

April 2008

Issue 10

Danforth East Update

Danforth East Community Association (DECA)



Farmers Market Volunteers Needed

Okay, we're still waiting for **the final approvals** from the city, but we're optimistic and we're looking for help. We want to start planning events and coordinating volunteers so we're ready to go. Come on out Monday, April 21st at 7 p.m. at the Earl Haig Public School Library (east of Coxwell, south of Danforth) and encourage your friends and neighbours to come, too. If all goes well, the farmers market will be Thursdays, 3-7 p.m. from June to October. If you can't make the meeting, but want to be involved, let Alison McMurray know at eastlynnpark@rogers.com

There's so much going on in this neighbourhood – we can't contain it all in our newsletter.

For up-to-date info on what's happening in your neighbourhood and in DECA, subscribe to our blog. It's easy peasy and you can find it on our website at danfortheast.com

Passion For Pools

The campaign to save school pools is still on. While G.A. Brown and 32 other pools across the city were saved by Toronto City Council, there are still another 23 on the chopping block. DECA sent letters to provincial cabinet ministers and, more recently, to Toronto District School Board members asking them to consider the importance of school pools to our communities. **Danforth Collegiate and Monarch Park pools are set to close this June.** Local MPP, Michael Prue is **inviting people to visit the public gallery of the legislature at Queen's Park on Tuesday, April 15th at 2 p.m. to show their support for school pools.**

Councillor Janet Davis' Community Clean Up Day is happening at Earl Beatty at 10 a.m. on Saturday, April 19th. Clean up gear will be available there. Also, mark your calendars for June 7th, when Councillors Davis and Bussin will host environment days at Stan Wadlow Clubhouse (Cedarvale & Woodbine) and Woodbine Beach Park (Lakeshore & Coxwell).

Earl Beatty Fun Fair & Ball Hockey Tournament

Saturday, May 31st, 2008

Fun Fair: 10am to 3pm, Ball Hockey Tournament: 9am to 5pm
55 Woodington Ave.

The fun fair and tournament are a great way for the whole family to spend time together, build community spirit, and raise much-needed funds for the school and community centre. This year we celebrate the return of grass to the schoolyard!

Check out the: dunk tank, bouncy castle, silent auction, market place, face painting, bake sale, yummy food, children's games and the world famous ball hockey tournament. To register for the tournament call Cindy Horton at 416-392-0199 before May 20th.

Earl Beatty is a TDSB Certified EcoSchool. The Eco Team will be promoting waste reduction and selling healthy snacks (food sourced from local suppliers).

If you're interested in volunteering for a couple of hours at the event contact Lisa Chapman at 416-691-8627, or randlchampman@sympatico.ca.

Take A Hike In Your Hood

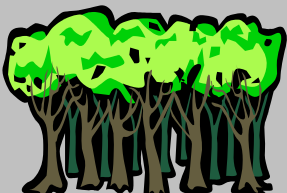
Have you noticed that we like trees? DECA, along with LEAF (Local Enrichment & Appreciation of Forests) are offering a tree tour on Sunday, May 25th from 2 – 4 p.m. On this fun and informative neighbourhood walk you will:

- ✓ learn about your tree canopy
- ✓ learn how to preserve your trees
- ✓ find out about different kinds of trees
- ✓ uncover some local history
- ✓ learn how trees can slow global warming
- ✓ rally with your neighbours to plant more trees
- ✓

This is the first of several tree tours that will happen throughout the DECA domain. The first walkers will wander in the areas south of Danforth, east of Woodbine.

For more information, contact Mary-Margaret McMahon at 416-693-9276 or spargy@rogers.com.

This is a pay-what-you-can event.



The DECA Danforth Development group wants to let everyone know about the great businesses along our stretch of the Danforth. Last month Heather Whetstone wrote her first column about hidden gems and this month, DECA vice-chair Catherine Porter (recent second-time mom) writes about one of her favourite spots on the strip – Seb’s Cappuccino.

Here’s the thing about Seb’s: It has the best lattes in the city. Really. They’re hot, sweet, and foamy. And at \$2.50, they are a massive bargain. I stumbled upon Seb’s while endlessly walking my colicky baby around the neighbourhood two years ago. At first, I bought a latte at the take-out window. The place is always so crowded with older Italian men, I was too intimidated to go inside. But Seb was always so friendly, and the men started to talk to my baby, so soon I was perched on one of the stools between Frank and Paul and I became a regular.

Inside, it feels like a movie set for an old Italian flick. The wall is plastered with postcards from Italy, there is a gelato cooler filled in the summer, a foosball table, and in the back, a whole whack of tables where men in fedoras play gin rummy all day. There’s a fridge with Italian soft drinks in little bottles – Orangina, pear juice, a type of root beer called Stappjno (I’ve never tried it, looks too potent for me).

The owner, Seb Dinatale, took the place over with his brother 17 years ago. He had come to a similar spot on the Danforth when he was a kid. Back then, “the Danforth was the place to be,” he says. Every storefront was full with an Italian business – pastry shops, shoe shops, tailors. But, when the streetcar tracks were ripped out in the late 60s, all the shoppers disappeared and the stores shut down, he says.

This place is always crowded, though. Drive by at 5:30 in the morning and you’ll see a crowd spilling out the front doors. Same thing at 10 p.m. But don’t let that dissuade you from elbowing your way inside. The coffee is served up quick and it never disappoints. One cautionary note — they don’t serve regular coffee.



Seb’s Cappuccino

Location: 1928 Danforth, across from East Lynn Park

Hours: 5 a.m. – midnight

Highlights: \$2.50 latte, \$2.50 cappuccino, \$1.25 espresso. Old Italy ambiance.

Jane Jacobs Walk Along the Danforth Greenwood to Morton

Sunday May 4, 2008 at 1 p.m.

Meeting place: Southeast corner of Greenwood and Danforth, at the abandoned gas station

Neighbourhood: Upper Midway (Danforth from Greenwood to Morton Rd., east of Woodbine.)

Tour guides: Stephen Wickens and Joe Cooper

Duration: 1.5 hours

Stephen Wickens is Real Estate Editor of the Toronto Star and has spent more than three decades in the newspaper business. He's also a locally raised lifelong amateur urbanist.

Joe Cooper is a columnist with the East York-Riverdale Mirror. As a boy he worked in a butcher shop that his grandfather founded in 1927 near Woodbine and Danforth.

The Midway Annex is just one year shy of its centennial as a part of the city. Midway was the name of an area between the City of Toronto (the eastern boundary was just east of Greenwood) and the Town of East Toronto (the western boundary crossed Danforth about a half km east of Woodbine). In its entirety, Midway, which was annexed in 1909, almost ran down almost to Queen.

It was a dusty rural road with small wooden bridges over swamps and creeks until pavement and streetcar tracks arrived in 1913. Its market gardens supplied fresh produce and dairy products to the nearby city, but gave way to a 1920s building boom that followed the end of WWI and the opening of the Bloor viaduct. The name Midway was largely forgotten as this hybrid streetcar/automobile suburb developed. Also largely forgotten is that for more than 40 years, people from north and south of Danforth walked to the Midway strip -- for streetcars into the core, for employment and kind of shop and service imaginable. There were movie theatres, several supermarkets, scores of independent food stores, lots of bank branches and a wide range of clothing and shoe stores.

Things changed rapidly after the subway replaced streetcars in 1966. With transit stops suddenly much farther apart, with traffic speeding up in the absence of streetcars and with major retailers shifting to larger-scale car-dependent business models, Danforth as a pedestrian-friendly destination went into decline.

But we still have some great restaurants and shops and we still have the bones of a wonderful urban strip. We can all benefit if we get back to investing in our community. Let's put our eyes on the street and our feet on the sidewalks. Bring along old pictures; bring along tales of the past and bring along tips for your neighbours about which businesses really deserve our patronage.