

New Milton Fire Chief has firefighting roots in Acton

By: Harry Rudolfs

Long-time Acton resident and part-time Halton Hills firefighter Dave Pratt was sworn in as Milton Fire Chief on July 1. Pratt was hired as deputy of support services for the MFD in 2008, and was appointed to the new position with the departure of former chief Brian Ellsworth.

Pratt will be overseeing the operation of four fire stations and a staff of about 120 people, including full-timers, part-timers and volunteers. Milton is a fast-growing, sprawling community and Pratt will be at the helm when the Town opens yet another fire station in 2019.

"Challenges for many fire departments is to provide the best service levels possible with the resources provided by Council," he said via an



Milton Fire Chief Dave Pratt

email interview. "In Milton, with our rapid growth and increasing diversity, there are other factors that need to be considered with respect to station location, staffing levels and communication with our residents."

Pratt has lived in Acton since 1996. He's a graduate of Ryerson University

and the Ontario Fire College. He began his career as a volunteer firefighter in Acton in 1998 and was hired on by Halton Hills FD in 2000 where he attained the rank of captain.

"I knew nothing about firefighting when I got started and had tremendous mentors in Halton Hills that taught me the craft," Pratt said.

He expressed enthusiasm about his new position. "It is the best job in the world. You have the opportunity to work with great people, you get to help others and make a difference in the community each and every day."

"When people don't know who to call they call the Fire Department...I compare fire service staff to elite athletes, they are highly qualified and have to be professional in a multitude of disciplines."

WORD ON THE STREET

With Jane Dougan

How do you keep your kids entertained during the summer?



Patty Getty with Alex: "The playground at Prospect Park and Fairy Lake are amazing—the zip line in the playground, it's clean, it's not too busy. I've taken Alex to many parks but we like that one best."



Matt Patenaude: "I have a two-year old son and a daughter who's almost five. Taking them swimming is a big way, kids programs, indoor pools, lots of parks. If it is too hot or rainy, then bouncy castles, jungle gym, Play with Clay in Guelph. The children's playground at Prospect Park is great!"



Heather Moon with Kiera, Grayson and Anthony: "Mostly we've been swimming, playing soccer, and at the family farm. Hopefully, we'll go camping or to an amusement park."



Amanda Warden with Olivia and Hannah: "They're usually with me at [the Store] in Acton or at home hanging out. I try to keep them occupied with crafts and stuff. They're really crafty so the store is a great place for them."




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