



## The DESKS

1. **FRONT DESK:** *A milestone in world history*
  2. **EDITORIAL DESK:** *Genocide in Gaza*
  3. **POLITICAL DESK:** *Elected rep messages*
  4. **RICHARD's DESK:** *The NEIGHBOURHOOD*
  5. **HEALTH DESK:** *Brain health*
  6. **OBIT:** *PetValu greeter passes away*
  7. **TECH DESK:** *Two essential apps*
  8. **FUN DESK:** *Take a break*
  9. **LAST WORD:** *Better days*
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## **FRONT DESK:**



### **Milestone in history of the world**

We are witnessing a milestone in history, the dying days of the American empire.

AmeriKans must be crying. Many voters there must have voters' remorse. Sadly, there is little they can actually do about their choice to lead their nation. At least not until 2028 for next presidential election.

Now they constantly whine and lament with every elder or journalist soap boxing cautionary and 'woe is us' declarations about their President.

### **Constructive action needed**

Rather than whine and verbalize their ongoing discontent, AmeriKans should turn to constructive actions to oppose this president or prevent his constant erosion of AmeriKan democracy/

It is not for us to say what they should or should not do in defence of AmeriKan democracy, but words, protests, marches and late night TV show criticisms are not likely effective strategies to stop its destruction.

AmeriKans need to take concrete, constructive and real steps in fighting this would-be autocrat. Their democracy is disintegrating before their very eyes. Their constitutionally protected right to free speech is in serious question as shown by the cancellations of late night TV shows, Colbert and Kimmel(restored).

This is a milestone in the world's history. We are seeing the collapse of the AmeriKan empire at the hands of one megalomaniac.

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## **EDITORIAL DESK:**



There was a time, not that long ago.....  
the United States was the peacekeeper of the world. Where there was a trouble spot, an insurrection, a rebellion, the threat of a regime change, the United States would send troops and quell the unrest, and life in the world would go on.

### **World tires of American dominance**

Maybe fatigue set in internationally, maybe countries have tired of the U.S. usurping regional power once they had calmed the disruption, maybe nations became angry with American capitalism that exploited the quelled regions for their potential profit. Nonetheless, the U.S. is no longer the policeman of the world.

### **What has happened?**

Maybe it was the leadership change in the White House, maybe the shift in economic goals by American capitalists, maybe actually being sucked into a real war, whatever the reason, the U.S. is not the world policeman any longer.

The world looks to the United Nations for policing of the hot spots of the world. If

this can be done with hot air, the United Nations is your man.

The policeman's role has definitely shifted away from the U.S. Nations now believe they can control regional uprisings on their own by imposing sanctions and embargoes to bring the recalcitrant perpetrators to their knees. They believe trade bans and economic prohibitions will do the trick. A delusion.

Whatever the case may be, there is no policeman of the world any longer. Hence, nations that want to flex their military muscles and annex neighbouring territories can do so at will, limited only by the military power or defensive determination of the victim.

### **Israel and Gaza**

Israel is the classic example of this flexing of military power. The nation has decided to destroy territory that Palestinians call their homeland, Gaza. It is not important why Israel has decided to do this, nor how they are doing it, nor the extent of the suffering and killing they are causing. The point is no policeman to force Israel to review its aggressive behaviour. There is no international accountability for the genocide of the Israeli military. No one can stop Israel from continuing this destruction. There is no policeman that can step up to Israel with words of support for the Palestinians backed by military action.

### **Russia and Ukraine**

The same can be said about the conflict in the Ukraine. Russia recognizes that the U.S. will not get involved in this conflict in any way beyond a few words of rebuke and revulsion for the atrocities Russia is inflicting on Ukraine. The United Nations, oh please!

The world is a sorrier place without the U.S. policeman. But we must be cautious what we wish for as the U.S. of today could be more harmful in anything it does in the cause of world peace. Its leader blows hot and cold, allies with and supports nations that are aggressors rather than condemning, criticizing and controlling the regional powder kegs.

We live in sad times. Peace management is now relegated to the effectiveness of the hot air, something that will never push the rogue nations into any kind of retreat and peace. And the choices we had were not appealing. Like choosing between "a rock and a hard place," American military occupation<sup>(intervention)</sup> vs. American capitalism<sup>(economic exploitation)</sup>.

### **Adding insult to injury**

No nation seems ready to actually back their criticisms with military action to

quell the regional disruptions. We live in a world where such nations are damned if they do and damned when they don't.

Meanwhile, troubled regions that once could believe the American policeman would come to their assistance, now are desperate as that defender has disappeared with the debilitation of the American presidency. Gaza, hope is gone. Ukraine, gone too.

# **POLITICAL DESK:**

*News from councillors, elected reps and community associations*



## ***Political commentary:***

Each elected representative was sent an invitation asking for an update about their work, their constituency and their interaction with their community members.

One responded.

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## ***From the PICKERING City Council***



Profile  
mayor@pickering.ca

**Councillor Maurice Brenner**  
Regional Councillor Ward 1



Profile  
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**Councillor Linda Cook**  
Regional Councillor Ward 2



lcook@pickering.ca

**Councillor David Pickles**  
Regional Councillor Ward 3



Profile  
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**Councillor Lisa Robinson**  
City Councillor ward 1



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**Councillor Mara Nagy**  
City Councillor Ward 2



Profile  
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**Councillor Shaheen Butt**  
City Councillor Ward 3



Profile  
sbutt@pickering.ca

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## **RESPONSE RECEIVED FROM: SHAHEEN BUTT**

*Kevin Ashe*



City of  
**PICKERING**

Shaheen Butt  
City Councillor – Ward 3



### Finding Connection in a Changing World

In today's fast-paced world, where headlines often bring news of unrest and uncertainty, a challenge close to home is unfolding, one that deeply affects the lives of many - senior loneliness.

Across Pickering and the broader Durham Region, older adults are experiencing social isolation. This isn't just a passing phase; it's a growing concern. For many seniors, especially those living alone or with limited mobility, the sense of disconnection can feel overwhelming. Yet amid these challenges, something wonderful is happening, communities are coming together with compassion, creativity, and purpose.

Local organizations, volunteers, and neighbours across Pickering are stepping forward with compassion and creativity to support older adults in meaningful ways. Through the City's 55+ Recreation Services, a wide range of programs are available that encourage seniors to stay active, socially connected, and engaged in life. From fitness classes and workshops to social clubs and informative wellness clinics, these offerings foster opportunities for connection and vibrant living.

The City of Pickering showcases its dedication to older adults through its 55+ Aging Well Together and 55+ Community web pages, which feature special events, educational programs, and joyful celebrations like Seniors' Month. These initiatives foster inclusive environments where older adults feel acknowledged and supported.

As Pickering and Durham look ahead, connection is not just a dream, it's a reality being built every day. With every shared story, every new friendship, and every act of kindness, the community is proving that even in uncertain times, we can create a future that feels warmer and more welcoming.

Please visit the City of Pickering website at [www.pickering.ca](http://www.pickering.ca) for more information about programs and services for seniors.

Shaheen Butt  
City Councillor - Ward 3

**Brenner**

Councillor

**Maurice**

Regional

Ward 1

Regional Councillor

Pickering

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Councillor - Ward 2

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***Linda Cook***

Deputy Mayor &

Ward 2

Beautiful City of

***David Pickles***

Regional

***Mara Nagy***

City Councillor

Ward 2

***Lisa Robinson***

City Councillor

Ward 1



no update this month

***Phil Warne***

President

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***Peggy Bowie***  
President  
*(Ph 416.903.3284)*

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**PWSCA**  
Pickering West Shore Community Association

***Scott Loyst***  
President

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## Richard's Desk: 'The NEIGHBOURHOOD'

- **My neighbourhood:** I have lived in Pickering, just east of Toronto for over 30 years. It's a marvellous city with many community events and activities. It is a great place to live with a municipal government that is very active and involved in improving the livability of our community.



A couple examples of how our community is active and energized at improving its livability:

A bit of noise in our neighbourhood, our Fiddlers-Tomlinson neighbourhood committee held its annual street party. Neighbours, special friends and civic leaders were invited to celebrate summer with burgers, hot dogs, corn and music too. It was a blast.



The Rougemont neighbourhood held its annual community event, their FALL CORN ROAST. What a party! What a crowd! What a day! A great event as every participant will reinforce.

[Visit our blog at [www.szpin.ca](http://www.szpin.ca) for photos and details -> **CORN**

Nice party....3rd year in a row now !

# HEALTH:

## **Briefly:**

- **PROMOTING BRAIN HEALTH:** A tougher battle as we age.

[A preface to this section: The goal here is to bring attention to a problem we all face, aging and decline of the brain. Upon self-evaluation and self examination, most adults will find memory loss and less problem solving capability. Below are some strategies and ideas to consider using in the cerebral battle facing everyone as they age.]

## **Why is brain health important?**

Promoting brain health is important because our brain is the control centre of our body and plays a critical role in our overall well-being. The brain controls everything from our thoughts, learning and memory, language, visual and spatial ability, emotions, and behaviour; to our movement, senses, and bodily functions. *Maintaining good brain health can help prevent or delay the onset of cognitive decline and brain diseases such as Alzheimer disease* that there are several actions you can take to promote brain health and delay or prevent cognitive impairment.

**It is never too early or too late to reduce your risk of dementia.**

## **What can affect your brain health?**

Brain health can be affected by age-related changes in the brain, conditions such as stroke or traumatic brain injury, disorders such as depression, substance use disorders or addiction, and diseases such as Alzheimer disease and other types of dementia. While some factors affecting brain health cannot be changed, there are many lifestyle changes that might make a difference.

## **What do we mean by dementia risk reduction?**

There are three main areas of consideration regarding dementia risk reduction:

1. Decreasing the lifetime risk of dementia
2. Delaying the onset
3. Possibly slowing the progression (this is sometimes called 'secondary prevention', as the person already has the disease)

### **What do we mean by risk factors?**

A risk factor is something that increases the chance of developing a disease. We can divide risk factors for dementia into two kinds: non-modifiable and modifiable.

Non-modifiable risk factors are ones that are outside of your control, like your age or your genetic make-up. Modifiable risks are ones that you can do something about, and we're going to focus on those in this detailed overview.

### **The impact of lifestyle on brain health**

Recent research has shown that there are several actions you can take to promote brain health and delay or prevent cognitive impairment. These actions relate to modifiable risk factors that you can change through healthy lifestyle behaviour and managing certain health conditions.

### **The important modifiable risk factors for dementia?**

Modifiable risk factors are the behaviour, lifestyle choices, and health conditions that can be changed in order to reduce the risk of developing certain diseases or health problems. These risk factors include things like smoking, poor diet, lack of exercise, excessive alcohol consumption, and high blood pressure, among others. By making changes to these modifiable risk factors, you can improve your overall health and reduce your risk of developing certain diseases or health problems like dementia and cancer.

### **How much can I reduce the risk?**

This is an active area of research, but The Lancet Commission identified several modifiable risk factors that might **prevent or delay up to 45% of dementias**. Two other recent studies found that engaging in 2-3 healthy lifestyle behaviours could lower your risk of Alzheimer disease by 37%, while **doing 4-5 healthy behaviours could lower your risk by 60%**. The behaviours were  $\geq$  150 minutes/week of moderate/vigorous-intensity physical activity, not smoking, not drinking too much alcohol, a high-quality Mediterranean type of diet, and engagement in cognitive activities.

**The more of these factors you can incorporate into your life, the better it is for your overall brain health.**

Modifiable risk factors aren't the only type of risk factors for dementia, there are also 'non-modifiable' ones. Non-modifiable risk factors are ones that can't be changed like **aging, family history, or genetics**. For example, the odds of developing dementia increase with age; and there are a small number of dementias that run in families and are often associated with particular genes.

It's important to remember that most cases of dementia aren't related to family history or specific genetic disorders. And a significant amount of dementia may be associated with several modifiable risk factors. There are also certain environmental factors – such as lower levels of education in early life – that are important things for us to try to address as a society, but might not be things that you can modify now.

### **Ways to promote brain health**

In the following sections, we're going to focus on those things that you **can** change to promote brain health, where there is evidence of dementia risk reduction. Many of these factors are also associated with other health benefits, such as reducing your risk of cancer or other chronic diseases.

The World Health Organization and the Lancet Commission and others have examined the evidence and made recommendations for several ways in which people can promote brain health and reduce their risk of

developing dementia. These include the following:

- Physical activity, sedentary behaviour, and sleep
  - Weight management, diet, and nutrition
  - Blood vessel health
  - Smoking and alcohol
  - Cognitive (brain) and social activity
  - Hearing and vision loss
  - Other health conditions and medication adverse effects.
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## **OBITUARY: *Petunia*, 2011-2025**



It is with a sad and heavy heart, we announce the passing of *Petunia*, the potbellied ambassador and greeter at Karen Sloan's **PetValu** store in Pickering.

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A heart-shattering silence has fallen over our home, and my soul aches with a grief I never knew I could feel. The emptiness where her familiar, gentle snores once filled the closet is a cruel and constant reminder that my beloved Toony has gone. I remember that day, long ago, when I saw a small ad for potbellied piglets. I was a new business owner, a busy woman searching for a companion to light up a lonely store, a gentle soul to soothe the quiet spaces in my heart.

Petunia, my Toony, was so much more than a mascot; she was the missing piece of our family. She was a loyal, lovable and loving companion who chose to sleep tucked away in the closet, her soft snores a lullaby to our weary day. People traveled for miles just to catch a glimpse of our sweet Toony in our pet store. And as they fell in love with her, my heart swelled with a hope that they would understand what I had learned—the painful truth that an exotic pet is a huge, life-altering commitment.

So many people were cruelly deceived by the term "*mini pig*," not knowing the immense size they would grow to be. They didn't know about the frequent, difficult

hoof trims, or the expense of a professional—because a dog groomer can't trim a pig's hooves. They didn't see the ramps we built, the enclosures we had to create, the way we had to change our home for her safety and freedom. We made those changes willingly, but I was saddened for all the people who couldn't, or wouldn't do the same.

Toony came into a home with two senior dogs and a pair of unimpressed cats, but her spirit was so pure and loving that she won them all over. My dogs, very curious at first, soon saw Toony as one of their own, and she, in turn, learned to behave just like them.

Every day, for years, we would make the journey to the store, just Toony and me. She'd stop traffic, a gentle, dignified saunter in her custom harness and leash, on her way to greet the adoring store customers. We lived this beautiful, simple life together, a happy time for both of us, until the day I realized she was too big for it. Her vision was poor, a sad reality for many potbellies, and this made the eager hands of her fans a terrifying threat. The decision to stop bringing her to the store shattered my heart into a thousand pieces, but her well-being was all that mattered.

Toony's picture remains in our store window, PetValu, a permanent tribute to a love that changed everything. Our social media overflowed with stories and photos of her happy retirement, her joyful face a reminder that we all deserve a chance to rest and be loved. Now, our hearts ache, voided by where her incredible presence once was. Yet, her memory be with us forever, joyful memories which she has gifted us. We've been overwhelmed by the memories our customers have shared, in every single one, Toony lives on. She will continue to live on in all our hearts, a testament to the fact that those who are truly loved never really leave us.

*Karen Sloan*

**TECH DESK:**



**Briefly:**

- **SOFTWARE** - Favourite software varies with every computer user. Below please find TWO that I think are absolutely essential for any user of win10: **EVERYTHING** and **SPEED DIAL 2 extention**

## ***SPEED DIAL 2***

This is an extension in Google browser. It is an app that manages all the websites you visit and records them as 'bookmarks' for easy access and recall. It is amazingly useful for recalling and returning to websites you have visited before, thought highly of, and wanted to keep on call for future access. Read details at ->

### **[SPEEDDIAL2](#)**

## ***EVERYTHING*** (Search Everything)

This app is my right hand man, so to speak. Whenever I need to find something on my computer. It is easy to use, amazingly comprehensive in finding things, and doesn't need a "PhD in computers" to use. An essential app to put onto your desk top. Read more at -> **[EVERYTHING](#)**

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## **FUN DESK:**

### **Briefly:**

- **FUN** - you deserve a little break....but this week, no puzzle, no wordle, no play toy... I urge you to put **Saturday, Oct 4** on your calendar



Even if you're not a baseball fan, you should watch the Blue Jays in their drive to the ultimate dream of every baseball team, victory in the WORLD SERIES. You'll catch the excitement and the fervour in spite of yourself.

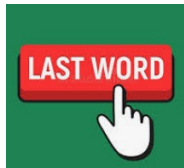
### **Why watch the Blue Jays?**

Watch the Blue Jays to become immersed in the joy of being human. The team spirit they display is the human spirit rising to the epitome of the zest for life, the excitement of living and the joy of camaraderie. Every player shows an enthusiasm and an excitement you only see in young kids, innocent and untainted by the toils and troubles of living. Each player shows a happiness that bypasses any verbal description. You just see it on their faces, in their smiles and in their energized vigour as they play the game.

### **Invite you friends, order the wings and pizza**

The Jays are going to make it a party! These players have the skills, have the dedication, have the determination to take the team to the ultimate goal. They are young, focused and driven. They'll make a 'game of it.' Maybe more importantly, they will give you the show of a lifetime as these are kids in 25, 35 and even 40 year old bodies, kids who are excited and happy as all get out in what they are doing, chasing a dream, chasing it not just with fellow teammates but with 'best buds.'

***Really worth watching !!!***



***Bittersweet days...***

Fall is a season filled with bittersweetness, days when summer struggles to warm us with a few more days of summer's glory, nights that see temperature drops, harbingers of the coming harshness of winter.

**Take a break...**

Take a break from your many responsibilities and demands of your time and get out there...don a sweater, a light jacket, grab the leash and call your best buddy to join you as you enjoy a refreshing walk in the Fall's finest.

For those of you who cannot take that kind of break,

click -> [CynthiaERIVO](#)



***NADIA & FERMO TOO !***