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THE AURORAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 7 No. 36

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FREE

Week of July 10, 2007



For Taylor Cooke, 12, it was the end of a lot of ribbing. Taylor, son of Paula and Paul Cooke of Aurora, looked a bit like a girl (and many let him know it) before he had his hair cut off to be made into a wig for a cancer patient. The event took place Thursday at A & F Hair Elite in the Aurora Shopping Centre, and Teresa Berhaaff did the shearing.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

Board decides not to decide

Dozens of parents, students and interested spectators waited more than an hour last week to hear what they didn't want to hear.

No decision on the future of Aurora's Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School was made by York trustees at a regular board meeting.

Ever since the controversy over the future of the school started, it was understood board trustees would make a decision at that meeting.

Their decision was to defer the decision until the fall.

Without any comment or discussion, at least in public session, on a motion by East Gwillimbury/Whitchurch Stouffville Trustee Loreale Carruthers and seconded by Aurora/King Trustee Gord Kerr the following recommendation was adopted.

"Property Management Committee recommends that the Board defer the decision on the replacement of Dr. G. W. Williams Secondary School until the fall of 2007 to allow trustees additional time to consider the implications of the replacement options".

At issue is whether to rebuild the school on its existing site on Dunning Avenue, or move it to a new location on Bayview Avenue.

The meeting was scheduled to start at 8 p.m. and the lobby of the Education Centre was packed with interested citizens waiting for the boardroom doors to open, which they did at 8.10 p.m.

With a standing room only audience in attendance and staff milling around, the trustees finally assembled at 8.34 p.m., and the meeting finally got underway.

However, the Williams issue was not aired for another hour.

It was announced that the 11 routine items, such as a moment of reflection, approval of the agenda, presentations, and approval of the minutes all prior to the Williams agenda item would take about 20 minutes, but it was stretched out to almost an hour.

It was 9.24 p.m. when the agenda item was called, the motion made, the vote taken and it was over in less than a minute and the audience filed out wondering about the next steps.

The revised feasibility study still

appeared to favour the Bayview site as school replacement costs were shown as \$32 million for the Dunning site and only \$19.5 million for the Bayview site with the estimated \$8 million revenue from the Dunning site included.

It was estimated it would cost about \$22.6 million to renew about 80 items in the existing school.

Board chairman Bill Crothers said there were many detailed factors to be considered in the decision and trustees felt more time was needed.

"Trustees will need to examine the relative merits of the two sites, community factors and costs," he said. "No matter what the outcome of this decision, secondary students in Aurora are going to continue to benefit from a first rate high school experience."

Williams is one of 10 schools in York being considered for replacement under an Ontario Government funding project that targets older schools considered "prohibitive to repair".

Future board meetings are scheduled for Aug. 28 and Sept. 25 at 8 p.m.

What about Wells St. school?

In June the Aurora Heritage Advisory Committee received a letter from a resident concerned about the future of Wells Street Public School.

The committee requested the Community Planner to bring back a heritage research report.

Earlier, the York Region District School Board made plans to move the students to Aurora Grove when school resumes in September.

It was pointed out that after 115

years on the same foundation, the school was beginning to show its age as new and widening cracks were in need of a structural inspection.

Engineering consultants have been monitoring the physical condition of the school over the past two years and while they were confident the building posed no immediate danger to occupants, they were concerned about longer term use.

As a result of their ongoing review, engineers recommended a thorough investigation of the building structure to be carried out this summer.

The investigation will involve opening floors and walls for visual inspection and because of the scope of the work, there is a strong possibility that the school will not be ready for classes in September.

In April the school auditorium
Please see page 14

BRIEFLY

Curbside gems

If you have never participated in a curbside giveaway, you're getting another chance.

Aurora's next Great Curbside Giveaway takes place Saturday, Aug. 25.

Here's how it works.

Take unwanted items to the curb and mark them "free" for others to take away. Then, do a little curbside shopping yourself to lighten the load on landfill.

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COMING EVENTS

During the month of July the Skylight Gallery in the Town Hall will feature the work of Nancy Hallas with a series of semi-abstract acrylic and mixed media paintings on canvas exploring themes on nature. Regular viewing hours are 8.30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday.

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.

Aurora Agricultural Society 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.

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. Contact Beverley at 905-727-2151.

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

The Aurora Seniors Evergreen 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.

Summer barbeques every Thursday from 11.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. at the Aurora Seniors' Centre. No registration is required. Choice of meat, dessert, tea or coffee for \$4. Budget Bistro on Wednesdays will return in the fall.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 11

Aurora Horticultural Society presents lecture on "Unusual Perennials" at the Royal Canadian Legion, Industrial Parkway North, at 8 p.m.

Concerts in the Park presents Cassava Latin Band, a night of Cuban music. Town Park, Mosley and Wells Streets. 7 to 9 p.m., weather permitting.

SUNDAY, JULY 15

Merlin Hollow Gardens Open House at 181 Centre Crescent. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

MONDAY, JULY 16

Aurora Writers Group monthly meeting at the Aurora Town Hall beginning at 7.30 p.m. New members 18 and over are welcome. For further Information check out www.aurorawriters.ca or contact Malcolm at 905-898-5484.

TUESDAY, JULY 17

Aurora Council meets in the council chambers of the Town Hall at 7 p.m. Aurora Cable Internet will telecast the meeting at 6.30 p.m. the following night and at noon the following Saturday and Sunday.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 18

Concerts in the Park presents Green River playing the best loved music of Credence Clear Water Revival. Town Park, Mosley and Wells Streets. 7 to 9 p.m., weather permitting.

TUESDAY, JULY 24

Food, fun and a film are back at the Seniors' Centre at 4.30 p.m. Register at the front desk.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 25

Aurora senior citizens are going out to the ball game as the Blue Jays take on the Minnesota Twins.

Concerts in the Park presents an Eric Clapton Tribute. Town Park, Mosley and Wells Streets. 7 to 9 p.m., weather permitting.

Christmas in July at Gateway Lanes, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., serves two purposes. First it is a food drive for the Aurora Pantry. Second it is a day to celebrate families. Bring any family member, to the bowling alley and bowl for free by bringing a non-perishable food item. The bowling alley will be decorated for Christmas and Christmas music will be playing.

The Canadian Red Cross will be at the Seniors' Centre at 1.30 p.m. for a free seminar on "How to Prepare for a Disaster". Register at the front desk.

THURSDAY, JULY 26

Blood donor clinic at the Aurora Legion Hall from 2.30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 28

Third Annual Calmar Crescent Street Festival and according to the organizers will be bigger and better with more children's activities, raffles, prizes and entertainment.

Everyone is welcome. Proceeds go to a local charity.

TUESDAY, JULY 31

Deadline for applications for the Aurora Arts and Culture Fund. Applications should include the nature and general activities of the individual/group and the specific use to be made of the grant. Send applications to the Town Hall, c/o the mayor's office.

JULY 31 TO AUGUST 2

Aurora Seniors are on a Ontario Musical Theatre Getaway. Call Pam at 416-630-3499 for details.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 10

Blood donor clinic at the Town of Aurora offices, 1 Municipal Drive, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 11

Second Annual Doors Open takes place all day in Aurora. Several historical sites are available for viewing.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 14

Aurora senior citizens will attend the Seniors' Jubilee at Roy Thomson Hall in Toronto.

Aurora Council meets at 7 p.m. in the council chambers of the Town Hall. Aurora Cable

Internet will telecast the meeting at 6.30 p.m. the following night and at noon the following Saturday and Sunday.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 22

Aurora's senior citizens will enjoy an afternoon boat cruise along the Toronto waterfront.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4

Aurora council meets in general committee at 7 p.m. in the council chambers of the Town Hall.

SEPTEMBER 7-9

Second annual Aurora Ribfest.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

Second annual Aurora Historical Society golf tournament at Westview Golf Club. Only 60 spaces available. Known as the KSG (Kiss Summer Goodbye) tournament, the event will feature dinner and a silent auction at DiNardo's, The Mansion. \$150 gets you the package; dinner only is \$50. Tickets available at Hillary House, Westview Golf Club and The Auroran. Tournament gets underway at 11 a.m. and will not use the "shotgun" format.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19

Aurora Chamber of Commerce annual Business Excellence evening in Aurora.

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Parking woes at school

At last week's council meeting members received a copy of a letter addressed to the principal of Aurora's Light of Christ Catholic School and others from a concerned parent.

Her concern was that parents parking in a visitor's space between 3 and

3.15 p.m. are blocked in by cars parked in the drive-thru lane as well as the drop-off and pick-up lane, effectively blocking parked cars for about half an hour.

The temporarily parked cars are causing delay and inconvenience, the letter said.

The author quoted an

incident when her husband went to the school prior to 3 p.m. to pick up their son from daycare, was blocked in and her son missed a doctor's appointment, set for 3.30 p.m..

The correspondence was received as information by council.



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Landowner wants to create three lots on Kennedy Street

A public planning meeting was held recently to consider an application from Robert Delcourt and Rui Chan Lin to amend the zoning bylaw to permit a three-lot infill residential development in Aurora.

The location is Kennedy Street West and Lensmith Drive.

The applicant is proposing two new lots on the property to facilitate the construction of three residential detached dwellings to replace a house that has been demolished.

Planning staff said the rezoning application is in keeping with the objectives and policies contained within the official plan and an amendment to the zoning is required to permit the development of the lands for two new residential lots.

The proposed lot frontages and areas are consistent to those in the surrounding neighbourhood and conform to the density requirements and are compatible with surrounding residential zoned

lands.

No members of the public were in attendance for the public planning meeting, although one resident from the area telephoned to express his concerns about the current appearance of the property.

Although the report was very comprehensive several questions were asked for clarification, as to lot coverage and size of the homes with staff responding that the lot coverage, size and design met the town's requirements.

As the application was compatible to the neighbourhood and met the provincial policy of infill, council agreed to approve it in principle subject to the resolution of outstanding issues and approval of the Committee of Adjustment for the severance of the three lots.

New arena violating building laws: Wendy

Recently, Aurora's general committee approved, without comment or discussion, a staff report that a private arena is under construction in Aurora.

The application dealt with a parcel of land on the north side of the St. John's Sideroad west of Yonge Street.

The lands were designated as Institutional and Private Open Space which permits a range of institutions and community services including recreation centres.

The application was to permit a private ice hockey arena which was in accordance with the official plan and zoning bylaw.

The facility would be for personal use, not for rental purposes or public use.

When the general committee minutes came to council for ratification last week, Councillor Wendy Gaertner claimed the arena had been built before council approval, so that the report council received was not complete.

She asked if a building permit had been issued.

Staff members said a building permit had not yet been issued and the owner had been issued an order to comply.

Councillor Gaertner said the construction was contrary to the planning and building protocol and asked if any penalties could be imposed.

She learned an administration fee could double the permit fee of \$12,000. Councillor Gaertner suggested the fee be imposed as she was offended by what happened.

The CAO pointed out that the Chief Building Official was a statutory officer under the Ontario Building Code and that

as such, council couldn't order the issuance of a building permit.

Council agreed to leave the issue to the discretion of the Chief Building Official.



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Poor Richard

Entertainment in the spotlight

*Great entertainment was available,
In Toronto in days long gone by;
Now it has all disappeared,
And many elders wonder why?*
- Poor Richard's Scrapbook

Back in the early days of the 1930s during what became known as the Great Depression, money was very scarce and entertainment was something many people couldn't afford.

To encourage families to go the movies during the early days of the week, the price was about 25 cents for adults and every woman attending received a dish.

By attending every week it was possible to collect a complete set of matched dishes.

In those early days my favourite entertainment spot was Shea's Hippodrome on Bay Street near Queen in Toronto, which was demolished to make way for Toronto's City Hall.

Due to the depression, I quit school at age 16 and was fortunate enough to obtain a job in a woollen mill factory near Dufferin and Eglinton in York Township.

I worked a 56-hour night shift for eight dollars a week.
(Not much has changed, eh, Dick?)

The only pleasure I had in those days was a weekly visit to Shea's theatre, at that time a movie and vaudeville house. After quitting work at 7 a.m. on Saturday, I rushed home, cleaned up and took the streetcar to the theatre.

If I got in before noon hour the admission was only 25 cents.

At that time Shea's was on the major vaudeville circuit and all the big stars visited Toronto, including Bob Hope.

I recall seeing Lou Leslie's "Blackbirds of 1933", a musical revue, and thrilled to the "hi-de-ho" music of Cab Calloway and his orchestra among the great giants of the entertainment business at that time.

While serving at the RCAF Manning Depot in 1941 as a drill and PT instructor, the last year the CNE operated during the war years, some of the CNE Grandstand stars, including Bob Hope, came to entertain the troops.

In 1942 while serving with the RAF Ferry Command based in Montreal, I went to the old Montreal Forum to hear a young Frank Sinatra.

He was a skinny kid with a good voice, who caused the young girls in the audience to scream as he went back and forth while holding onto the microphone stand.

After the war I went back to school to complete my Grade 13 in hopes of going to university, which never materialized. I was also employed in the evenings as a bouncer, or floor manager as we called ourselves, at the old Club Kingsway, formerly the Silver Slipper, and at the Palace Pier.

In those days the Palace Pier was home to all the travelling big bands of the day, including Tommy Dorsey, Gene Krupa and so many more.

It was quite an enjoyable experience.

When I entered the work force as a travelling salesman for Stafford Foods, I was away from home from Sunday to Friday night.

Following a Saturday morning sales meeting, it was off to Buffalo for the evening.

Our favourite spot was the Town Casino, which had all the big name entertainers of the day.

One night the featured stars were big band singer Helen O'Connell and Bob Eberly, previously with the Jimmy Dorsey orchestra.

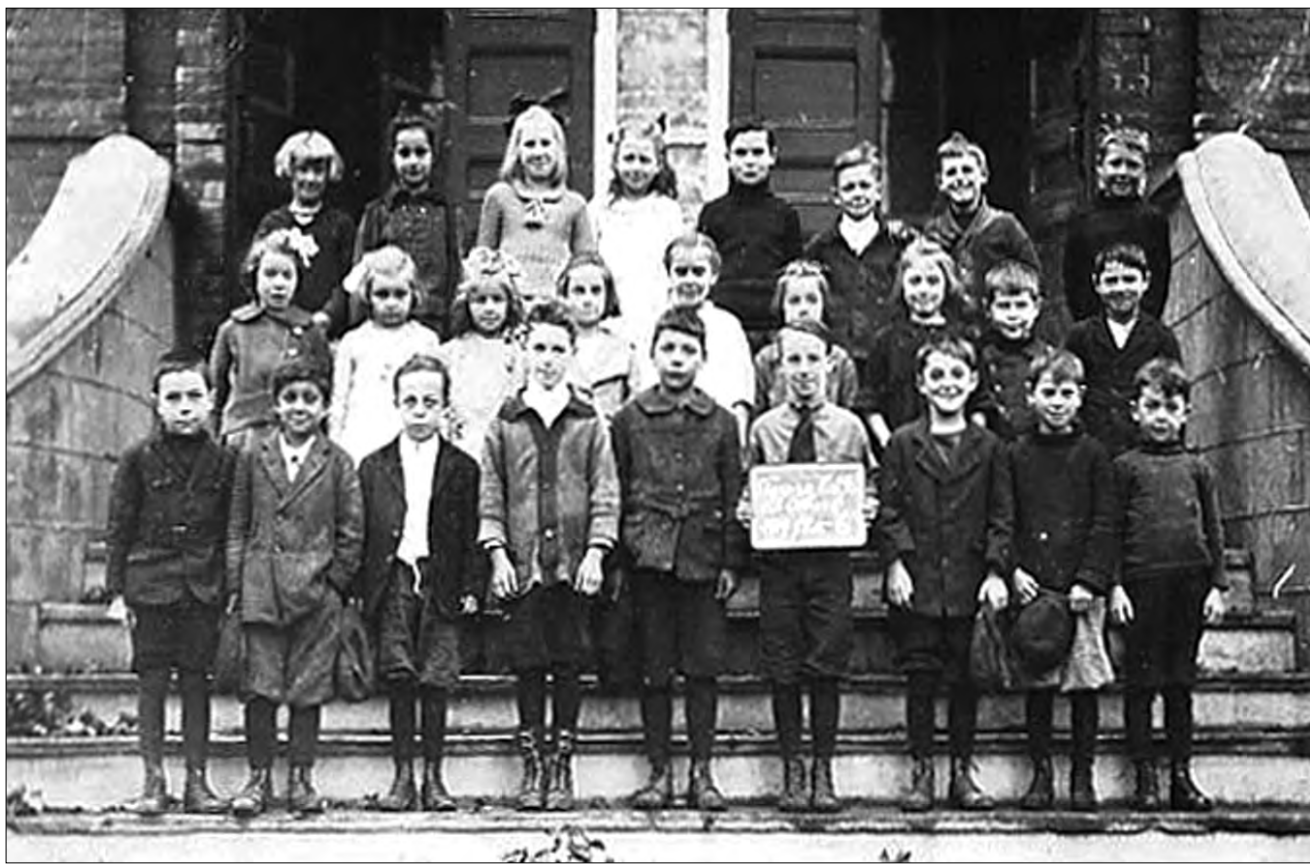
After leaving the Town Casino, the next stop was McVan's for the late night show, featuring black entertainers and then the long drive to Toronto arriving home just as the dawn was breaking.

Later on, while working at Queen's Park, especially during the evening sessions, which I attended as executive assistant to the Honourable John White, when he was Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, I had the opportunity to get to know many of the jazz spots in Toronto.

There was the Colonial and the Brown Derby on Yonge Street, George's Spaghetti House on Dundas Street East and my favourite spot, Burbon Street on Queen Street, where they featured a headliner along with a house trio usually led by jazz pianist Marian McPartland or Carol Britto.

Another favourite spot was the piano bar in the Sutton Place Hotel or the fabulous Ports of Call Restaurant on Yonge Street, which not only had a piano bar, but The Last Chance Saloon, featuring a girl singer in the Diamond Lil style.

Those were the days and musical events I remember.



This photo is up for sale on e-bay and there's not much we can tell you about it. We do know it was taken in 1919 in front of what today is known as the Church Street School, but then was Aurora's only public school. Anyone know anything about it?

Letters to the Editor

Reader takes exception to writer's point of view

To the editor,

**Re: "You won't see
this reader at a parade."
R. Gee (Letter to The
Auroran, July 3)**

Good thing.

I wouldn't really want to stand next to someone like you at a Canada Day parade, or any other parade held in this great country of ours.

A Canada Day parade

in Aurora or anywhere else in this great and wonderful nation of ours would be a celebration of our national inclusiveness!

We welcome all peoples of the world, many of whom come here at great personal sacrifice in order to become proud Canadians.

We are not a perfect nation, nor are we individually perfect people, we

do not have perfect governments, and sometimes as a nation, we drop the ball.

But...

Next time you have a few hours on your hands, have a gander at the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and a quick look through the Ontario Human Rights Code. You will probably choke.

You can stay home and keep your small-mindedness to yourself, under your hat and behind your own closed door.

In fact, the Charter guarantees every Canadian the Fundamental Freedom of thought, opinion, belief and expression and therefore guarantees even you, the right to your narrow and negative opinions and beliefs.

I believe that PROUD Canadians are the majority, and we are here to stay.

A very proud Canadian.

**Dora Robinson
Aurora**

Aurora Canada Day celebrations "pathetic": reader

To the editor,

When did Aurora have the referendum to separate itself from Canada? Are the days of patriotism for our country gone?

The lack of Canada Day activities tells me that I don't want to belong to THIS Aurora.

As if the lack of a Canada Day parade was not bad enough, the celebrations (term used loosely) at the Leisure Complex were PATHETIC!

At 4.30 in the afternoon the park had a midway, a petting zoo (with a biting zebra), an empty band shell, one ice-cream truck and one chip truck and my favourite, a booth from Power Stream.

NO promised leisure activities, in fact, the complex was locked up tight,

no beer gardens, no activities at all.

After inviting some new Canada Day celebrants to the park for what used to be a good afternoon culminating with fireworks, imagine my embarrassment when we left 30 minutes after arriving, to go to East Side Mario's for our Canada Day Celebration.

We did return for the fireworks.

At least they were good, although it leaves me with little hope for future celebrations (at least for the next three years).

**A proud Canadian
(if not a proud Auroran
at the moment)**

**Shelly Hayes
Aurora**

*More letters
see pages 6 - 8*

THE AURORAN

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Front Porch Perspective

By Stephen Somerville

A couple of weeks ago I participated in the 26th annual Aurora Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament held at the King Valley Golf Club.

According to outgoing Chamber president, Stephen Forsey, the event is the association's most popular. The golf day was sold out - 152 players in a 'shotgun' start.

The organizers could not have asked for a better, if not hotter, day. Not a cloud in the sky.

The course was in pristine condition - at least until I hit the first fairway. A suitable nickname for myself should be "the excavator".

At various times during the round I took some mighty big divots - some planned and some, uhhh, not. A couple of the divots were the size of beaver pelts!

One could not have asked for a better foresome; two former Aurora Chamber presidents in lawyer Jack Laurion and financial services executive Jeff White.

Human Resources consultant Mary Byczok quite nicely rounded out the grouping.

We had a great day, laughing, joking, talking a bit about our respective businesses, and even managed to score a couple of birdies.

I was in the right group for sure as my playing partners all love sports cars and I listened intently as they spoke about their respective rides.

Listening to them I began to daydream about owning a blue 2004 C5 Corvette. This was quickly flushed from my subconscious as I recalled my wife's words on the subject, "when hell freezes over or the Leafs win the Cup". But I digress.

Nice thing about the best ball format is that everyone contributes some great shots during the day, and this was certainly the case for our group.

Lots of good drives and long irons, problem was the short game - from within 80 yards or so. We could not stick the ball close, even with four chances each time.

I won't bore you with the details of our game but suffice to say, that while everyone in the group loves golf, none of us will be joining the respective professional golfing tours any time in the near future.

We shot a respectable four over, not too bad given that the King Valley greens keepers thought it important to have "Sunday at Augusta" pin placements in combination with U.S. Open like rough around the greens.

Thankfully, the greens weren't that fast, though. My eight-foot downhill putt on number nine only required a 35-foot putt coming back. I think the stimpmeter was registering somewhere around infinity that Monday afternoon.

As I haven't played the course in a number of years, I spent quite a bit of time on the 18th hole looking for my

favourite yardage sprinkler - the one that states "Don't even think about it".

Note to tournament organizers for next year: as the winning team shot an unbelievable 58 or 13 under par, given the conditions I demand a drug-testing program be implemented forthwith.

Or split up the winning foresome or better yet, have them play with yours truly next year - that will surely put an end to the winning streak.

These players are obviously spending too much time golfing!

At \$250 per golfer it does sound a bit pricey, but the value for money equation was quite good. For the price of a ticket, you received lunch, golf, power cart, access to the range and clubhouse facilities, dinner and door prizes.

Also, money was raised for charity. According to the Chamber website, "Southlake Regional Health Centre took responsibility for running the putting contest with many of the golfers participating, and was pleased to take home 50 per cent of the proceeds".

I look forward to playing again next year. Course groundskeepers beware!

Stephen can be contacted at:
stephengsomerville@yahoo.com



Cathy's Corner

By Cathy Vrancic

In a "Dog Meet Dog" world, does size matter?

I think it does because I am the owner of the big, black German Shepherd in a neighbourhood where most people keep cute, cuddly small dogs.

It isn't easy walking Jake and watching my neighbours scoop up their wee ones as we approach.

Poor Jake...nobody likes him.

Most times, he stands there with a sad expression...looking up at the little dogs protectively ensconced in their owners' arms.

He doesn't mean to lick his lips, really!

Jake would never hurt a smaller animal. Not since he met my sister's Jack Russell Terrier, Spot - he's afraid of them.

My sister keeps telling me that the Jack Russell is a big dog trapped in a small body... sounds about right.

Spot whipped Jake - but good!

Nearly chewed his ears off after she yapped him into partial deafness and total insanity, and still Jake made no aggressive moves. Poor Jake...

Damir was so ashamed.

But privately, I quite admire my gentle Jake giant.

Once, Jake brought me a baby bunny and held it in his mouth so gently that there wasn't a mark on it. The rabbit, I mean. Jake's tongue was a different story...

So I wasn't at all nervous when Nadia's boyfriend, James, asked if Kramer could stay with us for a while.

Thanks to Jake's size, our family doesn't make anybody's Top 10 List of preferred dog-sitters but James' family was in crisis with his father in hospital with a serious illness.

There isn't a heart in this household capable of declining any request the LeBlanc family could make, so we had to make it work.

Kramer is part Poodle, part Shitzu and mostly Lhasa Apso. In a word: Small.

In stature - not attitude! Poor Jake...

People who understand dogs will be familiar with The Dominance Dance.

Kramer's first act upon arrival in Jake's domain was to strut over to a tree in the backyard and "mark territory".

In a panic, Jake marked over the marked territory. Kramer stubbornly and boldly had to have the last...um, mark? Miraculously, he dared...and he lived.

Poor Jake...nobody respects him.

Watching from the window, Nadia, James and I doubled over in laughter at the antics. It was wonderful to see Nadia and James laugh for the first time in a long time.

It wasn't so funny when Kramer crossed the line over to Jake's bowl and had a bite.

For a dog who refuses to eat his kibble straight - without "condiments" (i.e. table scraps), Jake got pretty hot under the collar!

Kramer escaped with his hide intact - barely, and never tried it again. But he did go on a hunger strike, holding out until I started filling his bowl with Jake's food.

Kramer and I bonded over "our little secret". Poor Jake...

Walking the pair had its own challenges. In addition to the tangling of leashes came another "marking" hazard: Inevitably, Jake would be sniffing a tree when Kramer would

be marking it, and vice versa.

Yup, I did as much washing the dogs as walking the dogs!

But we had many sweet moments. During Kramer's stay, Tim was in bed recovering from his Pneumo-Thorax and somehow, the dogs knew not to bicker in his presence. They curled up on his bed (albeit at opposite ends) and peacefully slept all night.

When James' father sadly passed away, all of us cried and hurt and lost track of the dogs.

We went to the funeral home to pay our respects. I left the dogs at home...alone together.

I never gave it a second thought until Nadia hissed: "Mom! This family cannot handle another loss!"

Oh-oh...

The drive home was a horror show - visions of bloodshed dancing through my imagination as my brain considered the possibility that my "Dog Meet Dog" world could suddenly become a "Dog Eat Dog" world. What was I thinking?

Pulling into the driveway, I was struck by the silence. With much trepidation, I opened the front door and...there they were - the big dog and the small dog lying side by side...waiting for their people to return!

Kramer stayed for 10 days - long enough to establish a new order of things, worm his way into our hearts...and leave a big hole where a small dog used to be.

I want him back! Poor Jake...

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

An afternoon on the links

Dog meet dog



BOUQUETS to Bill Brown, John Parker, Dave Leitch and Herb Hatch, members of the Upper Canada Chordsmen, for welcoming the staff of The Auroran to their new facilities at 95 Edward Street.

BRICKBATS to one of most divisive Aurora Councils that equals or exceeds the last council with longer meetings, fewer major decisions and questioning of routine staff reports. They need to get away in a closed session and work out their differences and interpersonal relations as the town can't go on this way for another three years.

BOUQUETS to Aurora Tiger defenceman Alain Goulet on being selected by the Boston Bruins during the NHL draft. The 18-year-old from Kapuskasing collected 15 goals among 71 points in 78 games this season.

BRICKBATS to those in the government and RCMP for retaining Deputy Commissioner Paul Gauvin, who came under attack for lack of action in the Mounties' pension fiasco. The chief financial official for the force will step down but will remain in the force as special advisor on major Crown projects. Is this what they call cleaning house?

BOUQUETS to CBC News Anchor Peter Mansbridge on being honoured by the Radio-Television News Directors Association, with the presentation of the prestigious President's Award for his work in television over the years.

BRICKBATS to OPP Commissioner and former York Regional Police Chief Julian Fantino for publicly giving a testimonial to recently retired RCMP Commissioner Giuliano Zaccardelli, especially since the OPP is to carry out a review of how the pension scandal was investigated and if criminal charges should be laid.

BOUQUETS to Toronto Mayor David Miller for negotiating an agreement with the federal and provincial governments in having a say in the resettlement of immigrants and refugees as more than 60 per cent end up in Toronto. Quebec is the only other jurisdiction to have a say in the way immigrants are selected and resettled.

BOUQUETS to David and Dierdre Tomlinson for opening up their beautiful Merlin's Hollow Garden at 181 Centre Street to benefit Hillary House and also to the general public this month.

BRICKBATS to members of Aurora Council for not adopting the political adage that it is better to remain quiet and be thought dumb, than to speak up and remove all doubt.

BOUQUETS and a happy retirement to Sheri Bridel on her retirement after 19 years' service in the town's Leisure Services Department. She was recognized at a recent council meeting.

BRICKBATS to all the mixed opinions and confusion over tobacco advertising, as tobacco manufacturers should be able to advertise as long as tobacco is a legal product. Cars also kill so will they be next on the list?

BOUQUETS to Bryan Lin on receiving the Canada Day Youth Award at a recent council meeting for his many activities at his school and with the town's Youth Action Committee.

BRICKBATS to the provincial Liberal government for not allowing Ombudsman Andre Marin to open the books and examine any jurisdiction that receives provincial tax dollars such as municipalities, universities, schools and hospitals.

BOUQUETS to M & M Meat Shops and Strategic Objectives for raising \$1.9 million for the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada by events held by their community stores across the country.

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Peter Virtanen
CLU. Agent, Aurora



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Letters to the Editor

Political ploy to use trees, writer claims

To the editor,

At both the Aurora Home Show and the June Street Festival on Yonge St., Frank Klees MPP, (Progressive Conservative), gave out free white pine tree seedlings to the public, with a business card attached to the tree.

On one side of the business card, Klees' name and his website address is printed.

A phrase, "He gets things done for the environment" is written on the card.

On the other side of the card, is the official logo of the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority.

Here, the Region's government phone number is listed, with some other information on tree planting programs.

One would think that this gesture is in good intent

and spirits.

Everybody would agree that the environment is important and conservation of trees is a priority, especially along the Oak Ridges Moraine ecosystem.

But that is where the first impression should stop and we should question "Why is Klees using the Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority's official logo to give away his trees?"

It is a political ploy to gain the public's trust that the conservatives care about conservation of trees and the environment.

If Klees was so interested in the environment and conserving trees, why did he not stop the construction of large homes on the Oak Ridges Moraine, in his home riding of Oak Ridges?

The conservatives' track record on the environment does not meet many

"green" standards at all.

Then, the newly elected Liberal Party, in Ontario, tried to stop and overturn the decision to build on the Oak Ridges Moraine ecosystem, however, the ink from the contracts had well dried and it would have cost an enormous amount of tax payers' money to convert the land back to conservation area.

When I contacted the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, (LSRCA) I spoke with an official to ask about this white pine tree give away.

The official said that Frank Klees "just asked how to buy trees".

The spokesperson said that "he did not see the promotional material" which Klees then developed.

To most, the business card's logo gives the appearance and the impres-

sion that the Ontario public agency (LSCA) endorses Klees' campaign for the Newmarket-Aurora riding.

However, "this is not the case", said a conservation official.

Remember, Ontario taxpayers' money supports the existence of the LSRCA.

It is not an offence to give out trees, but it is another example of how campaign information and strategy, for the Fall 2007 provincial election, can be played out. This is a good example of political chicanery, but this one did not go undetected. Nice try.

The conservatives' policy on the environment should be questioned and we must see the issues, not the political hoopla, for the upcoming Fall election, in Ontario.

Jim Jackson
Aurora

It must be summer: there's no water, this reader states

To the editor,

Ahhhh! It must be summertime in Aurora; the kids are playing in the parks, the ice cream truck's tune rings out in the streets, people are out in droves enjoying outdoor activities, and Aurora's (seemingly annual) water restriction/ban has graced its citizens once again.

It seems to me that our elected officials have failed to see this re-occurring problem and yet continue to roll out the welcome mat for new commercial, residential, and industrial developments.

One would think that when one has a problem of this magnitude, one would try to fix it before com-

pounding the problem.

It's pretty sad to think that after only three weeks since our last rainfall, some of our residents recently woke up to discover that they were without water.

As I look at the development taking shape east of Bayview, north of Wellington, (one can only guess at the number of houses that will be built there) I can only scratch my head and wonder how there will be enough water for these new residents, let alone the rest of us Aurorans.

Living in Aurora comes

with a price, namely high taxes, and for that we should not have to worry about running out of water so easily.

I know that we cannot police people in their homes but water consumption goes a lot deeper than just outdoor watering.

There are many things that we can do on a daily basis and year round to reduce water use.

It's time for the Aurora Council to stop screwing around and fix this problem!

Conrad Weisser
Aurora

To the editor,

Once again we have seen not just water restrictions but the outright ban of outdoor water use.

You would think that by now the powers that be at the Region would have realized that we do not have enough of a water supply for the Region but every year they keep approving more development which leads to increased demand for water.

Which is true, do we have

enough water to continue maintaining growth or do we truly not have enough water and that development should cease?

If we have enough water to keep growing, then we don't need water restrictions and/or bans.

I am tired of the Region talking to us out of both sides of their mouths and saying two diametrically opposite things.

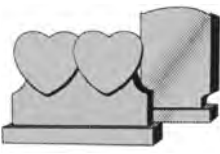
Dave Watson
Aurora

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Letters to the Editor

Thirty years later, Merlin’s Hollow flourishes

To the editor,

It is now almost 30 years that we have lived at 181 Centre Crescent in Aurora that was soon to be named Merlin’s Hollow.

David wanted to call a son Merlin, but we had two daughters, Beth and Melinda, so later when he developed the garden we decided to name it Merlin’s Hollow.

David designed it to be four gardens within the main garden.

When you stand in one you cannot see the next beyond eight-foot hedges except by walking through one of the arches that link the various sections.

There are many different microclimates within the total area, gravel and sand beds, bogs both acid and alkali, woodland beds and a fern walk, rich clay beds that grow plants up to eight feet tall, although my record was a long grass prairie plant of 11 and a half feet.

With the garden just shy of an acre we needed to grow many plants to fill it.

David grew a thousand packets of seeds a year, all chosen and sent by our friend Bob Adams in England.

They both trained as gardeners in the parks departments in England and then met as students at the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew.

Both later became landscape architects.

The plants we have grown have come from many different parts of the world that have similar climate and conditions to here, some only survive by creating special beds, e.g., bog beds lined with strong pool liners to trap moisture; rock gardents to give good drainage; beds with shifting shade, etc.

Some plants will thrive in many different conditions but these are rare.

It has been a long and fascinating experiement to see the diversity of plants that can be grown in our climate.

The garden contains more than 2,000 different species of plants, with seeds that have come from China, Japan, Europe, the Middle East, the Himalayas, New Zealand, USA, South America, etc.

Although it would have been extravagant to do this for a private garden, we decided that we would have a pieces of art in each section as we share it with so many visitors.

The theme for the stained glass window in the gazebo was inspired by our Ukrainian neighbour, Alex, who used to look across the hedge, when it was first planted and call, “Adam and Eva in the Garden of Paradiso”.

The snake sculptures in the Winter Garden, the flower made from spades and the giant morel in the woodland bed were all created by the wit and imagination of Ron Baird, the sculptor who devised the massive Thunderbird in Barrie harbour, plus many other memorable pieces.

This diversity of plant life brings in an echoing diversity of birds, butterflies and other fascinating insects as intriguing as the plants themselves.

We grow a large clump of stinging nettles by the workshop that act as a host plant for at least two species of butterfly.

They lay their eggs on the leaves and then curl the leaf around the eggs.

Some of the insects are faithful to one particular species of plant while others are much more catholic in

what they inhabit.

In Spring we fall asleep to the trilling of toads for several weeks and different pitches of song reveal each contestant in the race for a mate. The strongest voice wins.

Often a pair of toads are courting on the pond, the male smaller than the female, with eggs in untidy lines of black on the surface like lengths of black knitting unwound.

It is only a number of weeks before the young ones emerge in dozens, perfectly formed but the size of a finger nail, scaling the rock garden like the north face of the Eiger.

Green frogs take much longer to mature and emerge in late June of their second year.

They lose their tadpole tails and can be seen with their head out of the water, small and black.

Like their parents when they first show themselves out of the water in the early days of warmth, they become green once they have had sun on their skin for a while.

We keep minnows and goldfish in the pond all year round; we change the pump to a bubbler in the winter that keeps oxygen flowing under the ice.

Once David had built the pond and on the first day filled it with water there were dragonflies mating.

One year I saw a mink gambling over the rock garden, this first sighting was exciting until I saw him make a return trip with one of my large frogs in his jaws. Luckily, he never returned.

Every spring there is a pair of Mallards who land on the pond and stay a couple of days looking for a nesting site then leave for a larger (or quieter) site. It was amusing to see them walk-

ing down the gravel paths looking from bed to bed.

There is a snake hibernacleum that David built into one of the rock gardens, placed high so that it would not flood.

It’s a deep chamber filled with loose rock and blocks of wood, with three exits with an acid rock garden built above.

We are both interested in snakes but they are discreet and we rarely see them.

Sometimes when they emerge from hibernation in spring, they are lethargic and dusty and we have a chance to study them more closely.

We saw a young one this year, evidence they are breeding.

It is interesting to think of how many generations of insects, birds and mammals have bred in this garden.

Yet what a myriad of them, particularly insects, have bred under vegetation and behind buildings and underground that we have never discovered.

Also interesting in the collection of people who have come to the garden

and continue to visit year after year, bringing children and then grandchildren.

I wonder how many thousands have passed through Merlin’s Hollow since the first Saturday in July we opened it to the public in 1981, when we pinned up cards in supermarkets and cleaners.

The next year we opened on two days, on Sunday of the following weekend for those who worked Saturday. May and June Saturdays followed in subsequent years.

Aurora has changed greatly within those years, from the sleepy, country town we were welcomed to in 1973.

The world has become a fast moving place with little time for reflection or quiet enjoyment of the natural world.

With the massive building boom taking place over fields, ponds and woodland in Aurora, gardens can be some of the richest habitat available to wildlife.

As I tell our gardening students, gardening gives you hope, teaches you patience, and the illusion that you are in control.

There is one day left to visit - Sunday, July 15, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Dierdre Tomlinson
Aurora

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Letters to the Editor

Why do councillors need assistant?

To the editor, what eight part-time council- taxpayers of between cillor, I appreciate how much
Would someone explain lora need an Administrative \$41,374 and \$47,016? work is involved as a coun-
Assistant for - at a cost to As a past two-term coun- illor.

Mayor, council support Farmer's Market

To the editor, "be a servant to".
Those who serve in It is refreshing, there- with Chris Alexander as
public life frequently for- fore, to experience mem- liaison agents, the market
get what the word "serve" bers of council, spear- has begun to take real
means. headed by Mayor Phyllis strides and is now pre-
For many, it comes to Morris, working for the pared to make a signifi-
mean an opportunity to revitalization of the cant contribution to
advance their own power, Farmers' Market in Aurora's community and
wealth, and status. Aurora. its downtown core.
They often lose sight of Following a commit- The visible presence of
its primary meaning, ment by council, the des- our public servants has
which is to "to work for" or ignation of Councillor made a huge difference.
Stephen Granger together Of note has been the
willingness of Mayor

There is an enormous citizen enquires etc., but I citizen enquires etc., but I
amount of research and have no idea what an have no idea what an
reading to do, responding to Administrative Assistant Administrative Assistant
would do.
Councillors are not elect- ed to have staff respond to ed to have staff respond to
calls or do their research.
Councillors are elected part-time to set and oversee part-time to set and oversee
policy, not get involved (i.e. meddle) in day-to-day staff meddle) in day-to-day staff
business. That's why we hired a Chief Administrative hired a Chief Administrative
Officer.
I saw too much of the meddling in my day.
Maybe this new staff member is being hired to
provide a buffer between
council and staff, so staff
can do the work they were
hired to do?
Members of council need
to stick to the job they were
elected to do, and let staff
do theirs.
Some members of coun-
cil would do well to remem-
ber this.

importantly, we've had an opportunity to interact importantly, we've had an
with many within our extended community.
The seniors who live close by drop in. We get to know them.
Others looking for farmer fresh produce
become the regulars who show us the face of
Aurora and its environs.
They're not rushed.
We certainly are not.
It's nice to get to know
them, to hear their story,
to get a sense of commu-
nity.
It's rather nice.
Amazing what a
Farmer's Market can do!

Cancer Society fundraiser brings in more than \$12,000

To the editor, Revolutions, Dr. S.
On behalf of Shoppers Andrews, Thompson's
Drug Mart (Yonge & Aurora Furniture, Dover Carpet, St.
Heights), I would like to Louis Bar & Grill, Fully
thank the following local Completely, Spectrum,
businesses for their dona- Aurora Deli, Beard
tions to our recent fundrais- Tiakwondo and Gorham
er for the Canadian Cancer Foods.
Society.
They include: Rec Cycle With the support of the
'N Sports, Hurst Bakery, businesses as well as ACI,
Pizzaville, C.W. Coops, The Auroran, Town of
Grace Church, we were

able to raise more than \$12,000 for the Canadian able to raise more than
Cancer Society.
This event was held to pay tribute to the memory This event was held to
of my two sisters, Val McNulty and Nancy
Shannon, both who lost their battles with this dread- ful disease and who were
long-time employees of Shoppers Drug Mart.
A special thank you to

Cloud 9 Hair Design in Newmarket for hosting a Cloud 9 Hair Design in
cut-a-thon, and to 10 year old Mackenzie Dixon for
cutting her hair to donate to kids with cancer, while col- lecting pledges.
This raised an additional \$1,800 for this very worthy cause.
S. Gwilliam
Aurora

John Abraham
Aurora Bill Hogg
Aurora

Alternatives to watering, she says

To the editor, Twice since the ban
While at my office we are complying with the watering trucks driving
watering ban and not water- ing our outdoor herbs and flowers by hose.
I would think that an example should be set by both the Town of
Newmarket and Aurora.

trucks and plant drought resistant gardens?
They can look just as beautiful and reduce the amount of water needed to
keep the town looking
good.
I would suggest that
perhaps for town lands that
are not athletic fields we
also look at an alternative

ground covering that requires less water.
I have heard several
options over the years
depending on the soil and
traffic that can be lower
maintenance and lower
water.

Jennifer Menna
Aurora

Bring troops home safely, he says

To the editor, If one looks back into
With an election looming on the horizon, it looks
to me that the Harper gov- ernment is crumbling ,and
falling to its foundations.
With the questionable war in Iraq and
Afghanistan, it's time for
the government to take
control and remedy this
ongoing situation, to bring
our troops back home safely.

vision held by our fathers and forefathers is at stake.
Let's not sell ourselves
short of that goal.
First of all, let's not for-
get to protect and preserve
the freedom that was given
to us from our brave

Canadian soldiers, who fought and died for us in
past wars and let us keep
their spirit alive for our
future.

Brad Snell
Newmarket



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Ontario Stewardship Rangers Caleigh Perrett and Becky Shaw, top photo, add a wood chip mulch to 13 new trees planted in the Aurora Community Arboretum near Industrial Parkway North and St. John's Sideroad last Wednesday. The Rangers are youth doing environmental projects in a Ministry of Natural Resources program. Below, Rangers Becky Shaw, Michael Colley and Dave May install a mulch mat under a newly planted white spruce in the Arboretum.

Photos by Gord Barnes

Self-serve gas stations bad for senior population

It used to be when you pulled into a service station, there was an attendant to look after your every request; check the oil, wash your windows, check your tires and just about anything else you wanted.

Oh yeah, he would fill your tank with gas, too.

Today, there are only a few "Full Serve" stations and they are getting fewer and fewer.

Two currently exist in Aurora but even they only put gas in your car.

Many senior and handicapped drivers who have difficulty filling their tank, checking their oil, etc. will travel blocks to find a full service station, with little luck.

In November, 2005, Markham Council expressed concern that the proliferation of self serve gas stations presented hardships to the elderly and the disabled who require access to full service stations.

Council adopted a report asking the Canadian Petroleum Products Institute to review with its members the need to ensure all gas stations make provision for full service for patrons having special needs.

A request was also made to the Province of Ontario to address the issue of accessibility to gas station service in provincial policies and guide-

lines pertaining to the accessibility needs of Ontarians.

Copies of the resolution were forwarded to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and all local municipalities in York Region seeking support.

Aurora's Accessibility Advisory Committee received the resolution and forwarded it to council with the recommendation that it be supported. It was.

In April, 2006, committee members asked questions about having full service lanes at local gas stations and staff members said the Director of Planning was seeking assistance from owners during the planning process.

By May, 2006, the number of full service gas stations was dwindling across the GTA.

Many seniors and handicapped have difficulty opening the gas tank and working the gas nozzle and hose.

Inclement weather makes it almost impossible.

In Aurora the two full service

stations are Esso at Yonge Street and Royal Road and Beaver Creek at Mary Street and Wellington Street East.

With reconstruction, the Esso station will become self serve.

The question was asked again in June, 2006, and staff members said it wasn't possible to make full service lanes mandatory.

That sent the committee scurrying back to Markham for more information.

According to Markham officials they insist that gas companies apply for provisions for full service for at least 12 hours a day or they won't get approval.

With a provincial election in October, it's a good time to put pressure on provincial candidates for legislation in the Municipal Act, Planning Act or the Accessibility Act to provide municipalities with power to insist on full service at least eight hours during the day for an aging population.

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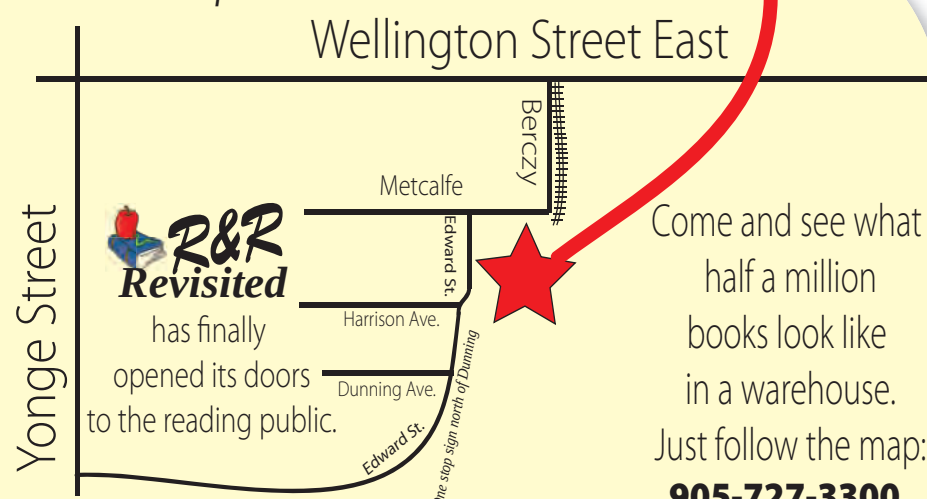
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THE AURORAN

SPORTS

Page 10

Week of July 10, 2007

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Aurora Cable Television's weekly sports program "Sportsbeat" celebrated its 25th anniversary recently. Volunteer co-host Colin Graham, left, has been with the show since 1990, while co-host Lowell McClenny, right, who is also a volunteer, has been on since its debut in June of 1982. In the middle is Doug Judson who started the show with Lowell. The show was known as "Sportsbeat Aurora" when it originated. Approximately 1,100 programs have been taped in 25 years featuring thousands of young and adult athletes. Sportsbeat is Aurora Cable's second longest running program...the longest is Our Town, hosted by Dick Illingworth, which has been running since 1980.

Triathlon events provide something for everyone

When it comes to triathlon, there is something for everyone and the Aurora Master Ducks Triathlon team has produced or is developing world-class athletes at all levels.

Individuals can start with a 375 metre swim, 10 kilometre bike ride and a 2.5 kilometre run.

One doesn't have to progress accordingly, but the next logical step is to attempt a Sprint triathlon (750m swim, 20km bike, 5km run).

From there is the Olympic triathlon (1.5km swim, 40km bike, 10km run).

If everything works, the competitor is looking for something a little more challenging like a '70.3' triathlon (1.8km swim, 90km bike and 21.1km run).

This race distance is half an Ironman race, but for trademark purposes, cannot be called such.

Finally, the mother of all triathlons is the Ironman - (3.8km swim, 180km bike, 42.2km run).

The Aurora Master Ducks have world-class athletes at all levels.

Most recently at the National Sprint Championships held in Brampton, seven Ducks qualified for the Sprint distance World Championships.

They include Darryl Weston, Karina Clark, Sue Quaiattini, Steve Murphy, Mary McCue, Indra Winters and Larry Bobbett, who will all be

racing in the BG Triathlon World Cup being held in 2008 in Vancouver.

Earlier, two Master Duck Triathlon team members, Larry Bobbett and Karina Clark, qualified for the Olympic Distance Triathlon Championships in Germany August 30.

Just before that, Karen Bonham, a National team veteran and Head Coach of the Aurora Ducks Triathlon team, qualified for the Ironman World Championships in Hawaii October 13.

To qualify, Karen raced in Ironman Brazil along with 1,300 other athletes vying for a spot at

this televised and world-renowned event.

The only World Championship distance that the Ducks haven't qualified for yet is the '70.3' World Championship. That will likely change when Spencer Lavis, Brian McGee and Dave Martinea compete in the Monaco 70.3 Triathlon early September or when Tom Hall, Richard Ahong, Karen Bonham, Crystal Drummond, Mike Roine and Larry Bobbett head to Newfoundland July 29.

All will be attempting to qualify for a spot in the championship event in Florida Nov. 10.

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Fitness club members excel

Four members, including one of its trainers, from the York Executive Fitness Club, showed well at the annual Toronto Classic Natural Bodybuilding competitions held in that city recently.

Agnes Ramsey, a trainer at the fitness centre located on Wellington Street East, had a second place finish in the novice division and finished

third in the masters division.

Meanwhile, Brian Hewitt, a physical education teacher at Aurora's Wells Street Public School, was, for the second year in a row, first in the light-heavyweight division.

Other winners included Lee Rombos, sixth in the novice division, and Helen Aranis, fifth in the masters and third in the open division.



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These photo clips are Aurorans (all 40+) who train here at York Executive Fitness. Recently, we took a group of five to compete in Ottawa. We returned with ELEVEN first place trophies and THREE second!

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Minor ball

Stewart sparks Aurora to win over Bolton

Alex Stewart drove in three runs, sprayed three hits, scored four runs, and stole three bases in the Aurora Jays' 14-3 win over

the Bolton Braves in YSBA Midget Rep action last week at the Leisure Complex.

Zac Davies scored two runs, stole two bases, drove

in two runs, and played well defensively.

Marc Horton drew three walks and scored three runs for the Jays.

Jordan Koen, Chris Cammerota, and Dylan Kelly drove in one run each to help pace the Jays' well-balanced attack.

Starting pitcher Kevin Kryshka earned the win for Aurora in this mercy-shortened victory, scattering four hits and yielding two runs in three innings of work.

Steve Scobie pitched two innings of effective relief.

The victory improved the Jays' league-leading YSBA record to 15-1-2.

One day later, Mark Horton struck out nine batters and scattered five hits over five innings to lead the Jays to a 5-2 victory over the Thornhill Reds on July 5th in YSBA Midget Rep action at

Concord Regional Park.

Jesse Barker pitched two scoreless innings to earn the save, his fifth of the season.

Kevin Kryshka led the Jays' offence with two runs batted in, both of which came on a key two-out single that resulted in the game-winning RBI.

Zac Davies, Andrew McQuigge, and Jordan Koen drove in one run each for the league-leading Jays.

The Jays improved their first place record to 16-1-2 with the win over the Reds.



An Aurora resident won a barbecue at the Oak Ridges Home Hardware as that firm celebrated its 50th Anniversary. Winner Amy Hughes of Aurora is flanked by Graham Wride and Ken Neale, owners of Decor Glass/Home Hardware store in Oak Ridges.

In 1969

Board takes over Church St. School

Back in 1969, a huge change took place in the world of Ontario education.

The York County Board of Education, along with several other county boards, was formed to take over from local school boards on January

1 that year.

Markham Trustee John MacKay as was the board chairman, and Aurora's trustee was former mayor, the late Keith Nisbet.

Aurora Council agreed the board could take over the Church Street School

as an Education Centre to keep them in Aurora.

The deal struck cost the new board a dollar per year.

Meanwhile, it was announced that the Wellington Street West high school, later named Aurora High School,

would be completed by the fall of 1970 to accommodate 1,200 students at a cost of \$4.4 million.

Today, the board, operating out of offices on Wellington Street West, is known as the York Region District School Board.

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Mosquito House League

Team	G	W	L	T	Pts
Re/Max Dererk & Leslie Ho (A5)	12	11	0	1	23
Bank of Montreal – Mike Searle's (A2)	12	7	5	0	14
Royal LePage – Larry Willert (A1)	13	7	6	0	14
Greenpoint Laser Products (A3)	10	4	6	0	8

July 3: Re/Max 16, Scholars 7
July 3: BMO 13, Royal LePage 11
July 5: Re/Max 11, BMO 3
July 5: Royal LePage 11, Reagens 7
July 5: Greenpoint 10, Scholars 8

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Bryan Moir is a member of Aurora's Economic Development Advisory Committee

By BRYAN MOIR

Why do we need a column on economic development?

By now you may be aware that I am writing a column for The Auroran.

When Ron asked how often I could produce one, I replied weekly. He then said why don't we go monthly, or whenever I need filler? That sounded good to me!

So this one is either appearing monthly or because it's been a slow news week in town.

Why write a column on economic development, you may ask?

First, the topic is a passion of mine.

Trained as an economist and having the opportunity to work in the field early in my career, I never stopped loving the work.

I had a chance to work on projects that ranged from helping small Caribbean islands develop the tourism trade to determining the economic viability of the tar sands in our far north.

The auto pact and the free trade agreement were thrown in along the way.

Then came the high tech boom and I was drawn into that industry. But economic development has always been my first love, and like your first prom date, you never ever quite leave her. So here we are.

The goals of my column are to point out how different types of proposed economic development can help or hinder our community.

I also plan to make comment on Regional, Provincial and Federal initiatives or lack thereof, and the impact they, too, can have.

The traditional definition of economic development has been understood as industrial recruitment, real estate development, "buy-local" campaigns, or Main Street improvement.

The perception has been that only business people and politicians tend to be the primary movers and shakers.

The time horizons for their decisions and plans are short-term or at best, their time in office.

Little attention goes into things that take longer than five years to achieve.

This is a one-dimensional approach to economic development. There is nothing wrong with a single project or a series of projects that improve a community in some respect.

But the one-dimensional approach is essentially outdated in a time when towns and neighbourhoods find their way of life literally disintegrating around them.

I hope to use this column to show how various programs, developments and activities impact our community by focusing on what

is called community-based economic development (CED).

By focusing our attention on local initiatives from both the private and public sector we can see for ourselves if they make Aurora a better place to live and work.

For those looking for a definition, CED is a comprehensive approach to economic development. It can include virtually any activity that might be seen locally as community improvement (for example, promoting a horse show, increased police protection, medical services, and/or housing rehabilitation).

The overall goal is the creation of improved economic, cultural, and social and leisure based "engines" that serve to make Aurora a better place to live and work.

Municipal and regional government have a very large role to play in how various "economic engines" shape our quality of life.

Through their respective policies and initiatives they impact us more so than any other level of government.

By determining the nature and type of development, setting policies to attract and locate industry, planning for new housing, schools and public transportation, they impact many facets of our daily economic lives.

My task then will be to look at how the various economic decisions and initiatives made at various government levels impact on the well being of our community.

This will include everything from how various cultural events help build a better Aurora, to the benefits of attracting the industries of the future, to how your tax dollars could be better spent by the politicians.

The next four years will permanently shape the nature of our community and the quality of life we will enjoy.

The last large tracts of land will be released for development. As the population expands, the number of people seeking employment will increase, the number of seniors will increase, the number of young people will increase and the pressure on our infrastructure and services will follow.

Politicians will have a profound impact on the quality of your life regarding the decisions they make and how well they are executed.

It's hoped this column will shed some light on those choices and allow you to assess for yourself how well your affairs and interests have been managed.

RUMOURS AND RAMBLINGS

Once, we saw UFOs over Aurora

There has been a flood of Unidentified Flying Object sightings in various areas recently but none in Aurora that have been reported.

It wasn't always that way, though.

Back in August, 1981, it was different as an apartment dweller on Temperance Street in Aurora was sitting on her balcony at about 10 p.m. when she saw this "thing" in the sky.

She described it as high in the sky with lights that kept going on and off.

It moved vertically as well as horizontally and hovered over Aurora until she went to bed after midnight.

She called her daughter who also lived in Aurora and both she and her husband confirmed her sighting.

But when she called York Regional Police, the officer on duty failed to confirm the sighting.

In a 1988 Gallup poll, 11 per cent of Canadians reported seeing a UFO, 46 per cent believed UFOs were real while 25 per cent said they were products of the imagination.

In June, 1993, reports of UFO sightings were received from all parts of York Region including Aurora.

There were so many that Tom Theofanous, an investigator with Canadian Anomalous Phenomenon Studies, visited the region to investigate.

All the sightings occurred between June 23 and 28 and all witnesses described seeing a fast moving object with bright lights travelling in a northeast direction between 9.30 p.m. and midnight.

By July, 1994, UFO phenomenon interest was running high in the area bounded by Aurora, Bradford and Keswick which became known as the Bradford Triangle.

This resulted in a UFO Symposium being held at the Aurora Howard Johnson Hotel in September, 1994.

The secret is out there somewhere.

MUNDIALIZATION

It was in May, 1973, when Aurora held its first public meeting since the municipality had accepted the concept of mundIALIZATION at the United Church.

June Lumsden of the World Federalist organization was the guest speaker and she outlined the program of twinning with another municipality, the establishment of a twinning committee and the selection of a twin municipality.

Among those invited to attend were Mayor Evelyn Buck, former

Small business may benefit from program

Small businesses in Aurora will be selected for a project that could save them money in the long run.

PowerStream, with the support of the Ontario Power Authority (OPA), and in partnership with Markham Energy Conservation Office (MECO), Enbridge Gas Distribution and GreenSaver, have announced the launch of a pilot program providing free energy efficiency assessments and upgrades to local small businesses in select areas of York Region.

Aurora is one of the areas.

It will be known as the "No Catch To Conserve" program.

Each business will receive up to \$1,000 in free energy efficiency upgrades to help reduce electricity costs, reduce demand on energy in their community and help contribute to a cleaner environment.

"York Region is experiencing significant growth, putting increased demand on energy needs," said Brian Bentz, President and CEO of PowerStream. "We want to help conservation-conscious small businesses do their part to help the community while also benefiting from reduced utility costs. We've made this program easy for small

businesses knowing they don't have the funds or the time to implement energy efficient retrofits".

"This pilot project is a wonderful example of the conservation "recipe" for all Ontarians," said Peter Love, Ontario's Chief Energy Conservation Officer. "Take many small businesses—Ontario's economic engine—add simple, effective conservation measures, a committed local utility and you create energy savings and a cleaner environment for everyone."

The team will visit businesses in Aurora, Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan to ensure a high level of participation in each area and to provide energy conservation education.

"There are few energy efficiency programs that target the small businesses sector and understand their diverse needs," said Vladan Veljovic President and CEO of GreenSaver. "Our pilot is designed to take those needs into consideration—whether it's a green grocer or restaurant—to make noticeable improvements to energy use and lower related costs."

The energy assessment will review each business' operation to identify areas that can easily be upgraded or made more energy efficient.

Mayor Dick Illingworth, Rotary Club President Joe Gaspar, Chamber of Commerce President Gord Stephenson and Recreation Administrator Ernie Batson.

At a previous council meeting when the twinning concept was first introduced, Councillor E. J. "Doc" Henderson suggested Aurora twin with Mombasa and other names were also presented.

Finally, Aurora officially twinned with Leksand, Sweden in 1974 due to the close relationship that had been built up between the two municipalities since 1971 when an Aurora minor hockey team first visited Leksand, the hockey capital of Sweden.

DICK JOINS THE HERITAGE CLUB

Back in 1969 as part of the Aurora Art Show and long before the town started to buy a painting from the Preserve Aurora in Paint category, Aurora artist Dorothy Clark McClure did a series of drawings of the homes of the mayors of Aurora over the years.

As Mayor of Aurora at the time, Dick Illingworth complained that his home hadn't been included, only to be told that the only thing historic about the house was him.

Now, Dick is a member of the Heritage Group and in the town's permanent art collection.

The Seniors Art Group, with the same Dorothy Clark McClure as art instructor, holds an annual art show and sale, including a category "Historic Aurora, Our Kind of Town".

Since 2001, the mayor has selected a painting from the category for the town's permanent collection which hangs in the seniors' centre.

At the recent Seniors Art Show and Sale Mayor Phyllis Morris reviewed the artworks and instead of selecting an historic building as has been the normal practice, picked a painting by Kay Nishimura of the Aurora Horse Show when it was held in the Town Park in 1969.

The artist came across a photograph of then Mayor Dick Illingworth presenting the Town of Aurora Shield to the winner of one of the jumping events and captured it in paint.

With the loss of the Horse Show this year after 85 years in Aurora, she entered it in the category and it was selected by the mayor as part of Aurora's history.

By the way, what ever happened to the Town of Aurora Shield?

HOW TIMES CHANGE

Today gambling in Ontario is widespread from lotteries to video machines, racetracks and casinos and there was even the lottery scandal to haunt the current Liberal government.

Back in May, 1989, it was a different story under the David Peterson Liberal government.

Although the federal government had adopted legislation allowing racetracks to set up betting theatres in restaurants and bars, Premier Peterson said it was not part of provincial policy.

He added that it was not something that would be encouraged in Ontario and there was no way he would allow casino gambling either.

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Caruso and Company

Downtown featured during Doors Open Aurora

The sixth article in the Doors Open series features sites in Aurora's historic downtown that can be seen at this year's event which takes place Saturday, Aug. 11 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

This year's Doors Open features five sites that visitors can explore in Aurora's historic downtown core as well as a walking tour conducted by historian Dr. W. John McIntyre.

Caruso and Company

A highlight of any visit to downtown is the Caruso and Company store. Built in 1887, 15210 Yonge Street has been owned and occupied by the Caruso family and business since 1913.

Beginning as a fruit and vegetable market, called Mary's Fruit Store, the building has also been home to a barber shop, lawyer's office, and shoe store.

When Mary's Flower Shop opened in the 1950s, these spaces were combined into one store.

Extensive restoration work in 1997 and 2004 created the store that will be seen on the Doors Open Tour.

The building has also been a home to the Caruso family for decade, and the second storey apartment is still occupied by Carusos.

Ninety-three years after the opening of the original business, the third generation of Carusos' now operates the business which was recently renamed "The Caruso and Company", making it Aurora's oldest continually operated family business.

Before you enter the shop from the Yonge Street entrance, notice the concrete patch on the sidewalk. This is where coal for the original boiler was delivered into the basement.

While inside, take in the tin ceilings, which were installed in the 1930's along with electric light fixtures which are still in use today in the main store.

The wood floors are original to building. Renovations in 1997 saw the rear portion of the main level store converted from living quarters to shop space. The building is still using steam for heat with original piping and cast iron radiators.

The rear portion of lower level was originally a stable area for horses and over the years the original structure has been gradually modernized. Today it is used as a floral design area, workshop, and shipping/receiving area.

Odd Fellow's Hall

A new addition to Doors Open Aurora this year is the Odd Fellows building which gives visitors a rare opportunity to see both upstairs and downstairs in a Yonge Street Commercial Block.

This commercial building was constructed by the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) in 1887 following a fire which destroyed the previous building on the site and a number of adjacent buildings.

The present building façade dates from 1923, when the building was modernized.

The IOOF purchased the site after the fire and had the existing building constructed to house their lodge on the upper floor and commercial space for lease below.

The Aurora Odd Fellows Lodge #148 is part of a national and world-wide fraternal and charitable organization.

The name is said to have been established because the original odd fellows were men who were engaged in various or "odd" trades and crafts.

A primary focus of the IOOF is community support and charitable giving. The Aurora IOOF Lodge is involved with a number of charitable activities, such as fundraising for Camp Trillium, a camp for children suffering from cancer, and for Southlake Regional Medical Centre.

The distinctive symbol of the lodge, which is visible on the Yonge Street façade of the building, is a chain of three links with the letters F, L and T. The three links of Odd Fellowship's symbol represent Friendship, Love, and Truth.

Visitors to the Odd Fellows Hall will see the lodge hall with its attractive woodwork, the banquet room and meet members of the lodge.

Mac Fleming Paint and Wallpaper

On the main floor of the building Mac Fleming Paint

and Wallpaper opens its doors to visitors who will see much of the historic commercial store interior intact.

The ground floor of the building has housed a number of businesses over the years.

The original tenants were a furniture store (southern section) and a general store.

From 1900 to 1915 the southern part of the store served as Aurora's post



office, while the northern store accommodated a series of drug stores from 1901 to 1974.

The current business in the store is Mac Fleming Paint and Wallpaper, which has been a fixture on Yonge Street for 34 years and retains a number of features of the historic 19th Century store interior.

John Fleming is the third generation of his family to work in the home decoration business as his grandfather manufactured polish and wax in Parry Sound.

Vic's Shoe Repair

Visitors to Vic's Shoe Repair at 15243 Yonge Street will see not just a traditional shoe repair store, but an Aurora institution.

The business is located in one of Aurora's most historic commercial buildings.

Constructed about 1884, for many years the small shop was occupied by Marshall Forsyth's stationery and music store.

Proprietor Vic Paraninfo

has been operating his shoe repair business in the same location in Aurora since 1973.

Vic came to Canada in 1956. Arriving at the famed Pier 21 in Halifax, Vic eventually made his way to Toronto where he worked as a barber and baker before going back to his true calling working with shoes.

Once in Aurora Vic became immersed in the Aurora community, participating in and leading a number of charitable activities.

He is perhaps best known for "Vic's Day in Aurora", held for many years in February, when Vic donates the full price of sharpening skates to the Aurora branch of the Canadian Arthritis society. Over the years Vic raised many thousands of dollars to the cause. For all his efforts, Vic was named Aurora's Citizen of the year in 1983.

Visitors to the store will meet Vic Paraninfo, who will demonstrate the craft of shoe repair.

Aurora Farmers' Market

A great place to start your Doors Open Aurora tour is with a visit to the Aurora Farmer's Market which runs from 8 a.m. to noon.

Now in its fifth year, visitors to this traditional farmers market can enjoy a taste of local produce and baked goods.

Located in the Temperance Street parking lot south of Wellington Street, the Aurora Farmer's Market will be the location of the Doors Open Aurora information centre where visitors can find out more about the sites that are available for viewing.

Walking Tour of Downtown Aurora

Leaving from the Doors Open Aurora booth at the Farmers Market at 11 a.m. will be a walking tour, conducted by renowned Aurora

historian Dr. W. John McIntyre.

Dr. McIntyre has a vast knowledge of Aurora's history and architecture.

He is a past president of the Aurora and District Historical Society, taught for many years at Seneca College and has written and lectured widely on aspects of Canadian architecture, furniture and social history.

He is currently Curator of the Sharon Temple Museum and a member of the Heritage Advisory Committee of Aurora.

Each weekend many Aurorans drive hundreds of miles to such places as St. Jacob's, Creemore and Port Perry, looking for a traditional old fashioned shopping experience without realizing that downtown Aurora also has much to offer. Why not stay closer to home this August 11th and visit Aurora's historic downtown on Doors Open Day.

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Senior Scape

By BRIAN WARBURTON

Seniors enjoy Canada Day

Canada Day marks the establishment of Canada as a Dominion on July 1st, 1867, 140 years ago.

It is as good a date for a birthday celebration as any other and Aurora residents, including many seniors, made merry at Lambert Willson Park on July First.

The day belonged to all Canadians and was a splendid day for having a good time; a little breezy, partially cloudy and ideal for physical activity but a little cool for inactivity.

The Aurora Opera Company represented by recording artists Sara Kyle and Joe Likuski sang beautifully and they were well appreciated by the crowd.

Lots of activities were available for the younger set and a fire-works display was presented in the evening.

The Aurora Seniors Association (ASA) has applied to New Horizons, a federal government funding agency, for funding to acquire equipment to facilitate presentations. Presentations reach and influence a great number of members and non-members for that matter, and making presentations is an area in which we present ourselves besides the subject material and therefore we need to be capable and reliable.

I prepared the application to New Horizons and in explaining the number of members who benefit from our instruction and presentations, I was awed by my growing awareness of the impact we have on the lives of seniors, which is considerable.

If we all lived our lives in villages or small communities where everybody is well known, we could do without community centres, but in our society with people constantly on the move, we lose the important long-standing familiarity with our neighbours.

Consequently, senior years can be remorselessly deficient in close friends and acquaintances which give cause for the necessity for senior community centres.

The previous Aurora Town Council provided quality direction in creating the ASA, and I wonder how many people realize what a marvelous creation the ASA is for seniors.

Time will prove the creation of the ASA to be a cultural step forward of power in reducing the many degrees of senior solitude, while adding momentum and structure to the senior fraternity.

Aurora and the ASA have plunged deeply into the holiday period of the year; consequently, some activities are suspended until September and others continue with fewer participants.

The ASA continues to function in a lively fashion with lots to keep energetic minds animated.

In conversation with a carpet bowling adherent, I was asked to look into the possibility of acquiring an electronic measuring device to measure the distance between the bowling balls.

It seems a tape measure tends to move the balls and with competitive seniors, moving the balls will not do.

If anybody can offer advice to correct this problem, please let me know.

In addition, I am hearing mention of competition with other organizations, and that sounds interesting and is an indication of how well this game is being received.

1965 murder still unsolved

The last time Geraldine Pickford was seen alive was at 9.15 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 18, 1965, at St. Andrew's College where she was employed.

Twenty-four hours later, the 39-year-old kitchen helper was found lying in Tannery Creek, which flows through the schoolgrounds.

She had been punched several times in the face and then strangled. She wasn't wearing any underwear when she was found and her green patterned dress was bunched up around her waist.

Lab tests revealed she hadn't been raped but had been dragged by her feet from a nearby bushy area and dumped in the creek.

Police investigators believed the frail and often sickly woman had planned to meet someone that evening, because she had been struck several times before being strangled.

Police speculated it might have been a lover's quarrel that turned ugly.

At that time as St. Andrew's was in King Township - it became part of Aurora following the introduction of regional government - the King Township police took charge of the investigation.

Little is known of her life before St. Andrew's College. It was known that for a number of years she worked as a domestic servant in Toronto and then as a nurse's aide at a private hospital.

It was there she met fellow nurse Joseph Pickford and after a whirlwind courtship the two were married in June, 1962. The following January, however, she left Joseph, to work as a live-in babysitter for a Toronto doctor.

Work days at the school were long beginning at 5.45 a.m. and ending at 8.30 p.m. with a morning and afternoon break.

It became known that a few days before death she and a friend spent a weekend at the Ford Hotel in Toronto, but she disappeared for awhile and returned to the school on her own.

On the evening she disappeared, she visited a co-worker who was ill. When she didn't show up for work the next morning her co-workers weren't unduly alarmed, even after they checked her room and found that the bed hadn't been slept in.

The following day two students ducked off the roadway into the bushes to sneak a smoke and discovered her purse. A search party was organized

and 90 minutes later her battered body was found.

Weeks turned into months as investigators interviewed dozens of people. However the trail in every direction ended before they were able to uncover conclusive evidence.

The case of the murder of Geraldine Pickford is still considered open by York Regional Police. A special squad of officers is working to crack unsolved murder mysteries.

In the meantime, was it a jilted lover who sealed Geraldine's fate?

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Wells St. School future uncertain

From page 1

was filled with former and current students, staff, parents and friends of the school as they celebrated its 115 years of history.

Teacher/librarian Wendy D'Angelo involved the students in a school-wide literacy project focusing on the history and heritage of the school, instead of presenting their annual play.

During the opening ceremonies, she spoke about the tradition of the school which she referred to as an old School with a Big Heart, dating back to 1892 when it was Aurora's first high school.

The original school was replaced with a new school around the turn of the century and was rebuilt in 1922 and underwent extensive modifications in 1952 when it became a public school with the opening of the Aurora and District High School, now Dr. G. W. Williams Secondary School.

The event was the first

opportunity for parents and friends to hear the school song, "This is Our School".

Guest speaker was Jacqueline Stuart, former Curator of the Aurora Museum.

She spoke about the history of the school and how back in the early days of the area John Mosley subdivided his land to include an academy, which later became Wells Street School.

The Village of Aurora purchased 16 lots in 1867 to create a cricket grounds which later became the Town Park and a Farmer's Market.

At one time there was a three tier fountain in the park with the top tier for people, the middle one for horses and the bottom one for dogs.

A band shell was built in 1892 which was replaced by the Aurora Lions Club in 1950 and more recently with a new bandstand.

Also in the park is the old drill shed, believed to be the oldest facility in Canada still serving as an Armoury.

Following the opening ceremonies, guests were invited to view pictures and artifacts in various locations throughout the school and explore a Wells Street classroom of the past, the present

and the future.

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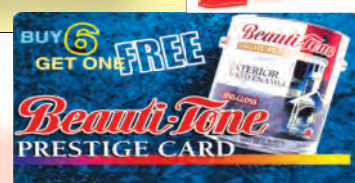
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