

The Pocket

FREE

VOLUME 8

MAY 2006

Wireless Internet in the Pocket

By Craig Jasman

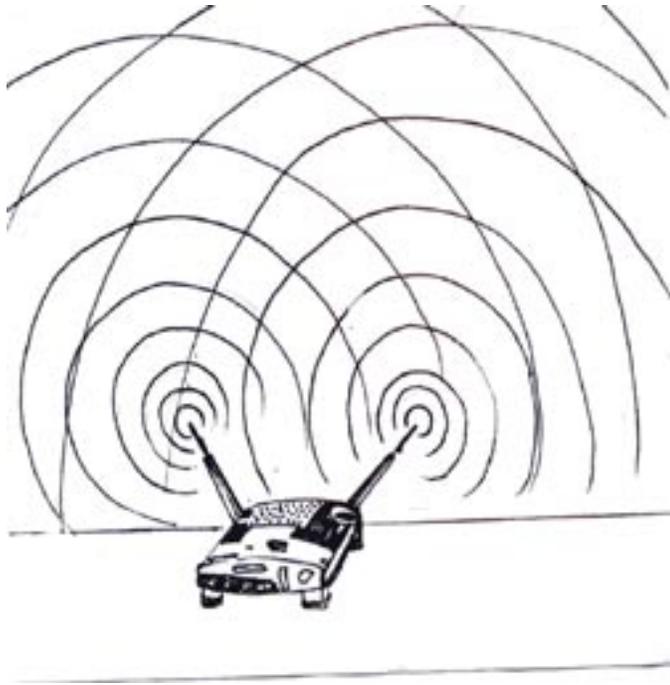
One of the coolest toys I have ever had is my new laptop with wireless Internet access. I can now check my email or surf the web without getting my butt off the couch. I can now get access to the Internet anywhere in the house or even on the front porch or in the backyard.

Clearly I'm not the only one. Over the last year, wireless Internet has exploded in the Pocket. I found five wireless networks from my front porch and have mapped a total of 137 wireless networks in the neighbourhood. I mapped the Pocket's wireless networks by walking up and down both sides of all of the streets with my wireless laptop and some free software that I downloaded. The software detects and keeps track of all the wireless networks and their names and indicates how secure they are.

My guess is that most people do not know that their wireless network name (also known as a service set identifier, or SSID) is being broadcast to the whole world. By the way, people in the Pocket have come up

with some really creative names for their networks!

Wireless networks are most useful to people with laptops or people who are adding a second computer to their homes and do not want to run wires to a second or third floor. To set up a wireless network all you need is a wireless access point and a wireless card (you can get both for less than \$150) and most new laptops come with a wireless card built in. (cont'd on page 5)



Illustrated by Cecilia Booth

Musicians in the Pocket

By Nate Hendley

Keith McKie sits in his living room, chatting animatedly about gigs, guitars, singers and bands. The wall behind him is covered with photos of friends and family members. One particular picture stands out from the rest: it's a black and white shot of a group of young men with a red anteater superimposed on the bottom of the frame.

The picture is captioned "Kensington Market"—the name of the band McKie played in back in the 1960s. The animal imagery is a reference to the band's second album, *Aardvark*. At the time the picture was taken, Kensington Market had built a solid rep on the North American concert scene,

playing shows with the likes of Chuck Berry, the Steve Miller Band and the Chicago Transit Authority (soon to be called, simply, Chicago).

Unlike many Canadian bands of the era, the members of Kensington Market wrote their own material. McKie, who played rhythm guitar and sang in the group, describes their sound as "eclectic folk-rock, with a classical touch." KM were never hugely successful, although they were big enough for McKie to have been included in the CBC-TV documentary *Shakin' All Over*. Broadcast in early 2006, the doc charted the development of Canadian rock 'n' roll.

(cont'd on page 9)

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Editorial: Taxes in our Pocket

One of our own Pocket people, Nicholas Brooks from Oakvale Avenue, is running for Mayor in the upcoming municipal election. His campaign raises interesting questions about community attitudes towards government and public services such as schools, parks and recreation, and garbage collection.

There seems to be four basic approaches to the issue.

Approach #1: Cut taxes, reduce expenditures

At one end of the continuum are those who believe that they alone should decide what services they want and where to purchase them. They would cut taxes, reduce governments, and eliminate services. They would prefer to pay themselves for things like daycare and recreation services, so they can provide these things in the manner they choose.

Approach #2: Maintain taxes at current levels, still reduce expenditures, and provide some additional services

Brooks believes that we should not be facing a three percent tax hike while he believes city workers' wages remain high and he sees no additional services. While he thinks our city provides some much-needed services, Brooks contends there is waste – he suggests cutting wages or contracting out city jobs so as to provide more services without raising taxes. (See p. 6 for more information on his campaign).

Approach #3: Increase taxes just enough to cover cost of living

Others think we should pay a little bit more in taxes to cover cost of living increases and to enable the city to pay what they consider a living wage to its workers. They believe paying three percent more in tax helps to retain what we already have. Some also argue that it's fairer to use provincial taxes to cover some of the new costs imposed by the province on the city in the 1990s.

Approach #4: Increase taxes and increase services

Still others are calling for more and better services and are ready to pay higher taxes to improve our community. They complain that politicians have been cutting services for many years, and think it's time we demanded more of our governments, not less.

Judging by what we see and hear in the Pocket, most residents seem to agree that taxes are the price we pay for living in a great neighbourhood and a more-or-less civilized world. Along with parks, schools, garbage collection, and road repairs, our city taxes help bring the firetruck to visit the neighbourhood party each fall, they let us use Eastern High School for meetings and parties, and they keep the Jones Avenue bus running.

What do you think? Come election time, you might want to consider the following questions:

- How much waste do you think there is? Where is it? How would you eliminate it?
- Do you know much city workers earn? Do you think government employees are overpaid? How much is the right amount?
- What does justify city tax increases?
- Are there additional city services you want? Would you be willing to pay more for them?

* * *

We hope you will enjoy this issue of *The Pocket* newsletter. After a bit of a hiatus, we are back and better than ever. We plan to publish two issues per year in future, and as always, we'll be keeping you informed about Pocket news and events (with a bit of fun – and even a recipe or two – thrown in for good measure). Enjoy the read, and have a great summer.

- The Pocket Publishing Team

The Pocket

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Many thanks to all that have been involved and to all that read the newsletter. Drop boxes are located at 1 Queen Victoria, 18 Boothroyd Ave, or 34 Condor Ave. You can email us at pocketnewsletter@hotmail.com.



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EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES IN THE POCKET

with contributions by Susan McMurray, Jesse Frayne, Nicholas Brooks and Roberta Stimac

Fireworks in the Park

Monday, May 22
Dusk (approximately 9 p.m.)
Phin Park

Last year Greg Barsoski collected several hundred dollars from friends and neighbours in the Pocket and together with a group of neighbours put on a fantastic fireworks show. Greg plans an even bigger and brighter show this year.

“It seems to be a spring kind of thing. People get to reconnect with their neighbours,” says Greg. “It’s great for the kids, and their parents don’t need to drive anywhere.”

To contribute or for more information, call Greg at 416-402-4283 or drop off a contribution at 19 Ravina Crescent.

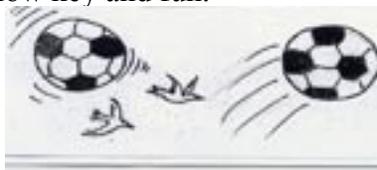
All-ages Community Spring Soccer

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

Whether you’re a player or simply an enthusiastic supporter, join your neighbours for a fun game of soccer each week between now and July. No one is too young or too out of shape!

This is year three for Pocket Dad Peter Cahill, who organizes a pick-up soccer game each Wednesday. “It’s nice to be able to go up to the local park and just play a game – you don’t have to register, you just show up,” says Peter. “Kids and adults get to play together, with no need for uniforms, no age limits, and no driving required. It’s low key and fun.”

For more information, call Peter at 416-406-1787. Or simply show up at Phin Park.



Illustrated by Cecilia Booth

Fifth Annual Car-free Day and Party in the Pocket

Saturday, September 16
2 p.m. to 10 p.m.
Condor Avenue, between Hunter and Shudell

Pocket residents have developed a tradition of kids and adults playing games, sharing meals and talking with each other – safely – on our streets. The kids like having the freedom of the streets so much that it’s hard to get them off at the end of the day. All of this is capped off with live music and entertainment provided by neighbours.

To volunteer, make a donation, or for more information, call Susan McMurray at 416-406-1684.

Biofuel Co-op Idea

Lately you may have noticed several families in the Pocket posting the GreenSaver signs, showing that they are working to improve the insulation efficiency in their homes. The cost of energy, both financial and ecological, from its production to consumption, is beginning to be a concern for many of us.

Biofuel is a diesel fuel made from used cooking oil. Not only does it use waste oil that would otherwise be garbage, it also burns much cleaner than petroleum; there is much less carbon dioxide, sulphur dioxide and particulate emission. It works for home furnaces that burn oil, and for diesel cars. Maybe you have heard about this stuff? Maybe you know that you can gas up your diesel car with 20% biofuel at the station at Pape and Queen. What you maybe don’t know is that the process is simple and cheap - people can make biofuel themselves.

Jesse Frayne is proposing is a biofuel co-op of our own, in the Pocket. Find out more about biofuel at the website, www.nonprofitfuel.ca, and, if curious, let Jesse Frayne know at mgripeh@pathcom.com or 416-465-1458. If there’s interest in the idea, Jesse will organize a meeting about it. Cheers. (cont’d on page 4)

Pub Night in the Pocket

Sunday, May 28 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Sunday, June 25 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Saturday, July 22 8 p.m. to 10 p.m.
(July only – Saturday night)
Sunday, August 17 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

* The Hargrave Pub and Restaurant
* 1106 Danforth Ave (between Jones and Greenwood)
The Pocket newsletter is organizing four pub nights to let us take advantage of lazy spring and summer nights. Join friends and neighbours from the Pocket for an evening of socializing. It’s casual and come-as-you-are. No RSVP required.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES IN THE POCKET

(continued from page three)

Phin Park

Previous issues of *The Pocket* have described the positive (and not-so-positive) ways we use and enjoy Phin Park. Sometimes the will of the community needs to be expressed in the strongest and clearest of terms, in order to keep our parks functional and beautiful.

Some residents have suggested that the community petition for a small fence to surround the playground in order to keep dogs from bounding through when small children are playing. For the city to consider such a step, the neighbourhood first needs to be polled and a petition drawn up with as many signatures as possible followed by a community meeting set up by the City. If you support a fence, you can sign a petition by visiting any of the following, 1 Queen Victoria, 34 Condor, or 18 Boothroyd, where you will find a copy of the petition on the porch.

A group of concerned residents are talking with the Parks Supervisor for our area about the basketball court. Although the City Parks department was quick to replace the basketball posts and nets last year when they were broken, the court itself is sloped and the gravel area on the eastern side of the court is said to be unsafe by some of the young players who use it. Let's show these young people that you can work with city hall to make your neighbourhood a better place. An update on the basketball court will be provided in the next *Pocket*.

The same group is inquiring whether Phin Park can get the same floral attention that other parks receive from the City Parks gardeners and also asking about additional benches that were promised in past years.

Join a Community Garden

A group of residents on Oakvale Avenue has been working toward creating a mixed use Community Garden in the greenspace at the north end of the TTC Yards between Chatham and Oakvale (right behind the firehall). This has taken a great deal of time, effort and negotiation with the TTC. The group is happy to announce to the community that an agreement regarding the use of this space is now in place.

Over the past five years or so residents have been in 'caretaking mode', watering, doing basic maintenance, planting 25 fruit trees, a small vegetable garden and various 'themed' spaces.

They now would like to offer some of this space to the community 'at large' for those who have no access to their own 'green space', or who just want to improve our community to plant as they wish. There is abundant space and water, but some challenges offered by open public spaces due to the high traffic. Nonetheless, excellent progress is being made and the garden is expanding.

To assist the effort, Home Depot, as part of its community input program, brought a volunteer crew with rototillers and flowers to help launch the garden on April 27th.

If you'd like to participate in the community garden, join others there on Monday, June 5th, at 7 pm. If it rains, the group will move indoors to 90 Oakvale. Refreshments will be provided so please RSVP, or for more information: Nicholas or Kathryn Brooks at 416-816-1462 or filmgear@symatic.ca

Be a part of *The Pocket*!

Attention scribes: itching to get something on paper? We invite article submissions of up to 500 words on topics of interest to Pocket residents. We also publish meeting and event listings, photos of neighbourhood scenes, drawings, jokes, and original recipes. Not a writer, but still have a great story idea? No problem! Send it to us, and we can assign someone to cover it. And we always need volunteers on our newsletter committee to help with things like editing, production, ad sales, and delivery. You can reach us at (416) 778-4564 or pocketnewsletter@hotmail.com.

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Wireless Internet in the Pocket

(continued from page one)

Now, let's talk security. Many of the 137 wireless networks I saw were unlocked, which means they are not secure. Most access points have a range of 150 to 300 feet and with a little work can be extended to 1000 feet. This means anyone who comes within the range on your access point can gain access to your network if you do not take steps to lock it down (also known as encryption). Someone who has access to your network can look at your private files and potentially obtain your credit card, bank and other information – whatever you might have used in the past on your computer. Here's what you do if you don't want others entering your network:

- Reset your default password.
- Change the default name on your wireless network.
- Use WPA encryption (WPA stands for wi-fi protected access).
- Do not use WEP encryption (WEP stands for wired equivalent privacy). WEP is easy for someone to break into.

It is important to set up some security measures on your wireless network. If you cannot do it yourself, find someone who can. Remember, if you are going to use your wireless network for online banking and credit card transactions, it is especially important that you keep it secure.

So what is next for wireless networking? On March 7, 2006, Toronto Hydro announced a plan to cover the downtown core with one big wireless network. If this plan works out we could see a wireless network over the whole city in three to five years.

I would like to leave you with one last thought. Wireless networking provides a great opportunity: You may want to consider sharing your secure wireless Internet network with your close neighbours and splitting the bill.

In the Kitchen with Cecilia

Maple Pecan Oatmeal Bars

Ingredients:

- 2 ¼ cups quick or old-fashioned oats
- 2 cups all purpose flour
- 1-½ cups packed brown sugar
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp salt
- ¾ cup margarine or butter, melted
- 1/3-cup maple syrup
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1 tsp vanilla

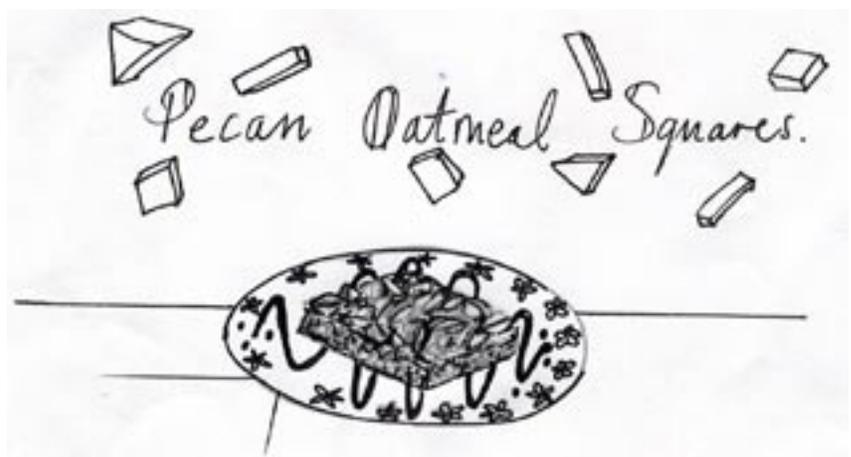
For topping:

- 1-½ cups chopped pecans
- ¼ cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1/3 cup maple syrup

Method:

- Heat oven to 350°. Lightly spray 13 X 9 inch baking pan with cooking spray
- For bars, combine first five ingredients; mix well. In small bowl, combine next four ingredients; mix well. Add to oat mixture; mix well. Press evenly onto bottom of pan.
- For topping, combine pecans and sugar. Sprinkle evenly over dough, pressing lightly. Drizzle evenly with syrup.
- Bake 35 to 38 min. or until edges are set but centre is soft. Cool completely in pan on wire rack. Cut into bars. Makes 32 bars.

Recipe contributed by Cecilia Booth



Illustrated by Cecilia Booth

Support *The Pocket*

Did you know that each issue of *The Pocket* takes three months to put together, involves the work of a dozen volunteers, and costs about \$400 to print? 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 1,000+ loyal readers, you'll also be helping to build our community. You can reach us at (416) 406-1684 or pocketnewsletter@hotmail.com.

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING IN THE POCKET

TTC Greenspace at Oakvale Green ("the dog park")

Last year, your community convinced the TTC to keep the greenspace green. After the TTC agreed not to sell the land, community residents set up the Pocket Community Working Group to negotiate a maintenance agreement with the TTC for the south and west parts of the space. While the negotiations have been slow, the TTC is continuing basic maintenance, such as grass cutting. Once a satisfactory draft agreement is reached, the Working Group and Councillor Paula Fletcher will organize a community meeting so the agreement can be discussed. For more information, call Susan at 416-406-1684 or email at speaking@web.ca.

In the meantime, the Oakvale Avenue Residents Association (OKRA) has reached an agreement with the TTC for the northern portion of the TTC greenspace. OKRA has worked hard to ensure that the parking lot on Oakvale Avenue does not get expanded and the community garden continues to have access to water. For more information about OKRA's agreement, call Nicholas Brooks at 416-816-1462 or email filmgear@rogers.com.

Community Clean-up Day

Once again, the neighbourhood pitched in, leaving our parks and our streets cleaner as a result of Mayor David Miller's community clean-up event on April 21 and 22. Congratulations and thank you to all who came out, despite the rain, as well as to those who keep the Pocket clean all year round.



Children Enjoy Easter Egg Hunt

Sharp at 11 a.m. on the Saturday before Easter 2006, around 30 kids scrambled around Phin Park to find their share of the hundreds of easter eggs hidden there. Three families started the easter egg hunt a few years ago, and it happens informally every year.

PEOPLE IN THE POCKET

with contributions by Amanda Smith and Susan McMurray

The Desperate Housewives of Seymour Avenue

This past November the ladies of Seymour Avenue got together for a drink. With many cries of "We should do this more often!!" an open date was set. Once every month, the desperate housewives get together at a local pub for some beer, wine (or shots if the mood strikes!). They enjoy the chance to get out, socialize, meet their neighbours and take a well deserved break!

Update on "Single" Nate Hendley

Nate Hendly, author of "Single Life in the Pocket" (Volume 2, September 2003, *The Pocket*), and previous Pocket publisher, is single no more. You may recall Nate's humorous story about trying to walk his cat, Oswald, to Phin Park to meet eligible young women. Although his walks in the park did not garner him success, he did manage to meet a life partner, Alyson Fischer, through more traditional activities. Nate and Alyson's nuptials are scheduled for August 2006. Although Nate and Alyson have moved from Nate's original Pocket homestead on Boothroyd, they have remained happily ensconced in the neighbourhood, setting up a new home on Boulton. Congratulations Nate and Alyson.

Local Resident Runs for Mayor

Nicholas Brooks, who has fought tenaciously to preserve Oakvale Green, and helped set up the community garden along the northern part of the Green, has thrown his hat into the mayoral election ring. Nicholas is running for Mayor in the municipal elections on Monday, November 13, 2006. "I'm a serious candidate, running on a platform of good sense and accountability," Nicholas says, "Accountability for how your dollars are being spent and accountability for the jobs that people should be doing."

"The historic price paid for the right to vote was huge," Nicholas continues. "If you don't vote, regardless of whether you think it counts, do you think you have the right to complain? Democracy is right and fair, but really hard."

For more information, check out Nicholas' website, <http://ca.geocities.com/nickformayor/>.

CLASSIFIED AD

We are looking for a responsible teenager who can commit to taking care of our daughter for a couple of hours after school most days of the week, starting next school year, i.e., from September 2006 to June 2007. She will be in grade four. Specific responsibilities need to be worked out, but at the least they would involve picking her up from Wilkinson School at 3:30pm and taking her home (we live on Ravina Cres.), or to an after-school activity, and staying with her until approximately 5:30pm. At this point, we are just interested in collecting names of interested individuals. We will figure out the details over the next few months. If you're interested and/or for more information please contact Carol or Ron at 416-466-0747.

SunRISE over Riverdale

By Carol Ramm

A group of Riverdale residents is about to embark on a historic and pioneering venture: participating in a group solar panel project that will feed electricity from their homes into the electrical grid. Picture a hydro meter spinning...backwards.

The project, called RISE (Riverdale Initiative for Solar Energy) consists of residents putting solar photovoltaic panels on their roofs and selling the power back to the province of Ontario.

The RISE participants will be helping to launch a solar revolution and will be among the first to take advantage of a brand-new offer by the province to pay 42 cents per kilowatt hour to all solar electricity producers.

Local resident

Ron McKay, an artist and environmental activist, initiated the project about a year ago out of the desire to do something practical about climate change and the environment. He collected names of interested residents and then put out a call to solar companies for bids to offer a reduced group rate to supply and install the solar panels. The winning company is Solera Sustainable Energies Company; the price is about \$10,000 per home for a one-kilowatt system (larger systems are also available). Using a system of that size, it will work out that the province will pay each homeowner roughly \$500 per year for the electricity produced. Homeowners will then pay the normal billing rate (which is much lower than 42 cents per kilowatt hour) for any electricity they use. It doesn't mean that people won't pay for electricity, but in general their yearly expenditure will be a lot lower when their solar panel earnings are added into the equation.

Some solar facts: each one-kilowatt system will prevent the burning of about 2,000 lbs. of coal per year in a coal-fired electricity plant. Toronto has more

available hours of sunshine than Germany, which is investing heavily in solar power, and it has almost as many available hours as Miami. Solar panels continue to produce energy even on bright overcast days, although they generate their maximum power on summer afternoons when electrical demand is also at its highest level.

The deadline to commit to participating in the

RISE project was mid-April 2006. There has been some talk of a RISE 2, possibly focusing on solar hot water systems, but the volunteers who have shepherded RISE to this point cannot take on another project. However, watch *The Pocket* and other local and city papers for news about future solar projects (or email carolramm@yahoo.ca), and check the websites listed below



for more information about solar energy.

There has been intense local interest in energy issues raised by the debate about the Portlands Energy Centre. Last summer's unprecedented 48 smog alert days also raised the spectre of increasing health issues caused by polluted air. It is great to know that right here in east Toronto, some local residents will be doing their bit to help close Ontario's coal-fired generators by converting sunlight into electricity.

For more information:

www.cansia.ca/resources.asp (Canadian Solar Industries Association)

www.solarenergysociety.ca (Solar Energy Society of Canada Inc.)

www.soleraenergies.com (solar photovoltaic systems)

www.solarcosystems.com (solar hot water and space heating)

www.toronto.ca/taf/links.htm (Toronto Atmospheric Fund website)



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Profile: Dawson Resident Daniel Simon

By Julia Morgan

Question: Can you name a Pocket inhabitant who once waited on Brigitte Bardot, has worked in many of Toronto's top French restaurants, and used to play in remnants of raw silk as a baby? Give up?

Well, if you live on Dawson Avenue you might know, because you've probably had a conversation with Daniel Simon, a convivial 16-year resident of the street whose typical greeting is a smile and a cheerful "Bonjour!" Spend a few minutes talking to Simon, and watching his hands move expressively as he emphasizes what he's saying, and you'll soon realize that his presence and fascinating life history bring a little bit of *joie de vivre* to the heart of the neighbourhood.

Simon was born in Lyon, France, where his family had been living for hundreds of years. "As a kid, I always had a shoebox with a cocoon in it," he says of his childhood in the silk capital of the country. His mother was a painter, who used silk as her canvas, and his father was in the construction business.

As a young man Simon trained as a pastry chef in his hometown, and then began bussing tables at a local hotel. He then moved to Paris to do his military service. Soon after, he found himself working as a waiter and a *maître d'* in an exclusive riding club, where he served greats like Bardot and many other top actors of the period, along with fashion legend Yves Saint Laurent.

In 1971, after traveling to Morocco and England ("you're a bit of a globetrotter when you're young," he notes), Simon decided to explore Australia. But he knew friends in Montreal, so he thought he'd stop in to Canada on the way over. With a single suitcase in hand, he arrived to discover a "fabulous" country. Trudeau was in power, liberalism was thriving, and the winters were cold, just the way he liked them. He has never looked back.

Simon spent two years in Montreal, where he served another celebrated figure, Indira Ghandi, the prime minister of India at the time. The occasion was at a gala buffet dinner at the National Film Board. "It was the most embarrassing moment of my life," he reports. "She couldn't eat anything." Ghandi was a vegetarian, but the event organizers hadn't considered

this in advance. Simon went up to the guest of honour and apologized, even though the mistake had nothing to do with him. "Pas de problème," Ghandi replied graciously.

With the goal of learning English, Simon decided to relocate to Toronto in 1973. Soon he was working in Toronto's *crème de la crème* of French restaurants: Gavroche on Hazelton Avenue, Les Copains on Wellington, Le Pigalle at King and John (where there was no Roy Thomson Hall nearby as of yet), and Scaramouche at Avenue Road and St. Clair W. At The House on Parliament pub, he was voted the best waiter in Toronto in *NOW* magazine's annual readers' poll in the late 1990s.

No doubt his love of people had something to do with the honour. Throughout his career in the hospitality industry, Simon would take notice of whole families changing over time. He'd see couples having children, and their kids growing up and going on their first dates. Despite meeting thousands of customers over the years, he displayed a remarkable capacity to remember the people he served, and could easily summon up what they did for a living, what was going on in their lives, and even what they had ordered 30 years

ago. "I just can't remember names," he says with a laugh. "So I have a lot of darlings in my life!"

Today Simon works three days a week at Brasserie Les Artistes on Carlton to help out a friend who owns the restaurant. But he plans to finally retire for good in September. He and his partner of 23 years, Larry Burke, recently got married, and they have an exciting trip planned to celebrate both their marriage and Simon's retirement. They might do a tour of Europe, especially Greece, and it looks like Simon is finally going to make it to Australia.

So what does Simon like about the Pocket? As you might imagine, he's fond of the people. And just as he spent years watching families grow and evolve in the restaurants he's worked, he's delighted that families in the Pocket are now raising a brand new generation. "It's a small community and people stay a while," he says with enthusiasm. "It's like a small village."



Photo of Daniel Simon

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Musicians in the Pocket

(continued from page one)

Born in 1947 and raised in Sault Ste. Marie, McKie is one of the more seasoned players in the Pocket, a neighbourhood that's brimming with musicians. If you listen carefully on warm, summer nights, you can hear the likes of McKie and other talented pickers and strummers playing music outdoors. Back when I lived on Boothroyd Avenue, I regularly took part in street jams—held quite literally on the street. At given times, we would close off Boothroyd to traffic, set up chairs and entertain the neighbours with tunes. I played guitar and mandolin and enjoyed the fact I lived in a community of musicians.

McKie, for his part, started playing acoustic guitar at age 11. He graduated to an electric guitar at age 15, and began performing in bands shortly thereafter. Throughout the early 1960s, McKie gigged with various local groups around Sault Ste. Marie. In 1966, now a member of a rock 'n' roll / r and b / blues ensemble called the Vendettas, McKie moved to Toronto.

It was an opportune time to be based in the Big Smoke; the Yorkville hippie scene was exploding and the likes of Joni Mitchell, Neil Young and Gordon Lightfoot were honing their craft in local bars, clubs and coffee shops. "It was a great time musically," recalls McKie. "We were all young and the scene was very exciting."

The Vendettas broke up, and in 1967, McKie joined Kensington Market, the group he's best known for. KM enjoyed high-level management and had a record produced by Felix Pappardi (famous producer of Cream and other bands). The band toured extensively but alas broke up at the end of the 1960s.

McKie continued to play music; he performed both on his own and with a series of bands throughout the 70s, 80s and 90s, put out a solo album, and even played music for funeral services conducted by his church. His cites the Beatles, Buddy Holly, Crosby Stills and Nash and Ray Charles as his primary influences as a songwriter. Currently a resident of Boothroyd Avenue, where he lives with partner Linda and his family, McKie still jams extensively.

Just down the street and around the corner from McKie is another avid Pocket player, Bob Sheppard.

Known around the neighbourhood as an expert renovator, Sheppard was born in 1958. He began playing acoustic guitar at age 12. He got an electric guitar—a 1969 model Fender Telecaster that he still uses today—while going to university in the Maritimes.

Sheppard's first band was a power trio called No Frills. Playing in the "new wave/punk" era, the group was "a punky kind of band" Sheppard recalls, playing "fast covers and original things I had written." Influenced by The Police, punk, and reggae music, No Frills played gigs around the Halifax area. They broke up and Sheppard started performing in a new group called Naked Ambition. They focused on original songs (most written by Sheppard) and did a few recordings.

In the late 1980s, Sheppard moved to Toronto. By the early 1990s, he was in a new group called Sheltering Sky, which released an album called *Hot Hazy and Human*. Sheltering Sky eventually fell apart, but Sheppard kept on playing. He became an active member of a



Photo of Bob Sheppard

songwriting collective that paired up local talents to write original tunes.

Sheppard was inspired to move to the Pocket in the late 1990s because he liked the shape of Boulton Avenue. "I drove around here, looking for a house," he recalls. "I remember thinking that the street looked like a riverbed, with slopes and bends." Sheppard purchased a house, established a day job as a renovator, and continued to rock on. He did a number of local gigs with a group called Pop Can, including some "seriously rowdy" shows at Grossman's Tavern.

As for the moment, Sheppard says he's "boning up on music theory" and taking piano lessons as a way to expand his palette. Living in such a music-drenched neighbourhood has been a bonus. "Summertime is a great time to organize outdoor acoustic events," he notes.

Sheppard says it was "a big sacrifice" to concentrate on writing and performing his own songs rather than cover versions. Doing the latter probably would have made it easier to get gigs around town. He has no regrets, however, over the musical path he's chosen. "Once you're hooked on music, it rules your life."



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The Pocket Puzzle!

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 X S I H K W Z S B E F K H E B
 I W Q I A V R Q Y T J U S E K
 R O D N O C S M F M Q N C R U
 R Y N P B X O T B U O Z X G P
 G M B A B U Q E B D S S X E J
 L P B R R O L W E V I B D L D
 R N C K O R U L K X X H Y A V
 Y E T Z Q M C L V V V C X V J
 A A T Q U N E P T Y Y Z W K P
 W M N N U F P D L B Y X U A F
 C R B T U J H E T T E J P O R
 M R J P K H I K T J H E E W C
 A M K C N W B A J S R D J Z I
 B C E P X A L D J L Y Q J G K

Find and circle the following Pocket landmarks. They run down or across or diagonally in straight lines.

- BOULTBEE
- CONDOR
- HUNTER
- OAKVALE GREEN
- PHIN PARK
- SEYMOUR
- THE POCKET
- TTC
- UNCLE DON'S

Joke: What do you call a gorilla with a banana in each ear?
Answer: Anything you like - he can't hear you.

Keeping our Community Secure - Oakvale Green

By Nicholas Brooks

Earlier this spring, the TTC Special Constables department was informed of a problem with an off-road motorcyclist riding in Oakvale Green. As a result, TTC constables will provide some proactive patrols of the area as they have done in the past with other issues.

In addition, as part of the TTC's draft agreement with the Oakvale Avenue Residents Association regarding the greenspace, the TTC has provided street addresses for Oakvale Green. This gives the police an address to respond to if a complaint is called in to them.

- 77 Oakvale Avenue, if there is unwanted activity taking place at the north/east end.
- 8 Oakvale Avenue, if the problem is at the south/west end.

If you see a problem, first and foremost, call the Police at 416-808-2222, ask for the radio room and state your concern. If weapons or drugs are involved, or if you feel unsafe in the space, make sure you let them know. You could also let them know if someone is vandalizing the garden.

The TTC says that following this process "will enable the police to take action more effectively and the TTC to work with the police to monitor and react to unwanted activity."

After you have called the police, please follow up with TTC representative Diego Senogoga (416-393-2197) "for the record" so incidents can properly be tracked by the TTC.



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