

COMING EVENTS IN AURORA

From Feb. 2 to 23 the paintings of Donna Greenstein will be featured in the Skylight Gallery of the Town Hall. The gallery is open from 8.30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday to Friday.

Aurora Opera Company is seeking 30 children (ages seven to 12) to participate in the main stage musical "Children of Eden" as animals and grandchildren in the children's chorus. No participation fee, and no experience necessary. Auditions in February. Rehearsals Sunday afternoons from mid-February (excluding March break) to April 20. Contact Aurora Opera Company at keepssinging@look.ca.

Until April 15, winter parking restrictions are in effect and parking is prohibited on all streets from 2 a.m. to 6 a.m. daily.

The 3rd Aurora Scouting Group has spaces available in Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Venturers. For registration information or to volunteer call 905-726-2393 or 905-841-0556.

Meet at Martha's Table, now in its second season. Every Thursday from 11.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m., you will find comfort food and a sense of community at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. A lunch of hot soup, sandwiches, and dessert will be provided.

Voice is a group of aspiring writers ages 12 to 19 interested in developing writing skills, working on a magazine and embarking on creative adventures with similarly minded people. The group meets in the Marjorie Andrews Room of the Aurora Library on the last Thursday of every month at 7 p.m. Call the Library at 905-727-9493 for more information.

Aurora Seniors present a movie night every Tuesday from 6.30 to 8.30 p.m. Admission is \$1 for members and \$1.50 for guests.

Aurora Zen Meditation Group meets weekly every Wednesday evening at Healing Hands Wellness Centre on Wellington Street East at 7.30 p.m.

Aurora Agricultural Society (organizer of the Aurora Fair & Horse Show) meets the first Monday of every month from 6.30 to 9 p.m. at the Aurora Community Centre. New members welcome. For more information, call 905-713-6773, e-mail at info@aurorafair.ca, or visit www.aurorafair.ca.

Aurora Rotary Club meets every Monday evening at 6.30 p.m. at Gabriel's on Yonge Street. New members welcome. For further information, call 905-841-1352.

On the first Wednesday of every month from 9 a.m. to noon, a satellite constituency office for Vaughan/King/Aurora MPP Greg Sorbara will be open in the councillors' lounge at the Town Hall. Call 1-877-880-6770 for information.

Independent Order of Odd Fellows Lodge #148 meets the first and third Tuesday of each month at 8 p.m. at 15216 Yonge Street (south of Wellington). For more information, call 905-830-9205.

Masons' Rising Sun Lodge meets the first Thursday of each month at The Rising Sun Temple, 57 Mosley Street, Aurora at 7.30 p.m.

Robertson Masonic Lodge meets the third Saturday each month at 57 Mosley Street at 10.30 a.m. Coffee club at 9 a.m., lunch at noon. Call 905-727-3032 or 905-727-1080.

Gamblers Anonymous, every Tuesday night, Trinity Anglican Church, Victoria Street, 7.30 p.m.

Progressive Euchre every Thursday night. Aurora Legion, 7.30 p.m. Call 905-727-9932.

Canadian Federation of University Women has monthly meetings at the Aurora Legion with a variety of speakers. There is also a selection of interest groups. Contact Beverley at 905-727-2151.

Dancing at the Legion, 8 p.m. every Friday night.

Bid Euchre at the Legion, 1 p.m. every third Sunday.

York Regional Police Male Chorus is looking for members from Aurora and area who would like to volunteer by joining the choir. Men, 16 years of age and older, are invited to visit any Tuesday at 7.30 p.m. in committee room B, York Region Administrative Centre, 17250 Yonge Street, Newmarket. For more information, call volunteer chorus supervisor Lowell McClenney at 905-727-9676.

Queen's York Rangers free camps for boys and girls, 12 to 18. Aurora Squadron runs Friday evenings at the Aurora Armoury. For further information, call 905-726-8600 any Tuesday evening between 7 and 9 p.m.

The Aurora Seniors Evergreen Seniors Choir practice under the direction of Tom Rainsford every Wednesday from 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. in the West McKenzie Hall of the Seniors Centre.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14

Justin Trudeau will be guest speaker at an Aurora Chamber of Commerce luncheon.

FEBRUARY 14 to 17

Aurora's Marquee Productions presents Rogers and Hammerstein's "Cinderella" at the Newmarket Theatre at 7.30 p.m. with 2 p.m. matinees on February 17 and 18. Call 905-713-1040 for tickets.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16

Aurora Chamber of Commerce Ski Day at Osler Bluffs Ski Club in Collingwood. Space is limited to 56 people so early booking is necessary. Cost is \$110. Call the Chamber office at 905-727-7262 to reserve.

FEBRUARY 16 AND VARIOUS DATES

Theatre Aurora presents "Crazy For You" at the Factory Theatre on Henderson Drive, Curtain is 8 p.m. Matinee dates, 2 p.m. For tickets, call the box office at 905-727-3669.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17

Aurora Writers' Group presents "Writing A Page Turner", a day-long seminar at St. Andrew's Church from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fee is \$38 in advance; \$42 at the door. To register, call Susan Stevenson at 905-751-1674 or e-mail brianhenry@sympatico.ca.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19

Aurora Public Library presents "Take A Deeper Look" with Aurora historian and former Aurora Museum curator Jacqueline Stuart. 7 to 8.30, Magna Room. Free. Pre-register at the adult information desk or phone 905-727-9493, option 4.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20

Pancake Tuesday at the Aurora Legion. 11.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. For further information, call 905-727-9932.

3rd Aurora Scouting Group hosts annual community Pancake Supper, with syrup, sausages, desserts and beverages from 6 to 7.30 p.m., in the social hall of the Aurora United Church, 15186 Yonge Street. Tickets \$6 per person or \$20 per family of four and are available at the door.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21

Aurora Historical Society annual general meeting at Hillary House at 8 p.m. Guest speaker is David Tomlinson. Call 905-727-8991 for additional information.

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church hosts a special 7 p.m. worship service. The service, led by the Rev. Matthew McKay, is intended to show solidarity with the people in Darfur, Sudan, where crimes against humanity are being committed.

FEBRUARY 21-23

Samuel Beckett's classic "Waiting for Godot" at St. Andrew's College beginning at 7 p.m. each evening. This student production is open to the public and tickets may be purchased for \$10 by calling 905-727-3178 ext. 260 or emailing jane.bedard@sac.on.ca.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22

Aurora Chamber of Commerce Business After Five meeting at Highland Chevrolet Cadillac, 15783 Yonge Street. 5.30 to 7.30 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24

Aurora Public Library presents author and independent publisher Collette Yvonne who will discuss getting self-published. 1 to 5 p.m. with a \$2 per person fee. Pre-register at the adult information desk, or phone 905-727-9493, option 4.

A coffee house, with entertainment and refreshments, will be held in aid of the people of Darfur, Sudan, in the Church Hall of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Mosley and

Victoria Streets, at 7.30 p.m. Admission is \$5. All funds raised will go to World Vision.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25

The Canadian Alliance of British Pensioners meets at the Aurora Legion at 1.30 p.m. for a presentation to have British pensions indexed and an update on the legal case which is currently before the European Court of Human Rights. Anyone who has worked in Britain and will in future, or is now receiving a British State Pension is invited to attend.

Call 1-888-591-3964 for more information,

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28

Aurora Horticultural Society presents a "Question and Answer Session with Master Gardeners" at the Royal Canadian Legion, 105 Industrial Parkway North beginning at 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 3

The York Chamber Ensemble, conducted by Aurora's Tony Browning, presents the Fourth York Region Youth Concert. In this strings concert, young performers add their bows to those of chamber orchestra members. The concert takes place at Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria Street, beginning at 7.30 p.m. Tickets, available at the door, are \$15; \$10 for students and seniors.

THURSDAY, MARCH 8

This is International Women's Day and the Women's Centre of York Region announces a day of celebration, education and inspiration for all Enterprising Women at at Cardinal Golf Club. For more information, call Shelley Lundquist at the Women's Centre in Aurora (905) 727-5837, extension 107.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21

Aurora Historical Society meets at Hillary House at 8 p.m. with Curator Cathy Molloy as guest speaker.

Community Living Newmarket/Aurora District is holding its 5th Annual Community Tribute Dinner honouring Vic Priestly of Aurora for his "Lifetime of Excellence in Community Service." The dinner will be held at The Manor,

Carrying Place Golf and Country Club, Weston Road, near Kettleby. Reception starts at 6.30 p.m. Tickets are \$100 per person or \$800 for a table. For information or tickets call: 905-898-3000, extension 258 or e-mail aboden@clnad.com.

SUNDAY, MARCH 25

Trinity Anglican Church presents the return visit of The Tri-City Gospel Chorus. Come and hear this 85 voice male choir sing in four part harmony. No admission charge; however an offering will be taken up. 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28

Aurora Horticultural Society presents a "Rhododendron Woods" at the Royal Canadian Legion, 105 Industrial Parkway North beginning at 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 30

Deadline for the Aurora Library's Second Annual Poetry Contest for Teenagers to celebrate National Poetry Month based on the theme Murmurs. There are two categories, one for those in Grades 7 to 9 and the other for Grades 10 to 12. For more information call 905-727-9493.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18

Aurora Historical Society meets at Hillary House with a Show and Tell and Pot Luck Dinner at 6 p.m.

APRIL 20 to 22

Aurora Home Show, Aurora Community Centre.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25

Aurora Horticultural Society presents an "Aurora Urban Oasis-Aurora Arboretum" at the Royal Canadian Legion, 105 Industrial Parkway North, beginning at 8 p.m.

MAY 9 to 12

Marquee Productions presents the musical "The Secret Garden" at the Newmarket Theatre at 7.30 p.m. with 2 p.m. matinees on May 12 and 13. Call 905-713-1040 for tickets.

SUNDAY, JUNE 3

Twelfth Annual Aurora Street Festival on Yonge Street. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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Aurora resident Cara Chisholm and Andrew Levert thrilled a full house of senior citizens Saturday afternoon when they performed at the Winter Cabaret at the new seniors' centre on Municipal Drive.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

Tower may go to Bloomington

If York Region gets its way the proposed new North Richmond Hill elevated tank will be located on Bloomington Road in Aurora but according to a council motion it's not welcome in Aurora.

The motion also included that correspondence from Susan Walmer, chairperson of the Ratepayers of Aurora Yonge South, be referred to the region.

The proposed large elevated tank will service Pressure District 9 which takes in the Oak Ridges area as far south as Gamble Road, from Bathurst Street to Bayview Avenue to just north of Bloomington Road.

Providing regional council adopts a recommendation of its Transportation and Works Committee York will enter into an agreement with the Ontario Realty Corporation for the purchase of property required for the construction of the elevated tank on 1.8 acres of provincial property on Bloomington Road near Yonge Street.

There is an Ontario government office building and an OPP building on the eastern portion of the lands. The remainder of the 79.7 acre site is vacant and consists of tableland, woodlands and valley lands.

The tank would locate along the Bloomington Road frontage abutting

the east side of the Cardinal Carter Secondary School.

In spite of several public meetings, the first Aurora Council heard about the elevated tank was at a general commit-

tee meeting in December when representatives of a consulting firm updated council on the status of the project.

Four sites were studied with the Aurora location being preferred.

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Poor Richard

New Act leaves many politicians scratching heads

*Municipalities are getting new powers,
But the results remain to be seen;
The province giveth and taketh,
And sometimes can be rather mean!*
- Poor Richard's Scrapbook

In a Speech from the Throne in 1995, the Mike Harris Progressive Conservative government clearly stated its intention to introduce a new Municipal Act, but it was a promise the municipalities had heard from various governments over the years.

There was general agreement that the existing legislation dating back to the mid-1800s needed to be replaced, as under the old legislation municipalities were creatures of the province and could only do what the provincial legislation permitted.

In an address to the annual conference of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario in 2000, Municipal Affairs Minister Tony Clement said the pending revisions to the Municipal Act would not only provide more authority for municipal council to carry out their affairs but also make them more accountable to their citizens.

The long-awaited new law was tabled in October, 2001, and became effective in January, 2003, but many municipal politicians claimed it fell far short of local needs and expectations.

As the 2003 legislation was widely regarded as failing to deliver on its promise of greater autonomy for municipalities, many groups, including the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, lobbied for a more fundamental reform of the relationship between the provincial and municipal governments.

As a result, Bill 130, the Municipal Statute Law Amendment Act, was enacted last December and became effective the first of this year.

At first glance the Act contains provisions which appear to broaden the scope of municipal powers and represents a positive step towards greater self governance.

At the same time, new provisions have been introduced to ensure accountability and transparency in municipal administration.

The Act does not make any significant amendments to the existing criteria for holding closed meetings.

However, it solves an issue that was a thorn in the side of the previous Aurora Council that caused much of the dissension and the boycott of workshop meetings by Councillors Phyllis Morris, Wendy Gaertner and Nigel Kean.

The new provision provides that a meeting may be closed to the public for the purpose of educating or training members, providing that the business or decision making of council is not materially advanced in the meeting.

For once and for all this provision sanctions the practice of holding retreats or workshops for the purpose of briefing council members.

The Act introduces provisions which allow any person to request an investigation as to whether the municipality has complied with the requirements governing closed meetings.

A municipality may appoint an investigator for this purpose and the investigator has the power to conduct an investigation and make recommendations to council.

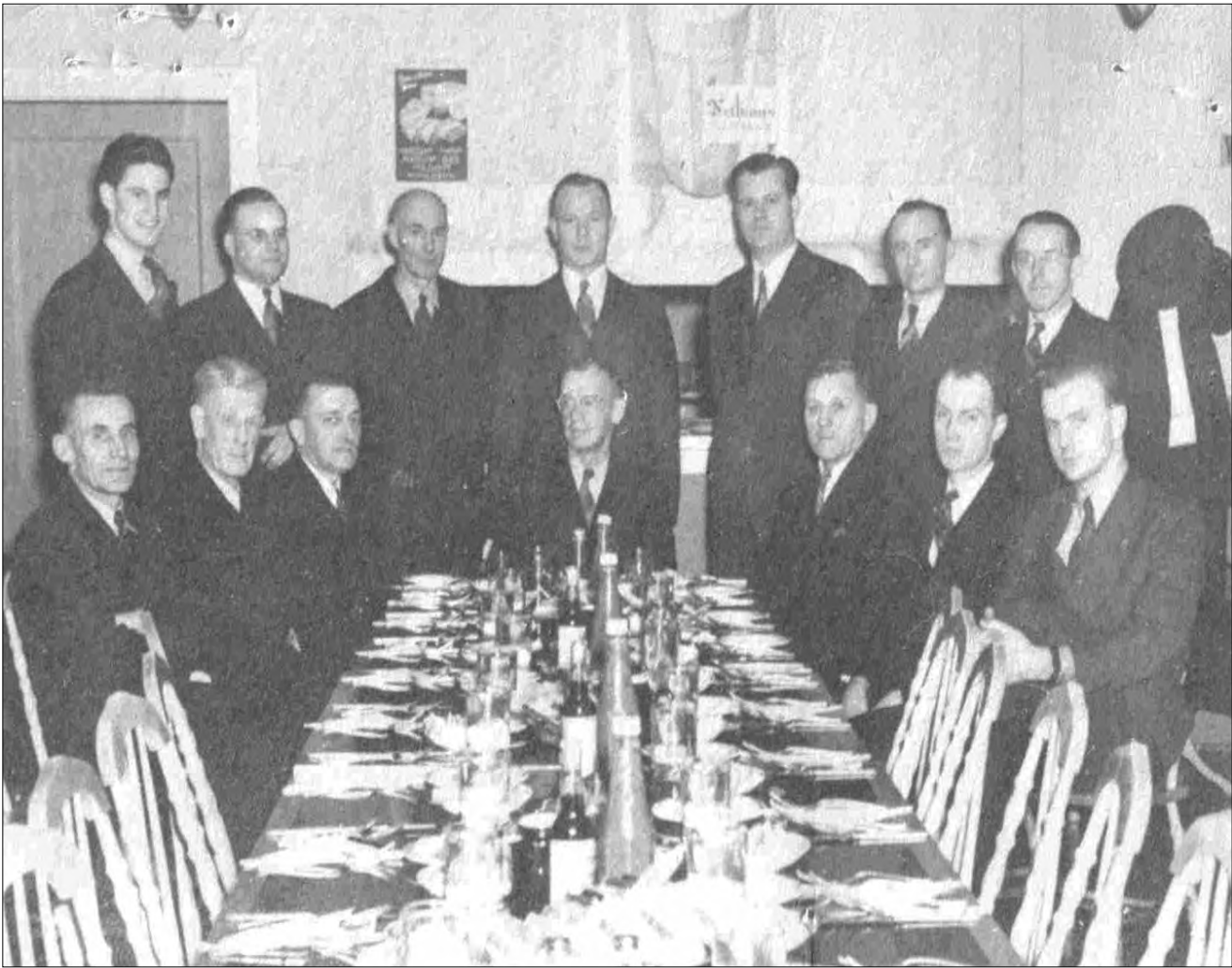
If an investigator is not appointed, the investigation will be conducted by the Ontario Ombudsman.

The Act also provides for council to delegate its powers and duties to one or more members of council or a committee.

In order to exercise this power, council must first adopt a policy setting out the scope of the delegation.

A good example might be to delegate certain powers to the general committee which consists of all council members, so that decisions of committee are final and not subject to further debate at council when a member who didn't get his or own way at committee, tries again at council when the TV cameras are rolling.

The broadening of powers may be more apparent than real as the legislation reserves an overriding power for the province to restrict municipal powers by regulation, if it is considered necessary or desirable in the provincial interest. This veto power creates uncertainty and could significantly curtail the exercise of municipal powers.



From the files of Aurora's Heather Sisman comes another gem from the heyday of the T. Sisman Shoe Company, once one of Aurora's major industries. This photo was believed taken in 1946 or 1947. In it are, back row, left to right, Fred Rowe, General Sales Manager; Warren Barnard, Salesman; William Stoddart, Accountant; Charles Dodson, Foreman; Leonard Simmons, Assistant Superintendent; Ernest Eveleigh, General Superintendent; and Ross Linton, Office Manager. Seated, left to right, are Jack Brown, Foreman; George Wilkinson, Foreman; Clarence Doolittle, Foreman; William Joseph (W.J.) Sisman, President; Frank Griffith, Foreman; George Chatburn, Foreman; and John Eades Sisman, Vice-President.

Letters to the Editor

Mayor attending Regional off-site, closed meeting makes this reader wonder

To the editor,

What a difference three years makes.

Following the municipal election in 2003, then Councillor Phyllis Morris boycotted an Aurora Council off-site gathering (supported by Councillors Nigel Kean and Wendy Gaertner) citing her personal principles.

In spite of a written legal opinion by an external solicitor that these meetings were permissible, plus the majority of council voting to hold this important two-day meeting to have staff provide the background information necessary to get new councillors up to speed quickly on Town business, she indicated

that her principles prevented her from attending because it was outside the bordering municipalities (plus, unlike the regional meetings she is now attending, this wasn't closed to the public).

This was the first of many actions by Councillor Morris that separated her from the sitting mayor and the majority of council which inevitably created an attitude of discord and dysfunction which she then blamed on the mayor.

And her strategy worked; she used this very dysfunction to successfully campaign on a platform of change.

In 2003, her personal

principles were more important than a legal decision by the majority of council, which the Municipal Act and the Town Procedural Bylaw direct all councillors to follow.

Now, three years later, she is okay attending both an out of region meeting, plus one that is also closed to the public, because Aurora Council unanimously voted she could go (including Councillor Gaertner one of the original boycotters).

Today, Aurora Council

votes on what her principles should be.

Why the new flexibility in principles?

What happened to transparency in government and no closed door meetings except as specifically identified in the Municipal Act?

Why didn't she follow the wishes of council last term?

Is this the kind of change we voted for?

One has to wonder.

**Bill Hogg
Aurora**

Turbines are "way of future", he says

To the editor,

Compromise must be found, in my opinion.

It will be tragic if the local wind turbine project by Aurora Cable Internet does not proceed.

This is the way of the future.

These few residents have succeeded in making our council appear no less dysfunctional than

the previous one.

I may have to move from this area, if I hope to develop my own rooftop solar, wind turbine energy and rainwater collection system without offending someone, and without support of a council with a vision for the future.

**Bill Hack
Aurora**

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Publisher Emeritus
Rosemary Schumaker

Editorial
Ron Wallace
ron@auroran.com

Dick Illingworth
dick@auroran.com

Photography
David Falconer
dfalconer@sympatico.ca

Advertising
Bob Ince
bob@auroran.com

Diane Buchanan
diane@auroran.com

Production
Cynthia Proctor
cynthia@auroran.com

Main Number
905-727-3300

Classifieds
905-727-7128
classifieds@auroran.com

Facsimile Machine
905-727-2620

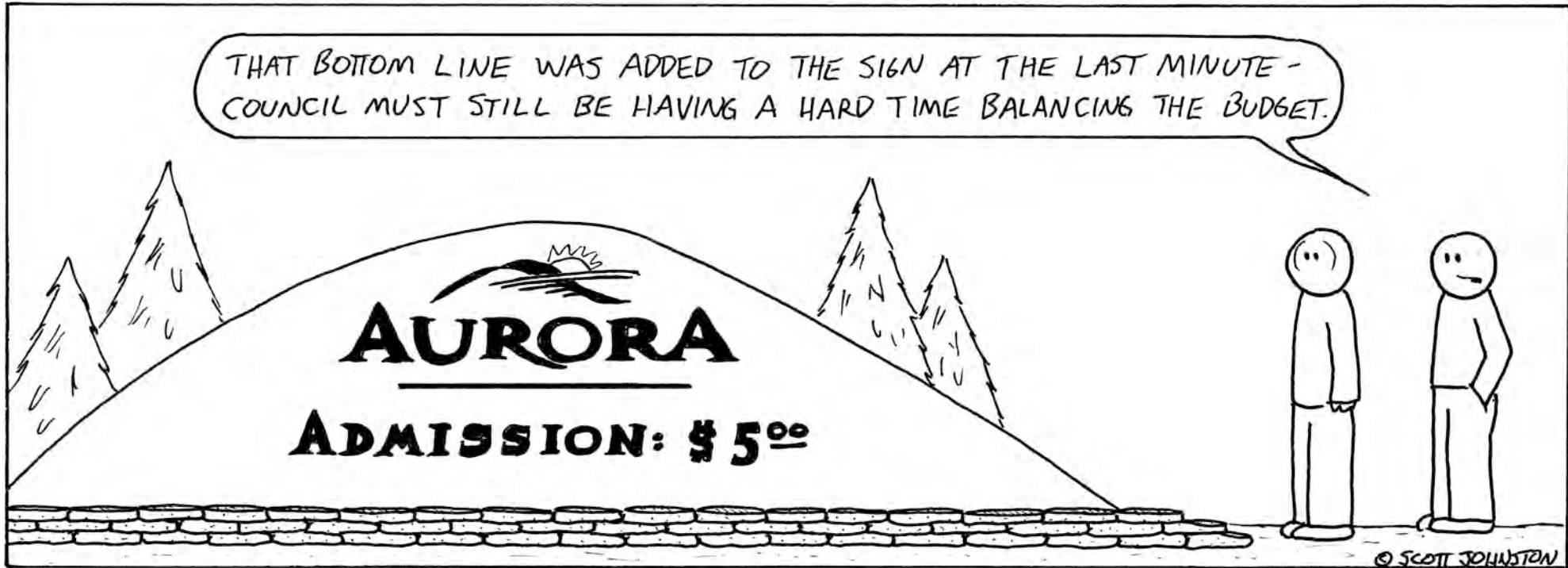
Editorial Department
rwall999@aol.com

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Front Porch Perspective

By Stephen Somerville

Unscrambling your taxes

For the voting public, and myself, trying to decipher the often Byzantine and arcane world of public finance is not an easy or a pleasant experience.

I have had root canals that have been less painful!

Last week, I noted an e-mail from a reader who wanted to gain a better understanding of how municipal taxes work and whether "everyone's taxes are rising by double the rate of inflation?...I can not believe that."

This column briefly reviews the roles, responsibilities, and spending and taxation powers of the various levels of government.

Next week I intend to answer the reader's question by looking at the trending of spending and taxes at all levels of government since the early 1990's as compared with GDP, population and income growth and see how Aurora measures up.

The Federal Government is responsible for matters of nation-wide concern, including national defence, criminal justice, immigration and trade and commerce.

The Federal Government, through the Canadian Revenue Agency, is responsible for the administration of tax programs, as well as the delivery of economic and social benefits.

It also administers certain provincial and territorial tax programs.

The Agency collects our personal federal and provincial income taxes and remits the provincial share back to the Provinces. This is the case for all the provinces, save Quebec.

The Provincial Government deals mainly with the delivery of health and social services, education, natural resources and the environment.

Municipal governments are, according to a website, "essential creatures of the provincial or territorial governments. The latter can create, modify, or eliminate a municipal government at will and controls exactly which powers a municipal government is entitled to execute."

The Region of York, according to the above definition, would be considered an "upper tier" municipal government while the Town of Aurora a "lower tier" government. (I'll bet the mayor and council just love seeing it defined this way!)

From the same website, "While there are variations from one region to another, services usually provided by regions include: arterial roads; transit; policing; sewer and water systems; waste disposal; region-wide land use planning and development; as well as health and social services."

And of course, the Aurora Council, which is comprised of a mayor and eight councillors, governs the Town of Aurora. The Town is responsible for things such as local roads, fire protection, garbage collection, snow plowing, traffic control, library, seniors' centre, recreation facilities and local land use planning needs.

The total Aurora tax levy is based upon the combined budgets of the town budget, our share of the York Region budget and our share of the York Region School Board budget.

All of the above is very well and good but so what? How does that translate into my pocket book?

Let's consider a hypothetical family living in Aurora. The family is comprised of two adults who have one seven-year-old child.

Further assume that both the mother and father each make \$50,000 for a combined gross income of \$100,000.

They own a home valued at just less than the Aurora average of \$330,000 - let's say \$300,000.

There are four federal tax brackets for 2007. The first bracket covers income from \$0 taxable income to \$37,178. The second goes to \$74,357 and the third to \$120,887.

Income higher than \$120,887 is taxed at the highest marginal rate.

In our example, at an income level of \$50,000 each parent would pay \$17,168 in federal income taxes or \$34,336 in total.

There are only three provincial marginal tax brackets in Ontario, the highest kicking in at income levels above \$70,977. Each parent would pay \$3,475 for a total of \$6,950.

Therefore, the total federal and provincial income tax bill would be \$41,286 or 41.28 per cent of the family's total income.

Based on an assessed home value of \$300,000, the family would be responsible for just over \$3,500 in property taxes.

Out of your property tax levy, approximately 29 per cent goes to Aurora, 38 per cent to York Region and 33 per cent to the school board.

Therefore, this typical family would pay just under \$45,000 or 45 per cent of their income in personal income and property taxes.

According to the Fraser Institute, this family would enjoy a "tax freedom" day somewhere around June 11 each year.

The Institute calculates that this family would work 161 days for the government and 204 days for themselves.

It would be very easy here for me to end the column with something pithy like "June 11th seems a long way off doesn't it?" - but I

would not be doing justice to the issues or to the decisions and trade-offs faced by our public officials.

Just as we want our politicians to keep in mind the adage that while there are multiple levels of government, there is but one taxpayer, we as good citizens, should be ensuring that our elected representatives ask themselves two key questions for every budgetary item that they consider - can our community afford it and are we receiving the appropriate value for our tax dollars?

Stephen can be contacted at:
stephengsomerville@yahoo.com



Cathy's Corner

What a woman wants

The heart of romance is the art of romance.

According to Hallmark and Cadbury, women want cards and chocolates on Valentine's Day.

According to florists, women want flowers.

According to fine dining establishments, women want candlelit dinners. According to jewelers, women want jewelry.

Apparently, advertising works. Women can tell because most men have the wrong idea!

Okay, so you rarely go wrong with jewelry, fellows, but what women really want is ROMANCE!

When I was in first year university, my boyfriend showed up at my dorm on Valentine's Day with a big gaudy heart-shaped box of chocolates.

He handed it to me with that "you do like chocolate, right?" look on his face, expecting me to squeal with delight, no doubt.

I didn't. I frowned and backed away slowly. The box was still in the plastic grocery bag!

Needless to say, I didn't marry the guy.

First of all, not all chicks want chocolate, and of those who do, not all of them like the gaudy boxes, or the kind of chocolate that comes in them.

But more importantly, heart-shaped boxes of chocolates in grocery bags are about as romantic as, well...Cupid in diapers. Kind of ruins the mood, you know?

And in romance, mood is everything.

The secret to creating a romantic mood is appealing to all five senses.

Hence, the combined effect of flowers, chocolates (in case my husband is reading, that would be dark chocolate - the darker the better), candlelit cuisine...perhaps the lull of poetry and certainly the lustre of diamonds...can be more pleasurable intoxicating than a bottle of the finest wine.

Oh, I can just hear the wallets wailing their woes!

This time of year, men all over Aurora face the agonizing decision of whether to contribute to their RRSP's...or waste the whole wad wooing their women.

It's a tough decision, and if a man misses the point (romance, guys - it's all about romance!!!), his investment will yield him a cozy little cottage commonly referred to as "the doghouse".

To celebrate our 20th anniversary, Damir took me to my favourite spot - Virginia Beach.

We arrived a couple of days early, and the mountain of tourist information that he amassed in the first 12 hours inspired visions of the perfect honeymoon.

So, on that milestone evening, I put on an elegant royal blue evening dress trimmed with rhinestones, and sexy high heeled sandals.

I didn't know where he was taking me - it was going to be a "surprise".

He took me to Norfolk. Just so you understand, that would

be like...Newmarket.

Our first stop was the mall. When I growled at him, he looked shocked.

"But you love shopping!"

I gave him "the look" - you know, the "are you blind?" look.

"Look at my dress," I said through my teeth. "Now, look at my feet. Do I look like I am in the mood for shopping?"

I had to talk through my teeth to avoid stabbing him with my stilettos - the ones that were giving me blisters.

Our second stop was a place that the brochure outrageously misrepresented as "a romantic dining experience overlooking the harbour".

It turned out to be another mall...this one featuring a food court with a window overlooking...a marina.

It occurred to me that my man was without a plan.

To test the theory, I asked: "And why, exactly, did you bring me to Norfolk?"

We headed back to the beach.

In silence - another maneuver that is popular among overdressed women who don't want to go to jail for stabbing their husbands with their stilettos.

We stopped at an elegant restaurant near our hotel. It overlooked the ocean, featured soft music and romantic lighting...and a 45-minute wait for a table.

Oh, darn, I thought. I married this one!

Needless to say, my errant husband enjoyed his tour of the doghouse just a little less than I enjoyed my tour of Norfolk.

The next day, I listened while he struggled to explain and apologize. It looked so painful, I had to forgive him!

Then, I had an idea.

"What if we both pretend that today is our anniversary?"

I don't remember what we had for dinner that night, or even if we had dinner. But I do remember riding our bikes to the grocery store and picking up a few things, including a bottle of wine and an assortment of cheeses.

We walked down to the moonlit beach and planted our chairs and our bare feet (I left my stilettos in the room - just in case!) in the still warm sand.

Then, with the sound of the surf and a front row view of the magnificent ocean all to ourselves, we sipped wine, nibbled cheese and talked, laughed, reminisced, and shared our dreams until 4 a.m.

Wine: \$10. Cheese: \$12. The most romantic night of my life: Priceless.

I have never felt more loved, more beautiful, more appreciated, or more understood in my life. That night, I fell in love with my husband all over again.

And THAT, gentlemen, is the objective.

Cathy Vrancic welcomes e-mail at:
laughingmatters@aci.on.ca
or cathyvrancic@hotmail.com

 **BOUQUETS** to Ballymore Homes for contributing \$2,000 each year for the next five years for the town's Character Community Program. The company looks forward to working with the town in this venture as a major sponsor.

 **BRICKBATS** to members of Aurora Council, including the mayor, for permitting a delegate to be critical of town staff for what he claimed to be loopholes provided by staff in the ACI controversy, which has dragged on far too long. Staff members can't respond and it's up to members of council or the mayor to act on their behalf.

 **BRICKBATS** to Aurora Council and staff for continuing to refer to e-mails received from citizens at a public council meeting when members of the public and the media have no knowledge of what issues of public business council members are discussing. E-mails should be treated as correspondence and included on the public agenda.

 **BOUQUETS** to Aurora's Erin McNeill on being selected as a member of the Canadian sailing team competing in the Australian Youth Olympic Festival in Sydney, Australia. She's a Grade 12 student at Cardinal Carter High School and began racing at the age of six.

 **BRICKBATS** to the York Region District School Board for implementing a two-tier education system by charging parents for special training for students which competes with private tutoring services who pay taxes to help pay for public education.

 **BOUQUETS** to Tru Value Hardware owner Mike Evans for reminding Poor Richard that the town has a bylaw on the books requiring street address numbers to be a certain size for easy identification, but it only applies to new subdivisions and is not retroactive.

 **BRICKBATS** to the federal government for being hypocritical by spending taxpayers' money to promote an anti-smoking campaign, yet at the same time providing tax relief amounting to \$500,000 to a select few tobacco processors who sort, grade and pack leaf tobacco, but refuses to name the companies. This is government transparency?

 **BOUQUETS** to the Aurora Youth Soccer Club for providing sporting opportunities for 2,800 families and about 4,100 players between the ages of five and 19, the highest per capita participation in Canada and it's right here in Aurora.

 **BRICKBATS** to a justice system that imposes a sentence of one more day in jail and three years probation on a 26-year-old man who was convicted of manslaughter in the 2001 beating death of a teenager. The criminal was given the two-for-one credit for time served. If you do the crime, you should serve the time.

 **BOUQUETS** to U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy for his ongoing attempts to find out why Mahar Arar is still on the U.S. terror no-fly list by asking the investigative arm of Congress to probe the reasons. He's doing more than Canadian politicians.

 **BRICKBATS** to the federal Public Works Department for placing an order for 40,000 Canadian flag label pins without stipulating that the pins be manufactured in Canada. While price is important, the symbolic pins should be made in Canada to show some respect for the flag.

 **BOUQUETS** to Judge Richard Blouin in Newmarket for taking just 20 minutes to acquit Michael Hanson, a teacher at St. Andrew's College, on criminal charges and sexual abuse allegations on the basis the alleged victim was not a creditable witness.

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Letters to the Editor

It's important to protest at Wal-Mart public meet

To the editor,

Re: Bigger Wal-Mart plan goes to public meeting, The Auroran, Jan. 30.

This story should spark a protest from the citizens of Aurora.

The future of our community is at stake.

Approximately two years ago, the United States based Wal-Mart made an application to build a 219,000 square foot store.

Now, Wal-Mart has switched its original application to add at least another 55,000 square feet.

This "footprint" for shopping will have monster store proportions that will dwarf the small businesses in the Town of Aurora.

The downtown core will soon look more like a ghost

town, rather than a market place with people out shopping and dining.

The Loblaws Superstore, at Bayview and St. Johns Sideroad, now wants to keep pace with the giant retail store and has already applied for an expansion plan to sell clothing and other merchandise.

This is a real test for Mayor Phyllis Morris and the Town Council of Aurora.

The City of Burlington has spent \$500,000 in their fight to block Wal-Mart, but they have had to give up their fierce battle to avoid an even more expensive Ontario Municipal Board contest.

It is ironic that the developers have coined the term, "Smart Centres", for these new developments.

What is so smart about

Wal-Mart decision not smart: reader

An open letter to Aurora Mayor Phyllis Morris

I find the sign on the side of the road near where the proposed Aurora Wal-Mart is slated to be built, rather ironic.

It says something about a "Smart Centre".

In light of the current news about the real and serious issue of Global Warming, in 50 years, I almost guarantee you that any and all developments of the kind Wal-Mart is proposing and the car-culture that they enable, will seem not so smart at all.

In fact, they will seem rather ridiculous and absurd!

When will politicians and municipalities start to take these matters seriously and REALLY start to look at the long term ramifications and impacts of their decisions over the long term, not just their term?

When will they take a stand against large corporations such as Wal-Mart and say, "No, thank you".

Why on earth does a

community like Aurora need a Wal-Mart? I refuse to shop at Wal-Mart on principle.

To paraphrase from the documentary of the similar name, there is a high cost to low prices.

However, with our consumer obsession with low prices, many are blinded and can't see or get a sense of the high price we are ALL paying.

More gas burned. More land paved over. More greenhouse gases emitted. More plastic produced. More... etc.

Again, in 50 years I suspect very strongly, that an affirmative decision on Wal-Mart in Aurora, or anywhere will seem completely wrong.

I suggest that you and the Town Council take yourselves out of the present and start to look 10, 25 and 50 years down the road, because decisions like this one and some of the other crazy development that is going on in Aurora will seem completely mis-guided!

**Stephen Fleck
Aurora**

them?

They will alter the character of our community.

Who is in charge of our town, the developers, or our Town Council?

On Feb. 28 there will be a public hearing for the Wal-Mart application.

It is imperative that the citizens of Aurora turn out for

the event and speak out against the sprawl of super stores at the hearing.

The town's slogan, "Aurora, My Kind of Town" may well change and read: "Wal-Mart: the King of Town!".

**Jim Jackson
Aurora**



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The story of a surviving elm tree

To the editor,

The photo (below) of this tree was taken just a month ago and it's very likely more that 100 Januaries have passed since it took up residence in what was at that time, nothing more than the hedge row of a farmer's field.

Not such a big deal in the life of an average hardwood tree in our part of southern Ontario.

Only this particular tree is no average tree; in fact there are but a handful of these trees dotting the GTA and for that matter, the province at large.

This tree is none other than the famed American White Elm (Ulmus Americana) located right here in Aurora on Henderson Drive.

The White Elm, once abundant throughout Ontario, was easily identified by its majestic high weeping canopy, a symbol of strength and durability, reaching huge proportions along many roadsides and farmers fields, even in this town.

This marvellous species was highly prized by farmers, carpenters and timber framers for its

unyielding strength and durability when used in construction.

Unfortunately the elm has been all but decimated from the Ontario landscape thanks to an insidious little insect call the Elm Bark Beetle.

These little pests, thought to have arrived on North America shores in the 1930's via an infested load of timber, are carriers of the deadly Dutch Elm Disease.

The disease is very aggressive and is spread by the beetle in the form of sticky fungus spores which are deposited into small wounds in the upper twigs and branches by the feeding beetle.

The fungus causes the tree to react by plugging the cambial tissue (outer sap wood) in an attempt to block the disease from spreading further which, in turn, blocks the flow of water and nutrients from roots to foliage.

First signs of the disease are wilting, yellowing leaves followed by branch die back.

The entire tree dies of dehydration usually after the second or third year of being infected.

There is no known

cure for this disease but research is ongoing and surviving mature elms like the one on Henderson Drive are of particular interest to researchers as it is thought that some of these trees may possess a genetic immunity to Dutch Elm Disease.

This particular tree has continued to defy the odds as it seems to have survived not only the constant threat of Dutch Elm Disease, but many of the other human and environmental stress factors that have invaded its space over time.

I can remember in the mid 1960's seeing this big tree regularly when, as a boy growing up, we use to venture over to the Subway Sideroad (now Henderson Drive) on bicycles to pick apples from the wild trees that were growing right beside the elm tree.

In the early 1970's Subway Sideroad was upgraded from a narrow dead end gravel road to the wide arterial Henderson Drive.

As the road was substantially widened and regraded much of The elm's root system was

damaged and its root zone was permanently altered, though somehow the tree survived and adapted with no supplementary care or maintenance.

This was followed by one of many residential housing booms in the early 1980s when the Iona Corporation began construction of the subdivision south of Henderson Drive.

Once again the elm suffered yet another blow this time from the south side when the land was stripped of top soil, and regraded to facilitate residential building lots.

The result of this activity should really have been the final straw in the demise of the elm as virtually the entire root zone in every direction of this tree had now been severely disturbed with the tree being left perched on a small knoll of soil as it is to this day.

Again the elm survived and adapted to this new environment.

Over the past 15 years the Parks Division of the Leisure Services Department has been monitoring the health of this magnificent tree.

We have also provided supplementary root fertilization, surface mulching and irrigation during times of drought.

The Town of Aurora has also registered the elm with the University of Guelph's elm recovery project whereby the University is selecting large seemingly disease resistant elms from across the province to collect cuttings.

The cuttings will then be grafted to create genetically resistant new trees.

Researchers are striving to develop these disease resistant trees to be

placed in a seed producing orchard where genetically diverse disease resistant trees can be propagated and later sold to commercial nurseries.

The hope is that one day these once abundant and grand specimens will again grace our urban and rural landscape.

In the meantime when you drive, cycle or walk past this tree I hope you will have an appreciation for this remarkable specimen and its will to survive against all odds.

Jim Tree
Aurora

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Letters to the Editor

Long wait at Southlake Regional Health Centre

To the editor,

Just for the record I feel compelled to relate a recent misadventure at that giant behemoth hospital in Newmarket.

On Tuesday evening I received a hurry-up call from my daughter Rochelle, that my grandson, Andrew Jacob, was quite ill and in need of a doctor's care.

I certainly will not let my family down when in need,

particularly when my daughter's car just maxed out.

We arrive at the hospital at 6.30 p.m.

Hour after hour passes and we hear two or three names called over the P.A. system. All the while more ill people are arriving by car or taxi.

Children are crying and carrying on and the parents feel helpless.

One old fellow appears to have a kidney stone or a

gall bladder attack and is all bent over, but true to their system of a number all lit up on the wall you know there is hope that you will be called.

What I should tell you from my observance is whoever designed the waiting room had one imperial thing in mind: to keep people shut out by a wall of glass as if they were in a cage.

Out of frustration you could march in to a lonely

nurse who will tell you are getting closer.

After four hours I tell my daughter enough is enough so she marches into a nurse in another glassed-in cage who promptly tells her she is getting close.

Well, you have to know this is no improvement from the Mike Harris days, but we labour on.

Finally they call my daughter in.

She asks the nurse how much longer, when horror

of horrors, she is told from 10 minutes to one and a half hours. So we abandon our hopes and return home completely mystified.

Please take out the

glass cages or give us a phone like the cons have so we can communicate.

Ben Kestein
Aurora

It appears times and principles change, former councillor says

To the editor,

To me it is not whether you should go to an off-site meeting, rather it is the following of principles and standards that you have set for yourself.

During the last term of council three councillors, Phyllis Morris, Wendy Gaertner and myself decid-

ed not to follow council's orders and did not attend the off-site meeting in Alliston.

We all felt that if we did attend we would be going against the Municipal Act as the meeting was being held in a community not adjacent to the region as the Act said it should be.

I personally felt that with a multi-million dollar Town

Hall that off-site meetings were a total waste of residents' money.

At the time Councillor Morris hired a lawyer to prove her point that the off-site meeting was illegal.

I respected her opinion and was proud to stand with her and Councillor Gaertner.

We all took a lot of flack for going against council's

wishes but we had our principles to stand by.

Now, it's another term, Councillor Morris has a new title - mayor - and it seems as if principles can change.

Yes, this new council did direct the mayor to go but that was no different from the last council's wishes.

As a good friend of mine says, "I have principles but if you don't like those principles, I have other principles".

I was truly shocked when I read that the new mayor went on this illegal off-site Region of York meeting, this time to the Niagara Falls area.

How much did this one cost? How many people went?

Again there is a massive regional building in Newmarket that sat empty that weekend.

It was great for the non-elected chair of the region to justify why they went but then again he does not have to face the voters.

Oh well, times change almost as fast as principles.

Entrance sign could be nicer, reader says

To the editor,

On February 6th I attended a meeting of Aurora's Council in Committee.

An agenda item really took my interest.

The town has \$80,000 to spend for a gateway sign.

The money for the project was provided by Whitwell Development.

An item from June, 2006, on the town's website says that "the construction of a prominent Entry Feature such as proposed in this report will only enhance the importance of this gateway."

I agree.

A great big sign proclaiming "Welcome To Aurora - It's Our Town and We're Proud of It!" is certainly warranted. However \$80,000 is a large price

tag to attach to something like this.

The designs provided are aesthetically appealing, but they all remind me of cemetery headstones.

A taller, livelier welcome to Aurora is a better idea.

\$80,000 is a lot of money. I'm proud to be an Auroran. Council could consider paying the money to a local artisan, or group of artists to produce a sign of this nature.

Wouldn't that be a sign of pride and confidence?

The money could be divided among the town's high school arts programs; an investment in our education system, and an opportunity for the youth of Aurora to show their stuff.

If the idea were put forth to the artsy folk of Aurora, I have no doubt

they could come up with something fitting for less than \$80,000.

I understand the money was provided to the town through an agreement with a developer in the area.

Does this mean that if they hadn't given the money to the town, our gateway sign could possibly have read "Welcome to Wal-Mart"?

Heather Sisman
Aurora

Nigel Kean
Aurora

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Arctic Adventure through photographer's eyes

It needed to be cold, and it was cold. The annual Arctic Adventure, held at Machell Park, was held Saturday under clear, crisp skies and hundreds of people took advantage of the afternoon of activities. From horse-drawn sleigh rides to ice sculpting, to pick-up hockey, there was something for everyone interested in cold, outdoor winter activities. Our photographer, David Falconer, had a great time shooting the activities, some of which are recorded on this page.

Aurora Cable Internet also recorded the afternoon for posterity, thanks to the efforts of Julia Bachelor, seen on the left in the photo at the bottom of the page. She's with Shelley Ware, Aurora's special events co-ordinator, who was responsible for setting up the activities. For the first time this year, all Arctic Adventure activities were held outdoors. Professional ice sculptors turned out that magnificent replica of the town's logo, seen at the bottom of the page.



*Auroran photos
by David Falconer*

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This month's business feature...



BIGGER & BETTER!



Buick Lucerne



GMC Envoy



Pontiac Montana SV6

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Ab and Tracey Cox and the Cox family have a long history in the automotive business. Both were born in Oshawa, Canada's Motor City. Ab's grandfather owned the first Studebaker and Ford dealerships in the Oshawa area... Ab's father was a car salesman there, and Ab started fixing up and selling vehicles at the age of 13 out of his family's garage. Ab spent 25 years with General Motors before opening the dealership, and his strong roots in the GM service department are still carried on today with Ab Cox's excellent service facility, with the best techs and bodyshop in the area. Tracey started off detailing cars for GM new car announcements in high school, and has been at the dealership since the beginning, landscaping the new facility with her sisters back in the 80's. "I remember being shocked at the soil here in Aurora. We had just moved here, and we had to use pick axes to dig in the trees, as the soil was pure clay. Those little saplings are now huge trees, and I am so proud of everything that my father has accomplished with the dealership. My mother Marion was here from the beginning, and she was an excellent salesperson and business manager. She is the vice-president and has taught me so much about the business. As the General Manager, I have a lot to live up to! One day, I will be the dealer, and my six year old son Alexander has told me that he will be the dealer after that. We have a hundred year plan for this business, and families can be assured that our family will be here for them for generations to come!"



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Locator Map

Map showing the location of Ab Cox Pontiac Buick GMC Ltd. at the intersection of Wellington St. East and Bayview Ave. The map includes landmarks such as the Aurora Chamber of Commerce, Straight Lines, Recycle N' Sports, Forever Fitness Health Centre, and The Backyard Pool & Spa Company Ltd.

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Clobber Buffalo Junior Sabres

No contest so far as Tigers win two

By now, the Aurora Tigers probably have bagged three of four wins needed to advance to the next round of junior hockey playoffs.

After two home blowouts in Aurora over the week-end, the Tigers travelled to Buffalo, New York, Monday night for Game Three of their playoff round against the Buffalo Junior Sabres, but results were not available at press time.

Game four is also scheduled for Buffalo this Saturday night.

But Aurora hockey coach Jerome Dupont isn't sure the games in Buffalo will be as easy as the games in Aurora.

Tigers opened the series Friday night with a convincing 14-1 victory, then followed it up Sunday afternoon with a 9-2 win.

"Buffalo plays a much more energetic and combative game before their large crowds at home and then there is the refereeing you have to deal with as well," Dupont said, as he anticipated much tougher contests in the states.

Local fans are still wondering how Buffalo got the single goal Friday night, however, after one period of play, it was difficult to know who would emerge victorious.

Aurora took a slim 2-1 lead to the dressing room after 20 minutes but kept Buffalo off the board for the rest of the game as they added four more in the second, then poured eight more goals into the Buffalo

net in the third period, while the Sabres wondered where all the fire power had come from.

The game set the tone for the best of seven game series, which Aurora is now expected to take in four games.

Friday, the line of Doug Henderson (two goals, four assists), Andrew Favot (one goal, five assists) and Paul Zanette (two goals, three assists) combined for a total of 17 points to lead the charge.

Other multiple point getters included Mark Thorburn (one goal, one assist), Joey Martin (two assists), Joey Piccone (one goal, one assist), Colin Williams (two assists), Mark Mayea (two goals), Brett Connolly (two assists), Daniel Michalsky (twi goals) and Vince Bruni (one goal, one assist).

Michalsky was back at it Sunday afternoon as Game

Two got underway at the Aurora Community Centre.

He fired three goals and added an assist as Aurora breezed to a 9-2 victory, to go two games up in the series.

This time, however, Buffalo scored singles in the second and third periods, but not before Aurora had piled up a 4-0 first period lead.

The line of Joey Piccone, Brett Connolly and Vince Bruni also had a big night collecting a total of seven points, Connolly scoring twice and adding an assist, Bruni reversing that with a goal and two assists and Piccone contributing an assist.

Connor McGarry, Doug Henderson and Andrew Eastman added singles.

Anyone interested in seeing Aurora play in Buffalo, Game Four is slated for Saturday night at 8.15 p.m.

at the West Seneca Recreation Centre.

The recreation centre is located on Union Road, which exits off, ironically, the Aurora Expressway, better known as Highway 400.

If a fifth game is necessary, it will be played at the Aurora Community Centre Sunday afternoon at 2.30 p.m.

The Tigers are offering a playoff package that could be worth its weight in gold.

Adults can purchase a pass for \$125, while seniors and students would pay \$100 and children \$75, for a pass that would get you into every playoff game the Tigers play.

That could be as many as 20 games.

Tickets may be purchased at the Community Centre and are good for all Tiger Ontario Provincial Junior Hockey League play-off games.

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Royal Canadian Legion
Aurora Branch #385

New Players Welcome

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Bridge results

Tuesday Feb. 6: NS - James Longley, Olly Smolak; Margaret MacFarlane, Paul MacFarlane; Dave Legallais, Bob Hull.

In the C Section: Wayne Doyle, Peter Winders.

Wednesday Feb. 7: NS - Gordon Saul, George Payment; Libby McWilliams, Gail Model; Wally Browne, Vivien Thomas. EW - Don Jackson, Lena Jackson; Hans Jacobs, Linda Lord; Shirley Hulbig, Paul Graves.

Friday Feb. 9: NS - Ross Jenkinson, George Payment; Margaret MacFarlane, Paul MacFarlane; Shirley Hulbig, Paul Graves; George Jordan, Irma Field. EW - Gerald Heath, Deanne Dennison; Gordon Saul, Jane Demers; Don Jackson, Lena Jackson; Virginia Smereka, Libby McWilliams.



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Monday night hockey

Results as of Monday, Feb. 5

TEAM	W	L	T	GF	GA	PT
Tom & Jerry's	14	2	2	62	35	30
Law Insurance Brokers	11	5	2	72	41	24
Highland Chev-Olds-Geo-Cad	9	6	3	76	57	21
Priestly Demolition	9	8	1	69	60	19
Rec Cycle N' Sports	9	8	1	63	63	19
Baldwin's	5	11	2	62	70	12
FPL Aggregates	5	13	0	44	84	10
Masterclean Contracting	4	13	1	52	79	9

Results, Monday, Feb. 5

Highland Chev	6	Tom and Jerry's	1
Masterclean	4	Rec Sports	0
Priestly Demolition	6	Law Insurance	3
FPL Aggregates	1	Baldwin's	2

Player standings, Monday, Feb. 5

NAME	TEAM	G	A	PTS
John Archibauld	Highland's	19	13	32
Mark Sedore	Priestly	19	8	27
John Anderson	Rec Sports	16	10	26
Steve Kavanah	Baldwin's	11	13	24
Ed Kilroy	Rec Sports	12	11	23
Bruce Chappell	Highland's	7	16	23
Steve McDonald	Law Insurance	10	11	21
Jason Muise	Priestly	10	11	21
John Yaremko	Law Insurance	12	8	20
Scott Crabb	Highland's	8	12	20
Kevin Brown	Rec Sports	8	11	19
Craig McConnell	Law Insurance	13	5	18
Darryl Thompson	Tom & Jerry's	14	4	18
Charlie Steenhorst	Rec Sports	3	13	16
Brad McMillan	Tom & Jerry's	8	8	16
Pat O'Mahony	FPL	6	9	15
Pat Davies	Priestly	9	5	14
Gerald Briand	Baldwin's	7	7	14
Colin Leech	Priestly	4	10	14
Ed Jackson	Baldwin's	4	10	14
Chris Neal	Highland's	8	6	14
Vince Greco	Tom & Jerry's	6	8	14
Frank Balkovec	Law Insurance	2	12	14
Kevin O'Keefe	Baldwin's	7	6	13
Brian Horton	Baldwin's	2	11	13
Joel Reeves	Tom & Jerry's	3	10	13
Mike Nisbet	Priestly	6	6	12
Doug Adair	Rec Sports	4	8	12
Darren Yaremko	Law Insurance	4	8	12
Jerome Flanigan	Priestly	4	8	12
Paul Gibson	Law Insurance	4	8	12
Jerry Mackrell	Tom & Jerry's	5	7	12
Dean Iwai	Tom & Jerry's	4	8	12
Mark Lemmon	Law Insurance	4	7	11
Dave McQueston	FPL	5	6	11
Hugh Alcorn	Masterclean	0	11	11
Dave Holden	Tom & Jerry's	5	6	11
Alain Boudreau	Masterclean	7	4	11
Steve Robertson	Highland's	4	7	11
Peter Briand	Baldwin's	6	5	11
Ken Rumble	Highland's	6	4	10
Ron Van Noort	Masterclean	7	3	10
Scott Sheppard	Rec Sports	1	9	10
Bob Ince	FPL	5	5	10
John Leeder	FPL	6	4	10
Brad Wilson	Highland's	3	7	10
Tom Hussey	Masterclean	4	6	10
Bill Collins	Masterclean	2	8	10
Phil Podstatsky	Priestly	5	4	9
Andrew Dalton	Rec Sports	3	6	9
Dave Caverley	FPL	3	6	9



Lauren Cooper from the Aurora Skating Club, shows excellent form during Oshawa Invitational tests held recently.

Donations sought by this foundation

February is Heart Month and volunteers of the Heart and Stroke foundation chapter that serves Aurora will be collecting donations for vital research.

Donations have helped fund research achievements that led to the development of the pacemaker, the artificial heart for transplant patients and a scale that measures a stroke's severity.

Every 10 minutes in Canada, someone dies or is disabled by a stroke and the numbers are rising.

Signs of a stroke include sudden weakness, numbness or tingling in the face, arm or leg, sudden temporary loss of speech or trouble understanding speech or sudden loss of vision, particularly in one eye, or

double vision.

Other signs are sudden and unusual headaches or loss of balance or dizziness.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation advises that if any of the above listed signs occur call 911 immediately.

With the establishment of the Heart and Stroke Foundation Centre for Stroke Recovery, the Foundation has created a highly influential centre designed to significantly lessen the burden of stroke.

The York Region North Branch of the Heart and Stroke Foundation, which serves Aurora and Newmarket, is located at 17665 Leslie Street in Newmarket and information is readily available by calling 905-853-6355.

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Skating results

The following members of the Aurora Skating Club successfully completed low tests recently:

Preliminary Dance

Dutch Waltz - Sandra Chicerella; Canasta Tango - Sarah Blios, Jessica Jamieson; Baby Blues - Sarah Reynolds, Rachel Glynn.

Junior Bronze Dance

Swing - Stephanie Morawietz, Mathew Warner; Fiesta Tango - Erin Foster, Monica Churchill, Ashleigh Calvert, Nicole McCausland; Willow Waltz - Kailee O'Connor, Alicia Alberton.

Senior Bronze Dance

Ten Fox - Kaitlin VanWinckle; Fourteen Step - Katherine Morawietz, Shauna O'Connor, Alyssa Simon; European Waltz - Samantha Duncan, Marilena Perri.

Skating Skills

Preliminary - Dylann Miller, Ashleigh Calvert; Junior Bronze - Katherine Morawietz, Jackieanne Abbey, Christina Kubiw-Kalashnik, Shelby Olesovsky.

Free Skate Elements

Preliminary - Alicia Saunders.

Free Skate Program

Preliminary - Carley Steiner, Samantha Duncan, Austin Bushell, Jackieanne Abbey, Shannon Lacombe, Becky O'Malley. Junior Bronze - Hailey Riggs, Jihyun Cha, Nicole Calvert, Tayler Sim, Amber Ciolfe, Samantha Galati.

Earlier, the following members successfully completed high tests.

Junior Silver Dance

Keats Foxtrot - Alessia Chiovitti; American Waltz - Christina Relke, Rocker Foxtrot - Raquel Burgess.

Senior Silver Dance

Paso Doble - Tayler Sim, Emma Laverty, Alana Fabbicino, Jennine Brunton; Starlight Waltz - Sierra Chovanec; Blues - Julia Chiovitti; Kilian - Samantha Galati.

Gold Dance

Viennese Waltz - Allie Sutton; Westminster Waltz - Garth Miller, Emma Slimkowich; Quick Step - Hailey Riggs; Argentine Tango - Emma Slimkowich.

Skating Skills

Junior Silver - Nicole Relke, Tayler Sim, Hailey Riggs, Raquel Burgess; Senior Silver - Garth Miller.

Free Skate Program

Gold - Emma Hayzelden.

Interpretive

Introductory - Allie Sutton; Bronze - Allie Sutton.



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Judo started in Aurora back in the early '70s

Today various types of martial arts and fitness centres are available in many areas of the town, but back in 1970 a judo club was almost unknown.

Or if people knew about one, members were considered to be a bunch of bloodthirsty, muscle-bound fanatics.

The Aurora Judo Club was formed in February, 1970, sponsored by the town's recreation department and participants met once a week at Dr. G. W. Williams Secondary School for two hours of instruction and practice.

The club soon had 45 members with an average attendance of about 30.

Instructors included George Thompson and John Hunter of Aurora. Bill Ramsey and Bill Manson, both Black Belt holders, came later.

The first thing a student learned was how to break his fall, instead of his leg or neck.

Breakfalls were practiced continually no matter the rank. Fingernails and toenails were inspected for length and cleanliness.

In March, 1974, the

Aurora Martial Arts Centre was officially opened with Mayor Evelyn Buck officiating.

Instead of cutting the traditional red ribbon, she chopped a board of balsa wood with her bare hand.

The new centre was located in a renovated auto body shop on Wellington Street East.

The centre, brainchild of George Thompson, featured physical fitness as well as the development of martial art skills including Kweon-Do and Hapkido classes.

It was pointed out that Judo and Karate teach children patience and tolerance as well physical fitness and coordination.

According to some parents the training changed their children's behaviour for the better.

Spectators watching the young Judo enthusiasts were impressed to see them wait patiently for their turn, bowing respectfully when it came time to compete and fighting cleanly without a display of temper or frustration.

Grades achieved by students at the centre were recognized throughout the world and

competitions were held with other clubs to test the standard of Judo and Karate learned.

Although the Aurora Martial Arts Centre has long since disappeared, other martial art centres have opened and the sport is more popular than ever.



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Results as of Sunday, February 11



House League

Tyke

101 Tim Hortons Red Wings 4 - Megan DiLosa 1A, Aydin Metel 1A, Jacob Cowl 1G, Nathan Sherrard 1A, Liam Desouza 2A, Dimitri Mikrogiannakis 3G, Charles Peters 1A, Jacob Cann 1A. **102 Tim Hortons Bruins 2** - Matthew Glionna 1A, Trystan LeBrun-Nagle 1A, Curtis Romanchych 1A, Liam Crone 1G, Keaton Thompson 1G.

108 Tim Hortons Sharks 5 - Matthew Carney 2G, Matthew Minchella 1G, Austin Hendy 1A, Kyle Wulle 2G, Clayton Allen 2A, Sam Speranini 1A. **103 Tim Hortons Senators 2.**

104 Tim Hortons Flyers 3 - Eric Pears 1A, Christian Ramirez 1A, Thomas Wilson 1G 1A, Tanner Arnold 1A, Patrick Cruickshank 1G 1A, Anthony Issaris 1G 1A. **110 Tim Hortons Thrashers 2** - Ariz Bhimani 1A, Johnathan Martin 1G, Ethan Brooks 1A, Brennan Young 1G, Andrew Warner 1A.

105 Tim Hortons Leafs 4 - Andrew Negri 1A, David Robertson 1A, Ty Boisseau 1G, Sean Mackrell 1A, Hayden Edwards 1A, Evan Coulter 2A, Colin McGoldrick 3G. **107 Tim Hortons Lightning 1** - Mark Kalmisto 1G, Mark Rossi 1A, Darcy Sarazin 1A.

109 Tim Hortons Wild 6 - Ben Langlois 1G, Joel Woodcock 1G, Stewart Gable 1G, Cameron Railton 2G, Lucas Dane 1A, Cameron Dyer 1G. **106 Tim Hortons Penguins 3** - Ryan Thornhill 2G, Andrew Sergejewich 1G.

Novice

206 Chouinard Bros. Home Improvements 1 - Christian Pearce 1G, Michael Dowling 1A. **203 McAlpine Ford 1** - Spencer White 1G.

204 Hitz 3. 205 Mastermind Toys 2 - Max Bruckner 1A, Matthew Barnett 1A, Connor Tripp 1G, Tyler Williams 1A, Anthony Loduca 1A, Matthew Colucci 1G.

Minor Atom

302 Rec Cycle N' Sports 7 - Michael Imseis 1G, Michael Fisher 1G, Bryn Burbank 2G 1A, Matthew Neice 1G, Joshua Capodagli 2A, Liam Joiner 1A, Joshua Lye 1A, Ryan Batten 1G, Hunter Jones 1G, Matthew MacGrath 1A. **301 Optimist Club of Aurora Inc. 4.**

304 HS Financial Services Inc. 3 - Ryan Ouvroules 1A, Nick Armour 3G. **305 Aurora Canadian Tire 3.**

Atom

402 Orr & Forster Insurance Brokers 7. 401 Shoppers Drug Mart Aurora 1 - Zachary Cowl 1G, Oliver Jones 1A, Nelson Hossack 1A.

407 Dr. Steiner's Drillers 6. 403 Delph & Jenkins Surveyors 5 - Alex Cicchino 1A, Brayden Beswick 2G, Luke Gregoris 1A, Matthew Walker 2G, Max Brown 2A, Scott Dunlop 1G, Jonah Blaser 1A.

404 All Pro Source For Sports 5 - Bendan McDonald 1G, Chris Sanita 2G 1A, Jake Detero 1G, Cory McGoldrick 1A, Samantha Sanita 1A, Kevin Siery 1A, Mathew Sanita 1G. **406 Ab Cox Pontiac Buick GMC 2** - Justin Chalmers 1G, Eric McMurray 1A, Callum Forrest 1G.

405 Laurion Law Office 4 - Michael Roell 1A, Tyler Futterer 2G, Spencer Robb 2A, Alexander Harrison 1G, Andrew Roche 1A, David Gonder 1G. **408 Greenpoint Laser Products 1.**

Minor Peewee

504 Rotary Club of Aurora 10. 501 Millennium Devils 1 - Liam Devlin 1G, Joshua Lawlor 1A.

502 ACI 4 - Matthew Hudon 1A, Zachary Ferry 3G, Trevor Rice 1A, MacKenzie McIntosh 1A, Christopher Kinsman 1A. **506 Dr. Steiner's Drillers 2** - Eric Staeuble 1G, Ryan Dowling 1G, Ethan Cullen 1A.

Peewee

604 Fresh Water Industries 3 - Kelley Hudson 1A, Christopher Karagiannis 1A, Gabriel C-Bauset 1A, Matthew Hart 1G, Shawn Hofmann 1A, Stephen Canatrutti 1G, Justin Mason 1G 1A. **601 Aurora Home Hardware Building Centre 1.**

Bantam

801 Supreme Collision Centre 1 - Scott Parry 1G. **805 Barb Blaser - Re/Max 1** - Nick Orsatti 1A, Robert Fiorini 1G.

Minor Midget

905 Skaters First 3. 901 Emilios Pizza 2.

Select

Newmarket Redmen Tyke 8. Aurora Tigers Tyke 4 - Katerina Dajia 1A, Ryan Thornhill 1G, Mark Kalmisto 1A, Ben Langlois 1A, Matthew Minchella 1G 1A, Anthony Issaris 1A, Eric McGhie 1G, Brennan Young 1G.

Rep Games

Newmarket Redmen Minor Atom AA 3. Aurora Tigers Minor Atom AA 1 - Graydon Gardner 1A, Braeden Kublick 1G.

Aurora Tigers Minor Atom AA 3 - Jake Appleby 1G, Alex Bernier 1G, Nicholas Baxter 2A, Graeme McDonald 1G. **Newmarket Redmen Minor Atom AA 2.**

Newmarket Redmen Minor Atom AA 4. Aurora Tigers Minor Atom AA 3 - Jake Appleby 1G 2A, Nicholas Baxter 2G.

Aurora Tigers Peewee A 2 - Sean Nishimura 1A, Dylan Woyslaw 1G, Adam Balaban 1G 1A. **TNT PW A Peewee A 1.**

Aurora Tigers Peewee A 3 - Reid Sisson 1A, Sean Nishimura 1A, Marco Ghegin 1G, Josh Klinowski 1G 1A, Evan Collict 1A, AJ Killens 1G, Dylan Woyslaw 1A, Adam Balaban 1A. **TNT PW A Peewee A 2.**

TNT PW AE Peewee AE 5. Aurora Tigers Peewee AE 4.

Aurora Tigers Minor Bantam AE 1 - Brett Richardson 1G, Luca Battiston 1A, Michael Nonnewitz 1A. **Newmarket Redmen Minor Bantam AE 0.**

Aurora Tigers Bantam AE 6 - Justin Killens 1G 3A, Paul Keilty 1A, Mike Machin 1A, Patrick Che 1A, Stephen Di Nallo 3G, Andrew McKay 2A, John-Caleb Ross 1A, Johnny Haralampopoulos 2G 1A. **TNT Bantam AE Bantam AE 0.**

Aurora Tigers Bantam AE 5 - Miles Curtis 1A, Justin Killens 1G, Paul Keilty 2G, Sean Agostino 2G, Stephen Di Nallo 2A, Geoff Gianopoulos 1A, Sheldon Rivard 2A. **TNT Bantam AE Bantam AE 2.**

Aurora Tigers Bantam AE 4 - Justin Killens 2A, Paul Keilty 1G, Sean Agostino 1G, Stephen Di Nallo 1G, Andrew McKay 1A, John-Caleb Ross 1A, Johnny Haralampopoulos 1G. **TNT Bantam AE Bantam AE 3.**

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MP REPORT

By Belinda Stronach
(Newmarket-Aurora)

New cancer centre gets final approval

Parliament resumed two weeks ago and a revitalized Liberal caucus is holding the Harper government to account on a wide range of issues.

During its first year in office, the Harper government has let Canadians down on a number of fronts - everything from failing to live up to a campaign promise to reduce health care wait times to breaking a promise not to tax income trusts, an important source of retirement income for many seniors living in our community.

In the House last week, I asked the Minister of Public Safety to explain why the government was so ill-prepared to deal with the flood of passport requests that have come pouring in as a result of new rules requiring Canadians to have a passport when flying to the United States.

Because of the government's negligence, a number of Canadians risk having their travel or vacation plans cancelled - particularly with March break just around the corner.

Here at home, I was delighted to be part of the roast for former Mayor Tim Jones, which took place Thursday at Di Nardo's Banquet Hall.

I was also proud and delighted to take part in the major announcement at our local hospital regarding approval to go ahead with construction of a new, world-class Regional Cancer Centre at Southlake.

I had the privilege of introducing The Honourable George Smitherman, Ontario's Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, who announced that the cancer centre project has been given the green light to proceed.

As a result of the announcement, Southlake can now advance to the tender stage of the project and seek bids from construction companies on the building of the new centre.

Construction of the cancer centre is expected to begin in the spring this year.

Aurora residents should be excited to know that work will finally begin on one of the most modern and up-to-date cancer care facilities in the country.

A number of residents will likely have noticed that we recently moved our constituency office to a new location here in town.

Our new office is located at 14996 Yonge Street in Aurora, just south of Kennedy Street on the west side.

The building in which we're located, known as the Hutchinson House, was built in 1892 and has local historical significance.

Please note: we've changed our telephone number as well - the new phone number is 905-727-8874.

Finally, I am looking forward to taking part once again in the annual Big Brothers Big Sisters "Bowl for Kids Sake" event scheduled for this coming Saturday, Feb. 17 at Gateway Café & Lanes on Edward Street.

It's the biggest fundraising event of the year for Big Brothers Big Sisters, with all funds going toward matching children with carefully screened Big Brother and Big Sister volunteers.

My constituency office will once again field a team and we'll strive to surpass the \$1,200 we raised last year.

Please consider getting involved - it's a worthwhile cause and a lot of fun.

Sam Strange dies

A former president of the Aurora Legion has died.

Sam (Samuel Alexander) Strange was 82. He died last Wednesday, Feb. 7.

He was honoured in a ceremony at the Legion Friday night.

Strange held the president's position in 1971, and had earlier sat on the committee responsible for raising money for the Legion's new building on Industrial Parkway, and held the position of special funds chairman.

In 1991, he was given a life membership at the Aurora Legion, Branch 385. He was married to

Jeanette for 60 years and is the father of John, Jennifer, Barbara, Marlene and Scott.

Services were held Saturday from the Thompson Funeral Home Saturday afternoon.



When the weather is so cold you have to walk backwards down the street, people need cheering up. So, M & M Meat Shop chief Greg Foster, and two of his staff members, Laurissa Wiitala, left, and Emily Cooke, donned red noses to give their customers a smile. The marketing technique worked, but the temperature didn't rise.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

Gateway sign

From page 1
the location as the site for the gateway sign and agreed that if the total cost was more than the promised \$80,000 additional funds would be provided through the 2007 budget process.

It was pointed out that a consultant had been engaged to prepare a site plan as required by the Ministry, an encroachment permit has been applied for and it was hoped construction of the sign would begin in the spring.

But that is now doubtful since general committee members couldn't agree on the location for the sign nor the design and referred the issue to the yet to be established Economic Development Advisory Committee with staff to prepare cost estimates as cost were escalating.

There was some confusion over the proposed location of the sign and whether it was designed to attract east-west traffic on Wellington Street or north-south on Highway 404.

Staff members explained that the Economic Development Advisory Committee had recommended one site but council had changed that and work had already

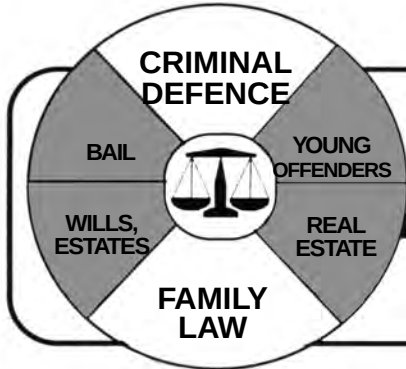
started on laying the foundation based on the council recommendation.

Councillor Al Wilson also expressed concern about the total cost of the gateway feature and sign and he was not supportive of any costs above the \$80,000 donated by Whitwell.

Councillor Bob McRoberts expressed concern that the proposed Aurora sign was to be located in Whitchurch-Stouffville and the proposed location might encourage motorists to turn right instead of left into Aurora.

He proposed the sign be located on the north side of Wellington Street immediately west of the Highway 404 intersection.

It was finally agreed to refer the issue to the Economic Development Advisory Committee for a report and recommendation.





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Start thinking about serving on the board

By BRIAN WARBURTON

Next June, the Annual General Meeting of the Aurora Seniors Association (ASA) will elect a new board of directors.

New blood is desirable; therefore, I urge anybody who has an interest in administration to start the reflection and reasoning that will lead to positive intention and constructive action.

There is a good chance that the Board of Directors will be expanded, to enable the workload to be spread more equitably.

The strength of any committee or board is the assembly of members considering problems or issues, and finding the answers by debate and consensus.

If one person alone could do it consistently, we would not need committees, but we do!

A council united in its aspirations, plans and purpose of mission is equipped to succeed admirably.

Betty Moore who runs the Wednesday Budget Bistro program, very successfully, has decided to stand down and hand the reins over to somebody else.

Betty has felt the strain of getting herself too deeply involved in too many programs, and when that happens, it is time to regroup and reorder personal priorities.

I understand that Betty will continue as a director of volunteers on the Board of Directors where she is a real asset, and we are pleased about that, and we thank her sincerely for her great effort with Budget Bistro.

However, the popular Budget Bistro will continue and if you have not tried this reasonably priced lunchtime treat at the Centre, come on over.

Budget Bistro is luncheon on Wednesdays, from 11.30 a.m. until 12.30 p.m. and more information can be obtained by phoning 905-726-4767.

The excellent food is prepared by our volunteers, who take pride in their creative culinary delights.

No reservation is required, just drop in and enjoy the food and the people around you.

If you are new to the group, you are sure to hear a friendly description of what is going on in the centre and something is always going on.

When you are young and in the golden hour of accomplishment, when you are the recipient of accolades, when your heart beats in pride of recognition, remember that the tide ebbs after the flow, and you should prepare yourself for days absent of excitement, more ordinary than extraordinary, in fact sometimes quite mundane.

This happens often enough just by aging, so it is wise to prepare yourself for what the future might bring just by widening your circle of friends and acquaintances.

Thus, I encourage the retired members of society to join the ASA; bring your talent for amusement and pleasure and parade your charm and personality where we can all enjoy it.

I encourage participation in any activity you enjoy and for the more adventurous and daring, I recommend spreading your wings and trying something new.

I suggest Pickle Ball and Carpet Bowling, if you need a prompt; but anything so long as it is new to you.

My understanding is that it does wonders for aging minds and is quite mood enhancing.

Get out of the cabin with new town event

Cold weather getting you down?

Are you looking for a fun-filled event for the whole family? Look no further.

The Town of Aurora is launching a brand new annual event Sunday, Feb 25, called "Cabin Fever Reliever".

Cabin Fever Reliever is the Town's first-ever outdoor winter concert featuring the musical entertainment of The McLaughlins and Friends, outdoor skating, hot chocolate and more.

Weather permitting, the

event will take place at the Aurora Town Park located at the corner of Wells and Mosley Streets from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

In order to keep you warm, complimentary hot chocolate will be available with a donation to the local Aurora Food Pantry.

This event is open to residents and visitors and is sure to become an annual activity, joining the growing list of annual events in Aurora.

For more information, call the Special Events Line at 905-726-4762 or e-mail sware@e-aurora.ca.

“Postponed” winter is now in our midst

With the exception of the last couple of weeks, hasn't this been a warm winter?

With all the talk and lack of action on climate change, weathermen are having a tough time making long range predictions with some saying it's going to be a mild winter and others saying it could be very uncertain, so be prepared.

We've already experienced the fact that winter won't miss us this year, it was just "postponed".

According to some weather exports the unusual warming of the Pacific Ocean, known as El Nino, is expected to continue into winter affecting weather across North America, which resulted in warmer than normal temperatures.

Only last month, In the days usually known as the dead of winter, birds were still swimming on the ponds, flowers were starting to bloom, golfers were playing, and ski operators and skiers were crying the blues over the non-winter temperatures.

But it didn't last long.

And before you think this is a regular thing, consider that Aurora has experienced some severe winter storms over the years.

Sunday, Jan. 14, 1968, was a mild, slushy day in Aurora after a sharp, cold spell.

Foot deep melting snow made driving difficult and walking was a hazard. The forecast indicated a big storm was on its way.

The snow started to fall about 8 p.m. as did the temperature and it snowed throughout the night.

Town crews were called out at 2.30 a.m. to start the arduous task of trying to keep the roads open and by morning all but two or three streets had been plowed.

Even though the town's work staff had made the roadways passable, many residents couldn't get to work as they couldn't clear their driveways.

The storm was still blowing Monday morning when Yonge Street merchants faced the daunting task of removing 14 inches of snow so they could open for business.

Schools remained closed.

Another storm hit Aurora in 1969 and town officials said there was so much snow it was quipped that it might take until July to get rid of it.

Then in 1971 another storm hit the area and while the following day dawned bright and beautiful, there were howling winds, drifting snow and abandoned vehicles everywhere.

It was said to be the worst storm in 100 years.

Drifts from 15 to 20 feet blocked the sideroads in

some areas causing problems for grader plows and heavy truck plows.

The storm returned in March with blinding snow in the Aurora area which caused hazardous driving conditions leading to a rash of fender-benders as more than a dozen cars became involved in one accident on north Yonge Street.

OPP officers at the then Oak Ridges detachment investigated 68 accidents that injured 30 people and caused more than \$75,000 damage.

A year later, a two-day storm hit Aurora with such fury the town was without power for more than seven hours as the storm downed power lines.

Driving to work was next to impossible as road crews tried to keep the roads open.

School buses were cancelled but schools remained open for students able to walk.

York Regional Police reported 35 accidents during the storm in the Aurora area.

Later in the month the storm hit again with biting cold winds and sub-zero temperatures.

It was said to be the worst weekend of the winter with seven-foot drifts on some roads causing several cars to be abandoned.

Aurora received a weather break in the winters of 1974 and 1975 with relatively mild temperatures and light snow.

December, 1975, tied a 50-year record for mildness and it was the warmest Christmas Day since 1923 when the temperature reached 36 degrees (F).

But in December, 1977, the area was hit with the first major snowstorm of the winter with police reporting several minor accidents as hundreds of motorists were left stranded on the roadways.

The heavy snows returned during the winter of 1981/82 resulting in blocked roads and burying many of the town's fire hydrants.

There was another major snowstorm in February, 1985, which kept the town's phone lines busy as residents called in to complain about blocked sidewalks, driveways and narrow streets.

In November, 1986, more than five inches of snow fell in the Aurora area with police responding to 172 accidents between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. across the area with the most serious accident at Yonge Street and the St. John's Sideroad when a car knocked over a light standard.

In January, 1997, the worst storm of the winter hit the Aurora area creating havoc on the roadways, disrupting bus schedules,

closing schools and plugging telephone lines.

Only about a third of the employees of the York County Board of Education reported for work and students who made it to school were sent home as the storm threatened to intensify and close roads.

In January, 2001, there were many snowstorms with few breaks in between as the snow piled higher and higher.

Officials said Aurora hadn't received that much snow since 1977 and there were still a couple of months to go.

Until January, 2006, Aurora residents were rela-

tively lucky as far as severe winter storms were concerned as there had been little snow and temperatures were unseasonably high.

It all changed in February, even though Wiarton Willie didn't see his shadow and predicted an early spring.

The weatherman threw everything at Aurora with freezing rain, lots of snow, high winds and sub-zero temperatures.

Over the years Aurora has experienced all types of winter conditions.

So, keep the woolies handy. It's still only February.

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RUMOURS AND RAMBLINGS

Computer turns business around

At \$20,000, R.J. Western Wear's new computerized sewing machine was an expensive tool, but it paid big dividends for Ray Jack and his Edward Street Plaza business.

Forced to shut down for about six months, while Jack completed other business commitments overseas, he re-opened his shop for business in September, 1983, to a new clientele.

Instead of catering to only those who like western-style clothing, the computerized sewing machine attracted a large cross-section of customers to his store for custom monograms.

He started to monogram hockey jackets, baseball coats, sweaters, linens and even baby blankets.

After deciding the type and size of letters, Jack entered the inscription into the keyboard computer.

The article to be monogrammed was fitted on a ring to ensure that the lettering would be straight, the machine was threaded, a button was pushed and the machine did the rest.

The computerized machine and R.J. Western Wear have disappeared but it is likely some of the monograms remain.

ANOTHER DISAPPEARANCE

Today, Aurora has a popular Howard Johnson Hotel but Aurora also had a disappearing Howard Johnson.

In December, 1974, council gave final approval for a new Howard Johnson Motor Inn/Restaurant complex on Henderson Drive at Yonge Street.

The original proposal by Auroran Holdings included two major department stores, a food store and a gas bar, but the site wasn't large enough and approval was given for the hotel, restaurant, the gas bar and six retail stores.

It was another plan that disappeared into the sunset and today the site includes a Dominion store and several retail outlets.

HOMEOWNER CLAIMS HE WAS RAILOADED

Every council gets criticized once in a while and December, 1965, was no exception.

An irate householder claimed council had railroaded a problem of his and refused him a hearing.

Harold Shoniker and his neighbour had a difference of opinion about the location of his neighbour's house, which he claimed would obstruct his view.

Although the setback of the new house was within the 15-foot bylaw provision, the bylaw also provided for a council decision when existing houses were involved.

At the next meeting, Shoniker got his say and council got a blast.

While he did not disagree with council's final decision, he objected to the way the issue had been handled and council agreed that when a citizen comes before council, he should be heard.

MARCH FOR PARKS FUND

In 1997, a group of citizens initiated the March for Parks Fund and asked the town to handle the funds for them.

According to a report submitted to council by the Treasurer, the money raised in 1997 was spent in 1997.

The funds raised in 1998 and 1999 were not totally spent and this money, amounting to \$13,769.87 is being held by the town.

Whatever happened to the organizers and workers and why wasn't the money used on parks?

Also, whatever happened to the fund that developers contributed to in lieu of parking spaces in the downtown core and how much is in that fund and how was it supposed to be used?

Possibly this fund could be used to help pay for the parking study to be carried out in connection with the Library Square project?

St. Andrew's students prepare for "Godot"

By KASHTIN FITZSIMONS
Special to The Auroran

This year has been a productive one for the St. Andrew's College Dramatic Society.

With the success of the fall production of Cabaret, and numerous upcoming projects, the future is looking bright for drama at Aurora's St. Andrew's College.

One of the most anticipated plays this year is "Waiting For Godot", an absurdist play by Samuel Beckett, written in the late 1940s and first published in 1952.

The St. Andrew's performance is entirely student run, directed by Ryan Cole, a Grade 10 student from Aurora, and featuring many of the actors from Cabaret.

Relatively new to acting, Ryan played the Emcee in Cabaret, directed a play during last spring's FOCUS Festival, and portrayed Puck in A Midsummer Night's Dream in November, 2005.

The two leading characters, Vladimir and Estragon, two confused, yet determined and at times naïve men, are played by Cabaret's Colin Murphy and Greg VandeMark. Colin had a lead role in Cabaret, opposite Sally Bowles as Clifford Bradshaw.

Colin and Greg are

both graduating students from Mexico City and Aurora respectively, and are prevalent in student leadership at the school.

Vladimir and Estragon spend the entirety of the play waiting for someone, or something named "Godot", a theme that becomes quite important as the play unfolds.

The supporting cast is one of talent and diligence, and includes Will Samson-Doel, Sebastian Biase and Julian Fitzsimons.

Will is a Grade 12 student from Richmond Hill.

His acting experience includes many FOCUS Festival plays, all of which have been very well received.

In "Waiting For Godot", Will plays Pozzo, the self-righteous landowner, who also owns a slave named Lucky, portrayed by Sebastian Biase.

Sebastian is a Grade 9 student from Aurora who is just launching his acting career. He has

already made his mark as a reporter for SACTV.

Sebastian's character, Lucky, is the tired, knowledgeable, yet somewhat deranged slave to Pozzo.

Julian Fitzsimons, is a Grade 7 student from Aurora, a former member of the Main Street Theatre Company, and is one of the most talented young actors in the Drama Society. Julian had a vocal solo in Cabaret, and also had a supporting role in A Midsummer Night's Dream.

He plays the Boy, a servant to Godot, and while considered mysterious among his fellow cast members, many audiences consider him the only sane one in the bunch.

While rehearsals began in January, the students started working on the production in November, as many considerations had to be made to accommodate for the play's abstract

style.

Literally days after Cabaret finished, and the set had been cleared, Ryan, the director, began planning for the next play.

S.A.C. Head of Drama, William Scoular, has been involved at a minimum, and is excited to see what the students put forth.

"Waiting for Godot" will run from February 21 to 23, at 7 p.m. in the St. Andrew's Science Lecture Hall (SLH).

Tickets are \$10 and may be reserved in advance by calling 905-727-3178, ext. 260, or by emailing jane.bedard@sac.on.ca.



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