

COMING EVENTS

THURSDAY, JANUARY 27

Aurora Seniors' Centre presents a day at a casino and bingo hall. Participants will get a \$10 slot voucher which can be used at Georgian Downs and a \$15 bingo play package to be used at the Boardwalk Gaming Centre in Barrie. Free lunch is also provided at the bingo centre. Cost for the day is \$20. For further information to sign up, visit the reception centre at the seniors' building or contact Michelle Stermer at 905-727-3123, extension 3611 or via e-mail at mstermer@e-aurora.ca.

Newmarket-Aurora MP Lois Brown holds a Pre-Budget Consultation meeting to hear your suggestions for the upcoming federal budget today at the Aurora Municipal Offices, 1 Municipal Drive in Aurora, at 7.30 p.m. All are welcome but presenters need to register ahead of time at 905-953-7515 or Brown.L@parl.gc.ca.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 28

Opening night at Theatre Aurora for "A Streetcar Named Desire" the classical play by Tennessee Williams, set in New Orleans, which has challenged and entertained audiences through the years with unforgettable characters Blanche du Bois, Stella and Stanley Kowalski. Produced by Special Arrangement with Dramatists Play Service. Play continues January 29, February 3, 4, 5, 6 (matinee), 9, 10, 11 and 12.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 30

Back by popular demand at the Aurora Cultural Centre, formerly the Church Street School. Paul Neufeld's Sunday Sessions – A World Of Musical Friends. Special guest is roots and blues musician Paul Reddick. Tickets are \$15 in advance at the Aurora Cultural Centre, or at the door. Show begins at 2 p.m. Call 905-713-1818 for further information or info@auroraculturalcentre.ca.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11

Today is the Aurora Chamber of Commerce Ski Day 11 at Osler Bluff Ski Club near Collingwood. Tickets are \$115 and the cost includes bus transportation, lift ticket, lunch and après ski.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16

The Aurora Cultural Centre, formerly the Church Street School, presents the second in a three-lecture series "Our Aurora Heritage: Taking a Closer Look", an informative series of evening chats by local historian Jacqueline Stuart. Tonight's feature: A Virtual Mystery Tour of Aurora. Can you identify these easily-passed-by spots? Where was this camera shot taken from? How well do you know your town? Complimentary admission and light refreshments, no registration required; starts at 7 p.m. Wheelchair accessible at north entrance. For information please call 905-713-1818 or info@auroraculturalcentre.ca.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 20

Are you ready for some heat? Warm up with classical guitar music performed by Robert Carullo. Tracie and Daniel will dance the Tango, Rhumba and Salsa in full costume and singer/actor Brent Titcomb will be fea-

tured in Bessada and Arbic's original short play, How Raven Stole the Sun. this is a fundraiser for the Yellow Brick House Second Shelter, Second Chances Capital Campaign. Tickets for the show at the Aurora Cultural Centre are available online at www.pandorasboxsalon.com or by calling 289-221-0229. They are \$35 adult; \$25 student/senior; or \$95 for a family of four.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 21

The annual Arctic Adventure takes place in the Town Park today and is an opportunity to bundle up and take in some great outdoor activities such as dog sled rides, snow shoeing, skating, live entertainment, professional ice carving, fire-eating demonstration, chili cook-off and "snow" much more. The event begins at 10 a.m. and continues until 4 p.m. For further information, check the Town Website at e-aurora.ca/arcticadventure.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 24

The Aurora Chamber of Commerce hosts the Mayor's Luncheon today. Aurora Mayor Geoffrey Dawe will be the keynote speaker and will talk about the Town's development of a new strategic plan and what that will mean for businesses in Aurora. The luncheon, sponsored by the Character Community Foundation of York Region, is being held at the Tuscany Event Centre, 222 Edward St., Aurora. Networking starts at 11.30 a.m., followed by lunch. Cost is \$40 for Chamber members and \$50 for guests – all are welcome but you must pre-register. Showcase tables are also available for \$30 at this event.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Bowl For Kids Sake, presented by the Big Brothers Big Sisters of York, will hold its Aurora Community Day today from 1 to 5.30 p.m. at the Gateway Café and Lanes. Call Mary Lynn Stephenson at 905-726-2149, extension 305 to book a lane for your team.

Explore different colours, textures and designs in glass with Daniela Weston while you create your own unique stained glass sun catcher at the Aurora Public Library. Event costs \$15 which includes all materials and is open for youngsters ages 9 to 14. Event lasts two hours and begins at 1.30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23

Retired York Regional Police Chief Armand La Barge will be honoured by the Community Living Newmarket/Aurora District at its ninth annual Community Tribute Dinner tonight. The event will be held at The Manor, Carrying Place Golf & Country Club, 16750 Weston Road in Kettleby. The dinner is the major fundraising event of the year for Community Living and all proceeds will go to support people who have an intellectual disability. Tickets are \$125 each (\$1,000 for a table of eight) and can be purchased online through the Community Living website at www.clnad.com or by calling 905-898-3000, ext. 258.

THURSDAY, MARCH 24

Embarrassed by your bare wrists? Get beading! Show off your sense of style with a unique beaded backpack pin and a fashion-

able suede bracelet made at the Aurora Public Library from 6.30 to 8 p.m. This program is for youngsters aged 9 to 14 and costs \$8 which includes all materials.

SATURDAY, MAY 14

"I Love Rock & Roll" dinner dance takes place this evening at DiNardo's Mansion on Industrial Parkway South beginning at 6 p.m.

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Don't miss Aurora's Borealis!

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Dorothy Clark McClure took time out from her art show, which opened Saturday at the Aurora Cultural Centre, to pose beside her painting of the Red House Studio, where she lived for many years. Currently, the building is a restaurant, off Yonge Street, south of the St. John's Sideroad. Dorothy's art show continues at the Cultural Centre until March 26.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

Buck opposes lengthy meeting

It was hard to ignore the frustration among council members last week as the January 18 General Committee meeting went up to the six-hour mark, if time spent in closed session is factored in.

As it was, the public part of the agenda started off with 19 delegates on subjects ranging from the A & B Courier Run for Southlake, the Town of Aurora's tree permit process, the Region of York's changes to the Town's 2C Secondary Plan, as well as delegations from the Ratepayers of Aurora Yonge South (RAYS), and further delegates on behalf of the Aurora Selkies swim team, voicing their concerns over the Town's existing pool allocation policies.

Although two delegates cancelled their appearance, and one was deferred to this week, it was nearly 10 p.m. before councillors got to the first item of the agenda, following the presentations of each delegate, staff members, and some procedural debate.

Due to time constraints, a number of items on last Tuesday's agenda were deferred to the following General Committee Meeting on February 1.

Frustration could also be seen in the public gallery, including from one member who sat in the audience for four hours and 45 minutes, portfolio in hand, to see what general committee had to say about a particular site plan approval application.

The item was pulled for separate discussion from the agenda by Councillor Wendy Gaertner.

When the item finally came up for discussion, Councillor Gaertner realized she pulled the item by mistake and moved the motion as is.

The gentleman in the audience could do nothing more but let out an audible groan as he held his head in his hands before leaving the chamber.

Before councillors - excluding Michael Thompson who did not attend the meeting - went into closed session around 11.45 p.m. to discuss former mayor Phyllis Morris' lawsuit against three local bloggers, as well as land acquisition, Councillor Buck expressed her frustration with how the evening had panned out.

"We had...a very heavy agenda, a number of very significant items to deal with tonight," she said. "We didn't do it because we were short a member. We wasted a lot of time because we had tie votes. But for more than two hours we spent time listening to people with special interests delegating and we had [Susan Walmer, representing RAYS] say, after she was refused a replacement for the delegate who didn't show up, 'Well, I'll come back next week!'"

"Is there a way we can get on with the Town's business at the next meeting because we will surely have more people than we had tonight? We have all this stuff left over to do in a council meeting than in the less formal process of general committee because of the time we spent listening to the same stuff over and over and over again because of their persistence they've got 15 minutes."

"Two people standing there so [David LeClair, on behalf of the Selkies] could claim 15 minutes," she continued. "Are we going to let ourselves be used like that?"

Councillor John Abel, who was in the chair for the General Committee meeting said he

thought everyone would be in favour of four delegates for this week.

Town Clerk John Leach, however, pointed out that everything was within the Town's procedural bylaw.

"At this point, unfortunately, council's procedural bylaw provides for delegations at committee and delegations at council if they are submitted in timeframes set out by the bylaw until such time as that bylaw is amended to have other provisions in it," he said. "That is the nature of the beast."

"I don't like that beast," Councillor Buck said in reply.

"I think more than that, democracy allows the public to speak their mind," countered Councillor John Gallo.

That did not sit well with Councillor Buck.

"Council is supposed to carry out the Town's business," she replied. "It is a privilege to come to council and delegate. It is not a right, it is a privilege! Anybody [aside from elected councillors] asks for the privilege and most people who are aware of that will thank us for giving them that privilege. It is a privilege, it is not a right!"

Discussion over Tuesday night's proceedings continued through the week, including one tweet that showed up on Councillor Chris Ballard's Twitter feed.

"Is it a 'right' or a 'privilege' to delegate to Town Council?" he tweeted. "At least one councillor wants to curtail delegations. Dark days for democracy."

Policy still irks neighbours

Aurora could receive suggestions on revising its tree cutting policy related to golf courses, after council requested a staff report on issues raised by two citizens concerned over planned tree cutting at Beacon Hall Golf Course.

Residents Jan Oudenes and Isobel Ralston made their second appearance before council at last Tuesday's general committee meeting expressing their frustrations over the planned cutting at Beacon Hall.

Renewing arguments made before the previous council in November against excluding golf courses from the Town's existing tree cutting bylaw, Mr. Oudenes said the exception was "inappropriate". "Our request is really to refer the matter back to staff to review the tree bylaw and for council to come out with an overall plan instead of a recommendation for consideration by this council," Mr. Oudenes said. "Personally we would like to have Aurora Bylaw strengthen and remove the exclusion for golf courses, which is fairly unique for this area."

Aurora residents since 1983, they said they have seen "consistent tree cutting and encroachment" onto their property from the neighbouring golf course.

"It really is a very different golf course, at least in the area where we are living than it was 20 years ago," he said. "We have seen a number of significant tree cuttings over the last 15 years and much to our surprise another round is planned."

The residents met with representatives from Beacon Hall, the Town of Aurora, and the Region of York over plans at the golf course last month, meetings which, at the time, Mr. Oudenes called "productive and informative".

The golf course plans on removing trees on the course to improve sunlight on the greens and undertake compensation planting in the area, according to Beacon Hall CEO David Main.

York Region has previously expressed satisfaction with Beacon Hall's plans.

Following Mr. Oudenes' comments, Councillor Wendy Gaertner moved to receive his comments and refer them to staff, noting it would be a good idea to look at Aurora's tree bylaws and list the pros and cons of excluding golf courses from the policy.

Councillor Evelyn Buck

also requested more detail in a staff report.

"We need to know what information was provided to council when the tree bylaw was passed," she said. "All of that history needs to come

back to us so we know why we passed the bylaw like that and there are reasons why we excluded golf courses and if, in fact, we have the authority to include golf courses within our municipal bylaw."



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Letters to the Editor

Aurora benefits from her show

To Alison Collins-Mrakas, all the best.
Aurora will only benefit from you and the show.
Just wanted to say I enjoyed your first Our Town show.
Good for you and I wish you

Brian Duff
Aurora

Reader enjoyed Robbie Burns night

To the editor,
Extraordinary!!
There is no other word that quite describes the 17th Annual Robbie Burns Dinner on Saturday at the Aurora Legion.
For those who were among the fortunate 250 attendees, I am sure that you would agree that the organizers (White Heather Pipes & Drums and RCL Branch 385) outdid themselves.
As I have stated before “I am not easily impressed” but as a true Scotswoman I can say, in all honesty, “I got my money’s worth and more” which is about the highest complement you can get from a Scot.

From the “Pipe in the Haggis and Ode to the Haggis” brilliantly performed, without notes, from memory by Bob Dunsmore – totally impressed – to the dancing band “Hadrian’s Wall” with their toe taping, reeling, gay Gordon invoking renditions, I was captivated.
The dinner, although not totally authentic, was as usual, at the Legion, most delicious.
I personally do not care for haggis and was glad that it was not the main course but I noticed that Nigel was “Kean” on it – second helpings, Eck!
The traditional Robbie Burns supper consists of the Tributes to Burns, Piping in of the Haggis, Toast to the Lassie and a Reply.
There was much laughter, a few tears, lots of drink – I enjoyed a few drams of Scotch myself – only to show my respect, of course.



Bob Dunsmore, above, gives his annual “Ode to the Haggis” Saturday night at the Aurora Legion.
Auroran photo by Ron Wallace



Okay, so where in Aurora was this house? Originally lived in by Colin “Pop” Nisbet and his wife Beatrice, it was known as Stonecroft. It doesn’t exist anymore, but does anyone, outside the Nisbet family, of course, remember where it was? If you know and you can tell us correctly, call 905-727-3300 after noon on Friday, January 28. The first correct answer will receive a free lunch for two, courtesy of the Aurora Legion.

Letters to the Editor

Citizens of Aurora want leadership, not posturing

To the editor,
The citizens of Aurora clearly indicated in the last election campaign that we want far more leadership and forward thinking, and far less political posturing.
It is very difficult to understand the shortsightedness and pettiness of the actions of two of our councillors, Wendy Gaertner and Chris Ballard, to decline attendance at the recent two-day offsite planning and team building session for Aurora Town Council.
I work as part of a global leadership development practice and I can tell you

She’s upset councillors did not attend meeting

To the editor,
Here we go again.
After reading the article in The Auroran dated January 18 where Wendy Gaertner and Chris Ballard did not attend the team building council meeting I am totally frustrated.
For the last four years this town has dealt with and paid salaries for dysfunctional council members, am I to understand we are continuing this practice?
What better way to get acquainted with and learn to work with your co-workers and especially when one of the non-attendees is a NEW council member, although in saying that I’m sure that Ms Gaertner could use some skills herself.
Still find it hard to believe she was voted in.
I am totally perplexed with this.
Is this how Councillor’s Gaertner and Ballard are going to conduct themselves because if so please do this town a favour and step down and we

that strong leadership often means doing the right thing even though it’s not the easy thing.
It’s easy for Ballard and Gaertner to just bow out and stand on the sidelines pretending to be protecting taxpayers’ monies, but this kind of session is used by high-performance organizations worldwide and is a very effective and efficient use of taxpayer dollars.
I appreciate my elected officials giving up two days of their business and personal time and use some of my tax dollars to create a strong and united vision for the future of my community and figure out

how to work together for the good of all the citizens of Aurora.
I was not in attendance, but I know firsthand that this type of session requires a lot of focus, energy, and commitment to ensure that all the perspectives of elected officials are heard, understood and considered before the agenda and direction for this council begins to move forward.
This cannot be done effectively at an evening council meeting which must focus on the management of important ongoing issues.
Getting “off-site” to listen and understand each other also prevents the kind of farce and lack of strong leadership we had to endure in the last council.
How many more tax dollars were poorly spent because there was no shared vision, a lack of understanding of different councillor perspectives and no resolve to bring forward consensus and high-performance teamwork?
And on the issue of using the Kingbridge centre in neighbouring King Township, this is a world-class meeting and conference centre which I have used many times because it is known for providing the right support so participants stay energized and focused on the work at hand.
It’s a shame we don’t have this kind of facility in Aurora, but maybe that can be part of the vision this council can develop for the benefit of all taxpayers going forward.
An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Robert Seguin
Aurora

THE AURORAN

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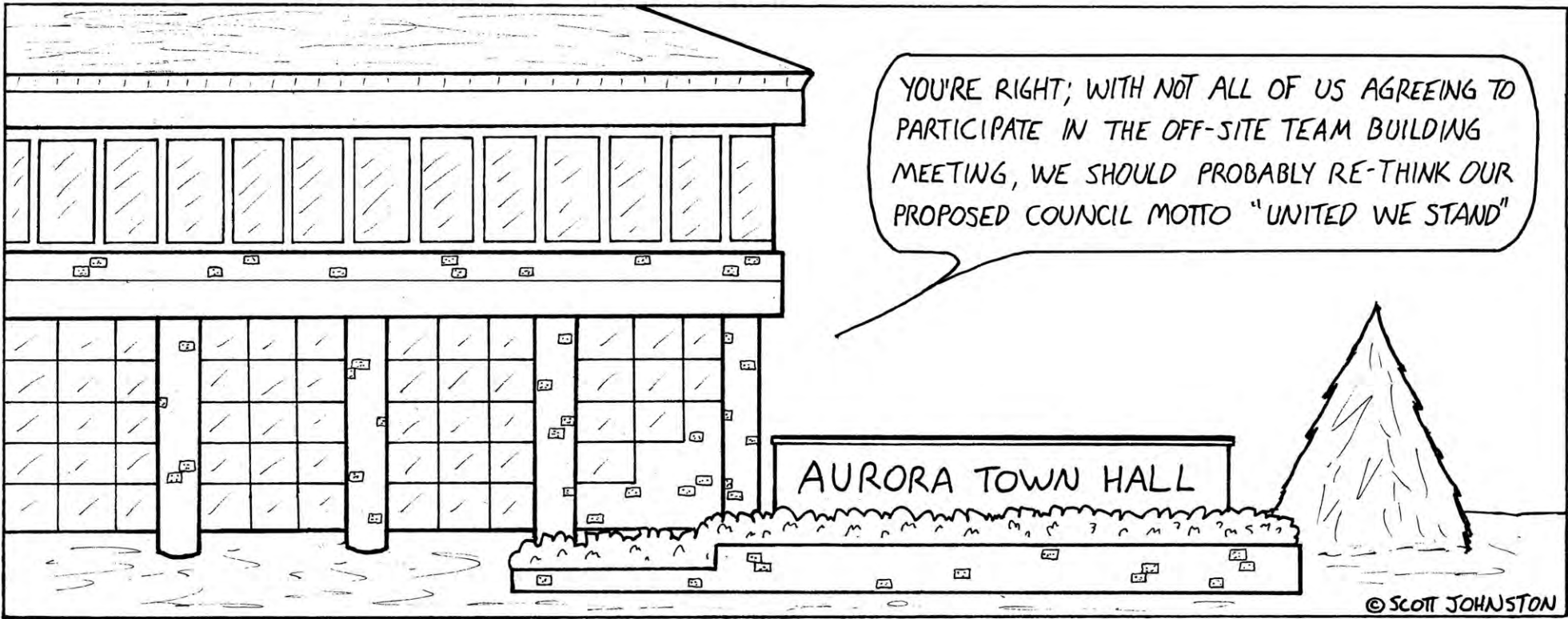
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Frankly Speaking

By Frank Klees

What really goes on at Queen's Park behind the scenes? Over the next few weeks, I will be giving you a glimpse into how things get done - or not - at Queen's Park. In this first Behind the Scenes column, I'll take you through the conception, development and legislative process of the Private Member's Bill.

"I meant what I said earlier today. Thanks for your initiative on street racing. You helped bring about positive change."

Those words were written on a yellow notepad, standard issue in MPPs' desks in the legislative chamber, and delivered to me by a Page. It was signed.... Dalton.

I keep that note under the transparent overlay on my home office desk for reasons you will more fully understand after reading this column.

Earlier that day, the Premier and his Attorney General had presided at a media event at the Safety Village in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

The purpose of the event was to announce the passing of the government's new Street Racing Bill. It would empower officers to issue on-the-spot licence suspensions and roadside vehicle impoundment if they had reason to believe that the driver was engaged in street racing.

A RARE NON-PARTISAN MOMENT

I made it a point to attend the announcement that morning, because I had tabled a Private Member's Bill months before, that called for these very same measures.

Although the government refused to pass my bill, they had incorporated my legislation into the government bill that was being announced.

I was there to show my support for the legislation, but I had mixed feelings - knowing that for months, the government had scuttled my attempts to have these same measures implemented.

Then came that rare moment.

Following the Premier's summary of the new legislation to enthusiastic applause of representatives of police, fire and EMS services from across the GTA, the Premier said, "I want to acknowledge the contribution of my colleague Frank Klees for his initiative and for the leadership he has shown on this issue over the past number of months".

Later that day, as we sat in Question Period, the Premier wrote that note which underscored his sincerity and reassured me that a measure of civility does exist in that place.

THE CONCEPTION

My constituents Rob and Lisa Manchester were on their way home to their seven year old daughter Katie when their car was hit by a Honda Civic at 140 km/hr.

They were killed and their daughter was orphaned.

I was motivated to do what I could to send a clear message that the deadly activity of street racing would not be tolerated and that there would be serious consequences for those who chose to put innocent lives like the Manchesters at risk through their irresponsible actions.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE BILL

Having made the decision to translate the Manchester tragedy into a positive outcome, I began the process of developing a Private Member's Bill.

I advised Legislative Counsel of what I wanted to achieve and provided a draft of the legislative amendments.

I had consulted with our Chief of Police, a number of front line officers from both the York Regional Police and the OPP.

They were unanimous: Give us the authority to issue on-the-spot licence suspensions and vehicle impoundments when we have reason to believe that street racing has taken place.

TABLING, DEBATE AND VOTE

First Reading of the Bill, as always, was a technicality. A Member is given the opportunity to give a short summary of

Behind the scenes: Private Member's Bills

the proposed legislation, then the Clerk calls for a vote and with rare exceptions, it passes on a voice vote.

It is at the Second Reading, however, that a full debate takes place.

If the Bill is passed at this stage, it is referred to Committee where the public have an opportunity to provide input and where further amendments can be made.

The Committee then votes on whether to refer the Bill back to the full House for Third and final Reading.

It is a fact that few Private Member's Bills get to this stage, because the government of the day has full control of this process.

As was the case with my Street Racing Bill, the government does not like to give credit to an Opposition MPP for meaningful legislative initiatives.

This is a serious flaw in the legislative process, and one I would like to see reformed.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

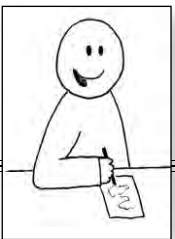
In the end, even a Private Member's Bill that is not passed, can bring about positive legislative changes, as evidenced in the example I've shared with you.

I have had similar experiences with Private Member's Bills that I introduced in support of organ donation and reform of the OSPCA to name just two.

The process itself can have significant impact on an issue by raising awareness of an issue and engaging the public in meaningful discussion.

I find this to be one of the most empowering aspects of my role as MPP and am honoured to be entrusted with the responsibility.

I hope that you have found this Behind the Scenes perspective both informative and encouraging. As always, I invite your comments, questions and advice. You can contact me through my website at www.frankklees.com or by calling 905-750-0019.



Inside Aurora

By Scott Johnston

It may not seem like it, based on the weather these days, but spring will be with us before long.

So, to get a last taste of winter, I decided to take a walk through the arboretum.

While I was enjoying the crisp air, and the white blanket of snow, I came across Aurora Annie, Aurora's season-predicting groundhog.

I had run into her last year, and remember her being stressed about potentially being sued, or even cited by the Integrity Commissioner, based on her less accurate than usual end-of-winter prediction.

So, I wasn't surprised to find her again slumped on a bench with a worried expression on her face, although I wondered about the bits of paper with tiny scribbles on them that surrounded her.

"What's the matter?" I asked, pushing aside some notes, and taking a seat beside her. "You're not worried about the Integrity Commissioner, are you? I don't think he can bother you any more."

"It's not that," she said.

"So," I continued, indicating the papers around us, "are you having hard time making a prediction?"

"No, it's...it's..."

"It's Aurora's budget deliberations," she finally burst out, tears streaming down her furry cheeks. "I may get cut!"

"Cut? You mean you have a budget?"

"Well, not a very big one."

Seeing my puzzled expression, she continued: "It's not easy predicting the seasons. There are almanacs to review, trends to track, the Weather Channel to consult, groundhog discussion groups to monitor on-line..."

"And keeping up one's membership in the 'Marmot Prognostication and Meteorological Society' doesn't come cheap, either."

"But Aurora's budget is huge," I noted. "Council pours hundreds of thousands of dollars into all sorts of dubious projects, and those things you mentioned can't add up to much."

"They don't," she agreed, "but this year is different. With the town's finances so tight, the new council is eager to provide a good impression for taxpayers, so they're going through the budget with a fine toothed comb. I've heard everything's on the table."

"Even you?"

"Even me," she agreed, wiping her eyes with a tiny handkerchief.

"So what's with all the papers?" I asked, pointing at the blanket of notes around us.

"The only way I can think of to save myself, is to appear as a delegate at the budget meeting, so I'm putting together my case."

"Do you think you've got a good one?"

Groundhog Daze III

"Well," she said, donning a groundhog-sized pair of reading glasses, and peering at one of the scraps of paper, "I think my best bet is to try to convince council to redirect funds to my budget from one of my colleagues."

"Which one?"

"The Easter Bunny. His budget is massive," she said, peering over her glasses. "Do you know how many eggs he hides every year as part of the town's Easter Egg Hunt? 14,000, that's how many."

Pointing to some calculations, she concluded: "I figure if he hid 25 per cent fewer eggs, that would easily cover my annual budget."

"Don't you think he'd notice the decrease in funds?"

"With luck, he wouldn't find out until the budget was approved. If necessary, I can always hide in my hole until he calms down. And besides, he'll still be able to afford tons of eggs."

"Well, I'd better get going," she said, collecting all her papers. "Wish me luck."

Watching Annie head towards Town Hall to make her case to Council, I just hoped that the Easter Bunny wouldn't be at the same meeting defending his budget.

That could get ugly.

Feel free to e-mail Scott at:
machellscorners@gmail.com

Letters to the Editor



They claim dog is oldest in town

To the editor,

We think we can lay claim to having the oldest dog in Aurora.

Her name is “Liza Doolittle”. (Eliza?)

She is a Lhasa Apso.

We think the reason for her longevity is primarily for the veterinary care she has received over the years from Dr. LeGallais and his team of vets and assistants.

He runs the best animal hospital in Aurora and surrounding area.

We also don't want to forget a very professional dog groomer, we think her name is Ingrid, the owner of Pet Panach Aurora.

She is a sweet caring person.

“Liza Doolittle” is 22 years old this year.

She just keeps going like the Eveready battery.

Neil and Patricia Pemberton
Aurora

It’s dangerous crossing Wellington St., he says

To the editor and Alison,

Very happy to hear about you hosting this weekly show.

Can't think of a better person that brings both experience and true commitment to "Aurora's" issues. I have met you on the train a number of times...I'm the one who has taken the train for some 30 years from the Aurora station back from when it was a VIA train.

Needless to say I have seen the train ridership grow from 10 to 20 people

Reader liked Alison’s debut

To the editor and Alison Collins-Mrakas,

Just watched “Our Town”. Awesome job!

It was very passionate, honest, and nervous - all good.

Glad to hear you'll be moving to your permanent home digs next week - that

ple per day to approximately 1600 (estimate) today from 1980.

I must admit I have some personal interest in writing about a problem I see everyday while walking to the train...the most dangerous part of my day and others who are forced to cross Wellington from the north side near the station is traffic and no means of cross walk or lights...as you are aware the traffic volumes are horrendous at train time on Wellington...lights and cross walk near Wells Street Public

loon pecking away at the left side of your head was bugging me.

I'll try and send a few thoughts your way soon regarding topics and stuff.

Again, cheers. I think Dick would have approved.

Matt Maddocks
Aurora

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He offers congrats to new show

To the editor,

Congratulations, Alison! You're off to a good start with your new on-line show.

This is going to take a lot of your time and effort so it will be interesting to see how many people tune in via this new communication effort.

A weekly show may be a real challenge, but I think you're up for it.

I like the fact that you're using the term "Council Watch" but having said that I just wish I had registered the name so that I could have received royalties.

Nice touch with the tribute to Dick.

His contributions to our town are worthy of ongoing reflection and recognition.

It might be helpful to have a menu of the general topics posted beside the show so that people know when to tune in for specific topics of interest and they should also have the ability to skip to the topic directly on the tape.

Not everyone may have 30 minutes to sit down and watch the show but I suspect that some people (like me) may even turn the show on and then do other things while listening, as they would do with a radio show.

As you know... I could offer a great many thoughts and ask a few challenging questions with regards to this week's topic,

however I'm going to take a deep breath and think about what, if anything, I should say given the litigious nature of our political landscape these days.

I always assumed that my

Making ice is an art, reader says

To the editor,

This year Jim's crew had the ice surfaces in Aurora in great shape before Christmas.

In all my years of flooding the rinks this only happened for me once.

The outdoor ice program is labour-costly but the benefits of seeing hundreds outdoors getting exercise far outweighs the cost.

All that's needed is a two-inch drain back hydrant, 200 feet of 1½ inch hose, a nozzle and one dedicated crew.

There is an art to making ice and Aurora has always had the best. Congrats to Jim and his team.

Not being an ace reporter for The Auroran (yet), my homework in my last letter was incomplete. Following are the sponsors of Aurora Borealis in the Town Park: Aurora Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club of Aurora, Aurora Seniors' Centre, Canadian Tire, Neighbourhood Network, Park Place Manor and TD Canada Trust.

Thank you for your generosity over the years and especially in this instance.

Norm Weller
Aurora

He explains tax increase

To the editor,

Sorry to bother you again.

I noticed that my last E-mail was printed and I am okay with that.

All I actually need to let reacting/questioning readers know that I remarked on my last 2010 monthly property tax being \$361.02 and the first 2011 monthly property tax notice being \$397.17, a factual increase of 10 per cent.

I need not go beyond that.

Alex Vander Veen
Aurora

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freedom of thought and speech was protected through our civil rights, however I never suspected that I would have to fight to prove that simple point in court against the town's considerable resources.

I'm grateful beyond words for the incredible amount of support that we are receiving from so many directions, including most notably from what I have to conclude is our new and improved council.

You did an extremely good job of covering some of the high level issues surrounding our case without getting too specific.

There are more high level issues surrounding this topic as well, but real fun is in the details.

The more we peel back the layers the more incredible I think it is that we find ourselves in the situation we now face.

It makes me realize how fragile our democracy is and how important it is to protect our civil rights as they relate to freedom of thought and speech.

Thank you for your continued efforts towards speaking up and sharing your views in such an articulate and well thought out fashion.

Our town should value and respect your input, even if not everyone may always agree all of the time.

Regards and good luck.

Richard Johnson
Aurora

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These two doctors will be on the staff of the new Magna Medical Centre which opened in Aurora Friday. They are Dr. Stephanie Milley, a chiropractor, left, and Dr. Christine Davis, in charge of naturopathic medicine. Centre will serve residents of Aurora and surrounding areas, as well as Magna employees.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

Magna opens new health centre here

Magna Health Centre, a new medical clinic established by Magna International Inc., officially opened its doors in Aurora last week. The Centre will serve residents in Aurora and surrounding communities as well as Magna employees who work in the area. The Centre is a multi-disciplinary clinic and its healthcare team includes practitioners in family medicine, chiropractic,

acupuncture, Chinese medicine and naturopathic medicine. In addition, Magna Health Centre has partnered with Meditech, a global leader in the field of advanced laser medicine, and recently installed Meditech's low-intensity laser equipment at the Aurora clinic. Low-intensity laser therapy is used to treat strains, sprains, chronic back pain, osteoarthritis and tendinitis conditions.

Laser therapy is also used for diabetic and venous ulcer wound healing. "We're excited to be able to offer our services to the community," said Dr. Arif Bhimji, Medical Director of Magna Health Centre. "Magna Health Centre is a unique medical clinic with a broad range of medical expertise under one roof and a personalized, multi-disciplinary approach to health care." Magna Health Centre is located at 375 Magna Drive, next to the Magna head office just off Wellington Street in Aurora. The clinic is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Residents can call 905-726-7470 for more information or to schedule an appointment.

MP is looking for suggestions

Newmarket-Aurora MP Lois Brown wants to hear your suggestions for the upcoming federal budget. Residents are invited to share their views and priorities at a public pre-budget consultation meeting Thursday, January 27 at the Aurora Town Hall, 1 Municipal Drive in Aurora, beginning at 7.30 p.m. "Good planning starts with listening," she said. "I look forward to hearing from residents, their priorities for the future and how they would like to see our federal tax dollars spent." Oral and written comments will be accepted at the meeting. Those wishing to make a five to ten-minute presentation will need to pre-register ahead of time. Residents are also invited to complete a survey, also available online at www.loisbrown.ca. To register, or to make a submission if you cannot attend the meeting, contact the constituency office at 206-16600

Bayview Ave., Newmarket, Ontario, L3X 1Z9, by phone at 905-953-7515 or email Brown.L@parl.gc.ca.

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Pond Hockey tournament cancelled

A proposed pond hockey tournament, being organized by the Aurora Optimist Club for early February, has been cancelled. "Our deadline for formal registration has passed, unfortunately we did not get the minimum number of formal registrations for the tourney, therefore we have decided to cancel the pond hockey tourney," said organizer Peter Bifolchi. The tourney would have been played February 5th and 6th. The Aurora Optimist Pond Hockey Challenge was described as a fundraising event of the Optimist Club of Aurora to bring the Canadian heritage game of pond hockey to the Town of Aurora and surrounding communities. The club expected teams would participate in five divisions of four teams each.

The divisions would have been made up of corporate or related industry, as well as a proposed women's division. The Aurora Optimists, being a not-for-profit organization, would use all proceeds raised for community services, particularly those related to youth activities within the Town of Aurora. The event would have been managed and run by volunteers. The planned tournament schedule consisted of three rounds of play within each division, with each of the two top teams in each division challenging the top teams in the other four divisions. A three-level playoff round

would then decide the top two teams in a championship game. Each entry would have been guaranteed three games, and possibly up to seven. Each game would consist of two 15-minute periods with a five-minute half-time break. The tournament would have been held at Machell Park, near the community centre, and consisted of an open-air ice surface big enough to accommodate two rinks. Optimists planned two special events, a hardest shot competition and a shootout competition. "Maybe next year," said Bifolchi.

Tsubouchi

From page 1

"I don't have an issue with the Code of Conduct but the concept of a Code of Conduct. I am not sure it is needed because you do take an oath of office. If the will is we want a Code of Conduct, then that is obviously the will of council. "Essentially the way it was written said that regardless of anything else that happens, council will decide if there is an issue and will determine the penalty, if anything. They set themselves up as judge, jury, and executioner."

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HOUSE LEAGUE

206 Caravan Kids Powder Blue 2 - Ian Hilgendorff 1G, Griffin Charnley 1G, Joshua Anselmo 1A, Christopher Marton, shutout.
202 Caravan Kids Gold 0.

204 Caravan Kids Blue 5. 201 Caravan Kids Red 5.

405 Novintro Black 3 - Wayne Freeman 3G, David Doroschenko 1A, Alexander Mueller 1A.
409 Pfaff VW Teal 3 - Liam Patterson 1G, Evan Bryan 1G 1A, Christian Ridd 1G 1A, Pranav Rendalker 1A.

404 Tilemaster Blue 7 - Aaron Preiano 1G 1A, Giuliano Iervasi 1A, Benjamin Godber 2G 1A, Ethan Cohen 1G, Liam Collins 1A, Jason Xue 1A, Claudio Basso 1G, Dillon Varone 2G.
410 HS Financial Orange 2 - Kyle Kasak 1G, Zachery Diaz 1A, Louis Wood 1A, Cameron Lang 1G, Becham Georgiou 1A, Ethan Moulds 1A.

610 Swiss Chalet & Harveys Orange 7. 601 Municipal Engineering Solutions Red 1.

608 Crabby Joe's Grey 6 - Jack Dion 3G, Gordon Scott 2G, Tristan Macklin 1G, Stephen McNeil 2A, Devon Hope 1A, Devon Mundy 1A, Nicholas Hatzitolios 1A. **605 Lakeshore Valu Mart 6** - Jack Bishenden 2G, Adam Powell 1G, Andrew Currie 1G, Patrick Facca 1G 1A, Jacob Hatton 1G, Remy Colicchio 2A, Jordan Reeves 1A.

903 Optimist Club of Aurora White 4 - Andrew Walter 2G, Nicholas Bertrand 1G 1A, Scott Cosentino 1G, Quinn McGowan 1A. **905 ATS Healthcare Black 3** - Vince Duggan 2G, Michael McCreesh 1G, Matt Melito 1A.

904 St. Louis Blue 4 - Matthew Warner 1G, Alex Woodward 2G 1A, Dustin Partanen 1G, Konstantin Bakdonow 1A, David Roberts 1A, Eric Saeuble 1A, Nicholas Reinholdt 1A, Eric Bulloch 1A. **905 ATS Healthcare Black 1** - Vince Duggan 1G, Martin Wood 1A, Zachary Cook 1A.

901 Graystones Restaurant Red 1 - Mathew Hart 1G, Kevin Langdon, shutout. **909 North York Plumbing & Heating Teal 0.**

908 Crabby Joe's Grey 8 - Marco Ghegin 2G 1A, Ryan Eberlin 3G 1A, Trevor George 1G, Quinn Harris 1G, Jason Eberlin 1G 3A, Tyler White 1A, Patrick Tardif 1A, Ryan Dalcin 1A. 910 Philly Orange 2 - Sam Steenhorst 1G, Thomas Scougall 1G, Ali Akbar 1A. **902 Boston Gold 3** - Kienan Osborne 1G, William Allen 1G, Christian Frappier 1G 1A, Ward Benn 1A, Connor Flynn 1A. 907 Wooder Food Safety Consulting Kelly Green 3 - Cody Sandersun 1G 1A, Massimo Longhin 1G, Mackenzie Wooder 1G, C. Karagiannis 1A, Stephen Cantarutti 1A, Wade McFarlane 1A.

906 Ruff-N-Redi Powder Blue 6 - Dylan Sutton 1G, Alexander Seto 1G 1A, Nick Theorodopolous 1G, John Dinocolantino 1G, Andrew Seguin 1G 1A, Zachary Seto 3A, William He 1A, David Marsillo 1A. **903 Optimist Club of Aurora White 3** - Nicholas Bertrand 3G, Ryan Dowling 2A, Scott

Cosentino 1A, Nic Venosa 1A, Kelly Hudson 1A.

REP LEAGUE

Tyke Select - Aurora 2 - Ryan Bryden 2G.
Richmond Hill 1.

Tyke Select - Aurora 3 - Ryan Bryden 2A, Jacob Hoffrogge 1G, Owen Hollett 1G, Ryan Catania 1G, Anton Sopov 1A, Michael Crowe 1A. **Richmond Hill 2.**

Tyke Select - Aurora 3 - Nicholas Giorgio 1G 1A, Ryan Bryden 1G, Owen Hollett 1A, Thomas Hollett 1A, Todd Cook 1G 1A, Charles Huxley 2A. **Richmond Hill 1.**

Novice AA - Aurora 5 - Carter Beswick 1G, Dylan DaCosta 1A, Daniel Gaeta 1G1A, Ethan Cameron 2G 2A, Geoffrey Wilson 1G 1A. **TNT 2.**

Novice AA - Aurora 3 - Ethan Cameron 3G, Ben Barber 1A, Jake Adams 2A, Geoffrey Wilson 1A. **Barrie 5.**

Novice AA - Aurora 2 - Ethan Cameron 1G, Sam Lombard 1A, Andrew Langlois 1G, Samuel Morin 1A. **Richmond Hill 1.**

Novice A - Aurora 1 - Brett Pearce 1G, Kazuki Negishi 1A.
Barrie 4.

Novice AE - Aurora 5. Innisfil 1.

Novice AE - London 2. Aurora 0.

Novice AE - Aurora 3. Port Credit 1.

Novice Select - Forest Hill 6. Aurora 1.

Novice AE - Aurora 6. Stouffville 1.

M Atom AA - Markham 2. Aurora 1 - Anthony DiPietro 1G, Trevor Dungey 1A.

M Atom AA Markham 2. Aurora 1 Luke O'Keefe 1G, Anthony DiPietro 1A.

M Atom A - Innisfil 4. Aurora 1 - Sam Ashton 1G, Blair Crabbe 1A.

M Atom A - Innisfil 3 - Aurora 2 - Sam Ashton 2G, Blair Crabbe 1A, Colby Prymch 1A, Matthew McConnell 1A, Dylan Prescott 1A.

M Atom A - Innisfil 5. Aurora 1 - Matthew Gram 1G, Jack Campbell 1A.

M Atom AE - Georgina 4. Aurora 1 - Thomas Childerhose 1G.

M Atom AE - Georgina 2. Aurora 0.

Atom AA - T Newmarket 4. Aurora 3.

Atom AA - Newmarket 3. Aurora 1.

Atom A - Aurora 2 - Jason Cox 1G, Ben Spittle 1A, Jamie Stewart 1G, Andrew Buffa 1A. **Markham 1.**

Atom A - Aurora 1 - Jaedon Jackson 1G, Jason Cox 1A, Andreas Imperio, shutout.

Markham 0.

Atom A - Aurora 2 - Carson Yeomans 1G, Andrew Cundari 1A, Anthony Capraro 1G, Ryan Jamieson 1A. **Markham 1.**

Atom AE - Markham 2. Aurora 1 - Carter Wilmsmeyer 1G, Braden Reid 1A.

Atom AE - Markham 6. Aurora 3 - Finn Reeves 2G, Justin Evans 1G, Francesco Scuglia 1A, Thomas Morra 1A, Adam DePiero 1A.

M Pee wee AA - Aurora 3. Barrie 5.

M Pee wee AA - Barrie 7. Aurora 1.

M Pee wee AA - Barrie 4. Aurora 2.

M Pee wee A - Aurora 2 - Mark Kalmisto 2G, Jack O'Keefe 1A, Ryan Thornhill 1A, Reid Carpenter 1A, Alexander Simardone 1A. **Bradford 1.**

M Pee wee A - Bradford 3. Aurora 2 - Eric McGhie 1G, Curtis Romanchych 1G.

M Pee wee AE - Markham 2. Aurora 1.

M Pee wee AE - Aurora 4. Markham 1.

Pee wee AA - Aurora 10 - Patrick Servideo 2G 2A, Alec Magnante 1G 1A, James Wyndham West 1G 2A, Evan Woodhead 1G, Cameron Morrison 3G 1A, Jack Pecora 2G, Jared Reeves 1A, Tyler Williams 1A, Jared Brown 1A, Brian Suominen 1A. **Georgina 1.**

Pee wee AA - Aurora 4 - Austin Pringle, shutout, Cameron Morrison 3G, Tyler Williams 1G 2A, Evan Woodhead 2A. **Georgina 0.**

Pee wee AA - Georgina 4. Aurora 3 - Patrick Servideo 2G, Cameron Morrison 1G, Jack Pecora 1A, Jared Reeves 1A, Michael Shum 1A.

Pee wee AA - Aurora 6 - Keegan Matthew 1G 1A, Tyler Williams 1G, Evan Woodhead 1G 1A, Patrick Servideo 2G 2A, Cameron Morrison 1G 3A, James Wyndham West 2A, Michael Shum 1A, Jared Brown 1A, Jared Reeves 1A. **Georgina 1.**

Pee wee A - Aurora 3 - Tristan Kuchar 2G, Daniel McConnell 1G, Cameron Zinner 1A, Spencer White 1A, Mathew Tyndall 2A, Matthew Tanel, shutout. **Markham 0.**

Pee wee A - Aurora 4 - Eric Shennan 1G 1A, Tristan Kuchar 1G 1A, Mathew Tyndall 1G, Daniel McConnell 1G, Evan Cherubini 1A, Colin Kostin 1A, Cole Chapman, shutout. **Markham 0.**

Pee wee AE - Aurora 3 - Jordi Severini 1G, Cameron Anderson 1G, Jeffrey McKay 1G 1A, Christian Arcuri 1A, Zach Fletcher 1A, Adam Leader, shutout. **Newmarket 0.**

Pee wee AE - Aurora 2 - Christian Arcuri 1G, Jordi Severini 1A, Brendin Ramsay 1G, Connor Downs 1A. **Newmarket 2.**

Pee wee AE - Newmarket 2. Aurora 1 - Connor Downs 1G, Charles Bennett 1A.

M Bantam AA - Richmond Hill 5. Aurora 1 - Chris Klinowski 1G, Matthew Leroy 1A.

M Bantam AA - Aurora 4 - Klinowski 1G, Matthew Leroy 1G 1A, Peter Andreakos 1A, Eddie Duffy 1G, Steven Tsianos 1G.

Richmond Hill 1.

M Bantam AA - Richmond Hill 3. Aurora 2 - Eddie Duffy 2G, Chris Klinowski 1A.

M Bantam A - Aurora 5. East Gwillimbury 1.

M Bantam A - East Gwillimbury 2. Aurora 1.

M Bantam A - East Gwillimbury 4. Aurora 0.

M Bantam AE - Georgina 7. Aurora 2.

M Bantam AE - Georgina 4. Aurora 2.

Bantam A - Barrie 2. Aurora 1 - Liam Coll 1G.

Bantam A - Richmond Hill 5. Aurora 3 - Shadoe Storm 2G, Jack Caldwell 1G, Liam Beresford 1A, Liam Coll 1A, Graham Robinson 1A, Evan Jackson 1A.

Bantam A - Richmond Hill 3. Aurora 1 - Erik Balkovec 1G, Shadoe Storm 1A, Liam Coll 1A.

M Midget AA - Aurora 3. Georgina 2.

M Midget AA - Aurora 3. Georgina 0.

M Midget A - Bradford 3. Aurora 1.

M Midget A - Aurora 4. East Gwillimbury 0.

M Midget A - Aurora 5. East Gwillimbury 3.

M Midget A - Aurora 3. East Gwillimbury 0.

M Midget AE - Aurora 4. TNT 4.

M Midget AE - Aurora 10 - Connor Moody 3G 1A, Kyle Fedec 2G 2A, Christopher Tsianos 2G, Collin Laird 1G 1A, Casy Severini 1G, Paul Steiner 1G, Eliot Harkin 3A, Matthew Reeves 1A. **Pickering 1.**

Midget AA - Aurora 1. Barrie 1.

Midget AA - Georgina 3. Aurora 0.

Midget AA - Georgina 5. Aurora 2.

Midget AA - Georgina 5. Aurora 2.

Midget AE - Aurora 2. Pickering 1.

Midget AE - Aurora 5. TNT 1.

Midget AE - Aurora 3. TNT 1.

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Monday night hockey results

Huntsville game postponed

Orangeville shows its power with 6-2 win over the Tigers

After spending two hours in a bus and travelling only 10 kilometres Friday, the Junior A Aurora Tigers cancelled a regularly scheduled game against the Huntsville Otters.

Of course, a fatal 40-car pileup on Highway 11, just south of Orillia, didn't help either.

But the Tigers were in fighting spirt Sunday afternoon at the Aurora Community Centre when they met the Orangeville Flyers, needing a victory over that team.

Aurora fell behind 6-0 before the end of the second period, scored twice in the third, lost the game 6-2, and now are alone in sixth place in the north division.

While Orangeville has a game in hand over Aurora, the victory for Aurora was necessary, since the two teams will likely meet for a playoff position.

The flyers lost to Stouffville 5-2 the night before but defeated the same team 2-1 in a shootout last weekend.

Nicholas Vassos was the killer for the winners. He scored a goal, a shorthanded one at that, and added two assists on Orangeville's first two

goals Sunday afternoon.

Upcoming for Aurora is an away game against the powerful Markham Waxers Thursday. Waxers are in second place in the north division.

That game, the only one for Aurora until they meet Newmarket in that town February 3rd, begins at 7.30 p.m.

Stouffville is in Aurora Friday, February 4, for a game that gets underway at 7.30 p.m.

At press time there was no indication that the cancelled game against Huntsville had been rescheduled.

ORANGEVILLE 6 AURORA 2

First Period

O - Kent McPherson (Vassos) PP 2.15

O - Chris Draper (Vassos, Fasano) PP 11.42

O - Joe Catalano (Fasano, Pilote) 14.04

O - Krystian Yorke (Draper, Birkhoff) pp 14.40

Second Period

O - Nicholas Vassos (Scott) SH 8.12

O - Zach Pilote (Sardella, McPherson)

PP 13.58

(Gidaro, Evely) PP 1/20

Third Period

A - Sloan Stewart (Moody, Moran) 18.43.

TEAM STANDINGS						
TEAM	W	L	T	GF	GA	Pts.
Masterclean Contracting	10	3	3	66	39	23
Copper Creek	9	6	1	69	55	19
Highland Chev-Olds-Geo-Cad	8	5	3	52	47	19
FPL Aggregates	7	7	2	54	59	16
Baldwin's	7	8	1	69	75	15
Rec Cycle N' Sports	6	7	3	45	51	15
Priestly Demolition	5	11	1	57	69	11
Tom & Jerry's	4	9	2	48	57	10
WEEKLY RESULTS						
Rec Sports	6	Masterclean			7	
Baldwins	1	Tom & Jerrys			1	
Priestly Demolition	4	Copper Creek			6	
FPL Aggregates	3	Highlands Chev			3	
PLAYER STANDINGS						
			G	A		Pts.
John Archibald	Copper Creek		15	18		33
Tom Hussey	Copper Creek		12	17		29
Mark Sedore	Priestly		16	9		25
Steve Kavanagh	Baldwins		9	15		24
Al Perkins	Baldwin's		14	9		23
Brad McMillan	Baldwin's		11	11		22
Paul Wolanski	Copper Creek		11	10		21
Darren Yaremko	FPL		10	10		20
Ryan Spampinato	Tom & Jerry's		10	9		19
John Andersen	Rec Sports		13	5		18
Phil Podstatzky	Priestly		12	6		18
Pat O'Mahoney	Masterclean		11	7		18
Ryan Bryce	Masterclean		10	8		18
John Leeder	Baldwin's		8	9		17
Kevin O'Keefe	Highland's		7	10		17
Gareth McDonald	Priestly		6	10		16
Craig McConnell	Highland's		4	12		16
Rob Carnegie	Masterclean		1	15		16
Rob Blakely	Masterclean		8	7		15
Don Nichols	Copper Creek		8	7		15
Ed Kilroy	Rec Sports		7	8		15
Jeff Sleep	Rec Sports		10	4		14
Glen Bince	FPL		5	9		14
Ron VanNoort	FPL		8	5		13
Ed Jackson	Baldwin's		4	9		13
Steve Robertson	Masterclean		7	5		12
Dave Caverley	FPL		5	7		12
Alain Boudreau	Masterclean		3	9		12
Ken Fisher	Highland's		8	3		11
Doug Adair	Rec Sports		6	5		11
Raz Khamissa	Tom & Jerry's		5	6		11
Ron Thiessen	Tom & Jerry's		5	6		11
Darryl Thompson	Tom & Jerry's		5	6		11
Hugh Alcorn	Masterclean		1	10		11
Mike O'Connor	Copper Creek		5	5		10
Vince Greco	Tom & Jerry's		4	6		10
Nick Weedon	Rec Sports		1	9		10
Scott Crabbe	Highland's		6	3		9
Murray Campbell	Highland's		5	4		9
Ken Rumble	Highland's		5	4		9
Jody Matthews	Highland's		4	5		9
Chris Neale	Copper Creek		4	5		9
Mike Caicco	Copper Creek		2	7		9
Andrew Dalton	Rec Sports		2	7		9
Billy Fetherston	Priestly		4	4		8
Scott Harris	Tom & Jerry's		4	4		8
Bob Nunn	Baldwin's		4	4		8
Sam Speranini	Masterclean		4	4		8
Brett Vickers	FPL		4	4		8
Steven MacDonald	Tom & Jerry's		3	5		8
Dave Mayberry	Priestly		3	5		8
Peter Briand	Baldwin's		2	6		8
Richard Fava	Tom & Jerry's		1	7		8
Ken Heinrich	Rec Sports		1	7		8
Dennis Tonello	FPL		1	7		8
Les Nip	Masterclean		6	1		7
Paul Gibson	Tom & Jerry's		4	3		7
Gerald Briand	Baldwin's		3	4		7
Craig Gellatly	FPL		3	4		7
Scott Thomas	Tom & Jerry's		2	5		7
Dan Cote	Baldwin's		1	6		7

Aurora Seniors Duplicate Bridge results

Monday, January 17: North/South - Mary Oglanby and Bernie O'Brien; Lucille Sequeira and Dave Legallais; Irene Kubica and Dorothy Young. East/West - Melody Irving and Jeannine Mackie; Priscilla Hull and Inger Kamel; Rose White and Gloria Smith.

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Mayor challenged to get involved in Hartwell run

The A & B Courier Run for Southlake is going digital, according to chair Steve Hinder, who also issued a challenge to Regional mayors and councils at last Tuesday's General Committee Meeting.

"What's new this year is that you can actually register and pledge on the Southlake website, which makes it a lot easier for people," he said, noting this move will make for further ease in communication. "You can go on the website, create

your own page, and fire it off to anybody you want."

Mr. Hinder's presentation to council also included a formal challenge for Mayor Geoffrey Dawe and councillors to form a Team Aurora for the event, which is slated to take place on Sunday, May 1 at the Aurora Community Centre.

"We intend to do this in all five councils that call Southlake their hospital," he said. "We're throwing out a Mayor's Challenge. This is the first step in the Mayor's

Challenge; the first stop so you folks have extra opportunity to get out there, put your act in gear, long before the others. I have a personal bias!"

"Do I actually have to run?" Mayor Dawe, asked jokingly?

Mr. Hinder replied that the important part is raising pledges, and walking is acceptable.

"We want to make this event for everyone...actually, I could set the pace for you!"

The Run is making

efforts to make the event as inclusive and attractive as possible for families, especially with kids and teens. While the event includes a half-marathon, a 5-K and a 10-K, there will also be a kids' "mini-mile."

"It gives them an opportunity to [run or walk] and it gives an opportunity for every member of the family to participate," said Mr. Hinder. "Those who collect pledges can win prizes, new this year; we are trying to make this as

much of a community event as we can. There will be a kids' zone with activities for kids to do before and after the event."

The annual A & B Courier Run for Southlake was formerly known as the Hartwell Challenge after the late Councillor Bob Hartwell.

"Bob was a long time runner who died in October 2001 while running the Toronto International Marathon," noted Mr. Hinder. "Most people know of Bob in the community. He certainly made his mark as a

great community contributor."

The name was changed in a sponsorship agreement with the company, a move Mr. Hinder said would have met with Mr. Hartwell's approval.

"If you knew Bob well enough you would know Bob was all about what was good for the community and he would see [sponsorship] as an opportunity to take it to the larger community, now to benefit everyone who calls Southlake their hospital. He would be thrilled with the change and the growth."

Proposed development creates fight

From page 1

identically designated lands" in the area, noted Marco Ramunno, Aurora's Director of Planning in his report to councillors.

Speaking on behalf of the proposal, planner Peter Smith acknowledged earlier plans for the site had been rejected but they had been working towards a better solution which has since garnered the support of the Town's planning staff.

"We think the plan before you is a very good working platform to move forward," he said, noting "fundamental" changes to the plan had been made, including reducing the number of buildings on the site to two, reducing the number of apartments from 56 to 24, and ensuring it meets Oak Ridges Moraine legislation.

"There are still a number of other issues that need to be worked on and that is why we need to be moving forward in the mediation and review process," he said.

Residents of Elderberry Trail, however, remain unsatisfied with the plan, if delegations from the Ratepayers of Aurora Yonge South (RAYS) are any indication.

On hand from the group was Susan Walmer, requesting the Town reject the application in principle.

"In your role as councillors you have a public trust to uphold current policies," she said. "Negotiation with developers might reduce our OMB costs or legal expenses, but at what cost?"

"In my experience during the past 10 years, many developers start the manipulation game with an outlandish plan that doesn't even come close to the Town plan. Then they reduce it as they have done here and say they have made supreme compromises. This application here does not meet our official plan in terms of built form."

Residents of Aurora, Town Staff, and council have the right to plan "our Town", she said, adding that they should not be "intimidated by the threat of one landowner or the OMB".

Approving the application that does not fit into the existing official plan could set a precedent in other areas and Town plans, she said.

Following delegations, Councillor Wendy Gaertner

agreed with the delegations by Ms. Walmer, and fellow RAYS representative John Green, that a new planning application was warranted given the changes in the plan, and in the interest keeping stakeholders informed.

"We have all campaigned on being accountable to the public and I think that is the appropriate way to go," she said. "We want to make sure the public is not excluded from the process. [If] council is going to change its decision, the public needs to be notified."

In the discussions, Mr. Ramunno reiterated his position that the revised proposal from the developers "is more in keeping" with the plan than the original in that the multi-storey low-rise development has been scaled back, making it consistent with existing institutional uses nearby, including the police building.

"The secondary plans always contemplated minor institutional uses, but they do need the official plan amendment and zoning bylaw to permit this change in housing form and the increase in density, but subject to further negotiations with the applicant," he said.

The opinions of Mr. Ramunno and staff were good enough for Councillor Evelyn Buck, who said councillors must look to them for "honest direction" in terms of all the relevant plans they have to wade through in

making their decision.

To ignore their advice, the matter could be brought before the OMB to make the decision, as indicated by Jane Pepino, lawyer for the landowners, in an earlier delegation.

"We have heard that a mediation proceeding gives everyone affected by this plan an opportunity to participate in the mediation process," said Councillor Buck. "If we don't do that, and if we don't resolve the problem, we are faced with an OMB hearing with the usual cost. They're not cheap."

"Here we have in our staff report a possibility of resolving the problem. We do have to concern ourselves with how much taxpayers' money we are spending and we look at the possibility of half a million dollars [for costs at the OMB]. How many more half million can we afford to throw around to give the Ontario Municipal Board complete authority to make a decision for us?"

"Once it is in their hands we have nothing more to say about it. We have an opportunity and staff have done their work. It would be completely and utterly irresponsible of this council to turn our backs on this opportunity to come forward with a satisfactory plan that will meet everyone's objectives."

Councillor Chris Ballard, however, argued that the Town should stand firm when faced with matters pertaining

to the Town's Official Plan.

"We have spent an awful lot of money developing [the plans] and it pains me to see them nibbled away at and, in some cases, thrown under the bus if they are not convenient. I would really fear us setting a precedent that all someone has to do is threaten us with an OMB hearing and we cave. It costs to be at the OMB, but that is the cost of a great Town."

Councillor Buck, however, took exception to Councillor Ballard's comments.

"He is not a planner, neither am I, and neither is Ms. Walmer," she said. "On the one hand we have a whole department of planners who have given a great deal of professional attention to this application. He made another comment that if we 'cave' every time someone threatens us with an OMB hearing [and] I find that offensive."

"When an applicant makes an appeal to the OMB they are doing nothing more than what the law provides. It is a right they have. They don't deserve to be accused of threatening the municipality with anything."

Councillor Gartner's motion to request a new planning application was rejected in a tie vote, as was Councillor Buck's motion to approve the plan in principle.

A motion to defer the matter to this week's council meeting was eventually carried.

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Aurora resident Jessica Richer plays Oliver in a musical presented by the Aurora Performing Arts Group and showing in Newmarket from February 4th to 6th. Photo courtesy of Caileigh Kyle

Oliver! opens February 4th

Lionel Bart's Oliver! is a memorable musical based on the 1838 novel Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens.

Filled with dark shadows and traces of hope, the Aurora Performing Arts Group 16th Season production of Oliver! runs from February 4th to 6th at Newmarket Theatre.

Featuring Auroran residents Jessica Richer as Oliver and APAG veteran Michael Barkowski as Fagin, the production is

filled with a chorus of 27 local, promising children and a huge cast of supporting Aurora adult actors from all walks of life.

Audiences are invited to bring a non perishable food item which will go to the Aurora Food Bank.

Oliver Twist has become of the most popular as well as longest running musical of its time.

Tickets can be purchased at www.newtix.ca or by calling 905-953-5122.

Electricity rebate is coming: PowerStream

PowerStream customers, which covers Aurora, will soon be seeing a 10 per cent rebate on their bill as the electricity distribution company begins implementing the Ontario Clean Energy Benefit (OCEB) on behalf of the Provincial Government.

The Ontario Government recently announced the introduction of the OCEB for all residential, seasonal, farm and small business (general service energy-billed with less than 50 kw demand) customers in the province.

The rebate, which will appear as a separate line item on customer bills, will be applied on the total charges (electricity, delivery, regulatory, debt retirement and taxes) for electricity consumed beginning on January 1 just passed and will be in place until December 31, 2015.

All electricity customers in Ontario currently on the Regulated Price Plan (RPP) two-tiered and Time-of-Use (TOU) prices will be receiving the OCEB rebate, including customers who have enrolled with a retailer as well as those on spot market pricing as long as they are deemed to be RPP eligible.

Since PowerStream residential customers are billed on a bi-monthly basis and with the rebate only for electricity consumed from January 1 this year onward, those customers billed in the first few weeks of January

and through February will only see a partial rebate based on the prorated portion of their electricity consumed in 2011 with the full rebate on consumption applied to all subsequent bills.

For more information on the OCEB rebate, visit the Ontario Ministry of Energy's website at <http://www.mei.gov.on.ca/en/energy/> and select "Ontario Clean Energy Benefit."

PowerStream is the second largest municipally-owned electricity distribution company in Ontario, providing service to more than 325,000 customers residing or owning a business in communities located immediately north of Toronto and in Central Ontario.

Communities served include Aurora.



A Karaoke Night this week will warm senior spirits this Friday from 7 to 11 p.m.

Tickets are available at the Front Counter at \$10 each, which includes refreshments. Trivia contests will challenge the memory and prizes await winners.

The Emcee is popular Larry Blight, and a cash bar of beer and wine will add to an exciting and amusing atmosphere.

Many seniors have departed to warmer climes for a few weeks.

For those who remain at home, a visit to the Seniors' Centre reveals a full list of activities and programs.

We should recognize such pastimes as scrabble or bingo as interesting and compelling ways which attract adherents time and again.

Walking is among the finest of exercises known to humanity and is still practised by the ASA walking club to this day and will do so, probably far into the future.

Walkers are hardy souls who do not necessarily challenge inclement weather, but who get out on the trails in a no-nonsense way and get their exercise in as planned.

Those who have engaged in walking regularly for years, exhibit the result of their endeavours in a hardy condition and robust outlook on life, and recognition is offered for their achievements.

The Walking Club has a number of trails to walk.

The usual day to walk is Wednesday morning beginning at 9.30 a.m. and you need only show up to for acceptance into the group.

The Friday Night Dances continue to have a fascination with many seniors, who relish the good company found among dancers.

If memories of dancing still bring a sparkle to your eye, it is not too late to get right back into this pleasure of life and dance the night away, just like when you were younger, and it is so easy to make friends in the Seniors' Centre when so many share the same interest.

Opera continues to exert a firm hold and strong influence on seniors, starting with the advent of the Evergreen Choir, and then promoted by Jytte Kobak Gillies with her presentations of opera in the ASA lounge.

Technology is a wonderful

instrument to present music, somewhat less than live presentations, but with the ability to present the finest artists at their best at very modest cost.

Jytte deserves recognition for her powerful initiative in promoting the opera and her impact in introducing inspiring opera to our lives.

Her ability to dig deeply into her capabilities and make the decisions required to introduce more of this beautiful music into our midst, elevates our lives, and delivers the sweet sounds where we may enjoy it together.

Tuesday evenings at the Seniors' Centre features Movie Night including refreshments.

This continues as an agreeable way to escape to the comfort of the Seniors' Centre lounge, where a variety of movies attract seniors, who enjoy the movie and good company all in the same package. Non-Members may enjoy the evening also.

On a housekeeping note, the Lost and Found box is located in the lobby, and it fills up, so members should take greater care not to leave their belongings in the Centre.

The Good Will Organization will receive the contents of the box about the middle of the month, so be aware that when something goes missing to check the box.

Karaoke Night is Friday

By BRIAN WARBURTON

In addition, volunteers will be welcomed to assist in the kitchen, which requires additional help.

Many times the different games of cards have received mention in this column and for the very good reason that people continue to find social satisfaction with the gratification of playing cards.

It seems that no matter what day or hour the Seniors' Centre is open, members play cards.

A reason for this custom must exist, and probably because it brings together

men and women, playing on a very level playing field, where everybody is responsible for their own results, or part of a team relying on each other.

Whatever the reason it works, so if you need to go out for a change, this may well prove the perfect light entertainment.

Last of all, and as I mentioned earlier, Scrabble and Bingo are two venerable pastimes that have lent many tranquil hours of pleasure to followers from all lifestyles and will continue to do so for many more years.

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