







# TOWN OF AURORA Weekly Notice Board

**Aurora Town Hall**  
100 John West Way • P.O. Box 1000 • Aurora • Ontario • L4G 6J1  
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Email [info@aurora.ca](mailto:info@aurora.ca) • Website [www.aurora.ca](http://www.aurora.ca)

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## COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Tuesday, February 19	7 p.m.	General Committee
Wednesday, February 20	7 p.m.	Aurora Public Library Board
Wednesday, February 20	7 p.m.	Sesquicentennial Ad Hoc Committee
Thursday, February 21	7 p.m.	Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee – CANCELLED
Monday, February 25	7 p.m.	Special General Committee – 2013 Budget Review – CANCELLED NOT REQUIRED
Tuesday, February 26	7 p.m.	Council
Wednesday, February 27	7 p.m.	Public Planning

Meetings are open to the public and held at Aurora Town Hall. Council meetings can be seen on Rogers TV, channel 10. For a full list of upcoming meetings, please visit [www.aurora.ca/calendar](http://www.aurora.ca/calendar)

General Committee meetings can be viewed online by visiting [www.aurora.ca/gcstream](http://www.aurora.ca/gcstream)

## AURORA 150 FACT:



### Eade's Aurora Hardware (1910)

This full encompassing hardware store was well stocked with items one would need for maintaining their homestead.

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Please visit [www.aurora.ca/employment](http://www.aurora.ca/employment) to view the job postings for Senior Summer Student, Legal (13-08) and for Waste and Wastewater Supervisor (13-10)

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

### Dinner and a Movie

#### Men in Black 3

Where: Aurora Public Library  
When: Saturday, February 23 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
Rating: Rated PG  
Ages: 11 to 14 year-olds  
Price: Entry is \$3 per person and pizza will be served.  
For more information, please call 905-726-4760.

### Winter Parking Restrictions in effect from November 15 to April 15, 2 a.m. to 6 a.m.

Please ensure that vehicles are not parked over sidewalks or onto the roadway.

This is a hazard for residents and it severely hinders the ability of our Infrastructure and Environmental Services staff to efficiently plow our roads and sidewalks.

For more information, please call 905-726-4751 or visit [www.aurora.ca](http://www.aurora.ca)

### 2nd Annual Aurora Winter Blues Festival on Saturday, March 2

An upfront and intimate evening of that good old blues music. Featuring Steve Strongman, The 24th Street Wailers, Little Bobby and the Jumpstarts.

Proceeds will go to the Blue Door Shelters. To purchase tickets, please visit [www.awbf.ca](http://www.awbf.ca)

### Blood Donor Clinic at Aurora Town Hall

A Blood Donor Clinic will take place at Aurora Town Hall, 100 John West Way on Friday, March 1 from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Donors will need photo ID or a blood donor card, must be in good health and should eat something before they come to donate.

For more information or to book an appointment, please call 1-888-2-DONATE, or visit [www.blood.ca](http://www.blood.ca)

### Business Retention and Expansion Consultation on February 28

In 2012, Town staff met with more than 150 local businesses as part of the Business Retention and Expansion program, to find out about the advantages and disadvantages of doing business in Aurora.

Now that the results are in, the Town is consulting with the business community on how to best address the top trends that have arisen from our business visitation surveys.

Business owners and those interested in the local economy are invited to join us for a Business Retention and Expansion action planning session on **Thursday, February 28** at 7 p.m. in the Holland Room at Town Hall.

For more information, please contact Michael Logue at 905-727-3123 ext. 4324

### Aurora Seniors Centre trips

The Aurora Seniors Centre offers many exciting trips for both members and non-members.

Trips this spring include:

- St. Patrick's Day at Carmen's Dinner Theatre, Hamilton  
**Thursday, March 14**  
Trip includes transportation, meal and show
- Myrtle Beach, South Carolina  
**Saturday, April 13 to Monday, April 22**  
Trip includes transportation, accommodations, shopping trips, meals and shows and more.

For more information, please contact Karie Papillon at 905-727-3123 ext. 3610.

### Join us for March Mania Camp

Join us during your school break for a week of fun filled activities.

When: Monday March 11 to Friday March 15  
Where: Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex  
Time: 9 a.m to 4 p.m.  
Ages: Four to 11 years old  
Cost: \$150 for all five days

Extended care is available. For more information please contact 905-841-PLAY.

### An Adventure a Day! March Break Edition for ages 11+

Bored of staying home watching TV and playing video games during March Break? Join us for a day or a week of adventure. Bring your friends and register for the days you want.

When: Monday, March 11 to Friday, March 15

Activities:


- Babysitter Training
- Fitness Fun
- Cooking School
- Kids Great Minds – Video Game Programming
- Home Alone

For more information please call 905-726-4760.

### Infrastructure and Environmental Services Feedback

Let us know how we are doing. Please take the Infrastructure and Environmental Services customer satisfaction survey by visiting [www.aurora.ca](http://www.aurora.ca) clicking on Town Departments > Infrastructure and Environmental Services (Public Works) > Infrastructure and Environmental Services Feedback Form.

Your feedback is greatly appreciated! Thank you!



TOWN OF AURORA  
PUBLIC NOTICE

### NOTICE OF SALE OF PUBLIC LANDS

The Town of Aurora is in the process of selling approximately 0.6 hectares of the property described as Part of Lot 19, Concession 3 in The Town of Aurora.



The proposed enactment of the Bylaw approving this sale will be considered by Town Council on **Tuesday, February 26** in the Council Chambers, Aurora Town Hall, commencing at 7 p.m. Written comments or inquiries for information relating to this matter may be directed to Anthony Ierullo, Manager of Strategic Initiatives at 905-727-3123, extension 4742. Comments may also be mailed to the Planning & Development Services department, faxed to 905-726-4736 or emailed to [aierullo@aurora.ca](mailto:aierullo@aurora.ca) prior to the meeting.

Please note, The Town of Aurora collects personal information in communications or presentations made to Town Council and/or its Committees. The Town collects this information to make informed decisions on relevant issue(s). If you are submitting letters, faxes, emails, presentations or other communications to the Town, you should be aware that your name and the fact that you communicated with the Town will become part of the public record and will appear on the Town's website. The Town will also make your communication and any personal information in it, such as your address, postal code or email address, available to the public unless you expressly request the Town to remove it. By submitting a fax, email, presentation or other communication, you are authorizing the Town to collect and use the above-noted information for this purpose.

The Town audio records Public Planning Meetings. If you make a presentation to Town Council and/or its Committees, the Town will be audio recording you and Town staff and may make these audio recordings available to the public. Please direct any questions about this collection to the Town Clerk at 905-727-3123, ext. 4771.

Town of Aurora 100 John West Way, Aurora, ON L4G 6J1  
[www.aurora.ca/publicnotices](http://www.aurora.ca/publicnotices) | 905-727-3123 ext. 4742

### Are you prepared for an emergency or disaster? Don't be scared. Be prepared.

Be prepared for a variety of weather or civil related emergencies by knowing the different types of risks, making a household emergency plan and assembling an emergency survival kit.

For more information, please visit  
[www.aurora.ca/emergencypreparedness](http://www.aurora.ca/emergencypreparedness)





Another exciting event brought to you by

# easter egg hunt

**Saturday, March 30, 2013**  
**9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.**  
**Aurora Seniors' Centre**

Actual Egg Hunt starts at 10 a.m., 11 a.m. and 12 p.m.

Find an egg and redeem it for an Easter goodie bag!

Join us for a pancake breakfast offered by the Aurora Seniors' Association and the Optimist Club of Aurora. (A minimal fee will apply)

Enjoy EGG-citing activities including face painting, a carrot toss, craft making and more!

Only 1,500 spots available. Tickets must be purchased in advance at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex or at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex.

Children 12 and under are welcome to participate. Tickets are \$5 per child. Parents are free!



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## One of Canada's "Next Top Ad Execs" finds inspiration in competition

By Brock Weir

It wasn't the weekly pitches on Dragon's Den, nor the booze-drenched smoky boardrooms of Mad Men that attracted Cailyn Farquhar to the fast-paced world of marketing and advertising, but rather working with clients and "handling large sums of money".

For a film student, evidently this sharp change in career path from the director's chair to a potential seat in the boardroom was well founded as the Aurora resident and student at the University of Western Ontario was named a finalist on the road to being Canada's Next Top Ad Exec.

Cailyn and her partner, Rahul Srinivasan, a student at the Richard Ivey School of Business, were one of 30 student teams making it to the next round in the competitive program which sees teams of university students go head to head developing marketing plans for the same product with plans judged by "Canadian industry experts."

With their plans firmly in place, Cailyn and Rahul are spending this week working on their next pitch for the second round and sitting back on pins and needles to see if they advance to the next level.

This year's teams are tasked with preparing new and innovative marketing campaigns for the Chevrolet Equinox and the winning

team will win two 2013 Chevy Cruzes, two \$2,500 scholarships, two \$1,000 cash prizes from Chevrolet Canada and other products.

"We want to see what markets they weren't tapping into," says Ms. Farquhar on their secretive strategy. "In the first phase, we had to come up with a creative idea to figure out what kind of target market you would want to bring the Equinox and the program provided us with a lot of information to get us started. From there, they have a panel of top ad execs in Toronto that get to review all the submissions. It's supposed to be the 'Top 25', but I guess they really liked it and picked the top 30!"

Their next round of submissions is due on February 25. If the judges still like what they see, it is off to the Top 10.

The competition might be, in some ways, a significant shift in career trajectory for someone like Cailyn, a graduate of Country Day School, who is still a film major at Western with a minor in creative writing. She says she knew, however, moving ahead with marketing and advertising was the path to take after doing an internship at Spring Advertising in Vancouver.

"I absolutely fell in love with it," she says. "It was the most incredible experience. I originally wanted to do an internship in the creative department doing some-

thing like copywriting but they only had an opening in their accounts department, but I took it and ended up loving it."

This, she says, is a prime example of how people can follow their dreams. Networking is essential, she said, finding similar internships help put you on the map. She describes herself as "artsy" and internships allow opportunities – over a summer job like waitressing – to gain unique experiences, meet new people, get a hand on the business world, and give you that extra push outside the box.

This little extra push, however, lead the way for marketing to supplant film in her list of passions. As a film student, she had to get special permission from the program and an endorsement from professors to enter, but with that in hand there was no looking back. Luckily for her, however, she sees advertising in giving her the best of both worlds.

"You get something that is really analytical and business related, but you also get to be really creative and think outside the box," she says. "I was able to use both skills and that is kind of what appealed to me – it's not your typical 9 to 5 job. Sometimes you're working over hours, or you get to talk with clients, you get to work with creative, so it is a very dynamic industry and that is why it appeals to me the most."



Aurora's Cailyn Farquhar, a student at the University of Western Ontario, is pictured at Yonge and Wellington's venerable Coca-Cola advertising mural on Sunday afternoon. The student has reached the next level in the search to name Canada's Next Top Ad Exec.  
Auroran photo by Brock Weir

## Chamber puts Business Achievement Awards on ice until 2014

By Brock Weir

If you were planning on kicking your heels up this summer at the Aurora Chamber of Commerce's annual Business Achievement Awards, you're out of luck.

The Chamber has decided to put their annual gala on hiatus for a year, while they look to retol the event.

"We're not cancelling them, we're just taking a year off to revamp the whole process," Judy Marshall, Executive Director of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce, told The Auroran. "We're trying to add more excitement to it and try to make it more attractive to all the community, not just a chamber function. We need to look at our nomination process and

just look at the whole thing again and review it."

2012's Business Achievement Awards were held at The Manor in Kettleby. While local Remax realtor Bill Jenkins took home top honours as Aurora's Business Person of the Year, other honourees included Maunders' Food Shop, PermaBoss.com Inc., Neighbourhood Network, St. Andrew's Valley Golf Course, Jack's Landscaping, T.H. Oliver Heating and Air Conditioning, and Cupid & Psyche.

"Attendance is declining like many other major events across York Region," says Ms. Marshall. "Everyone is seeing a decline in the number of people attending their major events, such as the Business Achievement

Awards. We just decided, 'let's stop for a year, let's evaluate where we are, and let's evaluate the whole process and try to make it a little more attractive to everyone.'

"We've got some ideas, but I don't think they're ready to go out yet – we're just starting the process."

If this news leads to some disappointment amongst members of Aurora's business community, more mindful local bean counters could take small comfort in a little bit of silver lining. The Town of Aurora is an active sponsor of the Business Achievement Awards, and no event in 2013 means a \$9,000 savings in this year's 2013 municipal operating budget, shaving a whopping 0.03 per cent off the proposed tax increase.

# SNOWBLOWER BLOWOUT Sale

Purchase any Snow Blower at Regular Retail and receive an in-store credit voucher for

# 50% off

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2011 & 2012

# Letter to the editor

## An apology would get new music fest off to “fresh start”

I watched the February 12th council meeting with particular interest to the discussion about a new music festival in Aurora.

It started with a lovely and lengthy speech by Councillor Buck about the old Aurora Horse Show.

My kids and I enjoyed that show for many years at Machell Park and were saddened when it ceased to be. Councillor Buck went on to say that the new proposed music festival could be that kind of exciting event; an annual one with plenty of supporters, and could put Aurora “on the map”.

An impressive oratory indeed – apparently Councillor Buck has no sense of irony what-so-ever – for four years the Aurora Jazz Festival was just that kind of annual event, run by local volunteers and attracting people from within and outside our community.

It was a motion by Councillor Buck, supported by a majority of council and the Mayor that killed the jazz festival and sent it packing to Newmarket.

Later, Councillor Abel, doing his very best to help the organizers of the proposed festival garner support, stated unequivocally that Machell Park will not be fenced on the north and the south.

The park will remain open to dog walkers, he stated. It’s a complete mystery to me how the organizers will charge ten dollars admission without the site being fenced exactly as the Jazz Festival was in the Town Park.

Perhaps they will rely on the honour system or invisible fences. I am not opposed to a fence at all, but since that issue is what was Council cited as the main complaint against the Jazz Festival, I wonder how Councillor Abel is going to reconcile all that in July when the fences go up.

So, it looks like we will have a music festival in Aurora in July.

That’s great, I support the notion.

I liked the one we had.

People from outside this community, like Lucid, the organizers of the proposed festival, are probably wondering what all the fuss is about. What they won’t know is that many people feel betrayed by this Council that, for personal vindictive reasons, threw the Jazz Festival out of the Town Park, using trumped up reasons.

Now those same Councillors are falling over themselves to replace it with a slick venture from outside our community, complete with fencing, admission charges of ten dollars and our youth shilling coupon books to pay for it.

Why don’t the organizers just apply for a permit to use Machell Park for their July weekend and have that permit approved on merit.

Perhaps to get this new event off to a positive start in our community there could be an apology from council to the organizers, the many volunteers and the attendees of the former Aurora Jazz Festival for the shoddy treatment and the double standard.

Starting fresh may give the new music festival a chance of success.

T.C. Smith  
Aurora

*(Editor’s Note: When the Town decided to open Town Park up for bids on Civic Holiday Weekend, “no fencing” was stated as a “preferred” option rather than a requirement. The Aurora Festival of the Arts, organizers of the Jazz Festival, decided not to place a bid for the use of the park. For more on Council’s approval of Lucid’s proposal, please see Page 22.)*

THE AURORAN

Aurora’s Community Newspaper

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Publisher is not liable for slight changes or typographical errors that do not lessen the value of an advertisement. Disputes must be brought to the attention of the publisher prior to the following edition.

To submit a letter to the editor please send your email to [letters@auroran.com](mailto:letters@auroran.com) – deadline for submissions is Saturday at 1 p.m.

## Ward Cleavers

### BROCK’S BANTER

Brock Weir

reason to get out door knocking to as many homes as possible and reach – or perhaps even engage – voters they might not otherwise have the opportunity to do so?

(b) When it rains, it pours. If you have over 20 candidates gunning for the same seat, it is a sign of a healthy community. These people want to give something back to their community, whether it is fighting for a particular cause or a political stance. This shouldn’t be viewed as a hindrance. While you’re bound to have a few hoary chestnuts come out to bat again, you’re equally bound to have a few previously hidden gems in the process.

(c) Where exactly are these geographic areas going to be?

It is this last point that concerns me the most of Aurora moving towards a ward system. Will there ever be a way to divide this Town up into wards that will make everyone – or even anyone – happy? If wards are designated on physical characteristics of the community, whether heritage or density, that could be construed in many different ways. Dividing the Town by Regional roads into four quadrants, for instance, that could be the path of least resistance, but still cause its own problems.

However the chips fall, there won’t likely to be any requirement for a candidate in a ward to live in the same. Is this more likely to lead to a candidate choosing a particular area to fight for because there is an interest there close to their heart, or

pick an area with a perceived weaker candidate to pick-off in a relative waltz to the Council table?

Forget sugar plums. Visions of certain parties fighting to the death to represent whichever ward gets custody of the Cultural Centre are dancing in my head. It isn’t pretty...but it might be good for a laugh.

### LIVING (AT) LARGE

Should that happen to be the ultimate solution, the outstanding question will be what will that do to the number of chairs needed around the Council table. While Councillor Pirri’s motion calls for the numbers of councillors to be reduced from eight to six with one tasked with being Aurora’s Regional Councillor, others may feel shortchanged.

Personally, I have no opposition to reducing the number of Councillors at the table but from the perspective of an Aurora voter, I am not convinced that people will be happy with having only one municipal representative in the long run. On this point, I firmly agree with Councillor Evelyn Buck.

If a ward system were implemented today, given my own place of abode and their general proximity, my own ward councillor would most likely be Councillor John Gallo.

That’s fine.

If I brought a concern to him as a civilian, such as the ridiculous traffic situation at the corner of Hollidge Boulevard and McMaster Avenue where overgrown and obstructive medians invariably leave both vehicles and pedestrians scrambling like ants in a fire due to non-existent sightlines, he’s likely to have witnessed this nightmare and be in accord with the concerns.

In the off-chance, though, he thinks everything is just peachy at this corner, as a voter I would like the luxury of shopping the concern around until I found a Councillor with a sympathetic ear.

Selfish, I grant you, but that’s one of the beauties of living at large.

# AURORAN POLL

New Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne took over from Dalton McGuinty on February 11. So far, what is your impression of Ms. Wynne as she gets down to business?

- a) Favourable
- b) Unfavourable
- c) Indifferent

RESULTS AS OF FEBRUARY 18, 2013	Favourable 50%	Unfavourable 38%	Indifferent 12%
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Please participate in our POLL –go to [www.theauroran.com](http://www.theauroran.com), scroll down and look to the bottom right of the home page to VOTE.



50 years ago, word got around Town and beyond about Aurora's Centennial Celebrations through this pamphlet from Centennial Headquarters at Mosley Street and Victoria. The flyer boasts of Aurora growing from a small town of 2,107 to a whopping 10,000 and “over 30 manufacturing firms in 1963” and heralded momentous moments in Aurora's history from the 1837 rebellion to the arrival of the Hartmans, the Fleury's, and even the family of Lester B. Pearson.

Image courtesy of the Aurora Historical Society

## A Reckless Law + Irresponsible Reporting = PANIC

On my drive to Queen's Park this past Thursday morning, I heard a news report that effective January 2013, all non-U.S. driver's license holders in the state of Florida would be required to carry a valid International Drivers Permit (IDP), and that failure to carry such a permit would be considered to be driving without a license.

I knew this news would create panic among hundreds of thousands of Ontarians heading south for vacation or for the winter, and wondered whether it was some kind of joke. But as I started hearing it all over the radio dial I realized it was the real thing.

The law, passed by the Florida legislature late last year, is intended to make it easier for State Troopers to understand non-English driver's licenses. But there were no exceptions for Canadians or those from any other English-speaking jurisdiction. The consequences of driving without a valid driver's license carries serious implications, and it didn't take long for that to settle in as people began reacting to the news.

The media picked up on this story through a press release issued by the Canadian Automobile Association, an organization that was founded in 1913 for the purpose of furthering the interests of Canadian motorists. (My CAA membership card tells me I've been a

member since 1989, and I wouldn't leave home without it).

I'm a satisfied customer of the CAA, but in this case they got it wrong!

When I got to my office, I immediately asked my staff to call the Governor's office in Florida. None of this made any sense to me. No advance warning or grace period for something that would have an effect on thousands of Canadians who winter there?

One day, you're driving in accordance with the law and the next day you're not? Even if the state legislature was as dysfunctional as ours, they couldn't get it this wrong – or could they?

I then instructed my staff to put calls in to every government office that would have any jurisdiction over this issue and within a matter of minutes we'd registered concerns with offices that included the Secretary of State and Florida's Lieutenant Governor.

While we waited to hear back on those calls, my staff called police departments in several major cities in



### FRANKLY SPEAKING

Frank Klees  
MPP Newmarket-Aurora

the state to ask if this law was being enforced. My suspicion was that if we didn't know about it, they didn't either. Jacksonville, Miami, Tampa, Naples..... as the calls went out, my suspicions were confirmed. No one was aware of the law and most confirmed they had no intention of enforcing it until they were instructed to do so.

I had heard enough and sent out the following message on my Twitter account:

“Florida's International Driver's Permit law will not be enforced against Ontario drivers. That's the word from my canvass of Florida police.”

Within minutes, I got a call from Newstalk1010 asking me to join Jim Richards on his show to discuss the issue. It was the first of many interviews throughout the day and the beginning of the end of this panic.

#### So, what went wrong?

This is a classic example of bad law-making. Here's a quote from Representative Ben Albritton, who sponsored the bill: “ I work hard to

understand bills and their unintended consequences. This one I just missed. I want to tell the people in Canada I am sorry.”

It's also a text book example of irresponsible reporting on the part of the CAA and the panic that can ensue when far-reaching issues aren't dealt with effectively. The CAA should have gone to the source – like we did – to confirm the facts before sparking a media frenzy with an irresponsible press release. It's worth noting too that the CAA is the only issuer of the IDP in Canada, and charges \$25 for the service. It's hard to know whether that may have clouded the judgment of those in charge there, but interestingly its website still encourages drivers to buy one even though refunds are being offered to anyone who purchased one during last Thursday's frenzy.

And while it was gratifying that my staff and I were able to get to the bottom of this on behalf of my constituents, and the thousands of Canadian snowbirds who were justifiably concerned, I had to wonder where the Ontario Government was while people were scrambling. It was radio silence on their end.

So what becomes of this reckless law? It will be repealed in Florida's next legislative session.

[www.frankklees.com](http://www.frankklees.com)

## Burning Questions about the Larter Mural

Over the years we've all enjoyed and been educated by the Canadian Achievements mural at the corner of Yonge and Wellington. But its content does raise some questions, such as:

With Marc Garneau having visited the sign at least twice, when will Aurora get on the “places to visit” lists of the other people up there, like Marilyn Bell, Queen Elizabeth II, and Bonhomme?

And speaking of Marc Garneau, did anyone else notice that the perspective of the photo of him in last week's Auroran made it look like his claim to fame was “First in donut consumption”?

Did you know that the average Wellington commuter will spend a total of at least 4 hours each year sitting in traffic westbound beside the mural waiting for the light at Yonge Street to turn green?

Apart from the train station, why aren't there more historical references to Aurora, such as a Fleury plough, Sisman shoe, Hillary House, or an integrity commissioner?

Why is that whenever some sort of temporary notice goes up over part of

the mural, like an election sign, it's always covering the picture of Emily Stowe?

Where else but in Canada would a figure like Mr. Dressup be included (and rightfully so) on a mural depicting great national figures and achievements?

How many people catch the incorrect upper case “D” in “MacDonald”?

Did the sponsors who originally contributed to the mural and whose company names and logos appear on it realize they would have this advertising at the main intersection of Aurora for at least 10 years?

With the space shuttle retired, will it be repainted over with a picture of the international space station, so that Canadarm's continued use can be acknowledged?

Did you know that the original description for Lester B Pearson was



### INSIDE AURORA

Scott Johnston

not “First Canadian Nobel Prize Winner”, but “Record of 8 consecutive detentions while attending Church Street School”?

Isn't it sad that one of Canada's greatest technological achievements, the Avro Arrow, had such a brief history?

How much older do you feel when a person younger looks at the mural and asks “who's Rick Hansen?”

With the success of the efforts of local resident Harry Lumsden to bring the Trumpeter Swan back from the edge of extinction acknowledged around the world, why is the Canada Goose the waterfowl displayed on the mural?

What happened with the proposal from several years ago to replace the mural with a new one depicting Canadian Juno winners?

While there is some representation, could they not have found a few more examples of women who have con-

tributed to our history?

Does it bother people at our first trans Canada railway, the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), that they are often referred to as their chief rivals, the Canadian National Railway (CNR), as is suggested on the mural?

If signatures were to be included for any of the people up there, why were they added for the scientists (Banting and Best), who are not traditionally associated with signatures, and not the artists (Group of Seven), who are?

With the penny, nickel, dime, loonie and toonie represented on the mural by the maple leaf, beaver, Bluenose, loon and polar bear, why was the quarter's caribou passed over for inclusion?

What sort of paint did they use that withstands the exposure to the harsh elements of each season so well, and can someone please come over and paint my deck with it?

Is not one of the great things about living in Aurora the fact that we have private companies like Larter that make the effort to produce public art like this for everyone's enjoyment?

Feel free to e-mail Scott at: [machellscorners@gmail.com](mailto:machellscorners@gmail.com)

# Timing threatens to jeopardize the Victorian Tea & Picture Show

What an adventure!  
On Wednesday, everything was going according to plan. We were down to our last 15 tickets and it was quite possible we'd sell out by Friday. And then, the storm hit.  
Fortunately, the forecaster called for clear weather Saturday and Sunday, just in time for the Victorian tea. What a relief!

Friday, I ventured out into the storm to pick up the handouts from the printer. To make sure things were set at the Centre, I spent the rest of the day there ensuring the necessary services were in place, and envisioning exactly how the day would go.

Feeling confident we were all set, I headed home. Saturday brought another surprise. My furnace died overnight, which meant spending the day waiting for the repairman to arrive, putting the final touches on the

sponsor "thank you" display, wrapping the final tea samples, and gathering all the items together, ready to pack into the car on Sunday.

Saturday, 11 p.m.: I'm sitting at the computer downloading old images from the Victorian era for the display table. "Oh, no!" I screamed. "I forgot to pick up the flowers."

In desperation, I tried to contact the florist who doesn't open on Sundays. Sunday morning, I got online to search in vain for a home number and to send her an urgent email.

Around 10 a.m. as I was loading the car, she called back to say she'd have someone at the shop at 11:30 a.m.

I rushed out the door, picked up one of my committee members, hurried to the Centre and unloaded the car. I had 10 minutes left. After a brief encounter with some of the committee, I raced to the florist, got the

flowers and raced back.

The event just wouldn't have been the same without those flowers.

As I collected myself and began work on the parlor, I was very pleased to see just how well my committee members came through at the last moment. While I was gone, they had set the tables, complete with handouts and tea samples, and begun work on the front display. Everything was looking great, just as I envisioned it. And then they dealt with the food and little surprises, ensuring every aspect was as planned.

We were down to the wire, and I hadn't changed into my period dress yet. By the skin of my teeth, I was at



## SENIOR SCAPE

Sylvia Dickens

the front just as the guests and sponsors were pouring through the door in a rush to experience the event.

Throughout the afternoon, the committee continued to come through and helped to clear the tables,

since we were a little short on kitchen staff, and then cleared away the room décor at the end. They are a speedy bunch!

Guests thoroughly enjoyed themselves, especially the chance to step back in time and be pampered. Some came in wonderful period costumes, while others wore fancy hats and dressed very nicely for this special occasion. They were happy for the opportunity to get their pictures

taken by our committee members Bev and Don.

Eight people won the wonderful door prizes. All were thrilled at the special touches like the chocolate hearts, the handouts and the beautiful carnations they took home. They even had the chance to try the Oolong tea, just one of three teas in their samples.

They say timing is everything, but I'm not sure this chaos was what they meant.

If you don't mind, I'm going to take the liberty here of thanking all those who helped make this happen. They don't always get enough recognition for the incredible work they do as volunteers and the sacrifices they make.

In this particular case, their service was especially appreciated because it happened on a Sunday, a time they normally reserved for their own families.

The kitchen staff: Irene Hunter; Don Stevenson, Joan Stevenson and Joan Levert who sewed the beautiful white lace aprons for the servers.

Bill Hawke, the staff per-

son who worked diligently to ensure all the tables, audio/video equipment and displays were in place.

The volunteer receptionists who sold tickets and answered questions. Without them, there would have been no Victorian tea.

And lastly, my committee: Jan Freedman, Mike Ilkiw, Bev Will, Don Keel, Virginia Bodnar, and Elfriede Greupner who offered a wealth of insight and assistance throughout.

I'd also like to thank the three ladies who generously loaned us the beautiful silver tea services and the gentleman who surprised me with the fantastic old portrait of Queen Victoria.

The event was sponsored in part by the Real Estate Ladies, to whom we are grateful.

For more information on the aurora seniors' centre and all it has to offer, drop by 90 John West Way, visit the web site [www.auroraseniors.ca](http://www.auroraseniors.ca), email [auroraseniors@rogers.com](mailto:auroraseniors@rogers.com) or call 905-726-4767 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday to Friday.

## Letters to the editor

### Downtown Aurora needs a new identity: Abel

Aurora, what you hear is true.

The Town of Aurora has identified within the Yonge Wellington Downtown Core (YWDC) the old Library and Fire Hall properties on Victoria St as surplus.

Aurora has an outstanding heritage district in the YWDC, along with our treasured Cultural Centre and vibrant Library. Aurora has lots of small town charm and character. The Library gives us a bit of an education bend, so you would think we'd be able to sustain an economic sector within. However, Councils have heard for over a decade the YWDC needs to be revitalized.

We have the Promenade Study from last term. Cost \$141,000. Recently a Streetscapes Study. Cost \$25,000. You'd be disappointed if you expected these studies to address the revitalization of the Downtown Core.

The Austin Texas Revitalization Authority (ATRA) is quite a story

The ATRA is a private, nonprofit corporation. The strategy adopted was to partner government, local organizations and private resources to form a Community Development Group. This group or Authority as they call it, was tasked to revitalize the neglected and decaying Downtown Core. As well, this district had major social and residential issues that Austin had to overcome.

Their focus paid off large

to re-establish the proud residential community in the downtown heritage district, complete with a vibrant retail and commercial sector. It wasn't like that 15 years ago. What was once a blight, is now the envy of many cities with decaying downtown cores. Austin is an innovator.

The ATRA shows us that we must promote a positive community working partnership. Called upon to invest resources into Social Capital.

Aurora's Core Focus would be: engaging consumers, supporting our youth, and building businesses.

The cycle: a healthy economy that helps fund the Cultural Centre, they in turn engage the community, which in turn has consumers spending time and money on businesses.

An Identity must be created. I draw your attention to the Big Apple and Webers Burgers. Both stories illustrate how an identity created a reason for speeding commuters to be drawn to stop at their locations. The hugely successful operations now have accompanying gas stations, Tim Hortons and shops. Economies that did not exist before are now vibrant and sustainable. Amazing what an identity can do!

In Aurora, I propose as an Identity – Live Music. That's what Austin Texas did.

Let the surplus properties become a common area with a performing arts building at the north end of the site. The open space would be adjacent to the Cultural Centre and the Library. The common area would mirror in the same fashion as the Newmarket's Riverwalk Commons. Let the "inclusive creativity" design an interesting gathering place for our community featuring our Farmers' Market, live music, performing artists, artisans and novelty vendors.

Flowerboxes would be made to look like accordions, bike racks - guitars, benches like piano's, garbage cans – drums, etc. This theme would be taken from the common square out to Yonge St. The YWDC streetscapes would now take on the music theme to backstop the live music identity. Along with the Aurora's fabulous trademark mural – The Larter Building on Wellington, we could compliment buildings on Yonge Street with huge murals depicting music.

Our Youth Centre would have recording studios and workshops supporting the live music industry and performing arts.

The money invested will be recouped in tax assessment of the new businesses attracted to the Downtown Core. Ripple effect on job creation, engaged community, will attract higher values for our home and new businesses relocating to our Town.

Aurora's Downtown Core would become a live music destination, with restaurants, supporting shops, and a focus on performing arts.

In the coming months the Town will be asking for your ideas on what to do with the old library. You can make a difference. "Aurora, only Sounds Too Good to be True."

Councillor John Abel  
Aurora

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### Resident has suggestions for downtown improvements

Aurora's "historic downtown core" is clean, pleasant and dull.

Planners suggest more trees, more lighting, "pedestrian friendly", different paving material, street side planters, and "heritage street furniture".

Aurora's "historic downtown core" would be clean, pleasant and dull.

Aurora is Aurora. Aurora is not

Unionville and it is not Markham. Planners should suggest more development.

Planners should suggest maximum density residential development in the Downtown Core. This will put "boots on the ground" and "boots on the ground" will encourage existing commercial establishments to stay and encourage new commercial establishments to

come.

Markham proposes to spend \$325-million to develop an arena. Imagine what \$325-million in development could do for the "Aurora Promenade Plan."

Aurora's "historic downtown core" would be clean, pleasant and – if not exciting – interesting.

Ross King  
Aurora

## Aurora has taken the lead in building a “complete” community: Mayor Dawe

By Brock Weir

Since Mayor Geoffrey Dawe took office in 2010, he has continually touted Aurora as a great place to live, work, and raise a family.

Indeed, this is a mantra that was deployed heavily by his predecessors as well, but looking ahead to Aurora's economic future, this philosophy in action is one of Aurora's chief selling points to newcomers – both looking to live and work in our community.

This week, Mayor Dawe will be speaking to Members and guests of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce at the annual Mayor's Luncheon at St. Andrew's College. He sat down with The Auroran on Friday to give readers a sneak peek of what's to come.

His speech last year focused on the state of the local economy and its relationship to the international community. At the time, the crisis in the Eurozone was at fever pitch – and still smouldering – but he also had some economic bombshells to deliver, such as the imminent arrival of Bulk Barn into the new business park near Wellington and Highway 404.

While he was mum on any such announcement on Friday, he was very optimistic about Aurora's economic state. Great barometers of the local economy are building permits and housing sales, he said.

“The quantity of sales is not as robust this year as it has been in the past, but the pricing is holding,” he said. “I think that is an indicator that perhaps people are looking to be a little bit more selective in when they move and how they move, but they are also being selective in where they wish to move to and that is helping us hold our housing price.”

This covers the “live” portion in the triple crown of Aurora's sales pitch, but what about “work”?

Aurora is a fulsome community and not just a bedroom community for employees holding jobs in Toronto, he argued, where people hop in their cars or get on the GO first thing in the morning and arrive back in time for dinner or later. This has been a focus in developing community infrastructure to make Aurora much more of a “community home”, and added that Aurora may be starting to reap the benefits.

“I think that is confirmed that we have businesses starting to locate and substantial businesses are locating here,” he said. “I think by investing in that and taking the lead we have created a great community that becomes a complete community.”

In the last few months, Mayor Dawe said similarly interested companies have come in looking for potential places to build or bring their businesses. The quick answer to their queries was to hop in his car and do a cruise around Town looking for potential opportunities, he said, pointing out ideal places to install a business but also underscoring existing and future housing nearby to foster this sense of a complete community.

“I think you just go back to Sales 101 and say, here's our benefits, here's

our features, and here's what it is going to do for you,” he said.

As many new businesses come into Aurora, however, it is important to make sure our existing businesses are well attended to as well. As we have seen in recent years, and as recently as last month, business owners in the Downtown Core have a less than rosy viewpoint of how things have been progressing.

Interest has been swift and ongoing in the lands bordering the 404, but the question remains on how to get such interest to continue to head west into Town. Mayor Dawe said that part of that happens “organically” and, for instance, manufacturing companies are more likely to look in the Industrial Parkway area rather than the 404 due to property prices, so interest often stems from the business itself.

“Through the Community improvement Plan, some of the options we have up Yonge Street would be some tax deferral plans or other investments that we can look at working with those businesses,” he said. “None of this has been approved so this is just some blue sky-ing here, but there are some options we can look at.”

Positive feedback had been received from residents and business owners in regards to the development of a Community Improvement Plan and a potential for business improvement as well, added Marco Ramunno, Aurora's Director of Planning. The next step in the process, he said, was to survey additional businesses, holding more workshops and “seeking their input in moving forward and actually developing a plan to get a buy-in” from downtown businesses.

Downtown Aurora, particularly in the radius of the Yonge and Wellington intersection has always presented particular challenges, but looking back to the last couple of years and ahead to the next few, Mayor Dawe said substantial progress had been made, whether they are new apartments and condos that have gone up, or are slated to go up in the near future, or redevelopment projects like the Wells Street Schoolhouse Lofts, or turning the vacant Thompson's Furniture building to the new home of the popular Aw Shucks! restaurant.

“[Aw Shucks!] is a great boon for the downtown core,” said Mayor Dawe. “It signals that business is actively interested in developments down there and somebody is willing to put a substantial investment in that building and turn it into to something I think is going to be quite spectacular.”

“[Urbanist] Jane Jacobs always said] don't bring people downtown; have them downtown. Those residences going in on Yonge Street will help with that.”

This is the first installment of a two-part interview with Mayor Dawe. Next week's installment will focus on the Aurora Promenade and Aurora over the next decade and beyond. The full interview, however, can be viewed online at [www.theauroran.com](http://www.theauroran.com).



Mayor Geoffrey Dawe, pictured Friday in his office at Town Hall, will deliver his annual address to the Aurora Chamber of Commerce this Thursday, February 21, at St. Andrew's College.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir


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# Gilmore’s decision was “only reasonable conclusion” : Lawyer

From page 1

Justice Gilmore ruled that “nothing had been crystallized” at the time of this meeting indicating any financial interest on the part of Ms. Morris.

“At its best and highest, I find the discussions at the closed session meeting to be related to a decision to investigate and take further steps, nothing more,” said Justice Gilmore. “No one at the meeting, including Ms. Morris, knew what the outcome of the investigations would be. As such I find no breach of Section 5 of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.”

To reach this decision, Justice Gilmore said she relied on the evidence of Ms. Morris, current Councillor Wendy Gaertner, former councillors Evelina MacEachern and Stephen Granger, as well as affidavits from Aurora CAO Neil Garbe and Clerk John Leach.

“Since a conflict cannot be declared retroactively, the circumstances of the closed meeting on September 14, 2010 are of paramount importance in determining if the basis for a conflict existed,” Justice Gilmore ruled. “Although Ms. Morris asked that this item be

added to the agenda, she did not draft the wording of the added item. It should be noted that the agenda item makes no specific reference to Ms. Morris as Mayor, but more generally refers to matters affecting the municipality.”

Justice Gilmore said the councillors’ evidence indicated that “Council was focused on finding out who the bloggers were so that posts could be removed” and “there was never any discussion about commencing a lawsuit in Ms. Morris’ name because the discussion focused on protecting the municipality and not Ms. Morris personally.”

The resulting motion, she concluded, was “vague and neutral and for good reason” as Council “intended for more investigation to take place.”

“No actual decision was taken that evening that litigation would be commenced or in whose name it would be commenced,” she said. “I further find that the discussions at the closed meeting related to concerns about the reputation of the municipality and its administration (including the Mayor) but did not focus exclusively on Ms. Morris.”

She added that while

Mr. Garbe and Mr. Leach “seemed certain” there was a discussion in the closed session meeting about a lawsuit, discussions were “very broadly based and tended to focus on how to determine the identities of the author(s) of the authors damaging blog posts.

“The discussions were generalised because it was recognized that no specific action could be taken without an outside opinion being sought. Based on the evidence from those present at the Council meeting, I find that no concrete decision of any kind was taken at the closed session meeting, and as such, no pecuniary interest was created at the time of the closed session.”

Then-deputy mayor Bob McRoberts participated in the Closed Session discussion and initially supported the recommendations coming out. By the time it came up for formal approval by Council he recanted his position. He was asked by Mr. Hervey to submit an affidavit and was willing to do so, but with the legal advice he received at the time, was not willing to go to the level desired.

In a statement to The Auroran following the

release of Justice Gilmore’s decision, Mr. O’Melia said Ms. Morris is “pleased” with the decision and “grateful for the effort that Justice Gilmore clearly put into analysing the actual facts in the situation.

“It is a complete and unqualified vindication of our client and, from a lawyer’s perspective, it was the only conclusion that could reasonable have been achieved,” he said. “I certainly hope that the Town will have due regard for Justice Gilmore’s clear and well-reasoned decision. The underlying litigation initiated by the Town has been discontinued and a Justice of the Superior Court with all the facts before her, has clearly and unequivocally determined that Ms. Morris never acted in a Conflict of Interest and that the allegations that have been made against her were untrue.”

Under the act, Mr. Hervey cannot appeal the judge’s decision and speaking to The Auroran, Mr. O’Melia added: “This will end it and my client is quite happy to end it on this note, which is completely in her favour.”


Calls to Ms. Copeland, lawyer for Mr. Hervey, were not returned by press time.



Keith Franklin ladled out his fair share of flapjacks last Tuesday at Trinity Anglican Church’s annual pancake supper. This year’s event attracted over 150 hungry stomachs, young and old.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

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# Town’s insurance covered Morris costs: Clerk

By Brock Weir

Costs for former Aurora mayor Phyllis Morris were covered by the Town’s insurance policy, one of several items that have gone to contribute to nearly \$40,000 increase in municipal insurance premiums this year, according to Town Clerk John Leach.

Ms. Morris’ legal fees were covered by the Town’s insurance policy since the action commenced in the spring of 2011. In a similar fashion, former mayor Tim Jones was covered in his defence against a local taxi company owner.

That case was dismissed at the start of January.

“Our claims/loss ration determines at least in part how much our insurance rates go up and that obviously was a claim which was responded to by the insurance company so they factor that into the mix,” Mr. Leach told The Auroran on Hervey v. Morris.

Mr. Leach said he simply didn’t know how much of the nearly \$40,000 increase to the premiums could be attributed to covering Ms. Morris in this case as the insurance company doesn’t break down the specifics, but they would just claim it was factored into the mix.

“We don’t have a total bill [yet on this matter] and I don’t know until we get an accounting on the insurance

company for what they actually paid out,” said Mr. Leach, predicting that it might not be a significant claim. “It may well be significant but we just don’t know at this point.

“We have trip and fall claims on sidewalks that cost a lot more money than that.”

Council considered the \$39,353 increase on Corporate Insurance premiums at the January 21 budget meeting. In a report before Councillors at that time, Mr. Leach said that number was based on “an early staff estimate.”

“Our insurer has advised that the actual cost will increase from \$339,508 for 2012 to \$392,567 for 2013, an increase of \$53,059 (including taxes) or a 15.6 increase over last year. This significant increase is a result of a poor claims/loss ratio, including increases in legal defense expenses incurred by the insurer in respect of insurable claims filed against the Town.”

Councillor Wendy Gaertner raised the issue of when more detailed information on current legal expense claims would be provided to Council in closed session, as well as further information on the impacts these would have on 2013’s increased insurance costs. Mr. Leach said a full report would be expected within the next two months, possibly as early as the March 19 General Committee Meeting.

Steven O’Melia, lawyer for Ms. Morris, has yet to file a claim for costs following Justice Gilmore’s decision last week in Ms. Morris’ favour. Requests for comment had not been returned at press time.

External legal counsel hired by the insurer to represent the Town, Mr. Jones, and bylaw officer Heather Green in the taxi matter were awarded just over \$3,700 in costs in their successful defence.

# St. Joseph students retain crown in ranking

By Brock Weir

St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School was once again named Aurora’s top elementary school in the Fraser Institute’s annual ranking of Ontario public and Catholic schools.

Province-wide, St. Joseph came in 37th out of a possible 2,714 schools in a four-way tie.

The school was ranked in a number of key areas related to student performance to achieve their overall Fraser ranking of 9.5 out of 10. These include continued success in Grade 3 reading in 2012 and improved performance in Grade 3 writing, Grade 6 reading, and Grade Six writing, based on standardised testing. Compared to last year’s numbers, the only average to take a hit was both Grade 3 and Grade 6 math testing.

St. Joseph ranked 44th in a five-way tie last year out of 2,695 schools in the same survey.

Several Aurora schools did not fare nearly as well as St. Joseph’s, with many schools sinking in the ranks compared to the previous year.

One success story, however, was Ecole Saint-Jean, which was Aurora’s bottom ranked school in last

Continued on page 17

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## Timing was an important factor in Judge's decision

By Brock Weir

In her decision in favour of former Aurora mayor Phyllis Morris on Monday, Justice Cory Gilmore addressed what was perhaps at the most basic concern in this matter – whether George Hervey met his time requirements in bringing forward his action against Ms. Morris.

Under the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act (MCOIA), an elector such as Mr. Hervey has six weeks to bring forward an action in the event he suspects a potential breach of the Act took place.

“[This] is not triggered

by mere knowledge of the facts alleged to constitute the contravention, but rather what is required is knowledge of the facts alleged to constitute the contravention of the Act and an understanding that those facts are likely to constitute a breach of the Act,” said Justice Gilmore in her decision. “Specifically, there must be an understanding that the facts likely constitute a breach of the act.”

During their arguments before Justice Gilmore in Newmarket, Mr. Hervey's lawyer, Jill Copeland, argued that the six month countdown began in March 2011

when the Town of Aurora released the executive summary of a report from George Rust-D'Eye, outside legal counsel hired by the Town, to look at their obligations with respect to the lawsuit.

Since there were no minutes made public of the September 2010 which ultimately lead to the lawsuit against the three Aurora bloggers, there was no information made public on what transpired until Mr. Rust-D'Eye's report was released by Council the following spring.

Steven O'Melia, lawyer for Ms. Morris, however, contended the countdown

began in an October 2010, when The Auroran published its October 19, 2010 report “Taxpayers Pick Up Tab for \$6 million lawsuit” on the commencement of the lawsuit against Mr. Hogg, Mr. Johnson, and Ms. Bishenden, outlining the facts on the table.

Justice Gilmore sided with this argument.

“Ms. Morris points out that the meeting in question was held in September 2010, although the application was not commenced until May 2011,” said Justice Gilmore in her decision. “She submits that the Applicant had knowledge

of the fact that the Act may have been breached and was part of a group of people who discussed that very topic. Ms. Morris submits that the limitation period began to run as of October 19, 2010 and ended on November 30, 2010 because the information about the closed session meeting was made available to the public.”

In his cross-examination, Mr. Hervey claimed he discussed the matter with Alison Collins-Mrakas, Bill Hogg, and former mayor Tim Jones. No evidence from any of the three parties were entered into the record.

In her reasoning, Justice Gilmore said the “strict time limit” in the act is meant to “protect elected officials” and ensure that applications are timely. The responsibility of establishing a possible contravention, she added, must be borne by the party bringing it forward. Any knowledge Mr. Hervey may have had that a possible contravention may have taken place is the trigger and our article was enough to get the ball rolling.

“The applicant had the factual underpinning to subjectively believe a breach of the Act had occurred after the October 19, 2010 article in The Auroran,” she said. “His beliefs were strong enough that they led him to taking certain actions such as having discussions with one of the named Defendants in the defamation action, seeking legal opinion and taking matters to the point of attempting to determine who would be the

Applicant in this application.

“I reject the Applicant's argument that he had to wait for the publication of the Rust-D'Eye report to obtain the certainty he needed to commence this application. There is sufficient evidence to support he believed that a breach had occurred as early as October 19, 2010 and as late as mid-March 2011. Using either date to trigger the limitation results in an application that is statute barred as it was not issued until May 10, 2011.

“I am satisfied on a preponderance of evidence that the Applicant had the required knowledge under the MCOIA by mid-March 2011 at the latest, which would put the issuance of this application outside the limitation period. As such, the Application is dismissed.”

## Wards for Aurora could be considered this fall

By Brock Weir

Residents champing at the bit to replace Aurora's current “at-large” Council with a ward system representing specific areas around Town will have to wait until at least the fall to know whether they can cast their vote in that direction.

Council made the decision last week to defer consideration of a motion brought forward by Councillor Paul Pirri to look at whether Aurora needs a ward system until September or October for a report from staff outlining the history of the ward question in Aurora, the experience of other municipalities in adopting wards, and costs.

Aurora currently has an “at large” representation system where voters are allowed to vote for up to eight candidates for Council, plus the position of mayor. In a ward system, voters would only be able to vote for council candidates running in their particular neighbourhood to represent them rather than a slate of eight.

Councillor Pirri's motion not only looked at whether Aurora needs a ward system for implementation in time for the 2018 municipal election, but also whether the number of Councillors should be knocked down from eight to six. One of these six, he argued, should be tasked specifically with representing Aurora's interests at the Region of York.

It is important to put this question on a referendum, he added, because although it has been talked about by Council many times over the decades, momentum has never gone as far as getting voters the chance to have their say on the ballot.

“I do think it is time that we approach our residents to ask them the question,” said Councillor Pirri.

“I am truly in favour of having a more efficient Council and I think

by having fewer of us we might achieve that. We might also achieve a savings of \$250,000 per term as it stands now.”

When the matter came before members at last Tuesday's meeting there were more questions than answers from just about everyone on the table. Councillor John Gallo, for instance, questioned those municipalities such as Oshawa who had an at-large system, went to wards, but quickly went back to the status quo. He also questioned comparisons made between various municipalities by Councillor Pirri as some municipalities' councillors are full time, whereas in Aurora, Councillors are part-time.

Councillor Chris Ballard entertained the idea and said it would be a good one to put to voters, but questioned whether such a plan would ultimately lead to efficiencies.

“Aurora is a very different place than it was in 1991 when we first had this debate,” he said. “It has grown and [there are] different demographics and a lot of people who come from different areas where there are wards, so it is good to have this conversation.”

Two years ago when he said his “feet were sore” from knocking on doors he would have thought wards were a good idea. Now? Maybe not.

“I am getting mixed reviews,” he said of communities that have made the switch.

Councillor Evelyn Buck has a similar argument to Councillor Ballard and said in her experience at the Council table and on the campaign trail those who are most enthusiastic about wards are either newly elected or first time candidates who think their job would be easier if they campaigned in a limited geographic area.

“When I was young and feisty and the Region was created, the

Provinces gave municipalities the option of deciding how many members of Council they would have,” said Councillor Buck. “I put forward the idea that we should reduce the numbers of Councillors, there was an uproar, and I almost got lynched – one of the many times.

“People do appreciate the options that they have. I think in terms of saving the taxpayers' money, it never happens. You reduce it to six members of Council and all of a sudden you have a bigger workload. They ought to be paid for it.”

With the two questions on Councillor Pirri's motion, Councillor Michael Thompson said while he would like to see them as two separate questions, it was premature at this point to consider it further. There have been no shortage of debates on the subject, but if staff were to come back with a report, one of the things that should be included is how to “educate” the public on their options.

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# THE AURORAN REAL ESTATE



## REAL ESTATE INSIGHTS

Stefani P. Konidis

### Market Report

This month, we focus on the Market Report for all of the Toronto Real Estate Board. The Aurora market has seen a similar reaction in the start of 2013.

Sales results for the first month of 2013 were stronger than anticipated. During the last half of 2012 the market witnessed consecutive negative variances, some substantial compared to the corresponding month the year before.

The Toronto Real Estate Board reported 4,375 residential property sales in January, only 1.3 percent less than the 4,432 reported sales in January 2012. Considering that January 2012 was the first of six extremely strong months last year, the results are very promising.

The average selling price increased in January compared to January 2012. January's average sale price came in at \$482,648, a 4.3 per cent increase compared to the \$462,655 average sale price achieved in January last year. It is interesting to note that in January 2003 the average sale price was \$293,067. In the last ten years average sale prices in Toronto have increased by 65 percent.

During this same period average household incomes have not increased anywhere near the increase in average sale prices. However during this same period mortgage interest rates have declined from approximately 6 per cent in 2003 to less than 3 percent for a five-year term today.

The very strong average sale prices achieved by the Toronto market have clearly been driven by declining interest rates.

A deeper examination of the overall Toronto market place in January indicates that the results are not homogeneous. For example, in the 416 trading districts of Toronto, detached home sales fell by 7.6 percent, semi-detached fell by 5.2 per cent and townhouses by 11.2 per cent.

Meanwhile, in the 905 trading districts, detached home sales increased by 3.7 per cent, semi-detached by 0.9 per cent and townhouse sales by 1 per cent compared to January 2012.

In both the 416 and 905 trading districts condominium sales were in decline. No doubt an explanation for this disparity in results is due to average sale prices.

The cost of a detached house in the 905 trading districts is 35 per cent less than a detached house in the 416 districts. Semi-detached homes are 49 per cent less expensive, and townhouses are 16 per cent less costly.

Add the additional land transfer tax that buyers have to pay in the 416 trading districts and you have an explanation for the better performance in the 905 trading districts.

Over the past few months the average days on market for Toronto and area properties has been increasing. In January it took 37 days for listed properties to sell, 5 days more than in January 2012.

In December the average days on market was also 37 days. Considering that on average condominium apartments took 45 days to sell, one day more than in December, the average days on market statistic, although it has increased, has not become worrisome.

It is a market statistic that must be carefully watched as the 2013 Toronto resale market unfolds. Notwithstanding that January ended with 14,231 active listings, 15.8 percent more than the 12,290 in 2012, months of inventory remained unchanged at 2.7 months. At the beginning of last year it was 2.2 months.

**\*This report as seen on The Chestnut Park Blog, by Chris Kapches, Sr VP, Chestnut Park Real Estate Limited, Brokerage.**

*Stefani Konidis is a Sales Representative with Chestnut Park Real Estate Limited, Brokerage, Exclusive Affiliate of Christie's International Real Estate. She has been trading in real estate for over 12 years. Stefani works with partner, Kim Nichols, Sales Representative and they both live and work in King and Aurora. Both Stefani and Kim were awarded the Director's Award from their Brokerage for achievements in 2012 and can be reached at 416-925-9191.*

This week, my job took me to working on a staircase and I thought it would be good to explain how you can turn those carpeted stairs into beautiful hardwood.

Lots of the Big Box stores have all the supplies you need to transform your carpeted staircase into a beautiful hardwood showpiece.

Depending on the amount of work you are willing to do, you can either go with a solid hardwood tread that is thin and basically fits over the treads that are existing (this is the easiest option). Or you can pop off the old treads and install new, solid hardwood or pressed treads with a veneer (Note: I prefer solid over veneer every time).

For this article, I will focus on the option of replacing the treads.

The first thing you will need to do, of course, is rip out all that terrible carpet. A word of caution: this will be a bit of a messy and dusty exercise so plan accordingly. Also, when removing the carpet be sure to remove all the nails and/or staples as well.

Once you have removed the carpeting, you will need to remove all the spindles if

it is an open staircase. If it isn't an open staircase then you won't have to worry about that – and will save yourself quite a bit of time!

With the carpet and spindles removed, you will begin installing the new tread at the bottom of the staircase, working your way up to the top. Don't try it the other way, folks, or you will learn the hard way that it will not turn out well!

If the risers are also being replaced with hardwood, then you should replace both tread and riser at the same time, working from the bottom up.

If, however, the risers are getting painted – a currently popular design style – and the existing ones are in good condition, then just ensure that all the staples have been removed, fill all the holes, sand and then the risers are good to be painted.

Assuming then that you are keeping the risers, all we



Tom Mrakas

## ASK TOM

### Transforming your Stairs

have to do is start by removing the treads two at a time. Once you remove two then you can install your first tread. A little trick to ensure better results is to run an adhesive along the edges before you set the tread down, then screw it down. Once the tread is screwed into place, you should reach in from the open second tread (hence the reason why you pull off two treads at once) and tack a few brad nails from the back of the riser into the tread

you just installed to ensure the tread is in securely.

Just keep repeating with each step until you reach the top. Now at the top, because you won't be able to reach in and brad nail the riser to the tread, what you do is just add adhesive to the back of the tread as you should have been doing! And this will be good for the top tread.

There you have it – a great looking hardwood staircase and the pride of knowing you did it!

*Until next week, remember a good job, is a job well done! If you have any questions you can reach me at [www.facebook.com/anastasisdesign](http://www.facebook.com/anastasisdesign) or on Twitter; @ADesign\_build and email, of course, [Anastasis@anastasisdesign.ca](mailto:Anastasis@anastasisdesign.ca).*



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The black walnut tree, above, was cut down in northwest Aurora due to safety concerns. Rather than end up as garbage or firewood, it has been turned into many different products by King artist Steve Meschino, including the inlay in this white oak table below.



## Designer puts new spin on old growth

By Brock Weir

When a black walnut tree, which stood proudly in northwest Aurora for well over a century, was beginning to feel the weight of its age, it was deemed a safety risk and put unceremoniously on the chopping block.

A chance encounter with a local artist gave the tree, however, a new lease on its...afterlife deflecting it from landfill or other less noble destinations.

Carpenter Steve Meschino of King's Cherrywood Studios saw an opportunity with the poor old tree, hauled off its remaining trunk and transformed it into a variety of rustic but modern wooden desks, tables, benches, magazine stands, and other accessories.

Mr. Meschino has always had a love of woodworking. As a senior VP for information systems for a call centre company, it was always a hobby. He found the people he came into contact with every day through this business had a similar creative streak, whether it was through visual art, music, or the written word.

To build upon his hobby, he built himself a wood shop, working on the odd piece here and there, but about six years ago he decided to "get out of the rat race and focus on his passion.

"[My work and my hobby] were both strangely very creative," says Mr. Meschino.

Evidently his reputation preceded him as when he decided to shift his full focus, he had already accumulated a number of logs from people in the general vicinity.

"People who knew I built stuff with wood contacted me and I had to go pick them up," he says of his raw materials. "It just sort of blossomed from there. It wasn't something I set out to do, but it just happened.

Examining his work – although Cherrywood has branched out, tables are his primary focus – he sees the end result both as a utilitarian piece of furniture, but also a work of art that just happens to be functional. He says he doesn't look at a design and say it is designed strictly for beauty, or strictly for function, but the two often go hand in hand with the end result.

With the business going full steam ahead, he has three or four arborists in the York Region area in regular contact and he's often near the top of their call list if they have a really great piece of wood to cut down. It works out well for them too, as he is willing to come and help them get the job done. He puts in the gas and the elbow grease, they get some assistance with the removal, and the prize is "beautiful old growth logs."

One recent example he cites is a homeowner looking to expand their property. An old tree stands in the way of the plans, but their new course of action is to remove the tree and incorporate the lumber into the new home as well as furniture.

"From a sustainability standpoint, it is all about local sourcing," he says. "We had a customer last year who wanted an outdoor table and asked if we would be interested in building it. We don't deal with foreign hardwood, but I said we do have a beautiful local hardwood that is very sustainable and an excellent outdoor wood – white oak.

"We built her this lovely white oak table with a steel base for her garden, so you take that idea and people have this image in their mind of what an outdoor table is. You say it doesn't have to be imported from Africa, South America, or a rainforest somewhere. It can be a sustainable wood which is grown right here in southern Ontario and the customer feels so much better about using something that is local."

Here we are in mid-February and, I don't know about you, but I'm suffering from the mid-winter blues.

One cure for that will be the upcoming Indoor Market on Saturday, February 23 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the Aurora Cultural Centre. More about what you can expect to find there in a moment.

First, however, let me introduce you to Snowden Farms, operated by John and Linda Snowden. Apparently, farming has been in the family for several generations. They are known for their naturally raised beef from which they make many different products.

They offer steaks, roasts, ground beef, stewing beef, beef patties, and sausages—all extra lean. They also accept freezer orders.

They do a booming busi-

ness at the Market with their wide variety of meat pies. They have several combinations of ingredients with steak and ground beef, as well as chicken pies made especially for them.

These delicious pies come in individual, family and mini sizes. Family favourites for us are the steak and kidney and the steak and mushroom pies.

In addition, they produce gluten-free beef pies, lasagne, shepherd's pie, Cornish pasties, sausage rolls, chilli, and pulled beef. At Christmas time, they also carry beef Tortiere.



## MARKET MUSINGS

Jan Freedman

to offer. Many of your favourites will be there as well as some surprises.

Tricia will have her tea and coffee and John Abraham will have his fair trade coffee, bagels and German strudel. Perhaps you can persuade him to sing you his famous "strudel song". Andre is back from holiday and will be there with his wonderful

Please visit them at the next indoor market to try some of their wonderful meat.

Our third indoor Market for this season is quickly approaching and I encourage you to visit us to see what we have

honey, Kim will have her amazing soaps and lotions, and Nancy Wood is adding scarves to her usual collection of homemade bags.

Kind Organics will be there with their organic sprouts and salads as will Toscana bakery with their multitude of breads and pastries. Julianne will also be there with her gorgeous homemade, hand formed breads. In addition we will have butter tarts, Empire cookies, fudge, and scarves.

With spring around the corner, Shirley and George Wiedemeyer will be there with a wide variety of garden seeds so you can begin to plan your garden. They might even be taking orders for their heirloom plants. In addition to these vendors, we will have some surprises for you! So, do be sure to plan to visit the

Continued on page 17



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# Aurora Minor Hockey Association

## Results up to February 17, 2013



### House League

**101 Timbits - Calgary Red: 8**  
Noah Rayner 1G 1A, Yiannis Skanderis 4G 2A, Lucas Reid 2G 1A, Andrew Mettel 1G 1A, Evan Murphy 1A  
**107 Timbits - Nashville Silver: 5**  
Thomas Dimoulas 4G, Shaun Belman 1G, Trevor Smith 2A, Aidan Lindsay 1A, Julian Fryer 1A

**102 Timbits - Boston Gold: 8**  
Christian Pisapia 3G, Max Bruce 2G, William Dodd 2G, Marcus Gingl 1G, Adam Campagna 3A, Adam Wolanski 1A  
**106 Timbits - San Jose Teal: 3**  
Nate Brentnell 2G, Luca Graneri 1G, Brody Burns 1A

**103 Timbits - Toronto White: 5**  
**105 Timbits - Pittsburgh Black: 2**

**108 Timbits - Atlanta Sky: 4**  
Norbert Kristoff 2G, William Stratos 1G, Matthew Cogswell 1G  
**109 Timbits - Philly Orange: 1**  
Ethan Lane 1G, Jack Charbonneau 1A

**110 Timbits - Vintage LA Purple: 7**  
Jacob Powell 2G 1A, Robbie Cipollone 3G, William Pare 1G, Jack Bulmer 1G  
**104 Timbits - St. Louis Blue: 2**  
Lucas Dang 1G, Thomas Moir 1G

**109 Timbits - Philly Orange: 8**  
Andrew Aikens 2G 1A, Ethan Lane 3G, Noah Savage 1G, Jack Charbonneau 1G, Kane Poland 1G, Owen Jacobs 1A  
**107 Timbits - Nashville Silver: 1**  
Martin McConkey 1G

**101 Timbits - Calgary Red: 7**  
Jacob Warecki 1G 1A, Andrew Mettel 2G 2A, Nicholas Ferrante 1G, Ryan Hamill 2G, Noah Rayner 1G 1A  
**106 Timbits - San Jose Teal: 3**  
Owen Kamphuys 1A, Luc Warner 1G, Luca Graneri 1G, Bryce Lamontagne 1G

**102 Timbits - Boston Gold: 3**  
Marcus Gingl 2G, Adam Campagna 1G  
**105 Timbits - Pittsburgh Black: 1**  
Jack Rispin 1G

**103 Timbits - Toronto White: 11**  
**104 Timbits - St. Louis Blue: 4**

**201 Caravan Kids - Calgary Red: 4**  
Nathan Cobb 2G, Jacob Madore 2G  
**205 Caravan Kids - Pittsburgh Black: 0**

**604 Orr & Associates Insurance: 6**  
Cody Fisher 1G, Stetson Colicchio 1A, Kyle Gillies 1A, Carson Williams 3G 2A, Matteo Fiorentino 1A, Colby Harrison 1G, Matthew Gram 1G 2A  
**607 Crabby Joes: 1**  
Ben Godber 1G, Claudio Basso 1A, Adam Wochenmarkt 1A

**609 Aurora Lodge #148 IOOF: 4**  
Rony Wahab 1G, Eathan Moulds 1G, Dane Kerkkamp 1G 1A, Nicholas Robinson 1G 2A  
**602 Aurora Chrysler: 2**  
Alexandre Meunier-Geoffroy 2G, Jack Viney 2A

**609 Aurora Lodge #148 IOOF: 5**  
Rony Wahab 3G, Ian Lafrancois 1G, Nicholas Robinson 1G, Ethan Moulds 1A, Stephen Silverio 1A, Kyle Macfarland 1A  
**610 Rotary Club of Aurora: 4**  
Greg Gatzopoulos 2G 1A, Shayne Colin 1G, Andrew Hoogers 1A, Tyler Regan-Avila 2A

**607 Crabby Joes: 5**  
Cameron Lang 3G, Justin Foster 1A, Hunter Gilpin-Maier 1G, Michael Kieffer 2A, Ben Godber 1G, Adam Wochenmarkt 1A  
**602 Aurora Chrysler: 3**  
Brendan Dodd 1G, Ethan Jeries 1A, Jack Viney 2G, Nathan Smith 1A, Pranav Rendalkar 1A

**604 Orr & Associates Insurance: 3**  
Matthew Gram 1G, Daniel Babcock 2G  
**605 Omar's Shoes: 2**  
Guiliano Iervasi 1G 1A, Kyle Trumper 1G, Jacob Cowl 1A

**601 Aurora Home Hardware Bldg Ctr: 6**  
Jack Weaver 3G, Chris Sands 2G, Joseph Franze

1G, John Dol 2A, Evan Bryan 1A, Christian Ridd 2A, Evan Bryan 1A  
**607 Crabby Joes: 2**  
Carter Beacom 1G, Justin Foster 1G, Michael Vivian 1A, Matthew Parkin 1A, Justin Foster 1A

**801 Diamond Groundskeeping Services: 2**  
Daniel McConnell 1G, Ethan Brooks 1G  
**810 Neuman's Puck Bandits: 0**

**802 Aurora Home Hardware Bldg Ctr.: 5**  
Cam Anderson 1G 1A, Jack Bishenden 1A, Nathan Sherrard 1G, Colin Boorn 1A, Eric Shennan 1G 1A, Zachary Fletcher 1G, Cameron Palmer 1A, Jake Hatton 1G  
**809 Manhattan Trophies Ltd.: 3**  
Connor Gonsalves 2G, Alex Sesto 1G

**809 Manhattan Trophies Ltd.: 3**  
Collin Dyer 1G, James Freel 1G, Josh Fallavollita 1A, Alex Sesto 1G  
**810 Neuman's Puck Bandits: 3**  
Kyle Wulle 1G, Noah Murphy-Sealy 1G, Michael Montesanti 1G, James Samson 2A

**801 Diamond Groundskeeping Services: 5**  
Daniel McConnell 2G 1A, Blake Holtby 1A, Evan Nugent 1G, Adam Wilson 1A, Ethan Brooks 1G, Michael Dowling 1G, Aidan Burbank 1A  
**808 Twirl 'n' Top Yogurt Cafe': 2**  
Ben Kissack 1G, Justin Miller 2A, Jordan Reeves 1G, Jordan Kagan 2A

**803 McAlpine Ford: 2**  
Louie Simonin 2G, Tarek Koudmani 1A, Devon Hope 1A  
**806 Backyard Pool & Spa Co. Ltd.: 2**  
Jordan Elliott 1G, Lucas Bulmer 1G, Gorgio Venosa 1A, Andrew Sutherland 1A

**805 York Region Auto: 1**  
Jackson Clements 1G, Shawn Mason 1A, Joey Leger 1A  
**804 Optimist Club of Aurora: 0**

**903 BMO Bank of Montreal: 7**  
Branden Fennell 4G 1A, Austin Persaud 1G 1A, Nelson Hossack 2G, Andrew Roche 1A  
**906 AHPA: 3**  
Adam Ashraf 1G 1A, Owen Nesbit 1G, Chris Sutherland 1G, Bowen Reid 1A

**905: 5**  
Graeme McDonald 2G, Lucas Marek 1G, Andrew Kaszuba 1G 1A, Stewart Reid 1G, Randy Sutton 1A, Cameron Pyle 1A  
**908 Laurion Law Office: 5**  
Tim Pare 1G, Liam Coll 3G 1A, Zac Kroll 1G 2A

**910 Neuman's Puck Bandits: 12**  
Gavin Patterson 1G 1A, Kevin Hillsdon 2G 1A, Brendan Ruuskanen 1G, Max Brown 2G, Noah Spicer 1G, Matt Sanita 2G 1A, Austin Harvie 2G 2A, Cole Baker 1G 2A, Brendan McDonald 1A, Derek Keun 2A, Kevin Willert SO  
**907 Crabby Joe's: 0**

**909 Inaria: 6**  
Mitchell Arnold 1G 2A, James Johnston 1G, Tom Mason 1G 1A, Erik Balkovec 3G, Andrew Foresi 1A, Matt Liscio 2A  
**912 Jonathan's: 1**  
Michael Walsh 1G, Sean Foxwell 1A

**902 Tile Master: 3**  
Graham Robinson 2G, Scott Barker 2A, Alistar Johnston 2A, Brett Bond 1A, Erick Bortolotti 1G  
**913: 1**  
David Gonder 1G, Ian Coschi 1A

### Rep League

**Tyke - Aurora Select A: 4 TNT: 2**  
Fionn Keon 2G 1A, Callum Millar 1G 1A, Matthew Lyons 1G, Bradley Gardiner 1A, Michael Ciaravella 1A

**Novice AA - Markham: 3 Aurora Tigers: 2**  
Adam Rame 1G, Ryan Smyth 1G, Andrew Parsons 1A, Adam Rame 1A

**Novice A - Aurora Tigers: 4 Nobleking: 2**  
Kellan Sherman 2G, Matthew Gianforcaro 2G, Adriano Fanuzzi 2A, Nolan Heggie 1A, Sam Spong 1A, Nolan Chiarelli 1A, Noah Smith 1A, Kevin Wasserman 1A

**Novice AE - Aurora Tigers: 4 Orillia: 1**  
Nathan Mochizuki 3G, Austin Venneri 1G, Ryan Blakley 1A, Josh McLeod 1A, Dylan Vasilevski 1A

**Novice AE - Stouffville Clippers: 6 Aurora Tigers: 3**  
Dylan Vasilevski 2G, Nathan Mochizuki 1G 1A, Austin Venneri 1A

**Novice AE - Markham: 3 Aurora Tigers: 2**  
Nathan Mochizuki 1G, Ryan Blakley 1G

**Novice AE - Markham: 3 Aurora Tigers: 1**  
Ben Hilgendorff 1G, Nathan Mochizuki 1A, Dylan Vasilevski 1A

**Minor Atom AA - TNT: 7 Aurora Tigers: 1**  
Charlie Huxley 1G, Michael Crowe 1A, Nick Giorgio 1A

**Minor Atom AA - TNT: 5 Aurora Tigers: 3**  
Michael Crowe 2G, Anton Sopov 2A, Nick Giorgio 1G, Owen Papulkas 1A, Luca Capraro 1A

**Minor Atom A - Orillia: 4 Aurora Tigers: 2**  
Dylan Andersen 1G, Jake McMillan 1A, Ryan Weeks 1G 1A, Aidan Kirchmair 1A, Ayden Whilby 1A

**Minor Atom A - Orillia: 3 Aurora Tigers: 2**  
Jake McMillan 1G 1A, Matthew Reid 1A, Ethan Solilo 1G

**Minor Atom A - Orillia: 3 Aurora Tigers: 1**  
Ryan Weeks 1G, Aidan Kirchmair 1A

**Minor Atom AE - Aurora Tigers: 1 East Gwillimbury: 0**  
George Rappos Jr 1G, Ryan Fowler 1A, Ben Charette SO

**Atom AA - Aurora Tigers: 1 Markham Waxers: 1**  
Zachary Kolm 1G, Sam Lombard 1A

**Atom AA - Markham: 2 Aurora Tigers: 1**  
Carson Maybury 1G

**Atom AA - Aurora Tigers: 2 Markham: 1**  
Jake Adams 1G, Sam Lombard 1A, Evan Vierling 1G

**Atom AA - Aurora Tigers: 2 Markham Waxers: 0**  
Brett Pearce 1G, Ethan Cameron 1G, Jake Piper 1A, Jake Adams 1A, Dereck Avery SO

**Atom A - Aurora Tigers: 2 Barrie: 0**

**Atom A - Barrie: 3 Aurora Tigers: 2**

**Atom AE - Aurora Tigers: 4 Barrie: 3**  
Curtis Manley 1G 1A, Carson Tidd 1G 1A, Geoffrey Wilson 1G, Mitchell Weatherall 1G

**Atom AE - Barrie: 5 Aurora Tigers: 1**

**Atom AE - Barrie: 3 Aurora Tigers: 2**

**Minor Peewee A - Aurora Tigers: 4 Newmarket: 2**  
Luke Jarvis 2G, Alex Sandras 2A, Connor Thomas 2A, Sam Ashton 1G, Adam Wloka 2A, Tyler Sawyer 1G, Ben Liotta 1A

**Minor Peewee A - Newmarket: 1 Aurora Tigers: 0**

**Minor Peewee A - Aurora Tigers: 3 Newmarket: 1**  
Colby Prymych 1G 1A, Sam Ashton 1A, Alex Sandras 1A, Adam Wloka 1A, Andrew Park 1G, Connor Thomas 1A, Luke Jarvis 1G

**Minor Peewee AE - TNT: 4 Aurora Tigers: 1**  
Owen Romano 1G

**Minor Peewee AE - Aurora Tigers: 1 TNT: 0**  
Matthew McConnell 1G, Kyle Fowler 1A, Noah Dempsey 1A, Jonathan Gianforcaro SO

**Peewee AA - Aurora Tigers: 1 Richmond Hill: 1**  
Cameron Tyndall 1G

**Peewee A - Orillia: 3 Aurora Tigers: 1**  
Brandon Vaughan 1G, Jamie Stewart 1A

**Peewee AE - Aurora Tigers: 5 Richmond Hill Stars: 3**  
Finn Reeves 2G, Nicholas Vamvakaris 1G, Callum Gorrell 1G, Mathew Hastings 1G, Thomas Morra 1A, Max Lombard 1A, Ryan Jamieson 1A, Carter Wilmsmeyer 1A  
**Peewee AE - Aurora Tigers: 1 Richmond Hill**

**Stars: 1**  
Nicholas Vamvakaris 1G

**Peewee AE - Richmond Hill: 2 Aurora Tigers: 0**

**Peewee AE - Aurora Tigers: 3 Richmond Hill Stars: 2**  
Justin Evans 1G, Ryan Jamieson 1G, Finn Reeves 1G, Mathew Hastings 1A, Braden Reid 1A, Max Lombard 1A, Thomas Morra 1A

**Minor Bantam AA - Aurora Tigers: 4 Markham: 3**  
Thomas Wilson 1G, Jordan Torres 1G, Brady Futterer 1G, Morgan Frost 1G

**Minor Bantam AA - Aurora Tigers: 3 Markham Waxers: 0**  
Morgan Frost 2G, Brady Futterer 2A, Rhys Perry 1A, Greg Hoogers 1G, Jordan Torres 1A, Robert Stewart SO

**Minor Bantam A - Aurora Tigers: 7 Newmarket: 3**  
E. Pears 3G, P. Wolanski 3G, M. Kalmisto 1A, R. Carpenter 1A, T. Kostoff 1A, B. Langlois 2A, J. Liotta 1A, R. Thornhill 1A, K. Rice 1G

**Minor Bantam AE - Aurora Tigers: 1 Stouffville: 0**

**Minor Bantam AE - Stouffville: 6 Aurora Tigers: 1**

**Minor Bantam AE - Aurora Tigers: 6 Stouffville: 0**

**Bantam AA - Aurora Tigers: 2 Richmond Hill Stars: 1**  
Zack Phillips 1G, Tristan Kuchar 1G, Ryan Coveart 1A, Connor Irving 1A, Richard Hache 1A

**Bantam AA - Aurora Tigers: 3 Richmond Hill: 2**  
Zack Phillips 2G 1A, Jack Pecora 1G 2A, Bryan Manweiler 1A, Cameron Zinner 1A, Richard Hache 1A

**Bantam AA - Richmond Hill Stars: 5 Aurora Tigers: 4**  
Cameron Zinner 2G, Richard Hache 1G, Michael Shum 1G, Bryan Manweiler 2A, Evan Cherubini 2A, Ryan Coveart 1A, Tristan Kuchar 1A, Jared Reeves 1A, William Stover 1A

**Bantam A - Markham Waxers: 4 Aurora Tigers: 0**

**Bantam A - Aurora Tigers: 3 Barrie: 3**  
Connor Downs 2G 1A, Jack Bryant 1G 1A, Nicolas Pearce 2A, Ian Rucker 1A

**Bantam A - Orillia: 5 Aurora Tigers: 2**  
Taylor Kauffeldt 2G, Lucas Ruscica 2A, Ian Rucker 1A, Nicholas Sansalone 1A

**Bantam A - Bradford Bulldogs: 1 Aurora Tigers: 0**

**Bantam AE - Richmond Hill: 4 Aurora Tigers: 1**

**Bantam AE - Newmarket: 2 Aurora Tigers: 0**

**Minor Midget AA - Stouffville: 4 Aurora Tigers: 0**

**Minor Midget A - Aurora Tigers: 3 Barrie: 2**

**Minor Midget AE - Whitby Wildcats: 7 Aurora Tigers: 2**

**Minor Midget AE - Barrie: 6 Aurora Tigers: 3**

**Minor Midget AE - Ajax: 8 Aurora Tigers: 1**

**Minor Midget AE - Georgina: 4 Aurora Tigers: 2**

**Minor Midget AE - Newmarket Redmen: 5 Aurora Tigers: 2**

**Minor Midget AE - Aurora Tigers: 4 Pickering: 1**

**Minor Midget AE - Barrie: 8 Aurora Tigers: 1**

**Minor Midget AE - Newmarket: 3 Aurora Tigers: 2**

**Midget AA - Stouffville: 3 Aurora Tigers: 2**

**Midget AA - Stouffville: 6 Aurora Tigers: 4**

**Midget AA - Aurora Tigers: 2 Stouffville: 1**

**Midget AA - Aurora Tigers: 4 Stouffville: 1**



# THE AURORAN SPORTS

Vol. 13 No. 15 905-727-3300

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Week of February 19, 2013



Former Aurora Tiger and current Toronto Maple Leaf Mike Kostka dropped the puck at Friday's Tigers game against the Newmarket Hurricanes at the Aurora Community Centre. At the special event, Mr. Kostka took the time to meet his fans and sign countless autographs.

Auroran photos by Jeff Doner

## Kostka swarmed by fans on return to Aurora

From page 1

"It's been a quick transition, obviously, from starting the year with the Marlies and then when the lockout ended it was – boom – a five-day camp and we jumped right into it," he said. "So, it's been fun, exciting, not too much time and you have to accelerate the learning curve I guess, but it's been a good challenge and I've enjoyed it."

Barry Quinn, the Tigers vice-president, said Kostka was "100 per cent in" as soon as he heard about the invitation to come out for a Tigers game.

"He was supposed to leave after the first intermission and he has stuck around to sign anything," said Quinn. "That's just a mark of what

the kid is."

Kostka, who was constantly swarmed by adoring fans, stayed right into the third period signing autographs and even spending some time with Tigers players offering some advice and inspiration.

"What a nice guy and a nice gesture," said Tigers head coach James Richmond. "He came down for about 20 minutes in the dressing room with the boys and then after the second period he came down again."

"Not too often do you get an NHLer, a guy that's playing every night, come out for not even a dime, and stays out here as long as he did," said Richmond. "He was great with the guys in the dressing room."

Kostka also received praise from his young fans.

"It was amazing meeting Mike Kostka and it was one of the best times of my life meeting an NHL player," said Leaf fan Sam Spong, 8, who also plays for the Aurora Junior Tigers.

Hundreds of people were out for the event that collected food donations for the Aurora Food Pantry as an entrance fee.

With a constant smile on his face the whole night, Kostka fondly looked back at his season with the Tigers.

"You remember winning and all the fun things on the ice, but it's also all the friendships that I made. I've still kept in touch with a lot of them," he said. "That's probably the best thing that you take away from it."

## Tigers reclaim division lead with win big win over Newmarket Hurricanes

By Jeff Doner

The Aurora Tigers shook off some early jitters in front of a packed house, using the shootout to defeat the Newmarket Hurricanes 5 – 4 at the Aurora Community Centre on Friday night.

The game featured many ups and downs as the Tigers clawed back from a 4 – 2 deficit after the first period.

Although Dylan Sikura gave Aurora an early lead, the Hurricanes replied with four goals in the first to put the Tigers in a deep hole.

Aurora head coach James Richmond said his team was a little shaken up to start the game.

"I think in the first period we were a little jittery playing in front of a big crowd like that, prob-

ably the biggest crowd we've seen in a few years," he said. "I think the guys were a little nervous and played a little tight. We haven't given up four goals in a period all year, but then we really buckled down and played our game and got pucks to the net."

The Tigers pulled themselves together after a messy start, keeping Newmarket off the score-

board for the rest of the game.

During first intermission, coach Richmond told his team to loosen up and just get back to basics.

"We talked about some things that we've been going over in practice and then just kind of lightened the mood a little bit and told them a funny story of when I played."

Aurora netminder Kevin Entmaa was a big part of the comeback win, stepping into the crease for teammate Brett Sinclair after the first period. Entmaa stopped all 21 shots he faced and denied both Newmarket players in the shootout.

Aurora captain Daniel Clairmont was happy with the way his team rallied for the second period.

"We came out strong in the second and started putting more pucks to the net and putting more traffic to the net and we started to get some goals," he said.

That mentality eventually paid off in the second, as Clairmont fed Adam Moody on the power play to bump the score to 4 – 3 after two periods.

Still down a goal, the Tigers were buzzing throughout the third looking for the equalizer.

Then with five minutes

Continued on page 21



Kory Kennedy faces down the Newmarket Hurricanes in their home game Friday. The Tigers take on the Stouffville Spirit on February 21 before hosting the Pickering Panthers on February 23.

Auroran photo by Jeff Doner

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# Councillors want to recoup nearly \$400,000 in taxes paid on Sports Dome

By Brock Weir

Aurora is looking recoup nearly half a million dollars on taxes paid to the Region and School Boards on the Aurora Sports Dome.

Councillors voted last week to seek legal advice to outline all the options available to them to rectify what they view as a long-smouldering problem with the Town's agreement with the Dome operators.

The decision came on the heels of the previous week's Committee meeting where Councillors looked at the terms of executing a new contract with the operators.

Under the public-private partnership agreement, the Town pays for the utilities at the Dome, as well as property taxes. Ultimately, it is this last issue which has been the cause of weeks – if not years – of consternation among certain members of Council.

"The Aurora Sports Dome is independently owned and maintained as a commercial venture," said Al Downey, Aurora's Director of Parks and Recreation in a report to Council. "The municipally-owned land is leased to them for this purpose and, accordingly, the property is taxable. Currently taxes for the Town, Region, and School portions are a budgeted expense of the Town in the [Parks] operating budget."

Last year, taxes to the Region and the School shares came to \$39,992.

The problem, however, is that when this deal was first mulled, the intention was to

make this property tax exempt but that's not how it turned out in the long run.

"It is my conclusion that going back to 2004, the original tripartite letter to the agreement [was] we agreed at the time to waive taxes and we agreed to do it back in 2004," said Councillor Chris Ballard. I would like to know if this can be part of [Town Solicitor Warren] Mar's report on did we get an illegal opinion to do that? Did we get legal advice on that front? It might be a real-long shot, but if we did, is there an opportunity to recoup? Obviously somebody made a mistake. If someone did make a mistake, is there an opportunity to recoup some of that \$340,000?"

Mr. Mar told Councillors that after looking through the Town's legal department files, he could not find any discussions in there about tax exempt status, or any record that it was actually done, so he was at a loss of what he could contribute to that particular discussion.

"Nothing in the file suggests that staff ever obtained legal opinion, external or otherwise, on that particular matter," said Mr. Mar.

However the chips fell when this matter was first brought forward, one of the primary concerns expressed by Councillors was recouping all or part of the \$340,000 in taxes paid to the Region and School Boards.

Councillor Evelyn Buck said it was an error on the part of the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) which

ultimately made the Dome land lose its tax exempt status and was an error that should have been challenged right then and there.

"The problem is when the contract was signed, it was the understanding of staff that the property would remain tax exempt," said Councillor Buck. "It came not just as a surprise to Mr. Downey as it did to everyone to discover that MPAC decided it was no longer tax exempt and anytime MPAC makes a decision it can be challenged. They're not right on everything. The idea that

we would renegotiate a contract that we have just asked staff to spend time in negotiating the terms of a new agreement may be a redundancy."

She suggested Mr. Mar review the existing contract and report back to Council on the "strength" of the contract and whether it is reasonable to expect the other party to sit down and renegotiate. She also introduced a motion calling on looking just that – challenging MPAC's decision.

"In researching my own notice of motion, my first

inclination was to get every damned penny back from the Region and the Board of Education, but I was quickly told that we could only get that from the date we challenged the decision," she said. "We failed in not challenging that decision and that is when the failure was."

When the land designation was changed, she said the advice was that the Town was stuck with it, but that was the wrong advice.

While Council ultimately decided to refer the matter back to Mr. Mar on the tax exempt status and any

opportunity to recoup what has already been spent on taxes for the Sports Dome, Councillor Wendy Gaertner said it didn't go far enough.

One thing she said she wanted to see was the contract examined by outside legal counsel. If that was done in the first place, as was suggested in the 2004-2006 term of Council, the Town "could have done better."

"This is going to be a very difficult thing to change and fight against," she said. "I think we need outside legal, as was suggested in the very beginning."

## e-Waste drive collects 24,000 pounds of electronic junk

By Brock Weir

Whether you carted your unwanted television sets, outdated computers, broken-down microwaves and excess printers out on January 19 to clear out space for recently received Christmas gifts or Boxing Day deals, or to clean out the garage, an abundance of appliances were received in the Mayor's e-Waste Recycling Day.

The aim of the event, which was co-hosted by the Town of Aurora, the Salvation Army, and Global Electric Electronic Processing (GEEP), was to take electronics that "contain heavy metals and other elements" and deflect them from the waste system where they would otherwise spend the rest of their days rotting in a landfill.

The event, which took place that morning and after-

noon at the Town's Works Yard on Scanlon Court, just off Industrial Parkway North, attracted over 300 vehicles loaded down with e-waste and thousands of individual items. While keeping the refuse out of the landfills was a good enough initiative, the over 23,612 pounds of waste collected, however, had another benefit to the community, according to event partners Global Electronic Processing.

"During the course of the day, over 300 vehicles showed up and residents expressed great satisfaction with having an environmentally sustainable option for disposing of their electronic waste," said GEEP's Dave Douglas, presenting a cheque for \$2,361.20 to the Town last week.

These proceeds will go towards further future environmental initiatives in Aurora.

Mayor Dawe and members of Town Staff accepted a cheque for over \$2,000 from GEEP last week from the items collected in last month's e-waste collection.



Auroran photo by Brock Weir

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The headlines in the February 5 edition of The Auroran edition spoke to yet another potential OMB (Ontario Municipal Board) fight in our Town.

From what I understand from the article, a group of residents are considering taking both the Town and the developers to the Board to address concerns they have with environmental issues (such as a lack of trails and inadequate buffer zones) within the 2C lands.

I am not sure if this complaint has in fact been pursued, but it's a testament to the seriousness of the resident's concerns that they'd consider a Board fight at all, given past history of Board decisions in Aurora. A successful case against an approved plan is certainly not a sure thing.

For example, the last big OMB case in the Town resulted in literally hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees – paid in taxpayer dollars - expended in an ultimately futile attempt to stop the Westview Golf Course and development. Not good odds, in other words.

But the resident's case is also not the only time that the OMB has made the news in York Region as of late. It seems virtually every municipality has its share of battles on the go. For example, in Newmarket there is the Slessor Square issue and the Glenway Issue.

In Aurora we have multiple issues on the go, including a number of challenges related to the 2C plan. In Richmond Hill there are battles surrounding the Dunlop observatory. Those are just some cases I can think of right off the top of my head.

Repeatedly, residents and developers alike – and even a few councils too – have found themselves in the midst of, or are considering entering that seventh circle of hell known as an OMB hearing - those mythically costly, and lengthy quasi-judicial proceedings that have confounded municipalities across the province.

Ask the average person about the OMB and what will inevitably be uttered in response is something along the lines of “oh, why bother, they always back the developer anyway”, “It's a losing battle, why risk our money?”, or some such similar sentiments.

OMB hearings are perceived to be these monolithic enterprises that cost taxpayers lots and lots of money that rarely if ever have any measure of positive return.

But is the perception reality? It certainly seems to be. Speaking from my own experience of sitting at the Council table, planning meetings were often a rather frustrating experience. Many times there would be applications before us that I at least had some fairly significant concerns with and yet felt I could do little beyond commenting on my concerns.

Why? Because regardless of whether I voted for or against an application, if the plan met the rules as they stood at that time of the application, then the belief was unless we were willing to risk yet another OMB fight, then we “had to” pass the application.



## POLITICS AS USUAL

Alison Collins-Mrakas

### Entering the Seventh Circle of Hell

(A.K.A. The OMB Hearing)

There is another train of thought though in regards to how councils deal with potential OMB fights. Some argue that far from being a metaphorical Sword of Damocles above the heads of decision-makers, it is in fact a shield, allowing Councillors the easy opportunity to sidestep, rather than face head-on a potentially unpopular planning decision. It's easier to just say, “Much as we'd like to oppose this development, we have to let this go. We can't risk taxpayer money on a futile OMB fight...”

In his fascinating journal article, “Passing the Buck: the OMB and Local Politicians in Toronto, 2000-2006” Aaron A. Moore, makes the case that, “the OMB allows local politicians...to avoid making a decision between the wealth of developers and the support of the electorate.”

He further states, “...(politicians) can use the potential of an unfavourable Board decision to justify their position to...residents.” As a former politician myself, I take issue with being portrayed as making planning decisions based on craven self interest. I don't

think that's true, for most politicians. However, there is a kernel of truth to his argument that decisions are made easier, for lack of a better word, by the Board's existence.

To quote once more from Mr. Moore, “The very presence of the OMB allows local politicians to deflect criticisms from themselves when dealing with controversial planning and development issues...that the Board is the ultimate decision-maker removes some of the pressure for local politicians to choose a side...it offloads the cost of decision-making to the Board.”

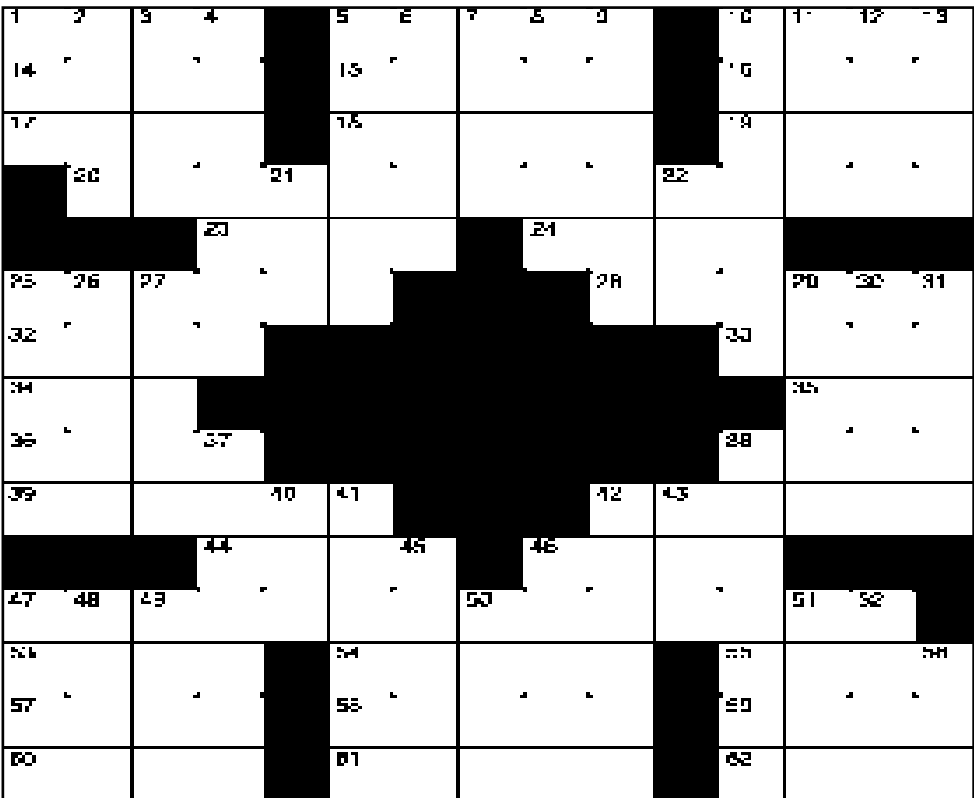
So which is it? OMB as usurper of local planning authority? Or patsy for local politicians desperate to avoid the political costs of unpopular planning decisions? I think it's somewhere in-between.

There is no question that the OMB has made decisions that have effectively wrenched control from Councils trying to plan their own communities. It is also true that there have been popular but legislatively unsupportable decisions made by local Councils that are made secure in the knowledge that they will be overturned at the Board.

A bit of a conundrum to be sure and a question that will only be solved through a re-examination of the role, responsibility and authority of the OMB in the context of local municipal planning decisions. Perhaps that question can be added to Premier Wynne's list of things to address?

That's all for this week, until next week, stay informed, stay involved, because this is, after all, Our Town.

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE



### CLUES ACROSS

1. Atrial feeling
5. I am a far-reaching word
10. A group of language learners
14. A sense of time
15. A piece of material
16. Disney's "The Little Mermaid"
17. A large group
18. A variety of flowers
19. A vocal piece
20. A body part of a female star
23. A kind of food
24. A weapon of war
25. A location in Africa
28. A word by saying
32. Original compound
33. A kind of flower
34. A person's name
35. A famous place
36. A kind of fruit

38. Used as a vegetable
39. A word
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### CLUES DOWN

1. On a hill
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## Last Week's Puzzle Solution





Mike and Christina dressed up in their finest to enjoy a sport of tea at the Aurora Seniors’ Centre, which hosted their Victorian Tea and Picture Show last week. Guests enjoyed the chance to step back in time with the traditional fare, but win a few prizes as well!  
Auroran photo by Sylvia Dickens

## Market Musings

From page 11

indoor market on Saturday, February 23 between 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at the Cultural Centre.

Since we have space limitations at the Cultural Centre, we will have vendors in both the Brevik and Aurora Rooms again and we strongly encourage you to visit both. We assure you that there will be several exciting vendors in the second room.

The Farmers’ Market is always looking for volunteers to assist, both at the indoor and outdoor Markets. We are particularly looking for students in the summer who are wanting to fulfill their volunteer hours’ requirement. So, if you or anyone you know, are interested in volunteering at the Farmers’ market, please drop us a line at: [info@theaurorafarmersmarket.com](mailto:info@theaurorafarmersmarket.com).

Teachers, please refer any of your students looking for volunteer hours to the Farmers’ Market.

We are still actively searching for a new Market Manager to work with the Chair and Market Committee. You can find the job description and requirements posted on our website: [www.theaurorafarmersmarket.com](http://www.theaurorafarmersmarket.com).

We are also beginning to plan our entertainment for the 2013 season, so anyone interested in performing at the Market is encouraged to contact Sarah Sparks, Aaron Morris or any member of the Market Committee. We are beginning to formulate our plans for participating in Aurora’s sesquicentennial and we are looking forward to a very exciting season.

See you at the indoor Market!

## Aurora Heights is last ranked school

From page 8

year’s survey, coming in 1,757th in a 40-way tie. The French-language school was Aurora’s third ranking school in the list, coming in at 392nd overall. Bottoming out the list this year was Aurora Heights Public School, which was Aurora’s second-highest ranking school in the previous survey. Last year, they came in 182nd place, but this year it was 1,760 due to downturns in almost all areas of academic performance.

Here’s how the rest of Aurora’s elementary schools fared

- Devins Drive Public School – 220th place (Average Rank in the last five years: 300)
- Ecole Saint Jean – 392

(629)

- Highview Public School – 535 (414)
- Light of Christ Catholic Elementary School – 567 (372)
- Aurora Grove Public School – 777 (264)
- Hartman Public School – 777 (725)
- Our Lady of Grace Catholic Elementary School – 829 (725)
- St. Mary of the Angels Catholic Elementary School – 1016 (new entry)
- Northern Lights Public School – 1107 (629)
- St. Jerome Catholic Elementary School – 1405 (1283)
- Holy Spirit Catholic Elementary School – 1518 (790)
- Regency Acres Public School – 1760 (629)
- Aurora Heights Public School – 1760 (790)

### ON NOW

#### JANUARY 23 – FEBRUARY 27

The BREAD (Brotherhood Reflection Education Acceptance Direction) Group will meet for six Wednesdays from 8 – 9 p.m. at 15213 Yonge Street, Suite 15 Aurora (Historic Post Office). This support group is intended for men who are currently considering making changes, changing or maintaining changes which they have made in regards to their eating behaviours. The journey to recover may be challenging, isolating, revelatory or just plain frustrating and group support and professional facilitation may be necessary to overcome or prevent relapses. We will be seeking insights into disordered eating and exploring coping strategies with the goal of learning from each other, effective coping strategies and life skills. Working together to grow and become ourselves. \$60 (for 6 weeks). To register please call 905-886-6632, email [info@edoyr.com](mailto:info@edoyr.com), or register online at [www.edoyr.com/support-groups.html](http://www.edoyr.com/support-groups.html)

#### FEBRUARY 4 – APRIL 8

The Ontario Clay and Glass Association brings its FUSION: Fireworks 2011 exhibition to the Aurora Cultural Centre. FUSION’S mission to promote excellence in clay and glass is fulfilled through the Fireworks exhibitions. Since 1975, the notable or award winning have been purchased by FUSION for the FUSION Permanent Collection, housed at and on permanent loan to the Burlington Art Centre.

#### FEBRUARY 6 – APRIL 6

The Aurora Cultural Centre presents Passage by Northern Star Collective – From Eastern Influences to Western traditions in the Great Hall Gallery. Exhibition includes works by artists Feng Yu Wei, Guan Sui Sheng, Hu Zu De, Phoebe Lu, Sun Chang Yin, Ann Yan, and ShiFu. Gallery Hours Tuesday to Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Aurora Cultural Centre, 22 Church Street. For more information, visit [www.auroracultural-centre.ca](http://www.auroracultural-centre.ca).

#### FEBRUARY 11 – MARCH 31

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum and Community Centre hosts Defining Moments: Discovering our Canadian Stories. This travelling exhibit is a national digital media arts and citizenship project aimed at engaging youth across Canada to explore, express and showcase their diverse perspectives on Canadian identity. These works are the 26 willing pieces, representing eight provinces and territories across Canada. While you’re here, participate in an on-site art activity that expresses your Canadian identity. Regular admission applies. For more information, contact the museum at 905-727-8954.

#### FEBRUARY 14 – MARCH 21

Eating Disorders of York Region (EDOYR) will host Healthy Coping Skills for Anxiety and Depression with Flora Svinarenko for six weeks from 5 – 6 p.m. beginning Thursday, February 14 at their Aurora headquarters. (15213 Yonge Street, Suite 15) Very often depression and anxiety are familiar feelings to someone struggling with disordered eating, body image issues and low self esteem. During this group you will learn how your

negative thinking patters might be affecting your feelings and behaviors. You will be able to explore the “mechanisms” of anxiety and depression and learn why they are triggered. You will learn healthy coping techniques with your symptoms and you will be able to share your struggles and worries in a safe environment.

#### FEBRUARY 18 – 24

It’s Heritage Week and the Aurora Historical Society will open Hillary house for special hours during the week. In addition to being able to explore the building, guests will view something unusual: exhibit creation in full swing. Some of the processes involved include creating mounts for artefacts, creating labels and text panels, hanging artefacts, installing the displays themselves and moving the artefacts into their new display cases. Hours Monday – Wednesday will be 1 – 4 p.m., Thursday from 1 – 7 p.m., and Friday – Sunday from 1 – 4 p.m. For more information, contact the AHS at 905-727-8991 or visit [aurorahistoricalsociety.ca](http://aurorahistoricalsociety.ca).

#### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19

Bonsai Hill hosts an evening of poetry “Love Shall Forever Remain” tonight at 7 p.m. at 15263 Yonge Street, Unit 2. Featuring musicians Sara Cameron, Matthew Kinnunen and Alex Nugent, poets Lileta Brown, Deborah L.V. Campo, Stephanie Davidson, Sterling Dillinger, Dmitry Saltykov, Linda Squires, Dierdre Tomlinson, Malcolm Watts, and an open mic for guest poets. Performances start at 7.15 p.m. Limited seating. Please note the last half hour of open mic may contain graphic language.

#### THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21

Parents of teens are invited to attend a free presentation to help them guide their kids to prevent injuries by making smart, safe choices. The presentation is being offered at Southlake Regional Health Centre in Newmarket tonight from 6.30 to 7.30 p.m. For details and to register visit [www.southlakeregional.org](http://www.southlakeregional.org) and click on Southlake Events – No Regrets Live for Parents.

#### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Early Medieval Celtic Calligraphy: one of a series of hands-on workshops at Table For 2 & More (15160 Yonge Street) led by Celtic Artist David Rankine. The series, Portals of Grace, takes a look at Celtic Art techniques and explores how the energies of Nature inspire ancient and contemporary Celtic artists. 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Tickets (\$35/session): 905-713-3788. Visit [www.davidrankineart.com](http://www.davidrankineart.com)

\*\*\*\*

The OSPCA will “Help Fight Animal Cruelty with Cupcakes” today on National Cupcake Day. “We’re encouraging people to register online at [www.nationalcupcakeday.ca](http://www.nationalcupcakeday.ca) and then to bake cupcakes and host a National Cupcake Day party with all proceeds going to support the Ontario SPCA and its communities,” explained Marc Ralsky of the OSPCA. “We hope that people will encourage their family and friends to donate online and to support their efforts by attending a local party or hosting an event of their own. It’s a fun and easy way to make a life-saving difference in the lives of animals who

## COMING EVENTS

desperately need our help.” For party suggestions, including the official cupcake recipe, visit the web address above.

#### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Free Stages of Recovery Workshop with Flora Svinarenko will occur today from 5 – 6.30 p.m. at 12513 Yonge Street, Suite 15. Are you ready to explore the possibility of change? If so, discover where you are in your Journey of Recovery. “Stages of Recovery” will help you explore the changes that you are seeking. In a safe and confidential setting, the costs and benefits of changing eating disorder behaviors will be presented. We will also try to identify barriers and explore healthy coping strategies.

#### WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27

Garden Aurora! The Aurora Garden and Horticultural Society invites you to hear David Tomlinson, Landscape Architect Emeritus and respected ornithologist speak on the ‘Making of Merlin’s Hollow’, a 30 year landmark Aurora garden. The meeting is held at the Royal Canadian Legion, 105 Industrial Parkway North and starts at 8:00 p.m. We look forward to welcoming both old and new members for a great evening. Further information at 905-713-6660 or visit [www.gardenaurora.com](http://www.gardenaurora.com).

#### FRIDAY, MARCH 1

The World Day of Prayer for 2013 will be celebrated at the Aurora United Church this evening at 7.30 p.m. This is an ecumenical service written and prepared this year by the women of France. The message is, “I was a stranger and you welcomed me.” The Aurora United Church Bellissimo Bell Choir will offer music as part of the service. Refreshments will be served. The participating churches of Aurora invite everyone to this international interdenominational event.

#### SATURDAY, MARCH 2

The Aurora Cultural Centre presents the official opening and artists reception for Passage by Northern Star Collective – From Eastern Influences to Western traditions in the Great Hall Gallery. Exhibition includes works by artists Feng Yu Wei, Guan Sui Sheng, Hu Zu De, Phoebe Lu, Sun Chang Yin, Ann Yan, and ShiFu. Reception runs

today from 1 – 4 p.m. Regular gallery Hours are Tuesday to Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Aurora Cultural Centre, 22 Church Street. For more information, visit [www.auroracultural-centre.ca](http://www.auroracultural-centre.ca). All artists will be in attendance. Efreshments will be provided by Phoebe Lo Events.

#### MONDAY, MARCH 4

Illuminated Letters: the last in a series of hands-on workshops at Table For 2 & More (15160 Yonge Street) led by Celtic Artist David Rankine. The series, Portals of Grace, takes a look at Celtic Art techniques and explores how the energies of Nature inspire ancient and contemporary Celtic artists. 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Tickets (\$35/session): 905-713-3788. Visit [www.davidrankineart.com](http://www.davidrankineart.com).

#### TUESDAY, MARCH 5

Amnesty International: Antonella Mega, wife of imprisoned Canadian Hamid Ghassemi-Shall will speak on human rights in Iran this evening at 7.30 p.m. at Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria St., Aurora. All welcome. Information: 905-713-6713.

#### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6

The Aurora Public Library presents Money Talk\$: When to Buy Individual Stocks or ETFs. Money Talk\$ is a free monthly discussion group to exchange ideas and unbiased information. Presentation will be followed by a Q & A. No financial products or services will be offered or sold. 7 p.m. in the Magna Room at the Aurora Public Library. For more information, contact the Library at 905-727-9494 x275.

#### FRIDAY, MARCH 8

The Aurora Cultural Centre’s Great Artists Piano Series continues this evening at 8 p.m. with the Seiler Piano Trio. An outstanding Canadian trio comprised of Maryum Seiler (violin), Rachel Mercer (cello) and Angela Park (piano) exploring the great traditions of the piano trio repertoire with their unique blend of intensity, passion and generosity. Repertoire this evening to include works by Mozart, Schubert and Piazzolla. For more information, visit [www.auroracultural-centre.ca](http://www.auroracultural-centre.ca). Tickets are \$40 for adults, and \$25 for seniors and students. On sale now. Doors open at 7 p.m. Concert begins at 8.

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Brushwood's George Crecoukias, Jim Richardson, and Jeff Martin are preparing to take the stage at this weekend's Conquer Cancer: One At a Time Benefit, the local rock/blues band will be joined by an array of local talent, including 12-year-old singer Megan Rowan, a student at Devins Drive Public School. For more information on the benefit, visit [www.conquercanceroneatatime.ca](http://www.conquercanceroneatatime.ca).  
Auroran photos by Brock Weir



## Musicians want people to "get happy" at Saturday benefit

By Brock Weir

Musicians are tuning up their guitars and others are spending the week polishing up their acts as local performers get ready for the spotlight for the Conquer Cancer: One Act at a Time benefit this Saturday.

In the final installment of our series showcasing some of the local talent taking part, we look at one established Aurora musician and one up-and-comer who are coming together for two common purposes – contributing to a cause and making people happy.

The benefit is the brainchild of Aurora's Carla Walker and Newmarket's Leslie Ann Holmesshaw, who were looking for a more creative way to raise money for Princess Margaret Hospital and the Ride to Conquer Cancer. Its aim was right up the alley for Aurora musician Jim Richardson, front man and founder of the indie rock band Brushwood.

"I am a musician, an artist, and kind of a wannabe philanthropist," says Mr. Richardson with a laugh. "Over the years honing my craft as a musician, I have come to the realisation that music heals and it really helps people, even myself.

There are certain songs I hear that actually make my day better."

This philosophy is more than just a one-off and something he regularly puts into action. On the band's website, for instance, 50 cents for every song purchased goes towards initiatives to bring safe drinking water to developing countries.

"It started when I was a teenager and I always wanted to help people and work together as a team to find a common solution," he says. "This one cause is particularly close to my heart as there are people I have known in the past and now that suffer from it and it is a terrible disease. As a cause, feeding children is another biggie."

He says he tries to make a difference as much as possible through performing, as well as initiatives from the next generation. His daughter, 8, is one of his primary inspirations on that front.

"She inspires me to do more," he says. "I'm inspired by world issues like feeding the children and clean drinking water, and that's what inspires me to keep writing and just keep exploring different things and aspirations."

His love for music began as a child, inspired

by his pianist grandmother who was also a church organist. A guitar playing uncle also helped push things along and growing up he wanted to be a keyboard player like Deep Purple's John Ward. He says he and his group have always tried to look ahead and write their own material and not simply be another cover band.

"We try to keep it an original act and move forward because the sky's the limit," he says. "We're very politically inspired sometimes and the music is a reflection of the days back in the 1960s and inspired by the hippie days of Neil Young, and Crosby, Stills and Nash."

While he says those songs covered a lot of "heavy" issues, when Brushwood appears on stage at the Newmarket Community Church on Saturday evening, they aim to bring "happiness."

"What I am trying to do with this show is to inspire people to really enjoy themselves and live in the moment of enjoying the song, the performance, and get positive vibrations from it," he says. "Everybody wants to change the world, but I have always been inspired to make people happy. If I could change one person's  
**Continued on page 23**

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(Above) A year of community events to support the Queen's York Rangers was officially launched at the Aurora Armoury on Wednesday. In a tour of the new facilities, Sgt. Ryan Mitchell (above) was asked how heavy the soldiers packs are. When he replied about 55 pounds, fundraising chair Councillor Pirri (below) asked to judge for himself. (Right) Special Dog tags will be on sale throughout the year to support the Rangers.

Auroran photos by David Falconer



## Queen's York Rangers invite you to have a day in the life of a soldier

By Brock Weir

They say you can't really know somebody until you walk a mile in their shoes, but organizers of a new series of events to mark the work of the Queen's York Rangers aim to offer a little bit of a taste of a day in the life of a soldier.

The concept builds upon two years of previous fundraising for the Queen's York Rangers Benevolent Fund, which seeks to provide support services, counselling, and other assistance for returned or returning soldiers and their families. One of the premiere events has been the Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe's Levee for the Queen's York Rangers held at the Aurora Cultural Centre, but this year organizers decided to take things in a little bit of a different direction, according to fundraising chair Councillor Paul Pirri.

"The concept came out of a want to involve as many people as possible and get the public at large to really know about the Queen's York Rangers because I think there are a lot of people who are unaware," said Councillor Pirri. "They do have a really great history and it is getting people involved and getting people to find out about it.

"[The Fund] lets returning soldiers have access to educational programs, counselling and, while they are away, we send care packages to them overseas. These care packages mean the world to them because they're given things they have no access to and things we take for granted, like packages of KD and Tim Horton's coffee. They really brighten the spirits of everybody who receives them."

The first event in the "day" of the life of a soldier, is a breakfast which will be held on March 6 at 7 a.m. at Cardinal Golf Club. This will be an

opportunity to hear about the current activities of the Rangers from Honorary Colonel Darryl Bricker and hear first-hand experiences from people who have served.

"We have got a couple of speakers lined up to talk about their experiences because a lot of people are unaware of how much the Rangers are entwined in our community, how long they have been here, and what they do," said Councillor Pirri. "We felt breakfast would be a great opportunity to have somewhat of a fun, entertaining and interesting educational piece to learn about [the Regiment.]"

The next event – yes, "Lunch" – will take place on Sunday, May 5 at

their hands dirty in training programs like a tough mudder course.

"Dinner" will be a full mess dinner for the Regiment on October 24 at The Manor at Kettleby's Carrying Place.

"We're still working on a couple of big name individuals to come out to that one," said Councillor Paul Pirri, only offering the teaser that the names they're working on are prominent in public life.

The event, which will feature cuisine from The Manor's Peter & Paul's Catering will feature "historical artefacts that have defined the Rangers", live entertainment, a silent auction and door prizes.

If you can't make it out to any of these events, there will be other opportunities to display your pride in Aurora's local regiment. The committee tasked with fundraising will be selling specially designed army dog tags to benefit the Regimental Assistance Fund as a fun way to bring together creativity and pride.

This spring, they will also be stepping up a Yellow Ribbon campaign throughout not just Aurora, but all of York Region, similar to the initiative held just a few years ago on Golf Links Drive. Yellow Ribbons will be available for purchase through the Queen's York Rangers at the new Aurora Armoury on Industrial Parkway South, or directly from the Regiment members participating in the Aurora Street Festival, which will be held Sunday, June 2 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Yonge Street.

Sponsorship at various levels are also available at their website, [qyrappreciation.ca](http://qyrappreciation.ca), which also includes information on opportunities to sponsor a soldier or student to participate in these events and purchase personalized porcelain plaques from Aurora's Pine Tree Potters' guild.



Machell Park in conjunction with Aurora 150 celebrations that weekend. While Aurora 150 is planning for a Military Tattoo featuring local regiments, bands, and cadets, the Queen's York Rangers lunch will also be a family affair with a barbeque, a chance to talk to reservists and cadets, and hear their personal experiences.

Attendees could also be put through their paces, seeing first-hand training and military procedures and having the chance to get

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(Left) A concept design of what Hillary-McIntyre Park might look like looking north on Yonge Street. Horton Place can be seen at the end of the design with new landscaping, accessible ramps to make the park fully accessible, and a fountain as a focal point. (Right) Bill Albino, chair of the park’s steering committee, presented his group’s plans to Aurora’s Heritage Advisory Committee on Wednesday.



## Hillary McIntyre Park plan clears one key hurdle

By Brock Weir

When most people retire, they look forward rather than backward, but Aurora resident Bill Albino’s vision of the future has taken him on a detour of the Town’s past heading back to the future.

He has always had a passion for heritage and following his retirement from business, including a long stint at Xerox, he had a “lot of time on his hands” to fulfil his passions.

Luckily for him, the perfect opportunity presented itself right here when local historian John McIntyre looked to his own future. Living in a rambling Italianate house near Hillary House that has been in his family for more than a century, Mr. McIntyre decided since he has no direct heirs himself that finding a way to secure the home’s future and make it available for future generations was in order.

Enter “Hillary-McIntyre Park.”

This park, which would combine Mr. McIntyre’s home on Irwin Avenue, with Hillary House to the north of the proposal as well as the Readman House sandwiched between the two buildings is the objective. The vision is to combine the three buildings into a heritage park of over four acres that would leave the two buildings on either side in pristine historical condition, but renovate and expand the middle building as a new multi-purpose museum and banqueting hall for Aurora.

Their vision got an extra shot in the arm last week when the Town’s

Heritage Advisory Committee voted to grant them \$50,000 to undertake a feasibility study on whether their plan is doable and create a business plan charting the way forward. This grant, however, still needs to be approved by Council.

If ultimately granted, the \$50,000 is just a drop in the bucket compared to the project’s overall cost of \$10 million, which Mr. Albino said includes the purchase of Mr. McIntyre’s Horton Place at a discounted price, and the Readman House from a local realtor.

“The Heritage Community would want to have a governance and occupancy role enshrined in the article, so we want to make sure that over time we can work with the Town on a partnership basis to make sure the usages and the adaptation of the land are appropriate,” says Mr. Albino.

After the sale of the homes, Mr. Albino says their tentative plan is to secure up to \$3 million in private donations and get the back \$5 million from the Town of Aurora’s Hydro Reserve Account.

“By the time you look at the amount of in-kind money, privately raised money by the efforts of the committee, it would be pretty close to when the ink dries...to the 50/50 range in partnership,” says Mr. Albino. “The estimates need to be born out, but that is one of the designs we have in mind that the Town would be contributing about half of it. Ultimately the Town would be the owner of it.

“We would like the feasibility

consultants to indicate the likelihood of developing a sustaining business case.”

If the plan ultimately comes to fruition after the latest development, Mr. Albino says the end result would have a significant impact on Aurora, not only as an “anchor” for the northern half of the Town, but as an example of shaping historical development. While the proposed significant addition to the Readman House would include both museum space and rentable banqueting and event facilities, they also plan to open up the rear of the properties to connect them to the adjacent Fleury Park, creating a through-way for pedestrians.

With a permanent home in the Readman House, Aurora’s historical collections would have two homes, in addition to the new dedicated museum space at the Cultural Centre. Organizers of the park are also in talks with Sport Aurora to have their proposed space as a home for Aurora’s Sport Hall of Fame and have a long-term vision of making their heritage assets available for all to see, something that is just not possible in their current settings.

“I think everyone is excited about it,” said Mr. Albino. “There is naturally a concern amongst the councillors and the politicians that the amount of money involved that the plan be very good plan so that all the estimates be reasonable estimates, that they be plausible estimates and we have high confidence that it can be done for that amount of money.”

## Diamond Jubilee park planned for northwest Aurora

By Brock Weir

Celebrations and commemorations to mark the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee kicked off in Canada and around the Commonwealth last year with parties, a handful of royal visits, and the creation of a Jubilee medal to celebrate those who have given back to their community.

Although celebrations this year leading up to the 60th anniversary of the Queen’s Coronation this June are a little bit more muted by comparison, Aurora could soon get a permanent reminder of the milestone Diamond Jubilee year with the creation of a commemorative park near St. John’s Sideroad and Bathurst.

Councillors will consider the creation of the “Diamond Jubilee Park” at the committee level this week “as a lasting tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth.” The parkette is currently in place, but all it needs is the regal moniker. It is located on Woodland Hills Boulevard near the intersection and contains a kids playground, a boardwalk, trails, and lots of space for shade.

“In recognition of Queen Elizabeth’s extraordinary milestone marking her reign of 60 years on the throne of many communities in Canada are very pleased to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee in an appropriate manner,” said Al Downey, Director of Parks and Recreation in a report to Council. “As such, Mayor Dawe

approached staff with a suggestion to name or re-name a park in the Town of Aurora as a fitting tribute to Her Majesty the Queen.”

Should Council approve the plan to mark the Jubilee, the Town will erect new signage in the park incorporating the United Kingdom’s Diamond Jubilee Emblem, which was chosen by Buckingham Palace from the work of 10-year-old Katherine Dewar. A special Canadian emblem was also released by the Government of Canada to mark the occasion incorporating the Queen’s cipher, a wreath of maple leaves, and a diamond design bearing the number “60”.

Signage for the park is estimated to be in the range of \$800 to \$1,000,

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# Tigers went into “playoff mentality” to overtake Hurricanes

**From page 13**  
left and a raucous crowd on the edge of their seats, Taylor McCloy fired the puck past Newmarket goalie Daniel LoPapa to tie the game.  
With neither team able to score in the five-minute overtime, the game was decided in the always dramatic shootout.  
Robert Angiolella and Taylor McCloy both scored for the Tigers and Entmaa stood tall in net, denying

both Hurricanes shooters.  
After the game, coach Richmond said the top scorers have continued to make the difference for the Tigers.  
“I thought McCloy had a heck of a game and so did our captain, Clairmont,” he said. “Our first line, Angiolella, Kennedy and Lisi were strong again tonight at both ends of the ice. It’s the same group of guys that keep doing it for us.”  
Moody said the key to the comeback win was playing with a do or die mentality.  
“We came out a little slow in the first, but we just put it in the playoff mentality and battled through it.”  
“Since last week we kind of started trying to play playoff-type hockey and continue that up until play-offs and keep it going.”  
**Tigers lose to Trenton, before beating Pickering**  
Just a night after defeating Newmarket, the Tigers

faced off against another juggernaut in the league-leading Trenton Golden Hawks.  
Aurora owned the first period, with Clairmont putting his team ahead 1 – 0 early in the period. Entmaa, who received the start after his heroics against Newmarket, also closed the door in the first, stopping eight Trenton shots.  
However, the wheels seemed to fall off in the second with the Golden Hawks netting four goals on 10 shots. Shawn Mackie led the charge for Trenton, scoring back to back goals just three minutes apart.  
Dylan Wallace added a goal for the Tigers, but it was too little, too late, as the Golden Hawks took off with a 4 – 2 win.  
Aurora capped the weekend with a 9 – 7 victory against Pickering on Sunday night.  
The Tigers will return home next Saturday, Feb. 23, for their final regular season game against Pickering.

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# "Aurora Live" festival gets a unanimous green light

By Brock Weir

Aurora Live, the proposed two day music festival for Aurora in the last weekend of July, well, lives. Council unanimously approved the proposal from Lucid Community Development Group, an offshoot of Lucid Productions, last week to host the music festival in Machell Park on July 27 and 28.

The group has been in negotiations with the Town since mid-January to host a new music festival in the Town since the Aurora Jazz Fest decided to take their operations to Newmarket after Council opened the use of Town Park up for bids on their traditional Civic Holiday weekend.

Organizers of the new festival promise a new kind of engagement of young Aurorans through finding and honing young local singers and dancers, as well as established and recognizable talent like Lucid board members – and Canadian Idol winners – Brian Melo and Theo Tams, So You Think You Can Dance Canada's Miles Faber, and former Canadian Idol judge Farley Flex. They bill the event as showcasing "Rock Your Socks Off" talent, having "spectacular music", a DJ Workshop, "Fantastic food" and, perhaps a touch optimistically, "guaranteed perfect weather".

Although all Councillors signed off on the extravaganza, the journey to get there was fraught with, to borrow a phrase from Mayor Geoffrey Dawe, "angst."

"It is essentially a request for a permit that we have managed to stretch into four weeks into what seems to be mostly angst," said Mayor Geoffrey Dawe referring to back and forth debate and recent controversy on what exactly Council was going to be approving when moving forward with the Lucid's pro-

posal

This ultimately stemmed from Councillors Chris Ballard, Wendy Gaertner, and John Gallo who raised alarm bells on what they felt were inconsistencies between two different proposals brought forward by the company.

Parks and Recreation Director Al Downey and Lucid's George Roche insisted that the proposals were "a work in progress" and the proposal before Council – which called for Lucid paying the regular permit fees and not requiring a previously floated \$25,000 buy-in from the Town on a two-year partnership – was the deal at hand.

"The proponent submitted documents which we believe needed some amendment," said Mr. Downey. "We received them in short order; we reviewed them, we got a report back in front of Council. As I stated last week [it] would be my recommendation we have the proponent come back once we have approved this in principle to this Council with a complete submission identifying many of the issues Council has addressed but based on the event highlights that we have provided in this report."

Mr. Downey added that he requested Lucid put into writing their agreement with the terms before Council into a letter, which was circulated to Council and media over Monday and Tuesday.

The two reports in question were dated January 22 and January 28. The latter report was beneficial in that it contained more detail, said Mr. Downey, as it outlined sponsorship and promotional opportunities within the local business communities.

One of these initiatives includes going to local businesses to participate in coupon books, in which Lucid plans on getting youth

involved to sell throughout the community not only to build their own engagement in the Aurora Live program, but also give them some business experience, part of their overall vision for Aurora youth in exposing them to the multifaceted business and artistic side of entertainment.

This initiative, however, raised concerns from Councillor Chris Ballard, who said he had heard from "smaller groups" that Lucid's going out to business for sponsorship opportunities might hurt their own ability to raise funds through selling ad space, for instance, in event programs. He also called on Mr. Downey to do "due diligence" in getting references from Lucid on their previous initiatives.

Although he and Mr. Downey agreed that asking for references would be an unusual practice as this is a private enterprise coming in to essentially ask for a permit on Town facilities, Councillor Ballard said this was a slightly different situation as there is a partnership aspect between the Town and Lucid on this deal, with the group providing support for Town initiatives like Aurora Idol and Aurora's Got Talent.

Despite these concerns, the plan ultimately won the support of everyone concerned. For Councillor Evelyn Buck, for instance, this is an opportunity to put Aurora back on the map following the demise of the venerable Aurora Horse Show.

"Those of us who have lived in Town for all those years really missed that annual event that put us on the map," she said. "It was a great excitement for the Town. We knew our place in the scheme of things and I think although they are talking about one event and not more, I think we have needed something like this to come along since that failed."

"[The private enterprise



Councillors unanimously approved the Aurora Live music festival for the last weekend in July last week. Members of Lucid Productions, the brains behind the plan, celebrated the decision with Councillors after the vote. From left: Canadian Idol Brian Melo, Councillor John Abel, Lucid producer George Roche, So You Think You Can Dance Canada's Miles Faber, broadcaster Christine Bentley, Councillor Paul Pirri, Mayor Geoffrey Dawe, Councillors Sandra Humfries and Evelyn Buck, Canadian Idol's Farley Flex, and Councillors John Gallo and Michael Thompson.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

that took over the horse show] wasn't community focused. This project is community focused and that's what makes it attractive to me. They are coming from somewhere else to show us how to do it, but it is our people and our kids and our community that are going to be participating in this festival. I look forward to providing this opportunity once again to put Aurora on the map."

Councillor Sandra Humfries was also enthusiastic about the plan, but her enthusiasm was somewhat tempered, cautioning Council and staff that as unique as this opportunity is, it is also an opportunity not to repeat the mistakes of the past.

"We need to be on a strong and solid relationship with this group of talented individuals and with that all the understandings are clear that there are regular updates to Council on progress, status, and what is happening," she

said. "I don't want to see what we have seen in the past for any community groups. I

want to see some really great things. It is important for me to start off on the right foot."



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## Lucid answered questions before approval

By Brock Weir

Before Lucid Productions' proposal for the Aurora Live festival was approved by Council, a number of questions that had circulated in the community needed to be addressed – and Lucid's director, George Roche, came forward to do just that.

Confusion had reigned among some members of Council, and indeed some members of the community, over what they were proposing to do in Aurora. Various evolving proposals had been circulated with varying statements on what, for instance, the Town would be out of pocket, whether it was an actual monetary buy-in or waiving permit fees and providing services in-kind.

In the final plan, the Town would neither be paying them nor waive fees. "It's a work in progress," said Mr. Roche on the plan. "The January 22 proposal is the one you should be looking at. We're not asking for any money. We're just going to be bringing our talents, and hopefully if you like what we did then we can have a different discussion at the end of all of it. I think you should look at our recipe first."

"Our intention is to promote, collaborate, and partner with the business community, make sure we involve ourselves in all the events going on and anything to do with Aurora as event planners has to do

with us, whether that be the Aurora Cultural Centre, Canada Day [Festivities] we want to do whatever we can to keep things alive. We're all part of the same thread, a different branch of the same tree. We are a non-profit."

Although they are non-profit, when Councillor Paul Pirri asked if they would be making any money on their operations, Mr. Roche's reply was a clear, "Absolutely. Five ways to Sunday."

When asked by Councillors, such as Chris Ballard, where they had brought their services before, Mr. Roche listed such shows as ClearFest and said their board brings a wealth of experience to the table. Speaking to The Auroran, he likened the request for staff to look at their references akin to "asking Marlon Brando for references" when filling slots in a movie.

"You can, perhaps, understand our concern when we see more than one proposal and we're not sure which one we're supposed to be basing our judgement on," said Councillor Chris Ballard. "You said that the past is history, but in my line of work, it is also a good indicator of future success."

Councillor John Abel was more eager to seal the deal.

"We have had a festival four times in the summer and this will be the

Continued on page 23

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## Tax hike stands at 3.42 per cent following final budget talks

By Brock Weir

Numbers have been crunched, deliberations are concluded, and now Aurorans are officially looking at a 3.42 per cent tax hike this year on the Town's portion of their tax bill.

This increase, when combined with the 1.9 per cent increase at the Regional Level and the static taxes required by the school boards, translates into an overall increase of 2.02 per cent on the residential tax bill.

It was a long and laborious process to whittle the municipal tax increase down from the originally forecasted 8.2 per cent down towards 3.42 per cent. Some of the most immediate slashes in knocking the tax hike down nearly five percent was a different kind of management for the expected \$400,000 surplus expected to come to the Town as a result of 2012's tax intake.

Although the final beans had yet to be counted this was the number presented to Council by Town Treasurer Dan Elliott. Rather than funnel this surplus back into reserve accounts, Council opted to put the money instead towards large scale hits from the continual phase in of a new crew with Central York Fire Services and investing in a fund to counteract the effects of the Emerald Ash Borer beetle, which is expected to sweep through the area, killing nearly all ash trees in its path.

Going into the final budget discussions last week, the tax increase stood at 3.58.

This was knocked down by 0.03 per cent by removing the Town's \$9,000 contribution to the Aurora Chamber of Commerce's Business Achievement Awards, which has been postponed to 2014, as well as a further 0.13 per cent by deferring consideration of a new full time staff position

to handle facility bookings and permits in the Parks and Recreation department.

Al Downey, Director of Parks and Recreation, said this position was needed simply for the volume of work that continues to flow into his department. This area is particularly understaffed, he said, in the amount of time it takes to process each permit request. That, in turn, takes a hit in their customer service delivery.

With the employee complement they have, which includes both full-time and part-time staff, 566 days per year would be required to deal with the volume they're facing, but with more permits being processed and turning a part time position full time, more revenue would ultimately be coming into municipal coffers as a result, he argued.

"It's strictly a numbers game for us," said Mr. Downey. "If the trend continues – and we see no reason why it wouldn't – the question is how soon can we get back to our customers and how much service can we provide them? It is beginning to cause a problem for us right now and we feel if we address it at this point we will be able to deal with the volume we have right now and some future volumes."

Although Councillors ultimately voted to defer consideration of this matter until June, when the new position was scheduled to become a reality, some Councillors said they recognized the need. For Councillor John Abel, it was about "doing our very best to...ensure satisfaction" of customers.

But they also questioned how the current group of staff members is dealing with this, particularly when Mr. Downey said one employee in the department was entitled to nine weeks of vacation this year. For Councillor Sandra Humfries, who

ultimately put the deferral on the table, she said she was disappointed that this matter hadn't been worked into the Town's new Customer Service Strategy.

"I really hope that we could build on some of the customer service strategies to build that into the plan," she said.

An additional item that could come forward in June is a \$10,000 contribution to the Smart Commute program, which provides support for businesses looking to implement carpool pro-

grams. A recommendation was on the table last week to put this funding in the budget right then and there. Although some Councillors touted the environmental benefits such a program would continue to have in Aurora, others said the fact the program is funded in part by the Region of York this constitutes "double dipping" the taxpayers.

Smart Commute is expected to appear in the Council chambers to make their pitch for future funding this spring.



Budding artist Angel Waskul, pictured here with Leia Heimamn. tried out a new medium last week at Sobey's painting faces at the grocery store's WinterFest on Saturday. Activities organized by employees and volunteers, included games, face painting, taste testing, a clown, and more. All proceeds raised in the event went to the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

## Musicians pool talent to Conquer Cancer

From page 14

day from a bad day to a good day then I have done my job as a musician."

At 12-years-old, Megan Rowan, a student at Devins Drive Public School, will be the youngest performer taking part in the show. Her passion is for singing and she will be spreading the happiness – and, she hopes, the inspiration – by performing Miley Cyrus' "The Climb."

"I look at it like I am really lucky to be in the show, but when I perform I don't want to go in there looking like the youngest or sounding like the youngest," says Megan of

the routine she has been preparing to make sure she's in top form for Saturday.

"The event is really special to me because the cause is really important and a lot of people in my life have been affected. I have some uncles and aunts who have passed away from cancer and my Uncle Eric was really close to me and I will be thinking of him during my performance."

Music is very important to Megan. She said her first memory of hearing music is something that will always be with her and it started a passion that has continued to

go from strength to strength.

"I knew from the music that this was me and who I wanted to be," she says.

Looking on will be her mother Tracy.

"I am a proud mom, for sure, just because she wants to be a part of this," says Tracy. "Singing is very important to her and she has been singing since she could talk. We're really proud to see her do this and get up before this audience."

For more information on Conquer Cancer: One Act At a Time, visit [conquercanceroneactata-time.ca](http://conquercanceroneactata-time.ca).

## Lucid clears the air

From page 22

fifth and you have shown a tremendous willingness to talk with us and a very detailed proposal," said Councillor Abel. "The eagerness that you have demonstrated to partner with the Town is well demonstrated. The focus is there that it is a partnership with the whole community."

Initiatives will be ongoing throughout the community in the lead-up to Aurora Live, including outreach to local dance studios, arts facilities, and theatre companies to engage local talent.

"Filming is definitely a possibility. We would

like to capture some of what we're doing that's fascinating. People love to see it. When you can hand that mother or father a disc and say here is your son or daughter singing on that stage...but we want to

keep sewing our needle and thread through all the events so people become accustomed to understanding there is a rotational thing going on in Aurora, that there is more to expect than just Aurora Live."

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