

The younger Estonian Community in Toronto is hungry for a resurgence of energy to be injected their lives. As much as we have all grown up with the Old Eesti Maja dear to our hearts, most youngsters never go there anymore unless it is for a family wedding or wake.

The new Estonian Centre at the Spadina location would give these youngsters a very central and convenient place to gather whether it be for coffee during the day, or a few beverages in the evening.

I have a niece, Kersti who goes to University of Toronto, a daughter Leyki who goes to Ryerson University and a mother Anu who still works at the Estonian Archives at Tartu College. They have talked many times about getting together for lunch but it has never happened. I am sure with the NEW and IMPROVED EESTI MAJA she would be ecstatic to treat these two starving students/grandchildren for lunch on a weekly basis there so the girls could practice their Estonian and see their Vanaema.

Having run and organized the EKL Fraternity Volleyball tournaments many times, a central location with a facility to host the events and run the Fundraisers in the same location would be absolutely ideal. It would be an incredible way to bring together an Estonian volleyball community which dates back generations and is currently growing again exponentially. Needless to say it would give a practice facility for many of the budding young local Estonian athletes as well a place for us middle agers to gather, play and socialize.

Many of us Torontonians have children from non-English speaking mixed marriages, who consider their Estonian friends some of their absolute best friends despite only seeing them a few times a year. There is a growing interest for many of these youngsters to improve their Estonian Language, learn more about the culture, strengthen those incredible existing bonds and create new friendships. Having the New Estonian Centre at Spadina and Bloor would create new opportunities for young, middle aged and elderly that can only help build on what currently exists in this priceless Estonian community in Toronto.

*Hillar Sõrra*