

Sound Times Support Services

280 Parliament Street, Toronto ON, M5A 3A4

EMAIL • bulletin@soundtimes.com

WEBSITE • www.soundtimes.com/bulletin

December: the future, human rights, Social assistance, rent control removed, Toronto, rooming houses, cannabis amnesty, cartoons, resources, jobs,

Christmas and Holiday meal list available soon

Pro Tip: Cash cheques from the government for **free** at banks. Pay day lenders don't need your money.



Greet us: bulletin@soundtimes.com
Add **events** <http://soundtimes.com/events/community/add>

Mission—activate resources

The Bulletin will spark dialogue and share information and resources by and for the community of consumer survivors, users of substances, service users, people with lived experiences of addictions and mental health crisis, issues and systems.

Now monthly APOLOGIES any **DELAY**

Important changes need responses.

The Ontario government “For The People” has promised jobs rather than increasing social assistance. The government will change the definition of disability to the federal standard, which will restrict access to ODSP for new applicants and will leave many of us poorer and more vulnerable.

Rent control will be removed on new units built after



November 15th, 2018. The government believes this will increase rental buildings.

Sometimes we may not even believe it ourselves, but we are People. We are part of “The People”. People with ideas, humour, and rights.

You might want to give some feedback (see details within).

* * *

There is a great cartoon inside about how: “Desperate People Make Ideal Workers and Distracted Citizens”

Let's pay attention and use our desperation and vulnerability to make a difference!

Moments in C/S Bulletin History

C/S Bulletin 313, December 15th, 2005

December 10th 2005: International Human Rights Day

was dedicated to “End human rights violations against people with mental health disorders “ from www.csinfo.ca/bulletin/313.pdf

“* Extracts from WHO photo essay Denied Citizens: Mental Health and Human Rights at Policy Project: Addressing Needs, Improving Services (MHPP) can be viewed at www.who.int/mental_health/policy/en/

"There are still far too many violations of the human rights of people with mental disorders. However, too often both the health and human rights agendas overlook these problems, and as a result, they slip between the cracks," said Dr Lee

Jong-wook, Director General of WHO. "We have solutions to reverse the situation, in rich and poor countries alike. I urge countries, international organizations, academia, the healthcare and legal sectors and others to take a hard look at the conditions of people with mental disorders and take action to promote and protect their rights.

To mark International Human Rights Day, WHO is drawing attention to the problems and the solutions in a new online photo essay: 'Denied Citizens: Mental Health and Human Rights', which highlights some of these human rights violations, and gives examples of how they can and must be stopped

And NOW in 2019 Human Rights Day focuses on equality and dignity:

From the United Nations: (<http://www.un.org/en/events/humanrightsday>)
#StandUp4HumanRights

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights empowers us all.
- Human rights are relevant to all of us, every day.
- Our shared humanity is rooted in these universal values.
- Equality, justice and freedom prevent violence and sustain peace.
- Whenever and wherever humanity's values are abandoned, we all are at greater risk.



- We need to stand up for our rights and those of others.

Human rights are a frequent *Bulletin* topic and denial of our rights is part of our survivor experiences from policing to hospitals to civic participation to confinement to accessibility and inequality...

Human Rights Day is an opportunity to recognize that we are part of a bigger movements. There is so much to learn. For example we highlighted Mad In Asia that is using “inclusion” as a way to talk about our madness in society (issue #604). <http://soundtimes.com/mad-in-asia/>

... Survivor history **continues...**

New\$, Rights, Actions

Government Announcement about \$Social Assistance OW and ODSP

Key Points: Government did not increase ODSP and OW levels in response to extensive advocacy. Disability definitions will exclude many new applicants (existing recipients will maintain benefits). New applicants are more likely to be on OW with “wrap-around supports”. Lots of details to come.

Below is Extracted from the Income Security Advocacy Centre (ISAC) <https://bit.ly/2S93EXI>

New Disability Definition will exclude new applicants

ODSP currently uses an inclusive definition of disability that recognizes that people whose disabilities might not be “severe” may still face serious obstacles to employment and participation in the community and in daily life. ... Federal standards might exclude “those with episodic disabilities or some mental health disabilities, forcing them to rely on the much lower benefit amounts that Ontario Works provides.”

Grand-parenting current recipients of ODSP is essential to ensure the lives of current recipients will not be disrupted. But Ontario cannot condemn people with disabilities who will require support in the future to the much lower benefit rates available from Ontario Works.

Health Spending Account?

The Minister noted the creation of a new Health Spending Account for people with disabilities that would give them the ability to select and pay for whichever health-related services they require. [No details on amounts—what about that new drug, tool, service provider, therapist?]

Wrap-Around Supports to Employment

Minister will provided services to move people into employment, including commitments to improve access to critically important help like mental health and addictions supports, childcare, housing, and life skills. These changes recognize that people on social assistance are not necessarily ‘job ready’ and may need a range of services to stabilize their lives before contemplating employment.

[Bulletin Questions:

1. **Do you need more service navigators or accessibility, food, travel, and other resources?**
2. **Do you need more employment agency workers or jobs?**
3. **Do you need a housing worker or housing?**
4. **Do you want a case “manager” through OW or access to mental health supports on your own terms?]**

	Earnings Exemptions & Clawbacks
Ontario Works	Monthly amounts that people on Ontario Works will be able to keep will increase from \$200 to \$300. However, clawback rates on earnings above that amount will increase from 50% to 75%.
ODSP	For people on ODSP, the earnings exemption amount will increase from \$200 / month to \$6,000 / year. Clawback rate on earnings above \$6000 will increase from 50% to 75%.

News, Rights, Actions

Rent Control eliminated for new buildings

Rent Control continues for residential units occupied before November 15, 2018. Landlord is still allowed a basic rent increase and an AGI (above guideline increase) in rent.

New rental units will not be subject to rent control.

Pro of the new policy: Eliminating rent control for new buildings may encourage builders to produce more rental housing. Landlords can make more money! [But why build an apartment when you can build and sell a condo today?]

Con: Tenants moving into new builds will have no rent control from year to year.

Tenants must continue to organize and speak out to protect themselves.

Leadnow.ca: In a democracy, governments depend on the support of those they govern to stay in power. Let the Ontario Government know that you do not support weakening your protection in order to help the businesses that own your home. Contact your MPP and let them know. You can also sign a petition to [Tell Doug Ford: no unlimited rent increases](#)

Ontario Government: Give feedback (pro or con) directly to the Government through a survey, consultation. <http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page20902.aspx> deadline is January 25th, 2019.

ACORN.ca Make sure the City and Province knows what tenants think!

Sign our petition to save rent control >>> **Rent control under attack** [<https://acorncanada.org/save-rent-control-0>]

ACORN members are demanding a new defini-

tion of affordable that's based on income, so that we can actually afford the city's affordable housing.

Come out on Tuesday December 4th - the mayor and new city councillors are being sworn, we will be there to remind them they need to make affordable housing the #1 priority. December 4th, 11:00-1:00 at 100 Queen St W

Do you want Out of the Cold Program Funding to be permanent?



Does permanent funding of these programs imply that the our most vulnerable friends are being condemned to mats? “The Out of the Cold program ... was started more than three decades ago as an emergency or stopgap solution, but has since become almost a de facto shelter system. “ Or does a permanent funding mean that we can save the desperate advocacy needed each winter to prevent freezing?

There will be opportunities for survivors to work to provide for the short term desperate needs and to work for better housing that we deserve as residents—under an accessibility and inclusionary view.

Check out the *Toronto Star* article by Emily Mathieu November 22, 2018 <https://bit.ly/2rafaGM> Photo: (RICK MADONIK / TORONTO STAR)

Do you ever feel like someone is trying to distract you?

Credit: Costa A -2014 - www.facebook.com/costaacomics

DESPERATE PEOPLE



MAKE IDEAL WORKERS



AND DISTRACTED CITIZENS



News, Rights, Actions

From Campaign Pledges to Action
Consumer survivors can use the [Prosperity Platform which was prepared by Commitment TO Community](#) to advocate for resources and actions at City Hall. We can use it to remind / support / shame our representatives.

During the municipal election, Mayor Tory and 19 Councillors committed to "...support the full funding and full implementation of Toronto's Poverty Reduction Strategy (TO Prosperity) and other Council-approved equity initiatives over the 2019-2022 term, including:

- 7,200 new supportive housing units, at least 8,000 new deeply affordable rental housing units, and 1,000 new shelter spaces
- Reduced TTC fares for an additional 157,000 lower-income adults
- 11,500 new child care spaces, including 5,000 subsidized spaces
- 40,000 new recreation program spaces

To make sure that our representatives follow

through on the Prosperity Platform Pledge they need volunteers. You can contact Israt Ahmed at iahmed@socialplanningtoronto.org and <https://www.commitmentto.com/> More information from Commitment TO Community: [child care](#), [housing](#), [jobs](#), [poverty](#), and [transit](#).



Speak, write and show-up for **accessibility, inclusion and consumer survivors and people who use drugs**. We are talked about rather than listened to at planning tables. For example, many of us may need to access shelters, but do our ideas about making shelters more pleasant, healthy, and accessible drive the discussion or are the deciders only concerned about about money and keeping "us" away from them.

As discussed in the last *Bulletin*, cannabis convictions and charges are much higher for Black, Indigenous and homeless people than for white people. This racist and classist legacy affects many survivors and you may want to get involved in the movement for Cannabis Amnesty. <https://www.cannabisamnesty.ca/>

Campaign for Cannabis Amnesty Petition

We, the undersigned residents of Canada draw the attention of the House to the following:

THAT:

Criminal convictions relating to simple cannabis possession have devastating consequences for Canadians. ... No Canadian should be burdened with a criminal record for a minor, non-harmful act that will no longer be a crime.

THEREFORE:

We call upon Parliament to immediately enact legislation that grants pardons to all individuals for the offence of simple possession of cannabis.



News, Rights, Actions

Rooming House Consultations

Rooming houses were the most affordable housing for survivors leaving mental hospitals in the 70s and 80s during deinstitutionalization, especially in Parkdale. Real estate is so expensive now that rooming housing owners want to sell, renovate and displace us. We need to participate in this process to save what exists and change laws to allow more rooming houses outside the old City of Toronto.

The Neighbourhood Land Trust (NLT) & Parkdale Neighbourhood Land Trust (PNLT)

[Join the Rooming House Preservation Policy Working Group!](https://bit.ly/2FXMxqW) <https://bit.ly/2FXMxqW>

1. Please provide feedback on this Rooming House Official Plan Amendment

All Tenant Consultation: Dec. 5th 5:30-7:30pm at PARC -1499 Queen St. W- (with pizza & intro at 5pm) bit.ly/2TBcAXI

All Stakeholder Consultation: Dec. 12th 6:30-8:30pm Metro Hall, rm 309 bit.ly/2FzNd5x

Complete the **ONLINE SURVEY** by December 10th: <https://s.cotsurvey.chkmkt.com/?e=139573&h=15714B14D81F0DB&l=en>

*Please note the **Tenant Consultation** invite rooming house tenants to participate. The consultation begins at 5:30, there will be pizza. Intro at 5pm. Tokens will be provided.

Points to include in your feedback:

1. This Official Plan Amendment is a good thing. However, it alone will not be enough to prevent the loss of dwelling rooms and to protect tenants from displacement and homelessness.
2. To effectively address this issue, the City needs to work across divisions to develop a framework of additional policies and programs that will complement this Amendment.

3. One of these additional policies needs to be a by-law that will protect dwelling rooms from conversion, similar to the Residential Property Demolition and Conversion Control by-law ([Municipal Code Chapter 667](#)).

4. Losing one's housing is a traumatic event. All tenants impacted by the loss of housing must be provided with whatever supports are necessary to be successfully rehoused quickly in adequate, affordable housing.

5. Ideally at least the same number of units **and** at least the same amount of residential gross floor area would be replaced to prevent an overall loss in the supply of affordable housing.

6. Affordability caps simply push the problem down the road. We need to ensure replacement housing will be **permanently affordable**.

7. This Official Plan Amendment should apply to development that would result in the loss of **6 dwelling rooms** or more.

8. All tenants affected by dwelling room loss due to development, regardless of the size of their building, should be provided with the supports necessary to be adequately rehoused: financial compensation to "lessen hardship" isn't enough to prevent homelessness. Are you listened to by the professionals?

For further information visit: www.toronto.ca/planningforhousing or contact

Narmadha Rajakumar with Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto at narmadha.rajakumar@toronto.ca or 416-392-4529.

Rooming House Concerns we have heard:

Temperature control—Windows are locked and it is Summer or Winter.

There aren't enough fire, health and safety inspections and Enforcement.

Residents are trapped in their houses due to crime and gangs.

News, Rights, Actions

FYI: This article is for an audience of people who don't use drugs. How do your experiences and views relate and differ? This is an article from England where they use the term *Drug Consumption Rooms*, which can mean OPS, SIS, Supervised Consumption sites.

5 Reasons Why Drug Consumption Rooms Benefit People Who Don't Use Drugs

"Fortunately, even for those without any compassion or interest in the welfare of people who use drugs, there are still many ways in which Drug Consumption Rooms [DCR] will improve society as a whole."

1. DCRs ensure safer streets ...
2. DCRs reduce the spread of disease ...
3. DCRs improve access to emergency services ...
4. DCRs can reduce crime ...
5. DCRs help people integrate into the *legitimate economy* ... They provide a space to address structural inequalities such as poverty or homelessness, and can link people up to broader physical and mental health services, all factors which can and do keep people on the margins. The service link up DCRs provide can contribute positively toward bringing vulnerable people back into society.
6. DCRs save lives...

Accurate on 20 Nov. 2018

Across all [Ten countries](#) that have implemented them, and all the different models of implementation, not a single person has died of a drug overdose in a DCR.

Opponents of DCRs assert that we should focus on approaches of drug-free recovery and rehabilitation, rather than allowing drug use.

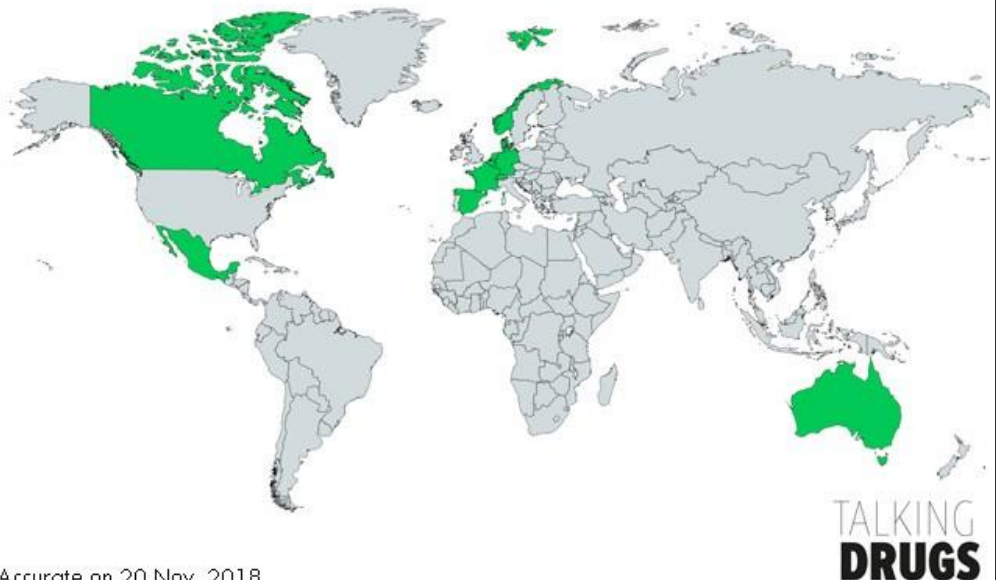
While successful approaches for some people, recovery and rehabilitation must not be the only options. It is undeniable that some people will use drugs no matter what politicians, police, or health professionals are telling them to do. The best we can do is ensure that they are as safe as possible when they use drugs, and support them if they eventually choose to reduce their use or abstain.

This is why DCRs matter: you can't recover if you're dead.

<https://www.talkingdrugs.org/drug-consumption-rooms-benefit-all-of-society>

Drug consumption rooms operate legally in the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Norway, France, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Canada, Australia, Belgium, and Mexico

Countries with legal Drug Consumption Rooms



Resources

Holiday Stress Tips from community members!

- Look at pictures and photographs.
- Make a list and sending inexpensive Christmas cards to friends.
- Talk to friends about their concept of Santa when they were children and get a real laugh.
- Play and sing music helps during the holidays.
- Play relaxing or non-relaxing music. Sing holiday and non-holiday songs at a karaoke place.
- Get a massage from someone you trust, as many people get tense during the holidays.
- Drink plenty of water. It is a good idea to keep track of how many litres you drink.
- Don't hibernate too much!

Learn how to find, work with or complain about your lawyer

Guide to getting legal help: <https://stepstojustice.ca/legal-topic/tribunals-and-courts/getting-legal-help>

* * *

Find more information about Street Soccer

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/streetsoccertoronto/>

ALL welcome you can come as an individual or a team. No expertise or fancy shoes required!

We will be playing at [new location indoors!] **John Innes Community and Rec Centre**, 150 Sherbourne St, Toronto. Mondays from 12-4:00.

* * *

Fair Pass Discount Program

Save money on Transit and get Better FOOD! TTC - Fair Pass Discount Program Ask about details of transport allowance \$2.00 per ride, 115.50 month

Find the forms and the details at: <https://www.toronto.ca/transitdiscount/>

You are eligible if you are an adult living in Toronto and in receipt of Ontario Works (OW) or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and not receiving transportation

supports equal to or greater than \$100 in the current month (i.e. Employment or Medical Related) through OW or ODSP.

How to apply— To apply for the Fair Pass Discount Program, you must complete and sign an [application](#) and [consent form](#). Completed forms can be submitted by mail, fax, or in-person at any of the following Toronto Employment & Social Services (TESS) locations.

* * *

Our Voice—Notre Voix

Recent Issue Piercing the Monopoly

OUR VOICE is published by Groupe de support émotionnel inc. OUR VOICE allows the freedom to express opinions on topics, which are relevant to wellness, madness, and its treatment in New Brunswick or elsewhere. This publication serves as an empowering tool of public education, advocacy and community pride for people who have lived experiences with psychiatry. We accept submissions such as articles, illustrations, poetry and letters. <https://www.ourvoice-notrevoix.com/>



**OUR VOICE
NOTRE VOIX**



Employment Opportunities

Fresh Start Specialty Supervisor

Fresh Start is currently looking to fill our Specialty Supervisor position. This is a full-time position working out in the field as well as encompassing some administrative duties. Applicants can apply through emailing karen@freshstartclean.com or through the Charity Village website where the ad is posted. The deadline for application is Friday December 14, 2018.



The successful applicant must be able:

- To uphold Fresh Start's mission, vision, and values.
- To perform the duties and expectations of the site specifications as an active extreme, one-off, snow removal, lawn care, and/or contract cleaning participant at all times.
- To liaise professionally with clients, community workers, and their clients utilizing exceptional communication, interpersonal and leadership skills at all times.
- To participate in hiring, training, and the evaluations of employees as needed.
- To have a valid driver's license in Ontario class "G" or higher, not under suspension.

All applicants must confirm in their cover letter or impact statement that they are a person dealing with a mental health issue. Any submissions without this will not be considered. Those who share a little bit about themselves (without too much detail) shine brightly with the hiring committee. We offer a full time salary plus benefits. As always I'm accepting applications for cleaning and for snow removal.

Karen Schwartz

Human Resources Coordinator
Fresh Start Cleaning and Maintenance
3345 Dundas Street West, Toronto, ON M6P 2A6
T: 416-504-4262 ext. 227 F: 416-504-3429
karen@freshstartclean.com
www.freshstartclean.com

PASAN Art to Power Project Coordinator

Project Date: January 7, 2019 - October 31st, 2019
Hours of Work: 14hrs Rate of Pay: 25\$ per hour
<http://www.pasan.org/employment-opportunities.html>

Job classification: Part time Contract, CUPE Local 7797

PASAN is working with Red Dress Productions to offer a community engaged art project for people who have experienced incarceration. The Art to Power Resiliency Initiative will enable ex-prisoners to forge pathways to explore their experiences, challenges, and resilience through collaborative creative engagement in a judgement-free community setting, which we believe will support reintegration into community life.



Duties

* Coordinate all aspects of program delivery including participant recruitment ... [more on website]

Qualifications:

* Experience in a community setting working with homeless and marginalized populations including ex-prisoners, people with mental health issues and people who use drugs... [more on website]

Indigenous People, People from African/Caribbean/Black communities, Racialized People, Ex-prisoners, People living with HIV/HCV, People with disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Transgender, Queer People and people from historically under-represented equity seeking groups are strongly encouraged to apply.

To apply send an email to janet@pasan.org with the following:

- 1) Letter of interest telling us why you'd like to work on this project, and any relevant skills or experiences
- 2) Your resume and two employment references

The subject line in your email should be titled "Hiring-Art to Power Project Coordinator".

Free and Fun Events

Did you know about the

City of Toronto Event Listings

www.toronto.ca/explore-enjoy/festivals-events/

HOLIDAY AND CHRISTMAS FREE MEALS



Please check TDIN.ca website or THE BULLETIN WEBSITE soon for free Holiday and Christmas meals. We will have the up-to-date list ASAP.

Here is the [Winter shelter and drop-in schedule from TDIN](https://bit.ly/2Qu80QU). It is a .PDF <https://bit.ly/2Qu80QU>

Did you miss Getting Back in Touch Day on November 27th?



GBITD is basically just an excuse to reach out to people you care about but (for whatever reason) have trouble getting back in touch with. Crustaceansingles.com has a great greeting card to share electronically or print and send. The author is pretty cool too:

My name is Andrew. The woman I'm married to found me through my comics, which is the best love story of all time. I have multiple sclerosis & an extensive collection of mental illnesses. In addition to making CrustaceanSingles, I write fic-

tion, write and record music, build strange musical instruments, co-author textbooks for learning French, and whisper conspiratorially into the void.

December 4 Rally for Real Affordable Housing

Toronto City Hall, Queen West and Bay St
11:00-2:00

Toronto is rapidly becoming a city for the rich and wealthy developers. Join ACORN members and housing allies to demand REAL affordable housing from John Tory and the new city council.

Emotional Support at the STOP

Please join us at The Stop for the Emotional Wellness Peer Support Group. The group happens every Thursday morning from 10am-12pm at The Stop, 1884 Davenport Road. The Drop In has breakfast from 9am-10am, and you are also welcome to stay for lunch after the group session, from 12pm-1pm.

Lead facilitator Cleopatra and co-facilitator Sharon have lived experience of mental health issues, and the group is a way to connect and support our community in dealing with those issues. For more information, please contact Cleopatra at cleopatra@thestop.org or Sharon at sharon@thestop.org. The group is open and ongoing for the next year and there is no need to register.

Jan 1, 8-12 New Year at City Hall

Performances, skating, all ages, fireworks. <https://bit.ly/2ARZVXn>

Find MANY MORE EVENTS at SoundTimes.com/Bulletin

And in the email version of the Bulletin.

Vote for your favourite caption to describe this giant Holstein cow surrounded by 15 brown cows that are only half its size?

- A) Sometimes you just can't seem to fit in?
- B) Why is everyone ignoring me? Is it something I said?
- C) Do we need an anti-stigma campaign?
- D) Is the huge capitalist going to stomp the workers?



Knickers is so big that it can't be killed for meat so it will get to live out its life. Knickers is special and will not be ostracized. But it is also a metaphor for big businesses eating smaller workers food...and then they are eaten.

Source: @7NewsCQ At 194cm 'Knickers' is the largest in his category in Australia. Story: <http://bit.ly/2As99K3> @7NewsCQ Nov. 27, 2018

APOLOGIES for Delivery DELAY

Download and Print Food Booklet

1. Ideally print 2 sided
2. Cut the pages in half and staple.
3. Share with friends and other folks.

Submit resources, orgs, food sources, advocacy tips for future editions of the booklet. <https://bit.ly/2rcOI53>



Computer Help! Martha Gandier (gandier47@hotmail.com) offers fellow consumers/survivors free computer advice and support.



Online Document Readers

(If you would like to hear The Bulletin, below you will find links to websites that can do that for you)

<https://www.naturalreaders.com/>

<http://ttsreader.com/>

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bulletin@soundtimes.com or visit

Soundtimes.com/bulletin

The Bulletin is free to receive.

You can also follow us on:

Where we post even more information and resources.

All previous issues are available on our website:

www.soundtimes.com/bulletin.

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