

The Pocket 小區社區資訊

FREE

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JANUARY 2009

Not-So-Little Mosque on the Danforth

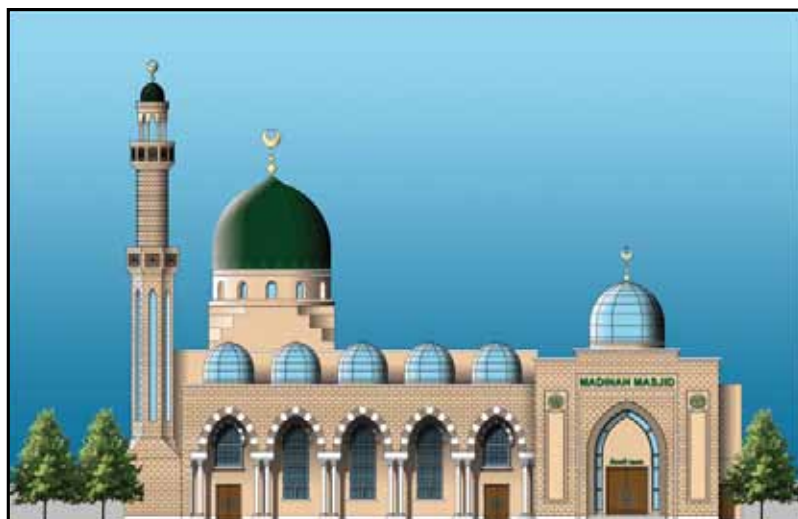
By Marc van Beusekom

The Madinah Masjid (Arabic for house of prayer), located at 1015 Danforth just east of Donlands, is undergoing an extensive renovation that will soon establish it as a landmark in this part of the city.

The story of the Madinah Masjid began several decades ago. According to Hanif Shaikh, president of the mosque today, a small group of 50 or so Muslim immigrants started meeting for prayer in the basement of a rented house in the east end of Toronto in the early 1970s. At that time there was only one mosque in the city, located in the west end, which made it difficult for Muslims living elsewhere in Toronto to meet their prayer obligations.

From these humble beginnings, the local Muslim community grew and, in 1984, managed to purchase what was then a derelict church of Scientology on Danforth just east of Donlands. This building was converted, in rather makeshift fashion, into a Sunni mosque.

According to Mr. Shaikh, the development of the Madinah Masjid reflects the growth of the Muslim population in Toronto in general. There are now 60 to 70 mosques and prayer facilities in the GTA, serving a Muslim population in excess of 250,000. Mr. Shaikh has been a member of



Architect's drawing of the future Madinah Masjid

the Madinah Masjid since immigrating to Canada from India in 1988. He notes that

most of the people who come to the Madinah Masjid are immigrants from a wide variety of countries and backgrounds. Brought together in community by a shared faith, they have now undertaken an ambitious project to improve and beautify their place of worship.

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Handy in the Pocket

By Jesse Frayne

Advice columns have always been part of good newspapers, if not all media. Who remembers Ann Landers? She wrote for the *Toronto Star* and many other papers for about three decades. Her sister Abby gave advice in another syndication. They answered questions about what to say to your boss/wife/son when you have a conflict.

Mary Schmich wrote a wonderful piece called "Advice, Like Youth, is Probably Just Wasted on the Young" (*Chicago Tribune*, June 1, 1997), from which a swoony chanting song was recorded by Baz Luhrmann (he was also the director of the Leonardo DiCaprio version of *Romeo+Juliet*), recommending that we floss, dance regularly, use sunblock, and much more. (Grateful thanks to my son, Jack Manchester, who brought all of this to my attention.)

In my own household, we have several golden rules. Among them:

Never give away your records, because you'll want to hear that music again some day, and
Before you move out on your own, read The Wealthy Barber.

Most enduringly, however, is "A good handyman is worth his weight in gold." When your furnace dies on a mid-winter night, when your bathroom faucet sprays water, when your boots need new soles, when your car crackles and smells funny, who're you gonna call? We are lucky that in the Pocket, we have some very good local people – funny, sensitive, alive human beings who I have put my faith in, most of whom don't know I'm writing this about them:

Ross Appliances Ross can fix anything except dishwashers. (416) 463-6330

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Editorial: Fresh Air and Friendship

How a massive garden overhaul helped a pair of Pocket residents put down roots

By Dave Michaels

It was late November 2005, and we'd been living in our house on Dawson Avenue for just a few weeks. Most of the boxes were yet unpacked, and we had a shopping list a mile long – cleaning supplies, furniture, a snow shovel. We were exhausted but thrilled to be in our new home. We hadn't met our neighbours. In fact, we had barely seen them.

That's when we found the note in our mailbox.

"Your yard is a mess. It is a disgrace to the neighbourhood," it read. It was signed "Disgusted Neighbour." What kind of area had we moved into? The yard wasn't that bad. True, our corner lot was a magnet for blowing trash. The wind seemed to whisk it from Phin Park down the street to our house, where it got caught in the vegetation. We had also just returned from a weekend trip, and there had been a storm while we were gone.

But the home's previous owner had said the neighbours were friendly (maybe they all say that, who knows?). Did we deserve such a reprimand so soon after moving in?

We never did find out who wrote the note. Winter began, and we continued waving to our new neighbours but not really getting to know them. It's tough to rub elbows in the cold and wind.

I'd grown up in a small town, and am a "fitting in" kind of guy, so I felt isolated. How does one get settled into a new place and get to know one's neighbours – to get past the basic introductions?

For me and my partner, it began with the start of Operation Deforestation. One of the reasons our yard attracted trash was that it was filled with 25 or 30 scrubby little trees and bushes – weed trees, we were told. Early in the summer of 2007, we bought a small electric chainsaw and began cutting. And cutting. And sweating. And digging out roots, sometimes standing waist-deep in holes, hacking away. We wanted to do the work ourselves, as difficult and time-consuming as it turned out to be.

That's when we began to realize the benefits of hanging out where everyone could see us. People stopped to say hello. They asked why we were working so hard. They probably thought we were crazy, but few said so openly.

Then they began offering advice, and tools. They cheered us on. They complimented the results.



We worked over consecutive weekends in July and August, and soon we had visits from our "regulars." We learned their names, where they lived, and the names of their kids and pets.

For better or worse, they began to share gossip, and told us things we weren't sure we wanted to hear. For instance, our home, a stucco place that was originally painted light blue, was once widely referred to as the Miami Vice House.

I began looking forward to the work each weekend, spending time in the fresh air and checking in with our passers-by.

A neighbour from across the street brought us some delicious Chinese food. She didn't speak much English, but she always gave the "thumbs up" when she saw us working.

Daniel, also from across the street, brought us homemade pâté. "I like to see people working, especially when it's not me," he said with a laugh. Jean and Michael offered us tools.

But most of all, our neighbours offered friendship. Their companionship made us feel more at home than a couch from IKEA ever could.

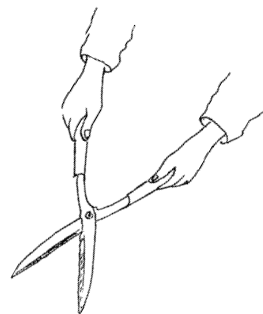
Then winter came, and we were shut-ins once again. But the next summer we continued the deforestation, then planted a hedge. More support, more advice, more visiting time. It was good to see everyone again.

Then we decided to put up a short length of fence. Then we built some raised planter beds, and added perennials. More cheering.

Aww, shucks.

Then we were finished. But we kept finding reasons to hang out in the yard. The hedge needed watering, after all. And how were the plants doing?

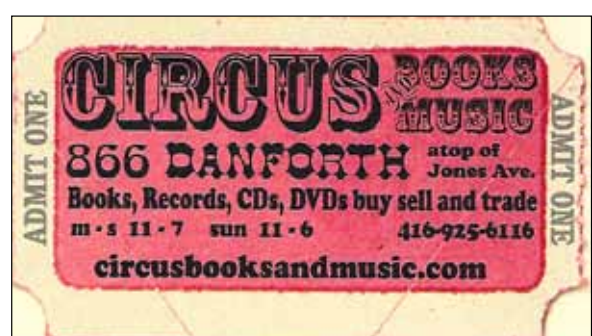
Next summer we'll build a pergola.



Peter Tabuns, MPP
Toronto-Danforth and
his staff wish you

Happy New Year!
We are open to serve you

421 Donlands Ave., 416-461-0223
Email: tabunsp-co@ndp.on.ca



The Pocket Welcomes The Creative Preschool

By Marcia Douglas

The Creative Preschool of East Toronto opened its doors this past July at 16 Phin Ave., within Eastern Commerce Collegiate Institute. About 130 children attend the school in total, with 40 present at any given time. The preschool moved from Bridgepoint Health near Broadview and Gerrard when that building was demolished to make room for a new hospital.

The preschool is located in the lower level (ground level/basement) of Eastern Commerce with generous windows facing north on Chatham. Parents participate in the program and volunteer their time on the Board of Directors of the school, which is a not-for-profit co-operative. Children learn social skills in a nurturing environment, and early childhood educators foster each child's creativity through music, crafts, drama, puzzles, math, science and computers.

Children are taught to acknowledge feelings and develop problem-solving skills. All teachers have Hanen training, which promotes social language development, early language intervention and language enrichment. Outdoor play is a priority, and the children are enjoying nearby Phin Park. The program is also working with the Family Studies Class at Eastern Commerce. Teens are learning about childhood development as they observe, interact with, and plan activities for the children.

The Creative Preschool provides a number of programs for children age 2 ½ up to Grade 3. Escort is available from local schools to the lunch and afternoon program. The Creative Preschool also offers parenting courses to the community at large.

For more information, visit www.creativepreschool.ca, email us at georgia@creativepreschool.ca, or call (416) 465-3865.

Not-So-Little Mosque on the Danforth

(continued from page 1)



The Madinah Masjid under construction

The existing structure of the mosque is heavily used and was in need of major repairs. The new mosque will be some 25,000 square feet in size with space in the main hall for 3,500 people. The renovations also include a new prayer space exclusively for women, which the present building doesn't have, and an evening school for Islamic studies that can hold up to 500 children. Washing facilities will also be upgraded (Muslims are required to wash before prayer), and an elevator will be added. Most impressively, the Madinah Masjid will have a façade of attractive warm pink granite and feature traditional Islamic architecture, including domes and a minaret.

All told, the renovations are expected to cost in the neighbourhood of \$4 million. About 65% has been raised already, all from local contributions. Construction, which began in the fall of last year, is slated for completion in the fall of 2009.

The mosque will expand on its role as a focus for the Muslim community in east Toronto. Mr. Shaikh explains that the Madinah Masjid is popular at least in part because it is on the subway line and so is convenient to get to. A big plus is that it doesn't require the same kind of parking space that other large buildings require.

In accordance with Muslim tradition, prayer services are held five times a day. The mosque also provides marriage ceremonies as well as complete burial services, including preparation of the body of the deceased, and access to an Islamic cemetery located in Scarborough.

Instruction in Islamic teachings is available, the mosque has a youth ministry, and, in conjunction with Woodgreen Community Centre, it sponsors a summer youth activity camp. Madinah Masjid fundraises extensively for humanitarian relief – including the recent earthquake in Pakistan – and helped to organize an interfaith peace walk which took place this fall. They hope this walk will become an annual event.

In a truly Canadian cultural mash up, the mosque also helps to sponsor a newly created Muslim ball hockey league.

Mr. Shaikh noted that Madinah Masjid is actively involved with the wider community. He is proud of their good relations with local churches and the links the mosque has established with local schools. He notes that the expansion of the mosque has met with support from all levels of government.

As for people in our community who may not have been inside a mosque: "When the project is complete, we will have an open house," says Mr. Shaikh, "and everyone is invited."

For more information: www.madinamasjid.ca

Handy in the Pocket

(continued from page 1)

Steve at A & A Furnaces and boilers quiver with delight. (416) 699-9549

Gus at City Plumbing Gus lives on Harcourt, an honorary Pocket person. (416) 466-1165

Dr. Rolf Kreher The adorable dentist, Gerrard at Greenwood. (416) 469-5279

Steve's Holistic Centre Just east of Square Boy, a great massage. (416) 778-0852

Onur and Ugur, the shoe repair guys 845 Danforth, just west of Jones. (416) 463-5085

Tim at ST United Master car mechanic, Dundas at Degrassi. (416) 469-2244

Tim the painter Tim lives on Condor Ave. and will do a great job on your walls. (416) 778-7718



Ugur at the Shoe Repair Shop

Photo: Irish O'Reilly

Advice? Mary Schmich and Baz Luhrmann have lots:

Do one thing every day that scares you.

Sing.

Don't waste your time on jealousy; sometimes you're ahead, sometimes you're behind. The race is long, and in the end, it's only with yourself.

For the rest, see www.davidpbrown.co.uk/poetry/mary-schmich.html

Cheers to all.

Be a part of *The Pocket*

The Pocket needs your help! We are always looking for article ideas and submissions of up to 600 words on topics relating to the Pocket neighbourhood. We are also looking for help with writing, photography, ad sales, delivery, and substantive editing.

Are you a substantive editor? Have you worked in book publishing or print journalism, and do you like working with writers? If so, we invite you to join our dedicated editorial team. To find out more about volunteering for *The Pocket*, call (416) 778-4564 or email pocketnewsletter@sympatico.ca.



EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES IN THE POCKET

Skating

The ice rinks at Withrow and Greenwood are now open for the winter. For info, go to www.toronto.ca/skate or call (416) 338-RINK. And don't forget our own ice rink in Phin Park – new and expanded this year, and open to everyone.

Next Meeting of The Pocket Neighbourhood Association

Late January/early February (to be determined)
Everyone welcome. Join TPNA to help with upcoming events and changes in Phin Park. If you are interested in attending, email jeffotto@sympatico.ca.

Pocket Pub Night

Sunday, March 29
7 to 9 p.m.
Rails and Ales
752 Danforth Avenue (north side, west of Jones)



The Hargrave is (sadly) no more, but Pocket Pub Nights live on! Join your neighbours for a night of socializing. As always, it's casual and come-as-you-are – no RSVP required. Organized by *The Pocket* newsletter.

Spring Cleanup Day

Saturday, April 25
10 a.m., Phin Park

Come on out to help clean up the park and get it ready for another spring/summer season. Refreshments will be served, and there may be walking tours and a fire truck for the kids.

Naturalization of Phin Park – East Side

Saturday, May 9 (tentative) – watch for signs in the neighbourhood

Volunteers needed to come out and help with this exciting project.

Fireworks in Phin Park

Monday, May 18
Dusk (approx 9 p.m.)
Phin Park, near the playground

All-Ages Community Spring Soccer

Wednesdays in May and June
5 to 6 p.m., Phin Park

BasketBall Court Opening Ceremony

Event tba in spring – watch for signs in the neighbourhood

Ask Larissa... Eco-Tips to Put in Your Pocket

Hello! My name is Larissa Mohan and I am excited to be writing a new series in *The Pocket* dedicated to answering your questions about the environment as it pertains to our community. My goal is to help us learn more about our neighbourhood while lightening our impact on planet Earth. Although I have worked in the environmental education field for many years now, I am still “green” on many subjects. So I know I am going to learn a lot from all of you, too!

To get us started, our team from *The Pocket* newsletter provided me with our first question:

Dear Larissa:

What can the Pocket do as a community to tackle climate change?

Um, I thought you'd be asking which brand of toilet cleaner to buy to work with our neighbourhood's sewage system. That is quite the ambitious question! Where should I begin?

First, how about we define what climate change is? Climate change is a change in our weather patterns. Global warming, a rise in average global temperature, is one measure of climate change. You only need to look at what is happening outside your window to see the signs – this year we have had a record amount of precipitation. Remember the shoveling from last winter?

How did this happen? Burning fossil fuels such as coal and gas are largely responsible for climate change. Deforestation and modern intensive farming methods can also contribute to the problem.

You may feel you have little impact on climate change but there are many small actions we can all take that really add up. In fact, this community is already taking many actions to help reduce climate change.

Some current examples include:

- A privately funded solar research project at 72 Ravina
- The ‘car-free day’ community festival on Condor Avenue
- Households that support Bullfrog Power – a provider of 100% green electricity
- Households that post “No Flyers Please” signs
- People who walk, bike or take public transit regularly

Let's take a moment, close our eyes, and think about what else we can do right here in the Pocket to tackle climate change.

... pause ...

What came to mind? My idea was to try and shop for gifts for friends and family on the Danforth instead of driving to you-know-who-mart up on Eglinton. I bet some of you also thought about conserving energy at home by turning out lights when not in use. All of these actions help, especially if we all take these steps. For a list of more ways to stop global warming, visit David Suzuki's website: www.davidsuzuki.org/files/climate/10_ways_to_stop_global_warming_web.pdf

But how can we measure how the Pocket as a whole is tackling climate change? That would require massive time, effort and energy. Phew, I am tired just thinking about this! But if you send me your stories about how you or your family, school or other community group are tackling climate change, we can all learn by your example! This is a topic that deserves more attention so we'll try and make your stories a regular feature.

If you would like to submit a question to “Ask Larissa,” write to me at asklarissa@mohan.ca. Questions should be focused on our Pocket neighbourhood. I look forward to hearing from you!



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Apartment or Roommate Wanted

Quiet, considerate, reliable professional seeking modestly priced, clean, safe one-bedroom apartment or shared housing arrangement with one roommate in the Pocket. Excellent rental record and respect for others' property. I am environmentally conscious with respect to water and electricity usage and do not have pets or a vehicle.

Looking for a place for February 1, 2009, for at least a six-month period. Inquiries can be directed to cecilia@onlink.net using the subject line “Housing.”



The Pocket Canopy

By Jeff Otto

I am sure many of you have noticed that we have lost some more mature trees in the area. What you might not have noticed is that quite a few of the remaining ones are losing their lustre and will also be going in the next year or two.

As a lover of this area and the unique environment it provides, I am worried that we are going to lose a big part of what makes it special. The canopy of trees forms a protective cover that shades our homes, deadens the outside din, calms our streets, cleans our air, and even increases our homes' value.

A bright spot is that many homeowners have chosen to plant new trees in their front yards. Two years ago we did a big push to encourage people to get a free tree from the city. It was quite successful and resulted in almost twenty trees being planted.

Other individuals decided to take a more aggressive route so they opted to hire a private company to plant larger trees. These can be seen on Ravina Crescent at numbers 16, 31, 35, and 57. Though these trees do cost money, the instant

results are both amazing and cost effective when you consider the added value to the home. (The city must be consulted regarding placement with these trees.)

Although all the leaves are gone, I encourage people to take a walk around and notice our area's canopy and its diminishment. If you have room for a tree or think you will be losing yours soon, then now is the time to get the ball rolling.

If anyone has more questions or would like help in getting a tree, please don't hesitate to get in contact with me at jeffotto@sympatico.ca or 416-986-2374.

For a free sapling from the City of Toronto:
www.toronto.ca/trees/tree_planting.htm
(416) 338-8733

For a larger tree from Hall Tree Farms:
www.halltreefarms.com
1 (800) 463-1996



The Pocket

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Many thanks to all who have been involved and to all who read this newsletter. Donations, volunteers, and story ideas always welcome. To contact us, use mailboxes located at 1 Queen Victoria, 18 Boothroyd Avenue, 16 Dawson Avenue, or 34 Condor Avenue. Or email us at pocketnewsletter@sympatico.ca or call (416) 778-4564. For advertising or classified inquiries, please call (416) 406-1684.

What's Been Happening in the Pocket

By Satu Repo, Julia Morgan, Jeff Otto, Trish O'Reilly, and Pascale Guillotte

The Other Pocket Street Party

Editor's Note: Past issues of The Pocket have reported on the Condor Avenue street party. The Condor party didn't happen this fall due to unforeseen events. But did you know that our neighbourhood has another street party?



Photo: Pascale Guillotte

On wheels and on foot, Seymour residents enjoy the party.

A few weeks after moving onto Seymour in 2003, my family was convinced that our decision to live here was the right one. Not only had we received our first (I believe THE first) issue of *The Pocket*, been invited to the Condor celebrations of No Car Day, and met some pretty awesome people at Phin Park, but we had also participated in our very first Seymour Street Party. We now belonged to a neighbourhood where people celebrated their neighbours and where the concept of a community was more than a slogan on street signs – it was truly embodied.

The summer of 2008 marked my family's fifth year of enjoying the Seymour party: face painting, hot dog luncheons, wild water fights and potluck suppers under the stars. This day is now so engrained in my young sons' lives, it is marked in our calendars the moment a new year chimes in.

(What's Been Happening is continued on page 7)

What's Been Happening in the Pocket

(continued from page 6)

The Seymour Street Party is actually ten years old. Two neighbours, Nancy Lew and Kim Harrison, decided one summer to get out and enjoy the people on the street. A flyer was distributed, a few tables gathered with a collection of stickers and temporary tattoos, a banner was hand-painted (thanks to the crazy imagination of young kids), and a parade up and down the street alerted everyone to the new tradition! During our festivities, every talent on the street is put to good use, from graphic design to balloon sculpting to cooking.



Photo: Pascale Guilloitte

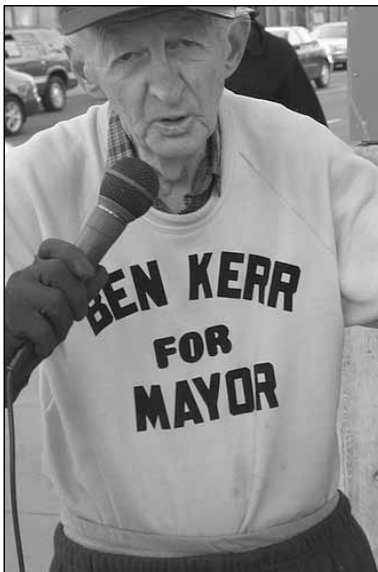
The Phin Park Olympics were introduced three years ago, where wheelbarrow racing, water balloon toss and three-legged races have kids and adults sweating and laughing and engaged in friendly neighbourly competition. Two years ago, Paul Dobson volunteered to devise an intricate obstacle course for the Olympics that continues to be one of the highlights of the event.

A devoted following of moms and dads help out every year, ensuring the continuity of this great end-of-summer tradition. The party is always held on the Saturday afternoon of the Labour Day weekend. And, of course, everyone in the Pocket is welcome!

– PG

Ben Kerr Lane Naming Ceremony

On May 25, 2008, Pocket residents, politicians, musicians, and members of the family of the late Ben Kerr gathered in the laneway running between Chatham Avenue and Jones (just south of the Danforth) to celebrate the naming of Ben Kerr Lane. Ben Kerr was a colourful local resident often seen pushing his busking equipment past this lane to his home on Jones Avenue. Originally from Nova Scotia, he had



Ben Kerr. Photo courtesy of photographer Kenneth Armstrong and *Spacing* magazine

lived in our east end neighbourhood for 25 years. Many other Torontonians know Kerr from seeing him play guitar and sing at his regular spot in front of The Bay at Yonge and Bloor.

He also added zest to the city's political life as a perennial mayoral candidate. It was less well known that he had served in the Royal Canadian Air Force for 15 years and was an accomplished songwriter. In his earlier years in Toronto, Kerr was part of the Yorkville folk music scene, performing alongside future stars such as Joni Mitchell, Neil Young, and Gordon Lightfoot. He died in 2005 at the age of 75.

The lane was named after Kerr thanks to the efforts of the Chatham West Residents' Association, which has worked hard in recent years to achieve this important reminder of our local culture.

The naming ceremony featured speeches from city councillor Paula Fletcher and federal NDP leader Jack Layton, as well as reminiscences from family members and people living in the area who had known Kerr. A group of local musicians – Mike Elmer, Angela Monette, Trish O'Reilly, Spencer Moody, and John Beirsto – performed songs they wrote to honour Ben, including "Won't You Walk With Me Down Ben Kerr Lane?"

You can hear these songs by visiting www.reverbnation.com/benkerrlanenamingcelebration.
– SR



In the photo, left to right: Top row: stiltwalker Paul Babiak of Zero Gravity Circus. Middle: Jack Layton, keynote speaker Babs Church, and Paula Fletcher. Front: Chatham West Residents' Association spokesperson Trish O'Reilly, Ben Kerr's son, Robert, and his daughter, Beverley. With thanks to Paula Fletcher's office for the use of this photo.

(What's Been Happening is continued on page 8)

What's Been Happening in the Pocket

(continued from page 7)

Phin Park Update

Work on revitalizing the basketball court in Phin Park (a project that The Pocket Neighbourhood Association has been working on for some time) began last summer but is now on hold, and it will be completed in the spring.

New, mature trees were planted throughout the park and surrounding the play area last summer and have gotten a great start. A cement pad has been installed along the walkway, and a new bench should be installed on it by spring. The toys in the playground have been put in the shed for safekeeping for the winter.

The City of Toronto's Forestry department is hoping to do a naturalization of the most easterly part of the park (we may be losing one or more of the trees back there as they are severely compromised at their core). This work would require the help of the community in the spring.

Volunteers are needed for garden maintenance in the park. We need people to meet as a group to weed and water a bit on Tuesday nights next summer. If you are interested, please contact jeffotto@sympatico.ca or (416) 986-2374. Also, if anyone has access to a projector, please contact me as I would like to organize movie nights in the summer as well.

– JO

Doing Jones

Leslieville resident and writer Joe Clark has a dedicated web page about Jones Avenue and its many curiosities. Starting at Queen and proceeding north to Danforth, Clark gives an opinionated but intriguing take on the architecture and history of the street, from familiar landmarks (the Jewish cemetery, the Jones Public Library) to rarely seen nooks and crannies (such as hidden housing units in back alleys). Check it out at <http://leslieville.org/other/Jones/>

– JM

A New Public Alternative School for East End Toronto

Beginning in fall 2009, the Whole Child School will open its doors in the Toronto–Danforth area, in a yet-to-be determined location. The Toronto District School Board has approved the school, and administrators are now looking to sign up students who will be in K–7 in the 2009 year, according to school spokesperson Deborah Adelman.

The school is the brainchild of a group of parents and educators committed to a holistic approach to educating children. The school website emphasizes an arts-integrated curriculum that stresses experiential learning. The intention is to draw on holistic pedagogies such as Waldorf education and inquiry-based learning that aim at a balanced development of children.

The new school has an advisory board whose members come from local universities and innovative private and alternative public schools, such as Hawthorne II Bilingual Alternative Public School and the private Discovery School.

For more information, see www.wholechildschool.ca. Be sure to look for the imaginary “Day in the Life of Whole Child School.” Reading it made me wish this school had been around when my children were young. I predict that the Whole Child School, when it opens its doors next fall, will have no trouble finding students and volunteer parents eager to participate in a school that is humanist rather than technocratic in spirit.

– SR

The Infamous Pocket

The Pocket has made it into the media several times recently. First, in an article called “Old Neighbourhoods Never Die – Do They?” (May 9, 2008) *Globe and Mail* writer Dave Leblanc tries an experiment to test Canada Post's mettle. He addresses a number of envelopes to friends who live in places in the GTA such as Wexford, Baby Point, and Mimico (all towns that do not officially exist) – leaving out any mention of Toronto or any postal codes.

“To make things interesting, I tried place names that I knew were long shots,” Leblanc writes. “To be really silly,” he includes The Pocket, which he bills as “a recent nickname for a little area south of Danforth Avenue, near Jones Avenue.” Well, guess what? After 29 days, Canada Post determined where The Pocket was, and delivered the envelope to Leblanc's friend – this despite the fact that his letters for Wexford, Baby Point, and Leslieville didn't fare nearly as well.

“So, with the autonomy of ‘The Pocket’ validated by Canada Post,” Leblanc concludes, “if residents ever decide they want custom street signs, streetlight banners or anything else to brand their neighbourhood, city officials will have no choice but to listen.”

Meanwhile, a more recent article in the *Globe* (“A Taste of the Other Danforth,” August 9, 2008) talks about the recent eastward trend of gentrification along the Danforth and the great diversity of our neighbourhood. It's worth a read, and available online through the Toronto Public Library's newspaper/magazine database.

Finally, a CBC radio investigation in April uncovered new information suggesting that James Earl Ray, Martin Luther King's assassin, may have stayed two nights at 6 Condor Avenue during the month he spent hiding out in Toronto immediately following the assassination. When Ray was stopped for jaywalking in Toronto that month, he gave 6 Condor Avenue as his address to police. He had also circled the address on a map found later. In 1968, 6 Condor was operating as a brothel run by a madam and an ex-convict. According to CBC, Ray may have stayed there, where he likely stole the identity of several men who were also visiting the brothel. For more, see: www.cbc.ca/world/story/2008/04/28/f-james-earl-ray.html

– JM

A Pocket Christmas Carol

Pocket resident Trish O'Reilly recently performed in a version of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* held recently at St. David's Anglican Church (Danforth and Donlands). O'Reilly was singing as part of an *a cappella* trio called The MadriGALS. Actor John D. Huston starred in the show, which was a re-creation of performances Dickens gave in his time, and the actor prepared his script based on Dickens' script and working notes. The show will be presented at St. David's again, so if you didn't make it out, you can still catch it next year.

– JM, TO

The Pocket by the Numbers

- 2 Issues of *The Pocket* each year
- 16 Number of volunteers who worked on this issue
- 5 Length of time, in months, to put out this issue
- 150 Estimated number of total volunteer hours given this issue
- \$650 Total cost of printing each issue
- 1100 Number of households who receive *The Pocket*
- 2500 Estimated readership per issue

If you enjoy *The Pocket*, please consider making a financial contribution – any amount most welcome! – to keep it going. Or why not take out an ad to promote your local business? Ads cost \$50 for a business card-sized space; larger dimensions are also available. In addition to reaching our loyal readers, you'll also be helping to build our community. We also have classifieds available. You can reach us at (416) 406-1684 or pocketnewsletter@sympatico.ca.



Scrabble Lover?

I'm looking for three other people to join me for a fun and friendly Scrabble night once a month in the Pocket. Contact Julia at (416) 778-4564 or julia.morgan@sympatico.ca.

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councillor_fletcher@toronto.ca

Happy New Year

from Jack Layton, MP Toronto-Danforth

Peace and good wishes to all.
Meilleurs voeux de paix et de bonheur à tous.
祝願您和您的家人新年平安，吉祥如意！
Ειρήνη και τις καλύτερες ευχές για το
Νέο Έτος σε σας και την οικογένειά σας.



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In the Kitchen with Jesse

By Jesse Frayne

In our Pocket we have every taste. Since in the last issue we printed a pork roast and squash soup, this time let's have vegetarian fare and a delicious dessert.

Quinoa Loaf

Quinoa is a delicious ancient grain, and a great source of calcium, amino acids and protein.

Bring to a boil in a saucepan:

1 cup dry quinoa
1¾ cups water
Pinch of salt

Reduce heat, cover and simmer for about 10 minutes until the water is absorbed. Spill the grain out into a bowl and let cool. Wipe out the saucepan and add a little oil. Place therein:

1 chopped onion
2 cups chopped carrots

Stir, cover, and sauté gently until tender crisp, about 10 minutes. Add to the grain. Also add:

1 cup whole wheat or all-purpose flour
1 tsp each thyme and dry basil leaves
A good grind of black pepper

Meanwhile, combine:

½ cup warm water
A heaping tablespoon of brown rice miso

Stir to dissolve, pour over the grain/vegetable/flour mixture and stir to combine. Place this mixture in an oiled ovenproof dish, and mound it into a loaf shape if you like. Sprinkle on:

¼ cup toasted sunflower seeds

Cover the pan and warm the loaf in a 350-degree oven for a half hour. Serve with gravy.

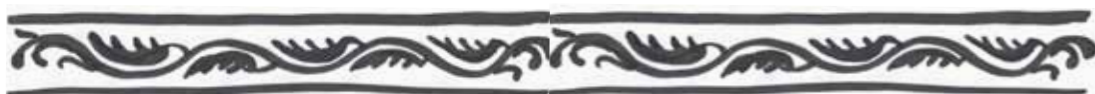
Gravy for Quinoa Loaf

In a big frypan, warm 2 tbsp olive oil and in it, over medium heat, sauté 2 cups of chopped mixed mushrooms (like crimini, shiitake, oyster, portobello), until they begin to brown, 4 minutes. Add trimmed asparagus or green beans, and continue cooking until the greens are tender crisp, maybe 3 more minutes. Mix together 1 cup of water, ⅓ cup tamari, and 2 tsp cornstarch. Stir to dissolve and pour over the vegetables, then stir until the gravy thickens. Like the consistency? Add a little more water if you find it thick. Taste for seasoning, grind on some black pepper or fling in some red chili flakes. Pour over your serving of quinoa loaf and gloat at your healthiness.

Foolishly Delicious Chocolate Pecan Pie

1 tbsp butter
1 cup finely chopped pecans (you can buy pecans already ground)
16 oz. semi-sweet chocolate baker's pieces or chips
2 eggs lightly beaten
½ tsp salt
1 tsp vanilla extract
½ cup each corn syrup and pecan halves

Grease an 8" pie plate with butter on the bottom and sides. Sprinkle with very finely chopped pecans and shake the plate around to distribute the nuts. Melt the chocolate in a bowl over (not in) hot water over low heat. When melted, stir in eggs, salt, vanilla and corn syrup. Pour into the prepared pie plate. Arrange pecan halves on top attractively, and bake in a 350°F oven for 25 to 30 minutes. Serve with whipped cream.



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