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Vol. 7 No. 16

AURORAN, Week of February 20, 2007

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Briefly

Butterworth dies

One-time golf pro at the Aurora Highlands Golf Club, a former part owner of the Aurora Tigers, and one-time co-owner of an Aurora sports store, Bruce Butterworth died Friday.

A memorial service will be held at St. Andrew's United Church in Beaverton Thursday at 2 p.m.

Jazz clinic

Jazz Trumpeter Chase Sanborn and his Quartet will give a Jazz Tactics Clinic and Concert Thursday, Mar. 1 at St. Andrew's College in Aurora, beginning at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$10 and may be purchased in advance by emailing jane.bedard@sac.on.ca or by phoning 905-727-3178 ext. 260.

Appointments cause stir at council meet

The bylaw covering the appointment of people to Aurora's Committee of Adjustment didn't sit well with at least one councillor last week.

As a result, people were placed on the committee only after council, after a private meeting, on a recorded vote, agreed 5-4.

The issue started as council decided who it wanted to sit on its various committees, and Councillor Bob McRoberts took exception to the Committee of Adjustment bylaw.

His request for a separate vote and another request from Councillor Grace Marsh that an item dealing with the committee appointments be discussed in private, resulted in a 15-minute behind closed doors session before being approved by council.

James Beechey, Lisa Cruickshank, Hank Gosar, Walter Mestrinero and William Warner were appointed to the

Please see page 11



One of several teams included in the Big Brothers Big Sisters bowlathon at Aurora's Gateway Lanes Saturday included this uniformed fivesome of, left to right, Janesse McPhillips, MPP Frank Klees, Ken Wakeman, Darryl Wolk and Jen Serdetchnata. Participants, representing residents and politicians throughout the area raised thousands of dollars for the organization.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

ACI owner fights back

In an e-mail to Mayor Phyllis Morris dated earlier this month, Aurora Cable Internet founder and president Jim Irvine referred to an e-mail from the mayor and CAO requesting a meeting with ACI and the concerned citizens to facilitate discussion over the controversial wind turbines on ACI property on Ridge Road.

He declined the offer.

Irvine referred to an earlier letter to council to close the door on the discussions and not to open a new one.

As set out in a letter dated

January 30th, Irvine noted discussions with neighbouring residents was covering the same ground.

He wrote that the two sides had repeatedly discussed these issues formally and informally and "they and us are only repeating ourselves, which is no longer productive".

In the letter, which appeared on last week's council agenda at the request of Councillor Evelyn Buck, Irvine set out the Aurora Cable position in the ongoing controversy.

Please see page 8

Trudeau grounded, Newman steps in

It may be tough leaving Los Angeles to come to Aurora in February, but it's even tougher when planes won't land in the area.

For the past several weeks the Aurora Chamber of Commerce had been advertising that Justin Trudeau, son of Pierre, would be the guest speaker at their February luncheon and more than 350 members and guests signed up, the largest Chamber luncheon crowd to date.

As it was expected Trudeau would have a message on education and the environment, including students, the

Chamber asked companies to sponsor a high school student at the luncheon and 29 complied.

Then to the dismay of Chamber officials, a telephone call was received last Wednesday morning advising Trudeau was grounded by bad weather and would be unable to get to Aurora.

That sent officials into a tizzy, and the result was a last-minute stand-in, Canadian author and journalist Peter C. Newman.

Newman admitted he was no Justin Trudeau but told several stories about Pierre Trudeau going back to the leader-

ship debate in 1968.

He said Trudeau broke all the rules and was totally unpredictable, but spoke from the heart and the gut.

He also told stories about Bill Clinton, Ronald Regan, George Bush, Paul Martin, Joe Clark, Brian Mulroney, Stephen Harper and how Stephane Dion would do better by changing his name to Celine.

During his speech he wore his traditional black cap similar to a naval cap causing The Auroran to ask why he always wore it.

He explained that after he retired

from Maclean's magazine in the 1980s he did a lot of sailing and fishing and acquired the hat as he understood it was the type of a hat worn by the Greek fishermen.

But the on a trip to Greece, he found out that it wasn't worn by Greek fishermen, but by Greek donkey-drivers.

While many may have been disappointed at not hearing Justine Trudeau, who promised to appear at another luncheon, Newman did a remarkable job on such short notice and delivered a humorous and interesting talk about Canada and its leaders.



Twenty-nine students, above, had been invited to an Aurora Chamber of Commerce luncheon last week hoping to hear Justin Trudeau. But bad weather grounded his plane so they met Peter C. Newman (inset) instead.

Auroran photos by David Falconer

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COMING EVENTS IN AURORA

Until Feb. 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 keepsinging@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 McClenny 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.

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.

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 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 \$100.00 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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PROUD TO BE LIVING AND WORKING IN AURORA



Prior to the screening of "Snow Cake" last week, the Aurora Film Circuit presented a cheque for \$2,500 to the Aurora Public Library. Accepting on behalf of the Library Board were Geoffrey Dawe and Elizabeth Bishenden. Jane Taylor, the Aurora Film Circuit's Chair, left, made the presentation. This is the first donation in what is expected to become an annual contribution towards out-of-budget programming at the Library. Funds were raised through 2006 ticket sales. The Aurora Film Circuit is committed to enhancing the arts and cultural scene of Aurora by providing the community with an alternative cinema experience through the screening of independent, critically-acclaimed Canadian and international films. Aurora is one of 192 communities across Canada taking part in this film-outreach program.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

Aurora is looking for exceptional citizens

Given how many exceptional people live in Aurora and make a difference in the community, the Town of Aurora Civic Appreciation Awards is an annual event recognizing the contributions made by these citizens.

The Town of Aurora organizes the event, however its success rests with the public's participation in nominating the award recipients.

Groups, organizations, service clubs and individuals who make a difference need someone to highlight their contributions.

The awards ceremony will be held at the Aurora Town Hall Council Chambers Wednesday June 6 at 7.30 p.m., but nominations must be in by Tuesday April 10.

With ten categories to choose from, it's easy to

nominate someone exceptional this year.

Categories include; Bob Harman Memorial Award, Johnson's Cultural Achievement Award, The Civic Appreciation Awards (Individual and Group), Outstanding Achievement Awards (Individual or Non Profit Organization), Volunteer Service Awards, Youth Volunteer Service Awards, Community Organization Award,

Quarter Century Achievement and The Citizen of The Year Award.

These awards recognize individuals and groups who have consistently given back to the community through their generosity and active participation.

To learn more, pick up a nomination package at the Aurora Town Hall, Aurora Family Leisure Complex or call 905-726-4762 to have one mailed.



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Pet licence fees remain at 2006 rates...for now

Citizens can beat town hall if enough of them get together and strongly object to a proposal before council, especially where pets are concerned.

Council, at a general committee meeting recently, talked about increasing licence fees for pets.

It was pointed out that the current dog fee is \$20 and the fee for cats \$10 and it was proposed to increase these amounts to \$30 for a dog and \$20 for a cat.

Seniors had not been required to obtain a licence in the past, and it was proposed to that they pay \$15 for a dog licence and \$10 for a cat.

When the report came to a previous council Councillor Bob McRoberts was unsuccessful in gaining support to lower the fee for seniors from the proposed amounts to \$5 for a dog and \$5 for a cat.

Staff members said that in spite of the town's growth, licence fee revenue over the past six years had been decreasing and the cost of canine control was increasing.

By removing the exemption for micro-chipped pets and charging seniors, it was envisioned that licence revenue could help offset escalating costs of the animal control services which was a burden on non-pet owner taxpayers.

In spite of the efforts of Councillor McRoberts, the staff report was adopted and council directed staff to prepare the enacting bylaw for adoption at the next council meeting, after advising residents of the proposed revised fee structure.

However, last week correspondence was received from 12 residents, all opposing the proposed fee structure for various reasons.

It was also noted that several pet owners had tried to obtain their 2007 licences but were advised by staff that they would not be available until council adopted the enacting bylaw.

Councillor McRoberts moved that staff review the rates for micro-chipped and neutered pets and the fee for seniors be \$5 for cats and dogs.

Other councillors agreed with the referral for review but objected to the fee stipulation for seniors.

After deciding to refer the issue for another report, it was

agreed to direct staff to start issuing pet licences under the existing bylaw, as some members of council said they would not support a change in fees in mid-year.

Resident Keith Munroe complained about the lower fee for cats than dogs as he claimed cats are much more destructive and asked for a definition of what was meant by dogs running at large.

He said he'd been fined when he let his dog out of his van in Sheppard's Bush, and although not approached by the canine control officer, was traced through his licence number.

So, for now at least, pet owners can obtain a licence at the old fee structure.

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Back in 1926, this was the group of employees who showed up for the T. Sisman Shoe Company's 10th annual picnic. The major Aurora industry held the event

at Bond Lake, once a prominent summer getaway resort, served by radial cars from the city to the south. Bond Lake is located in Oak Ridges, part of Richmond

Hill, and most of the land surrounding it has now been earmarked for a residential subdivision. This photo was provided by Heather Sisman of Aurora.



Poor Richard

Decades later, we're still waiting for winter holiday

*We need a February holiday
To forget the winter blues;
It is so badly needed;
But politicians haven't any clues,
- Poor Richard Scrapbook*

We need a mid-winter holiday to break up the long stretch from New Year's Day to Good Friday which doesn't normally arrive until April and that's a long time, normally full of poor weather conditions.

Many Canadians suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) and seasonal depression due to the lack of sunlight during the winter solstice.

During this period of the winter, blues sufferers are less enthusiastic about life, less creative and less productive.

I've been a supporter of a mid-winter holiday for more years than I care to remember, and if things had worked out differently, Canadians would have been celebrating a statutory holiday last Thursday.

My campaign stated in 1966 when as a new and inexperienced Aurora councillor, I introduced a motion that February 15th be declared a statutory holiday to be known as National Flag Day.

It was at noon on February 15, 1965, when RCMP Corporal Joseph Secours hoisted Canada's new national Maple Leaf flag on a ceremonial flagpole at the foot of the Peace Tower in Ottawa.

The new flag also waved in the breeze atop the former Yonge Street Post Office in Aurora and later at Aurora schools, but the Red Ensign and the Union Jack still waved from most flag poles as the new creation was in short supply.

After much discussion, the motion for a mid-winter holiday was adopted by Aurora Council on a 4-2 vote.

In June of that year, Prime Minister Lester Pearson, an Aurora old boy, acknowledged the suggestion and advised it had been referred to the Secretary of State.

Then in June, 1971, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau visited Aurora and on behalf of the mayors of the newly formed York Region, as the host Mayor, I had the honour of presenting a brief to the Prime Minister, recommending a number of issues including the need for a mid-winter national holiday.

The brief stated in part, "...In order to provide a needed break in the long and sometimes depressing duration of winter."

In February, 1973, York-Simcoe Member of Parliament Sinclair Stevens introduced a private member's bill to establish the last Friday in February as a national holiday to be known as Discovery Day.

His bill was referred to a committee along with two other private bills, once proposing a holiday to be known as Sir John A. MacDonald Day and the other, Canada Flag Day.

In December, 1973, the committee recommended a new annual holiday to be established on the third Monday in February to be known as Heritage Day, but nothing ever happened.

Then in 1975 the Optimist Clubs of Canada got into the act by preparing a Heritage Planning Guide describing various activities that could take place to recognize the holiday.

Finally, in December, 1976, a Bill was prepared to designate a mid-February holiday as Heritage Day but it was never introduced.

Then in January, 1977, a Bill making changes to the federal labour code was introduced which included the February holiday.

But in October that year Secretary of State John Roberts, the same John Roberts who had encouraged the York Mayors to present Trudeau with the brief, announced that the Heritage Day holiday had been put on hold because of its economic implications.

We still don't have a national holiday in February to celebrate the flag, the heritage, a former Prime Minister, early explorers or what have you.

A federal election is coming sometime in the next little while, and all parties will be searching for votes to form a government and the difference between winning with another minority government could be the February National Holiday.

Letters to the Editor

There's no reason for turbine secret meeting, she says

To the editor,

The last meeting of council prior to an election is a favourite venue for lobbyists to pressure councillors to accede to their demands. Sadly, their efforts are usually successful.

It was no different last year. Three residents from Ridge Road demanded council enforce conditions of an OMB decision on Aurora Cable Internet.

The trio had objected to the application before a Committee of Adjustment hearing. The application was granted. They filed an Appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board. They had legal representation as did Aurora Cable.

The OMB approved the application. Now they were

at council to insist conditions be immediately complied. Seven councillors were present. Despite staff advice there were no time limits for conditions to be met, four members directed staff to meet with Aurora Cable and direct them to comply.

The Ridge Road trio had been to council before with their arguments. They have been several times since, during the new term.

They bring sheafs of papers citing federal and provincial laws and regulations. They persist in their dispute with town staff as to definitions of town zoning and the provincial building code. They bring pictures.

Holding the door open for the ongoing onslaught is the support of four councillors and the mayor. The last

motion from Councillor Evelina MacEachern directed staff to submit a written definition of the word "storage".

ACI have sent their envoy to council again and again to outline their intentions and good faith. Their plans are to secure a back-up of energy by the use of three small wind turbines; a conservation measure and green technology.

Finally Jim Irvine, owner of ACI, sent a letter outlining a two-year history of following advice of Aurora staff every step of the way in their endeavour.

Still, the mayor declared to council her willingness to meet with the Ridge Road trio, town staff and ACI representatives of their property to find a "solution".

Walter Mestrinaro, of the

Ridge Road trio, issued a challenge. Let ACI, the residents and the town go to court and seek a decision.

Councillor MacEachern declared herself willing.

Subsequently, a letter was received from Mr. Irvine declaring the door is closed to further discussion.

The latest development has seen the issue retreat behind closed doors. Councillor MacEachern indicated the object was to determine the town's legal liability should there be a catastrophe on the site.

The town's interest is never harmed by an open discussion of insurance liability in any matter. This was no reason for a secret meeting.

In fact, there is no reason, nor has there been since the OMB decision, for any further discussion.

ACI's experience at the hands of four councillors and the mayor, is a classic example of why the Ontario Municipal Board was created in the first place.

There are matters of citizen's rights, which simply cannot be left to the vagaries of the political arena.

At last week's meeting, Walter Mestrinaro was appointed to the Committee of Adjustment by a vote of the same four councillors and the mayor.

To the editor,

I would like to thank Dick Illingworth for keeping the wind turbine issue in the forefront.

I don't agree with all of Dick's reporting with respect to the facts, and I feel that for the most part he has misrepresented the position put forth by my neighbours and I; however, I accept his writings as his perspective on the issue.

However, I feel that I must set the record straight on at least one count.

During my closing statements to council January 30, I stated that given ACI's (Aurora Cable Internet) position and strongly held beliefs that they are in full compliance and given our opposing position and staff's inability, or perhaps unwillingness, to deal with the issue we should explore a different route.

I offered ACI to join us in making a joint application to the courts for a determination on this matter.

Should ACI refuse this offer (to date, ACI has

not contacted us) then we would make the same offer to the Town.

I believe that this would bring closure to the issue and given everyone's strong belief in their respective positions I believe this to be a reasonable alternative.

Dick's interpretation was that I threatened to take ACI before the courts.

With all due respect, Dick, I think you missed the point and you are doing a disservice to the community by passing your opinion off as reporting.

I would also like to take this opportunity to ask staff, where our definition of "storage" is?

At the January 23 general committee meeting, staff submitted a report to council, concluding that the storage of the trailer was not in contravention of the zoning bylaws; however, when pressed for the definition of storage, staff could not offer one.

In fact, council directed staff, by resolution, to provide the residents with a written definition of "storage".

Needless to say, we are still waiting.

Tip to Dick: Given that a Director has signed her name to a report that concludes that storage is acceptable, but couldn't define storage at the time of the report, in my opinion, was probably worth reporting.

Walter Mestrinaro
Aurora

Evelyn Buck
Aurora

AURORAN

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Front Porch Perspective

By Stephen Somerville

Budget numbers...

Could someone please call York Region Police Chief Armand La Barge.

Tell him I believe there is a large "Grow Op" in Aurora.

It is located in the middle of the Aurora Town Council Chamber, and has been operating since sometime in the early 1990's.

How else do I explain the financial decisions that have emanated from past and present Town council members since that time? Our publicly elected officials must surely have been breathing in this rarefied (i.e. low oxygen content) air to make such dreadful, totally egregious and harmful decisions to our community.

Okay, now that I have your attention and before any "cease and desist" orders or libel suits are slapped on me, just ignore the aforementioned highly inflammatory and offensive rhetoric.

The reason for the above is that I am again writing about public finance and I didn't want you all to turn the page. I needed to capture your attention!

I was thinking of asking the editor to make the headline for the column, "Swedish bikini volleyball team comes to Aurora", but I didn't think he would do it. (Note to editor, if they do come to Aurora, please let me know).

And I don't have the luxury of the CBS television network that can have Sunday afternoon NFL football provide a "lead in" to Sixty Minutes.

So, after that dreadfully long and rather grandiose introduction, let's talk about taxation.

Specifically, let's look at the trending of taxes at the various levels of government since the early 1990's as compared with population, Gross Domestic Product ("GDP"), Consumer Prices ("CPI") and income growth and see how the Town measures up.

Canada's national population, according to Statistics Canada, in 1996 was 29.6 million. It currently stands at just under 33 million. This represents an increase of one per cent annually.

The Ontario population has grown from 10.7 million people in 1996 to 12.7 million people in 2006, an increase of 18 per cent.

Over the same period, Aurora's population has increased 43 per cent or more than four times the national average.

York Region is the fastest growing part of the Greater Toronto Area with a current total population of 933,400.

GDP represents the total value of production in the economy. Economic growth is often measured as the percentage increase in GDP, adjusted for inflation, from one year over an earlier year.

Real GDP growth for all industries averaged about 3 per cent between 1997 and 2006.

The CPI has averaged about a 2.2 per cent increase per year since 1996.

Real personal disposable income has increased about 4 per cent per year between 1996 and 2006.

From the period of 1992 through 1999, the Town of Aurora had a zero percent increase in the tax rates. From 2000 through 2006 the increase averaged 7.3 per cent.

The Region of York, between 1992 and 1999 averaged 3 per cent annual increase in taxes while averaging 3.6 per cent from 2000 through 2006.

The average for the public and separate school board over the time frame of 1992 through 1997 was 4.53%.

Effective January 1, 1998, the province mandated the move to current value assessment and assumed the responsibility for the setting of tax rates for boards of education.

What does this mass of statistics mean?

It suggests the Aurora portion of the tax increases that we have experienced over the past few years are not sustainable.

Although our real wages have increased at more than the rate of inflation, a tax level that is continually higher than the rate of growth in the economy and over triple the CPI is not good for our community.

There will be those who argue that, although a 7.3 per cent increase sounds large, on an absolute basis, it is not.

They will also argue that, based on an assessed home value of \$300,000, Aurorans are only being asked to pay \$1,015 annually or approximately an extra \$85 per household.

They will further argue that, in return for this modest sum, Aurorans get a lot; the Town is responsible for things such as local roads, fire protection, garbage collection, snow ploughing, traffic control, Library, Seniors' Centre, recreation facilities and local land use planning needs.

Yes, this is true, but it misses the point.

Sure, we want our elected representatives to ask themselves - for every budgetary item that they consider - are Aurorans receiving the appropriate value for their tax dollars? That goes without saying.

But shouldn't the primary question(s) be can our community afford it and is the tax increase sustainable in the long run?

I understand there is much, much more to a community than low taxes.

And I know that the BMA Management Consulting firm produced a report for the Town that showed Aurora fared very well in comparison to 80 other Ontario municipalities in a number of categories - including taxes.

Again, true (and very good news as well), but again, it misses the point.

It says here it is incumbent upon the mayor and council to communicate their collective economic vision to us in such a way that their 2007 Budget is understandable, that it is prudent, and that Aurorans can buy into it.

Stephen can be contacted at:
stephengsomerville@yahoo.com

Machell's Corners



Letter to the Editor

Reader hopes council will keep taxes down

To the editor,

I read with interest Newmarket Mayor Tony Van Bynen's campaign promise to try and control property taxes by holding them to the rate of inflation.

His commitment to fiscal responsibility is to be admired.

Having recently received by inteim tax bill

from Aurora I can only hope that our new mayor and council, having also identified high tax increases as a priority in their campaigns, will take note and act accordingly.

I believe Councillors Evelina MacEachern, Al Wilson and Grace Marsh were elected principally on their professional experience and in the case of Ms

MacEachern, her past record in trimming the budget in her previous term on council.

To date, I have read of only one councillor, Alison Collins-Mrakas, who has commented at all on the budgetary process.

It is impossible to satisfy all requests for additional capital and operating expenses.

I wish all levels of government would base their decisions as private citizens hopefully do...by balancing needs as opposed to wants on affordability.

We elected this new council on a hope for change and I'm sure they won't disappoint.

Judy Salmon
Aurora



Cathy's Corner

A tribute to Tim Jones

Earlier this month, a tribute dinner was held in honour of Aurora's former mayor, Tim Jones.

The event attracted more than 360 people and raised \$10,000 for Southlake Regional Health Centre.

It was my pleasure and privilege to participate in roasting the man who has been at the forefront of Aurora politics for the past 28 years, and I'd like to share the chuckles that my reminiscence inspired, so here it is:

"Ladies & Gentlemen, it is a pleasure to be here tonight - "In Good Company", to be sure!

It must make you feel warm and fuzzy all over, Tim - to be in SUCH good company; to be in the midst of this big crowd of loving and supportive individuals.

Now if only they had gone out and voted, huh?

But look on the bright side: Your days of sign-pounding, door-knocking, and ribbon-cutting are over!

Soon, those calluses on your hands will heal...but then again, now that you'll have more time for golfing and gardening, they might not. And that's a good thing.

And another good thing, Tim: You won't have to go to any of those stressful, strenuous power lunches anymore! Now you can have...power naps! Life just keeps getting better, doesn't it?

And the best part is: You are no longer a "chained man", my friend!

A few weeks ago, I looked up "Mayoral Chains of Office" on the internet and I discovered the most shocking thing! It's a "collar", Tim!

Those chains originated in London, England, in the 19th Century and they are "properly" referred to as the "Collar of Office"!

No wonder you were always on such a tight leash!

I mean, look at the "standard issue" equipment for a mayor!

First item: A gavel. One cheap little wooden gavel? Are you kidding?

Evelyn Buck made more of an impact with a rolled up Auroran! Thank goodness she didn't borrow your chintzy little gavel, Tim! Ron Wallace would have been picking splinters out of his brain for months!

Next item: A pair of scissors. If they wanted you to trim the fat off the budget, they could have at least given you a pair of poultry shears! What can you do with a pair of scissors? Cut ribbons? Who decides these things?

Next item: a council. This would be a group of eight people who have always wanted to be on TV. Each one gets to speak, says nothing, nobody listens...then, everybody slips on a pair of brass knuckles and it's...show time!

For the last three years, network television had nothing on ACI's Channel 10! The last council had more edge-of-your-seat action than the World Wrestling Federation and Jerry Springer put together!

There was the "Amazing Race"...to the microphone, the teamwork of "Survivor", and how many times did you get called to the rescue in an episode of "Nanny 911"? Too many, huh?

Really, Tim?...a gavel? That's almost as bad as a collar! They should have given you a sledge-hammer!

And you ran for re-election? What were you thinking? The man has nerves of steel.

Last item: What was that final item, Tim? You know - the mayoral hand-me-down that you inherited from John West...who inherited it from Dick Illingworth...who accepted the item...back in - what was the year, Dick? 1824?

Right! The ceremonial sword!

Yes, ladies and gentlemen, Aurora has a ceremonial sword that has been passed on from generation to generation of illustrious mayors...oh-oh!

Tim? Tim! What were you thinking?

How could you leave that to Phyllis? She's going to peel off the shrink wrap, Tim!

Oh, Tim...we are going to miss you!

And I'll tell you what I'm going to miss the most. I'm going to miss your unassuming, good nature.

Some of you might remember that I wrote several chapters of the "Roarora" saga last year. I basically put a slight "twist" on the somewhat "bent" behaviour of Aurora Council, and created a purely fictional - okay, not so fictional - imaginary town inspired by Tuesday nights in Aurora.

Now, whereas Aurora is a "Character Community", Roarora was a "Community of Characters".

Said characters included: Councillor Mayoress, Councillor Eager, Councillor Legal Beagle, Councillor Dogg, Councillor Florist, Councillor Walla-Walla, Councillor East, and Councillor Stag.

I published the first chapter just before Christmas, 2005 in The Auroran, and I understand from readers that there was NO confusion as to who was who...

That weekend, I ran into Tim Jones at a Christmas party. I looked at him suspiciously - I was afraid he might be packing that gavel!

Imagine my surprise - he said, "Hello"! Warmly - even!!!

"Are you still speaking to me?" I asked in utter amazement.

"Of course," he said. "Why wouldn't I be?"

"Because," I guessed, "you haven't read my column this week?"

He said he had.

"And you're STILL speaking to me? Even after I called you 'Mayor ... Fotowop'?"

"Well," he said, "I figured it was either that, or Scissor-Hands!"

Ladies and Gentlemen, you've got to love a man who can roll with the punches, take it as it comes, rise to every occasion, and shine in the spotlight of the affection, admiration, and respect that he has earned.

We're going to miss you, Tim. Thank you for giving us YOUR best in the past,

And may we wish you all OUR best in the future!"

At that point, it got so warm and fuzzy in the room, I could hear Emcee Gord James purring!

It was both a heartwarming and hilarious night, but there is one thing I regret: That the organizers of the event insisted on remaining incognito. I think they deserve a standing ovation!

Cathy Vrancic welcomes e-mail at:
laughingmatters@aci.on.ca

BOUQUETS to the organizing committee for the Tim Jones Tribute Dinner, the roasters and the nearly 400 in attendance at DiNardo's Mansion with the proceeds providing a \$10,000 donation to the Southlake Regional Cancer Centre.

BRICKBATS to the members of Aurora Council who are dragging their feet in approving the application from Aurora Cable Internet, to install three wind turbines at their transmitter site on Ridge Road, as it was approved by the Committee of Adjustment and the Ontario Municipal Board.

BOUQUETS to Vanessa Crone of Aurora and her partner Paul Poirier of Unionville on capturing the Junior Dance Crown at the recent 2007 BMO Financial Group Canadian Championships in Halifax.

BRICKBATS to the Motor Vehicle Licensing office on Mary Street for not having an answering machine that provides the hours of operation as to when the office is open. It's most frustrating when you call an agency of the government and can't obtain information, which should be readily available.

BOUQUETS to Melissa Waldie, the high scoring forward for the Aurora Panthers in the Provincial Women's Hockey League who was named to Team Ontario for the Canada Winter Games and offered a hockey scholarship with Clarkson University in Potsdam, New York.

BRICKBATS to a deportation and justice system which orders a Portuguese family and four children to be deported to the Azores in Portugal, even though a government passport backlog meant their Canadian born 11-month-old baby couldn't travel with them without a passport and they had no family to leave the baby with. Their crime was being turned down as refugees after six years in Canada.

BOUQUETS to St. Joseph's School for leading the way for Aurora elementary schools with a 2005/2006 provincial ranking of 159th followed by Regency Acres and Aurora Grove tied in 202nd place, Our Lady of Grace in 233rd, Aurora Heights in 426th, St. Jerome 852nd, Highview 910, Northern Lights 1,190, Devins Drive 1,261, St. Jean and Holy Spirit 1,464, Light of Christ 2,076 and Wells Street 2,173.

BOUQUETS to Toronto City Council for deciding to take all steps possible to battle an Ontario Municipal Board decision approving condo developments in the Queen West Triangle which was opposed by council and the community.

BRICKBATS to a justice system that permits 20 court remands for a motorist charged with impaired driving and assault resisting arrest when found vomiting beside his car in front of a house party in Scarborough. Because of the charges, the motorist couldn't drive and lost his job and his apartment and because of the many remands all charges were dropped.

BOUQUETS to the dentists and citizens who offered to assist 25-year-old Jason Jones in correcting his dental problems so that he can become gainfully employed, after his story appeared in the Toronto Star, as neither the provincial nor federal governments have a health plan to cover dental care for people on low incomes.

BRICKBATS to the bone-headed federal bureaucrats who decreed that new security regulations for ferries, including single-file boarding and metal detectors, would apply to Toronto's ferries to the Island, where thousands of visitors and picnickers board the ferries hundreds at a time. Get real!

Letter to the Editor

Were we duped by Wal-Mart?

To the editor,

You know, in the larger scheme of things, friendly competition between rivals may not be such a terribly sordid affair it is oft made out to be.

As a matter of fact, it may even be healthy, or at least somewhat desirable.

After all, to quote Samuel Clements, "it's the difference of opinion that makes horse races".

And if we didn't have horse races, and all those other forms of gambling, then where would we be?

Well, in my case I'd still be where I always am, because I don't gamble, but a lot of other folks could be at a station where they would not be normally found.

Like at home with their families, or at a job, or performing some other important function that may actually be a benefit to the community and society at large.

On the other hand, all those whose employment depends on the propensity of stupid people to fritter away the last of their hard earned compensation (or more likely, the remaining remnants of their government assistance cheques) on the mistaken belief that gambling is an acceptable or financially responsible manner of income generation, would be out of a job.

For instance, people like those involved in organized crime, or those people who work for casinos and the Ontario Gaming Corporation.

But, all that is not the point I attempting to arrive at.

What I was linguistically meandering my way towards, was to comment on an article on the front page of the Jan. 30th edition, which announced that Wal-Mart was making an application to increase the size of the store they have proposed for Aurora.

Specifically I wished to wonder aloud why we the citizens of Whitchurch-Stouffville find ourselves competing once again with you Auroragonians.

This time over who should be the proud home of the biggest "regional" Wal-Mart in York Region.

As an aside, I'm still trying to figure out why York Region needs more than one "regional" store.

Seems this proposed edifice is to be well in excess of 210,000 square feet.

Considerably larger than any other store in your town, larger than your bylaws allow for, and probably larger than virtually anything else in your town.

Actually the word "excess" seems to be quite fitting in this case. I think a building that large probably has its own gravity field and could possibly affect the tides in Lake Simcoe.

My problem with this proposed mega store is that it will exceed the size of the Wal-Mart that just opened last fall here in my town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

If my memory serves me, the good folks at Wal-Mart promised the council and the citizens of our good town that our Wal-Mart would be the largest in Ontario, if not Canada.

Seems we were duped. Or at least misled.

That is not to say that our Wal-Mart isn't big. In all fairness, it's awfully big. So big in fact, that if you stand in the front door, you can't see the back wall, due mostly to the curve of the earth. And apparently yours is going to be bigger than that.

I say we were duped because the folks at Wal-Mart promised us ours would be the biggest.



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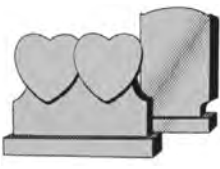
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That we would receive more of the benefits than any other small community would receive due to the arrival of Wal-Mart.

We would get the most new jobs created. And not just any jobs.

We would be the lucky recipients of the largest number of dead-end, part-time, no benefit, no future and no chance of real advancement minimum wage jobs that a Wal-Mart could provide.

We would get the largest impact on the current independent mercantile in our town.

That is to say the largest detrimental effect. Our downtown merchants would go out of business faster than any other town.

Which, on the other hand would alleviate the downtown traffic problem we have here, and also share with you. Seems you can't rush through town at 90 km/h while people are trying to park in front of functioning stores.

Forcing all the stores out of business would help solve that particular traffic issue.

We would also get to move our traffic woes to some place on the outskirts of town, where it wouldn't bother the townsfolk. Except those who have to drive past the Wal-Mart trying to get out of town to go to their jobs, because all the good jobs have moved out town, and they can't afford to work at the Wal-Mart because those Mc-jobs don't pay enough.

All the Wal-Mart jobs, of course, are taken by people who need extra cash to pay off their gambling debts. And heaven knows we got a lot of those people around here, maybe even more than in Aurora.

All In all, it just isn't fair. They made us promises. And they seem to be breaking them.

And if you can't believe a large a corporation like Wal-Mart, who can you believe?

Looks like we may have to start believing our politicians again.

On the other hand...maybe not.

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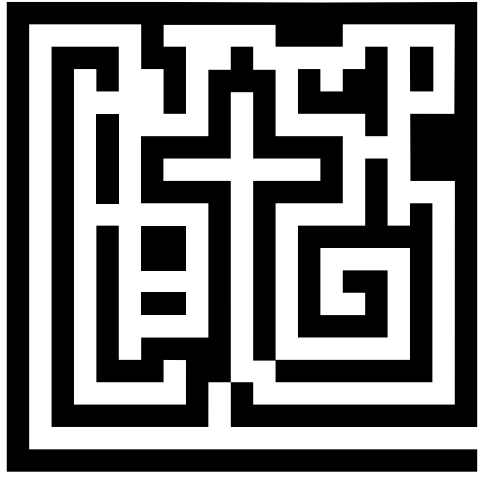
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Letters to the Editor

Wal-Mart: sleeping with an 800-pound gorilla

To the editor,

There has been a great deal of discussion about Wal-Mart and the effect it will have on our town.

The original development that was approved by the last council was for two stores, a Wal-Mart and a Sam's Club, totalling roughly 250,000 square feet.

The development also included a significant amount of commercial space around the perimeter of the property.

The new proposal before council is for one store, a Supercentre, of about 219,500 square feet.

They will carry everything a Wal-Mart Discount Store does, as well as a full-line supermarket including meat and poultry, baked goods, delicatessen, frozen foods, dairy products, garden produce and fresh seafood.

Many Wal-Mart Supercentres also feature a garden centre, a pet shop, a pharmacy, a tire and lube express, optical centre, one-hour photo processing lab, portrait studio, and numerous alcove shops such as a cellular phone store, hair and nail salons, a video rental store, a family fun centre, a branch of a local bank, and possibly a fast food outlet. Some locations also sell gasoline.

In whatever format it finally arrives, Wal-Mart will have a profound impact.

There will not be one business that is not affect-

ed in Aurora. And the impact for business goes beyond a decline in sales, which most are likely to be in the range of 25 to 30 per cent.

The ability to hire new staff, donate to local charities, sponsor local sporting teams, and participate in community service will all be affected.

Look at the list of services that the supercentre will provide and consider who in town you do business with and how they might be affected.

Wal-Mart is like the proverbial 800-pound gorilla.

How do you sleep with an 800-pound gorilla? The answer is: very carefully.

Can we stop Wal-Mart from coming to Aurora? The answer is NO!

Can we prevent the proposed format? Perhaps.

Currently the proposed large format violates a number of our bylaws, and would require Wal-Mart to either gain the approval of council or take the Town to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) if it refuses their changes.

Staff and the previous council worked in good faith with Wal-Mart to ensure a development that was consistent with the community and our strategic plan.

Now Wal-Mart has effectively said that this is no longer good enough and wants to change the nature of the development and the terms under which they were given the initial approval.

Here are some facts

about Wal-Mart based on various studies:

1. Wal-Mart is the largest retailer in the world with annual sales of \$350 billion US;

2. Wal-Mart operates in 14 countries, has 6,700 outlets and serves 175 million per week;

3. There is one Wal-Mart store for every 100,000 people in Canada;

4. The new Supercentre concept ranges in size from 99,000 to 261,000 square feet;

5. Wal-Marts generate approximately \$500 per square foot in annual sales;

6. A 219,000 square foot store will generate \$110 million in sales;

7. 84% of sales will be at the expense of other local businesses...or \$92.4 million;

8. Wal-Mart distributes and sells over 10 per cent of all food in the United States;

9. Traffic patterns and daily car counts around Wal-Mart increase dramatically;

10. Value of downtown core buildings declined by 16 to 20 per cent based on assessments and property sale values, unless there is pro-active reinvestment;

11. The number of stores and the associated gross sales decline in the downtown core;

12. Fewer employees are required for each \$1 million in sales at Wal-Mart than for the same quantity of sales in other retail stores;

13. Wal-Mart saves the average family \$2,300 per

year;

14. Wal-Mart donates on average \$30,000 per store to local community groups annually;

15. Wal-Mart will generate \$2 million in property tax revenue.

The bottom line is that Wal-Mart will bring some positive benefits to our community.

Employment is a good news/bad news story depending on where you work.

Additional tax dollars will flow to our municipal treasury. Competition will bring savings to many young families.

The bad news is that it will not help revitalize the downtown core and may actually hasten its demise.

It will also hurt small and large businesses alike and result in a net loss of retail jobs, especially at the entry level. This will have a multiplier effect on the local economy.

Businesses will have to re-invent themselves in Aurora if they are to survive.

Those who learn to adapt, change their offerings, and product mix or enhance their services can compete against the "big box" format. Those who can't will perish.

On a qualitative basis the supercentre will change and possibly undermine the present nature of Aurora.

In a world that seeks to be green, how does a single story facility and parking lot of this size respect the environmental concerns we all face?

The proposed supercentre will be located in the Wellington and 404 area and is expected to draw shoppers to Aurora from Newmarket, Markham, and Richmond Hill.

There will be increased traffic flow east/west along Wellington, and north/south along Yonge, Bayview and Leslie accelerating the wear and tear on the infrastructure and requiring sooner than expected replacement.

Recently Smart Centres (the developer of the prop-

erty for Wal-Mart) gave \$80,000 to the town for a gateway sign. This was a very generous gift. But, is spending it on a sign the best use of the money?

Would the funds be better spent trying to identify synergistic opportunities for our town?

Are there possible ways we can use the increased number of visitors to Aurora to benefit those areas that will be negatively impacted, such as the downtown core?

These are questions that need to be asked over the next few weeks as the February 28th date for the public planning session approaches.

Wal-Mart is here to stay. Public debate on how to turn it to our advantage is what is needed.

**Bryan Moir
Aurora**

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Has dysfunctional government returned to Aurora, reader asks

To the editor,

The ability to achieve unanimous decisions on matters of routine procedure is the hallmark of teamwork and good government.

The current council almost pulled that off last week when it ratified citizen appointments to the various committees.

However, it was marred by the insistence that a separate vote be taken on the slate of members to be appointed to the Committee of Adjustment.

Despite the many in-camera (private) sessions to review all of the applicants, where concerns and disagreements could be voiced in private, and then as a team select those who they believe could best serve the town, this one councillor took the unusual step of breaking with tradition and good form by airing in-camera disagreements in public.

In the councillor's rush to publicly demonstrate displeasure in the selection of

specific members to this committee, the solidarity that the council should have shown in making these appointments was undermined.

In addition, the councillor's self interest has called into question the reputation of the Committee of Adjustment as a whole and by extension the town itself.

The move was immature,

and unbecoming of a councillor.

Those who supported this effort are to be equally admonished.

Let us all hope that this was an isolated incident and that dysfunctional government has not returned to Aurora.

**J. Ireland Richardson
Aurora**

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Letters to the Editor

Should be a “head tax”, not “house tax”, he says

To the editor,

In response to the article about "pet licences", I would like to offer my two cents worth.

The bit that caught my eye was the remark "pet licence revenue can help offset the escalating costs of the animal control services which can be a burden

on non-pet owner taxpayers."

What a load of manure, I have lived here in Aurora for more than 30 years, paying taxes each year that

just keep going up.

This year it's 10 per cent.

A good portion of this tax is for schools, but I do not have any kids and, at

65 years old, the odds are not good! Another sizeable amount goes to the police department.

I have been broken into twice, I can count the number of times I have seen a cop go by my house on one hand, but have a signal malfunction, and we have two cruisers at the site.

So, now that I am a senior, I get free dog licences and now they want to take this away, too!

We all pay way too much in taxes, why do we not pay a head tax, instead of a tax on the house?

The odds are I pay more in taxes than my neighbours, but as there are only two of us, compared with six on one side and five on the other, we pay the same for garbage pick-up.

Is that not a burden on seniors?

Ian Allison
Aurora

Reader has better way to get license money

To the editor,

It has come to my attention that the Town of Aurora may be changing the fee

structure for pet licenses.

In the past owners were encouraged to microchip their pets and if also neutered there would be no

cost for a pet license.

I was one of those who thought that this was a good idea and had my pet neutered and microchipped.

As a person who has lived in Aurora for over a decade, I strongly object to this change in fee for existing pet owners. I believe that existing dog owners should be grandfathered and not have to pay the new fee structure.

I do, however, offer a suggestion that can more than offset the needed expenses incurred by the town for animal control.

As one of the committee members for the Leash Free Dog Park (Aurora Canine Commons-ACC) we had no issue of raising funds to the erection of the fencing needed.

In fact it took less than one week.

Currently there is no opportunity for businesses to advertise in the ACC, but there is a lot of interest.

So my suggestion is as follows: Allow pet stores, vets and other associated businesses to advertise on the fencing and pay for the space.

The stores would be required to supply the signs that meet the requirements set by the ACC committee.

ACI owner responds to wind turbine issue

From page 1

He wrote that for the past 16 months, Aurora Cable Internet has tried to establish a wind-powered generation unit, consisting of turbines and batteries contained in a shipping container on its forested transmission site at the end of Ridge Road.

The three turbines would provide a clean, renewable source of energy while the batteries would enable the company to reduce or eliminate its power consumption during peak generation hours.

He referred to a recent letter to council from Walter Mestrinaro containing what he said was a great deal of misinformation and he wanted to correct any misimpressions.

He pointed out that the company's high tower and accessory buildings have been a fixture on Ridge Road since 1982, predating all homes now in and around Ridge Road.

To provide its services ACI is dependent on public utilities and resources, especially electricity, and as a provider of telecommunication services, it is known that subscribers depend on the service for television, news, internet connection and telephone.

Before committing the company to the project, an exhaustive, transparent and legal process was undertaken to obtain the approvals of every stakeholder and authority for the project, he said.

While the company was advised municipal approval was not legally necessary, it was believed that meaningful consultation with the municipality was a prudent pre-requisite to good planning and good relations, he said.

Accordingly, company officials met with town staff to determine the best approach and they advised submitting an

application to the Committee of Adjustment for a minor variance to erect the three turbines and the shipping container.

Town staff members advised that if the shipping container was left as a trailer, a variance was not required to place it on the property.

Following a hearing at which the residents had the opportunity to express their objections, the Committee granted the variance subject to a noise impact study and a tree preservation agreement.

The residents appealed the decision to the Ontario Municipal Board in which council of the day decided neither to support nor oppose the appeal to the OMB.

Irvine wrote that the company acquiesced again to the non-federal jurisdiction as a show of good will and good faith to the town and the people.

Following the OMB

hearing the board approved the company's proposal in total, subject to a certification from the Ministry of the Environment regarding noise, which was not appealed to the courts by the residents.

Irvine stressed the urgent need for backup power and had placed the shipping container full of batteries to a place beside the tower in accordance with federal, provincial and municipal regulations.

In addition to the firm's efforts in terms of time, energy and funds, officials have met with neighbours on a number of occasions.

From the company's perspective, there is no reason or benefit to rehash the same old arguments and it is a classic case of the "Not In My Backyard" syndrome, Irving said, and it was time for council to accept what its staff, the Committee of Adjustment and the OMB had

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(House of Commons, February 5, 2007)

Belinda STRONACH
MP Newmarket-Aurora

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AURORAN SPORTS

Page 10

AURORAN, Week of February 20, 2007

Newmarket or Seguin is next

Tigers eliminate Sabres in four straight games

The Aurora Tigers don't know yet who they'll meet in the next round of playoffs, but at this moment, it doesn't really matter.

They're still busy revelling in the four-game sweep they just finished, sending the Buffalo Junior Sabres to the golf courses, before the snow has melted.

Aurora finished off Buffalo Saturday night at the West Seneca Recreation Centre 6-3, outscoring their opponents over the four games 32-6.

Aurora won the first two games on friendly ice, then travelled to the outskirts of Buffalo to win two more contests.

The first one, last Monday, was a 3-0 victory, and Aurora was led by the solid goaltending of Tyler Gordon who stopped all 21 shots sent his way.

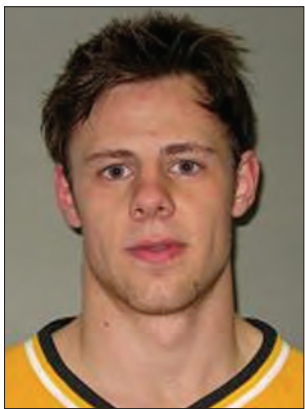
It was a crucial victory, according to Coach Jeremy Dupont.

"Winning the clincher is always the toughest game to win," he said, emphasizing that winning four straight was important in the whole scheme of things.

His prediction came true Saturday, although, for a time, it looked like Buffalo may have had different ideas.

After 20 minutes of play, neither team had managed to find the back of the opposition net.

However, the Paul Zanette line changed that around as the



PAUL ZANETTE
Scored twice

game aged.

Zanette score twice and added an assist, while Andrew Favot contributed a goal and assist, and Doug Henderson added an assist, give the line a six-point eveing.

Also scoring for Aurora Saturday were Alain Goulet, Joey Martin and Brett Connolly.

Mike Lalonde stopped 20 of the 23 shots that came his way in the Tiger net.

In game three, Tiger scoring was handled by Vince Bruni, Mark Mayea and Favot.

Favot found himself on a breakaway after

taking a pass from goaltender Gordon.

Bruni's goal came on the power play when he tipped in an Andrew Eastman blast.

The next round will get underway in Aurora this Friday night, and the challenger will be either the Newmarket Hurricanes or the Seguin Bruins.

Aurora has not had trouble with either of these two teams during regular season play.

As soon as the opponent is known and the corresponding schedule set up, the information will be posted on the Tiger website.

Aurora 3 Buffalo 0

First period

A - Bruni (Eastman, Connolly) 11.45

Second period

A: Andrew Favot (Gordon) 6.14

Third period

A : Thorburn

(Henderson, Mayea) 19.02

Aurora 6 Buffalo 3

First period

No scoring

Second period

A - Goulet (Thorburn, Williams) 3.06

B - Blujus (Cacciatore) 7.03

A- Martin (Michalsky) 14:38

Third period

A - Connolly (Eastman) 3.13

B - Klin (McQuiggan) 4.00

A - Favot (Zanette) 9.17

A - Zanette (Williams, Favot) 12.15

A - Zanette (Henderson) 16.59

B - Maier (Schmitt, Ryan) 17.47

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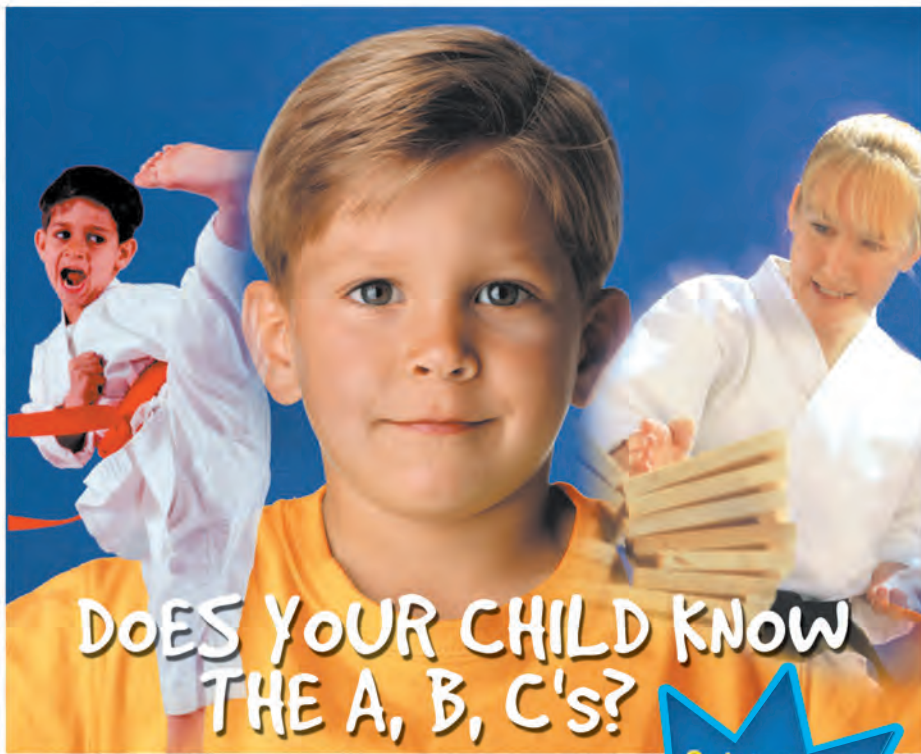
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Monday night hockey

Results as of Monday, Feb. 12

TEAM	W	L	T	GF	GA	PT
Tom & Jerry's	14	2	3	68	41	31
Law Insurance Brokers	12	5	2	77	43	26
Rec Cycle N' Sports	10	8	1	67	66	21
Highland Chev-Olds-Geo-Cad	9	7	3	78	62	21
Priestly Demolition	9	9	1	72	64	19
Baldwin's	6	11	2	67	74	14
FPL Aggregates	5	13	1	50	90	11
Masterclean Contracting	4	14	1	56	84	9

Results, Monday, Feb. 12

Rec Sports	4	Baldwins	5
Priestly Demolition	3	Masterclean	4
Tom & Jerry's	6	Law Insurance	5
FPL Aggregates	6	Highlands Chev	2

Player standings, Monday, Feb. 12

NAME	TEAM	G	A	PTS
John Archibauld	Highland's	20	13	33
Steve Kavanah	Baldwins	13	16	29
John Anderson	Rec Sports	17	11	28
Mark Sedore	Priestly	19	8	27
Steve McDonald	Law Insurance	12	14	26
Ed Kilroy	Rec Sports	12	12	24
Bruce Chappell	Highland's	7	17	24
Jason Muise	Priestly	11	11	22
Craig McConnell	Law Insurance	15	6	21
John Yaremko	Law Insurance	12	8	20
Scott Crabb	Highland's	8	12	20
Darryl Thompson	Tom & Jerry's	14	5	19
Kevin Brown	Rec Sports	8	11	19
Brad McMillan	Tom & Jerry's	9	10	19
Pat O'Mahony	FPL	7	10	17
Charlie Steenhorst	Rec Sports	3	13	16
Kevin O'Keefe	Baldwins	9	7	16
Vince Greco	Tom & Jerry's	7	9	16
Darren Yaremko	Law Insurance	5	11	16
Dave McQueston	FPL	8	7	15
Colin Leech	Priestly	4	11	15
Ed Jackson	Baldwins	4	11	15
Frank Balkovec	Law Insurance	2	13	15
Pat Davies	Priestly	9	5	14
Gerald Briand	Baldwins	7	7	14
Chris Neal	Highland's	8	6	14
Doug Adair	Rec Sports	5	9	14
Tom Hussey	Masterclean	6	7	13
Dave Holden	Tom & Jerry's	6	7	13
Joel Reeves	Tom & Jerry's	3	10	13
Brian Horton	Baldwins	2	11	13
Hugh Alcorn	Masterclean	1	12	13
Mike Nisbet	Priestly	6	6	12
Jerry Mackrell	Tom & Jerry's	5	7	12
Andrew Dalton	Rec Sports	4	8	12
Jerome Flanigan	Priestly	4	8	12
Paul Gibson	Law Insurance	4	8	12
Dean Iwai	Tom & Jerry's	4	8	12
Mark Lemmon	Law Insurance	4	8	12
Steve Robertson	Highland's	4	7	11
Bob Ince	FPL	5	6	11
John Leeder	FPL	7	4	11
Peter Briand	Baldwins	6	5	11
Alain Boudreau	Masterclean	7	4	11
Ken Rumble	Highland's	6	5	11
Ron Van Noort	Masterclean	7	4	11
Mike Slimkowich	Masterclean	3	8	11
Dave Caverley	FPL	4	7	11
Scott Sheppard	Rec Sports	1	9	10
Phil Podstatsky	Priestly	5	5	10
Brad Wilson	Highland's	3	7	10

Council

appoints citizens

From page 1
Committee of Adjustment and the Property Standards Committee.
When a recorded vote was called on the bylaw, it was narrowly adopted with Councillors McRoberts, Marsh, Alison Collins-Mrakas and Evelyn Buck in opposition.

Meanwhile, it was not known if there was a lack of applications for the Leisure Services Advisory Committee, but it was decided to re-advertise for citizen members.

Kathy Banks, Elizabeth Bishenden, Geoffrey Dawe, Milton Hart, Charles Levine and Michael Thompson were appointed to the Aurora Library Board.

Ann Boden, Jane Boorman, Catherine Couchman and John Lenchak were appointed to the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

E c o n o m i c Development Advisory Committee members are Christopher Ballard, Bryan Black, Kent Dinning, Angelo Giannetta and Bryan Moir.

Robert Elliott, Lynne McKenzie, Bill Newman, Stan Rycombel, Donna Smith and Jacqueline Stuart were appointed to the Heritage Advisory Committee.

The Environmental Advisory Committee consists of Gordon Barnes, Robert Cook, Carol Cooper, John Gallo, Catherine Marshall, Peter Piersol, David Tomlinson, Susan Walmer and Richard Wizeman.

David Nesbitt, Rino Roncardin, Mike Walters, Horst Wizemann and Carmen Zambri were appointed to the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee, and, following the private meeting, Brett Cole was appointed to that committee to provide continuity.



Aurora's new Chamber of Commerce general manager, Carla Adams, set a precedent Friday when she went skiing with a group of Chamber members at Osler Bluffs in Collingwood. Also attending was chamber president Stephen Forsey. More than 50 people enjoyed perfect skiing conditions at the private resort.

Auroran photo by Ron Wallace

These two groups are trying to change funding mechanism

The Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the Association of Municipal Recycling Coordinators of Ontario have advised there is a growing concern from residents and environmental groups regarding the widening discontent between waste diversion objectives and private sector activities.

Notwithstanding the recent initiative by the Ministry of the Environment to establish a deposit return system for all LCBO containers, there is an increasing trend towards design and production of disposable packaging and non-recyclable products.

The draft submission produced by the two

associations tries to present a new funding mechanism that accounts for the full cost of consumer packaging and printed paper in municipal waste management systems.

As well, the submission provides a list of recommendations on how to improve the effectiveness of the Blue Box through litter reduction initiatives and strengthening of recycling markets.

AMO is asking its member municipalities to adopt a resolution at council conveying their comments and support to the discussion paper.

Currently municipalities bear the majority of the cost for managing industry generated print-

ed paper and packaging and the discussion paper recommends a more equitable funding mechanism, in which industry carries the major load.

The discussion paper presents a series of recommendations to the province that reinforce AMO's call for an integrated waste strategy that works towards promoting positive outcomes for all shareholders.

It was also recommended that the province encourage the federal government to crease a national plan for waste and waste packaging in collaboration with municipalities and industry.

At press time the AMO request had not yet been before Aurora Council.

Skating results

The following skaters represented the Aurora Skating Club at the 2007 Boston Pizza STARSkate Championships held last week at the Century Gardens Recreation Centre in Brampton:

Preliminary Ladies Freeskate - Hailey Riggs (Group A) 5th; Samantha Galati (Group 3) 4th; Kate Sutton (Group 2) 9th; Raquel Burgess (Group 1) 11th.

Junior Bronze Ladies Freeskate - Sierra Chovanec (Group 3) 7th.

Gold Dance Biathlon - Meaghan Jones/Garth Miller 2nd.

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RUMOURS AND RAMBLINGS

Aurora no longer Chicken Capital

In October, 1991, Maple Leaf Foods announced that Canada's largest food processor planned to shut its Aurora poultry plant at the end of November in order to consolidate its poultry operations, as the company operated six other poultry processing plants in Ontario.

It was in 1948 when William Garfat and Frank King established Choice Cut-Up Chicken on the east side of Yonge Street, just north of what is now Batson Drive in what was then Whitchurch Township.

The plant processed 3,000 chickens per day.

In 1962, the thriving business with 125 employees was sold, the plant renovated and production increased to a capacity of 40,000 chickens a day.

Trucks were loaded at night and the chicken parts delivered to stores and restaurants the next day.

At the time the active Aurora Jaycees adopted the chicken as their logo and members wore black jackets sporting a large rooster on the back with the words "Aurora - Chicken Capital of Canada".

With the plant's closing, Aurora ceased being the chicken capital and soon after the Jaycees disbanded.

POLICE OFFICER WEARS A DRESS

In January, 1986, Aurora resident and Metro Toronto Police Constable Bryon Russell wore a dress to work and that helped him and his partner Constable William Andrews win the November Police Officers of the Month awards.

They were honoured for their efforts in breaking up the Black Dragon street gang linked to a rash of burglaries and purse snatch- es in the Don Mills area. Over a three-month period they laid 87 charges for break and enter, possession of burglar tools and pos- session of property obtained by crime.

As part of his undercover operation Russell disguised himself as an old woman to catch purse snatchers.

With make up and clothing borrowed from his mother-in-law, he paraded around the Don Mills area at night with his partner never far away. .

YORK REGION ALMOST HAD A SPORTS ACADEMY

In February, 1986, York Regional Council gave moral support to a multi-million dollar national sports academy proposed by Magna International for the former Langstaff Jail Farm in Richmond Hill, owned by the City of Toronto.

The proposed academy for which Magna had agreed to donate \$5 million would be designed to cater to very talented youngsters in high school, giving them a chance to hone their sports skills and get proper training.

The proposed five phase development would include a 5,000 to 7,500 seat arena for sports, cultural and business events with facil- ities for several sports, five dormitories capable of housing 200 stu- dents each, plus a main building to house classrooms, lecture halls, a library, offices and other ancillary facilities.

Magna officials noted the proposal had been well received by Otto Jalineck, the Federal Minister for Fitness and Amateur Sports Minister, and by provincial government.

Unfortunately, the dream never became a reality.

A MOMENT IN HISTORY

In June, 1976, the new \$1.5 million administrative centre on Wellington Street West to accommodate the York Region Board of Education and the Town of Aurora was officially opened by Ontario Treasurer Darcy McKeough.

Representatives from all levels of government were in atten- dance as approximately 500 guests and local residents toured the new facility.

Getting together for a rare and history making moment were five former Aurora mayors and the current Mayor Evelyn Buck.

They were Keith Nesbit (1961-1963), Dick Illingworth (1969-

1973), Ross Linton (1944-1947), Jim Murray (1957-1960) and Dr. Crawford Rose (1948-1949 and 1952-1954).

In his remarks the Minister congratulated the town and the school board for agreeing to work together under one roof and that the facility had not cost the provincial treasury a single cent.

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Aurora Minor Hockey Association

Website: www.aci.on.ca/amha

Results as of Sunday, February 18



House League Tyke

101 Tim Hortons Red Wings 8 - Megan DiLosa 1A, Jacob Cowl 1A, Nathan Sherrard 2A, Robby Graham 2A, Jack Dion 2G, Liam Desouza 1G 2A, Dimitri Mikrogiannakis 3G, Charles Peters 2A, Graydon Belgue 1G 1A, Matthew LeClair 1A, Nolan Roy 1G 2A, Colin Read 1A, Jacob Cann 1A. **107 Tim Hortons Lightning Tyke House League 1** - William Morin 1A, Mark Kalmisto 1G, Brady Sarazin 1A.

103 Tim Hortons Senators Tyke House League 8 - Troy Campbell 1G 1A, Devon Browning 1G, Ian Reynolds 1G, Mathew Macdonald 2A, Thomas Kostoff 1G 3A, Casey Corner 2A, Alexander Wyndham-West 2G 2A, Blake Van Der Valk 1G, David Blom 1G. **102 Tim Hortons Bruins 0.**

104 Tim Hortons Flyers 5 - Eric Pears 2A, Mathew MacDougall 2A, Christian Ramirez 2A, Thomas Wilson 5G, Patrick Cruickshank 2A, Carmelo Sortino 1A, Anthony Issaris 1A. **108 Tim Hortons Sharks Tyke House League 5** - Matthew Carney 2G 1A, Matthew Minchella 2G, Jordan Torres 1A, Clayton Allen 1A, Sam Speranini 3A, Brianna Nocon-Willatts 1G.

106 Tim Hortons Penguins Tyke House League 6 - Reid Carpenter 1G, Filip Ekstrom 1A, Jack Camplin 1G 2A, Andrew Currie 1G, Quest Rodin 1G 1A, Ryan Thornhill 1A, Andrew Sergejewich 1G 1A, Dan Atasiei 2A, Dylan Cowell 1G 1A, Liam Vanderploeg 1A, Mark Carpenter 2A. **105 Tim Hortons Leafs 2.**

109 Tim Hortons Wild 6 - Tyler Thomas 1A, Joshua Fallavollita 1A, James Samson 1G 1A, Joel Woodcock 1G 3A, Stewart Gable 1G 1A, Josh Hookey 1G, Lucas Dane 2G. **110 Tim Hortons Thrashers Tyke House League 4** - Rhys Perry 1G 1A, David Tonelli 1A, Johnathan Martin 1A, Gordon Scott 1G, John Powell 1A, Brennan Young 1G 1A, Andrew Warner 1G, Jacob LeBlanc 1A.

Novice

201 Diamond Groundskeeping Services Novice House League 6 - Michael Montesanti 1G 1A, Jordi Severini 1A, Adam Caicco 1G 1A, Blake Holtby 1A, Brett Diamond 1A, Ryan Simmons 1G 1A, Lucas Ruscica 1A, Justin Nisbet 1A, Conor Braund 2G 3A, Ryan D'Antimo 1A, Colin Dyer 1G. **206 Chouinard Bros. Home Improvements 2** - Christian Pearce 1A, Jack Bishenden 1A, Daniel Della Rocca 1G, Michael Dowling 1G, Bram Wood 1A.

Minor Atom

301 Optimist Club of Aurora Inc. 3 - Sabino Pacitto 1G, Emerson Cepelak 1A, Bowan Reid 1A, Alexander MacKinnon 1A, Matthew Hall 1G, Joey Hodgson 1G, Johnny Sherwood 1A,

Ryan Donovan 1A. **306 Danny's Boys Minor Atom House League 2.**

302 Rec Cycle N' Sports 3 - Nolan Smith 1G 1A, Michael Fisher 1G 1A, Bryn Burbank 1A, Liam Joiner 1G 1A, Matthew MacGrath 2A. **305 Aurora Canadian Tire Minor Atom House League 3.**

Atom

401 Shoppers Drug Mart Aurora 2. **407 Dr. Steiner's Drillers Atom House League 2.**

402 Orr & Forster Insurance Brokers 3. **406 Ab Cox Pontiac Buick GMC Atom House League 0.**

403 Delph & Jenkins Surveyors 1 - Matthew Walker 1G. **405 Laurion Law Office Atom House League 1** - Alexander Harrison 1A, Jason Glionna 1A, Michael Liscio 1G.

404 All Pro Source For Sports 7 - Chris Sanita 3G, Victor Chadarov 1G, Kevin Siery 1G, Mathew Sanita 2G. **408 Greenpoint Laser Products Atom House League 1** - Neil Duggan 1A, Jamie Wilson 1G, Braydon Babineau 1A.

Minor Pee wee

503 Continental Ingredients Canada Minor Pee wee House League 9 - Dylan Indos 2A, Drew Bryan 2G, Andrew Boehmer 2G 1A, Kevan Cress 1A, Cody Mulhern 1G 2A, Tyler Indos 1G 2A, Justin Stevens 1G 1A, Trevor Stephens 2G 1A. **501 Millennium Devils 0.**

502 Aurora Cable Internet 5 - George Plukov 1A, Matthew Hudon 1G, Zachary Ferry 2G, Trevor Rice 1G, Liam Batulis 1A, Andreas Mikkelsen 1A, MacKenzie McIntosh 1A, Tyler Grossi 1G. **504 Rotary Club of Aurora Minor Pee wee House League 4.**

506 Dr. Steiner's Drillers Minor Pee wee House League 2 - Eric Staebule 1A, Paul Louis Steiner 2G. **505 Nacora Insurance Brokers Ltd. 1.**

Pee wee

602 Chevalier Chrysler 3. **604 Fresh Water Industries Pee wee House League 2** - Kelley Hudson 1G, Matthew Hart 1G, Stephen Canatrutti 1A.

Minor Bantam

701 Pharmasave 3 - Braden Pettigrew 1A, David Scott 1A, Tivon Cook 1A, Tanner Brewer 2G, George Chalmers 1A, Matthew Bishop 1G, Nick DiVincenzo 1A. **705 CAA South Central Ontario Minor Bantam House League 1** - Jaret Meron 1G, Kevin McCrudden 1A, Matthew Brutto 1A.

702 Aurora Cable Internet 4 - Branden Bortolin 1G, Jarrett Lennie 1A, Curtis Rose 1A, Michael Wood 1A, Michael

Reilly 3G, Ricky Evans 2A. **704 Mary's Flower Shop Minor Bantam House League 2** - Ethan Morice 1G 1A, Gianluca Sampieri 1A, Tyler Jensen 1G, Adam Masciangelo 1A.

706 Cosentino Produce 8 - Cameron Annear 3A, Jonathon Boehmer 1G 1A, Lucas Cristillo 2G 1A, Colin Sandquist 3G, Andrew Cosentino 1G 1A, Zach Andrews 3A, Alexander Payne 1G 1A, Logan Weber 2A, Robert Anderson 1A, Ryan Cumiskey 1A. **708 Perfect Moves Minor Bantam House League 1** - Thomas Gans 1G, Michael Bernier 1A.

Bantam

804 Manhattan Trophies Bantam House League 4. **801 Supreme Collision Centre 2** - Adam Stubbs 1G, Eric DeRoos 1A, Alex Heintzman 1G, Jordan Adams 1A.

801 Supreme Collision Centre 6 - Andrew Osmond 1A, Scott Cunningham 1G, Adam Stubbs 1G, Alex Heintzman 1G, Johnathan Siery 1G, Neil Gaston 2G 2A. **803 I.O.O.F. Aurora Lodge #148 Bantam House League 1.**

806 Wood Brothers Drywall Bantam House League 5. **802 Aurora Home Hardware Building Centre 3** - Michael Coggin 1G, Anthony Marsillio 1G, Evan Casselden 1G 1A.

802 Aurora Home Hardware Building Centre 2 - Devin Scudds 1A, Garrett Lewis 1G, Anthony Marsillio 1G 1A. **804 Manhattan Trophies Bantam House League 2.**

Minor Midget

904 Pizza Pizza Minor Midget House League 6 - Ethan Shore 3G 2A, Jason Nadeau 1G 1A, Kevin Nandlall 4A, Michael Shoesmith 2G 1A. **902 2**

Rep Games

Newmarket Redmen Novice A 5. **Aurora Tigers Novice A 3** - Eric Shennan 1A, Philip Wolanski 1A, Cameron Zinner 1A, James Wyndham-West 1G, Daniel McConnell 2G.

Aurora Tigers Minor Atom AA 3 - Jake Appleby 1A, Austin Riswick 1G, Alex Bernier 1A, Nicholas Papousek 1G 1A, Nicholas Baxter 1G, Braeden Kublick 1G. **Newmarket Redmen Minor Atom AA 1.**

Aurora Tigers Minor Atom AA 1 - Austin Riswick 1A, Alex Bernier 1G. **Newmarket Redmen Minor Atom AA 1.**

Aurora Tigers Pee wee AE 2. **TNT PW AE Pee wee AE 1.**

Aurora Tigers Minor Midget AE 6 - Cory Blom 1A, Ryan Finlay 3G 1A, Brandon Giniotis 1A, Marshall McQuillan 1A, Chris Burns 1G 1A, Brett Dutchyshen 2G, Darrell Evans 2A. **TNT Minor Midget AE Minor Midget AE 1.**

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Storm deters few from activities

By BRIAN WARBURTON

We got pounded pretty hard by 'Old Man Winter' finally, but I console myself with the thought that spring is about five weeks away and the days are growing perceptibly longer.

Beneath the snow covered and frozen ground, daffodils and tulips are poised waiting eagerly to emerge and as enthusiastic as you or I am, for spring.

The 'Winter Cabaret' show was as good as the publicity for it and lifted us all to a higher emotional and heart warming plateau.

The entertainment was splendid, providing a glorious contrast to a dreary winter February day, and living up to the high standard that Brian Roman and Cara Chisholm, our entertainers, produce consistently.

I note and express gratitude, that The Auroran showed a lively interest and provided wonderful support for this senior enterprise of winter entertainment!

I note also that The Auroran is a well read and popular newspaper amongst the seniors in the Aurora Seniors Association (ASA), and in Aurora.

When the winter storm hit us a few days ago, I wondered what impact that would have on the programming for the day.

As it so happened and predictably, some seniors did not attend but many did, and the Valentine's luncheon held that day, in place of the 'Budget Bistro', was very well attended.

I was unable to stay for the luncheon but popped my head into the West McKenzie Hall just as the door prizes were being announced and found the attendance to be excellent. Food and door prizes are a combination that makes a good incentive to have lunch.

Computer lessons also proceeded near to normal with almost full attendance, and the Tai-Chi, Yoga, Bridge and the choir rehearsals all proceeded with slightly reduced attendance.

Seniors are made of stern stuff these days, and a storm is little deterrent.

Starting in March, on Tuesday evenings, the computer club has organized itself to offer instruction to computer beginners on some of the easy computer card games available.

Hopefully, this will provide an easy introduction to the world of computing and card games.

The games are not difficult to learn or to play so if this catches your imagination, come on over and give it a try.

You do not have to be retired, just 55 years or older and a member of the ASA.

Computer games and teachers for the next few Tuesday evenings beginning at 7 p.m., include: Mar. 6, Lydia, FreeCell; Mar. 13, Brian, Solitaire; Mar. 20, Herb, Hearts; Mar. 27, Tom, Spider Solitaire.

This program is offered as a trial, and on a first come, first served basis.

Other activities are available and new members are invited to tour the facility and select whatever catches their imagination.

Retired years are worthy of a little thought and preparation even a little inspiration, and will provide many hours of enjoyment among active people.

I popped into the wood shop this week, and all is ready to go. Two of the members who will help manage the shop were busy in there. They tell me all is ready, and final approval is required from the Town, who in fairness have to consider in depth what they are agreeing to.

This wood shop will be a very popular rendezvous for a lot of senior men and women.

Getting it open and running is the real test, but, if anything has been overlooked it will be corrected.

PowerStream says rates will go down

For former Aurora Hydro users the switch to PowerStream, Inc., may have come as a surprise as it had been believed Aurora and Newmarket utilities would join.

Then in 2005 a \$34.5 million offer to purchase was received from PowerStream which became effective in November, 2005, following approval by the Ontario Energy Board.

PowerStream Inc. is comprised of the former Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan utilities and is owned by Markham and Vaughan.

In order to obtain input from Aurora, a PowerStream Customer Advisory Committee was established in March, 2006.

A working session was arranged for Aurora councillors last week prior to the regular council meeting to review outage tracking, capital budget as it pertained to Aurora, smart meters and rate harmonization.

The best news for Aurora users was rate harmonization and cost allocation. The Ontario Energy Board requires that PowerStream harmonize fixed and variable

distribution rates for the four rate zones in 2007 with input from the four municipalities.

By blending 25 per cent of the cost allocation results with the harmonized rates caused slight increases in Markham and Vaughan and decreases in Aurora and Richmond Hill.

The impact on the average monthly bill of residential users in Aurora will be a decrease of 7.8 per cent or \$8.34.

When cost allocation and harmonization is 100 per cent complete the monthly residential rate for Aurora users will be a decrease of 6.6 per cent or \$7.06, small commercial/industrial down 6.8 per cent or \$25.88 and large commercial/industrial 2.6 per cent or a \$185.71 decrease.

The 2007 capital works program includes an extension of the line on Wellington Street East with a transformer station to service the Whitwell Business Park development, a line extension on Bayview Avenue north from Bloomington Road and works in conjunction with road reconstruction on Bathurst Street north of Wellington and Morning Crescent and Knowles Crescent.

Aurora schools participate in PowerStream's program

Two Aurora schools are involved as about 1,200 grade 5 students and their families participate in a comprehensive education program over the next few months that will provide them with a framework for changing habits when it comes to energy conservation.

Highview Public School and Aurora Grove Elementary School are participating in the program.

The PowerStream Energy Education Program is a unique pilot project involving the largest electric utility in York Region, York Region District School Board, and York Catholic District School Board.

Coordinated by Toronto and Region Conservation (TRCA), the program also involves Ontario EcoSchools, the Clean Air Partnership and York Region Health Services.

Forty-one Grade 5 classes from 19 elementary schools located within PowerStream's service territory have been selected for this pilot, which will include a sponsored trip for each participating class to the Kortright Centre for Conservation sometime between now and June.

"PowerStream is committed to doing its part in helping to build a culture of conservation in Ontario," Brian Bentz, President and CEO of PowerStream said. "Delivering an education program on energy conservation to school-age children is an important part of

building such a culture."

The curriculum of the PowerStream Energy Education Program is based on Ontario EcoSchools resource materials including several energy guides as well as the "20/20 The Way to Clean Air" campaign brochures.

Use of these resources will enable teachers and students to complete energy reviews and action plans. Each student will also receive an "energy toolkit" from PowerStream to facilitate the lessons and exercises they need to do at home in conjunction with their parents.



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Audience goes crazy over "Crazy For You"

If you like the music and songs of George and Ira Gershwin, such as Shall We Dance, Daybreak, and Embraceable You, and lots tap dancing, love and fun then you'll love "Crazy For You" presented by Theatre Aurora at the Factory Theatre.

Opening night audience last week went crazy over the show.

It's the old "let's put on a show" story made famous by Mickey Rooney in the movies. Take some classic 20th century songs, add a wonderfully funny and well-known story formula, throw in some song and dance and you have a show.

The show was written around the Gershwin songs and the end result was "Crazy For You", a tribute to the great musicals of the 1930s.

It's the story of Bobby Child, a well-to-do 1930s playboy whose dream in life is to dance. Despite the efforts of his mother and soon-to-be ex-fiancee, he achieves his dream in this high energy comedy.

He tries to get an audition with Mr. Zangler, well played by Gerry Dimmelow, a musical producer without results, even with the assistance of the dancers.

Fed up with his dancing and showbiz interest, his mother, a crusty old woman played by Marilyn Browning, sends him to Dead Rock, Nevada, to foreclose on a property with a threat of having his allowance cut off.

When he arrives, he finds the property is an old theatre owned by Everett, played by Frank Hawkins, and his daughter Polly, played by Diana Ryan.

He tries to talk them into putting on a show, but Polly won't have anything to do with him.

Across the street Lank Hawkins' Saloon and "Restront" is located and Lank wants to buy the theatre to demolish it.

Lank is played by Stewart McLaren who also produced the show.

Billy knows that Polly is aware of Zangler, so he dons a wig, goatee and mustache and pretends to be Zangler and Polly is smitten and agrees to the show and arranges for the dancers to come to Dead Rock.

Also arriving is Irene, a society gal.

The story is old, the music older and the show goes on to a rousing finale.

Director is Thom Currie who got his start in theatre as a teenager and went on to form his own production company which travels extensively across Canada, the USA and Europe and came to Theatre Aurora to direct the play with the permission of Canadian Actors'

Equity Association.

With the assistance of choreographer Nicole Hapke a strong cast of singers and dancers was selected and rehearsed to perfection with all the talent and professionalism of a Broadway musical.

Bobby is strongly played by Tom Ryan and the scenes with Polly and the real Zangler are a delight.

Catherine Kentridge and Reg O'Brien are English tourists, Patricia and Eugene Fodor stumble on Dead Rock and get caught up in the action and bring a

humorous twist to the fun.

The dancing girls include Lori Moritz as Suzie, Krystal White as Mitzi, Fenualla Jiwani as Tess, Taisa Ballard as Patsy. Others include Danielle Chretien as Elaine, Nicola Strom as Irene and Christine Randl as Margie.

Cowboys are Lee Goodwin, Kyle Runeckles, Taylor Prost and Fabio Saposnik.

The songs and dance numbers would not be complete without the backup of John Clements as musical director on piano, Anton

Cook on percussion and Steve Wood on base.

Special mention must be made of the set design and construction by Bill White and John Harkins with scenic design by Trudy Neumeyer and Anita Eveleigh.

"Crazy For You" is one of the best musical productions by Theatre Aurora and is well worth seeing.

It continues Feb. 21, 22, 23, 24, 28 and Mar. 1, 2, and 3, at 8 p.m. with a 2 p.m. matinee Feb. 25.

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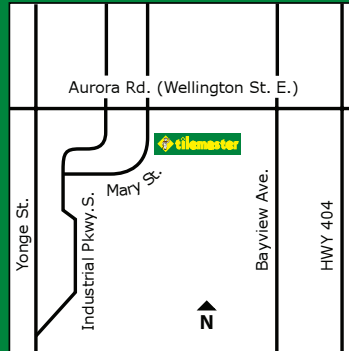
Barrie
8:00 am - 5:30 pm
8:00 am - 8:00 pm
9:00 am - 4:30 pm
Closed

HOURS
Monday - Thursday
Friday
Saturday
Sunday

Aurora
8:00 am - 6:00 pm
8:00 am - 9:00 pm
9:00 am - 5:00 pm
11:00 am - 3:00 pm

tilemastercanada.com

AURORA
125 Mary St.
905-841-2333



* Installation of tiles is arranged by Tilemaster only. Actual installation is done by established independent contractors.