



Regional Review

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM DEPARTMENT

Tourism spotlight shines on Pickering waterfront

For many, the City of Pickering shoreline may conjure up images of Ontario Power Generation's nuclear power generating station and wind turbine. But this fast-growing municipality's waterfront is far from being only about steel and concrete. The Regional Municipality of Durham, Economic Development and Tourism Department and the City of Pickering recently teamed up to showcase the urban tourism oasis that lies beneath the industrial shoreline.

Frenchman's Bay, one of a series of coastal wetlands along Lake Ontario, is the natural habitat for a diverse array of wildlife. A natural barrier beach separates the bay from Lake Ontario, calming the water and creating the perfect setting for recreational activities such as canoeing, yachting, birdwatching and fishing. "There's a lot to see and do here, so local residents and visitors use this as a recreational hub," said Michelle Pongracz, Environmental Awareness Co-ordinator for Pickering.

Led by the Pickering Dragon Boat Club, members of the media and elected officials toured the bay by dragon boats to learn more about the success of watershed rehabilitation efforts made in recent years.



Pickering Mayor Dave Ryan (second from right) and guests on a recent tour of Pickering waterfront are greeted by Y'OAR Waterfront Winery owner Gary McGill.

Stewardship activities aimed to restore open spaces along Pickering's waterfront are ongoing, added Pongracz as she pointed to the East Spit—six acres of natural space that became accessible to the public this spring.

Pickering Nautical Village is also a big draw for both residents and visitors. From stores offering boat and marine supply rentals, to those

specializing in wine, tea, crème brûlée and even tattoos, it's hard to believe such an eclectic mix of retail choices can be found along the barely 500-metre stretch at the south end of Liverpool Road.

"People are looking for things to do in their own backyards," said Tourism Manager Kerri King, noting the rising popularity of "staycations" due to tough economic times. "Durham

region really has a lot to offer to those that are staying home for summer."

Along with tourism activities, area businesses are ready to provide support to the local economy as well. "We hire all our staff locally," said Port Restaurant's Todd Morgan, who is also keen on supporting Durham's farmers by using as much local ingredients as possible. "Durham has lots of great bounty," he added.

Staff receives prestigious business communication award

Tourism Manager Kerri King was recently recognized by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) with a Gold Quill Award. An Award of Merit in the Special Events—Internal or External category was presented to King for excellence in business communication for the Durham Tourism initiative, Gates Open: Savour Durham Tour.

King accepted the award at the Gold Quill gala dinner and awards ceremony on June 8, during IABC's international conference in San Francisco. This year's Gold Quill Awards competition received nearly 1,000 entries from 26 countries. Of these, 122 were selected to receive awards.

Gates Open: Savour Durham Tour is an annual weekend event

that celebrates the region's natural resources and cultural heritage. For the last three years, Durham Tourism and Durham Farm Fresh Marketing Association have partnered to produce this fall event to showcase Durham region's finest farms. Gates Open invites families to tour participating farms across the eight local area municipalities, and learn about regional agriculture through a variety of fun and interactive activities.

"To be recognized along with the work of other professional communicators really shows the event's high calibre, and staff's creativity and commitment to excellence," said King. "I look forward to promoting local tourism and encouraging

collaboration between key business sectors with Gates Open again this year. Planning is already in full swing."

IABC is a global network of communication professionals committed to improving organizational effectiveness through strategic communication. For more than 36 years, IABC's annual Gold Quill Awards program has honoured excellence in business communication, offering professional communicators an opportunity to have their work evaluated by expert judges and showcased among peers. Winners represent the best in organizational communication and their work plans serve as best practices for professional communicators.



The challenge of building a sustainable community and developing long-term solutions that meet current and future energy needs has become the defining infrastructure and development issue of our time.

On Thursday, Oct. 1, Durham Strategic Energy Alliance (DSEA) will be hosting its second annual conference to deconstruct the sustainable community through case studies, and reveal the technologies and partnerships needed to design and build the future. Informed speakers will also discuss timely topics such as infrastructure requirements, energy generation and distribution, planning and implementation.

The conference will be held at Ajax Convention Centre, 550 Beck Cres., Ajax. For more information and to register, visit www.forum.dsea.ca.

MAKING BUSINESS HAPPEN

Redefining Agriculture

The Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee (DAAC) is hosting the seventh annual Durham regional farm tour. This year's tour, Redefining Agriculture, will be held at various locations in the City of Pickering on Thursday, Sept. 17.

This annual farm tour intends to give participants a first-hand look at the future of Durham's vital agricultural sector. In addition to highlighting agriculture's importance and diversity, the tour aims to encourage all levels of government, the education sector and public agencies to learn more about this sector. Those directly involved in agriculture will also share their unique perspectives on current issues and trends.

The 2008 tour showcased farms in the City of Oshawa, with approximately 110 participants. In previous years, tours were also hosted in Brock, Clarington, Scugog, Uxbridge and Whitby/Ajax.

With some of the richest soil in Ontario, Durham region sustains a large and diverse agricultural sector. As the second-largest goods-producing sector in Durham, agriculture has a major economic impact on the regional economy. According to the 2006 Census of Canada, primary production alone accounted for approximately \$240 million in gross farm receipts.

DAAC is a group of volunteers that provides advice to The Regional Municipality of Durham's Planning Committee, and staff, on agricultural and related rural issues affecting Durham region.

For more information on this tour, contact The Regional Municipality of Durham, Planning Department at 1-800-372-1102. To learn more about programs and initiatives that support the region's agri-businesses, visit www.durhambusiness.ca.