



Issue 1

Thursday, January 2, 2025



Who are we

Many residents of the Pickering-Durham region have been looking for a central depository source of news regarding the City and the region, a source like a *newspaper*.

Newspapers are a dying breed today. We had or have: *Druthers, The Central, The News Advertiser*.

The **eNEWS - Pickering Durham** is not intended to compete with those worthwhile newspapers or replace them. It is a limited edition alternative, citizen based, written by locals who live in the region. It aims to be as objective neutral as possible in its reporting. It is ad and commercial free though donations may be requested some time in the future to help offset expenses.

Your input and your help

If you think such a people's voice is worthwhile, give us your support. You are invited to submit news, information and feedback.

For now, only a digital edition is available. For now, only this "limited edition" is being published. If it meets with success, the publishing plan will be changed. Continuation of the newspaper depends on your support.

If you are interested in writing for the newspaper

contact Richard.

Submissions, feedback and queries should be submitted to zippyonego@gmail.com

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Our Code of Ethics

Our e-newspaper is committed to integrity, accuracy, and accountability and our writers abide by this Code of Ethics in reporting authenticity while respecting individuals' rights.

1. Truthfulness

- Report accurately and without bias.
- Verify all information before publication.
- Issue prompt corrections when errors occur.

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ETHICS

2. Independence

- Avoid conflicts of interest.
- Reject gifts or favors that compromise objectivity.
- Make editorial decisions based on journalistic principles.

3. Fairness

- Provide balanced coverage reflecting diverse perspectives.
- Allow individuals to respond to allegations against them.
- Approach sensitive topics with compassion and respect.

4. Accountability

- Journalists are responsible for their published work.
- Encourage reader feedback on ethical concerns.

5. Respect for Privacy

- Honor the right to privacy unless public interest demands disclosure.
- Handle personal data confidentially.

6. Plagiarism

- Ensure originality by crediting all sources; plagiarism is strictly prohibited.

7. Sensitivity in Reporting

- Exercise care with vulnerable populations; disturbing content should be used sparingly and only when essential.

8. Diversity & Inclusion

- Strive for diversity that reflects the community served, avoiding stereotypes while uplifting underrepresented voices.

9. Use of AI (artificial intelligence)

- Occasionally, we use AI as inspiration, enhancement or supplementary information.

The INSIDE stories...

- Pickering Mayor Ashe speaks out
- Food Bank Director hungers for more
- Tim Horton's: good coffee, but...
- Singleton's "Pickering Then and Now"
- White's 'FBNA' annual report
- Van Rooy on another kind of 'gift giving'
- Tech talk: A digital world! Inevitable!
- Last word

Mayor 'Jobs'

Story by Richard Szpin



Richard, a 35 year resident of Pickering, is a community activist passionate about his City. He publishes news about the City and events in it in two digital publications, a website and a monthly newsletter.



An interview with City of Pickering Mayor Kevin Ashe where he talks about his greatest concerns, his Pickering of Tomorrow and his critics...

Mayor Kevin Ashe, City of Pickering Mayor, sometimes known as "Mayor Jobs" for major goal of improving the economy through job creation, thereby making livability in Pickering better. Mayor Ashe met with me in December.

One of Mayor Ashe's biggest goals is to create jobs. More jobs mean more people coming to the City making it a city center rather than a commuting base for Toronto

However, Mayor Ashe is more than just a developer of employment. He is a big supporter of many charities connected to Pickering: DARS, St. Paul's on-the-Hill Community Food Bank; Big Brothers Big Sisters of SW Durham and Northumberland and most notably Durham Mental Health Services, in memory of his son, Alex.

The areas of his greatest concern
The greatest concerns the Mayor has are *homelessness, food insecurity and property taxation.*

The City's budget is seriously impacted by

See 'Concern' next page

Concern

homelessness, a growing problem, exacerbated by greater immigration and increasing asylum seekers. These rising numbers become a bigger financial burden as other government levels download more and more on the City. Ashe worries these growing numbers will impact on other problems, mental health and addiction.

The City must address *Food insecurity* issues in other ways than it currently does according to Mayor Ashe. Food contributions and financial donations have failed to dent the problem. The City allocates specific funds from the municipal budget each year for the Food Bank and designates money to it from the Mayor's annual Gala. In the Mayor's view, it is crucial to find other solutions to deal with these problems.

Property taxes is a larger kettle of fish in Ashe's eyes. Tax revenues must be managed with the sustainability of municipal government in mind. Financial support for one problem removes money from other areas of money need. This impacts on the sustainability of municipal government. Municipal infrastructures are at risk their financial support is diminished. The Mayor worries that increasing affordable housing, currently managed by Pickering at a provincial award-winning pace, will impact negatively on various municipal departments, its services and its future growth.

Pickering: City of the future

The "Pickering of Tomorrow" is closer than many may think in Ashe's view. His 'Pickering of Tomorrow' is a walkable City, vibrant, attractive with green spaces and parks, an

engaging City center, skating rinks, water features and commercial retailers.

'Pickering of Tomorrow' is a more economically supported city. Many corporations have responded to the Mayor's overtures: FGF Brands, Kubota, Porsche International, Pickering Nuclear, Films-Cinema Canada, each bringing more jobs. Importantly, corporate tax revenues will rebalance the current tax ratio, 85% residential:15 % commercial in favour of the residential base.

Communication and digital gap

Ashe laments that as the world moves relentlessly toward more digitalization, more Internet use, and more digital connectivity, the aging population of the City may slip behind. The City is continuously expanding its digital footprint billing, permits, licenses, documentation, payable fees. However, too many residents pass on the benefits of this growing digitalization resulting in many residents being insufficiently informed about their City.

The Mayor tries to fill the informational gap non-Internet users suffer with his public community-based open houses. He visits local organizations like Rotary, Probus and Seniors residences to discuss questions and concerns raised by attending citizens. Additionally, Mayor Ashe reaches out to the faith community with weekly attendance at various churches and denominations hoping to encourage the needy to find assistance and support with places of worship.

See Criticisms

Criticisms

Criticisms of the Mayor

There are many criticisms made of the Mayor:

- ‘Pickering of Tomorrow’ development is moving too fast;
 - too much congestion on major City roadway seven today;
 - too much building causes more problems;
 - traffic jams are a growing problem even now.
-
- Ashe continued talking about Pickering of Tomorrow again emphasizing that the City must become a more ‘walk friendly’ one, less car dependent. All parts of the City should be within easy walking distance. However, with less car dependence in mind, Pickering needs to improve its transit system expanding and improving things. The ‘Rapid Bus System’ will have dedicated bus lanes in the City core and better connectivity with commuter travel west to Toronto.

Too many people left behind

For many marginalized and sidelined citizens, “geopolitical-macro economic issues” have no meaning or significance. Their concern, in the eyes of the Mayor, is that too many of them are being left behind the more affluent ones. *Food bank* use continues to set records, *homelessness* is an ongoing problem. He thinks there is a greater need for better cooperation and more integration of all levels of government, with municipalities, to cope

better with the demands made by unregulated population growth.

The bottom line

Job creation is Job #1 for Mayor ‘Jobs’ and in this regard he has delivered: Pickering Nuclear refurbishment means thousands of jobs for the City, a new recreation center in Seaton means construction work, the same in the building of a new fire hall on Brock Road.

On the other side, the Mayor continues his support in the area of health needs with development of the Jerry Coughlan Health Centre.

Mayor Kevin Ashe came from the corporate world where held a lucrative paying position as an insurance executive. He chuckles a little when he thinks about the salary reduction upon entering the world of municipal politicians. But as he says, “My heart is in the politics of Pickering. I love the give and take and its something that has been in my family for a number of generations.” His commitment is to constantly improving livability in the City. He is committed to Pickering and his commitment is every day.



Do you remember the “TV Guide” publication? Long since gone, this handy publication a little magazine that listed TV shows and reviewed many. Very useful.

With deference to that old “TV Guide” publication, you are offered a mini version to help save you from wasting(!) time while you are watching television.

See www.szpin.ca
See -> www.szpin.ca/?p=69884

Pickering: Then and Now

Story by Bruce Singleton



Bruce Singleton has lived in Pickering for 45 years. His career was I.T. but now enjoys all sorts of writing - humour, politics, verse, or anything that pops up. Upon graduating in Math. from U. of W. he travelled throughout Europe with his girlfriend widening both of their cosmopolitan views - also enhanced by working in U.K for 3 years in the '70s. He's AKA The Brewster.

As a long-time resident of Pickering, I wanted to reflect on the changes our community has experienced since we moved here in 1979.

Back then, Pickering was a small town with plenty of open spaces. Kingston Road (Hwy. 2) was a scenic route, and the TePee drive-in theatre at Liverpool and #2 was a popular spot from the 1960s until the early 90s. Nearby, the Bay Ridges drive-in was another favorite destination for local teens.

The area has transformed significantly over the years. The old Liverpool House, which we often thought would make a great restaurant, eventually became just that, with various ownership changes since. In the past, dining options were quite limited, with only a few restaurants in the Sheridan Centre.

Pickering has evolved into a vibrant residential hub, attracting high-tech industry and commuters seeking more affordable housing compared to Toronto. With around 75 new residential towers planned, the area is poised for further growth, complemented by good access to GO Transit.

While some amenities like golf courses have diminished, Pickering's development reflects a dynamic shift towards urban living. Despite

challenges like the missed opportunities for a casino and horse racing, the community continues to adapt and grow.

There are still areas where improvement is needed, particularly in planning and infrastructure. Recent decisions, such as the sale of Elxicon Energy shares by our mayors, have raised questions among residents about transparency and consultation.

Overall, while there are mixed feelings about our journey, it's clear that Pickering has made significant strides. I look forward to sharing more positive insights in future articles!



Brewster

www.thebrewsterblock.com

[@brewsterblock](https://www.youtube.com)

[@brewsterblock](#)



A time for new 'gift giving'

Story by Nancy Van Rooy



As well as being a wife, a mother, a retired Durham Police officer/detective, Nancy Van Roy is a woman of dynamic of energy which she exudes when she hits the waters of the Great Lakes in her summertime passion of boating.

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GIFT

Gifts done, at least the Christmas gifting is. Christmas 2024 behind us. Now let's jump into the new year! And we need to consider some new gifting...

What better gift for those in need in the next calendar year – your time; energy and participation in volunteering within your community. These are gifts you can give to those in need. These are gifts for those who need and receive care and attention; funds; material goods; opportunities; human connections and the most important benefit – hope and faith in mankind for the kindness and generosity which evolves from residents stepping forward to offer their volunteer involvement.

Volunteering is an art form and for many, a lifestyle choice. There is a saying, which in essence states, “the unpaid hours of the global volunteer networks make the world go around” It is an economy not tabulated and not reported, but one which donates sweat; toil; skill sets and time to countless thousands of people in need.” We are not talking about monetary donations. We are speaking of “people hours”. Those who come forward to donate their talents; their expertise; time; efforts; goodwill, to embrace others with the benefits of hope; faith and improvement.

Every community has residents and groups of all ages in need of volunteer support. The Not-for-Profit agencies amongst us within our own City of Pickering is astounding. Agencies are craving for the “unpaid workforce” of volunteers to join and assist their efforts within our community, to directly benefit the less fortunate.

As a lifetime volunteer, starting in my early teens and spanning decades, it is just something I have always embraced, and it which defines me. There is never the expectation of a reward or personal gain, nor the acclaim coming from acknowledgement or praise. It is just a desire to recognize the privileges which I have had in my life, free from worry of food insecurity; housing; education; extracurricular activities and in comparison, the recognition of knowing so many others within our community, who don't have these basic staples of a stable environment or lifestyle. It is essentially, a chance to give back into my community in recognition of my privilege.



Story by Paul White

Paul is the long time serving President of Pickering's oldest neighbourhood association, approaching its 100th anniversary. He's a Canadian Military vet who is very active in making his City and neighbour better places to live.

Year end report from the President

Another tumultuous year comes to pass, and we reflect on what we can do as a society to help others in need. FBNA has been in continuous operation since 1927 in Pickering, and it has been my distinct privilege to have been President for the last 35 years. Our Association was Incorporated in 1949, and is operated as a non-profit organization under its Constitution. What sets us apart from the many ratepayers groups that come and go, is how we are able to

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NEIGHBOURHOOD

survive all these years. Fairport Beach is a recognized community created back in 1900 or earlier. It comprises land along the lakeshore between West Shore Blvd. and Petticoat Creek, and north, to a block north of Oklahoma Dr., approximately 400 homes. All the older homes have it in their deeds to perpetual access to the waterfront. As new infill homes are built that right is removed. In the 1930's, the Bank of Canada ceded all this waterfront property to FBNA. We decided to sell it to the Metropolitan Toronto Regional Conservation Authority in 1991, and this allowed the bridge to be built across Petticoat Creek and the waterfront trail to continue east. With the funds from this sale we have been given the opportunity to reach out to other worthy organizations.

Over the past decades, our members approve the budgets presented at the Annual General Meetings. An estimation of our donations would be in the ballpark of \$75,000 more or less. Our elected executive members bring a wealth of expertise to the table and we continue to flourish under our present guidance. One of our proudest accomplishments is making the donors wall of contributors at the Ajax-Pickering Hospital. We started with \$1000/year for over 20 years. As we expanded our outreach, we partnered with the City of Pickering, largely due to working closely with our Ward 1 Councillors, Maurice Brenner and Kevin Ashe. In 2004, the major disaster struck in Indonesia, and Pickering set up the Tsunami Red Cross Relief Fund. FBNA responded with a cheque for \$10,000. We also reached out to our 3 elementary schools in the West Shore community and have helped with sports and playing area improvements, and \$500/year grant for projects.

During Covid, we expanded our outreach to help the Ajax-Pickering hospital with PPE emergency funds, Ajax-Pickering Salvation Army Food Bank, and the St.Paul's Food Bank in Pickering with \$1000's in cash and food donations. Within our special waterfront community parkette, named Fairport Community Park, we had partnered with TRCA, City of Pickering and T.D. Environmental Fund, and initially donated \$17,000 to planting trees along Park Cres. and shrubbery. When the waterfront trail was extended we designed and paid for a butterfly garden that is maintained by Gray's Landscaping and the City. These are just some of the many community events we continue to support, and expand as recommended from our members. All the forgoing comments are just a reflection of what it is to volunteer, and to be involved with our community and City. None of this would have been possible without the selfless contribution of time and commitment from our neighbours who make up FBNA.

Paul White
President



Tech-savvy citizens: Unlocking a world of connection and convenience

Story by Richard Szpin

Some claim that technology should be just for the young? That is wrong. All citizens should learn how to use technology. The technological world of today can be compared to the first days of the telephone. “Instrument of the devil!” “The devil’s tool.” “Ridiculous nonsense that will never catch on.” Those were claims made about the new communication device but it did take root. Root, so deeply, that now phones today are not only in every household but they are almost in every open hand.

Citizens of all ages recognize the value and importance of phones. At the very least, they are devices of communication. With a little skill, they become video connections between families and friends. They are a gateway to information, news and entertainment.

One would think that the ubiquitousness of phones would lead to broader use of technology and greater numbers of digital devices. A significant number of our society are not connected by phones or any other digital devices. The reasons may vary from budget limitations to anxiety and apprehension in learning how to use these new devices. The older the person, the less likely to be tech savvy or technologically connected.

Technology is not the wave of the future; its time is now. Doctors make appointments with their patients; municipalities license and regulate

development digitally; corporations communicate, invoice and connect with their clientele; organizations network and connect with their members; there is no end to how technology is permeating every part of society. Soon, no technological connection will mean marginalization from the general population.

Though it seems to be said about seniors more than any other dynamic of society, too many seniors are being separated from what is happening in the world, from being connected to the world because they are not using technology. However, more and more seniors are discovering how technology can enrich their lives, from staying connected with loved ones to simplifying everyday tasks.

These seniors are diving into the ever deepening pool of the technological world. They are becoming members of the tech-savvy generation. Are you jumping into the pool? Put on your bathing suit and dive in. Here are a few ways technology can benefit you in your daily life.

1. It can bridge the distance with video calls

Missing your grandkids or loved ones? Video chat apps like FaceTime, Zoom, or Skype let you see and hear loved ones no matter how far apart you are. Sharing a virtual cup of tea or reading a bedtime story has never been easier!

2. It can connect you with like-minded communities

Social platforms like Facebook can help you stay connected with friends and family, discover new communities, and keep up with current events. It is also a way to share photos, join groups with shared interests, and connect with friends and family.

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TECHNOLOGY

3. It can simplify life's tasks

There's an app for almost everything! Whether it be medication reminders, grocery delivery, transportation, or entertainment, a variety of apps that can help make life's daily tasks a little easier.

4. It can enable you to learn something new

From online courses to sites that allow you to trace your family history to news websites full of articles and blogs on various topics, the internet opens up a world of possibilities.

There are many, many more things you can do with technology. You just have to stop fearing getting wet. Technology can be as easy to use as your telephone or you can dig way down into it and no matter how deep you go, it will have more for you to learn. The depth and ease-of-use are in your control. The important thing is to get into that world. Otherwise, you will be a marginalized citizen experiencing growing difficulties and problems that not being connected will cause. The technological world is not a world to avoid and run from; it's a world of benefit and value for you. One you should run to and connect with.

The last words

So jump into the technology pool. Start with the basics. Ask for help from family or friends. Take your time. Learning new technology takes patience. Don't get discouraged! Find the resources available in your community, recreation centers and libraries offer technology classes specifically for older adults. Contact them and learn what they offer. Finally, when you do connect stay safe online by being attentive and mindful about sharing personal information and avoid clicking on suspicious links.

Embracing technology can open a world of connection, convenience, and lifelong learning. Leap into the pool and discover all that the digital world has to offer!

ST. PAUL'S ON-THE-HILL

COMMUNITY
FOOD BANK



Story by Richard Szpin

St. Paul's on-the-Hill Community Food Bank has a rich history of serving the Ajax-Pickering area in Ontario, Canada. Established in 1990, the food bank began as a temporary outreach program initiated by members of St. Paul's on-the-Hill Anglican



Today's 'soup kitchen' managed by Food Bank Director, Lindsey Morrill (center, in the green)

Story by Richard Szpin

St. Paul's on-the-Hill Community Food Bank has a rich history of serving the Ajax-Pickering area in Ontario, Canada. Established in 1990, the food bank began as a temporary outreach program initiated by members of St. Paul's on-the-Hill Anglican Church.

What started as a modest effort to address immediate community needs has since grown into a vital resource for thousands of individuals and families facing food insecurity.

Early Years and Growth

The food bank's inception coincided with a period of increasing awareness about hunger issues in North America. While the first food bank in Canada opened in Edmonton in 1981, the concept had been pioneered in the United States in the 1960s by John van Hengel in Phoenix, Arizona.

St. Paul's on-the-Hill Food Bank emerged as part of this growing movement to address food insecurity at the local level. Initially operating on a small scale, the food bank quickly realized that the need in the community was far greater than anticipated.

As demand grew, the organization had to relocate several times to accommodate its expanding operations.

Community Support and Volunteerism

From its early days, the food bank has relied heavily on community support and volunteerism. As of 2023, 72 dedicated individuals volunteer their time to keep the food bank operational. This includes 15 drivers who use their personal vehicles to collect donations from grocery stores and other collection points, demonstrating the community's commitment to the cause.

Expansion of Services

Over the years, St. Paul's on-the-Hill Food Bank has expanded its services to meet the growing and diverse needs of its clients. In addition to providing regular food assistance, the organization has implemented special programs such as the Christmas Program. In 2023, this initiative provided 250 care packages, gift cards, turkeys, and winter clothing items to clients.

Recent Statistics and Impact

The food bank's impact on the community has been significant and continues to grow:

- In 2023, the food bank provided food to feed 29,119 people, marking an increase of 8,253 people compared to 2022
- There were 8,263 food bank visits in 2023, representing individual households
- Clients are permitted to visit the food bank up to two times per month

Operational Challenges and Adaptations

Like many charitable organizations, St. Paul's on-the-Hill Food Bank has faced challenges over the years. The COVID-19 pandemic presented unprecedented difficulties. However, the food bank has consistently adapted to meet increasing demand and rising operational costs.

Current Operations

As of 2024, the food bank continues to serve residents of Ajax and Pickering. Its operations include:

- Distribution of both non-perishable and perishable food items
- A Christmas assistance program for active clients
- Regular operating hours on Tuesdays and Fridays from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm for clients

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FOOD BANK

- Donation acceptance on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9 am to 11:30 am

Community Partnerships and Support

The food bank's longevity and success can be attributed to strong community partnerships. Local businesses, organizations, and individual community members provide generous support through donations and fundraising efforts.

The food bank also benefits from creative community initiatives, such as food drives and special events, which help to stock its shelves and raise awareness.

Looking to the Future

As the need for food bank services continues to grow across Canada, St. Paul's on-the-Hill Food Bank remains committed to its mission of providing nutritional support in a welcoming environment.



Food Bank Director Morrill at the center of action.

The organization continues to adapt to changing circumstances and increasing demand, always striving to meet the needs of the Ajax-Pickering community. From its humble beginnings in 1990 to its current status as a

crucial community resource, St. Paul's on-the-Hill Food Bank has demonstrated resilience, adaptability, and an unwavering commitment to fighting hunger. As it moves forward, the food bank will likely continue to rely on the strong foundation of community support and volunteerism that has been its hallmark for over three decades.



***Walked into a Pickering pub
the other day and here's
what the bartender said....***

A sandwich walks into my bar the other day. I looked at it and said, "Sorry, we don't serve food here."

Then the bartender continued...

"A dyslexic man walks into a bra."

Two antennas met on a roof, fell in love, and got married. The wedding wasn't much, but the reception was excellent!

I asked the bartender if he knew any political jokes. He wasn't very nice....

What do you call a politician who is great at math?
A rare breed!

Why did the politician go to art school?
To learn how to draw a crowd!

Why don't politicians ever get lost?
They always know how to find directional polls!

Why are politicians never allowed in nudist colonies?
They always insist on covering their asses!

Councillors never come to this bar!



PICKERING Council Offices



David Pickles, married with 2 daughters, has been a Regional Councillor in Pickering for over 30 years, has extensive experience in environmental protection and budgeting. Elected since 1997, he has received multiple awards for community service and led initiatives like the Pickering Casino project. David advocates for local infrastructure improvements and diversity through various committees.

On Being Good Neighbours

Story by Councillor David Pickles

As we begin a new year I thought I would reflect on a category of concerns I receive from residents or see in social media that I will call neighbour and neighbourhood issues. These unfortunately are common issues but the good news is they are easy to solve if residents ensure they are respectful to their neighbours and neighbourhoods.

So, what are these neighbour and neighbourhood issues? Not exclusive and in particular order:

> property maintenance, beauty may be in the eye of the beholder and we may all have different levels of skill or interest in yard work but we receive many calls about uncut, tall grass and weeds, or dead lawns and gardens and trees, and clutter or garbage stored in sight. Your neighbours are not expecting you have a botanical garden but please maintain your property in a tidy manner. I think pride in your property adds to quality of life and also helps with curb appeal. If you are not able maybe friends and family can lend a hand.

> I love pets and I often walk my daughter's dog and I pick up after him. Please stoop and scoop and dispose of at home. I don't understand people who don't pick up after their pets leave a mess on someone's private property or our public property. Also you are not being responsible if you stoop and scoop but later throw the baggie on the ground before you get home. I often see piles of baggies near electrical boxes or super mail boxes, take it home. Please also keep your dog on a leash, and watch out for the heat and cold, don't leave your pet out in dangerous conditions. And please no excessive barking dogs, especially in the evening. Neighbours would appreciate your training your dog not to bark and not leaving them out at night.

> Speeding, a very common complaint. It's against the law and can result in charges and penalties. But worse you put your neighbours and children at risk and harm. Please slow down, drive responsibly, and watch for pedestrian, children and other drivers.

> Increasingly, we receive complaints of loud and likely illegal after market exhaust systems, I won't call them mufflers because they do the opposite and you can hear them on your street and far off. Neighbours are very irritated by this and regularly getting the vehicle plate number and home address and reporting this to police. If you use these, please reconsider.

> Sidewalks, keep them clear so your neighbours can use them safely. We get many reports of sidewalks in front of homes and side yards on corners not being cleared of snow and ice or blocked by vehicles. It is very sad to see mothers with strollers, caregivers with wagons, and people with disabilities having to move onto the road way because the sidewalk is blocked. This is not only an inconvenience but a safety risk. Please ensure you keep the sidewalk clear. Bylaw staff are

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PICKLES

increasingly having take action on blocked sidewalks.

> Litter, I will never understand people who throw garbage out their vehicle window on to our roads and boulevards, have some respect and take your litter to a garbage can or home. An increasing problem is illegal dumping on to public property, roadways, parks and ravines. This includes leaving your home waste bags beside municipal garbage cans or over stuffing them. This only fills up the can and results in attracting animals and insects, and trash blowing around. If you missed garbage day, cleaning out your car, or have unwanted furniture or construction debris, don't illegally dump it, put it out on the next garbage pick up day. If permitted visit the municipal waste disposal depot. Keep our community clean.

> 'Signs, signs, everywhere there's signs' you may recall the 60's song, residents do not like this signs being illegally placed on boulevards, street sign poles and Canada post boxes advertising your private business or services, I have heard from some people who tear them down and throw them out. I have heard many people say they would not use businesses that are posting these illegal signs. Bylaw has powers to remove them and follow up with offending businesses and persons.

Now, this only seems like common sense to most of us and most residents are good neighbours and follow the rules, look after their properties and respect others' and public property, and look out for others, and I say thanks. But we get a lot of these and other types of neighbour and neighbourhood complaints.

Not only do these disrupt and frustrate residents, but they also divert city and police resources (taxpayer funds) to pursue offenders and cleanup while these resources could otherwise be directed to more constructive efforts in our community.

On behalf of all residents, please be a good neighbour and respect our neighbourhoods. If you have questions about any of these matters please contact the city's customercare@pickering.ca



New regulations for public attending Council presentations

The City has initiated some new rules regulating the public gallery. One regulation restricts digital recording or *photography*.

We saw some of the councillor faces at recent meetings and understand why the regulation is needed.

Some councillors would not release their names.





One of the City of Pickering's most dynamic councillors, Councillor Maurice Brenner represents Ward 1 as well being the Regional representative.

Hoping the challenges of 2024 become less so in 2025

2024 was a very challenging year for the City and many residents. But let us be reminded there were many positives that also made it a special and memorable year.

The Ward 1 community and associations and organizations pulled together as a village supporting the **Food Bank**, **DARS** and the *Farm house transitional housing project*.

Our family stepped up donating a sewing machine to the farmhouse to enable residents to develop new skills sewing. In addition, we sponsored a family of 2 youngsters who needed a Christmas with their single dad and ensured their dream from Santa Claus was not shattered.

Let us remember how *TACC Developments* stepped up along with our City to ensure there was water to service to the residents at 690 Concession Rd 3.

Our Ward 1 Community Groups continue to evolve. The *South Rosebank Association*, while winding up their neighbourhood watch program, will embrace a new modernization of their Community Safety and Well-being model. The *Rougemount Community and Recreation Association* established their association and in their first year hosted two successful community events plus the first ever Christmas Carolling in the park.

I could fill this entire edition with all the great and positive things that make our City and in particular Ward 1, so special, but now as we welcome this New Year, let us stay focussed on the positives that lay ahead in our lives and in our community and strive to bring them to fruition to make living in Pickering even better.

Maurice Brenner
Regional Councillor, Ward One



Pickering Mayor responds to threats made to City Councillors

Story contributed by Garry Winsor

According to Mayor Kevin Ashe, violent and aggressive threats have been made at a number of City of Pickering Councillors. In response to these acts, Mayor Ashe has changed how City Councillors will meet in the new year.

Instead of *live* meetings, effective January 13, 2025, all future meetings will be *virtual* to minimize the vulnerability and risk to City Councillors.

More details can be found at

[Ashe statement](#)

Editorial commentary: www.szpin.ca



It's a Mad, Mad world?

Living in the world of today is becoming an ever increasing problem? Getting the bird at a traffic light. Being

blasted by an angry honker in the next road lane. The abandoned grocery buggy parked up against your rear bumper in the grocery store parking lot. These are the minor mishaps. The more serious: accused killers being cheered on social media; home invasions by early teen led gangs; indicted officials viewed as worthwhile governing leaders. Something's wrong with this picture.

These are things that make one wonder what is happening to our world today. The abhorrent, despicable become the acceptable, supportable. The world's upside down and increasing numbers of people are accepting it without rebuttal or response.

What is happening? What is the cause? Are we abandoning principles, morality and ethics? Can it be reversed to bygone days where it was, "Yes sir!" "Thank you ma'am." "Excuse me please." "I beg your pardon." "I hear you and understand. Thank you."

Some of us long for the return of that stability and steadiness where authority was respected, society had valued foundations and the world was a place of mutual respect and acknowledge. It was a world of willingness, compromise, obedience and cooperation. Our society is losing these essential foundation blocks. Many people would agree; others would not in their support of independence and individuality of this 'free fall.'

Where do you stand? Have you given your position any thought?

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