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Editorials

Briefly:

Editorial comments are solely the opinions of the site manager and are not intended to offend or insult any individual, group or social faction.

Surely people cannot be so naive as to think the public purse is bottomless. The sources of public funds are ever closer to the point where the public purse will be bankrupt. The financial situation is nearing critical mass, the contributors to the public coffer are decreasing in number while the creditors withdrawing funds continually grow.

Every facet of society is increasingly challenged by financial shortfalls. Health services need more money for infrastructure, additional staff and more equipment to meet the demands of an ever growing number of patients. Municipalities need more money to deal with demand for housing, to update old municipal infrastructures, to expand and improve existing services. Social services need more financial support to meet the demand of an ever increasing population in need: homeless people, mentally challenged people, people trapped by substance abuse issues, crime victims. All these numbers are growing with no end in sight. Crime is an enormous financial drain with associated expenditures growing, again endlessly. Police forces are working as optimally as they can but they are clamoring for more, endlessly. More staff, more equipment, more technological solutions.

There is no solution to these financial problems. The financial crash is inevitable. The question is when? The end can be staved off, delayed by more belt tightening, by reducing expectations and decreasing demands. However, our society has been conditioned to having so much for so many decades. It's impossible to put the genie back into the bottle. Besides, many of us today, refuse to lower our expectations. Rather we expect that our wish is their command. We demand and it should be fulfilled.

Woe it were so, that our wish would be fulfilled without reservation but alas, reality isn't so.

A change in attitude will only delay the inevitable. Such is the world we live in.

However, one glimmer of hope...

Humanity has solved every problem eventually, resolved every issue or somehow overcome every obstacle. Grabbing the lifesaver of hope, we can hope that we will

overcome all these problems somehow. Perhaps technology? Perhaps Artificial Intelligence? Perhaps the dynamic and creative thinkers of the next generation? We cannot give in to the forces of defeat and surrender. We will find a way. It is the nature of mankind.

***POLITICAL Desk: News from councillors,
elected
reps and community associations***



Political commentary:

Each month, we invite every elected representative of the region and municipality to write a message for our *Political Desk*. We thank the representatives who have given their support with their message published below.

NO RESPONSES to April invitation:

Ashe, Robinson, Pickles, Butt, Nagy, Bethlenfalvy,
O'Connell

From the PICKERING City Council



Profile
mayor@pickering.ca

Councillor Maurice Brenner
Regional Councillor Ward 1



Profile
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Councillor Lisa Robinson
City Councillor Ward 1



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Councillor Linda Cook
Regional Councillor Ward 2



lcook@pickering.ca

Councillor Mara Nagy
City Councillor Ward 2



Profile
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Councillor David Pickles
Regional Councillor Ward 3



Profile
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Councillor Shaheen Butt
City Councillor Ward 3



Profile
sbutt@pickering.ca

From Ward 1 Regional Councillor Maurice Brenner

Dear Friends,

Homelessness is a serious problem our community is facing and the City of Pickering is tackling Homelessness through an Agricultural Lens.

With the help of **TACC**, who owns the property at 690 Third Concession (Greenbelt-Agricultural Lands) and **DARS**, along with the financial support of the Pickering Council through a \$50,000 grant paid for from Casino revenues, Mayor Kevin Ashe, Councillor Shaheen Butt and I have joined Margaret Eskins and numerous community volunteers for the Official launch of one of Canada's first transitional housing entrepreneurship projects that will provide affordable transitional housing for up to seven residents. These residents will have an opportunity to be part of a model based on an Agricultural scope. The model includes farming and farm-related production, fresh produce and eggs. Excess produce will be donated to the Pickering Food Bank, as well as sold at the Farmers Market.

Creating a sense of home is part of this model with residents having an opportunity to transform this century farmhouse into their home with the assistance of qualified contractors.

Watch for further updates with a ribbon cutting scheduled for October 10, International Homeless Day Awareness.

Yours Truly,

Maurice Brenner

Regional Councillor, Ward 1
City of Pickering



Left to right: Phil Warne, FBNA V.P, Brianna Cibrari, SCC Chair, Diana Winsor, FBNA member, Amara Bardsley, SCC member, Paul White, Nicole McLean, SCC member, Chris Van der Vliet, FBNA Director, Garry Winsor, FBNA, Membership

Chair, Laura Imbeau, SCC member, Patrick Li, FBPS Principal

Dear Neighbours,

We value the importance of providing our children with safe and enriching natural outdoor spaces to play, learn, and grow together with their peers. With the help of the Fairport Beach Neighbourhood Association, we propose a complete revitalization of the current schoolyard with a pavement paint project. Playing in natural spaces provides children with important opportunities to flex their imaginations, refocus attention, connect with their peers, and stay physically active.

Research demonstrates that children feel more ready to learn when they can centre themselves both mentally and physically. Studies analyzing physical activity of schoolchildren before and after playground paint renovations show that these simple projects lead to long term improvements in children's development. Importantly, as we navigate shrinking residential green spaces and children's increased use of technology, these outcomes are more dramatic for children who have fewer opportunities to engage with nature outside of school hours. A revitalization of our outdoor space at Fairport Beach P.S. is long overdue. Currently, our only asphalt markings include faded keys around two basketball nets and a few empty white squares. There is great potential for this to be a vibrant space for our children to play hopscotch, basketball, snakes and ladders, or run through an activity track.

Yours truly,

Paul White

President, FBNA



Hello Neighbours,

The Rougemount Community and Recreation Association is in its infancy. Thus, in development as it finds its legs and develops its foundations.

It held its first General Meeting recently, on March 28.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

June 8 RCRA will host its inaugural **Street party**

Location: Rouge Valley Drive, more info to be posted at www.szpin.ca

Yours truly,

Peggy Bowie

CEO, RCRA

Health and Ageing...

Briefly:

HEALTH: This month we offer a mixed bag of posts relating to health.

- Ageing and hand functions
- Alcohol consumption

[***Always consult with your doctor*** before undertaking any new medical initiatives or changes]



Ageing affects Hand Function. [Hand](#) function decreases with age in both men and women, especially after the age of 65 years. Deterioration in hand function in the elderly population is, to a large degree, secondary to age-related degeneration changes and to the deterioration of the musculature, vascular, and nervous systems.

This deterioration of hand function in elderly adults is inevitable, usually combined with additional pathological conditions, such as [osteoporosis](#), [osteoarthritis](#), [rheumatic arthritis](#), and [Parkinson's disease](#)).

To read more **Click** → [HANDS](#)



The consumption of alcohol is increasingly in the news with the main thrust of the stories being the reduction of its consumption. The choice is yours to make and if you are paying attention to the stories then you may need to review and evaluate your consumption.

McMaster University Health Sciences has published a study relating to alcohol consumption. Nearly 20% of Canadians are considered to be heavy drinkers. The article

underlines the various diseases associated with heavy drinking.

Read more at —> [ALCOHOL](#)

TECHNOLOGY:

Briefly - Notes and comments about TECHNOLOGY:

- Technology vs Reality: See 'Baby Swan;'
- Poke!Book: great way to write with side bar for notations as you write;
- Making song/music playlists got easier and more pragmatic;
- Ever wonder what news source world leaders read? They don't; they get summaries;
- Some people love having a hard copy of their calendars. Here's one that offers you the **ENTIRE YEAR** on one page!!!

1. *Baby Swan*



This video will have you appreciate many things about children and people: their creativity, capability and determination.

This enjoyable performance showcases the capability and athleticism of very young children who put on a captivating performance. The synchronization with each other is astounding and the choreographic synchrony is incredible. These youngsters had to rehearse and rehearse to successfully perform such wonderful show.

Click —> [BABY SWAN](#)

2. **Poke!Book**

I found a writing app described as useful for poetry writers, but I think it can also be used by all writers. [Poke!Book](#) is free, and stores everything locally in your browser. Its main feature is that it displays **two notepads** side by side—one for the writing poetry and the other for making notes. The lined notepad expands infinitely, and makes it painless to delete and change line breaks. And best of all, it doesn't auto-capitalize when you start a new line. Be sure to save your work

properly with a title for future recall. [in my tests, Poke!Book was undependable in returning my saved work. I caution users from its use.

Click --> <https://book3.pokeghost.org/>

3. Similar Song Finder

This search engine [Similar Song Finder](#) is helpful for creating Spotify playlists based on your favorite song of the moment. I tested it out with songs of different genres and it's great for creating "mood" playlists. However, there is a bit of a daunting menu for dealing with your creation choices, the worst part is not being able to remove a song. Below are two very good choices:

Click --> <https://www.chosic.com/>

Click --> <https://www.similarsongsfinder.com/>

4. Semafor Flagship

Where Heads of State and Global Leaders Get Their News: introducing *Semafor Flagship*, a premium newsletter that delivers transparent, intelligent, and need-to-know news right to your inbox. It's the daily global news briefing you can trust and you can sign up for a free subscription though I doubt heads of state actually use it.

Click --> <https://www.semafor.com/>

5. Entire Calendar year on ONE PAGE

This is a nifty calendar that displays all of the year's dates on a single page. Quite awesome when seen as a hard copy. You can plan out your entire year.

Click --> <https://neatnik.net/calendar/>

Travel...

Briefly:

- Some of this material is untested but readers may find it useful.



According to the CAA, it is a not-for-profit federation providing more than 7 million members with emergency roadside service, member reward savings, comprehensive insurance, travel and automotive offerings.

I have been a member of the CAA, The Canadian Automobile Association, for many years. As I have the mechanical skills of a displaced African simian, I need the CAA and have used its services numerous times over many years. My car battery has died a few times, mostly for lack of use. Eventually, the CAA service agent suggested a new battery as the old one had outlived its life-span. Surprisingly, the agent promoted the car maker's battery over the CAA replacement explaining that the car maker's product was more durable and more dependable, though he redeemed himself by underlining that the value of the CAA battery was an *acceptable value*.

CAA has been providing benefits over the years.

Triptiks

'Triptiks' are wonderfully practical map booklets in a mini flip notebook form. They are custom assembled for upcoming specific driving holidays containing maps of the journey, each page sectioned into practical driving duration sections. Additionally, they include brief notes about various aspects along the route. Handy, informational and practical compact for easy use in the car.

Maps

My wife is attached to use of hard copy maps no matter how much I tout the benefits and advantages of automobile GPS technology. She holds to her printed

maps like a squirrel to the last acorn in late summer. Charlton Heston's "can't pry from my dead hands" comes to mind. In any case, CAA provides members with maps for every province in Canada, the United States and some of the more popular world travel destinations. Very handy if you have a map aficionado in the passenger seat.

Roadside assistance

Obvious as to its meaning, service is always efficient and timely. Wonderful for those like me who start shaking when the hood is opened.

Maple Health care

A relatively new service, it is explained as a lifeline for times when you need to consult with a physician right away.

Shell gas discount

You get .03 cents/litre discount at the gas pumps with your CAA card.

PHONE, PRICING, and PRESIDENT

The CAA has one of the very best phone redirection services you can ever experience. Clear, concise, crisply stated and each section ends with "For all other inquiries, press #." Press that final selection each time ultimately gets you to a live person.

In my case, I was connected to "Charlotte," a very personable and patient staff person. She was a pro at listening patiently until I finished. Then, crisply responding with an appropriate explanation or instruction.

More importantly, when I informed her my purpose in inquiring for information for this article, she was even more helpful. When asked if connecting with the office of President Jay Woo, a deluge of praise was released. She complimented this CEO as a director that was praised and admired by everyone in the organization, as being approachable, responsible and caring about his company personnel. This agent was very enthusiastic with her praise.

Finally, pricing at CAA has not changed since COVID. In the latest issue, President Woo explains that operating costs have risen with CAA as with most companies but CAA has made the decision not to pass them along to members, absorbing the costs within the company. Even in their medical assistance service, prices have been changed, sometimes reduced or even eliminated. Amazing.

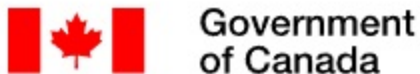
CAA Phone service, best in the world of auto phone systems

Loblaws, take note. In fact, every corporation in Canada should take note of how CAA handles phone calls. One cannot help but feel that the company cares, cares about its operation, cares about its employees, cares about its services but above all cares about its clients (members). CAA's phone service makes one feel like you really are *somebody* to this company. Makes me appreciate that I am a CAA member.

The World's Most Visually Stunning Museums

Architects of cultural institutions seldom shy away from the challenge of creating structures that are as interesting and alluring as the wonders they hold.

Click —> [MUSEUMS](#)



TRAVEL ADVISORY

The federal government has a list of countries to which travellers are cautioned about travelling.

To access the Canadian Government Travel Advisory list, click —> [DON'T GO THERE](#)



CanXplore is a tour operating company in the Durham region. We specialize in escorted tours for the 'young-at-heart.' Our accommodation in Newfoundland is in best of class hotels in each area we travel.

Spring/Summer 2024 Tour Additions

- **Spring Garden Tour, June 13** - more info at www.canxplore.com/springgardentour
- **Prince Edward County Wine Tour, June 20** - more info at www.canxplore.com/prince-edward-county
[**Both above tours depart from Durham Region**]

Newfoundland Tour, 2024

Our outstandingly popular Newfoundland tour is being booked now. This tour has received dozens of “5 star” reviews. Here are some of what our previous clients have said...

Cathy was so much fun and the small group was perfect. I will book again soon!! Very professional driver as well. Karen A.

This coach tour brings Newfoundland alive. From west to east: Western Brook Pond, “Anchors Away” entertainment, to Gander- feels great to be associated with these people, to the eastern tip of Canada, and boat touring seeing icebergs, puffins and whales. Get screeched in to become an Honorary Newfoundlander. This tour brings it all together with smiles, tears and pride to have been part of NFLD for a short while! W.B.W.

This trip to Newfoundland was beyond amazing in so many ways.

Cathy created a diverse, interesting, and creative itinerary, encompassing the many aspects of Newfoundland. The geography of the area was an experience: tours of the Tablelands (i.e. the earth’s mantle), a boat tour through the amazing fiords, Bonne Bay which showed us the other side of Gros Morne, all expertly explained by very knowledgeable guides. A bonus on our boat trips was being entertained Newfoundland style on our ride back to the docks.

We were fortunate to see icebergs, whales, and puffins on our other boat tours.

Newfoundland history was presented with tours of Trinity, Bonavista, where we saw a replica of Giovanni Caboto’s ship, Signal Hill, and more.

And the fun stuff!!! Wine and beer tastings, our own kitchen party at one of the hotels, Anchors Away Show, and of course getting Screeched!!

Cathy’s attention to detail was exceptional, making sure everyone’s needs were met. Garfield, our bus driver, was a delight, going above and beyond.

I highly recommend CanXplore, Mary Ann M.

What a fantastic 10 days in NFLD with a great group of people! The entire trip was very well planned out. Every day was packed with great sites, excellent food & lots of activities. Cathy did a fantastic job of keeping us well informed and entertained (especially on the bus). Our bus driver (Garfield) being a Newfoundlander, shared many stories from his past & present. He made sure I had my fill of bananas



I would recommend CanXplore for future trips.

Karen M.

Newfoundland has always been on my bucket list...fantastic 10 day bus trip. Cathy you could not have done it better..no complaints

Carolyn N.

For more information information, see [CANxPLORE TOURS](#)

Newfoundland Discovery Tour: July 7 - 18, 2024

Final date for booking tours: April 15, 2024

Book at www.canxplore.com/newfoundland... Or Email Cathy: cathy@canxplore.com

Books Shelf...

Briefly:

- This material is information regarding BOOKS. There is no affiliation with any BOOK related commercial organization.
- Though some readers still purchase hard copy BOOKS, with *global warming* in mind, we suggest book readers borrow books from their local libraries rather than buy hard copies.



Gail and Heather, two retired school administrators, are passionate readers of BOOKS. Their book commentaries, suggestions and opinions are astute and valuable information about books.

Gail Aziz

Gail, still actively involved with professional development and responsibilities in the community today, is not only an avid reader but also a published author, "[The Larroger Road.](#)"

Heather Stuart

Heather is very active in the community as a dynamic and energetic Book Club manager of almost two dozen book club participants. She is a passionate reader who reads a wide assortment of books, always interesting and often listed on today's best sellers lists.

Gail's Book Thoughts

Horse

My first selection for this month is an historical fiction. Historical fiction helps readers relate the past to the present and that's exactly what author Geraldine Brooks does in all her books. Her latest book is "**Horse.**" This story is about a record breaking racehorse named Lexington. This horse was a legend in the 1850s. Brooks also fast forwards the story to 2019 to a Smithsonian scientist and a Nigerian art student. The stories blend well together and give us a picture of the American culture during the civil war and how it continues to impact present day. It is a very moving story.

A New Season

"**A New Season**" by local Canadian author Terry Fallis. I have heard Terry speak about his books on two different occasions. He advises writers to write what you know about and that is exactly what he does. This is a thoughtful exploration of aging, love, friendship and loss with healthy doses of humour through the story. He writes about people and things we can relate to i.e. Jim

Cuddy, his ball hockey team, the sudden death of his spouse and reclaiming his life back. It also provides a beautiful narration of the main character's journey and discoveries through the streets of Paris, France. A well written, engaging story you will definitely enjoy!

First Lie Wins

The first book to hit the bookshelves in 2024 was a spectacular mystery called "***First Lie Wins***" by Ashley Elston. It has everything you could want in a thriller: secret identities, action packed, twists and turns, intrigues and cons. It is a thrilling read with a very unique story. I don't want to give away any details because I think this thriller actually fulfills its promise - it will thrill you (without blood and gorge).

Heather's Book Thoughts

Reader's block?

Sometimes even readers hit 'the wall' in their reading.

I have no words of wisdom regarding my recent book reading. Lately, I've been reading book club books that are not worthy of a review.

My most recent read is "***The Women***" by Kristin Hannah. Exceptional, especially as we lived through this time and it highlights how women's contributions have been ignored forever.

Cheers

Heather



Richard on BOOKS...



BookPecker.com

Now here's a really interesting book information site. Naming the author or the book title results in **BookPecker** delivering a short summary of the book along with 5 key points. Enough information to help you decide if you want to actually read the book. Very convenient, very practical but disappointingly limited at this time as its catalog has just over 14,000 books and growing. The value of this tool will increase as their catalog grows. Check it out at <https://bookpecker.com/>

The Last Repair Shop

A little detour from books. OK, OK, a big detour, the Oscar winner for short documentaries, "***The Last Repair Shop***."

This presentation is a cinematic tribute to the people, staff and musicians connected with a small musical instrument repair shop hidden away in a lowly

neighbourhood of Los Angeles.

The documentary is an unpretentious, low key presentation. It plucks the strings of viewers' souls with its engaging and empathetic cast: students, musicians, and repair staff connected by the instruments they repaired or they play as Los Angeles school district music students or alumni. The staff who repair broken instruments are soul touching 'nobodies' whose stories tug at the heart strings. Poor, gay, marginalized, young and old, these staff members have found a meaningful home in the repair shop. Each recounts their life's journey reaching their final destination - the instrument repair shop. The student musicians describe their bonds with their instruments = a love story. The repair staff display their appreciation for the life renewal given the repaired instruments by the graduating performers.

The documentary climaxes with a complete orchestra of L.A.U.S.D. alumni graduates of yesterday and tomorrow playing an original symphony in celebration of The Last Repair Shop. The documentary was produced by two maritime Canadians, Ben Proudfoot and Kris Bowers. Outstanding and viewable on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xtrkgKXtZ4>



Hello everyone...

We hope you had a Happy Easter and that you and your family are healthy and celebrating with much joy and love. Our Easter celebration was different from the usual. We celebrated our special gathering with just young people, the nieces and nephews, grand nieces and grand nephews, aged from 4 to 40, no older. As you can guess, it was a bubbly, energetic and laughter filled celebration. Felt strange talking with people who are one to two generations removed from us.

As always, we thank everyone for your ongoing support. Your donations help us with publishing expense.

Thank you.

Richard

(with lots of assistance from

Nadia and ***Fermo***)