



Issue 2

February 3, 2025



*Happy Valentine's*

Give your partner a 'listen' to the Greatest Melodies of LOVE of all time...or email them a Valentine card...

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### Pickering Fire Chief Stephen Boyd

Pickering residents are in good hands

As a boy, Chief Boyd never dreamed about becoming a fire fighter. His education was in engineering but destiny played out its cards differently. Chief Boyd became a fire fighter. His first job with a paint company, Dupont of Ajax, in their industrial fire department. Conversations fellow firefighting staff led him to considering firefighting as his professional career which took him on a circuitous path to becoming Fire Chief of Pickering: 25 years as an actual fire fighter, 5 as a deputy chief elsewhere, and finally coming to Pickering in 2017 as deputy chief. Five years later, he became Fire Chief.

Today he is commander of 5 fire stations, more than 100 fire fighters and manages a budget of \$35 million. Chief Boyd has seen a lot in his many years in the profession, many positive and worthwhile innovations and many tragedies. His pain is evident when he talks about the fatalities saying "I have never pulled a dead person from a home with a working smoke alarm." That's the core of Chief Boyd's fire fighting heart. Though he

has many fire fighters in his command, a lot of expensive equipment, (the average cost of custom-made fire trucks exceeds \$2.5 million), he is most passionate about smoke alarms. The chief emphasizes there is nothing as important to reducing the risk of fire fatalities as a working smoke alarm. Smoke kills. If residents are not outside the burning home when the fire department arrives, the home likely did not have a working smoke alarm. Fatalities are likely. The fire department under Chief Boyd is actively involved with the City in many more ways than just fire fighting.

*Public education* is an important facet of the work done by the department, along with *enforcement* and *emerg-ency response*. The department is regulated by the Fire Protection Prevention Act (FPPA) which directs that homes have working smoke alarms, that there be door-to-door confirmation of these alarms, that printed material be available for the public and that there be efficient and effective response to fire occurrences. Ironically, the act does not mention 'fire fighters.'

See FIRE

## FIRE

Pickering Fire actively engages in the education of its residents. Department personnel attend community events, retail malls, neighbourhood festivities, even hockey tournaments just for opportunities to talk with city residents. Chief Boyd boasted that he had uniformed personnel riding the GO train, handing out fire prevention brochures to commuters.

Cooking/kitchen fires are the most common types of fire occurrences. To help educate and inform residents, teams of fire fighters visit homes to talk with residents about fire risk reduction. “We inspect about 600-700 homes a year this way,” Chief Boyd says. This fall we plan an open house at our main fire hall in conjunction with Durham Fire where we will have tours of the fire hall, information booths and hot dogs and drinks for the attendees.



When asked about the demographic that is the worst offending, Chief Boyd was diplomatic: most home owners are reluctant to admit strangers into their home. Uniformed persons at the door can be intimidating. Some cultures as they have experienced problems with authority figures in their homelands. Seniors are particularly reluctant about having an unfamiliar person enter their

homes but their education and knowledge about fire issues is crucial. Often, seniors are forgetful and some have mobility challenges. Our 'Older and Wiser' program responds to these needs specifically.

The department recognizes the growing cultural diversity of Pickering and is developing a multi-language card where residents can glance at various languages to select their language. The personnel will then give them material in the appropriate language.

Asked about how the City's growth affects fire fighting, Chief Boyd is justifiably proud about the Fire Department's excellent response time. “More than 90% of our fire calls meet the 4 minute-4 person team response goal to almost every part of the city. The new tanker trucks are very important fighting fires in the more rural areas on the outer borders of the city.”

There are areas of the City and aspects of life here that are trouble Chief Boyd but knowing about them helps the department respond as needed. Train crossings are a problem, but City Planning responds appropriately to the need for underpass and over pass construction. Multi-level condominiums can be another potential problem area. City building codes regulate fire mitigation measures such as fire-resistant construction materials, construction methods that decrease fire destruction, sprinkler systems, and of course, smoke alarms.

Few worries keep Chief Boyd awake at night. He says developers and the City are aware of the fire prevention needs and necessities with city growth and more high-density neighbourhoods. Bylaws regulate construction methods and installation of fire prevention and detection equipment. City planning studies and responds to traffic flow in new neighbourhoods. And speaking of traffic flow, Pickering Fire trucks are equipped with remote control devices to regulate traffic lights for optimum passage.

Asked for a final word about Pickering Fire, Chief Boyd smiled and responded, “Smoke alarms, smoke alarms, smoke alarms. Like seat belts in cars, working alarms will save lives.

See **FIRES...**

## FIRES...

We have not had a fire fatality in Pickering in more than five years. I'd like that streak to continue.' The Chief recommends the 10-year lithium-ion battery powered models when asked about his smoke alarm recommendation but he emphasizes that all models on sale are CSA, ULC approved.

The Chief sounds justifiably confident about Pickering fire fighting capability. We have three lines of defense, he says, “*public education* where we educate people about fire prevention and fire fighting in their homes; *enforcement* where we confirm people have smoke alarms and proper fire separations in home rental areas; and effective and efficient *emergency response* which takes 80% of our fire fighting expenditures.”

The Pickering Fire Department works hard to ensure Pickering residents have a safe and secure community in which to live long lives. It is likely to continue in the great hands of Chief Stephen Boyd.



## Polar what?

Ever hear of a *Polar vortex* a few years back? We froze in subzero temperatures. Our exposed skin was frostbitten when exposed too long to those temps. Kids quickly learned the dangers of the extreme cold.

A tongue on a metal pipe....eeyikes! And nobody used the name 'polar vortex.'

### *Much of Canada experiencing polar vortex*

Many areas of Canada have been hit by bone-chilling -30°C temperatures. Some regions have dipped lower wondering if residents should invest in thermal suits or just embrace being a hibernating winter hermit.

### *The Great Canadian Freeze*

The polar vortex is not just any cold front; it's a swirling mass of frigid air that makes even the hardiest Canadians reconsider their life choices. It's Mother Nature cranking up her air conditioning to maximum and forgetting about it for a few weeks. It's Old Man Winter reminding us who's the boss this time of the year! Squirrels have been seen wearing tiny scarves, birds huddling together in what looks like an avian version of a group hug. Lakes and ponds in the region have turned into vast sheets of ice, perfect for ice skating—if you can feel your toes long enough to put on skates. Local kids are ecstatic, building snow forts, engaging in epic snowball fights, and tobogganing with heated energy. Their parents stand by with hot toddies praying for an early spring.

### *Fashion out the window, geez, close that window*

With temperatures so low that even your breath freezes mid-sentence, Pickering residents have had to adapt their fashion choices dramatically. Gone are the days of stylish winter coats; now it's all about layering. You'll see people walking around looking like marshmallows wrapped in layers of puffy jackets, long johns, and beanies that could double as helmets. One enterprising local even started a trend: “Polar Vortex Chic.” This involves wearing every piece of winter clothing you own at once while accessorizing with a thermos of spiked hot chocolate. It's a look that screams “I'm prepared for anything” while simultaneously saying “please send help.”

### *Polar Vortex Survival Guide*

We offer you some tips if you're brave enough to venture outside:

1. Dress Like an Onion  
Layering is key. You want to be able to peel off layers as you enter buildings without resembling a clumsy penguin.

See **VORTEX**



## VORTEX

2. Invest in Hand Warmers  
These little packets are magic! They're like tiny heaters for your fingers and will save you from frostbite while trying to operate your car keys. Canadian Tire sells them.
3. Stay Hydrated  
Yes, even in winter! Hot chocolate counts as hydration when it's this cold—just don't tell your doctor.
4. Avoid Face-to-Face Conversations  
With temperatures this low, speaking outside is akin to trying to communicate through a block of ice. Stick to waving from afar.
5. Embrace Indoor Hibernation  
If you can avoid going out altogether, do it! Binge-watch your favorite shows while wrapped in blankets—it's practically an Olympic sport at this point.

### *Community Spirit Amidst the Chill*

Despite the bitter cold, Pickering residents have shown remarkable resilience and humor. Community events have adapted; instead of summer barbecues, there are now “Winter Warm-Up” gatherings where everyone brings their favorite hot dish and shares stories about how they survived last year's polar vortex. Local businesses have also jumped on the bandwagon by offering “polar vortex specials.” Think hot soup deals at cafes and discounts on winter gear at sporting goods stores—because nothing says “support local” like buy-ing another pair of mittens or long johns.

### *Conclusion: A Love-Hate Relationship with Winter*

As the polar vortex continues its reign over Pickering, residents find themselves in a love-hate relationship with winter. Sure, it's cold enough to freeze your eyelashes together, but there's something magical about watching snowflakes dance through the air or sipping hot cider by a roaring fire. So here's to embracing the polar vortex! May we all find warmth in our homes and laughter among friends as we navigate this frosty chapter together.

Just remember: when life gives you polar vortices, make snow forts and ice castles!

## *Robinson saga continues*



### **OPP investigating after complaint made about Pickering councillor Lisa Robinson**

David Rider  
Toronto Star

The Ontario Provincial Police have launched an investigation after the city of Pickering complained about controversial councillor Lisa Robinson, asking if her interactions with far-right figures had crossed into illegality.

Pickering Mayor Kevin Ashe recently said his city's integrity commissioner suspended its latest review into Robinson's conduct, and brought to police a complaint that the councillor may be aiding and abetting criminal harassment with her participation in “far-right” media.

Robinson has repeatedly appeared on podcasts known for espousing racist and Islamophobic views, as well as podcasts that falsely branded other Pickering officials pedophiles and saying they deserved to suffer violence. Robinson has previously denounced the podcast host's comments about violence and apologized to her colleagues.

Durham Regional Police said that, in compliance with the Community Safety and Policing Act, they had turned the matter over to the OPP, which said in a news release Thursday that a probe is underway.

See **INVESTIGATION**

## INVESTIGATION

OPP Criminal Investigation Branch,” the OPP said.

As this is an ongoing investigation, the OPP will not be providing any further comments at this time.” The service offered no details of exactly what officers are investigating.

Reached by phone, Robinson asked the Star to forward her the police statement and said she will comment later.

A spokesperson for Ashe told the Star via email: “As the OPP investigation is now underway, the City is unable to provide information or comment on it at this time.”

Robinson, elected Ward 1 councillor in 2022, has over the past year [faced accusations from colleagues of inviting an alt-right siege](#) that they say has hijacked city business and led to security threats.

At Pickering's Dec. 16 council meeting, Robinson's five fellow councillors approved her second consecutive 90-day pay suspension over public comments accusing the city's chief administrative officer of corruption.

Ashe recently announced that disruption and intimidation of council members, city staff and residents at council meetings by people associated with Robinson, as well as the anti-vaccination and convoy movement, led him to [decree that meetings will indefinitely be online only, with no in-person component.](#)

Earlier this week, Robinson in an email to the Star blasted that decision, saying it “undermines the very essence of grassroots democracy, and the feedback I've received from residents reflects their discontent and concern over these actions. The people of Pickering deserve better.”

## EDITORIAL COMMENT

The Robinson saga is endless, disrupting the City of Pickering municipal council endeavours. It is unfortunate one elected representative seems uncompromising and intransigent in her municipal responsibilities.

Gagging Robinson may expedite municipal functions but it would violate free speech rights. Pickering Mayor Ashe continually fails in bringing Robinson into line with accepted and acceptable council discussions. The conflict has escalated into a conflict with alt-right groups to the degree that there are aggression and violent threats being made at Councillors. Police and security measures have failed to minimize and de-escalate the upheaval.

Mayor Ashe's latest strategy of virtual meetings may be flawed. **Mohamad Fakhri**, the Lebanese business person and philanthropist found by an Ontario court to have been defamed by right-wing podcaster Kevin J. Johnson's “hateful Islamophobic” comments, said far-right attacks on perceived enemies and their families are “very harmful and some people will wonder if the allegations are true.”

However, retreating to computer screens in response to attacks from Johnston and others sends the wrong signal. Virtual meetings may expedite council discussions but their major flaw is that they remove the public from real life attendance at meetings where public emotion about issues can actually be felt in the council chambers.

The better strategy may be to openly set the rules for debate. If and when they are violated, cut the violator off by muting their mic. If that fails, they should be removed from chambers physically. There is the danger that the media image of this exclusion will be exploited by the violator but informing the public of the regulations could minimize the impact of these images.

The bottom line to this whole Robinson saga is that the rules of debate and discussion need to be publically laid out for everyone to see. Then, elected representatives need to understand and abide by these proper discussion regulations in Council debate. There is more than 'time limits' that need to be considered. Councillors must be cognizant of community thinking, of respectful participation in debates, and be aware that Council debate is a group effort, not a 'solo performance.'

Robinson seems to disregard all aspects of proper and considerate participation in debate by group.

## Pickering: Pet Paradise!



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.

Perhaps it's not quite a paradise yet, but much has improved in Pickering when it comes to pet ownership. While much of this content applies to pet owners anywhere, some details are specific to Pickering. And let's be honest — only dog owners will truly relate to this article.

### ***Dunmoore Park Leash-Free Area***

- Fully fenced with separate spaces for small dog  
One thing I guarantee: both your kids and your pets can read this without restriction! I owned a dog for 14 years named Sasha. She was a surprise gift for my wife, bought from the original pet store in the Pickering Town Centre.

Sasha, a Shepherd-Lab mix, was the only all-brown pup in her litter, hiding at the back of the cage. I felt sorry for her, and she turned out to be an amazing choice. I even wrote an entire book of poems about her, though it remains unpublished on my shelf!

It's funny how perspectives change. These days, I'm very aware of pet rules and get quite indignant when I see people violating them. It can be unnerving when a large dog approaches off-leash. Yet, I trained Sasha myself, both on and off-leash, and we walked that way. Back then, I didn't fully appreciate how others might feel. Sasha was about 75-80 pounds. Losing her many years ago felt almost like losing a family member.

We don't have kids, and I believe a dog (though cats

aren't for me) is a fantastic companion and substitute. Dogs are highly intelligent, despite what some might say. Just ask the CNIB and those who rely on guide dogs. These dogs not only increase independence but also enrich the owners' lives.

Dogs serve many essential roles that highlight their intelligence: guard dogs, police dogs, sniffer dogs for drugs and other substances, comfort dogs, and even medical alert dogs who can detect seizures. My personal favorite? Therapy dogs who bring joy and smiles to hospitals and seniors' residences. Naturally, Sasha was the smartest of them all!

One thing that still makes my blood boil is people who don't clean up after their pets. There is no excuse. Tools and bags are readily available, and Pickering even supplies free dog waste bags (check the references below). I once wrote a blog post naming and shaming the worst offenders:

***THE MIDNIGHT SKULKER:*** Operating under cover of darkness, they let their dogs do their business anywhere — your lawn, the sidewalk, wherever. My wish? That two skulking owners cross paths and step in each other's mess.

***THE MOBILE MARAUDER:*** These cowards drive to another neighborhood (often at night making them MOBILE MIDNIGHT SKULKERS) let their dog out, and speed off after the deed is done. If I were fast enough, I'd fling the offending pile onto the fleeing vehicle thus identifying its driver as true scum.

***See MINDLESS MASTER***

## ***MINDLESS MASTER***

***THE MINDLESS MASTER:*** These folks always "forget" their bags. I carry spares for them, but they often seem to develop sudden back pain.

***THE DELIBERATELY FLAGRANT:*** They let their dogs go right under the largest "No Dog Waste" signs. Bonus points if the sign itself is hit.

***THE SIDEWALK SICKIE:*** Right in the middle of the sidewalk. There is only one worse (see next category). They turn your Hush Puppies into Mush Puppies. Enough said.

***THE SCHOOLYARD SCATTERBRAIN:*** This is both selfish and stupid. Leaving dog mess in a schoolyard? Jail time feels fitting, but mandatory cleanup duty might be even better.

***THE OLDER COUPLE/MOP DOG DUET:*** Sweet old couples with yappy little dogs who act oblivious to their pet's mess. Cute, but still wrong. My parents in their eighties still managed to do the right thing.

***THE PLASTIC FACADE:*** They pretend to clean up but ditch the bag somewhere inconspicuous — or not so inconspicuous.

***THE GREAT PRETENDER:*** They mimic the motions of cleaning up but leave the mess behind. Academy Awards all around!

On a positive note, most pet owners have stepped up their game, and responsible pet citizenship is becoming the norm.

### **Leash-Free Areas in Pickering**

Here are three designated leash-free areas in Pickering: s and all dogs. Features a sandpit and a unique Canine Activity Area with 10 fun stations

### ***Dunmoore Park Leash-Free Area***

- Fully fenced with separate spaces for small dogs and all dogs.dogs and all dogs.
- Features a sandpit and a unique Canine Activity Area with 10 fun stations.
- Thank you to Pet Valu for sponsoring the Canine Activity Area.
- Location: Whites Road South, Pickering.

### ***Balsdon Park Leash-Free Area***

- The smallest of the three areas, located in a residential subdivision.
- No designated parking lot; street parking only.
- Location: Liverpool Rd. and Krosno.

### ***Grand Valley Park Leash-Free Area***

- Main fenced area located west of the parking lot at the bottom of the hill.
- A smaller area near the lot is available for those with mobility challenges.
- Location: Third Concession, west of Valley Farm Road. also known as the South Trail Head for Seaton Hiking Trail.

### **Fun Fact: Dog Waste = Energy!**

In 2023, 6.6 tonnes (1 tonne = 1,000 kg) of dog waste in Pickering were converted into 976.95 KW of electricity. Who knew your dog's business could power homes?

### **Rules and Volunteer Opportunities**

Be sure to check the City of Pickering website for leash-free rules, covering topics like licensing, age restrictions, and aggressive behavior.

See **VOLUNTEERING**

Support the





# VOLUNTEERING

## Interested in volunteering?

Leash-Free Area Working Group meets quarterly to address concerns, recommend improvements, and assist with maintenance. For more information, email [animalservices@pickering.ca](mailto:animalservices@pickering.ca).

## Final Thoughts

Much of this information can be found on the City of Pickering website at:

<https://www.pickering.ca/en/living/leashfreearea.aspx#Leash-Free-Area-Working-Group>

If you have suggestions for improving life for pets and their owners in Pickering, reach out to the city using the resources mentioned.

For licencing tags and to make a donation towards the construction of a new animal shelter see try this website: License your Pet

your neighbours. Join together with groups doing community projects. Talk to your local Councillor on what needs to be improved in your neighbourhood. Volunteer with the many organizations that are helping the less fortunate. There is no such thing as “I am too busy to help others who need a helping hand.” The busier you are, the more fulfilling life is. As I think back to what our Fairport Beach Neighbourhood Association accomplished in 2024, I can feel satisfied that we continue to do our part in helping maintain a level of community spirit and activism in Pickering:

- We hosted a dinner for the DARS organization, in support of people living on the streets of Pickering.
- We served nutritious meal for nearly 30-40 people.
- We attended the "town hall meetings" put on by our Ward 1 Councillors.
- We attended fund-raisers for the new Animal Shelter, and have raised \$1000's through our community bbq/yard sales.
- We attended DRPS open house for Senior Fraud.
- We partnered with Pickering West Shore Community Association in food drives for the St.Paul's food bank.
- We partnered in the removal of an Airbnb removed from our community.
- We were actively involved in the design of the last section of the waterfront trail between Marksbury and West Shore Blvd.
- Our last activities in the last two weeks of December were to make our Christmas donations\$1200 to the St. Paul's Food Bank\$1000 to Ajax Salvation Army\$500 to the Ajax-Pickering Hospital.

As the New Year evolves, I have informed my FBNA executive that I will be resigning as President(Chairman) after 35 years and reaching the mature age of 80. I can rest assured that our community is in great hands, and that our volunteer work continues with amazing neighbours who give their efforts and time to make Fairport Beach a special place to live.



Paul White 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.

## NEW YEAR HAS DAWNED

Story by Paul White

I am always hopeful that with a new year comes new hope and inspiration for society. There is enough despair and worldly unrest to go around for a lifetime. How do we manage to deal with these issues? Start with simple steps in your own community. Say hello to





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.

The **FireSmart Program** seems to be an independent organization dedicated to the mitigation of fires in and around homes and urbanized areas. At this time, the program seems to be alive and well in western Canada. There are contacts in central and eastern Canada for connecting with these people but the connection is shaky at best as the organizations.

The organization in western Canada where it is established sounds like they will come to your neighbourhood and do an assessment as to its fire risk analysis. They will examine your neighbourhood for fire hazards, potential risk conditions and report how risk situations can be mitigated and minimized.

Currently, Ontario has one contact for this organization:  
FireSmartProgram  
Chelsea Osesky  
1-705-255-8096

Though the Ontario program may be in its infancy, they do offer an excellent self-evaluation application/brochure which may be an excellent guide for assessing the fire risks of your neighbourhood/home.

This brochure is available as a download.

Click --> [FireAssessment](#)

The Council of the City of Pickering's latest meeting dealt with the **Fire Master Plan** for the City. The meeting can be viewed on YouTube. (See Council Meeting, January 13).

The Fire Master Plan, presented by Tim Beckett and Isaac Comandante, examined and reviewed Pickering's current Fire fighting state, its risk areas and recommendations the City needs to consider.

The fire risks examined included road and traffic issues, the waterfront, residence and business occupancy, the City' demographic (65+, 17%; 55-64, 15%), the primary causes of fires (Kitchen/Cooking, Pickering, 18%, Ontario, 15%), smoke alarms not working, 17%.

Beckett and Comandante pointed out that Pickering's fire plan was outdated and reviewed more than three dozen recommendations which can be summarized by the need for updating: equipment, staffing in information services and firefighters, fire stations and emergency response.

The discussion gave smoke alarms high priority as these devices, when functioning, save lives. Beckett pointed out that very sadly, 17% of the alarms in use were not functioning. As Beckett compared it to having seat belts in the car but never wearing them. He lamented that many more lives would be saved in fires if homeowners would correct and confirm that their fire alarms are working.

The Councillors questions in the Q&A session that followed covered many areas:

- rural fires;
- traffic problems at train crossings;
- Firefighters on duty;
- the need for a local firefighting training facility;and
- smoke alarms

See **BECKETT**

See **BECKETT**

Beckett was most emphatic in talking about smoke alarms. He likened failed alarms, 17% in Pickering, to not using seat belts in the car. Many lives would be saved if people checked, updated and confirmed operation of their home smoke alarms.

The Councillors' questions dealt with fire information and its dissemination throughout the community, to seniors, to new immigrants; penalization of homeowners with failed smoke alarms; inspection of homes for fire risks; the adequacy of City budget for firefighting.

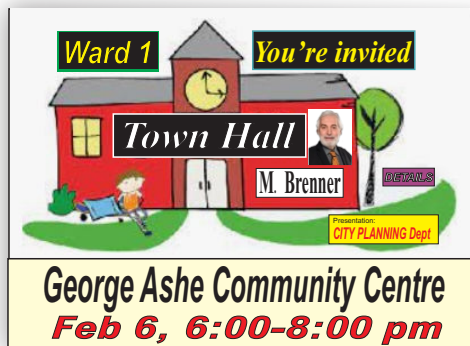
One area particularly disturbing was in response to survey results completed by the City's fire fighting services and its firefighting staff. The survey showed that 40% of the responses from the service departments and 85% of the staff felt the current Pickering Fire Plan was inadequate.

Fire Chief, Stephen Boyd, attended the virtual meeting and responded to many Councillor questions, most importantly that the current fire fighting capability and budget for it in Pickering was satisfactory.

Chief Boyd's only lament about Pickering's fire fighting capability was that we need a local fire fighting training facility as opposed to the OPG facility in Leslieville and that we need more staffing, more public education and more inspection of residences relative to their risk of fires.

### **In short**

The fire fighting capability, facilities and equipment seem to be at an acceptable level currently but much of this assessment is based on 2021 census information and there is a need for updating and re-evaluation of in these.



## *Best Seafood Salad anywhere*



Recipe is an original creation by Richard Szpin

My father was a professional chef long before all the Food Network circus began. He even had a TV show in the 1950's which must have been a bit humorous as he would have spoken with a heavy accent having coming to Canada in 1948.

The recipe is dedicated to Chef John Szpin.

### **SHRIMP SEAFOOD SALAD**

(Richard Szpin *original*)

for about 6-8 people

### **INGREDIENTS**

- 1 Pkge (350 gm) crab flavoured POLLOCK
- 1 bag 31-40 raw zipper back SHRIMP
- 1/3 finely chopped red or Vidalia onion
- Y2 diced sweet red pepper
- 1 finely diced stick of celery
- 1/4 cup chopped Italian parsley
- 1 small finely chopped garlic bud
- salt & pepper to taste
- 1/4 tsp granulated garlic
- juice of Y2 - 1 lemon
- Y2 tsp of lemon zest
- 1/4 cup of extra virgin olive oil

### **PREPARATION OF SHRIMP**

1. Bring large of water to boil, add 3 tbsp coarse/sea salt to water
2. Peel, devein shrimp and cut each in half crosswise (to make bite size pieces)
3. Keep about 8-12 shrimp whole, for decorating
4. Put shrimp into rolling boiling water
5. Let water come back to bubbling, cook shrimp for 1 1/2 minutes
6. Drain and IMMEDIATELY submerge shrimp in ice water to stop cooking
7. Set aside to drain and dry

### **PREPARATION OF SALAD**

Dice, chop, grate as required for each of following

- 1 small garlic bud, chopped very fine
- 1/3 Vidalia or red onion (must be sweet onion)  
(soak slices in water for about 30 mins to reduce acidity)
- 1/2 sweet red pepper
- 1 stick of celery
- 1/4 cup Italian parsley
- 1/4 tsp granulated garlic
- 1/2 tsp lemon zest
- salt & pepper to taste

- Separate the pollock and cut into bite size pieces Cut whole shrimp into *thirds*
- Reserve 6-8 whole shrimp for decorating finished salad
- Combine all salad ingredients and mix together gently
- Add juice of half the lemon (reserve more to adjust taste later)
- Add in the olive oil and mix all the ingredients

- Refrigerate for at least 1-2 hours for flavours to blend.
- Remove from fridge, stir ingredients gently again and taste.
- Determine if you need more lemon juice, salt, pepper and/or olive oil.

[You do not want liquid swimming in bottom of bowl but enough to cover all parts of the salad for taste.]

### **ACCOMPANIMENT: CROSTINI**

Crostini made from sliced ITALIAN BUNS [about 1/2 bun per person]

### **PREPARATION OF CROSTINI**

1. Slice into 1/2 inch slices
2. Spread out onto a cookie sheet covered with parchment paper
3. Drizzle about 1/4 tsp olive oil on each crostini
4. Sprinkle about 1/8 tsp granulated garlic powder on each crostini
5. Sprinkle 1/4 tsp granulated parmigiano cheese on each crostini
6. Bake crostini in 350F oven for about 4 mins, watch carefully, until golden
7. *You can broil at the end if you want more golden colour but crostini burn very quickly once they start to turn golden.*



**Help the needy...**

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## Property trash a problem near donut shop



Eva Henn is a published author, a wife, a mother and very active grandmother. Eva writes, paints, when she's not at home in Pickering, she travels the globe with her husband, from Central America to central Zaire.

I am not *Neighbourhood Watch*. I am just a concerned neighbour living in the area of Kingston Rd and Glendale Ave. in the Glendale Community.

The *Tim Horton's* at 1286 Kingston Rd. concerns me as the only business in the area that generates so much garbage in a short time. Tim's cups, wrappers, sandwich boxes, paper bags and other assorted garbage piled up on the road, beside the curb, and on the boulevard adjacent to the business. Often, there is no visible sign of large trash bins. More of them may be helpful on the property.



Whose responsibility is the trash situation? Is it the City's? There seems to be no one from the City on top of this issue? Is it Horton's? What areas should they be responsible for? How much of the property do they clean?

Should they be accountable? Should the City be?

We take pride in our community; its vibrant neighbours; its many activities and events. Clean roads and curbs are just one part of all that.

Lately, that's been a challenge!



As Councillor David Pickles urged last month, in his piece *"On Being Good Neighbours,"* 'please maintain your property in a tidy manner.' I am certain he was addressing everyone in Pickering, residents and businesses alike.

Keeping the property adjacent to the Horton's building clean is the responsibility of Tim Horton's. The property across the street belongs to the City and therefore keeping it clean is the City's responsibility. Both properties are trash dumps more often than should be. Both property owners need to pick up their slack.

However, Horton's patrons need to be encouraged to dispose of trash properly. Large trash bins in visible areas might help. Both property owners should consider their use.

In the spirit of *"being a good neighbour"* keeping our community's streets clean is vital for the good reputation the community enjoys and to have reason to continue being proud of our City and the communities therein.





The Durham Region Health Department is reminding residents within 10 kilometers of the Pickering or Darlington nuclear generating stations to ensure they have potassium iodide (KI) tablets.

These tablets are crucial for reducing thyroid cancer risk in the unlikely event of a radioactive iodine release.

**Key points:**

1. KI tablets protect the thyroid gland from radioactive iodine;
2. Residents should only take KI tablets when instructed by the Chief Medical Officer of Health during a nuclear emergency;
3. KI tablets are available free of charge at these local pharmacies:
  - Bay Ridges Pharmacy, 1794 Liverpool Rd., Pickering
  - Pickering Medical Pharmacy, 1885 Glenanna Rd., Pickering
  - Liverpool Pharmacy, 725 Krosno Blvd., Pickering
  - Global Drug Mart Remedy's Rx, 130 Waverly Rd., Bowmanville
  - Courtice Pharmasave, 2727 Courtice Rd., Courtice
4. The risk of a serious nuclear accident is extremely low;

5. Specific dosages are provided for different age groups, including pregnant and breastfeeding individuals.

The Health Department emphasizes that having KI tablets on hand is a simple yet effective preparedness measure.

Residents within the designated area are encouraged to take advantage of this free resource to ensure their safety in the highly unlikely event of a nuclear accident



*City of*  
**PICKERING**  
*Councillor David Pickles*  
***Dec 2024 Newsletter***

*(Co-attended with Councillor Steven Butt)*

***Winter snow removal***

For more information visit [pickering.ca/snowclearing](http://pickering.ca/snowclearing)

Vehicles parked on the road during snow clearing operations are subject to being ticketed (\$90) and/or towed (at the owner's expense).

**Emergency Overnight Warming Centre**

(Operated by DARS - Dedicated Advocacy Resource Support)

**Location:** Peace Lutheran Church, 928 Liverpool Rd., Pickering.

**Hours:** Saturday to Thursday: 8:00 pm – 8:00 am and Friday: 10:00 pm – 8:00 am

**Contact Information:** Supervisor on-site can be reached at 289.314.2261

The Centre will open if temperatures reach -8°C or colder and/or wind chills of -11°C or colder.

See **SEATON**

## **SEATON**

### **New Seaton Long-Term Care Home**

The Region of Durham is building a new long-term care home in the City of Pickering. This 200-bed home will be located within the beautiful Seaton community on Alexander Knox Road. It will be financed, owned and operated by The Regional Municipality of Durham, with substantive funding provided by the Province of Ontario.

### **Pickering Heritage & Community Centre**

The Pickering Heritage & Community Centre is being constructed on the upper site of the Pickering Museum Village. This new 44,000 sq. ft. facility will celebrate the city's rich heritage by bringing the Museum, Library, and Community Centre together into one dynamic space. Construction began in March 2024, and is expected to be complete in November 2025.

### **FGF Brands Construction update**

FGF Brands, a technology company that bakes, is developing their new campus facility in Pickering, opening phase one in 2026. It will include manufacturing plants, a distribution centre, a learning centre, and more.

The first phase of development will consist of three manufacturing plants and a distribution centre, with an overall gross floor area of over a million square feet and the creation of 1,000 new jobs, with another 2,000 jobs coming in the second phase. The entire site will include 2.5 million sq feet and thousand more jobs.

FGF Brands is the largest producer of fresh breads, rolls, croissants, fully baked muffins, and sweet goods, in North America, and has become a global leader by replacing low tech equipment with robotics, integrated AI systems, machine learning, and supply chain innovations. Some of its brands include Wonder Bread, Stonefire, ACE, D'Italiano, Country Harvest, and Casa Mendosa. As you can see in the photos they

like the thumbs up for photos.

### **Streetlight Maintenance Program**

The City also acknowledges that we are transitioning into a Streetlight Maintenance Contract with a new Contractor, with optimism for improved service and maintenance response levels, as laid out in our Contract.

### **Peter Matthews Drive Extension**

The Peter Matthews Drive from Seaton to Brock Road will convey four traffic lanes and have a paved asphalt multiuse path in the south boulevard, providing a vehicle, pedestrian and cycling connection from this southern portion of Seaton to Brock Road and Rossland Road/Third Concession Road.

### **Meeting with the Chief of Police Peter Moreira**

At Regional Council last week, we got a presentation from the Durham Regional Police Services Board and Durham Regional Police Service Chief Moreira.

I had my regular meeting with DRPS earlier this week and met with Chief Moreira last week. These are opportunities for me to raise local matters I see and hear from residents as well as hearing the Chief's updates including successes and challenges. The presentation is ongoing but while auto thefts are down, violent/organized crimes are up. We will be discussing police services and resources to best serve the community. The bail system continues to be a priority issue, many of those arrested for car thefts and violent crimes are out on bail for having been already charged for similar offences.

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**See WINTER UPDATES**

## WINTER UPDATES

### WINTER UPDATES Councillors Butt and Pickles

#### Selected Park Updates

- Hollyberry Green
- Heartwood Green
- Dave Ryan Community Park
- Southcott Park
- Pickering City Centre Park

#### New Paramedic Station Update

#### New Acute Rehabilitation Centre

#### Transit Service Increases, expansion and updates

#### Ongoing Capital Projects - continuing throughout 2025:

Old Brock Road Reconstruction & Streetlights

Joseph Street Reconstruction

Westney Road Reconstruction

Sixth Concession Road & Greenwood Bridge

Scarborough Pickering Townline Road Reconstruction

Pedestrian Signalization – Major Oaks at Wildwood

Altona Road – New Sidewalks

See CAPITAL PROJECTS

#### CAPITAL PROJECTS

Bus Rapid Transit – Kingston Road (incl. Valley Farm Sidewalk)

Whitevale Road and Drainage Implementation Construction

William Jackson Drive Culvert Replacement

Sideline 24 Road Hard Surfacing

North East Corner of Finch Avenue and Altona Road – Sidewalk

Rouge SWM Pond Cleanout

Autumn SWM Pond Cleanout

New Neighbourhood Park – Geranium/Claremont

Greenwood Park Redevelopment Plan

Whitevale Park – Playground Replacement

Diana, Princess of Wales Park – Playground Replacement

Village Green Stonepay Development

Chickadee Park Playground Replacement

Beechlawn Park Multi-Use Pad

Valley Plentiful Community Garden Parking Lot

Claremont Memorial Park Playground Replacement

Dave Ryan Community Park

Bainbridge Drive Asphalt Resurfacing

Pickering Parkway Asphalt Resurfacing

Denvale Drive Asphalt Resurfacing

#### Proposed 2025 Capital Projects

Nighswander Bridge (Sideline 30) –

Guiderail Replacement

Wilson Bridge Replacement – Construction

Michell Bridge Replacement – Design

Greenburn Place Asphalt Resurfacing

Cherrywood Third Concession Road Culvert Replacement

Linwood Street Asphalt Resurfacing

Lodge Road Asphalt Resurfacing

The Esplanade South Asphalt Resurfacing

Pickering Museum Village Pedestrian Bridge Replacement

Park Gateway Feature – Seaton Recreation Complex

New Park Block at Old Operations Centre Site

Neighbourhood Park – Dersan Street and Tillings Road

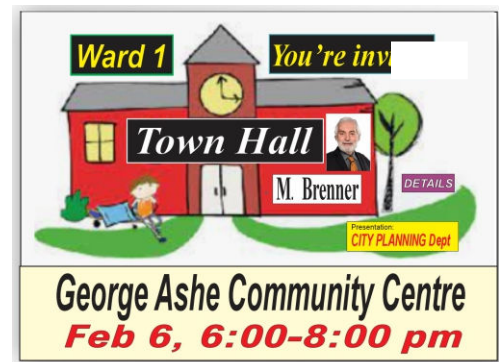
Outdoor Pickleball Court Complex at Diana Princess of Wales Park



City of  
**PICKERING**  
Councillor Maurice Brenner

Regional Councillor Ward 1

## Upcoming Town Hall



See **BRENNER**

## BRENNER

### *About Brenner TOWN HALLS*

Councillor Maurice Brenner has been doing Town Hall presentations for many years. Just some of the presentations done in the last couple of years:

- social assistance presentation by DARS director Margaret Eskin;
- Food Bank presentation by Lindsey Morrill, St. Paul-on-the-Hill Food Bank;
- Youth involvement with the City

Again, in the upcoming Town Hall, Brenner will have the City of Pickering Planning Department presenting about “*Pickering of Tomorrow*.” This will be an opportunity for attendees to ask about the planning for Pickering of Tomorrow. How will the City deal with...

### See *Brenner Brenner*

- The expected growth;
- The population explosion;
- The tremendous traffic congestion;
- The many problems expansion will bring?

Each town hall of the past few years has been a well-planned and a well-organized event making the evening informative and educational for the residents who attended.

This upcoming Town Hall will likely be an evening of worthwhile information, news and discussion.

### *The presentation*

The presentation will be done by the City's PLANNING DEPARTMENT which will be presenting, discussing and describing '*Pickering of Tomorrow*.' Condos, traffic congestion, population growth, retail places and City greenery will likely be just some of the topics in the PLANNING DEPT's presentation.

Every Brenner Town Hall has always been very informative and very worthwhile and this one should be even more interesting as we will learn what the Pickering of Tomorrow is expected to look like.

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## *Mayor Ashe Town Hall*



### NEW DIRECTIONS

Might the Mayor consider alternate ways to keep City residents informed:

- Town Halls at the central library would allow for larger crowds and be more like the town halls of old.
- Could the Mayor consider monthly podcasts, something along the lines of the YouTube videos.
- **The city's webpage:** Text publication works best for people as people can access at will, read at their own pace, and pause to evaluate and consider. The City's webpage would work for this, practical, steadfast and available on demand.

Read next page...

### *Mayor Ashe Town Hall*



# Mayor Ashe Town Hall

The ideal answer.

- Publish all the information **online**: the tax structure, the planning, the city responses, the words of the Police Chief, the Fire Chief, the City's chief accountant. [Read my interview with Fire Chief Stephen Boyd on my website at [www.szpin.ca](http://www.szpin.ca) to get my meaning.]

Disappointingly, as one of your most astute councillors has said, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink" in regard to people accessing the City's website for information.

Build a better site and they will come, Make it simpler, more succinct and easier to comprehend and they will come. Residents will spread and they will come. Those who miss out on the information will hear about their loss and they will come.

There is much room for improvement as to how the mayor keeps Pickering residents informed but the ball is in the mayor's court.

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## Editorial



T\*\*\*\* is a real threat to more than just Canada, now the whole world and to democracy everywhere.

You cannot do anything about the mad man. You have no vote in America. You do not have elected representatives in government there.

You can do something though. Watch the news, cross reference what you hear with reliable news sources you trust and

use. Stick with reputable news sources like the CBC, the BBC and reputable journalists like Dan Rather, Joyce White Vance and Heather Cox Richardson, American journalists known for being factual, truthful and objective.

Avoid the gossip rags like Facebook and Elon Musk's X. The CEO of Facebook, Suckerberg, has declared that Facebook will no longer use fact checkers so 'all' news gets reported without censorship. So Zuckerberg will post garbage as free speech allows everything. Garbage will be permitted now. The other, X, the CEO is a T\*\*\*\* lackey, enough said.

You may want to add your name to the **Action Network** petition, copy and paste this link into your Internet browser. There are many well-known Canadians on it now. Take a look at it...

[https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/pledge-for-canada-petition?source=direct\\_link&](https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/pledge-for-canada-petition?source=direct_link&)

Watch the news and stay onboard against T\*\*\*\*.

*Richard Szpin*

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