

Easter Bunny is excited for Aurora return at Saturday's Egg Hunt



By Brock Weir

Easter is this weekend and the famous rabbit behind our favourite chocolate eggs is 'egg-cited' (his word!) to be hopping back to Aurora this Saturday to spread some sweet and festive cheer.

This Saturday, April 14, the Town of Aurora, in conjunction with the Girl Guides, will be taking over the Aurora Community Arboretum and Seniors' Centre for the annual Easter Egg Hunt.

Running from 9.30 a.m. to 1 p.m., the drop-in event is a family favourite with egg hunts through the woods to suit Easter revellers of all ages, Easter-themed games and crafts, and a special pancake breakfast served by the Aurora Optimists.

This past Thursday, despite the cold, the wind, and the rain, the Easter Bunny and event organizers were on site to strategize just where he should hide his eggs. In between trips through the arboretum, however, he stopped to share his thoughts on the big day with The Auroran.

Brock Weir: So, I can imagine you're hoping Easter Saturday brings some better weather than this today!

Easter Bunny: I am not one to comment on weather, but I am very enthusiastic that the hunt is not today!

BW: The weather did cause some problems last year though!

EB: There were a lot of activities last year we weren't able to bring to fruition because we were bouncing back from the ice storm that happened on Good Friday of last year. This year we're welcoming that Easter falls into April where we're anticipating better climates. Of course, we always want to keep the Easter Egg hunt still egg-citing, so we continually evaluate the activities from last year and decide what new items to bring in this year. Back by popular demand, we're bringing in our Bunny Bowling, which has been requested over the last couple of years.

BW: You're going to bowl bunnies?

EB: We have some really cute wooden-figured bunnies that kids of all ages can play. The sport of bowling is easy for them, especially with their size and dexterity. With Bunny Bowling, the kids always have fun mimicking this popular game in an Easter Fashion.

BW: What can you tell us about your egg-placing strategy? I can see you take it very seriously!

EB: We like to be very cognizant of the age range of the little egg hunters because we will have children as young as two who aren't entirely steady on their feet and then we will have children between the ages of 10 and 12 wanting to get into the game of it. We're very strategic in setting out two areas for the different age groups just because the younger children will take more time hunting for the eggs. With the trees in the Arboretum we have to make sure that the branches are in good shape at the anticipated height of the hunters and all those sorts of things. There are a lot of safety precautions in place for this ? and we also have to make sure there is an actual hunt involved. A lot of time goes into this particular activity.

BW: What other activities are going to be ongoing throughout the day?

EB: We are very fortunate to also have another important partner, which is the Aurora Optimist Club which put on a fantastic pancake breakfast in the West Mackenzie Hall and the pancake breakfast is always really well attended. It gives families the chance to sit down, have a meal at whatever time works for them throughout the special event. Then, inside, we have a lot activities. We have the famous face painting and when the kids make their bunny ears and also craft stations. We also have interactive games and this is where the bunny bowling is. We have some Minute To Win it games and everything is Easter themed. We also have our famous baby chicks and baby bunnies on display!

BW: Our readers know that Mayor Dawe and other community groups are on a health kick to make Aurora Canada's most active community. As the Easter Bunny, have you been roped into this as well?

EB: The Mayor is very supportive and very keen to incorporate those elements into our events and one of our bigger activities is called the Hopstacle and it is proudly going to be presented by Activate Aurora. They will be on site putting together that activity which also gives them the opportunity for further working with the community to spread awareness about Activate Aurora. What they're about, what they're trying to achieve, and with their principles that has certainly been in the forefront of our minds with planning activities because we want them to be interactive. We're always really happy to provide crafts but I think we have a really healthy balance between the physical activities as well as the traditionally well-loved activities such as the crafts.

BW: What are you doing to keep your energy level up for the big day?

EB: It is always great that we get into physical shape because there is a lot of bending and reaching at this particular event. With about 3,600 people that do attend, we are constantly refilling eggs in the egg hunt zone. The event is 9.30 ? 1 p.m. but that is still a significant period of time with the thousands of people who do attend. It is challenging keeping your energy up but they do it very well year after year. Of course I keep a small stash of chocolate for myself which, after Easter morning happens, I don't need to worry about saving it for anyone else! I have my little bit of chocolate breakfast!

Wristbands for Saturday's Easter Egg Hunt are on sale now at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex, Aurora Town Hall and the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex for \$6 per child. Parents and guardians are free. Wrist bands must be purchased in advance and will not be available on site. For more, call 905-726-4762 or visit www.aurora.ca.