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see pages 4 - 9

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THE AURORAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 7 No. 48 905-727-3300 **auroran.com** FREE Week of October 9, 2007



More than 600 students from Stone Road/Wells Street Public School joined thousands of others from across the country to try to get a couple of lines in the Guinness Book of World Records. At exactly 12.30 p.m. last Wednesday, they set out to walk a kilometre around the school property. In the top photo, students get final instructions before the walk, then, below, prepare to set out on their brief journey. It will be some time before anyone learns whether enough people in Canada took part to get a new listing in Guinness. It is believed about half a million people, in total, participated.

Auroran photos by Ron Wallace

Williams may stay

By RON WALLACE

While it won't be made official until the end of this month, it appears Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School may survive at its current location on Dunning Avenue.

And, if the York Region Education Board throws enough money at it, Wells Street Public School could become a school again.

Aurora-King Trustee Gord Kerr told The Auroran last week that the board's Property Management Committee met Oct. 2 to exclusively discuss the two Aurora items.

"The Board has a process for decision-making and I have to respect that process, so I cannot report the specific details of a recommendation that will not be officially endorsed by the Board of Trustees until its meeting Oct. 25," he said. "What I can tell you is that the trustees support a decision that very much honours the wishes of a great many people who want to see this school continue in its present location on Dunning Avenue - at least until there is more certainty about the timing of phasing of residential development in Aurora in the coming years."

Meanwhile, students at Wells Street School learned last May they would be transferred to Stone Road Public School, because the ancient Wells Street building - once the site of Aurora's first high school - was in need of repair.

Engineers spent the summer going over the building's structure, and said it could be fixed, but it wasn't going to be cheap.

"The engineers' report has been received and has to be officially reviewed and accepted by the Board Oct. 25," the trustee said. "The engineers have made it clear that significant work must be done to the structure before anyone can re-occupy the building."

"The Board will need additional information on costs and other considerations before a decision can be made about the future of the building (mechanical, electrical and life safety systems) and has requested that those estimates be obtained."

The Williams' secondary school issue erupted last year when it was suggested Aurora's Dunning Avenue high school be demolished and relocated to a small site east of Bayview Avenue, north of Wellington.

That brought howls of protest from politicians, parents and students, and saw the launch of a website - Save Our Site - to object to the proposal.

Over the summer, the board met to settle the issue, but decided to reserve a decision until October.

The final word is expected at the school board meeting Oct. 25.



Andrea Kearns will be part of a new venture in Aurora: a haunted forest in Sheppard's Bush, Saturday, Oct. 27. The event - the kids should love it - will take place between 6 and 8 p.m. See the story on Page 3.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

BRIEFLY

Forget mom; who's Trevor?

Last week, a front page story about Liberal provincial candidate in the Newmarket-Aurora riding Christina Besanz suggested she was better known in the community as "Trevor's mom". Christina's son is named Tyson, and the story, of course, should have read "Tyson's mom". We're chalking it up to a senior's moment.

Wanna get published?

If you ever harboured the desire to publish something you've written, Aurora's Tom Davey may have the answer. He will make a presentation at the Aurora Writers' Group meeting Monday, Oct. 15 at 7.30 at the Aurora Town Hall. He will focus on writing non-fiction on diverse subjects. Davey, who founded the Aurora Writers' Group, has worked as a journalist in England, Australia and Canada winning national and international awards for his articles. His magazine, Environmental Science and Engineering, published in Aurora, is in its 20th year of publication. For further information, click on www.aurorawriters.ca.

Buildings remain empty

The issue of an empty hydro building and the future of the former library and seniors' centre on Victoria Street, remains an issue.

In August while discussing the future of the former Aurora Hydro building, council agreed to consider a strategy for all town buildings and scheduled a special meeting to discuss future uses for all currently vacant town buildings.

It was held last week, but drew no conclusions.

The special meeting was called to discuss the future of the buildings and in spite of a comprehensive report from staff members, after more than two hours of debate the report was received and referred to a future meeting.

The report was obviously too much for committee members to digest at one meeting and they wanted it divided into more manageable sections, such as one building at a time.

Karen Berger, a professional trainer, submitted a proposal regarding the former seniors' centre.

Her proposal was for a Phenomenal Fitness Wellness Centre for all ages to work with sports teams and parents.

She said she believed the former seniors' centre would be a great location to offer the services with the right amount of open space, a cooking facility and

Please see page 12

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COMING EVENTS

A drop-in centre will operate every Wednesday at the Community Bible Church, on Bathurst Street, just south of Henderson. Operating from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. it's open to all parents, grandparents and caregivers. For more information, e-mail Judy Hoffmann at jhoffmann@sympatico.ca.

Scottish Country Dancing is held every Friday morning at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church beginning at 10.30 a.m. No partners are needed and beginners are welcome.

Until Nov. 28, on nine Wednesday evenings, the Bereavement Support Group, for adults experiencing the loss of a loved one, will meet at Aurora United Church, 15186 Yonge Street from 7.30 to 9.30 p.m. For more information, call Mary at 905-727-6984. There is no fee for this program.

Meet at Martha's Table, now in its third season. Every Thursday from 11.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m., comfort food and a sense of community is available in the St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church hall, Aurora. Any funds raised are directed to other community outreach projects.

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, 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.

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 and interest groups. Contact Beverley at 905-727-2151.

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.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 10

Provincial election and Referendum Day.

Internet training at the Aurora Public Library for beginners. A one-hour session on basic world wide web navigation. 1.30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 17

Aurora-based Women's Centre of York Region Annual General Meeting to be held at the Regional Municipality of York Administration building in Room "A", 17250 Yonge Street, Newmarket from 6 to 7.30 p.m.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18

CHATS presents its United Way Fundraiser "Around the World" from 6 p.m to 9 p.m. at the Aurora office. It will be an international food sampling, wine tasting and silent auction. Tickets are \$20 and are available at the Aurora Office, 126 Wellington Street West, or call 905-713-3373, ext. 6032.

To celebrate Ontario Public Library Week, the Aurora Public Library will welcome Aurora's Marina Nemat, who will read from her memoir "Prisoner of Tehran, from 7 to 9 p.m. Copies of the book will be available. Pre-register at the adult information desk, or call 905-727-9493, option 4. Event is free with ticket and seating is limited.

Amnesty International meets at 7.30 p.m. at Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria Street. New members are welcome. For further information, call 905-713-6713.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19

Aurora Chamber of Commerce annual Business Excellence evening in Aurora. Pre-registration required. Call 905-727-7262.

OCTOBER 19 and 20

Aurora United Church Fall Rummage Sale, 15186 Yonge Street. Hours on October 19: 1 p.m. to 8 p.m. on October 20, 9 a.m. to noon. For more information call 905-727-1935.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20

A sale of many types of used books, including an array of cookbooks, will be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in St. Andrew's Hall, Mosley at Victoria Street. Proceeds will go towards the purchase of church library resources.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 24

Aurora Horticultural Society presents lecture on "Festive Entertaining" at the Royal Canadian Legion, 8 p.m., 105 Industrial Parkway North.

For advanced computer operators, "Beyond Google", a one-hour session on advanced search strategies, using electronic databases will be held at the Aurora Public Library beginning at 6 p.m. Pre-register at the adult information desk, or call 905-727-9493, option 4. Mouse and keyboarding experience required.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 26

For advanced computer operators, "Beyond Google", a one-hour session on advanced search strategies, using electronic databases will be held at the Aurora Public Library beginning at 10.30 a.m. Pre-register at the adult information desk, or call 905-727-9493, option 4. Mouse and keyboarding experience required.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27

York Chamber Ensemble begins a four-concert series with a Bach motif featuring renowned guest violinists Gerard Kantarjian and Gayane Bareghamyan. The concert, conducted by Aurora's Tony Browning, will be held at Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria Street, at 7.30 p.m. Tickets, available at the door, are \$15; \$10 for students and seniors.

Celebrate Hallowe'en at the Aurora Farmers' Market as part of customer appreciation. Lots of prizes and activities will be featured. Good food, crafts and contest winnings for best costumes.

NOVEMBER 4 to 19

Aurora seniors will take a 15-day Hawaiian cruise. Call Pam at 416-630-3499 for details.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10

Christmas Bazaar at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church Hall, Victoria and Mosley Streets. St. Andrew's Guild is presenting baked goods, crafts, and treasures

from 10 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. Hot lunch will be served from 11 a.m. Tickets: \$7; \$3.50 for children under nine.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 12

Aurora Film Circuit presents "La Vie en Rose", starring Marion Cotillard as "La Mome". French with English subtitles. Tickets are \$10 and available at R & R Revisited, 95 Edward Street and the Aurora Public Library. All screenings take place at the Cineplex Aurora, with door prizes at 6.45 p.m. and film at 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17

Big Brothers Big Sisters of York presents its Annual Gala "Catch A Dream" at DiNardo's Mansion, 400 Industrial Parkway South, with reception at 6.30 p.m. and dinner at 7.30 p.m. Evening includes cocktails, dinner, raffles, live and silent auction and dancing. Tickets are \$150 per person and may be reserved by calling 905-895-0289.

12th annual Christmas Fair & Artisans' Craft Sale, takes place in Lynett Hall, 16 Catharine Avenue, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sponsored by Our Lady of Grace Catholic Women's League.

Trinity Anglican Church presents 'Winter Wonderland' Christmas Bazaar from 9.30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the church. Luncheon is served from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Proceeds for A.C.W. Anglican Outreach and Parish needs.

PRO meeting at hotel

On Wednesday, Oct. 17, the Professional Referrals Organization (PRO) will host a Wine and Cheese Networking Event for members of local businesses.

PRO is one of the area's most progressive business referral groups.

The event will be held at the Howard Johnson Hotel, 15520 Yonge Street, Aurora, from 6.30 p.m. to 8 p.m., as part of Canada's Small Business Week.

"We have sent out many letters of invitation and

expect a good-sized group of small business owners," said PRO's Chair, Carolyn Bogseth. "We are hoping to attract some new members to round out our already lively organization."

Membership of PRO is made up of individuals representing different categories of business in the area.

PRO's website, at <http://www.professionalferralsorganization.ca/>, provides more information about PRO and its mem-

bers - and the categories they represent. You can find the member list, and a listing of open categories at the "PRO Members" link on the home page.

Cost for the event is \$10.

If you are interested in attending or if you have questions about how your business category might fit in, call Carolyn at 905-895-2290.

And if you plan to be there, bring lots of business cards.



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Animals, trees blamed for Aurora power outages

Homes and businesses in Aurora will benefit from several improvements to the local electricity distribution system as PowerStream works to upgrade the area's network infrastructure to meet current urban operating standards, according to a press release issued by the company last week.

The release also notes that a heavy animal population in the Yonge and Wellington area of Aurora has been responsible for

several power outages recently.

It also noted that in its assessment of the entire Aurora system, the company identified excessive tree growth as another reason for the outages.

Improvements to the system include the automation of the existing six Aurora transformer substations and the addition of two others by May next year, adjusting circuit breaker settings at substations to limit the impacts of localized out-

ages, building back-up circuits as an alternate supply to the municipality and completing an infrared scan of the entire overhead electricity distribution system to identify potential problem areas.

An equipment and network assessment conducted by PowerStream following the utility's acquisition of Aurora Hydro in 2005 revealed a few deficiencies including limited remote monitoring and control, having only a single point of supply

from the Armitage Transformer Station and circuit breaker settings not being optimized to minimize the impact of outages.

For the year 2007 alone, PowerStream has earmarked a total of \$4.5 million towards capital system improvements in Aurora.

"These scheduled system improvements, combined with the lower distribution rates that will be in place for Aurora customers November 1,

demonstrates our commitment to provide safe, reliable and efficient electricity distribution services to the municipality's residents and business owners," Brian Bentz, President and CEO, PowerStream Inc., said.

Changes to the system protection settings as well as the implementation of remote monitoring and control of vital equipment are expected to minimize these problems, as well

as a trimming campaign of overgrown trees.

PowerStream Inc. is the third largest local electricity distribution company in Ontario, providing service to more than 234,000 residential and business customers in the municipalities of Aurora, Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan.

It is an incorporated entity, jointly owned by the City of Vaughan and the Town of Markham.

Town meeting is arranged to discuss monster homes

The Town of Aurora will hold a public meeting later this month to discuss changes to its zoning bylaw.

At the heart of the issue is the introduction of "monster" homes in existing neighbourhoods.

Included in the discussions will be bylaw amendments specific to infill housing, that will touch on

height, setbacks, housing depth and garage projections.

The meeting, arranged by the town's planning department, is scheduled for Oct. 24 at 7 p.m. in the council chambers.

Town staff members have been looking at this issue since last year, in response to concerns expressed by the commu-

nity related to the scale, placement and character of residential infill development.

"Staff members have been studying the issue of standards for infill housing for the past year," a press release said. "Research included consultation with the local community as well as other municipalities that have dealt with the

issue of oversized housing. To consider the possibility of recommending new standards for infill housing in Aurora, a committee was formed and based on research and consultation, the committee identified a number of preferred zoning options.

Those options and the study processes were presented to the general public at a Public Open House held in June. Residents and property owners are invited to attend the upcoming public meeting and provide opinions regarding the proposed amendment.

The bush will be - boo - haunted

Sheppard's Bush, at the best of times, seems like an eerie place to walk...what with all the trails and hundred-year-old trees.

Imagine if it were haunted.

Well, the Town of Aurora has every intention of doing that to help kids - and adults, too - get into the Hallowe'en spirit this year.

On Saturday, Oct. 27, from 6 to 8 p.m., Sheppard's Bush will become a haunted forest.

The forest will be comprised of two haunted trails leading to a common area, where there will be a bonfire, ghost stories, children's activities and complimentary witches brew for all attendees.

There will also be a charitable barbecue offering a variety of foods.

There will be two trails for participants to follow.

One trail will be geared towards children and the other for youth and adults.

Attendees are encouraged to dress up in their Hallowe'en costumes.

Wanna go? Well, first of all, pre-registration is recommended. The cost is \$4 per child and each participant

should bring a flashlight.

There are several entrances into the bush, but organizers are urging you to use the one at the end of Industry Street, just south of Mary Street.

For more information or to pre-register, call 905-726-4762.



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Bridge results

**Aurora
Seniors Centre**

Monday, Oct. 1: N/S - Joan Rotenberg and Mary Oglanby; Gloria Smith and Rose White; Carolyn Liddy and Christine Woolley. E/W - Judy Salmon and Lucille Sequeira; Suzanne Nunn and Shirley Laurin; Audrey Robertson and Ev Dickie.

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Poor Richard

Enforcement of speed limits a definite must

*Enforcement of speed limits is a must,
But the province doesn't want to play;
It has been asked for enforcement controls,
But the answer is always "there's no way!"
- Poor Richard's Scrapbook*

Aurora Council is spending almost a quarter of a million dollars for traffic calming controls to control speeding and volume of traffic in one small section of the town, when there may be better ways to achieve the objective.

The province is adding more police officers and even an aircraft to control speeding and aggressive driving on the provincial highways.

Ontario was the first province in Canada to approve the use of automated speed enforcement by the use of photo radar in 1994 mainly on the 400 series highways by the OPP before its use was discontinued by the Mike Harris Progressive Conservative government in 1995, claiming it was a cash cow.

Automated speed enforcement is permitted in Alberta under strict guidelines to establish consistency among all jurisdictions using automated speed enforcement to ensure it is not being used as a revenue generator, but to enforce speed limits and reduce traffic collisions.

Automated speed enforcement is also used extensively in Australia and European countries such as the United Kingdom, Sweden, France and the Netherlands.

Let's face it speeding is one of the most frequent complaints received by regional and local municipalities, as Aurora councillors well know, and remains one of the biggest factors contributing to motor vehicle collisions in the region.

Speeding in residential areas and school zones compromises the livability and safety of neighbourhoods.

It makes the outdoors hazardous to children, it increases background noise and it makes walking, bicycling and driving dangerous for all.

We have no idea how successful the police are in controlling speeds in neighbourhoods as council members never ask to see reports from York Regional Police as to the success of their Safe Streets, Nice Neighbourhoods in Aurora. Nor have they taken the time to appear before the Police Service Board to request the status of policing in Aurora.

Speeding is a police enforcement problem but instead of trying to get to the root of the problem, members of council are quite content to spend taxpayers' dollars for traffic calming, more stop signs where they don't belong and 40 km/hr signs on many streets in Aurora which are mainly ineffective.

In 2005, regional traffic engineers conducted a total of 98 speed studies and on average for all 98 studies, 62 per cent of vehicles exceeded the posted speed limit.

There was a high degree of non-compliance to the speed limit in the 40 km/hr speed zones at 94 per cent which should be of significant concern, especially for school children.

Studies reveal that in a 40 km/hr zone, a 10 km/hr increase in speed increases the risk of a pedestrian fatality by 100 per cent.

It is unlikely that any significant reduction in travel speeds can be attained with existing law enforcement resources using conventional enforcement methods.

Automated speed enforcement may be the only way to reduce travel speeds and increase safety.

It isn't possible to have a police officer on every street and automated speed enforcement would allow police to better deploy limited resources to respond to community demands and complaints.

It would also give police officers a safe, accurate way to enforce speed laws.

In 2003, Staff Sergeant Doug Hall of York Regional Police said photo radar was an invaluable tool that reduced speeding and saved lives.

Police departments across the province also supported the move to bring photo radar back, he said.

In August, 2004, Premier Dalton McGuinty indicated that the automated speed enforcement in Ontario could become a reality if municipalities and local politicians asked for it and, when they did, he closed the door.

Now is the time for local municipalities to start the ball rolling through the Association of Municipalities of Ontario for a march on Queen's Park to insist automated speed enforcement become a reality.

It's time we stopped wasting tax dollars for ineffective local traffic control measures.



Aurora Mayor Crawford Rose made the town's first long-distance telephone call, Sept. 12, 1953. Who'd he call? We don't need the name of the person on the other end of the line, simply tell us what town the mayor called. If you know, call our office at 905-727-3300 after noon, Friday, Oct. 12. First correct answer will get a free non-alcoholic dinner for two at Jonathan's Restaurant in Aurora. Enjoying this huge step in technology are, left to right, F.J. Picking from the Aurora Banner; Harry Seston, Mrs. E. Carson, telephone operator; Harry Mills of Bell Telephone, and C.E. Blodale, district Bell manager. All of them spoke to the person on the other end of the line...whoever it was. Thanks to Michael Seaman of the Town of Aurora for sending us this photograph. That means he can't enter the contest.

Letter to the Editor

Market open until end of October

To the editor,

Really appreciate the coverage you're giving the Farmers' Market recently.

That letter about the pie person not included in the Aurora contest took up close to a quarter page and would have been easier to handle if I were called to assess how important it was for her to attend.

Like anything it will be a learning experience to the vendor committee and this matter will be considered in the organizing of next year's event.

All special event activities and decisions are made by the Farmers' Market committee and in their defense they didn't want the event to be uncontrollable in circulation and decided that Aurora residents only was a pretty big place to start this contest.

They'll keep this information for consideration for next year's event allowing broader participation.

Too bad there was no mention of the \$202 that was raised through market patron donations for the Welcoming Arms Mission in Aurora (this is the Eccumenical churches of Aurora that support people in need), or the 50 plus children who participated in the creating of their own personal Apple & Honey Tarts sponsored by the Aurora Super Store.

There were also loads of free gift loot bags filled with goodies for the children along with the vendors giving away all sorts of free samples.

We had a record in attendance of well over 500 people from the community visiting the market.

We also had excellent volunteer support in traffic control from the 2nd Aurora Scout Group.

There was also a hilarious apple pie eating contest fea-

tured by David Heard at the market who runs his Anti-Bullying Program.

An Aurora youth winner was given a \$100 education bursary from this contest and exhibited great leadership skills! This event was a terrific crowd pleaser at the market.

We had eight key Apple Pie and Apple Crumble judges.

Mayor Phyllis Morris and other important community people such as Sharon Culver, the Aurora Chamber of Commerce President assisted here.

Councillor Bob McRoberts was also among the crowd of eager shoppers attending.

We had a good number of apple pie and crumble contestants registered with a lot of crowd interest shown especially for enjoying the tasty samplings afterwards!

Nigel Kean graciously helped also as a judge and was given special acknowledgement by David Heard as the original founder of the market along with myself as its new councillor supporter with the Town.

It's difficult to give you complete updates as a follow-up to key events but the grace of our market's success is based on the "You're in Good Company" theme which focuses on the positive image of the Town and the Farmers' Market values.

This is a key ingredient to the image building of the downtown area and it was a shame we had only one letter featured as the key element of the overall intent and not the latter points which were highlighted above as a more positive reflection of the day's events.

There was much fun generated from the many volunteers and patrons of the day that need to be stated!

In my effort to assist in the

continued success of the Farmers' Market and its 18 vendors, I would appreciate if you could clarify to the readers that the Farmers' Market is fully operating and open up to Saturday, Oct 27.

This is as per the current Town permit.

Last week's Auroran mentioned that it was finished this weekend which is incorrect.

Secondly, please note that Saturday Oct. 27 will be "Celebrate Halloween at the Aurora Farmers' Market as part of our customer appreciation".

Lots of prizes and activi-

ties will be featured by the Farmer Marketeers.

Good food, crafts and contest winnings for best costumes will happen this day.

I've spoken to many people at the market and they have a strong feeling that continued positive support for the market and its theme is key to its solid economic success as a contributor to the downtown community.

I appreciate all your great efforts continuing this here!

**Stephen Granger
Aurora**

THE AURORAN

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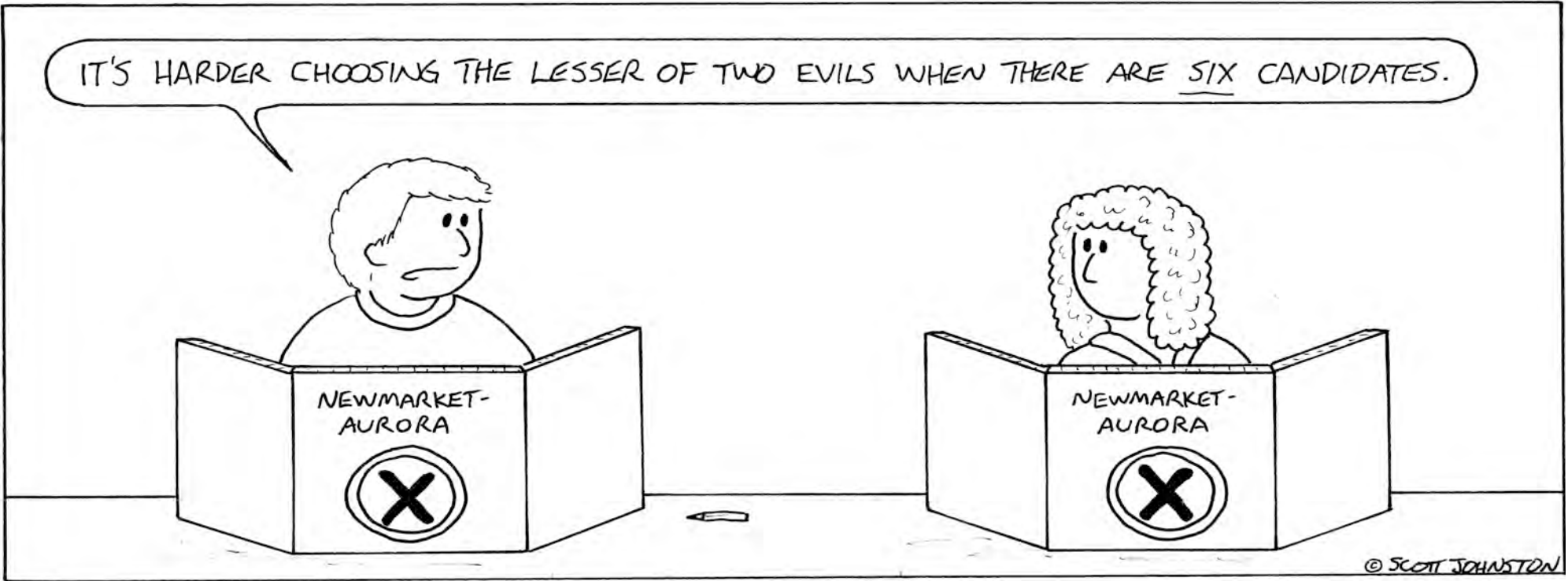
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Front Porch Perspective

By Stephen Somerville

This is the fifth in a series of short profiles on the members of the Aurora Town Council.

Councillor Alison Collins-Mrakas is a fitness fanatic who jogs at least three to four times per week in the summer and five to six times per week during the winter when she is not able to row.

As I also jog a bit, it was my intention to conduct the interview as we weaved our way through the town streets. That is, until I was driving my car this summer and saw Ms. Collins-Mrakas running, or should I say, sprinting up Orchard Heights Drive; then and there I felt it best to conduct the interview in a more conventional way.

First time I heard of Ms Collins-Mrakas was when her brochure appeared in my mailbox last summer.

She has a very interesting background. She is the manager of the Office of Research Ethics at York University where she is charged with the management of research ethics policy and procedures as they relate to research involving humans, animals and biological agents.

She has earned a Masters of Science degree from McMaster University and has just completed a Master of Laws (LLM) in Alternative Dispute Resolution at Osgoode Hall Law school.

Her graduation ceremony is slated for Oct. 21.

Like the other councillors, Ms Collins-Mrakas has a distinguished level of commitment to this community.

As her brochure states, "as a cancer survivor, I am particularly drawn to working with groups who assist others as they fight their cancer battle".

Her volunteer activities have included: Play Therapist for the Children at Ronald McDonald House, and Volunteer - Special Events for Gilda's Club, To Support Those Living with Cancer and Their Loved Ones.

She has also participated in the Terry Fox Run and the Gears 24 Hour Spin-A-Thon (For Cancer Research) and is a member of the Aurora Historical Society.

She has been married for four years to - and she wants me to emphasize this - "a wonderful man - Tom Mrakas".

"We have a crazy little Jack Russell terrier named Sport who thinks he's the king of the neighbourhood.

"I have been involved in competitive rowing, off and on for more than 18 years now and I absolutely love it. I also like long distance running, tennis, sailing and skiing.

"I have played the piano for 30 years, and have just recently taken up the cello. I have also been a supernumerary for the Canadian Opera Company.

"My favourite books are biographies and histories - in particular pertaining to explorers, historical fiction and late 19th and early 20th century English/American Authors.

"My favourite movies are Blade Runner, Chariots of Fire and Chitty Chitty Bang Bang.

"Of immediate concern to me, I must say, was and is the issue of graffiti and petty vandalism. Graffiti can have a direct impact on the quality of life in our community - it is a significant blight that needs to be eradicated.

"My first motion at Council pertained to graffiti. Council sup-

Meet Alison Collins-Mrakas

ported my motion for the creation of an ad hoc graffiti abatement committee, of which I am now the Chair, and we hope to bring forward for Council's consideration workable solutions to the issue of graffiti."

Have you enjoyed your term thus far?

"To be honest, I had no idea how much work it was and is! The first budget process was particularly arduous. The (term) has been indeed interesting and enjoyable thus far, though."

What do you think has been the Council's biggest accomplishments so far this term and what has made you frustrated?

"I think we as a Council should be pleased with our budget for 2007. We were presented with more than 12.4 per cent of an increase and after months of work and a literally line-by-line analysis of the budget we managed to get the levy down to just over four per cent.

"Our biggest challenge is the management of appropriate growth and its attendant issues - such as infrastructure development - in particular water and sewer infrastructure, traffic management and community services.

"Our biggest opportunity? I would say is the restoration of the Heritage Centre - we have the opportunity to have a magnificent restored heritage building and cultural facility right in the heart of our community that could serve a multitude of functions in our town."

Stephen can be contacted at:
stephengsomerville@yahoo.com



Cathy's Corner

By Cathy Vrancic

Okay, so I don't have a Blackberry.

In fact, I'm way behind. My new cell phone was not only obsolete when I ordered it - it was discontinued before it even arrived! And besides, it was forced on me - totally against my will!

My service provider sent me countless cards, letters, e-mails and called more often than my mother to advise me that the Cellular Stone Age, a.k.a. "analog" service would be discontinued at the end of May.

The information overload started politely in January, but by mid-May I sensed a growl in the undertone..."We're even offering you a free flippin' flip phone and whether you take it or not, we are flipping the switch!"

I felt threatened.

Hey, two years ago they offered me a free flip phone with all the latest and greatest bells and whistles, and I nearly went to pieces!

A week later (a humiliating week that featured the shame of not having a clue how to answer the darned thing every time it rang!), I gave the phone to my son and gratefully reclaimed my life, my sanity and...my old phone.

I wasn't going to risk that again.

I held on until a few days before "Analog Armageddon", fully prepared to give up the convenience of a cell phone to save my adrenals...and my reputation.

My son looked at the flip phone that was being offered and told me it was an obsolete piece of trash that didn't do much besides make phone calls.

Music to my ears...I jumped at the offer.

Tim was wrong.

The darned thing can connect to the internet so now I live in fear that it is posting transcripts of my conversations on its own

blog!

My old cell phone would never betray me thus! I LOVED my old relic! It was an awesome piece of out-dated technology even if it was roughly the size of a payphone!

It had a "send" button and an "end" button, and that was it for features.

It didn't take pictures or make movies, couldn't play music and it couldn't download anything - not even a text message, not even a word - never mind Hockey Night In Canada!

It had a selection of ring tones that all sounded like an electronic elephant in labour and as an added bonus, it was really, really ugly - embarrassing to use in public for most people, but I have high standards!

I loved it like I will never love again!

It was so simple to operate that I could talk to people out of my purse.

It kind of made me feel like "Agent 99" on "Get Smart" talking into his shoe.

Lots of times I had the urge to tuck it into my black high-heeled pump (I have big feet) and limp down the street, but then one day I shared my fantasy with my husband and that was end of that!

"Cathy, people know us in Aurora!"

"Yes, honey," I agreed, "but I am a humorous columnist! Surely people will know that I'm talking to my lawyer?"

The look on his face said "NO" in less than two letters and more than 60 exclamation marks, so I never did it. But I still dream about it...

How is that worse than walking down the street with an ear-piece so tiny that people make the cuckoo sign behind your back because you look like you are having an animated argument with...yourself?

Cell phone phobia

I don't know about you, but the idea of these state-of-the-art high-tech space-age microchips with blue tooth karaoke capabilities that take pictures at such impossible angles that one can no longer feel safe in a bathroom cubicle really scares me!

And really, how many times have you been stuck behind some crazy driver who has clearly relinquished control of his vehicle to some diabolical digital device and wondered if he is being attacked: "What is that thing stuck to his head?"

"It's a shoe...no, it's a gun...no, it's a cell phone! Oh, thank God! No wonder he can't drive!" We all roll our eyes like it makes sense now...

Really, isn't it just a wee bit disturbing that hearing voices has become the leading cause of driver dysfunction these days?

Why don't they have a breathalyzer for the wirelessly impaired? Maybe because they can't "see" the problem?

Darn it, we need to know where those voices are coming from - so show me the cell phone! Never mind that it looks like a cash register...

I like it that way! It's comforting...

Cell phone shrinkage is becoming a serious problem. My new one is so small that I often mistake it for a breath mint. Not only can I not make phone calls without bifocals anymore (heck, I can't even find the phone without bifocals anymore!), but my fingers are too big to push one button at a time. I am now buying sharp tooth-picks in bulk...

So I might reconsider about the Blackberry...in about 10 years...when somebody invents a super-duper multi-purpose wireless toothpick...that takes pictures...

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

 **BOUQUETS** to former Canadian and Commonwealth Welterweight Boxing Champion 46-year-old Donovan Boucher of Aurora who scored a unanimous decision over Montreal's Martin Desjardins in his return to the ring after an 11-year absence.

 **BRICKBATS** to whoever might be responsible for scheduling presentations of general interest at general committee meetings instead of council meetings when the TV cameras are present to provide the information to a much wider audience. Case in point is the recent presentation by the Holland River Unit of the Canadian Cancer Society of the 2007 Relay for Life in Aurora.

 **BOUQUETS** to Aurora's ultramarathoner George Biondic on completing nearly 191 kilometres in the Canadian 24-Hour Championship Race held in Ottawa and finishing 3rd overall. He was top Canadian male behind two Americans.

 **BRICKBATS** to Vaughan Council for going along with the request of former Mayor Michael Di Biase for a judicial recount of the close vote in which he was defeated by Linda Jackson after a recount by town staff. The bills are now in and the total cost of the recount was \$859,555 of which taxpayers are on the hook for \$601,514.

 **BOUQUETS** to Aurora's Marilyn Munslow on being elected President of the Aurora Probus Club, along with Vice President Bob Saunders, Treasurer Lorne Smith, Secretary June Sadgrove and Past President Michael Varcoe.

 **BRICKBATS** to Toronto Council for purchasing \$52 million worth of goods and services last year without calling tenders, while the city is struggling to balance its books and expects others to bail them out.

 **BOUQUETS** to Aurora's Doug Hotham on his 80th Birthday which he celebrated with his family and friends at the Graystones Restaurant recently.

 **BRICKBATS** to Toronto Councillor David Shiner for refusing to resign or take a leave of absence as he campaigns as a Tory candidate in the provincial election and to Conservative Leader John Tory for supporting his decision. You can't serve two masters! Shiner relented and finally took leave from council.

 **BOUQUETS** to Judge John Gomery for his strong warning that the law in Canada was becoming available only for the wealthy and the extremely poor, which he claims was due to the high cost of lawyers and long delays on court procedures.

 **BRICKBATS** to the Stephen Harper government for shortchanging the Canadian vets who suffered from Agent Orange at Gagetown by giving them about half of what Canadian vets received for suffering from Agent Orange in Vietnam, plus a disability pension. Why the big difference?

 **BOUQUETS** to famed Canadian writer Farley Mowat for his generous gift of 200 acres of his property on Cape Breton to the Nova Scotia Nature Trust in an effort to save some of Nova Scotia's coastline for the public. The property to be named Farley's Ark will be held in trust as protected conservation land.

 **BOUQUETS** to Aaron Nusbaum of Aurora with his teammate Joey Nuguid of Scarborough for capturing the boy's under 14 division provincial beach volleyball championship in August and then going on to win the national championship last month.

 **BRICKBATS** to the Dalton McGuinty aides in the election campaign for threatening a Hamilton TV station after an airing of a news segment over the Caledonia dispute caught the Premier off-guard and made him look weak.

 **BOUQUETS** to 27-year-old April Wales of Aurora on winning the Open Class World Jiu Jitsu Championship in the Channel Islands recently.

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Letters to the Editor

Aurora Community Garden badly needed for our town

To the editor,

When many of us think of gardening we think of our own back yard, however gardening in our neighbourhood and in public places; community gardening is a growing trend.

There are thousands of people in Ontario who are taking their love of plants into the community.

Nowhere is this more evident than in our own town at the Aurora Community Garden (ACG).

My 10-year-old daughter Isabel is a community gardener.

Under the guidance of the Aurora Horticultural Society she has successful-

ly grown a variety of veggies including tomatoes, cucumbers, leeks, Swiss chard, and peppers at the ACG.

She has made salsa, carrot soup for Thanksgiving, donated to the Aurora Food Bank and many friends have tasted her delicious cherry tomatoes.

But what Isabel has learned about the environment, gardening and community can't be measured by her harvest.

Community Garden Coordinator Catherine Cook's presentation to Aurora Council about the value of this land as a community garden was bang on. Gardening is renowned for

its health benefits, stress relief and exercise and community gardening has picked up not just on these aspects but also on the social benefits; social interaction that is needed for social cohesion.

Council must take all these factors into consideration and not just the value of the land when deciding what to do with the current location of the community garden.

Selling the land and moving the garden is not what is best for our Town; Aurora needs to keep the community garden at its present site!

Moving the garden will decimate the harvest, discourage the gardeners and

eliminate a beautiful public site that we all should be proud of.

At the ACG, young and old are getting outdoors, making new friends, learning skills; creating a beautiful environment and showing that gardening need not be a private affair, but a community affair.

Let's be proud of what the community has accomplished at the present site. Come on, Council, put community ahead of profit; sever the land, declare it a community garden; let's keep on growing together.

**Isabel and Elizabeth Brims
Aurora**

Here's why I don't watch council on cable television

To the editor,

Over the past nine or so months I really have not had the urgency to watch an Aurora Council meeting on Aurora Cable.

It seems that I get enough calls from people who have, telling me how disgraceful they are.

However, this week, I caught part of last week's meeting and I get the feeling that some councillors feel the same way.

It is easy to tell by the number of empty councillors' seats at the end of meeting.

Of course, the charge for the door starts with Councillor Evelyn Buck. But then again that is no different from last term.

During the meeting she continues to bestow her wisdom on the other members of council with her rambling stories of how things used to be done in the past.

Most of the time it has little or no relevance to what actual-

ly is on the agenda.

Then before the meeting ends she's up and out of there. Alison Collins-Mrakas was either not there or also left early. Then Grace Marsh leaves. In Grace's case, I do not blame her.

As the meeting is now running past 11.30 p.m. the mayor continues to ramble on by repeating everything that was just said, trying, as she says, just to clarify what was just told her by the staff.

To me, the mayor's job is to

facilitate the meeting and to keep the councillors and staff on track but not to take over the meeting as she did this night.

No wonder meetings with this council continue to run late.

I remember being told that the last council was dysfunctional.

Well, now there is a new definition of the word dysfunctional: this council.

**Nigel Kean
Aurora**

She monitored power failures

To the editor,

When I moved from Mississauga to Aurora in the summer of 2005, I was surprised at the large number of power outages in our area.

We live on Tyler Street, an older part of Aurora, and seemed to experience these power failures more often than friends in other parts of town.

As things didn't improve, I decided to keep track of the outages.

Between August 10 and September 30, we had 11

power failures, many of them short, but at least two of them of a three-hour duration.

This means an outage every four or five days.

In our household, power failures are a mere nuisance and inconvenience (having to reset the clocks and waking up late because the alarm didn't go off). However, on September 14, for example, businesses up and down Yonge Street from Wellington to Henderson had to close for three hours, the traffic lights were all out and it was

a general mess in our downtown area.

I am sending this letter to PowerStream and to the mayor's office in the hope of learning what causes this large number of power fail-

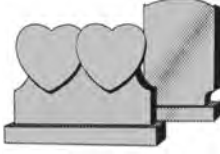
ures and, more importantly, what can and will be done in order to provide us with more reliable electricity service.

**Sylvie Hoyer
Aurora**

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I did not write the letter, she says

To the editor,

Re: "Perhaps councillor should have a look" by C. Sharp (Auroran, Letter to the Editor, Oct. 3)

As the only C. Sharp in the Aurora phone book, and

a long-time resident of Aurora, I've been asked if I am the author of the letter to the editor "Perhaps councillor should have a look" regarding the traffic-calming project. For the record, I did not write the letter. Unfortunately

Councillor Evelina MacEachern, she does not have a forum in which to respond to the letter writer and I certainly don't want to encourage her to start writing letters to the editor. I understand and welcome the need for neigh-

bourhood safety and preserving the heritage core of our town. Especially as such issues are positive factors in attracting new residents that want that so called 'small-town' feeling, and in encouraging businesses to move to our community where we

promote that you can "work, live and play".

While I do agree with the letter writer that the traffic-calming measures do not initially appear to address all the safety concerns, the lesson I've learned from this contentious issue is that I need to be more aware of council business and how my hard-earned tax dollars are being spent.

Had I attended public information meetings on this issue I would have been better informed and perhaps felt strongly enough to question the value of this project to the town as a whole.

Whether residents feel it was 'special interest' or 'squeaky wheel' politics that got this project approved and implemented, the bottom line

is the information was there for all residents to consider and I'll admit I wasn't paying enough attention to realize it wasn't going to be just a few chicanes, speed bumps and new signage.

Time will tell the success of this project, and residents have every right to ask questions of elected officials regarding any issue on how tax dollars are spent.

I continue to drive the streets of the north-east quadrant at every opportunity - even though it takes me a bit longer to get to where I'm going and I lament that those streets might have lost some of the charm that make them so "special" in the first place.

Carol Sharp
Aurora

Society president outlines Church St. School plans

To the editor,

Re: R.W. Hanes letter, The Auroran, Sept. 25

I would like to take this opportunity to provide some information to Mr. Hanes re the Heritage Centre at Church Street School.

In 2001, when the Aurora Historical Society began its mission to lease the entire Church Street School from the Town a plan was approved by the Board of Directors that envisaged a unique, expanded Aurora

Heritage Centre which would serve the community through an excitingly different concept.

This Centre would incorporate the former Aurora Museum, provide dedicated space for the document and photograph collection of the Historical Society but also allow for community use through meeting space, possibly a café, event space and hallways perfect for displaying art work and other exhibits.

Travelling exhibits were planned and activity rooms

for workshops and school visits were included in the design.

Our basic plans have never changed over the years and the architect firm of Lynch and Comisso, who drew up those plans, has been retained by the Town to ensure they are carried out.

The Historical Society always intended this building to be a Heritage Centre - and to be open to a variety of cultural activities.

All this information has been fully accessible through the Historical

Society's newsletter, The Attic, and through our annual report - both available to members of the public at our Hillary House office.

The Town is currently asking for applications to a newly-created Arts and Culture Committee.

One of the Terms of Reference for this committee is to act as a liaison with the Aurora Historical Society in regards to the Heritage Centre.

The Heritage Centre will restore and preserve one of the few remaining historic municipally owned buildings in Aurora and will ensure that it remains open to serve the community in an exciting new way.

Arts, Heritage and Culture are becoming more and more intertwined - a Centre, whatever its name, that strives to serve all these needs will fill a gaping hole in Aurora's community services.

Helen Roberts
President
Aurora Historical Society

Yonge and Wellington needs a “roundabout”

To the editor,

As requested by your recent writer to The Auroran, Dave Watson, here is another solution to Yonge and Wellington traffic.

His tunnel would surely be effective as I think mine might be as well.

Perhaps a little less expensive.

My suggestion is a large roundabout similar to that at Picadilly Circus in London, England.

It's the largest I have ever encountered during many visits to London, prior to our landing in Normandy, also

many times in the sixties and the seventies, and I noticed the traffic always seemed to move well.

My idea will, of course, require the destruction of at least four buildings, one at each corner, with two-lane circular traffic, and a nice garden in the centre.

Pedestrian traffic could be a problem.

In the meantime, it can be noted that many times while out driving - I live at Park Place Manor on Yonge Street, south of the new library - I have seen northbound traffic on Yonge be backed up to even my place while at the

time time there is much less traffic at the intersection on Wellington East and West.

The stoplight timing right now needs adjustments to remedy that situation.

Archie Milne
Aurora

ED. NOTE: As we pointed out to Mr. Watson, we have seen blueprint plans, as early as 1970, showing a subway station at Yonge and Wellington. While that surely won't happen in our lifetime, it's unlikely anyone would agree to tunnel through a subway station!

Tory showed us he is a leader

To the editor,

Re: Tory Changes Direction on Faith-based School Funding

Quintessential dogmatist, the late Jerry Falwell was fond of boasting "If the Bible says it, I believe it, and I'll never change what I believe."

Such is the definition of dogma, dogma that blinds.

In order to be an effective leader within our society, one must be able to listen and evolve one's theories, adapting as new information becomes available.

On Oct. 1, when John Tory elaborated on his Faith-based School Funding theory, more

clearly defining it, adding pixels to the picture, he was showing good, though potentially self-sacrificing leadership.

He avoided the iceberg of doctrinal absolutes and showed us that he is willing to listen, an act that is enlighten-

ing and flex, an act that can be strengthening.

The beauty of a good theory is that it can evolve.

Dogma can't.

Rick Strongitharm
Newmarket

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Suck it up, Evelyn, this reader suggests

To the editor,

I really can't believe the nerve of Evelyn Buck. I would like to know if, when she was a child back in the U.K., she was a spoiled brat or a bully. It seems that every time

she does not get her way she starts writing letters to the editor and arguing with everyone. I have never seen any other councillor writing letters to the editor to complain about the mayor, councillors and council

matters. I wonder how legal this practice of hers is. I also remember her writing to say that she was not going to do it any more. Well, that didn't last long. I would like to know how she gets away accusing the

mayor and the council majority of theft by stealing electricity. I also did not like the way she referred to my neighbour ("angry resident"). My neighbour went before the mayor and coun-

cil on behalf of the residents of Mosaics Avenue with a petition requesting the town's help with getting the lights turned back on. If Evelyn feels that the safety of the Mosaics residents means nothing and that we are not worth the \$210 a year for lighting maybe she can convince her neighbours to give up three of their street lights. This way it will not cost the town any more money. I would like to thank Councillor Evelina MacEachern for all of her help. I would also like to thank everyone else on council who voted to approve the lighting.

I really hope that when the next election comes around that Evelyn finally decides that she should not run. If she decides to run I really hope that she does not get in. When I have watched the council meetings on TV all she does is argue and get angry if she does not get her way. I wish she would grow up and suck it up. You can't always get your way. Just to let you know that if you do decide to run the four people in my house will not be voting for you.

T. Brown
Aurora

New referendum rules are "Orwellian", he says

To the editor,

Our democracy may die October 10, unless the public wakes up and realizes the scam that the McGuinty government is trying to pull with its referendum on so called electoral reform. More alarming are the draconian rules that the government has put in place concerning how the discus-

sion and debate of the proposed changes are to be conducted. Under the rules a private citizen has to register as a lobbyist with the government if he wishes to promote one side of this debate. In addition, there are many other rules, warnings and conditions to be followed or the private citizen will suffer the wrath of Elections

Ontario(www.yourbigdecision.ca). This is an Orwellian intimidation tactic that has no place in a democracy where the right to free speech is enshrined in the Charter. The proposed change to the electoral system would undermine the foundation of our democracy and result in 39 non-elected party drones serving at the feet of their

political masters, totally unaccountable to the public. In other words, Ontario is about to get a Senate. This regressive step creates a class of non-elected MPPs that bear a striking resemblance to the aristocratic tribes of feudal medieval Europe. Tribalism has no place in Ontario, and the government's attempt through intimidation to limit open and honest debate on this issue should be harshly criticized. While our soldiers are dying in Afghanistan to bring about democracy, the Premier of Ontario is conspiring to make a mockery of their sacrifice.

John Galt
Aurora

MMP system impacts politics for the better

To the editor,

As a big fan of the citizens assembly (CA) process, I can already see signs that a mixed member proportional (MMP) system could have a tremendous impact on Ontario politics for the better. For example, parties are already pledging to create the most attractive lists possible, through the most democratic methods available. I believe that this type of 'healthy competition' between parties is good for democracy. Here is what some of the party leaders are saying: PC Leader John Tory (National Post, Sept. 25): "The Conservative leader went on to say that if the referendum passes, his party will likely find a democratic way to develop its list of candidates: 'The history of our party is that the party insists on choosing its candidates democratically' ". NDP Leader Howard

Hampton (Ontario Today, CBC Radio, Sept. 26): "We believe we should nominate at-large candidates according to a very democratic process. We would want to ensure we have more women, more visible minority candidates, more First Nations candidates... a lot of people who make up the Ontario mosaic. Green Party Leader Frank de Jong (GPO press release, Sept.27): "Democracy extends to choosing candidates in a

transparent and equitable manner...We are committed to using a transparent and equitable process to produce a slate of qualified Green candidates who accurately reflect Ontario's diverse population." Still unsure about MMP or FPTP? Download the CA's final report from the internet, and check out some of the debates in the media.

Raymond Lorenz
Aurora

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Residents enjoying the public purse

To the editor,

This year we awarded a contract for \$991,000, give or take a dollar or two, for a new road on Knowles Crescent.

There are 51 homes on the street.

That's about \$20,000 added value per house.

We've been carrying out the renewal of infrastructure for a number of years now and paying for it out of general revenue.

Cost has balanced out across the community.

Before we started this program, we were reconstructing and replacing underground services in the old part of town and everybody shared in the cost for that program.

So, it has been fair and we have grown our assets.

Neighbourhoods built in the late fifties and sixties had semi-rural roads. Open ditches provided drainage and culverts under driveways. Road surfaces weren't much more than a sheet of asphalt thrown down like a table-cloth. Driveways were loose gravel. Only front yards were sodded.

Neighbourhoods have matured and the new roads really do add to real estate values.

Many of us look forward to our turn, having had the chance to see how fantastic the improvements have been.

It seemed that's how it was going to be on Knowles Crescent until the curbs were installed.

There was still a layer of gravel and asphalt to be added

but it looked like three or four driveways were so high and the road bed so low, that never the twain might meet.

Then the proverbial element hit the fan.

Nothing said could assure a few residents the matter was well in hand.

E-mails started flying, talk of legal action, a meeting with the mayor, a court reporter present and a transcript prepared.

Out of that came the hiring of a consultant to consult with residents and explain the process. It cost \$6,500.

To no avail.

The consultant did not have the authority to give what these few decided they had to have. More talk of legal action.

The contractor, with two weeks left to complete the job,

was ordered to stop.

Councillor Evelina MacEachern held a meeting with the disgruntled residents. Subsequently a delegation appeared at council with a list of complaints and demands.

On the spot, a much scribbled upon document from Councillor MacEachern was placed on the overhead and council, without ever having a document in hand indicating what they were approving, made yet another \$65,000 available to satisfy the demands of a few...however reasonable they may or may not be.

In addition, the delegate asked for a "go-to person" to be named and that it not be the Town's Director of Public Works.

The delegate asked for Councillor MacEachern.

It was a bonanza night for demands from the public purse.

Another resident staked her claim, in the name of her neighbours, to plan the landscape of Vandorf Sideroad.

Some \$6,000, not in the 2007 budget, will be spent immediately on bushes and vines. There is a further invoice for \$76,000 for the upcoming budget to fulfill that lady's wish list.

Last year, the town spent in excess of \$2 million realigning a creek and constructing a road with a sufficient base to carry the weight of heavy industrial traffic.

Vandorf is the designated route for truck traffic. It has been for 36 years. Residential streets in town are not designed for the purpose. Why would they be?

Now, I understand residents living south of Vandorf Sideroad have avowed their intent - the truck traffic will be removed.

As we have had an election since they first raised the issue, we have no way of knowing as of this moment who may have promised what to the residents.

No doubt all will be revealed in the fullness of time. Stay tuned.

Evelyn Buck
Aurora

Here's why I'm not supporting the Progressive Conservatives

Open letter to Frank Klees:

Yesterday, Oct. 3, I received a phone call from a canvasser for your party asking if I was prepared to vote Conservative on the upcoming election.

I answered her with succinct no. She responded saying "beg pardon?", and I repeated no, N.O.!

But before I could explain why, she said thank you and goodbye!

Well, Mr. Klees, I would like to explain to you and all Aurora/Newmarket voters why. There are three reasons:

1) I believe your party's platform on funding all faith based schools is WRONG!

2) I believe your leader John

Tory's "flip-flop" on a free vote in the legislature is a "sham" and WRONG again. Two WRONGS won't make a Right !

3) I am an ABC voter, ie. Any Body but Conservative. Why? These are my reasons:

a) I cannot forget the "crisis" your party under Premier Mike Harris created on the public education system of Ontario in the 1990's.

b) In addition to the "crisis" placed on the dismissal of nurses, civil servants, Walkerton, native unrest, protest at Queen's Park, down-loading to cities and towns, etc, all for the measly tax rebates.

These "crisis" created under the misnomer "Common Sense Revolution" set Ontario back 10 years.

Now just as we are about to recuperate from these "crisis" over the last four years, you and your party want to introduce another "crisis" over public education.

Mr. Klees, you were front and centre and involved with these policies as a member of the cabinet and party-whip.

There is one issue that I do agree with you, Mr. Klees.

That is on the referendum. My objection on the MMP system is not based on your lofty criteria of working with the list-

ed members to serve the constituents, but on the possibility of various fringe religious, environmental, fundamentalist parties and self-interest groups being an "anchor" to the democratic process of the Ontario legislature.

As for being decisive as you claimed on your advertisement, the referendum on MMP is not part of this election process, so let every voter be informed and let them decide what they want in the 2011 election.

My apologies to you and all voters of Aurora/Newmarket for my long letter. I do have some last questions for you, Mr. Klees.

Where do you stand on the faith based funding situation BEFORE a commission is appointed? Would you:

a) vote against it and therefore a commission is redundant and a waste of tax payers' money, OR

b) vote for or against the commission's findings depending on its recommendation, and thus be a fence sitter?

c) will you vote with your conscience and your constituents' wishes rather than toe the party line?

Ken Chong
Aurora

Clarifying the story

To the editor,

Thank you for recognizing the Purple Pig in your recent paper.

Please recognize that in 2004 we sold the business, and had no further responsibility in the operation of the store.

During the time our family operated the location, we made many great friends, and were committed to being a big part in the local community.

For 10 years we sponsored many sports, recreational and cultural events.

The demise of the store occurred through the new ownership.

I would like to clarify this for the record.

We are currently operating a new barbeque concept in Woodbridge called Memphis BBQ.

It is our hope to open a Memphis BBQ in the Aurora area in the near future.

Best wishes to you and all of our friends in Aurora and Newmarket area.

Lee Rombos
Aurora



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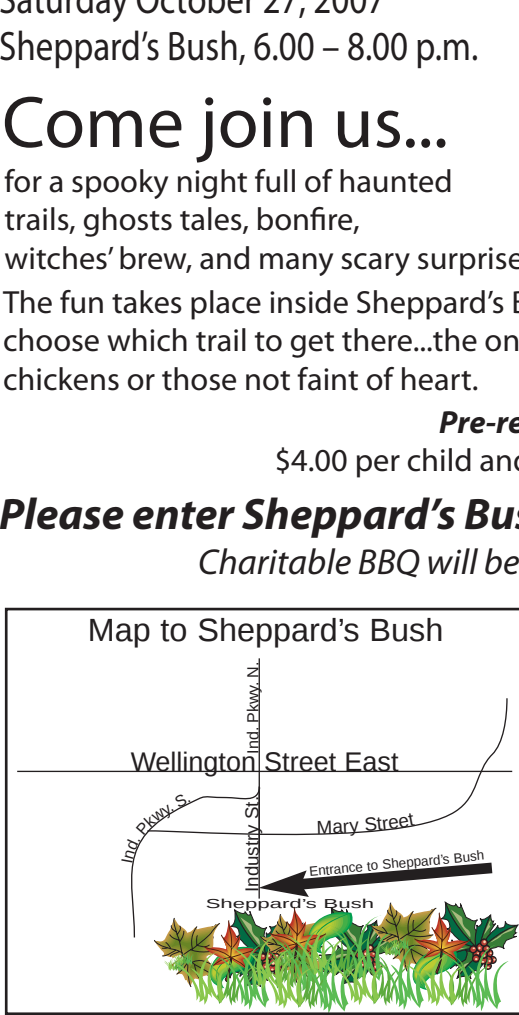
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Page 10

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Three members of the Aurora Special Ducks Swim Program are, left to right, Chrissy Babiak, Meredith Allan and Elaine Hurst.

Master Duck swimmers begin "Special" program

The Aurora Master Ducks Swim Club has always been active in the community and has been active in its efforts to support good causes, such as the Santa Claus Parade, Street Festival, Heart & Stroke Foundation, Big Brothers & Big Sisters of York.

Every year, team members would struggle looking for a new cause.

That's all come to an end.

Although the members of the club will continue to partake in Town activities, they chose one cause to which they would lend their financial and physical support.

In the fall of 2006, the Master Ducks formed the Aurora Special Ducks Swim Club.

Through its roster of adult swimmers (and with the assistance of a few younger Ducks from the age group team), this new club offered swim instruction and coaching to swimmers with an intellectual disability.

They weren't sure how it would work out because although they knew a lot about swimming they needed to know more about their athletes.

To prepare for this, 15 of the 20 volunteers took an NCCP (National Coaching Certification Program) Level 1 Special Olympics training program.

With some form of personalized training and a lot of enthusiasm, this group

led nine athletes through a fantastic first season.

They practiced every Friday night and competed in Barrie at the Regional Qualifiers.

They are currently waiting on word about two of the athletes who may have qualified for the Special Olympics Provincial Championships next summer.

In addition to the competitive aspect, the swimmers work on fitness and stroke improvement and the volunteers will actually assist with 'learn to swim'

elements.

This Friday, Oct. 12, they start year two and once again, almost 20 volunteers are ready to coach and teach these talented swimmers.

If you know of an athlete who would benefit from this type of training or might benefit from learning how to swim, contact nancy@masterducks.ca or call 905-726-3825.

To learn more about Special Olympics in Ontario, go to <http://www.osoinc.com>.

Tigers rolling, pick up two more victories

By John Klein

The Aurora Tigers Provincial Junior A hockey team broke out of their home-town jinx Friday night defeating the Stouffville Spirit 5-3, then the next night marched into Orangeville and handed the Crushers a 4-1 setback.

Aurora even gave Orangeville first crack at the scoreboard early in the first period but that was all as the winners needed only 40 minutes to secure the victory.

Friday, in front of fewer than 300 fans, Aurora's Mike Bodley scored two key goals and Sam Yearsley added two assists as the two players combined for the eventual game winner, allowing the Tigers to cruise to victory.

The win, their first on home ice this season, cou-

pled with Saturday's victory, put the Tigers ahead of the Spirit in the North Division standings.

The Spirit had stood in front of Aurora by just two points going into Friday night's tilt, despite having already being defeated by Aurora earlier in the season.

The early stages of the game were quickly defined by both teams with the man advantage, with all four of the opening goals coming

Please see page 11

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WINNERS

Panthers win Oshawa tourney

The Aurora Panthers Novice B girls' hockey team captured Oshawa's Fall Classic by defeating the Clarington Flames in a hard fought game recently.

The Panthers, led by Jasmine Grant's three goals, were able to hold off the Flames in a 6-2 win.

Aurora captured the title by going 3-0-1 in the tournament. Grant led the team with eight goals and two

assists over the four games.

Nicole Shaw contributed seven points, Hannah Daniels four, while Rose Falzone, Florence Awde and Nicole Stolys chipped in three points apiece.

The team also had some great defensive play, led by Julia Giannitsopoulos, while goalie Natalie Thompson posted two shutouts and a 0.75 Goals Against Average over the four games.

Defeat Stouffville, Orangeville

Tigers win two more in hockey action

From Page 10

on the powerplay.

Paul Dupont put the Tigers up early in the first period with a powerplay goal coming just one minute and six seconds into the opening frame.

Sam Yearley added a goal of his own only a few minutes after that, again while up a man, putting the Tigers up 2-0.

However, Stouffville wasn't ready to quit, and early in the second period had battled back to take a 3-2 lead.

Stouffville's Tyler Gubb started it off in the opening period, and Aurora took a slim one-goal lead into the dressing room.

Stouffville came out with purpose to begin the second period, potting two quick goals from Ethan Werek while on a man advantage, followed by a Randy Johnston even strength marker with less than five minutes expired on the clock.

Aurora responded soon afterwards courtesy of goals from Connor McGarry and Mike Bodley giving the Tigers a 4-3 advantage going into the second break.

The third period saw Bodley pot a well-deserved insurance marker, his hard work paying off as he elevated the Tigers to their first home win of the season.

Aurora's Matt Beirnes was awesome in net stopping 54 of 57 shots that came his way, as the veteran Tiger earned his second win of the young regular season.

In Orangeville Saturday night, Aurora allowed the hosts the first

goal at 2:37 of the opening frame when Orangeville scored on a powerplay.

After that, however, it was all Aurora as they fired four unanswered goals in the next 40 minutes of play.

The Crushers get an opportunity for revenge this Friday when they meet the Tigers at the Aurora Community Centre.

Game time is 7:30 p.m.

AURORA 5 STOUFFVILLE 3

First Period

A - Paul Dupont (unassisted) PP 1.06

A - Sam Yearsley (Cacciatore, Siekris) PP 2.44

S - Tyler Gubb (Archibald, Spivak) PP 17.19

Second Period

S - Ethan Werek (Sullivan, McIntosh) PP 3.15

S - Scott Johnstone (McDowell) 3.58

A - Connor McGarry (Watts) 9.27

A - Mike Bodley (Yearsley, Turcotte) 12.21

Third Period

A - Mike Bodley (Yearsley) 18.42

AURORA 4 ORANGEVILLE 1

First Period

O - Nicholas Hewko (Ezekeil) PP 2.37

A - Jeff Vanderlugt (Siekris, Yearsley) 6.00

Second Period

A - Mark Mayea (Sandella, Morley) 7.35

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Empty town buildings remain empty

From page 1
enough room for various activities.

Her presentation was received and referred to the report.

Director of Leisure Services Allan Downey provided a summary of the various buildings outlined in the report and submitted a series of recommendations for each building and the interrelationship between some of the buildings and future expansion needs to 2011 and beyond.

It was recommended that the Parks Division and the carpenter be relocated from Scanlon Court to the hydro building and Leisure Services Administration and file storage from the Town Hall also be relocated to the Hydro building with the second floor to be utilized by community groups.

This would permit Public Works to expand into the vacant space at Scanlon Court.

As previously approved by council the former library

and seniors' centre on Victoria Street would be upgraded and renovated for use by community groups.

He also recommended the fitness centre expansion be relocated to the Recreation Complex and the vacated fitness area be renovated to accommodate a Youth Centre multi-purpose room.

The rear parking lot at the Leisure Complex could be converted to a skateboard park and the Aurora Figure Skating Club could use the

vacant carpenter's shop at the Leisure Complex, he said.

It was also recommended that a Town Hall Expansion Reserve be established for the future expansion of the Town.

With comprehensive background material in the reports for each building and the proposed financing for the various proposed projects it was recommended that all identified items be included in the 2008 budget for council consideration.

In spite of all the information contained in the report, it was met with a wave of opposition with requests for more information and cost-benefit options such as selling the hydro property and purchasing other property for the Parks Division.

There was also opposition to renovating the Victoria St. buildings in the event they had to be demolished in the future to provide parking for the Heritage Centre and Library.

The major complaint was

there was too much information for one report and the need for a fitness centre was questioned as it was in competition to fitness centres in the private sector.

Finally, it was suggested the issues be broken down into three or four categories.

That suggestion was adapted into a motion which was approved by the committee and a date was set to discuss the future of the hydro building.

RUMOURS AND RAMBLINGS

It was a night to remember

Not every small municipality in Ontario has the honour of being selected to premiere a major government initiative, but that happened in Aurora in 1984.

Ontario Bicentennial Showcase, featuring Dinah Christie in a 90-minute family variety program, opened at the Aurora Community Centre July 3 that year as it started out on a 26-stop tour around the province.

The program was based on Ontario's 200 years of cultural development and featured some of Ontario's top entertainers, including Liliane Stilwell, Shirley Eikhard, Denis Simpson, Audrey Brownlow, Grant Cowan, Rene Highway, Donald Poliquin and the musical group Camo.

In addition to the entertainers, the \$1 million production included more than 1,700 colour slides projected on huge background screens coordinated with video scenes and live video playback of the performers and the audience.

The show opened with the entire company singing the lively Bicentennial theme song "Celebrate Ontario" with the program moving on to focus on the decades since the last century with themes such as Our Northland, The Seventies, the Classic Arts and Big Bands Entertain.

The second half of the production took the capacity audience back to Ontario's Beginnings and offered a challenge for the future in Watch Us Grow.

Prior to the performance Mayor Dick Illingworth, Members of Council and historians entertained Dinah Christie, Walter Pitman of the Ontario Arts Council, Arthur Gelbur, chairman of the Ontario Bicentennial, David Garrick, Major General Richard Rohmer and Bicentennial Committee members Steve Otto and Norm Best.

The Year 1974 was selected as the Bicentennial Year to mark the settlement of the United Empire Loyalists in Ontario, the first large scale wave of immigration to the province.

REMEMBERING PALS SLO-PITCH TOURNAMENT

In September, 1990, Pal's Restaurant, now Shoeless Joe's, supplied hot, spicy chicken wings for the first Pals' Co-Ed Slo-Pitch Baseball Tournament, organized by Buck McLarty.

The objective was to find the best slo-pitch team in Aurora and help the Aurora Food Pantry.

Each team must have a minimum of four female players with an entry fee of \$150 per team and with each team guaranteed three games

It was an opportunity to have fun and support a very worthy cause.

WAS A CITIZEN MEMBER EVER APPOINTED?

Last April the Joint Council Committee on Fire Service embarked on a review of the Central York Fire Service Master Plan by a committee consisting of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Joint Committee, the Fire Chief, a member of the Firefighters' Association, the CAOs of Newmarket and Aurora and two citizen members, one from each community.

Some council members objected to the suggestion that candidates for the Aurora citizen member be interviewed by members of the JCC.

Instead, councillors said, they should be interviewed by council which was the normal process.

Council finally did agree on the selection process to be used by the JCC.

Was a citizen member ever appointed and has the Master Plan been completed as neither has been reported to Aurora Council. What happened?

THE BIG BAND ERA

Back in 1940 during the height of the Big Band era, Glenn Miller made a hit out of the song Pennsylvania Six-Five Thousand and over the years people wondered if it was a real phone number.

It turned out to be the number for Hotel Pennsylvania, a 2,200 room tower built in 1919-20 and during the 1930s and 1940s it was home for some of the famous Big Bands.

Later it became a Ramada Hotel and if you phoned the number you heard the music Pennsylvania Six-Five Thousand playing in the background.

WHEN THE BIG PIPE OPENED

It was on June 28, 1984, when federal, provincial, regional and local government officials gathered in Newmarket to mark the completion of one of the world's largest public works projects, the York Durham Servicing System, better known as "the Big Pipe".

The 70-mile long network, designed to relieve the burden on rivers with limited capacities and the protection of Lake Simcoe, carried sewage from York and Durham Regions to a massive treatment plant on Duffin's Creek at Lake Ontario.

The system, started in 1975 and finished two years ahead of schedule, cost approximately \$280 million creating about 3,900 man-years of employment with another 8,000 man-years of employment in related goods and services.

Participating in the opening ceremonies were Environment Minister Andy Brandt, Municipal Affairs Minister Claude Bennett, Durham Regional Chairman Gary Herrema and York Regional Chairman Anthony Roman.

In his remarks, the Environment Minister said the event was the highlight of 20 years of effort by the Ontario government and municipalities to restore and enhance the quality of the water in the Humber, Don, Rouge and Holland Rivers and the clean-up of Lake Simcoe, one of the province's most valuable recreational waters.

WORDS CAN COME BACK TO HAUNT

In September, 1988, Aurora Council, of which Councillor Evelyn Buck was a member, rejected an application by Albie De Luca for a restaurant and complex on the northeast corner of the St. John's Sideroad and Yonge Street, where a lawyer's office is currently located.

She did not run for re-election in the 1988 municipal election and made an unsuccessful attempt to win the federal seat in York North as an NDP candidate. Failing this she became a planning consultant.

One of her first clients was Mr. De Luca and in January, 1990, she made an appeal to the Aurora Planning Advisory Committee to approve the application she had voted against as a member of council, claiming she was distracted at the time and was upset about the delays her client had faced.

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Stop signs to remain

By September, Aurora had received many complaints from residents regarding the existing two-way stop sign control at Temperance and Reuben Streets.

Currently the signs stop traffic on Temperance and residents want to flip the signs to Reuben Street, as it dead ends to the west.

A traffic study revealed traffic on Temperance is much higher than on Reuben and staff recommended to the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee that the stop signs be switched and that motorists be warned of the change one month in advance.

The staff report and recommendation were received at the last meeting of the TSAC. Three delegations appeared before the committee to express opposition to the recommendation.

Concern was expressed about pedestrian safety, parking, obstructed sight lines due to the hill on the roadway, speeding and a bypass to avoid the Yonge Wellington intersection.

After listening to the delegates, the committee rejected staff advice and recommended stop signs not be changed to which the general committee agreed without comment or discussion last week.

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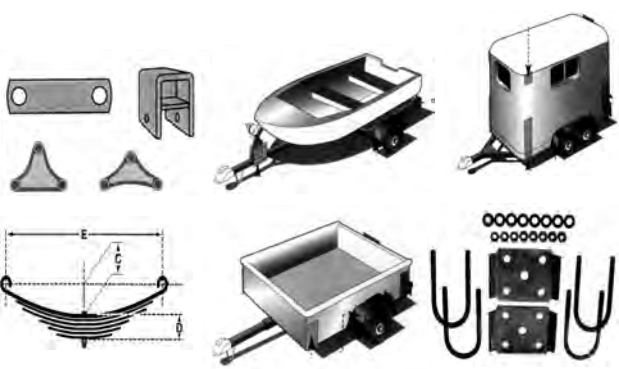


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Recent recipients of the Heritage Advisory Committee of Aurora's Sign Program for Historical Buildings include, from the left: Joseph and Marcella Lawless, 97 Wells Street (W. Lewis Stephens House, 1912); Dana Atkinson, 89 Wells Street (Walter Grice House, 1923); Robert Duncan McGregor and Carol Farrenkopf, 96 Wells Street (The Pugh House, 1915); and James and Margaret Herder, 88 Wells Street (The Roderick and Ethel Smith House, 1941), seated on the bench. A total of eight plaques were presented as part of program. Other properties included 26 Kennedy Street West, "John F. Kendall, Blacksmith, built 1881" owners are John and Barbara Wilson; 102 Temperance Street, "Philip L. Querrie, Blacksmith, built 1887" owner is Nancy French; 104 Temperance Street, "William Brown, Melter - The Fleury Works" owner Joanne Banfill; and 52 Spruce Street, "The Danbrook House, built 1880" owned by John Elisio. The Sign Program was established by the Heritage Advisory Committee of Aurora as a way of recognizing heritage buildings in Aurora that have significant architectural features and/or historical connections with the history of the community. The program is intended to promote pride and awareness by identifying examples of Aurora's unique historical and/or architectural properties. All owners of historical properties in Aurora are encouraged to apply for the program. Plaques are provided free of charge and applications are available at the Town of Aurora Planning Department by contacting Michael Seaman, Community Planner 905-727-3123, ext. 4351.

Business group issues challenge to raise funds

Three Aurora business leaders have issued a challenge to others to raise funds to support the "Room to Read" Charity.

The small group hopes to assist in raising the largest single-event amount for "Room To Read" (www.roomtoread.org), one of the world's fastest growing non-profit organizations which builds schools in developing countries.

Hong Kong currently holds the record of raising the largest single event amount - half a million dollars.

Involved in the challenge so far from Aurora are three business leaders who have committed to fund the building of a computer lab and a library complete with books.

They are John Towsley of B Wyze Solutions; Val Fleck of Whitewave Food Company; and Jill Donahue, president and founder of Excellerate.

"We are so lucky to live in a fabulous community such as Aurora, said Fleck. "It would be wonderful for the business leaders to pull together for this common cause and create a long lasting legacy that will impact thousands of children who, without us, would not receive an education."

They group's challenge goes out to the business community to join them to construct an entire school.

"Getting involved in this program is a no-brainer," added Donahue. "This charity is awesome - they have won numerous distinguished social entrepreneurship awards."

Individual contributions are typically packaged and go to the direct construction of a

library, a school, or a computer lab. Additionally, the facility provides a legacy for the contributor with their name appearing on a plaque.

"What we would like our fellow business leaders to recognize is that for a small tax deductible contribution, they will create a lasting legacy for their company, their employees and their family," said Townsley. "Most importantly their lump sum donation will educate thousands of kids in the coming years."

The group involved in the Canadian effort recognizes the personal, and business benefits of aligning themselves with the non-profit brand in Room to Read.

The Canadian Challenge is

to raise \$510,000 by Oct. 19 to beat Hong Kong.

Specifically their goal is to raise at least \$380,000 by October 19.

That amount will allow them to take advantage of an offer of "matching dollars" by a local Canadian entrepreneur, Tim Nye.

He is the Chairman of Geosign, already a significant donor to "Room to Read".

He has agreed to match every dollar raised Oct. 19 over \$250,000 up to an additional \$130,000.

That means if the group can raise \$380,000 and maximize Tim's matching dollar offer, they will raise a total of \$510,000.

"Room to Read" is a chari-

table organization that partners with local communities throughout the developing world to establish schools, libraries, and other educational facilities. John Wood, Founder and CEO, launched Room to Read after a trek through Nepal.

He quit his executive position with Microsoft and built a global team to work with rural villages to build sustainable solutions to their educational challenges. His book is "Leaving Microsoft To Change The World".

Since its inception in 2000 it has built more than 5,000 libraries and 300 schools.

For further information call Jill Donahue at 905-841-1137.

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Playing to a standing-room only audience, members of Opera York presented a one-hour version of the Barber of Seville at the Aurora Seniors' Centre last week. Participating in the event were, front row, Lydia Schuster, who suggested and initiated the performance, and Philip Trow, co-founder of Opera York. In the back row are, left to right, Charles Sequeira, president of the Aurora Seniors Association, and opera players, Rory McGlyn as Count Almaviva, Jennifer Elisabetta Fina as Rosina; Dion Mazerolle as Figaro and Geoffrey Butler who was the narrator.

Auroran photo by David Falconer



Senior Scope

By BRIAN WARBURTON

The Aurora Seniors Association (ASA) took a giant step forward in membership after a fabulously successful open house and membership drive.

On behalf of everybody, I welcome all new members to the ASA.

A wonderful change of pace for the ASA was the comic opera, the "Barber of Seville", which played to a full house of seniors and local dignitaries last week. The audience enjoyed every part of the proceedings and this is the marvelous kind of event and musical programming that seniors enjoy and we should do more of it!

I would comment also that the organization of the event and presentation by the seniors was efficient and ran smoothly from the start of the opera, right through to the refreshments and general socializing after the finale, which provided opportunity for local politicians and seniors to exchange some thoughts.

Earlier, I had a pleasant conversation with Mike Varcoe who is one of the leading members of the wood working shop, and later with Tony Schuster and both are happy with the progress of the wood working shop and the flow of members returning after the summer holidays.

The wood shop opened at the end of July after a long delay, just as members were starting their summer holidays.

For practical purposes, the quiet holiday period allowed small but necessary operating adjustments to be made with minimum inconvenience to anybody.

Mike informs me he is in process of ensuring the shop

runs as designed, with two people present at all times including one who has undergone wood shop training.

The wood shop will be open daily, and members should book times at the reception desk to avoid disappointment.

The wood shop is, without question, an excellent place to fabricate small to medium articles in wood, and get excellent advice if required.

It is available to all members of the ASA including women, many of whom have a penchant for wood carving.

The horseshoe tossing equipment has arrived and may be obtained at the reception desk.

The proposed playing times are, Wednesday and Friday afternoons between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m.

Perhaps this is the time to join the crafts group and make

Seniors' open house increases members

some of the costumes, crafts or gifts that you will need at this busy time of the year.

The crafts group meets every Monday morning at 10 a.m., so why not stop by and discuss what interests you have with Rozlin, Doreen or Grace.

They will be happy to show you what they do and how you can fit into the group.

To all new members with an interest in computing, the computer club meets every Tuesday morning at 10 a.m.

This is an excellent time to meet other members and to bring your computer related questions.

Everybody in turn has an opportunity to ask a question, and anybody in attendance who has the answer may help you.

Anybody who missed the open house but would like to

become a member is invited to come on over and we will sign you up.

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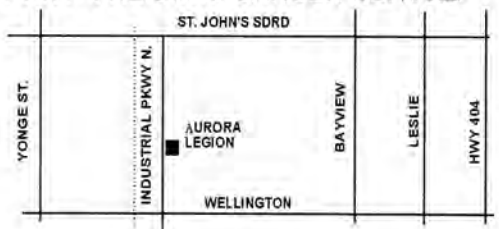
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Who will you trust to represent you as your MPP for Newmarket and Aurora?

You know who I am and what I stand for. I have always taken a clear stand on the issues and have always been accessible, accountable and responsive to my constituents. With the support of a dedicated staff, I've had the privilege to make a difference in the quality of life for many in our community.

Whether by intervening on behalf of a child with special needs such as autism, helping a cancer patient receive timely care or ensuring an aging parent is accommodated in the comfort of a long term care home.



I'm proud of my role in securing approval for Southlake's Regional Cardiac program and I will work to ensure support for the future vision of our hospital including the new Cancer Care Centre.

My track record as a legislator is well-known. I championed the Oak Ridges Moraine legislation which now protects more than 470,000 acres of land from future development and my support for York Region's transit plans is a matter of record. And many of my constituents are aware of my initiatives to eliminate street racing and to bring public awareness to the importance of organ donation.

On October 10th, I ask you to consider the importance of principled and experienced leadership when casting your vote.

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