt sales and sweater sales are open to teachers, and the response has been really good,” says Lisa. She also has been particularly pleased with how SAC was able to open club registrations and budget requests early enough to release their clubs budget at the beginning of October, several weeks earlier than last year.

Still, there is work yet to be done and more changes to be made, Lisa says. She has yet to fulfill her platform promise to livestream all SAC meetings and generally create better communication throughout the student body, especially with those without social media. While Lisa says social media is probably the easiest way to stay connected with SAC, she wants to extend SAC’s outreach and ensure that students without social media are not excluded. To address the issue, Lisa hopes to start classroom visits, which she found effective based on some conducted earlier in the year, and encourages students to visit “Ask SAC”, which is now open during lunch and certain periods, with any concerns or questions regarding SAC and its initiatives. Furthermore, to encourage participation in school clubs, SAC will soon publish a list of official clubs with their respective descriptions, contact information, and meeting time and location.

Lisa is also still looking to improve the previously mentioned house colour system. Regarding the latter, Lisa mentions that she is working with the administration to hold house colour assemblies that require students to be more involved. Through creating mandatory events, rather than create more optional events that fewer attend, Lisa hope to increase participation and engagement within the student body. Additionally, she hopes to create a better way of displaying the respective house points, and by the end of the year, aims to establish a structure that will be maintained by future SACs.

In the end, she says, it’s been challenging thus far, but rewarding: “The hardest part is being resilient and having to be always on-call and able to work on tasks and projects that come up on the spot. At the same time, I’ve really liked meeting and working with so many fresh faces and really motivated people that I probably wouldn’t have been able to had I not joined SAC.”

Finally, when asked to give a message to Garneau’s student body, Lisa said, “Don’t be afraid to try something new. Join a club, try-out for a sports team, meet someone new—that stranger in the hall might just become a friendly face! There are too many great people at Garneau not to meet. And next time you see me in the halls, come say hello! I’d love to get to know you.”

Update of the Decade

by HENRY TANG

As school began on 5 September 2017, students of Marc Garneau C.I. were welcomed to a newly renovated building. However, the changes are not yet finished. Before the end of the year, Garneau’s roof is to be covered with solar panels.



Photo: Eric Zhao

Starting in April 2017, MGCI began its long-awaited renovation project, as workers began repairing its forty-five-year-old roof. During the summer, Garneau also overhauled numerous sections of the school. The following changes occurred:

- Repairs to the roof have been completed.
- The sinkhole in the field has been filled.
- The fencing around the track has been removed.
- Bleachers have been assembled in the backfield.
- The drama room and library have had their carpets changed to carpet tiles.
- Teacher offices and a dozen classrooms have had their floors changed to ceramic tiles.
- All external and many internal doors to the school have been repainted.

See **UPDATE** on P2

TDSB NEEDS TO CHILL

by MEGAN NIU and GRACELYN SHI

Do you remember the last time you tried to learn in a hot classroom? In the last few months of the 2017 school year, the students of Marc Garneau endured the oppressive heat of summer. Although air conditioning was installed, it was turned off to prevent the fumes from roof construction from entering the school. If you were around then, you understand the struggle of learning, or at least attempting to learn, at 25°C.

Thankfully, by the beginning of the following school year, roof repairs were complete, and air conditioning was turned on just in time for the September heat wave (except for classes in the portables). Most schools in the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), however, were not so fortunate. Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute is one of just 125 schools in the TDSB—which oversees 584—that are fully air conditioned [1]. It is a blessing. To have to experience Summer 2017 every year, during a time when the pressure to study is just as strong as the heat, would be unbearable. But such are the circumstances for the other 459 TDSB schools.

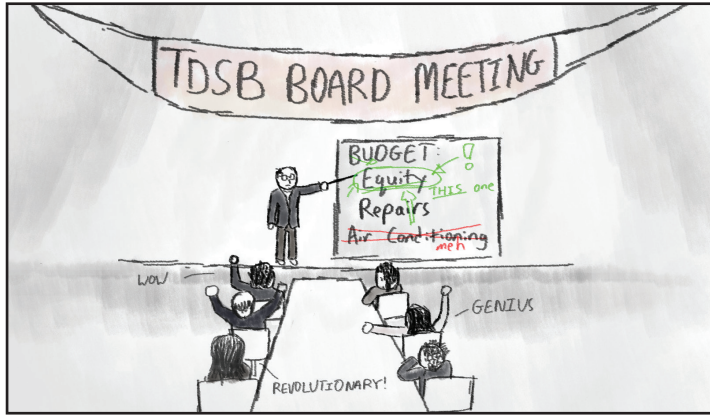


Illustration: Jeffrey Liu

For those 459 schools, TDSB proposed some tips for “beating the heat.” The suggestions included closing blinds and utilizing fans, moving to cooler areas where possible, limiting intense physical activity such as gym activities, and cancelling all practices for school sports teams temporarily across TDSB schools until temperatures cool down during particularly sweltering periods [2]. Students impacted by heat-related medical concerns are to ask staff for further accommodation. Unfortunately, not only are these tips obvious, but have all been tried by schools to no avail. The Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario claims that the lack of effective measures to cool students off “takes an unacceptable toll on teaching and learning” [3].

Confronted with the immediate need to alleviate the discomfort brought by a heat wave, installing full air conditioning should be a priority. TDSB spokesperson Ryan Bird points out that the board has a \$3.4 billion repair backlog [4]. This backlog, according to the TDSB, excludes repairs that are hazardous or extremely urgent [5].

See **TDSB** on P3

Marc Garneau Haunted by School Spirit

by SADIA AKBAR

Trick-or-treat! Marc Garneau celebrated Halloween with an eventful Spirit Day. Students were treated to several Halloween-themed activities in the cafeteria, which was decked out in spooky decor.

At lunch, a Halloween fashion show and costume contest were held in the cafeteria for students and staff alike to show off their costumes. The audience deemed

Grade 9 student Damisha Siddiqui the winner for her police officer costume, who was awarded with a gift card.

Students in pairs were also invited onto the stage to participate in Garneau’s first ever mummy wrapping contest. Students raced to first wrap their partner in a whole roll of toilet paper to receive prizes.

See **HALLOWEEN** on P2

\$2 for customization

MGCI APPAREL

Senior sweaters

\$35

Beige
Burgundy
Sports grey
Black

FALL FEST DANCE

November 16

Edwards Gardens

\$25

SAC OFFICE @ LUNCH

It Is Very Difficult To Write About People

by KATHERINE MA

It is very difficult to write about people.

It is very easy to write about objects. Objects are consistent. They don’t change the way they look, unless you change them. They stay where you last saw them, or where you last put them down. They have a purpose, and when they don’t serve that purpose, they’re not good to use anymore. They don’t pick up and look for a new purpose, a different spot, a new look. Unless you want them to.

It is very easy to write about places. You can write about the objects found in the place, on the place, near the place. Places may stay in the same location, but unlike objects, they change every day. They are changed by trespassers. Trespassers may make the place their own, and may change whatever they want, but it’s okay because the place is still in the same place. It still has the same buildings, streets, furniture, floors. Places can hold their place. They don’t pick up and move elsewhere. Unless you move them.

See **WRITING ABOUT PEOPLE** on P4

CLUBS

FEATURE

P2

ART

P4



Clubs Feature

Uncovering Undercover Kindness

by TOM LIU

No matter how big or small, any act of kindness has the potential to make someone’s day. The mission of MGCI Undercover Kindness has always been to make people happy and show that genuine acts of kindness still exist.

Undercover Kindness was founded in 2012 by MGCI alumni Deifilia To and Vicky Xu. Since then, it is run by a team of twelve students along with teacher supervisor Ms. Woodley. Meetings operate in a casual atmosphere, where students work on many projects throughout the school year. Notable projects from last year include the Kindness Café and the Sticky Note project.

The club also operates through social media with Facebook and Instagram pages. One of their initiatives, “Undercover Compliments Garneau”, is featured on the club’s Facebook page. There, they post anonymous compliments and messages to MGCI students almost daily to spread kindness throughout the Garneau community.

Undercover Kindness’s positive efforts within Garneau have recently been recognized. Earlier this year, Undercover Kindness participated in an annual contest held by Random Acts, an American-based non-profit organization. For the contest, Undercover Kindness created a video highlighting their mission and the activities they do at Garneau. They were rewarded for

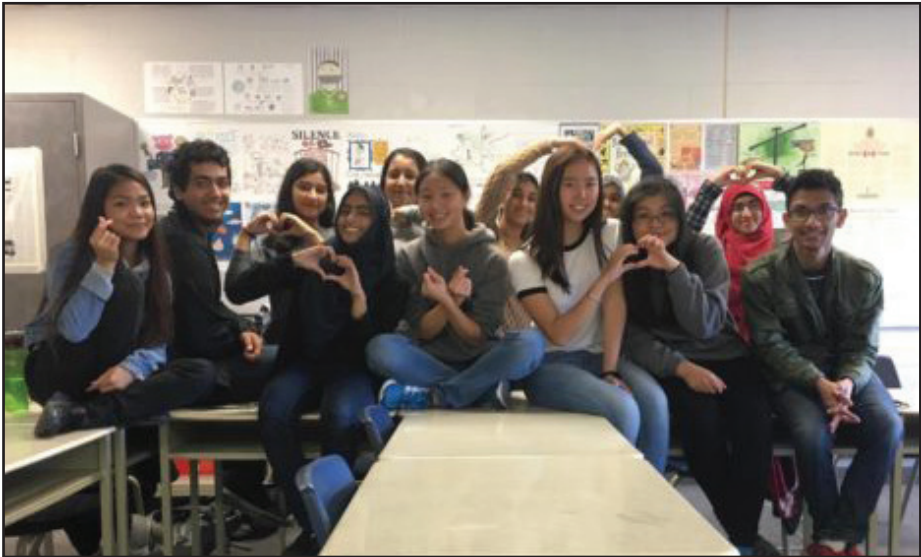


Photo: Jenny Bai

their accomplishments at school, becoming the first Canadian winners and receiving a grant of \$6000 USD.

Undercover Kindness plans to use its funds to help continue their mission to spread kindness and create new projects for the current school year. This year, the club plans to add a permanent mural to the school where students will be able to write positive messages on. They also hope to increase their social media presence, with more regular posts and starting their own #Share-Kindness campaign in the school. Additionally, the club will allocate \$2000 to start their own scholarships, which will be named after its founders, to recognize students who spread kindness in Garneau.

When asked what Undercover Kindness means to her, President Zainab Alavi said, “The feeling you get when you do something kind for someone is indescribable. It’s so important because you never know what someone else is going through. We all put so much time and effort into the projects we do because when the person sees the positive sticky note we’ve made, or someone reads a compliment we post about them, we know for a fraction of a second we’ve made their day, and that’s what keeps us going.”

Undercover Kindness meets on Wednesdays during lunch in Room 235, and everyone interested in spreading kindness is welcome to join.

A SPOOKY SPIRIT DAY

HALLOWEEN
Continued from P1

SAC President Lisa Wang thought the addition of the mummy wrapping contest inspired more people to participate and “raised a lot of spirit.” A photo booth was also available for students to take and print pictures with their friends. Throughout the day, SAC members also distributed candy to students dressed in costumes.

With the newly-implemented house colour system, students were able to win points for their house by dressing up for Halloween. SAC’s grade representatives visited classrooms and ranked costumes either strong, medium, or weak and awarded points based on the ranking.

Additionally, MGCI’s Save the Syrian Children Club sold Halloween candy grams during the Clubs Fair on 20 October which were delivered on Halloween.

Around sixteen dollars was raised for the cause and will be donated to Lifeline Syria.

In general, students were thrilled with all the Halloween festivities. The fashion show and mummy wrapping contest generated a lot of noise and cheers around the cafeteria. Grade 10 student Sadia Siddique said, “It was very entertaining, better than last year I think. I especially enjoyed the mummy wrapping.”

SAC’s Spirit Convenor Laksikaa Raja said, “I was very happy with the participation involving the Halloween contest and the mummy activity. It was great to see involvement with the teachers as well.” In the future, SAC hopes to increase participation through stronger promotion before spirit events.



Photo: Justin Ye

Islamic Heritage Month: Showing Support in Schools

by JESSICA GUO

On 16 October 2017, a workshop for Islamic Heritage Month was held at Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute. The event was one of thirteen different workshops that took place in October for Islamic Heritage Month. Each event was held at a different school in Toronto, covering a unique topic regarding Islamic heritage.

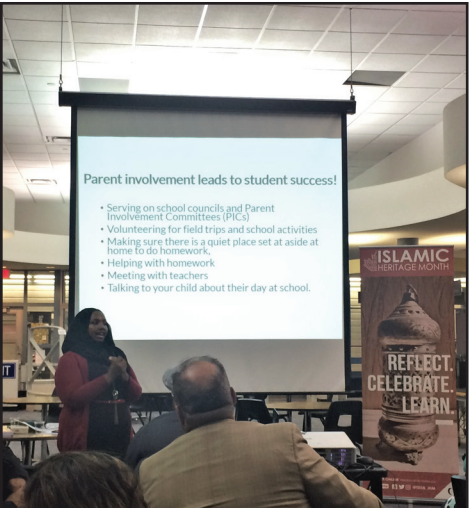


Photo: Jessica Guo

The workshop was held in the library from about 7 pm to 8:30 pm. The topic of the workshop was “How to Build Strong Relationships with Your Local School” and it was the first of four events under the larger theme of supporting Muslim students in the classroom. The successive three workshops were held at schools in each of the different learning centres of the TDSB.

The evening’s events were led by Giliary Massa, a member of the National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM), an advocacy organization that focuses on the human rights and civil liberties of Canadian Muslims. The NCCM ran all four of the school-related workshops for Islamic Heritage Month. Ms. Massa encouraged audience members to comment and ask questions during the presentation as well respond to each other. The workshop was concluded with a

case study, in which participants were put into groups to discuss how biased activities in the classroom can affect Muslim students. When asked why the NCCM conducts these workshops, Ms. Massa said, “We want to participate and play our part in helping communities understand their rights.”

Over fifty parents and administrators attended the workshop. Dr. John Malloy, Director of Education at the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) was also in attendance to show his support for Islamic Heritage Month. He expressed the importance of celebrating and honouring diversity in school. “I think that it’s really important for us to better understand all cultures and ethnicities,” he said. “Without it, we can’t really be the community that we want in the TDSB.”

The audience was very active, as Ms. Massa promoted discussion between the parents and administrators. One participant, Ms. Sheri, is a parent of a student attending MGCI, as well as a teacher at Valley Park Middle School. When asked about the workshop, she said, “It was well done. We talked about awareness regarding how we stereotype in a school environment and the challenges that Muslims and non-Muslims can face.” Speaking from the perspective of an educator, she added, “We may see those barriers, but we have to ask: How much do we support those students in the classroom?” Audience members also commented on how helpful it was to hear personal stories from other parents.

Overall, the workshop succeeded in its goal of helping parents and educators learn more about the issues of discrimination and Islamophobia in the school environment. Dr. Malloy said, “These are very important topics—it connects families to our schools so we are all learning from one another.”

Powering Up With Solar Panels

UPDATE
Continued from P1

Many parts of the school that were renovated were several decades old. Notably, the carpets were twenty to forty years old and had become heavily stained. The change to tile was to reduce allergies and allow for easier maintenance. If somebody were to spill something on the library tiled floor, the affected tiles could simply be pulled out and replaced. Not all rooms have had their carpets changed to tiles yet; the entire process may take several years.

Near the start of October this year, installation of solar panels on MGCI’s roof will commence. The process will take eight to ten weeks to complete depending on the weather. Although already a Platinum EcoSchool, the use of solar panels instead of traditional electricity will make Garneau even greener.

The installation of these solar panels is part of the TDSB’s Solar Schools Project, which began in the spring of 2014. Eventually, the TDSB hopes that solar

panels will power all three hundred and eleven TDSB schools. MGCI Principal Ms. Goldenberg explained, “[This year] the board chose Garneau, and usually if they chose to repair the roof, they wouldn’t install the solar panels in the same year, so we lucked out.”

The money for the repairs came from both the TDSB and MGCI’s own budget. The TDSB has been paying to repair the roofs of numerous schools but some of the other renovations were funded by money MGCI has collected over the years. The money was used this year to pay for renovations and purchase weight room equipment in mass quantities, as buying in bulk allows for better prices.

Other than the solar panels, most major renovations have been completed. As with every year, small repairs may still go on during the school year. However, unlike the roofing project, the installation of the solar panels is



Photo: Justin Ye

SAC’s New Grade Reps

by JESSICA XIONG

As the month of October began, SAC introduced their four new Grade 9 Representatives for the 2017-2018 school year. Potential candidates were selected from a greater pool of online applicants and interviewed from 25 to 26 September 2017.

The 2017-2018 MGCI SAC Grade Representatives are as follows:

- Grade 9: Fatima Gulab
- Grade 10: Nelson Lee
- Grade 11: Helen Chen
- Grade 12: Hasib Gul

Grade Representatives will aid other SAC members to help start student initiatives for their grade and will act as student liaisons for their grade.

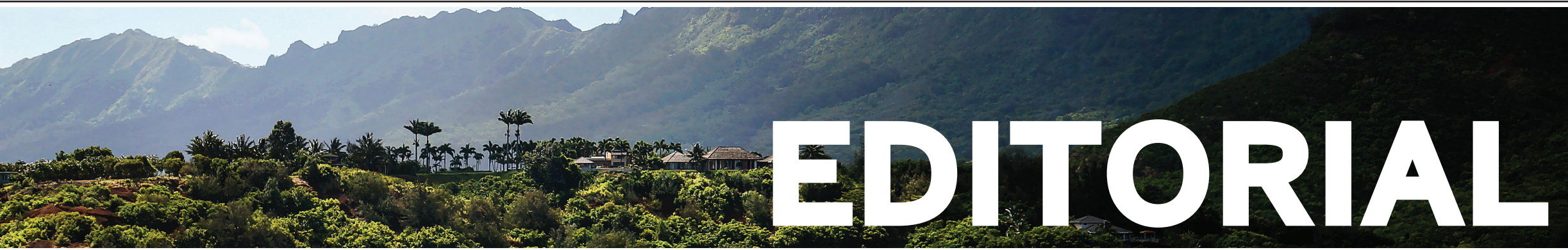
When asked why she applied, Grade 9 Representative Fatima Gulab said, “I think SAC is a great opportunity to improve your leadership skills and to make new friends.”

As to what she thought about SAC and its impact on the student body, Helen Chen, the Grade 11 Representative, said, “I think Student Council is a great way to convene students and bring all the students together. By managing and allowing a lot of clubs to run and organizing many activities, more students know how to get involved in the school.”

Grade 12 Representative Hasib Gul, shared one of his plans to help improve

the school this year. He said, “I plan on having after school seminars for the Grade 12 students about when and how to apply to OSAP and post-secondary applications. A lot of people are confused about how to apply and I want to help Grade 12 students get out of the school.”

Marc Garneau’s Grade Representatives are very enthusiastic about the new school year and look forward to helping SAC. Hasib said, “I feel like this is going to be a pretty unique year. The student council is trying to bring change and go above and beyond.”



Rohingya and Suu Kyi

by MARZAN HAMID, TAZIK SHAHJAHAN, BRUCE HE, and UMAR YOSAFZAI

The Rohingya of Myanmar have no place to call home. A military crackdown in late August 2017 has left members of the ethnic minority facing destitution, disease, and death, forcing more than 600,000 Rohingya Muslims to seek refuge in Bangladesh and other countries [1]. While the government’s ban on foreign investigation makes it difficult to establish exact figures, first-hand accounts from victims paint a gruesome picture. Although the massacres have been condemned by the international community, Myanmar’s own government has done little to criticize, much less prevent, the genocide, leading to numerous calls for the retraction of Prime Minister Aung San Suu Kyi’s Nobel Peace Prize.

On 25 August 2017, militants of the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) in Northern Rakhine State killed ten police officers, a soldier, and an immigration official. In response, the military conducted a massive crackdown on the Rohingya, decimating entire villages and torturing, killing, and raping many innocent civilians. The destruction is so widespread that large swathes of smouldering villages in Rakhine State are clearly visible by satellite imaging.

Aung San Suu Kyi became the de facto leader of Myanmar in 2015, forming the nation’s first democratic government after five decades of authoritarian rule [2]. Despite her political triumph, Suu Kyi has, for the most part, ignored the plight of her nation. Granted, certain aspects of the Myanmar military are beyond the Prime Minister’s control; however, Suu Kyi should have at the very least taken a public stance on her nation’s military. Instead, in her only televised appearance since the beginning of the crisis, the Nobel Peace Prize recipient used the term “Rohingya” just once—and only when referring to the ARSA militant group [3].

The Rohingya migrated to Myanmar in the early 19th century during the rule of the British Empire. However, to this day, they continue to be persecuted and are wrongly considered “illegal Bangladeshi immigrants.” As the crisis looms over the lives of hundreds of thousands of displaced refugees, Suu Kyi still clings to her ignorance and cold feet by not defending the very foundation of her country.

When Suu Kyi finally delivered a speech and broke her silence on the crisis, her words were discredited as a “mix of untruths and victim-blaming” by Amnesty International. Even though the crisis fits the definition of ethnic cleansing to a tee, Suu Kyi tactfully steered away from the criticism, stating that “As a responsible member of the community of nations, Myanmar does not fear international scrutiny” [3]. Her evasive statements on the subject appear to show that she puts political expediency ahead of her principles and integrity. Either way, she has failed to uphold the very values

she championed when she was elected.

Suu Kyi recently visited the remains of some villages in the Rakhine State, walking over the rubble of the people she was supposed to defend, still without a word of acknowledgement—a clear act of insensitivity on her part. Ironically, her government recently offered to “repatriate” any displaced Rohingya who are able to confirm that they were residents of the Rakhine State [4]. Interestingly, they seemed to have overlooked the fact that the Rohingya were ousted from their homes with nothing but the clothes on their back, let alone valid ID. Suu Kyi and her administration’s superficial fixes do nothing but add fuel to the fire and make the crisis more painful for those affected by it.

The attack on the Rohingya constitutes a breach of human rights, and bores a hole through the purported ideals of the National League for Democracy, Suu Kyi’s party [5]. Democracy in Myanmar will not be achieved until each and every citizen - including the Rohingya - receives the most basic of human rights. Until the NLD acknowledges the rights of these individuals, Myanmar has little right to call itself a democracy. The international community for its part, continues to trade with Myanmar. Although there have been a few sanctions, Myanmar’s economy is projected to grow regardless, rendering them largely ineffective. The UN continues to refer to the crisis as an “ethnic cleansing”, even as it escalates into full-scale genocide. This is because defining it as a genocide would force the UN to send in their peacekeeping forces [6]. The unwillingness of other nations to intervene is a great moral failing, and although inevitably human, nonetheless very tragic. In the meantime, those interested in helping these people who the Economist has dubbed “The most persecuted people on Earth” [7] can contribute by donating to the following charities: [8]

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BRAC
Action Against Hunger
Unicef
Doctors Without Borders

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Erasing History School by School

OP-ED by EMMA WAI

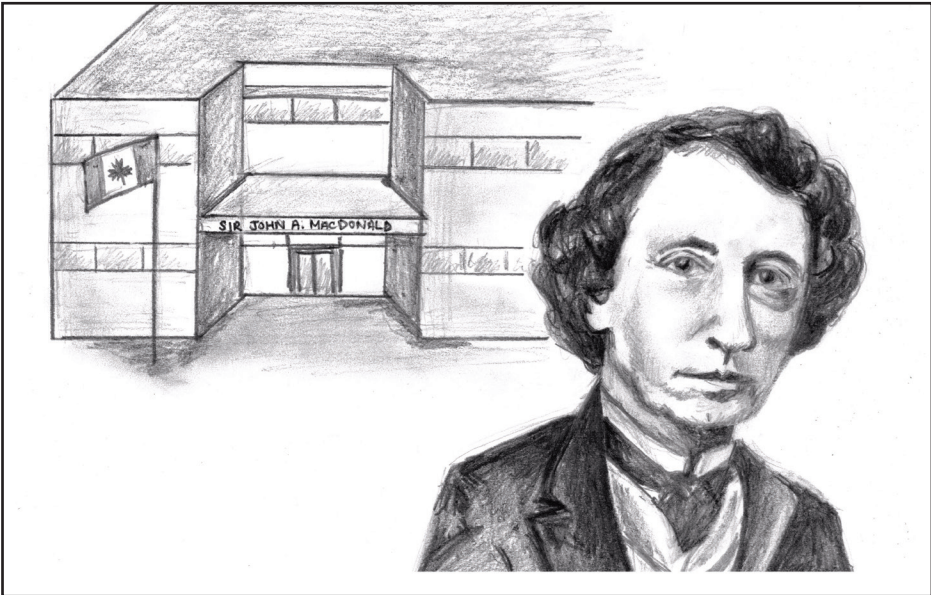


Illustration: Amy Chen

In late August 2017, the Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario voted to remove Sir John A. MacDonald’s name from Ontario public schools [1]. The motion, which follows ongoing reconciliation efforts within school communities, protests what members see as a lack of acknowledgement of MacDonald’s role in the systemic discrimination and persecution of Aboriginal peoples, and urges consideration for students whose ancestors and cultures were targeted.

As the saying goes, every tale has two sides. For John A. MacDonald, this could not be more accurate. To this day, MacDonald’s leadership in shaping Canadian democracy and uniting the country are widely celebrated. And while the first Prime Minister is remembered for his great deeds, his wrongdoings often fly under the radar. Although MacDonald’s railway project exploited and killed thousands of Chinese labourers, it is remembered only as a key milestone towards uniting the country [2]. Likewise, his Indian Act forced Aboriginal peoples onto reserves with scarce resources, laying the groundwork for residential schools that would abuse generations of Aboriginal children [3].

If we truly condemn the grievous deeds of a historical figure—no matter how great their accomplishments—is it right to name public buildings and monuments in their honour? In MacDonald’s case, naming schools after him not only serves to honour his accomplishments, but also risks being seen as an approval of his wrongdoings against many. Certainly, the message this sends to the community, especial-

ly those whose ancestors were targeted by MacDonald, is not one of acceptance and safety, and is only detrimental to the school environment and the students’ learning.

However, MacDonald is a significant part of Canadian history and his contributions to the development of Canada are invaluable; it seems appropriate that schools—which teach history—should highlight important historical figures. It seems acceptable that MacDonald be featured on schools—if and only if the local community has no qualms with the name. For schools, accommodating students and cultures who feel targeted should be a priority. Launching individual community inquiries would provide better regional perspective on the impact of MacDonald’s name on students. Assuming that each community would be affected in the same way is unreasonable; hearing the opinions of people who are actually being affected honours the reconciliation process without blindly leaning towards one side.

That said, even if a community does accept MacDonald’s name, there should be more featured than just the name “Sir John A. MacDonald”. Naming buildings after controversial historical figures serves to highlight their important contributions, but without clarification or elaboration, their crimes may be overlooked or even dismissed. Instead, there should be clear and prominent acknowledgement of the role MacDonald played in the targeting of minorities within Canada. Whether it be through accompanying signs or otherwise, recognizing that MacDonald was no saintly figure and

that his legacy is deeply flawed would allow MacDonald’s accomplishments to be celebrated while ensuring that his crimes are not overlooked, and the struggles faced by minorities are respected.

Some argue that removing John A. MacDonald’s name from schools will only begin a slippery slope that will eventually lead us to justify omitting or “erasing” MacDonald from history. However, those that argue that MacDonald should remain on all buildings just as it is today are advocating that we turn a blind eye to his crimes. Herein lies the true fault—not in highlighting MacDonald, but rather, in not telling the full story. Blindly embracing MacDonald’s name on buildings without acknowledging the struggles he caused is truly how history is being “erased.” Whether or not schools bear John A. MacDonald’s name, his legacy should be remembered for what it was—the good and the bad. There is no problem in recognizing MacDonald’s accomplishments so long as his crimes are not lost in all the acclaim. Remembering and recognizing discrimination for what it was acknowledges the struggles and abuse minorities endured under his hand and helps them feel accepted and respected.

Overlooking MacDonald’s crimes erases the true story history tells. It defeats the point of teaching and telling our history: to remember and learn from previous mistakes. John A. MacDonald’s legacy must be remembered for what it is—we would be wronging history to deny MacDonald’s great accomplishments, just as we would be erasing it by hiding his wrongdoings. Ultimately, this is not a matter of holding historical figures to the ideals of today, it is simply a matter of ensuring history is told properly. ■

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Beat the Heat

TDSB
Continued from P1

As expected, one of the obstacles in prioritizing air conditioning is the cost. Funding allocated to school boards for repairs and maintenance is one-tenth of what industry standards recommend to maintain a good state of repair in schools [6]. Even if air conditioning is prioritized relative to other backlogged repairs, insufficient funding means hazardous damages consume most of the budget. Hazardous damages such as leaking roofs and malfunctioning boilers are justifiably a top priority. Currently, there simply is not enough room in the TDSB budget to accommodate the installation of full air conditioning.

Even newly-constructed schools are not guaranteed air conditioning. Of the last five schools built, only three were equipped with air conditioning [6]. If a school is built with air conditioning, which costs upward of \$500,000, it is typically because it received a trade-off on some other aspect of the construction such as smaller gyms or less elaborate playgrounds. If we recognize now that air conditioning is essential, then the TDSB should act promptly. Make it mandatory for all new schools to come fully installed with air conditioning so

we do not have to expand the to-do list.

For those schools built without air conditioning, the TDSB is in the process of creating cooling stations. This entails cooling large areas such as gyms or libraries to create a safe zone for students during high temperatures. It provides immediate relief to an immediate problem. However, even this is expected to take five to seven years to implement. The inability of the TDSB to implement solutions quickly, owing largely to a lack of funding, has forced communities to craft their own solutions. For instance, a Toronto teacher spent \$500 on an air conditioning unit out of her own pockets because she couldn’t handle the heat. So it seems that if Toronto summers are becoming hotter and hotter [7], school communities must cool themselves off.

As a temporary solution, communities could fundraise. The responsibility of a more permanent solution, however, falls on the shoulders of the TDSB and the province. The province, along with their increase in funding for school repairs every year [8], should provide a grant specifically for air conditioning installation. This would ensure that the TDSB will allocate more

funding towards their air conditioning projects. Help students beat the heat! ■

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The Reckoner

of Marc Garneau C.I.

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HEARTWORM

by MADHUMITA NATHANI

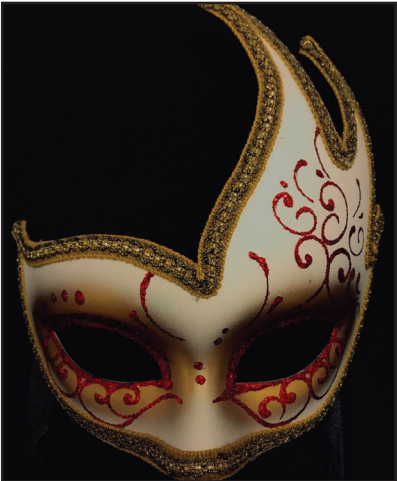


Hearthworm
n. A relationship or friendship that you can't get out of your head, which you thought had faded long ago but is still somehow alive and unfinished, like an abandoned campsite whose smoldering embers still have the power to start a forest fire.
A forest fire that can destroy everything on the ground. From space, it'll look terribly beautiful.

THALIA AND MELPOMENE

by CARYN QIAN

The teenage boy shrouds his identity with a veil of superficial technology. He goes by “John Smith”; he is a 127-year-old grandpa with a birthday on January 1st, 1890. Likes on a post matter more than catching up with a childhood friend, number of retweets determines his success. The middle-aged woman paints a new façade each morning. Unfading scars are covered with powder and foundation, her lips stained blood red. Retouching her eyeliner trumps the mid-day break, fingernail painting is her pastime. The singer throws on a wig and sunglasses each day before heading to the recording studio. Made up name, hyped up fame, paparazzi snaps photos at every given chance. Photoshopping her magazine cover comes before accepting natural freckles, a multi-million-dollar empire created through media portrayals. I can't help that I lie a lot. False words just fly out of my mouth, with no filter in-between. Honing opinions are lost in the fear of hurting others' feelings. Counterfeit grins top genuine sorrow, my forged character built up through a web of myths. We all wear masks. They depict our desires, how we wish to be portrayed. Perhaps someday, we'll take them off. Who will be underneath?



Artwork: Caryn Qian

AUTUMN AIR

by ANJING LI



People & Their Places

WRITING ABOUT PEOPLE
Continued from P1

It is very easy to write about nature. Nature like weather, the sea and the sky and the sun, and night and day. But nature is not like objects or like places. It is messy and just when you think you know it, it surprises you. But messiness is also nature's best quality. It doesn't find order because it doesn't need to. Nature goes the way life takes it. It doesn't need plans or goals or destinations. But it has its own ways of coming back to the same places, its cycles. That is why it lets things be messy, because its messy cycles, no matter how messy, don't change. Unless you change them. But people are difficult to write about. They are not like objects, or places or nature. They are always looking for new purposes, They will pick up and move because they feel like it, and they don't always come back to the same places. They will change their minds constantly, flinching at any sound, sight, or touch around them. People are very difficult to write about. They are not like anything we've ever seen before. In fact, they are not even much like each other.



Illustration: Amy Chen

CHARACTER WARS

Best Villain

by AMY CHEN and ANJING LI

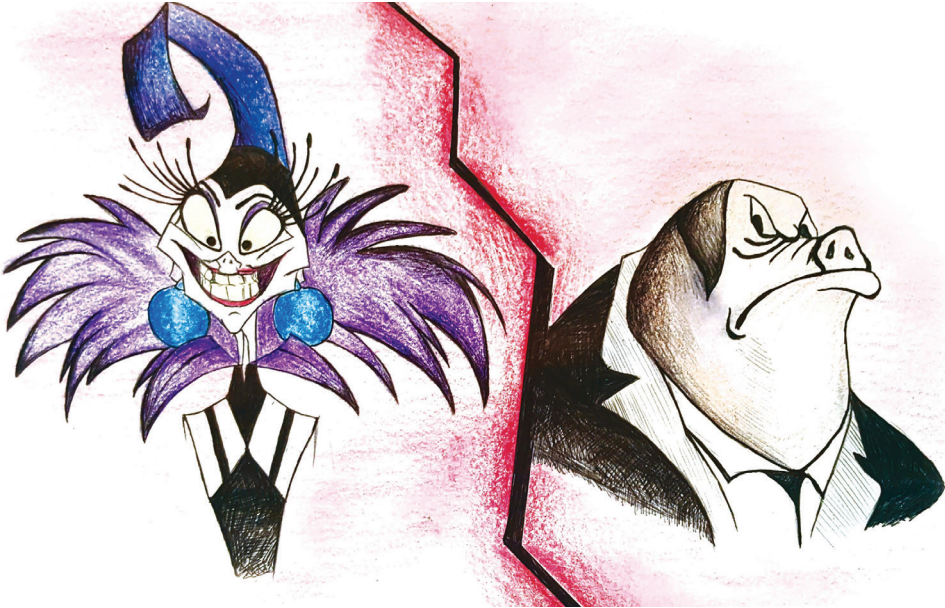


Illustration: Sheri Kim

YZMA

There's no competition when it comes to who the best villain of all time is. Yzma from The Emperor's New Groove has been slaying the game since the movie first came out seventeen years ago. Let's do a quick rundown of her credentials, shall we?

1) The woman is fierce, and she's got the fiercest eyelash game to prove it. Those babies must be at least 5 inches long, and they've even got those little bobble things at the end to boot. Her eyelashes accentuate not only the malicious gleam of her eyes but most importantly, the savagery of her eye-rolls as she sassily plots to overthrow Emperor Kuzco. She really isn't afraid to get her hands dirty, always side-by-side with her henchman, Kronk, who works throughout the movie to fix his mistake of giving the Emperor tonic instead of poison. Which brings me to...

2) Her compassion. Yep, I said it. Good villains can be compassionate too! Let's not forget how good Yzma was to her beloved Kronk. How many times have we watched villains treating their minions like scum in other films or TV shows? That was rarely the case with this iconic duo, and it's certainly clear why; Kronk is all you could ever ask for in a man, let alone a henchman. He cooks gourmet Peruvian meals, speaks chipmunk, has the hunkiest muscles and is complete husband-material. You just know that Yzma's got something special if she was able to make a catch like him.

3) Was it her smarts? Her sense of style? Her ambition? It's likely all three if you ask me. And let's not forget how she was years ahead of her time with the whole pointy free-the-nipple thing she had going on before freeing the nipple was even a thing. That's some feminist dedication right there.

4) Yzma's got a great color scheme. The color purple like green is typical of most cartoon villains, but on Yzma, it's totally original. Her flawless eye-shadow, and perfect purple pout sets her leagues away from every other wannabe in Disney or Dreamworks. Even when she's accidentally turned into a fluffy cat, Yzma takes her lilac colour palette in stride as she deals with the turn of the events in her signature classy way.

So there you have it. Not yet convinced that Yzma the best villain to grace history? Give The Emperor's New Groove a watch and you'll never think differently again.

NAPOLEON

Imagine a pig rolling in mud and strolling on a farm, not very scary right? Now picture a grotesque, ferocious Berkshire boar on two legs, its unblinking beady eyes staring you down. This image is what George Orwell brings to life in his classic, Animal Farm. Orwell's tale weaves a web of deception and hypocrisy, and said boar named Napoleon (after French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte and definitely not the football player Napoleon Harris) is the central antagonist. No other creature commits actions as manipulative as Napoleon. He ostracizes Snowball, his only opponent in his quest for power, by altering his words and casting a negative light on him. Napoleon does not hesitate to lie to the very animals that idolize him. Napoleon brutally executes innocent animals, and this is only one of the many impacts that he has as the farm's leader. He is very corrupt, giving himself and the other pigs the farm house and segregating them from the commonplace animals. Napoleon even dares to kidnap puppies (honestly, hurting puppies is a line no one should cross). Without opposition from the other leader, the farm soon snowballs out of control. Napoleon steals others' ideas, and hides his failures through a veil of confusion and distortion. By forcing out false confessions, he starts to twist past events with words that don't match actions. Words written to represent the animal's future utopia are changed. The Commandments, which were once a representation of the animals' equality, later reads: "everyone is equal, but some are more equal than others." By completing such atrocious actions, this animal acts like the vilest human imaginable. Napoleon's hypocrisy alone earns him the title of the best villain.