

Easter Bunny is hopping excited for Saturday's Egg Hunt

By Brock Weir

Easter is a little bit later than usual this year and the Easter Bunny has been taking the extra time to get in the zone for their biggest weekend of the year ? not to mention a traditional visit to Aurora.

On Saturday, April 20, the Town of Aurora will once again host the annual Aurora Easter Egg Hunt at the Aurora Seniors' Centre.

Doors open to the fun at 9.30 a.m., with Egg Hunts running between 10.30 a.m. and 12.30 p.m.

Additional family-friendly activities will be spread out throughout the Aurora Seniors' Centre and adjacent Aurora Community Arboretum. Inside the Seniors' Centre, crafts and games will be running along with a pancake breakfast hosted by the Optimist Club of Aurora for a nominal fee.

Ahead of the big day, the Easter Bunny sat down with The Auroran for a sneak peek at the plans.

The Auroran: What have you been doing with all this extra time ahead of Easter?

Easter Bunny: It has certainly enabled me to make more treats ? and I think it certainly enables kids to make sure they will all be worthy of their treats on Easter Morning. I quite often like a late Easter because I know the ground is a lot harder for me to hop on! Sometimes when Easter is in March, there's still often snow and some parts of Canada are really wet. Having it in April means I can clean my feet less.

TA: But that means organizers have had more time to prepare here in Aurora, as well. What have you heard about what's in store?

EB: Well, I have not seen this firsthand, but I am very excited to see it. I understand that once all the kids find their special eggs and they redeem them for their goodie prize, they are going to be redeeming their eggs from an Easter-decorated crooked hut, which has been all jazzed up. I have no idea what these event coordinators are talking about, but they are hopping excited about it. In the past, there has always been a tent set up for the kids to redeem their eggs and this year there is a physical crooked hut ready to go and apparently it has been painted in my favourite colours ? blues and reds.

TA: That's what the organizers are cooking up, but what are you doing to prepare?

EB: I always want to make sure my hair is ready for photos because I know kids like taking their photos with me, but my coat is getting a little bit thinner because of the warmer weather, so I am hoping my hair is not too thin by then. I'm also doing my regular exercise routine. Now that I have had a few extra weeks to train for my big night, it is a bit more than what I'm used to.

TA: So, this hare is hoping for a good hair day?

EB: Very funny!

TA: I try! What are you most looking forward to?

EB: It is always different what is on the ground each year because each spring is completely different ? and that's the joyous thing about the season: it's a time for rebirth. The plants and stalks will be coming up, there is always something different and it is always something cool to look forward to. A lot of people don't realise that the Egg Hunt is only one of the activities. There are always countless extra activities in Aurora ? and I love to brag about them because they are all themed around me! They have a fun activity called Bunny Bowling ? no, it doesn't involve any real bunnies, but I'm flattered they made a game all about me. As well, they have a face painting station, and a lot of kids seem to have their faces done just like me! A lot of the crafts are bunny-themed too, and then there are these cool Rabbit Hoppers, which are races where kids get to jump on these tiny inflatable rabbits down a course.

TA: Easter is your busiest time of year. How do you find the time to fit Aurora into your schedule each year?

EB: Have you ever seen a bunny race? We are one of the fastest ? maybe not as fast as a cheetah, but bunnies certainly have a lot of speed and know how to cover a lot of ground efficiently!

TA: Will you have any helpers on the ground this weekend to make things go even smoother in Aurora?

EB: I sure do. I am very impressed that the Aurora Girl Guides come out every year and help to volunteer and put on all the activities. My understanding is there are approximately 30 Girl Guides who will be there helping us and, in addition to them, there are going to be about 40 high school students. All in all, I think there is going to be over 400 hours of volunteer work, all done to celebrate my special day.

TA: That sounds impressive!

EB: There are so many things that teens could be doing on the Saturday and I know from what I hear that teens like to sleep in, but at Aurora's Easter Egg Hunt, this is not one of those mornings you sleep in. All the volunteers are up super early, they are in the Arboretum, making it safe for everybody and the

fact they are giving their Saturday is very heartwarming.

TA: Do you think you'll see some familiar faces this weekend, maybe people who have come to the Egg Hunt before and are excited to come back?

EB: There is really something the entire family can enjoy. The Easter Egg Hunt is a truly multigenerational event, a magnet for nuclear families to get together, along with their extended families. For every child that attends this event, there is a guarantee that it is 2.5+ people that come out with that one child. It is really cool to see.

Aurora's annual Easter Egg Hunt will take place Saturday, April 20 from 9.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wristbands are on sale now for \$6 per child (parents and guardians free) and can be purchased at Town Hall, the Aurora Family Leisure Complex, and the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex. Wristbands will not be available on site. For more information, visit www.aurora.ca/easteregghunt.