

Get lost, Thomas! Not a problem

Lost!
It's the story of my life. Wherever I go, be it Toronto, Ont., or Pittsburgh, Penn., I always end up in a non-descript hamlet called 'Nowhere'.

The situation worsens when I negotiate directions via the sun. The man-in-the-moon isn't much help either.

Admittedly, an up-to-date road map would prove beneficial. A compass might be better. Regardless, the end result would undoubtedly be the same - lost somewhere in 'Nowhere'.

While the male of the species, of which I am one, has a reputation for not asking for directions, I recently learned a change in attitude could be a solution to my problem.

Proof in point, after departing the Walters Family Theatre near Bright and travelling great distances on dusty country roads, I sought assistance from an Amish farmer in the middle of 'Nowhere'.

To my surprise, I learned we weren't headed north towards Kitchener but south towards Woodstock. Oh the embarrassment.

Worse than this, just last week, my wife and I decided to take a leisurely tour around Stouffville, forgetting for the moment, our little village has, in recent years, taken on all the characteristics of a larger town.

"Let's visit the areas we seldom see," Jean said, "the new neighbourhoods where the build-up's taking place."

I agreed. We started out at the intersection of Hwy. 48 and Millard Street and headed east.

All went well until turning west off Durham Road 30 onto Mantle Avenue. It was here I honestly wondered if our Chevy had suddenly sprouted wings and landed in a section of Bathurst Street and Steeles Avenue.

There were houses everywhere - in front of us, beside us and behind us.

"Are you sure we're still in Stouffville?" I asked half jokingly, "it seems only yesterday this site was a farm."

"It was," my wife admitted reluctantly, "but keep on going and maybe we'll hit a road we know."



Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

And we did, three roundabouts later at the Tenth Line.

That's when the fun, (or frustration) began.

Assuming all the bravado of a tourist chief, I expounded on the fact all should be clear sailing from here to home.

Wrong!

At the intersection of Hoover Park Drive and James Ratcliff Road, I turned left, thinking anyone with a name so prominent as Ratcliff would warrant a street paved with gold.

Wrong again!

While the homes are large and the lawns are immaculate, James Ratcliff Road is only a cul-de-sac leading to, you guessed it, 'Nowhere'. We did a complete circle and ended back on Hoover Park and then the Tenth Line, exactly where we'd been 10 minutes previous.

"Isn't this great," Jean said in disgust. "We're lost in our own home town."

"Things change," I replied. "Should have brought a map."

We have a map now, a convenient guide provided by the chamber of commerce that includes not only Stouffville but rural Whitchurch, too.

But I'm wondering. How many native residents really know the community in which they live? For those of you who, like me, travel no further than Tim Hortons, you probably don't know your town at all, at least your town as it is today.

Don't believe it? Then jump in the family chariot some Sunday evening, drive north of Elm Road and south of Hoover Park and see for yourself.

But a word to the wise.

Take a map.

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

~ OUR ~ FLANK STEAKS

This is an item that goes back a long way with us. In fact, I think that we started making these in our original little Main Street, Markham store.

What makes these so popular is (a) the marinade that we make - it's delicious, (b) there is no waste at all; what you buy, you can eat, (c) they are easy to prepare - hot grill, 7 minutes each side on average - a bit more if it's thicker, and a bit less if it's smaller. Just slice it thinly across the grain when you're done - maybe after a short rest for the steak. (d) It has that quintessential flavour of beef - if you like that flavour, you need one of these - and finally (e) they are very reasonably priced for what you get.

Reg. \$9.95 lb.

LIMITED QUANTITIES

25% OFF THIS WEEK

TEXAS HOT SAUSAGES

Like most things from Texas, these are a bit bigger than most and they are on the spicy side - right up there next to our hot Italians. Made with omega-enhanced pork.

Reg. \$4.99 lb.

25% OFF THIS WEEK

WHAT'S FOR DINNER?

The forecast for this week is "busyness" - and hot weather. The "busyness?", you're on your own - but dinner is ready. We'll be featuring our Chicken Cacciatore - a meat that just needs warming, and perhaps a side of rice. I had five items that I could have chosen for dinner, but Jaana, our bakery Diva, chose this hands-down. So...get some!

Serves 2-3.

Reg. \$14.95

25% OFF THIS WEEK

~ NIAGARA ~ PEACHES

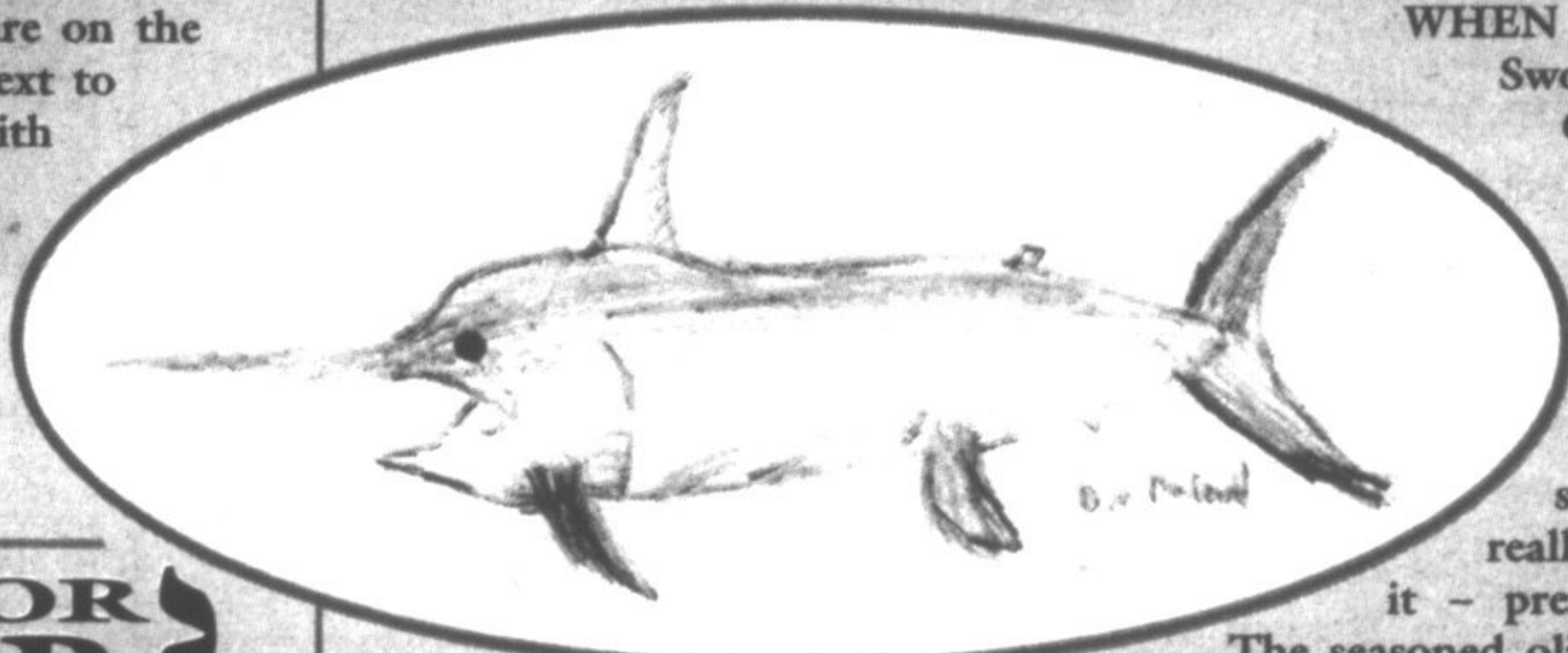
We'll have these for the duration now that peach season gets into full swing - and local Nectarines too, all from Hunter Farm in Niagara-On-The-Lake.

Peach Baskets will be \$3.99 each, loose Peaches will be .99/lb. and Nectarines will be \$1.49/lb. Life is good down on the farm!

CAULIFLOWER

We've got some good-sized local Cauli on sale this week. I know that this is not green, but it's also good for you... and it's local too! Large size. **.99 EACH**

~ CANADIAN ~ SWORDFISH



WHEN I SAY 'Canadian' Swordfish, I mean caught in Canada. The swordfish capital of Canada is Yarmouth, Nova Scotia - a really nice place to visit, and probably live. There are many ways to cook swordfish, but one that really works well is to BBQ it - preferably over charcoal.

The seasoned olive-oil marinade that I recommend that you make will drip onto the coals and give it a slightly smokey flavour - very delicious.

We cut this in steaks of about 3/4" - 1" thick - and we'll make some kebabs which will be marinated in my seasoning. Enjoy your dinner!

From Nova Scotia

19.99 /LB. THIS WEEK

WHAT'S BAKING! - THIS WEEK -

With the coming of the local peach season, this is a no-brainer; it will be PEACHES! We'll be making...

PEACH PIES - We've changed up our recipe for the pies a bit - not everyone liked the crust as much as others. We have begun using Doreen's butter pastry for the top - and it's so good that you might just eat the top first. We use Cling Peaches with our Niagara Peaches mixed in, all seasoned up and covered with either a lattice top or streusel. (at home we need two pies on the go - pastry for me, streusel for Cathy).

- All homemade - 9" Size

Regular... **\$10.95 each**

PEACH CUSTARD CAKES - These are our custard coffee (or tea) cakes which have lots of peaches - and custard - baked in. Buy the big one, because if some should survive the first onslaught,

it's even better the next day. Two sizes, small and large.

Regular... **\$14.95 / \$22.95 each**

PEACH SCONES - I'm thinking that any lemon loaf is good, but with raspberries baked in - sublime.

Regular... **\$1.69 each**

PEACH CRISPS - You'll find these in the freezer section. We make three types: Just with the spiced Peaches, with Raspberries and with Wild Blueberries. This is the perfect dessert if you are cooking dinner anyway; all you do is slip it in the dinner oven while you are eating, and presto - it fills your kitchen with the best aroma in the world, and it's nicely warm for dessert!

Regular... **\$12.95 each**

PEACH SLIPPERS - These are our puff pastries with custard and peaches - a sublime combo - serve slightly warm.

Regular... **\$3.49 each**

All these items will be featured at

25% OFF THIS WEEK

WHILE SUPPLIES LAST

WHAT'S HAPPENIN' OUTSIDE?

We've got bright, long lasting **KALANCHOE BOWLS** on special this week for just \$12.99 each. They are great for a sunny windowsill or an outdoor spot that gets sun or part sun, the more light they get, the more they flower. We also have a nice selection of cactus in stock, as well as some interesting oddities like Atlas pitcher plants. Pitcher plants are carnivorous just like a Venus fly trap, however, they are much easier to care for and do not require a resting period. This means you can treat them very much like any other tropical plant and keep them healthy for many years in a home environment. They simply require a bright light location and regular watering. Hearty mums, ornamental peppers, Rudbeckia, and a large selection of annual and perennial grasses are available as well. Come in and see what's new!



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940-1770

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