

T.O.'s mean streets mellowed this day

I'm not a big city lover. Never have been, never will be. This hostility doesn't pertain only to Toronto. All cities, to me, are the same. For this reason, when on vacation, in Canada or the United States, I stay clear of all metropolitan centres, be they Hamilton, Montreal, Buffalo or Boston.

My wife, Jean, shares this view. My six-month tenure at the Hong Kong Bank on York Street in Toronto only intensified this feeling. While the site was impressive, walking to and from was anything but. People jostling people, like cattle in a corral, was not an atmosphere I enjoyed, only tolerated. Sanity prevailed only when the GO-train entered Stouffville.

Yes, I like Toronto. But only to visit. Not to work or live there.

Not everyone shares this view. Many like the hustle and bustle of crowds, the razzle and dazzle of lights and the lustre and splendour of shows. To them, Stouffville is dullsville.

To each his own.

My main complaint with urbanism is man's inhumanity to man. Except under extreme circumstances, it's everyone for himself, a total disregard for the other guy. To get where you're going in the shortest possible time is a prime objective. Even if it means walking over someone in the process.

Tunnel vision at its worst.

With past experiences in mind, Jean and I set out for this encampment of asphalt



Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

and concrete March 31.

Our goal was the SkyDome, the opening game of a new season, the Blue Jays hosting the Yankees.

But we had other locations in mind, including The World's Biggest Book Store on Edward Street, west of Yonge. For this reason, we departed Stouffville early, around 1 p.m.

Little did I know, this single experience would change our whole attitude toward Toronto. We discovered the people not only friendly, but accessible, even sociable.

"Is it us or is it them?" I wondered. Jean wondered, too.

For example, walking along Yonge, I enquired as to north-south directions from a total stranger. He responded politely, obviously realizing we'd come from the boonies.

"That way's the North Pole," he said, "the other way is Lake Ontario." We both laughed and continued north.

Toronto the cold? No way.

One sure indication a country bumpkin's come to town is the way he stands in the centre of the sidewalk, staring straight up.

"Whatcha lookin' at?" a street-corner panhandler asked.

"That tall building," I replied, "what is it?"

"It's called a tall building," he answered with a smile, "but to most folk it's the Commerce Court."

Now I know, but it cost me a toonie to find out.

Toronto the impersonal? Not a chance.

The under-city tunnel, extending from the Sears Centre to Union Station, is a piece of engineering excellence. This climate-controlled phenomenon makes one oblivious to the whims of Mother Nature, be it the coldest night in January or the hottest day in July.

But it does have its drawbacks. Despite a multitude of visible signs, it's easy to get lost. Which we did, several times.

Totally confused, we approached a gentleman headed in the same direction.

"Which way to Front Street?" I asked.

"Follow me," he replied. He accompanied us the entire route.

Toronto the accessible? For sure.

At the SkyDome, people were extremely helpful. Everywhere we turned, ushers, security, ticket-sellers and ticket-takers answered all enquires with patience and composure.

Despite a disappointing Blue Jays loss, it felt good to be there. We'll want to return.

Yes, Toronto has its mean streets.

I've seen them.

Inhabitants have their mean streaks.

I've observed these also.

But this one day, jewels sparked within the Queen City's crown, making it an occasion we'll long remember.

Jim Thomas is a Stouffville resident who has written for local newspapers for more than 50 years.

WHAT'S FOR DINNER?

In our freezer section this week we'll have our Veal Parmesan with a Fresh Tomato Sauce on sale. There is a serving sufficient for 3 or 4 people. Made with veal sirloin.

Reg. \$16.95 ea.

25% OFF THIS WEEK

EASTER CHOCOLATE!

An extensive selection of really good Easter chocolate is available for both kids and grown-ups — yet further proof, should you need it, that a bona-fide chocoholic is at the helm of this store.

—AND—

you could win one of two giant chocolate Easter rabbits from Chelsea Chocolates of Barrie. You must be under twelve, fill out your name and number and deposit it at the cash area of our store. Draw will take place on Thursday April 17th.

SAGE & ONION SAUSAGES

Our weekly sausage feature is our venerable sage & onion sausage. We make them with fresh pork, salt, pepper and sage, as well as, you guessed it, sauteed onions. This is one of the few sausages we make with out garlic.

Reg. \$3.99/lb.

25% OFF THIS WEEK

OUR DELI ROAST BEEF

We sell lots of this because (a) we cook it pink (b) we trim it lean and (c) we use the centre cut of an inside round roast.

Reg. \$2.49/100g

1/3 OFF THIS WEEK

CORN

This corn will be arriving Thursday and Friday. It's really good corn at a really good price — and if this weather holds, it'll be great to have a corn cookout.

From Florida or Georgia

29¢ cob

AMAZING URNS!

Last year, late in the season, we bought a few urns for our own personal use. They were delivered to the store and we sold them to customers who spotted them around the corner in hiding. It took us three tries to get some at home — an event which opened our eyes to an opportunity!

So this year we've bought quite a few cast iron urns in various shapes and sizes. You'll be able to get them from us 'an nature' or planted with suitable plant material for the location you have in mind. The beauty of cast iron urns is that they don't blow over, they can easily be 'touched up' every Spring and they bring a classic look to almost any garden. We'll have some bases for the urns as well — and we'll have, from what I can tell from a competitive survey, great prices!

TURKEY & RICE SOUP

We sell so much soup because (a) it's good, (b) we make so many kinds and (c) it's so easy to serve — it's just a matter of thawing and warming it. This year has been an especially good soup year because the winter has been especially long, or so it seems.

Reg. \$5.49 ea.

Serves 3-4

25% OFF THIS WEEK

WHAT'S HAPPENIN' NEXT WEEK

Watch for our ad in next TUESDAY'S paper. We'll have an extensive bakery repertoire with a full description of the items so that you'll be able to plan ahead. A few of those delights will be: beautiful strawberry shortcakes, raspberry mousse bombes, a new vanilla mousse cake with mixed berries, Easter cupcakes and cookies, Easter jelly rolls, bunny cakes and various others, all with an Easter motif. Judging by the empty cake counter on every Easter Saturday morning, you'd best plan ahead a bit and order early.

WHAT'S HAPPENIN' IN THE BAKERY?

This week we're baking with our Wild Blueberries. We buy huge amounts of these during the season so that we'll have the good stuff now. We'll be making:

BLUEBERRY - WHITE CHOCOLATE CHEESECAKE - We use the best white chocolate (Callibaut) along with those little Northern Ontario blues in a shortbread crust.... **\$12⁹⁵ & \$20⁹⁵**

BLUEBERRY CUSTARD CAKES

These are more like a coffee cake than anything. They're on the heavy side because they've got the custard baked in — and a good thing is that they improve with age, if you don't happen to eat it all at once, which is not a problem at our house!..... **\$13⁹⁵ & \$18⁹⁵**

BLUEBERRY SCHNITZ PIES

These are our open-faced coarse-cut apple & custard pies with the addition of generous amounts of wild blues..... **\$3⁹⁹ & \$10⁹⁵**

WILD BLUEBERRY SCONES

drizzled with white chocolate..... **\$1²⁹ ea.**

All of these Wild Blueberry delights are: **25% OFF THIS WEEK**

CHICKEN CUTLETS

This is one of our more popular meat counter preparations. We begin with our chicken breasts and flatten them so they'll cook quickly, we bread them with egg, crumbs and a French herb seasoning — and voila! — a quick and tasty meal that can be served on a bun or on a plate with your veggies (and fries).

Reg. \$9.95/lb.

25% OFF THIS WEEK

WHY SHOULD YOU BUY OUR HAM?

To many people, ham is ham — if you've tried one, you've tried them all. That is unless you are old enough to remember what ham was originally like before machines were invented. Machines? Yes, that's right. Nowadays, almost all hams (including spiral honey baked hams) are put through a process called 'tumbling'. It's like a giant dryer, except the opposite is the result. This machine boosts 'yield' which means hams grow in weight during this process — just read the 'protein added' part of the label to find out how much it has naturally 'grown'. The good part (for the manufacturer) is that (a) you have more ham to sell because they've all 'grown' and (b) all the little bits of pork can be put through this process as well because it glues it all together in the shape of a ham (\$1.99/lb. supermarket ham). The bad part (for the customer) is that gone for good is the texture, tenderness and flavour that made ham famous in the first place. At our store, we make ham in the time-honoured, pre-mechanical way — by hand. Come pay us a visit — we'll restore your faith in ham!

Oven-Roasted Maple Sugar Hams - Boneless, whole or half **5⁹⁵ lb.**

New Apple Cider & Allspice Ham, either oven roasted or smoked **5⁹⁵ lb.**

Hardwood Smoked Black Forest Hams - Boneless, whole or half **5⁹⁵ lb.**

Traditional Smoked Easter Hams - Bone in, whole or half **2⁵⁹ lb.**

Smoked Apple Cider Ham, bone in, whole or half **2⁵⁹ lb.**

It's best to order early - 905-940-0655

SPECIALS IN EFFECT UNTIL CLOSING SUNDAY APRIL 13TH

Hours:

Mon. 11:00-7:00 - Tues. Thurs. 9:00-7:00 - Fri. 9:00-8:00

Sat. 9:00-6:00 - Sun. 10:00-5:00

548 Carlton Road, Unionville

940-1770

the VILLAGE GROCER
QUALITY FOODS