



Remember FERMO

EDITORIAL/MESSAGE: Watch the news is questionable

POLITICAL DESK: Messages from political officials, Mayor's monthly recap

RICHARD'S DESK: Mico comes to his new home

BLUE JAYS: The season is sinking like a brick in Lake Ontario

HEALTH: Many posts; most notable series re older women

BOOKS: Many books read, reviewed

TECHNOLOGY: AI is focus, repeatedly. For good reason.

LAST WORD: Appreciation and gratitude

[Some of the following material has been modified by AI.]

EDITORIAL, COMMENTS & OPINIONS:

You just cannot watch the news anymore. Why not?

It offers the same stories, day after day. They even use the same film clips repeatedly. If you stick to one news broadcast regularly, you will find they repeat topics, use the same video clips repeatedly, barely changing the script in new broadcasts.

The news broadcasters must be thinking they are getting new viewers every day, but is unlikely. Most people like a particular broadcaster and will view it regularly. New viewers are skimming telecasts, so they may not stay long enough to give the broadcaster a chance to win them over.

Daily news, when repeated over and over, will lose viewers. People get bored or want fresh views, new newscasts, not old news.

You cannot trust what you see. AI use is so prevalent and so capable in the digital world that you should be skeptical about anything you see. Not only can AI create unbelievably authentic looking images but now it can imitate any voice it hears.

Bottom line

Watch the news with a skeptical eye. What you see is what the broadcasters want you to see. It many not be completely true. It has been edited. Think about what you see. If you have doubts about it being completely true, confirm the story with other news sources.

POLITICAL Desk:

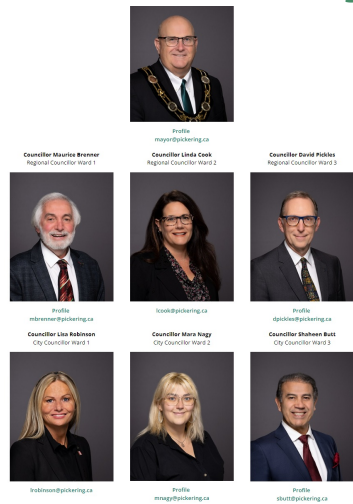
News from councillors, elected reps and community associations

Briefly:

- **Note:** We try to get updated text from the various politicians each month. We publish what we receive.
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[Note: No new messages are permitted during the campaign period.]

From the Pickering City Council



Mayor Ashe: MAY 2026 recap (TEXT), [CLICK ... -> ASHE](#)
M

Councillor Brenner newsletter link, [CLICK ... -> BRENNER](#)



Phil Warner
President



Peggy Bowie
President
Ph 416.903.3284



John Meloche
President



Pickering West Shore Community Association

Scott Loyst
President

RICHARD's Desk:

Briefly:

- **Mico:** Our new puppy has arrived.



Fermo's passing left our home feeling very empty. Every room, every nook where he used to lie, no Fermo. It was very sad. Those empty spaces weren't just empty spaces. They were constant reminders of our Fermo. He passed away in March.

The void was miserable. The emptiness was like a heavy weight bearing down on us all day long. I finally convinced Nadia we needed to refill the void, another dog.

The search was short as I returned to my searches from years ago when searching for Fermo. The "largest small dog." A Scottie was #1, a mini Schnauzer was #2.

Getting another Scottie was out of the question because it would have been a constant reminder and comparisons to Fermo. Too painful. The final choice became the mini Schnauzer.

MICO

A local breeder was chosen as we do not like the stress and trauma a puppy has to suffer in a long transit. Mico was bred in Burlington, an hour or so drive from our home.

The breeder confirmed she had a black puppy who would be ready for 're-homing' about mid May. Mico was born Mar 20, 2026...same day as Fermo had been born. What a

coincidence.

We brought Mico home May 17 and our home has been rejuvenated once more. This guy is pure joy...excited, curious, intelligent, responsive, quite obedient for a 9 week old puppy. The joy and elation has returned to our home.

HOME DISRUPTION BY PUPPY

It's not all fun and games. Many things changed once more and energy had to be devoted to puppy training. There were many things about this guy that were very positive: boundless curiosity, quick learning and attentive response to his name, staying close to me no matter where I went in the house.

There were so many things we needed to do or do again as we focused on training Mico. This guy was a fast learner but also had the universal trait of all terriers, OBSTINANCY and this guy had it in spades.

We still have accidents though very few as we learn his signals and his needs. We still have the issue of his constant nibbling on everything, normal for puppies. These issues will take time to resolve and train but this guy looks like a good learner, anxious, intelligent, willing and comprehending.

More about puppy training

I decided to start a series recording our training experiences, successes and challenges on my website. Check out the series... [PUPPY TRAINING](#)

Once more, our home is filled with laughter, fun, discovery and smiles...thanks to Mico.



Briefly:

- **Blue Jays:** The season is taking on the colours of misery and disappointment.

Changing the cap from Blue Jay to “fair weather fan” so early in the season would be premature and unreasonable. The season is just 2 months old and the Jays are 29-31, so it’s too soon to abandon support.

But it is fair to point out the problems and they are the same for most losing teams: pitching and batting.

Pitching looked like gold on paper at the start of the season. Some real gems, Cease, Yesavage, Gausman, and relievers who were treasures, Valardy, Fluhardy, Rogers. But that was all on paper. As the season unfolded, many of these so called gems, began to fade. The shine began to dull. Injuries, age, poor production. The shine left the mound and pitching became one of the team’s Achilles heals.

The other Achilles heal was the batting. The team was notorious for stranding runners on base. They were getting men on with singles, an occasional double but they could not deliver the fatal blows, runs. This became the major flaw for the team. They would get hits, often enough to win the game if only they could bring them in. They couldn’t

So the team is sinking slowly, game by game so today their losses outnumber their wins, 29 wins -31 losses.

Sure they have been minor league calibre play in the field, some gross errors that have hurt the team. Sure, injuries are adding up: Kirk, Badger, Scherzer, Springer, and others. But injuries impact every team. In the Jays’ case, they just added to the team’s woes.

The team has lost another series to another league competitor and have concluded their 17 day daily play stint. They are coming home for some rest, recover, recuperation and regrouping. Hopefully they can find some answers and apply the new strategies when they resume play. We gotta hope so.

HEALTH:

Briefly:

- **HEALTH:** I am constantly researching about HEALTH on my website as most of my site visitors are older adults, many in their 'golden years,' eager to learn how to maintain good health and continue ageing well for as long as possible.

I write about health often based on researched information from reliable sources such as the Mayo Clinic and the McMaster Optimum Aging portal. Though I publish many articles about health, I strongly urge visitors to always consult with their doctors when considering changes to their regimen.

Health Posts

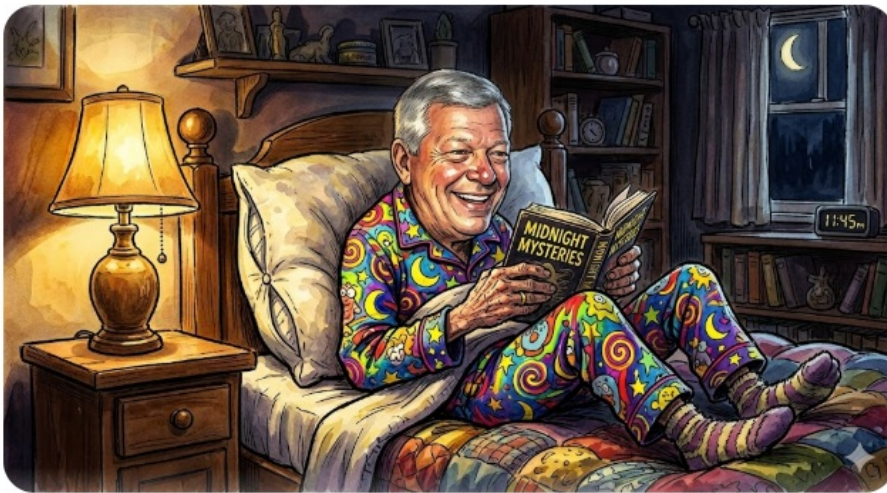
My posts relating to HEALTH can be found at [HEALTHPOSTS](#).

I wish everyone well and good health.

Books Shelf..

Briefly:

- **Books:** mental escapism, tools for learning, cerebral alternatives to TV



I read nightly, about a half hour to an hour before lights out. Habit? Wind down time? It relaxes me but I stick to light stuff...usually something by my favourite authors, Baldacci, Grisham and Gerritsen.

Richard reads

I keep a record of everything I read, more than 300 books, read, reviewed and recorded. I need the record as I forget the titles of many of the books I have already read. So it really helps to be able to examine the full list.

If you go to my website to www.szpin.ca Select “Richard reads reviews” from the **CATEGORY** drop down box on the right, You will see a portion of the list....



Richard reads a lot.

The list below shows the books I have read and reviewed. It reminds me and helps me remember what I have read.

Notice my favourite author is *Stuart Woods*. He writes 'adult comic books,' pure escapism, engaging entertainment. Nothing more but fun to read.

OTHER REVIEWS

← Older posts

- [The EDGE, David Baldacci](#)
- [ECHO BURNING, Lee Child](#)
- [EDUCATED, Tara Westover](#)
- [ELEPHANT WHISPERER, Lawrence Anthony](#)

On my website choose the category RICHARD READS to reveal the longer list and click these LINKS to see more

Newer posts →

Be sure to click the circled links to see more titles in the list.

Why I prefer Digital books and my iPad reader

I read almost all of my books on my iPad using the Libby app. I prefer digital reading to actual books as I can access the Internet at will to look up definitions, find locations on a map, even visit a particular places they have Internet websites. It is a richer and more useful way to read a book than the plain and simple hard copy. Some people prefer the old fashioned way. Good for them.

True Blue, David Baldacci

I like David Baldacci a lot. He writes a style that is engaging and entertaining and I have never been disappointed with any of his books.

I think *True Blue* was first published in 2009 but it feels fresh and as current as if it were published within the past year.

Review

If you're looking for a book that grabs you on page one and doesn't let go, *True Blue* delivers. Baldacci has built his reputation on fast-moving Washington thrillers, and this one fires on all cylinders.

The heart of the story is Mace Perry, a former D.C. cop who was framed, imprisoned, and comes out swinging with one goal — getting her badge back. She's impulsive, street-smart, and flawed in believable ways, which makes her easy to root for. Her partner Roy Kingman, a lawyer who stumbles into a murder investigation at his own firm, is a solid foil — more cautious and by-the-book, which plays nicely against Mace's instincts.

The plot is classic Baldacci: layered, twisty, and soaked in Washington

atmosphere. What starts as a law firm murder spirals into something touching national security and D.C.'s darker machinery. Some secondary characters feel thin, and seasoned thriller readers may see the villain coming – but those are minor gripes.

True Blue is exactly what a good thriller should be: propulsive, entertaining, and hard to put down. Mace Perry is the kind of protagonist you want to spend more time with – and luckily, Baldacci obliges in follow-up books.

Recommended without hesitation for thriller lovers.

Technology Desk:

Briefly:

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** I write about AI, a lot. It's a tool that every computer user should have in their arsenal: to write text, to summarize, polish and rewrite text to generate images, to do research, to help with productivity and project organization. In short, it is an incredibly useful tool becoming increasingly helpful the more you use it

I write about AI a lot because it is one of the most important tools I have in my computer arsenal. I use it to generate articles as inspiration, to organize material, to edit and refine written text, to summarize long articles, to simplify complex articles, to create and edit images. I am just scrapping the surface of the uses and value AI has to my work.

My AI of choice

There are many AI's available online: Anthropic's Claude, ChatGPT, Dall- e, Perplexity and many, many more.

I use Claude most often as it feels personal in its responding, a conversational style that I like. However because I do not have total faith in the authenticity of any AI response, I often use ChatGPT to supplement the Claude results.

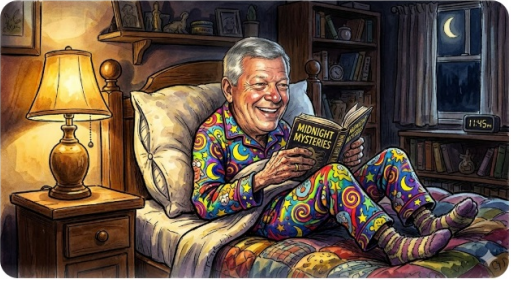
Subscription

I liked and used Claude so much I subscribed to it for approx. \$20/month. For my work, website blogging, article writing, image creation, internet research, newsletter publishing, it is a very worthwhile expense.

This newsletter is enhanced and supplemented by AI. It has helped develop topics, edited or polished my copy and helped find more information where I needed it. As a search tool, it far surpasses Google Search, Google Search on steroids I say.

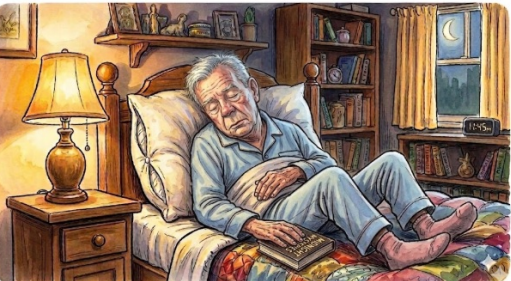
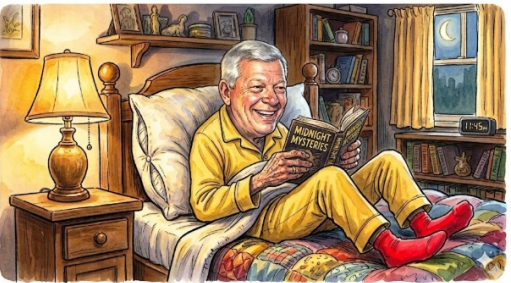
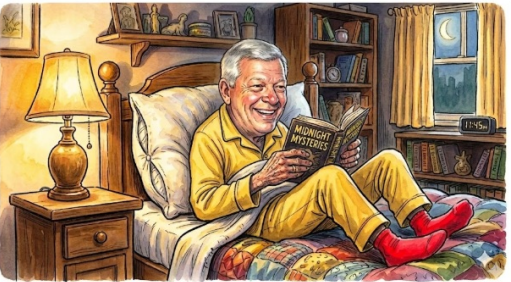
AI create images

AI can produce images on demand. More importantly it can edit the images you request. Here are two images generated by AI...



Images edited by AI

Each image below has a change AI generated in seconds.





SAFETY/GUARD RAILS

AI does have safety guard rails in place, as it should. When asked to insert the following image into my monthly header, it refused explaining the image violated its programmed regulations on violence....



I have not pursued this further, but I get the sense that something violent, criminal, and such will not be published as AI explains. I think there are likely work-arounds that hackers and moderately experienced computer users will learn to circumvent very quickly.

PROMPTS

Ask and AI generates...know this public figure ?



CAUTIONS

AI can be a useful tool and a lot of fun. However, in malevolent hands it can become a tool that puts the boots to validity, factuality and truth. These images were generated in minutes. One can see that changing the requests, can turn innocent images into less acceptable results.

Just imagine how news images can be, may be, and likely are being edited and modified to suit the source.

[The images generated were not done to offend.]



Each month I derive a lot of satisfaction and pleasure in creating a newsletter that offers information, news, and humorous diversion to its readers. I have given AI a lot of attention over the past while because it is such a useful tool and also because it is being used by so broadly in the digital world. Readers need to be aware of this powerful tool, not as something to fear but as a tool that is being used everywhere in the digital world. Knowledge and awareness are important to keeping you safe and secure in this dynamic and endlessly changing world.

Thank you everyone who has made a donation each of whom is sent the newsletter automatically. Others can view full editions on my website at www.szpin.ca ... click the widget



June marks the beginning of summer....it will be a hot one folks.

Best,

Richard, Nadia & Mico