



Rajesh Sammy // The Observer

Dan Frankian and Jerry, teaching students about pests, birds and Harry Potter.

## Hawkeye falconer Dan soars into East York to talk with students

By **RAJESH SAMMY**  
The Observer

Students at Centennial College's East York campus readied their cameras for the moment when Dan Frankian would open up his mysterious box to show them what he had inside

On top of the metal box was a plastic dish and a pair of brown leather gloves, but inside was something special: a one-and-a-half-year-old falcon named Jerry.

Jerry is a bird of prey, one of many that Frankian uses to scare away pests from businesses and homes. Birds of prey — like owls, eagles, hawks and falcons — hunt and kill small animals for food.

They can also scare larger animals, and so Frankian, the owner of Hawkeye Bird Control, guarantees he can remove and control some of those animals with what he says are humane and environmentally friendly techniques.

So when it comes to animals like raccoons, pigeons and seagulls, Frankian told the students on class assignment that homeowners have two conventional options: they can euthanize the pests or relocate them a kilometre away from their home.

Frankian says a better alternative is to stimulate fear into the animal.

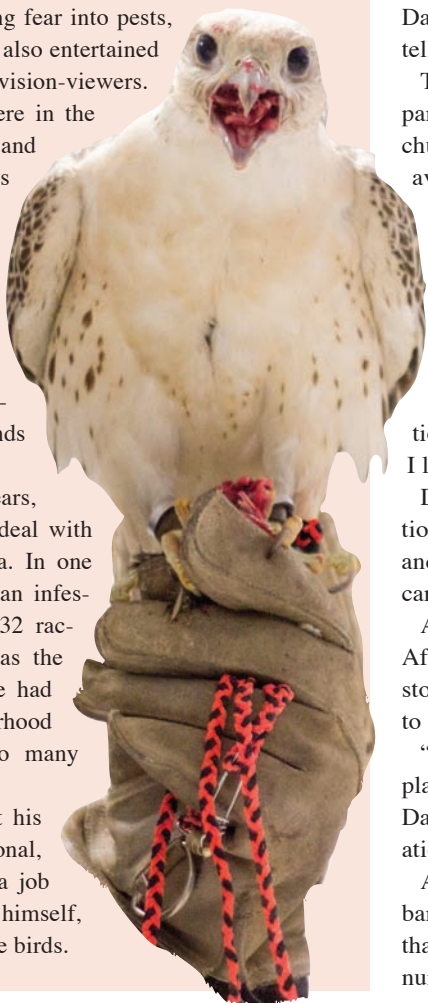
"If I kill you, you won't tell the person next to you that you are scared of me," Frankian said. "If I scare you, the first thing you are going to do is you tell the person next to you that you are scared of this guy. It's the same thing with them. If I scare one seagull, and if I kill only one of them, the rest of them are going to go 'Ahh! I don't want to be anywhere near him.'"

Aside from instilling fear into pests, Frankian's birds have also entertained movie-goers and television-viewers. Three of his owls were in the Harry Potter films, and some of his animals were part of Panasonic television ads for plasma TVs.

In the course of his work, Frankian has become a master of falconry, a technique used for thousands of years for hunting.

In more than 25 years, Frankian has had to deal with pests all over Canada. In one home, he dealt with an infestation of more than 32 raccoons. Then there was the coffee shop where he had to stop a neighbourhood bear from eating too many donuts.

One could say that his job is unconventional, but to Frankian, it's a job worth doing — for himself, for Toronto and for the birds.



Peder Myhr // The Observer

## Bring home the (little) cup!

Members of the East York Hockey Association's peewee house league Boston team celebrate their win of the EYHA's Little Stanley Cup, at the East York Memorial Arena on March 29.

# The art of storytelling

Acclaimed author takes time to share stories with young readers in East York

By **PEDER MYHR**  
The Observer

A tricky spider, bone button borscht soup and a bear with a taste for baking soda.... This strange collection of things were all at St. David's Anglican Church on March 23 as author Aubrey Davis told stories at the Mosaic Storytelling Festival.

The audience of children and their parents sat quietly captivated in the church hall at Donlands and Danforth avenues, occasionally breaking into laughter as Davis performed his award-winning stories.

"Oh it went well," Aubrey said. "Did you see the kids? They all sat there. There were no props, just imagination. Our world is so cluttered with technology and distraction. But they were using their minds. I love that."

Davis's books have garnered international acclaim, but it was performance and live storytelling that launched his career in children's literature.

As a young adult, Davis travelled to Africa where he discovered traditional storytelling methods. He then returned to the vibrant Toronto scene.

"Toronto really was a wonderful place to begin a career in storytelling," Davis said. "There was a lot of appreciation and opportunity."

After settling in Toronto, Davis embarked on a 30-year storytelling career that would see him perform in jails, nursing homes, hospitals, radio and



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Aubrey Davis spins a yarn at the Mosaic Storytelling Festival, held at St. David's Anglican Church.

television.

"Storytelling really did come first. My writing career really was just an off-shoot of that," he said.

Davis was asked to perform a Jewish story to an audience of children but could not find one he liked, so he wrote Bone Button Borscht. It won him a publishing deal and launched his career as an award-winning children's book author.

Events like the Mosaic Storytelling Festival at St. David's are what give Davis the most satisfaction though.

"I get out of it what they get out of it," he said. "It's sharing with them. They get to enjoy language and their imaginations are activated. I mean it's a pretty good deal."

## Story time

Aubrey Davis's award-winning stories include:

- A Hen for Izzy Pippik
- The Enormous Potato
- Bagels from Benny
- Bone Button Borscht
- Kishka for Koppel
- La Grosse Patate