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THE AURORAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

CMCA AUDITED

Vol. 13 No. 9 905-727-3300 theauroran.com FREE Week of January 8, 2013

When labour unrest at the school boards called their annual art show into question, Grade 12 Aurora High School students Miranda Petrossi, pictured above with her untitled painting of a flower, and (inset) Emily Sweny, took matters into their own hands and decided to coordinate the show themselves. It opened Monday and artists from AHS and Williams will hold a reception Wednesday evening. See right.

Auroran photos by David Falconer

Judge dismisses lawsuit by taxi owner against Town, former mayor

By Brock Weir

An Ontario Superior Court judge has thrown out the multimillion dollar lawsuit by a local taxi company owner against the Town of Aurora, former mayor Tim Jones, and bylaw officer Heather Green.

The decision came Friday from Justice Andra Pollak.

The plaintiff, Mohammed Hashem Azizi, the owner of York City Taxi Limo on Berczy Street, did not "disclose a tenable cause of action" in his statement of claim, argued Charles Painter, a lawyer for the defendants, in arguments lasting less than five minutes.

Mr. Azizi's claim, he continued, did not identify the three parties, the relationship they had with the plaintiff, or what they allegedly did.

"There's no action pleaded," said Mr. Painter. "They're not even named within the body of the claim. There is no tenable action against the Town of Aurora because although damages are claimed, there is no duty pleaded. It's just a bald claim of damages. I would expect that Mr. Azizi, having been told over the last six weeks that [he would need to] show up and explain what his cause of action against my client is. He has not sought leave of the court by way of a cross motion to amend this pleading and he has filed an affidavit, which I wrote to him three times is not permitted, to be fair to him. His factum is all evidence."

Mr. Azizi's claims the Town denied two taxi licenses to his company, resulting in a damaged reputation for both himself and his business, and

Continued on page 7

Student artists take matters into their own hands, amid unrest at the school board

By Brock Weir

Labour and political unrest have caused an upheaval in the lives of students and teachers across Ontario in recent months, but when the battle between the teachers and the province spilled over into extracurricular activities, students at Aurora High School (AHS) were not going to take things lying down.

With the future of their annual art exhibition for graduating students called into serious question, students took matters into their own hands and banded together to make sure the show goes on outside the confines of the school program. Their hard work and dedication to the project pays off this week when their art show opens this Wednesday at the Aurora Cultural Centre.

"[Fellow student] Miranda and I recently decided to put this show together because we didn't want to accept that this year we wouldn't have an art show when the grads the year before us had one," said Grade 12 AHS Student Emily Sweny. "It's just a really good opportunity for everyone who wants to get into fine arts to get experience in a gallery and even for people who aren't going into the fine arts, it is still a great way to have their work mounted on a wall. It's always a lot of fun and we felt it would be a really good experience for all involved."

The show, however, is not limited to just Aurora High School Students, as they reached

Continued on page 8

LOIS BROWN, M.P.
Newmarket-Aurora
www.loisbrown.ca

I want to hear from you!
Looking ahead to Budget 2013, I invite your suggestions on how we can position Canada to compete and prosper in the long term, and your priorities on the best use of taxpayer's dollars.
Please attend my Pre-Budget Consultation meeting on January 16th or complete my survey online at www.loisbrown.ca to have your say!
905.953.7515 Lois.Brown@parl.gc.ca

Newmarket-Aurora
Pre-Budget
Consultation Meeting
Wednesday, January 16, 2013
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Aurora Cultural Centre
22 Church Street, Aurora

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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COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Tuesday, January 8	10:30 a.m.	Joint Council Committee
Wednesday, January 9	7 p.m.	Accessibility Advisory Committee
Wednesday, January 9	7 p.m.	Sesquicentennial Ad Hoc Committee
Thursday, January 10	7 p.m.	Economic Development Advisory Committee
Saturday, January 12	9 a.m.	Special General Committee – 2013 Budget Review
Monday, January 14	7 p.m.	Special General Committee – 2013 Budget Review
Tuesday, January 15	7 p.m.	General Committee
Wednesday, January 16	7 p.m.	Aurora Public Library Board
~~Thursday, January 17~~	~~7 p.m.~~	Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee – rescheduled to Jan. 24
Thursday, January 17	7:30 p.m.	Committee of Adjustment
Friday, January 18	10 a.m.	Trails and Active Transportation Committee

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**

General Committee meetings can be viewed online by visiting **www.aurora.ca/gcstream**

AURORA 150 FACT:

The Hillary House housed four prominent physicians who lived in and served the community of Aurora. The Hillary's served their community from 1876 to 1993. The house derives its name from the last family of physicians, Dr. Robert William Hillary and later his son, Dr. Robert Michael Hillary and their descendants.

REMINDER

Christmas tree pick up in Aurora is **one day only** and is scheduled for **Monday, January 14, 2013**.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Dinner and a Movie

Will resume on **Saturday, January 19**.
For more information, please call 905-726-4760.

Get involved in the 2013 Budget process!

Residents are invited and encouraged to have their voices heard on the 2013 Budget by attending and speaking at the upcoming session:

Saturday, January 12 at 9 a.m.
Introduction of draft Operating Budget

Monday, January 14 at 7 p.m.
Review of Third Party Budgets

Monday, January 21 at 9 a.m.
Departmental reviews continue

Monday, January 28 at 7 p.m.
Monday, February 4 at 7 p.m.
Monday, February 11 at 7 p.m.
Monday, February 25 at 7 p.m.
Operating Budget review and discussion

All meetings will be held in the Council Chambers, located at Aurora Town Hall.

Public input will be received at the beginning of each meeting. Those who wish to speak are encouraged to register with the Clerk's office in advance by emailing CSecretariat@aurora.ca. Those who do not register will be allowed to make a presentation if time permits.

Budget information will be posted to the Town's website at **www.aurora.ca/2013budget** and updated throughout the process.

For more information about the 2013 Budget, please contact Dan Elliott, Director of Corporate & Financial Services/Treasurer at ourtownbudget@aurora.ca

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**

Events at the Aurora Public Library in January

Aurora Public Library

Capture the Light: Explorations in oil by Shawna Patenaude

Experience the magic of light and shadow reminiscent of the great master painters in this exceptional and dramatic art exhibition. Showing in the Colleen Abbott Gallery at Aurora Public Library, **January 7** to **March 15**.

myAPL Video Contest: Screening & Awards Ceremony

Please join us for a screening of the videos entered into the Library's first ever myAPL Video Contest. This will take place on **January 10** at 7:30 p.m. in the Lebovic Room. Following the screening, the contest winners will be announced and there will be light refreshments for all. Everyone is welcome!

2013 Community and Waste Management Calendar is now being distributed

Please be advised that the 2013 Community and Waste Management Calendar is now being distributed through Canada Post (unaddressed mail) and should be delivered by **Friday, January 11.**

Check out this special edition calendar for interesting information and photos celebrating Aurora's past, present and future.

For more information on waste and recycling collection in Aurora, or to download a copy of the 2013 Collection Calendar, please visit **www.aurora.ca/wasteandrecycling**

Status of Outdoor Skating Rinks in Aurora

The Parks department is currently constructing all 4 outdoor ice rinks for the 2012/13 skating season.

Thank you for your patience over the holidays but we had to wait for Mother Nature to co-operate!

Please continue to check the website and Notice Board for further updates.

For more information, please contact the Parks & Recreation department at 905-727-3123 ext. 3233.

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

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In This Week's Issue:

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17 At Your Service

Briefly

AURORA SKIER SUCCUMBS TO INJURIES

A 48-year-old Aurora man died Wednesday after sustaining injuries New Year's Day at the Blue Mountain Ski Resort. Police and paramedics were called to Blue Mountain around 1 p.m. to attend to the injured man on the Tranquility run. According to a report from the OPP, the incident was witnessed by other skiers and reported to the authorities. He was taken by ambulance to the Collingwood General and Marine Hospital where he died the following day. The OPP are continuing their investigations. The man's name has not yet been released.

FIRST BABY OF 2013

Aurora's first baby of the year born at Southlake General Hospital arrived at 12:34 a.m. on New Year's Day. Weighing in at 7 lbs, 1 oz, the healthy baby boy Amir Khazal was born to mother Rua'h Abdalla and father Wasam Khazal. He was also welcomed by big sister Julia Khazal who, in a rare coincidence, was born January 1, 2012!

12 CHARGES LAID DURING HOLIDAY R.I.D.E.

12 impaired driving arrests were made this year in the York Regional Police's holiday Enhanced R.I.D.E. program. Launched on November 28, the R.I.D.E. program stopped 40,527 vehicles this year, administered 191 roadside tests, issued 25 three-day suspensions, and issued nine other criminal charges. This is one more impaired-related arrest compared to the previous year, and two less other criminal charges than 2011. "During the course of the Festive Season Enhanced R.I.D.E. Program, an additional 29 impaired driving arrests were made thanks to motorists who called 911 through our Safe Roads...Your Call campaign," said Constable Blair McQuillan of the YRP.

TOWN OF AURORA
PUBLIC NOTICE

OUR PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE
AURORA
1863 150th 2013

NOTICE OF PUBLIC PLANNING MEETING

Aurora Town Council will hold a public meeting on Wednesday, January 23 at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers at Aurora Town Hall to consider a Streetscape Design & Implementation Plan for The Aurora Promenade Secondary Planning Area (Yonge and Wellington Street Corridor).

The purpose of this meeting is to present the final Aurora Promenade Streetscape Design & Implementation Plan to Council for their endorsement.

BACKGROUND

The Planning Partnership, in collaboration with Town staff have prepared The Aurora Promenade Streetscape Design & Implementation Plan. Two previous Public Information Sessions have been held for the project. The first took place on March 5, 2012, where feedback was received regarding opportunities, constraints and priorities. A second Public Information Session was held on June 28, 2012, where the draft Aurora Promenade Streetscape Design & Implementation Plan was presented for the purpose of obtaining feedback.

the aurora promenade
A Vision for the Revitalization of the Yonge & Wellington Corridors

The Aurora Promenade Streetscape Design & Implementation Plan sets out specific design recommendations for each Character Area. It includes recommendations for enhanced streetscapes, as well as design strategies for several focus areas, intersections and gateways. General furnishing and signage guidelines provide direction for property owners and a guide for Town staff when evaluating development applications.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information and material related to the proposed Aurora Promenade Streetscape Design & Implementation Plan is available between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. during regular business days at the Town's Planning & Development Services department, located at 100 John West Way, 3rd Floor. The planning report and a draft copy of the Aurora Promenade Streetscape Design & Implementation Plan will be available on The Town of Aurora's website on Friday, January 18. Please see the Public Planning agendas and minutes section, located at www.aurora.ca/agendasminutes. Please direct inquiries to Fausto Filipetto at 905-727-3123, extension 4342.

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.

January 8, 2013

Town of Aurora 100 John West Way, Aurora, ON L4G 6J1
www.aurora.ca/publicnotices | 905-727-3123 ext. 4342

In hindsight, Aurora's Catherine Rossi (pictured Saturday at the Aurora Public Library) suspects she always had a hidden, but burning desire to be a writer – and now she's having her chance. Ms. Rossi's story of a chance encounter which greatly helped her daughter was published last week in the latest volume in the popular book series Chicken Soup for the Soul. Auroran photo by Brock Weir

An unexpected moment with a feline friend inspired local "Chicken Soup" writer

By Brock Weir

When Catherine Rossi's nine year old daughter Jessica broke her wrist in a fall, after a few weeks in a cast, the bones were found to be misaligned and the break had to be re-set.

Distraught over what was to come – and the fact her parents weren't allowed in with her for the break – Jessica's parents were at a loss at what to do to comfort her. All she wanted was a cat, and mysteriously one showed up at their house, out of the blue, seemingly with the single minded purpose to spend the day with Jessica, to comfort her and, with that objective fulfilled, went on its way never to be seen again.

This is the story Ms. Rossi shares in the latest installment of the Chicken Soup for the Soul book series, this edition entitled "Angels Among Us." The book was published on New Year's Day. Although slightly trepidatious about putting her work out there for public consumption, she's slowly letting her family in on her secret that she's now a published author.

"It was one of those things where once I got selected in the process to keep it going through the editing rounds, I got more and more excited, but I decided I better keep it to myself because I don't want to jinx the opportunity," she explains. "I kept it really quiet and only my immediate family knows. My husband was really, really happy as well."

But what of Jessica, the leading lady in this tale?

"She is really, really happy," says the proud mom. "She is 20 now and still remembers it very, very clearly. She's really happy to actually have the book in and to have it for her whole life and potentially pass it onto her own kids."

Encouraged by a friend to actually take the plunge and set her thoughts down on paper with an eye to sending it into the book publishing company, which regularly publishes volumes of 101 stories dedicated to specific themes designed to inspire and help the reader, she realised it was something she actually wanted to do for a long time but never had that real push in the right direction.

"It had to be a true story, which this obviously was, and my friend pushed me to submit it," she says. "I just tried to recall the events as they happened. This exquisite cat just showed up out of nowhere. It is not a common breed of cat that you see very often and most stray cats will just take off when they see you, but this cat was obviously on a mission.

"It really felt like it was here for a reason and then it just vanished. There're no coincidences in life and everything is meant to happen for a reason, good and bad. If you look for the signs, they are always there. I don't consider myself a religious person, but definitely a spiritual person and when something profound like this happens to you, it is amazing the sort of things you can pick up from it."

One further sign that she was meant to submit this story was the title. The Chicken Soup publishers don't accept unsolicited stories on the whole, but stories that fit in with specific themes they have already outlined. After Ms. Rossi penned her short memoir, she titled it "Angels Among Us." Heading online to see if there was an edition that would be a perfect fit to her narrative, she was surprised to see "Angels Among Us" was actually a title of an upcoming edition. Coincidence or not, she found her perfect fit. Through the editing process, publishers since re-titled Ms. Rossi's story "The Assignment."

A naturally creative person, writing is a new outlet for Ms. Rossi to express herself. She has done everything from graphic design, to cake decorating, to floral arranging, and now works part time for Weight Watchers where she continues to inspire clients. Although she says she dabbles a bit in everything, it is now safe to say she has been firmly bitten by the writing bug, having collaborated on a self-published children's book last fall with an eye to eventually sell to Scholastic, and thinking up ideas for her next Chicken Soup for the Soul effort.

"I think a lot of people have a secret desire to be a writer," she says. "For me, I just see it as another medium to explore. If you walk around my house, you'll see I have little pieces of paper everywhere with little ideas scattered on it for stories or an outline for something, and I have actually started a book to keep these topics written down.

"[This time] I just decided, you know what? The signs are there. This is just a gentle nudge in the right direction and maybe that is the thing I need to be pursuing."

Letters to the editor

Tennis Club had a plan

There seems to no end to the fuzzifying of our recently submitted Feasibility Study presented and rejected by the Aurora Town Council on November 20th.

To set the record straight, I am restating once again that the Aurora Community Tennis Club followed a transparent process in which we forwarded all relevant correspondence to the Town staff for their comment and suggestions. If anyone is interested they can contact me for copies of our correspondence with the Town and the LSRCA.

Our Feasibility report contained research and in depth quotes along with sustainable solutions for the creation of a multi-use, year round Sesquicentennial event centre at Fleury Park. I am amazed by the dismal performance of the Council in evaluating our feasibility report. It was very apparent that the majority of Council did not even read the Feasibility Report. Months previous to the November 20 Council meeting we offered to inform Council of our solutions especially in respect to the flood plain compliance issues but we did not receive any response from Council members.

Below is an excerpt of advice provided us by the LSRCA dated September 12, 2012. It appears the Town has chosen to interpret this LSRCA message as a rejection of our whole Fleury Park Proposal and reprimands us for following their advice. At the November 20 Council meeting we followed up on the LSRCA advice and requested that the Town fund a hydrological study to demonstrate the viability of constructing an open sided structure with smart vent technology that allows unobstructed flow of water.

"Any system designed to allow the easy inflow of water would have to be designed by a qualified professional engineer. At this stage, I could not comment further on the device listed below until a detailed design is received for our review as part of a complete permit application. In the event that the building was designed to allow the easy inflow of water, this would meet Policy 7(f)

"However, the proposed building still would not meet a number of our other Watershed Development Policies as listed in my email dated September 5, 2012. The major ones are as follows:

• The building site is located at flood depths of greater than 1 metre.

• A building of any type at this location is very likely to obstruct flood flows. A detailed hydraulic analysis would be needed by a qualified P. Eng. to demonstrate that flood flows would not be obstructed".

Clearly, we created a plan to solve the flood plain compliance issue by asking the Town (as our Partner) to bring forward an application to the LSRCA along with a hydrological report completed by a qualified engineer. With this report, we would either verify or refute our proposed solution. The cost of this study was quoted at $25,000. The Fleury Playhouse would enhance the Promenade area viability and is eligible for a $500,000 Heritage Canada grant.

But Council has authorized spending $97,000 on yet another consultant to study the Promenade area. Go figure.

Brent MacKinnon
Aurora

SLAPP motion looks at issue from the wrong side: reader

In contemplating the incorporation of elements of the SLAPP legislation, Aurora Town Council should do so devoid of an outcome aspect involving Phyllis Morris' lawsuit, commenced in her function as Mayor.

Current deliberations appear to be strictly a motivation to extend apologies (and, of course, more importantly, some form of financial compensation) to bloggers who caused the lawsuit to be undertaken. Town Council is looking at rationale totally from the wrong side of the mirror.

Alex Vander Veen
Aurora

THE AURORAN
Aurora's Community Newspaper

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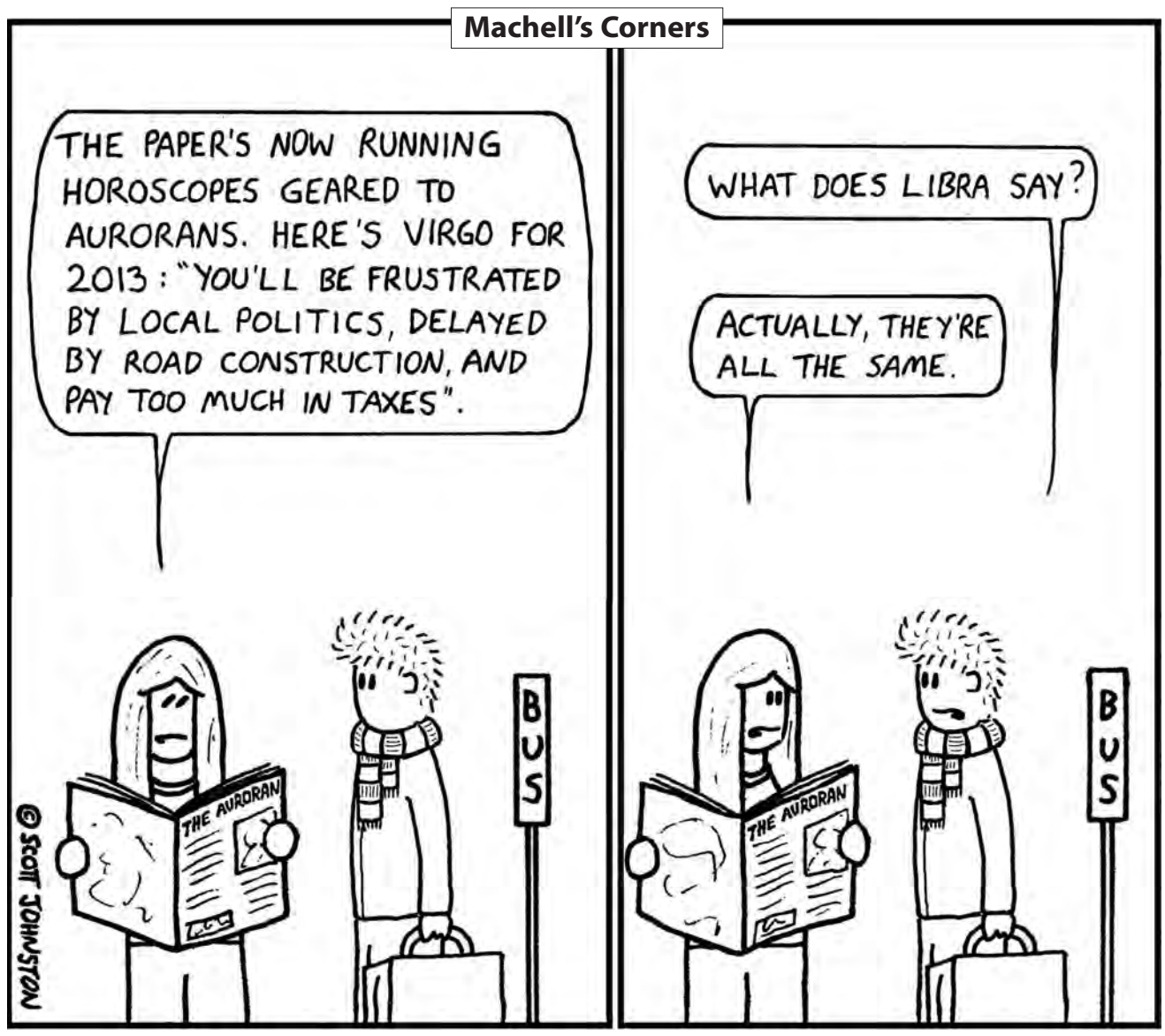

To submit a letter to the editor please send your email to letters@auroran.com – deadline for submissions is Saturday at 1 p.m.

Neighbourhood Watch 2013

BROCK'S BANTER

Brock Weir

After the New Year's Eve excitement of a mini-movie marathon at the local Cineplex (Skyfall and Les Miserable; good choices both!) and kicking back to watch the Times Square ball drop from the comfort of my living room, it was nice to wake up January 1 to brilliant sunshine bouncing off fresh snow. I like to think that is a good omen for the year ahead.

As we head into the first full week of the New Year, it is the perfect opportunity to pause for a moment and look around the community for the people and issues that could shape where we are when we look back 11 months from now. With the Sesquicentennial year now in full swing, some might be tempted to look back, but let's look ahead at the potential big names of 2013 in semi-alphabetical order.

BRIAN BISHOP AND THE SALVATION ARMY

The Salvation Army of Central York Region hopes that this will be the year to formally break ground on the Northridge Community Church on Leslie Street near Wellington Street East. Although they formally turned the soil in 2011 in the midst of the last provincial election campaign with an eye to truly start building in 2012, a deal falling through to sell their current facility in Newmarket put the kibosh on those plans. If they can unload the building, 2013 will herald the first phase of construction of the new multipurpose facility, which will eventually include a youth loft, a full-size gym, and a sanctuary which will also double as an auditorium – space all available for the community to use. Although Major Bishop has said the plans were designed as such that there would be little overlap or competition within the community, the building will undoubtedly be a boon to the east side of Town. It will be telling if (a) it brings a sense of unity to both sides of Aurora or (b) highlights any further modifications that could or should be made to the town's proposed Community Space for Youth.

GALLO AND THOMPSON

As someone who observes Council and Committee meetings week-in and week-out, it has been fascinating to watch the development of these two Councillors since the 2010 Municipal Election. Both often plant their feet on opposite sides of the fence, but both have started to present their cases in an increasingly confident, forceful, and proactive manner, with the former often surprising his critics (online and elsewhere) for voting outside of a perceived slate. As this is the last full year before Aurora residents head to the polls to piece together their next Council, one can't help but wonder if both men are laying the groundwork for something more.

JUSTICE CORY GILMORE

Both sides in Aurora resident George Hervey's lawsuit against former mayor Phyllis Morris, accusing Ms. Morris of breaching the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act by participating in the meeting which lead to the last Council's authorization of her $6 million lawsuit against three local bloggers, among others, have made their case with Ms. Morris vehemently denying the claims. Now the decision is ultimately in Justice Gilmore's hands. Whichever way her decision falls, Justice Gilmore's decision will have important ramifications in Aurora. If she decides in Mr. Hervey's favour and uses the full gamut of penalties at her disposal, Ms. Morris could be barred from seeking public office for the next several years. If she decides in favour of Ms. Morris, it will be fascinating to see on which factors she based her decision. However you slice it, it will be a watershed moment for the future of local municipal politics.

MPP FRANK KLEES

Ontarians are likely to head back to the provincial polls this spring to deliver their verdict on the current Ontario government. Although still relatively fresh, as far as provincial parliaments go, this installment has been plagued by scandals – real, hyped or otherwise – and criticisms from all fronts, culminating in the resignation of Dalton McGuinty and battles with teachers. Mr. Klees has never wasted an opportunity to underscore these issues and has already been acclaimed to carry the Progressive Conservative banner in the riding in the next election. If the new Liberal leader reinvigorates the party (more on that next week) and the PCs have another dismal showing in the polls, will Mr. Klees see this as an opportunity to take another run for party leadership?

LIBERALS (SQUARED)

Often dubbed "Canada's natural governing party" until, you know, they weren't, both the Federal and Provincial Liberal parties are in significant transition. With the new leadership of the provincial party expected to be decided this month (and the vast majority of the various candidates coming to the riding to court potential voters), the clock is fast ticking for the local riding to selection their candidate. Mr. Klees will likely face off against a fresh competitor this time around. Federally, not only are we without an official Liberal candidate, the party itself is without a permanent leader as the race continues. So far, only candidate Justin Trudeau has made a local splash with his campaign, but will others trickle in to capture the local vote? This first quarter will be the make or break moment.

NEXT: Filmmaker Jared Pelletier, Aurora Taxi Drivers, Ontario Teachers, York Region Transit workers and, of course, youth.

NEW AURORAN POLL

Q: Whose side you you support in the battle between Ontario Teachers and the Province?

a) Teachers
b) The Province
c) Neither

Send your thoughts to **letters@auroran.com**

FINAL RESULTS OF PREVIOUS POLL

Council recently approved plans to move ahead with a youth centre, known as a "Community Space for Youth" at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex. Do you think this addition will serve the needs of Aurora's youth? **(A) Yes (B) No (C) Unsure**

RESULTS AS OF JANUARY 7, 2013	Yes	No	Don't Know
	16%	63%	21%

Please participate in our POLL –go to www.theauroran.com, scroll down and look to the bottom right of the home page to VOTE.

This Edwardian view looking south on Yonge Street from Wellington shows a very familiar, yet strangely alien, view. While many of the buildings depicted here are still there, the leafy foliage viewers could see the further south they progressed down "Yonge Street North" is undoubtedly much a thing of the past. Although this post card – which is part of the McRoberts Collection, recently published in the book "Postcards of Olde Aurora" – was sent from Aurora, if you look closely, the site now occupied by the historic Aurora Post Office was occupied by a laundry.

Photo courtesy of the McRoberts Collection

The Last Resort...

FRANKLY SPEAKING

Frank Klees
MPP Newmarket-Aurora

I recently suggested to my constituency office staff that we should consider changing the sign on the door to "The Last Resort". Let me explain.

Between January 1 and December 31 of last year, our constituency office dealt with 5,001 inquiries - either by email or phone. We keep detailed notes of those contacts, the action we take and the results of our intervention.

I say "our intervention" because my constituency staff, Suzanne Bolton, Neave Greig and Jacqueline Flowers do the day-to-day advocacy work with government departments and agencies. It's largely because of their dedication on behalf of constituents that we've earned the reputation of being able to 'get things done'.

It's YOUR Constituency Office

Since I was first elected in 1995, Fridays have always been dedicated to meetings with constituents. Even as a Cabinet Minister, I refused to have ministry staff schedule briefings or announcements on my "constituency day" because I always maintained that my first responsibility is to the people who elected me.

Of interest is the number of times people feel the need to start the meeting with an apology or a confession. The apologies are typically for taking up my time, to which I respond that this is what I'm elected to do and I just hope that I can be of help.

The confessions range from regrets of not having been politically involved, to not voting for me - none of which make any difference of course, but for some it's apparently an important cleansing experience.

I always find that interesting, because it doesn't matter to me or my staff whether someone is a staunch partisan of any stripe or a political agnostic. Everyone gets treated the same when they come through the doors of our office. After all, it's their office, where their MPP and his staff have one purpose – to help people with their problems as they relate to the provincial government.

Then comes the comment that prompted my reference to changing the sign on our door: "I have a problem and I hope you can help me. You're my last resort".

The fact is, that before we get that call or have that meeting, most people have already exhausted every other attempt to resolve their issue. Following is a glimpse into some of those 5,001 calls. While in most cases we can help, sometimes the best we can do is to provide a respectful explanation.

Case Files Uncensored...
Except for the names and identifying details

A well-known Aurora constituent, who was so pre-occupied with Aurora Council business when he left on a trip to Europe, that he misplaced his driver's licence. Consequence? Car rental was denied. A call to our office resulted in the Ministry of Transportation issuing a temporary licence. Case resolved. (I could not possibly disclose who that person was, and will leave the research to you).

A Newmarket resident was unjustly denied re-writing her board exams by her professional college. We intervened. The constituent was granted a re-write on June 27. She passed the exam and I had the honour of cutting the ribbon at her new business on October 20.

An elderly Aurora resident was scheduled for hip replacement surgery at Southlake. She was distressed because she had no one to care for her at home following her release from the hospital. We contacted Patient Relations at Southlake and the CCAC to ensure that the necessary home care arrangements were made.

A legally blind constituent who suffers multiple health issues was not able to access specialized transportation services. The issue was resolved following a meeting with the YRT's General Manager.

An Aurora resident who applied for his Millwright licence was told that he didn't qualify because he had not accumulated enough hours of work experience. We initiated an investigation through the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and it was determined that former employers had failed to verify the constituent's hours. The licence was issued and within days the constituent received three full time employment offers.

A mortgage broker recommended by one of the major banks, failed to arrange promised financing for a constituent, despite collecting thousands of dollars in fees. Although the matter was reported to York Regional Police, the OPP and the RCMP, no action was taken against the broker. I referred the matter to the Attorney General and while the case is ongoing, I was advised that an arrest was made on December 21st.

Add to this list the appeal from the parents of an adult son suffering Duschenes Muscular Dystrophy, the desperate call from the father who could not get access to mental health and drug addiction services for a teenage son, the grandparents who have mortgaged their home to provide Autism Intervention support for their grandchild or the last minute call for help to expedite a birth certificate or drivers licence re-instatement, and you get some idea of what goes on in your constituency office.

As always, I welcome your comments and advice and don't hesitate to call if we can be of help. Even if it is your last resort. www.frankklees.com

2012 in Review

INSIDE AURORA

Scott Johnston

Jan 17 – The sudden appearance of "Acme" products in Aurora suggests the presence of coyotes.

Jan 31 - Council approves demolition of The Browning House, and hides the town's recently-received Prince of Wales Prize for Municipal Heritage Leadership.

Feb 15 – It's announced that starting in 2013 one per cent of future capital funds will go towards public art – the amount set aside for lawyers will remain at 25%.

Feb 27 – Funding is provided to Club Aurora to obtain new equipment when it is revealed that the gym is using copies of old Council meeting minutes in place of free weights.

Mar 20 – The failure of finding enough people in Aurora to make the world's largest human smiley face is blamed on the 4.77% tax increase.

Mar 27 – Council expresses concerns about the Cultural Centre not being accountable to taxpayers for how they send public funds, noting that only Council should have that privilege.

Apr 14 - Free passes to the Home Show are not enough incentive to entice Camilla and Charles to visit Aurora during their Royal Tour of southern Ontario.

Apr 26 – A police proposal to hold the Santa Under the Stars parade on Wellington Street East is abandoned when the police are unable to guarantee rides for the 40,000 attendees who would not be able to find parking anywhere near the parade route.

May 23 – Council discusses 21 agenda items, but fails to get to the one regarding the proposal to limit the number of council agenda items, as it is number 47 on the list.

Jun 3 – Reconstruction of Wellington Street West is approved when it is discovered that most pot holes are now so deep that traffic cones placed in them as a warning to motorists can no longer be seen.

Jun 26 - To beautify local parks, school kids paint scenes on picnic tables, which is better than the previous form of table decoration, which consisted mainly of mustard stains and seagull droppings.

Jul 5 – Concerns are raised about Aurora's finances when a toonie found at Town Hall is hailed as a significant contribution to the town's reserve funds.

Jul 24 - A councillor's assertion that Aurora has too many retail jobs receives more media coverage than the seven local stores that go out of business that month.

Aug 17 – The town post office closes after efforts to launch a letter writing campaign fail because no one can be found who writes letters anymore.

Aug 28 – Vivaldi fans rejoice when it is revealed that the Four Seasons will be the theme of the town's sesquicentennial celebrations.

Sep 16 – Kolbe and Williams teacher's start threatening their students that if they don't behave, they'll be forced to attend Aurora Council meetings to be held at their schools.

Sep 30 – When Council asks residents what to do with $30 million in unspent hydro funds, the most popular response is to give each of the town's 15,000 taxpayers their $2,000 back.

Oct 9 – A proposal that Aurora be split between two federal ridings seems appropriate as the town is divided on pretty much every issue that comes before it.

Oct 17 – The chicanes in the northeast quadrant are removed, but kept in storage for when this decision is once again flip-flopped again, and they need to be re-installed on the same streets.

Nov 13 – Council approves apologizing to three bloggers who were sued by a former council member, but does not consider apologizing to the remaining 55,237 Aurorans for the proposed 8.3% tax hike.

Dec 2 – When concerns are expressed that a proposed covered structure in Fleury Park may be subject to flooding, its potential uses are expanded to include water polo.

Dec 21 - The Mayans fail to predict either the apocalypse, or Ron Wallace's final column.

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

This Victorian challenge could turn out pretty ugly if not done correctly

SENIOR SCAPE

Sylvia Dickens

This should be interesting. Will it work? Or will the challenge be too… challenging?

I'm talking about my outfit for the upcoming Victorian Tea & Picture Show on February 10. Since I'll be the hostess, it is only fitting that I dress accordingly to help set the mood. There is a big problem, however. It appears that affordable Victorian costumes are not an easy find, which leaves only one alternative – to make my own.

Last week, I dropped by Fabricland to get advice on what material to use and what it will cost. It seems that I can make my own for around $60-$80, compared to the $200 dresses I saw advertised online.

This won't be the first time I've sewn my own clothes, but that was about 40 years ago. How difficult can it be, I thought back then? Simplicity patterns made it pretty easy. Having a mother who made clothes for us helped. This time, I'll be on my own, but I'm not worried. I have a fall-back option.

After hours scouring the Internet for images of what the tea gowns looked like, I found some pretty ones, but no patterns. Those that I did find weren't as pretty as I'd hoped, so I ended up buying a Butterick pattern that looks more like the Renaissance than the Victorian era.

So now I'm getting really brave. But that's me, always thinking, "I can do this. It just takes common sense and imagination, of which I have a lot." I figure I can adapt the pattern into a dress that looks more like the 1910 styles. This actually means it will be an Edwardian dress.

This concerned me, until someone said, "People probably won't know the difference." Well, I really prefer the Edwardian styles, like they wore on the Titanic, so if all goes according to plan, that's what I'll have in the end.

Many of those Victorian dresses were made from drapery material. Did you ever see the Carol Burnett Show episode set in Gone With The Wind? She waltzes down the stairs in a dress made from green velvet drapery, complete with curtain rod, that hung on one of the downstairs windows? What a spectacle!

I can see it now. My Victorian-cum Edwardian dress made from bold, colorful fabric that would more appropriately decorate a window. Well, let's hope not, or this truly will end up a Titanic adventure.

Sewing Fun

Are you ambitious and daring? Are you interested in learning to sew? Or are you already an accomplished sewer? Whichever category you fit, you can enjoy this activity in the Sew Much Fun group which meets Friday mornings at 9.30 a.m.

For more fun, drop in to the Knotty Knitters Group. Initially, it was created specifically for knitting, but they have modified it to cover any activity that involves needles. I understand it's mostly to create small things or, for the really ambitious, quilts. They meet every Monday morning at 9 a.m.

Annual Memorial

Each year, the Centre sets aside time to honor members who have passed away. Join in the memorial service on Wednesday, January 23 at 2 p.m. in the West McKenzie Room. Celebrate their lives and contributions. The Evergreen Choir will sing. Refreshments will be available.

Please note that, out of respect, the activities normally taking place at that time will be postponed during the service.

Membership Renewal

If you haven't renewed your membership yet, you need to do it next time you're at the Centre. All memberships were due on January 1, except for those who joined after Nov. 1, 2012. You will need your green membership card in order to renew your membership. If you have lost it, you can purchase another for $2.

All members will be asked to show their green membership card when signing in, so keep it with you.

This is a good time to purchase a 2013 Gold Activity Card ($100). If you have a 2012 Gold Card, you are entitled to a 50 per cent discount on the 2013 card. If you prefer not to buy one, you can pay the $1 per visit activity fee each day you come to the Centre.

Programs

Are you looking for programs in which you can learn something that you enjoy or would like to try? The Town offers a lengthy list of programs for 2013, from Acrylic Painting to Zumba Gold.

You might benefit from Nutrition and You, a program that focuses on using nutrition to increase your energy, improve your digestion and shed body weight.

For details, check the Town of Aurora Winter Program Guide, or grab a copy of the Seniors' newsletter available at reception. The first program, Aquafit, begins January 8 and January 10. The Fitness Challenge begins on the 10th.

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, email auroraseniors@rogers.com or call 905-726-4767 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday to Friday.

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Letters to the editor

There are some things that defy understanding: Reader

There are some things in life that defy understanding or rational thinking.

There are some things in life that are just plain wrong.

I am moved to tears to find a peaceful explanation for the death of so many young children and teachers in Newtown, CT. What disturbs me is I wrote about this type of event back in 1981.

I was attending the Ontario College of Art at the time. I had a very vivid dream that I was back in the elementary school I attended in grade seven and eight.

A child was coming into the school with a gun open firing everywhere and I tried to run and hide. I woke up and wrote about this event in my poem called "Nightmares" which was published later on in my works of poetry & Illustrations "On Angels Wings And Moon Beams" in 1997.

I never had any idea that I would write a poem that would eventually become a saddened reality not just in Canada but frequently in the USA. I never would have believed that this one poem out of hundreds I have written would eventually burden my heart. I work with children teaching many art programs within the community as an artist and I love the spirits of these children. I just do not want to believe that there is evil in our world a madness in a human mind that would destroy the lives of the innocent.

Deborah Campo
Aurora

Buck responds to Smith letter

(Re: Reader takes issue with Buck's comments. Tuesday, January 1, 2013.)

T.C. Smith is too modest by half.

His first cause celebre is the Cradle of Culture in Church Street School.

I was in the company of Councillor Abel when he received a flurry of e-mails from members of the board. An "emergency" meeting had been held on a Sunday to deal with the outrage of an elected official questioning the merits of the amazingly generous arrangement with the Town.

Mr. Smith is no stranger to the art of hurling the organic. In that episode, he chose to kill two birds with one stone.

Even in those early days, making accusations against myself and assigning nefarious motive to myself.

Readers may recall, Mr. Smith accompanied then board chair Mr. Layton to the microphone when the board came to Council to give account of their stewardship.

I asked the question of why the museum had been excluded from the building. Mr. Layton offered no answer.

Mr. Smith, in an extraordinary move, turned his back on Council and whispered in Mr. Layton's left ear.

Whereupon Mr. Layton stated, the board had not made that decision. I noted my inability to accept the answer but no further information was provided.

Thereafter, the non-answer itself became something of a cause celebre. To this day the author of the decision to exclude the museum from the School that was renovated to receive it remains a mystery.

Mr. Smith is good at abusing others, not so good at providing facts.

He is certainly well equipped to recognise his own weapons.

Councillor Evelyn Buck
Aurora

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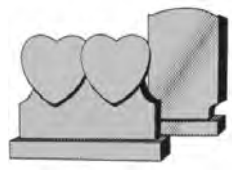

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Ramping up accessibility in businesses is easier than you think, says engineer

By Brock Weir

It could be easier than you think to make your businesses more accessible not just to people in wheelchairs, but also parents pushing strollers.

That's the message engineer Luke Anderson will be bringing to Aurora this week in a special presentation on accessibility. Mr. Anderson will be here to encourage the Town and local businesses to get behind the Community Ramp Project.

Mr. Anderson co-founded the Community Ramp Project to help people and communities alike to overcome any physical barriers in the built environment. They coordinate newly built – and eye catching –- ramps donated by local community hardware stores and built by volunteers to, first of all, make struggling over a single step to get into a shop a thing of the past.

It's a simple, low cost solution, Mr. Anderson says, making businesses more inviting, but also a way for communities to take a proactive way in being "ahead of the curve" when it comes to provincial accessibility standards.

"A good solution doesn't necessarily happen right off the bat," Mr. Anderson tells The Auroran. "It's an iterative process and, like our name suggests, these ramps are a stop gap solution to the problem, the solution being a permanent one that is a good segue into how a municipality can be ahead of the curve and create legislation of their own in order to be ahead of the curve and develop a really great bylaw that gets solutions in place."

Indeed, to this end, Councillor John Abel has a motion coming up for discussion January 22 which, if passed, will formally give municipal support to the Community Ramp project. The City of Toronto recently formalized its support of the Community Ramp project and the group has continued to make inroads close by in communities such as Stouffville as well as in British Columbia, where this story actually starts.

As an athlete with a passion for mountain biking, it was only natural that Mr. Anderson move from Toronto to the BC interior, which he describes as "the Mecca of mountain biking" in Canada. Unfortunately, he "bit off a bit more than he could chew" about 10 years ago and came up short of a big gap jump. The resulting crash left him in a wheelchair.

"In that split second I was all of a sudden literally launched into a world that is not well-suited for somebody who uses a wheelchair; all of a sudden with my new situation I was introduced to a lot of barriers that prevent not just myself, but other people who use mobility aids, parents pushing strollers and delivery people, everyone seems to have a problem with step entrances and barriers I was coming up against," he explains, noting his work for a Downtown Toronto engineering firm.

"For the first five years of my employment here I had to call up a co-worker to come and meet me at the entrance to deploy a temporary folding ramp to help me gain access to the building. You can imagine how frustrating a situation that would leave you in if it was raining and super cold and snowy and you're waiting for a co-worker to come and help you get into the building. This happened every day for five years and usually it would be my friend Michael who would come and help me out and we would have these great conversations riding the elevator up to our office space about how stupid this problem was.

"I guess these conversations reached a boiling point and we said, 'let's do something about this' and that was really the catalyst for getting the ramp project off the ground. Since then, I think we have done just over 100 ramps to date and it has been about a year in the works."

It has been a year to hone this "simple solution" and Mr. Anderson says there is an idea that increasing accessibility – whether it is in a small way – is a costly endeavour for businesses. With help from volunteers and material donations from downtown business owners, a fund can be set up to provide a means for these businesses to acquire a free ramp.

If both his presentation and Councillor Abel's motion is successful, what Mr. Anderson says he would like to see is about a dozen local businesses to take up the challenge and ramps will "speak for themselves" and build awareness throughout community, and start a conversation about building a barrier-free province.

"Business owners are kind of fearful about what barrier-free means," he says. "From my experience introducing the project there is always hesitation to be involved because they think they have to provide barrier-free amenities throughout and that includes washrooms and automatic door openers and all of those things bring up dollar signs in the mind. The misconception is that is not necessary at this point.

"What we're doing with the ramp project is just one – literally – step in the right direction for just letting people into the establishment and gain access to a business' services. It is going to be next to impossible to get a business to foot the bill for a full upgrade to their storefront and renovate their space to accommodate washrooms in basements where access is impossible for someone like myself who uses the chair.

"It just takes a little bit of education letting the business owners know that, hey, you have the opportunity here to be part of a movement."

Freshly painted ramps are readied to be put in position in Toronto through the Community Ramp Project. Council is set to consider endorsing the program in Aurora on January 22. Supplied photo

Taxi company owner vows to continue fight against Town, Jones

From page 1

ultimately a loss in clientele. In his statement of claim, he states there was no reason provided to him as to why the Town withheld the plates for six years.

"As a result of the Town's action, not only have I been unable to grow my business, but I have lost approximately 80 per cent of my client base," he said in his statement. "Over the past six years I have purchased five cars which were intended to update and replace my older cars as they wear out. Due to the delays in issuing the plates these cars are no longer acceptable for taxi use due to their age and the inability to obtain necessary insurance for them as a result. These cars are now worthless.

"As a result of the loss of income, I have been unable to maintain the cars in a serviceable condition, resulting in breakdowns and an inability to honour longstanding and current commitments to my clients for the provision of transportation services."

In addition, the issue has had "emotionally and physically adverse impacts on him."

During his arguments in court on Friday, Mr. Azizi asserted the truthfulness of his claim and argued that the case had already been decided in his favour both by the then general manager of bylaw for the Town, and in a subsequent committee review of his complaint over the withheld plates.

"I have been suffering a lot," he told the court. "My company going without taxis for six years is like a coffee shop without coffee."

However passionate his pleadings were to the court, Justice Pollak argued that the only things she could look at in this case were the words in the statement of claim. Mr. Azizi needed, she said, to respond to Mr. Painter's claim that he had no basis for a legal claim and the onus on Mr. Azizi was to prove otherwise.

"You have to justify the fact that you actually have a legal claim, not that you're right morally – morally doesn't count here," she said.

Mr. Azizi, however, claimed that he did have a legal claim because the matter had been decided before, but underscored that this was the first time he had been involved with a lawsuit such as this.

"I was not looking for it," he said. "I was forced to do it because this is my livelihood. I suffered a lot. What I am trying to say is I am innocent and I can go onto the next court, but I am not going to accept it if someone says I am guilty, which I am not."

Justice Pollak ultimately decided in favour of the Town of Aurora, Mr. Jones and Ms. Green, dismissing the case and ultimately awarding the Town $3,715.46 in costs of the legal proceedings.

"On the basis of the submissions of all of the parties, I find that it is plain and obvious that the statement of claim discloses no tenable cause of action," said Justice Pollak in her ruling. "There are no duties plead against any of the defendants. The claim alleges that damages are owing but contains no factual and/or legal basis to establish liability for any claim for damages. As the defects in the statement of claim cannot be remedied, the statement of claim is struck out without any leave to amend."

Outside the courtroom, Mr. Azizi told The Auroran he intended to continue pursuing this matter.

"The damage is very clear and the case has been decided two times," he said. The damage I am suffering is very clear, I don't need to explain it. The next step is I am going to follow up with the law to see what options I have. This is the first time in my life I have been in this situation. I was not looking for a suit, but I was forced to do it because I have to stand up for myself. What is going on is not fair to anybody."

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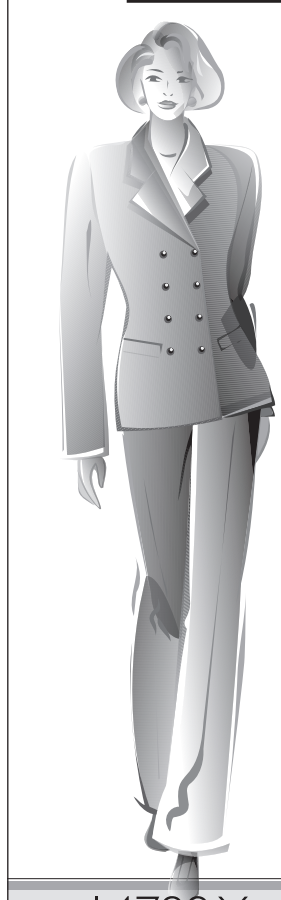
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POLITICS AS USUAL

Alison Collins-Mrakas

Happy New Year

I hope everyone had a lovely and restful holiday. I most definitely appreciated the break and I hope you all got some much needed time with your loved ones.

Now that the pleasantries are out of the way, well, it's 2013 now. The parties are all over and it's time to get down to work. Many of us – perhaps even most of us - have made New Year's resolutions, myself included. Foremost among my own resolutions is to spend a bit less time working and a bit more time doing fun things – and that means I must cut the invisible tether to my Blackberry.

I have been told that the constant vibrating, red-light blinking presence of my little silver mobile device is a wee bit irritating. I have not yet reached the "stage an intervention" level of usage but I was well on my way. So it's a key resolution for me.

And as an aside: to those folks in movie theatres and at the ballet (yes the ballet! Our Nutcracker experience a few years ago was ruined by an obsessive texter…) who constantly check their emails, text, tweet or what have you, please stop. It is really rude and very, very annoying! No matter how furtive you think you are being, we can see the bright glare of your mini screens in the darkened theatre. So again – please stop. Frankly, unless you are a transplant surgeon or in a position of similar importance, to answer your iPhone/Blackberry/android or whatever in the midst of a social event is inappropriate and self-absorbed. It's almost as bad as tweeting from a Council table in the midst of an on-going debate. But I digress…

In keeping with the convention of setting resolutions for the New Year and as this is a column ostensibly about politics in Aurora, I would like to suggest some resolutions for our members of Council to consider as they get back to the work of governing – and dare I say leading – our community on our behalf.

To listen to and consider the needs of the community as a whole and not just those small groups that make the most noise.

Yes, the squeaky wheel does indeed get the oil. But so what? Does that mean that the other wheels don't need oil too? Or that the wheel even needed the oil in the first place? Just because something – or someone – makes a big noise about "needing" something doesn't mean it's a real priority. Or even a need. In keeping with the tortured analogy, should you not consider the vehicle in its entirety to ensure good working order rather than focus on just one element? You may give in and provide the wheel the oil, but if the engine is in disrepair, the car isn't going to go very far, now is it? In short, groups will advocate for what they want. That is their right. However, those "wants" should always be considered within the context of the greater "needs" of the community.

To consider carefully the mid and long term impacts of the decisions made in relation to this years' budget.

Aurora Council is currently wrestling with a proposed 8.3% tax hike. I have said it before it is not an enviable position to be in. I think we can agree that no one in our community is prepared to accept a near double digit increase in taxes. In fact, I would foresee a mass of pitchforks and torches approaching the Town Hall if there was such an increase. Thus, the decisions to be made are indeed difficult ones. However, the methods by which taxes will be cut and what amenities or services end up on the chopping block, should be considered in the context of both current and future needs. As we have seen in other municipalities, short term decision making may be politically advantageous but is ultimately not conducive to long term community health and prosperity. There is always a price to pay.

Finally, decisions made at the Council table should address the multi-generational and multicultural needs of Aurora.

Aurora's demographics are changing. We are a growing community – both in terms of size and diversity. Decisions made in regards to services, programs and amenities made available to our community must reflect the increasingly complex needs of our residents. A one size fits all approach to the provision of services will no longer suffice. We will see an increased need for programs targeted to youth and seniors as well as diverse language-based programs. The Aurora Public Library does a great job of providing unique programs for the wide variety of groups in our community. I think it is an approach well worth emulating.

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

It was a labour of love for Grade 12 students of Aurora High School as they spent Friday afternoon putting the finishing touches on the Aurora Youth Fine Art show, which opened at the Aurora Cultural Centre on Monday. With the political fight between teachers and the province threatening the future of the show, they ensured that the show went on. Pictured above (clockwise from top left) are Sabine Garoza, Buffy Sweny, Selin Kahramanoglu, Kelly Baskin, Emily Sweny, and Miranda Petrossi. Auroran photo by David Falconer

The show must go on for student artists

From page 1

out to other area high schools to "help diffuse the tension" and art from a Dr. G.W. Williams student is also showcased.

Putting together a show such as this at any point, let alone in a situation in such a heightened climate as today – would be a daunting task for anyone, but text messaging and social media such as Facebook, did a world of wonder to help everyone stay in touch and band together to make the best show possible.

"It has been a matter of getting everyone coordinated, which can be kind of task like herding cats, but I feel it has paid off," she says. "We have never done anything like this before so it has definitely been a learning experience. I think once it is done everyone is going to be proud of what we have accomplished and I feel everyone is going to feel pretty good about it.

"It is going to be just as good as every other year before, even though we have had a few other obstacles to work around."

On a personal level, she will be exhibiting three works, the first of which is an encaustic (wax and oil) piece, and a couple of acrylic and collage pieces. One depicts deep sea diving and old fashioned diving equipment mounted in sepia tones on top of a newspaper collage.

"The Divers are kind of a psychological piece," she explains. "Water represents the conscious mind and the subconscious mind, so the idea of delving into one's own psyche is kind of what brought this one about. The piece with three figures is a reference to Pablo Picasso's Guernica for school. We were supposed to tackle a current issue and the issue was mental illness. It addresses the idea of a personality being reduced to a condition by chemical imbalance and is just food for thought."

Upon graduation, Emily plans on pursuing art from a professional standpoint with an eventual eye towards teaching.

The Aurora Youth Fine Art Exhibition opened Monday at the Aurora Cultural Centre. The official kickoff of the exhibition will be held this Wednesday from 7 – 9 p.m. in the Red and Blue galleries. The exhibition itself runs through Friday, January 18.

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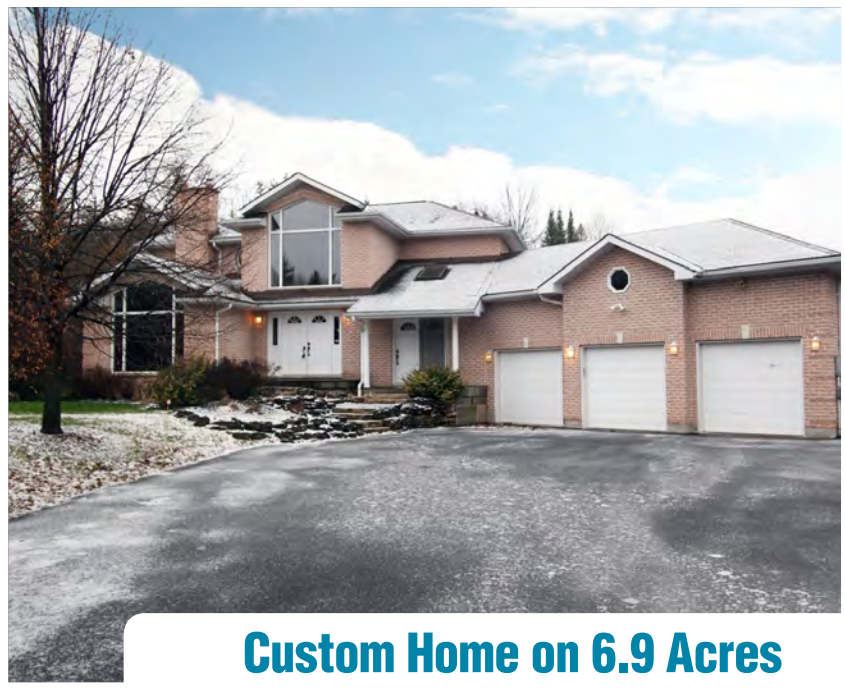

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Garage disaster brings Grey Cup to Aurora on Family Day

By Brock Weir

Sabrina and Rob Schuetze knew their garage, packed to the rafters, was a disaster area before they entered Whirlpool's Tackle Your Garage contest, but little did they know their clutter would help bring Canada's celebrated Grey Cup to Aurora.

Sabrina posted photos of their garage online and 4,800 votes later they were named winners in the contest. Their prize not only included new Whirlpool appliances and products from Gladiator to fully equip and organize their garage space, but also tickets to the Grey Cup in Toronto...and a private afternoon with the cup itself.

"What most people do is they have a little Grey Cup party afterwards in their new garage," said Mr. Schuetze, before explaining they wanted to take the opportunity to do something a little bit more significant.

"We thought that's kind of neat that you get it for half a day, but we thought we wanted to give something back to everybody who had helped us out. Why not do something bigger and let everybody see it in Aurora – especially now since the Argos won and it's the [the Cup's] 100th Anniversary. We thought if we're going to do it, why not do it on Family Fay, because we know everyone will have the day off."

Above and beyond the 4,800 votes received by the Schuetzes' entry, submissions from across Canada were also graded with 20 per cent awarded for basically how disorganized the garage was, 20 per cent awarded for lack of space, 20 per cent for creativity and the balance with the public's votes.

"We did some creative things and put little signs up and things like that," he said, of their submission which had a now commonplace "Keep Calm and Carry On" sign modified to read "Keep Calm and Clean Your Garage."

When asked whether receiving an award for the nation's messiest garage was a rather dubious honour when you really get down to it, Mr. Schuetze laughed off the suggestion and underscored the importance local support made in securing the win.

"We had a lot of family and friends vote for us every day and that really goes a long way," he said. "It's people like that who really helped make it happen and they have a lot of family and friends. We had a lot of support from our family and friends, even people who aren't from Aurora.

"It's a great thing you can have so many people to help you out and now we have a chance to give something back."

Thanks to this team effort, this "give back" will be the Grey Cup's arrival in Aurora this Family Day, February 18. Final details are expected to be hammered out this week by all parties involved, but Mr. Schuetze told The Auroran that working with Sport Aurora, they are hoping to not only have a great community event, but also raise a few dollars to help local youth.

"Everybody that we talked to about this thought it was a great idea," he said. "Whirlpool loved this idea, we told them we're going to have the Mayor out there, our MP, and MPP, youth, and everything else and they were just amazed that we could even do something like this. They're all on board and excited about it and they said, whatever we can do to help you, if you need some extra dollars to help cover some costs, we will."

Thanks to the messy garage of Sabrina, Madison, Rebecca, and Rob Schuetze's – and a few thousand votes – Aurora will be welcoming the Grey Cup on Family Day next month.
Photo by Rob Schuetze

Should all the details come together, Mr. Schuetze's company, Aurora Online, will be offering photography services at the Grey Cup venue (tentatively hoped to be the Aurora Sports Dome on Industrial Parkway North) for people to come by and have their photo taken with the cup at no cost.

Many other activities are planned in addition to the photo op, with the possibility of incorporating Aurora's time with the Grey Cup into already planned Family Day festivities, including the Arctic Adventure in Town Park.

Full details will be available in next week's edition of The Auroran.

Jazz Fest organizers eye taking the show to Newmarket

By Brock Weir

The Aurora jazz+ Fest could be heading to Newmarket.

The Aurora Festival of the Arts, the non-profit group behind the popular annual festival, announced their intentions to set up a new incarnation of the event at Newmarket's Riverwalk Commons last week. The move came amid the ongoing controversy stemming from Council's decision last fall to open up the use of Town Park on this year's Civic Holiday Weekend up for tender.

In a statement, Sher St. Kitts, chair of the AFA, which has now been rebranded, hailed the "birth" of a new festival in York Region featuring local artists and musicians over the weekend in question.

"Newmarket jazz+ Festival will be overseen by non-profit corporation – Arts Music Festivals York Region (AM-FYR) and managed by St. Kitts Music Inc.," said Ms. St. Kitts in a statement. "We will work with members of the Newmarket [Business Improvement Area], downtown businesses, creative community, community organizations, Town staff and Council members to bring it successfully into the community.

"Newmarket is a wonderful place to start a new festival in York Region! Newmarket's long-standing Cultural Master Plan acknowledges the importance of local events featuring music, arts and culture. Newmarket celebrates the arts, culture and local talents."

Speaking to The Auroran via email, when asked whether the rebranded potential festival in Newmarket would be in a similar format to what had previously been held in Aurora Town Park or if it was subject of a new vision by organizers, Ms. St. Kitts responded, "New vision, new venue – new festival – Newmarket!"

"This is a new festival, a new beginning and given the venue and everything about it, it will be different, but, as always, we will maintain support for local entertainers and artists to showcase them to their community in hopes they will be supported, which in turn, supports local culture and is a win for everyone!"

Requests for further information on other details, including how their intended new location will govern the format of the event, were not returned at press time.

The possible change of venue is a result of a motion from Councillor Evelyn Buck, which was duly approved by Council, which calls for the use of Town Park to be open for bids if people intended to use the park for a music festival. Speaking in favour of her motion, the Councillor said the motion was all about equity and giving all community groups (such as the Rotary Club, which had expressed an interest in hosting a similar festival) a fair shake at the prime piece of real estate.

Others claimed it was the result of personality conflicts between certain Councillors and AFA organizers, but the struggle over Town Park whad been ongoing almost since its inception nearly five years ago with neither side able to come to a clear consensus over admissions to the park and fencing surrounding the neighborhood facility.

With the use of Town Park on the August holiday weekend up for proposals, organizers of the jazz+ Fest mulled over but ultimately declined to put one in.

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Expect the unexpected for "A Sheard/Wendellful Delight"

By Brock Weir

Musicians John Sheard and Wendell Ferguson promise a hilarious combo of "rock, mock, melody and parody" when they hit the Aurora Cultural Centre on January 25, but how much hilarity ensues might just be up to the audience.

The seemingly unlikely duo of Sheard, a pianist best known for his work with Stuart McLean on CBC Radio's popular Vinyl Cafe, and Ferguson, a guitar wiz with a very unique perspective on things, teamed up last year to meld their two distinct talents into one show on a whim during a Christmas party.

According to Ferguson, the two just "started to jam" and were eventually "laughing their guts out" they were having so much fun together. It was John's idea to put a show together and after their first outing at Toronto's Hugh's Room, there has been no turning back.

"You just get together with certain musicians and you click and it is effortless," said Mr. Ferguson. "That's what formed the whole thing."

But if perspective ticket holders are unsure of exactly what to expect at their Aurora gig this month, they're not alone. Both musicians pride themselves on the "malleability" of their material to suit the audience, so it's really up to you at the start of the show.

"You have to find the level of the audience and you have to find it pretty quick," said Mr. Ferguson. "There are a few songs that break the ice. I never work blue, I never swear, there is nothing bad in my songs, but occasionally there is suggestiveness. So I start with some I think will tickle their minds first and then their funny bones.

"If we're playing the Rusty Nuts Car Club in Aurora, anything goes. You can scrape the bottom of the barrel, but if it is a high class gig with lots of people in tuxedos, then that is not something I am going to do here. You have to gauge your audience to see how far they will go with you."

While Mr. Ferguson, who says he was reared on such highbrow fare as MAD Magazine and Homer and Jethro, it should come as no surprise that he is the brains behind the musical spoofs and parody lyrics. Mr. Sheared was raised on classical and jazz thanks to his parents, being infused with the styles of artists from Ella Fitzgerald and Peggy Lee to Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington. Eventually, he branched out into rock, with two favourites being the Rolling Stones and The Animals.

"Their 'The House of the Rising Sun' has a great organ solo and I remember listening and thinking, how do they do that? I think I better rent an organ and figure out how to do that."

While his early musical influences were more conventional, humour bubbles through his playing whether he is making people laugh through unlikely sounds emanating from his synthesizer or blending 33 movie themes into a five minute medley.

Listeners to the Vinyl Cafe are well aware of this brand of humour through his banter with the radio show's host and the amount of improve that they do.

"I have always tried to amuse people because I think I have a sense of humour and I guess enough ability as a player to play around with a lot of music to try and entertain people with just playing," says Mr. Sheard. "People think it is a really hard thing to do, but I do pride myself on my ability as a player first and foremost. I have played for 45 years, so if you have that ability you can figure out how to entertain people by doing things like putting 40 songs together in a five minute medley.

"I have always tended towards instrumental humour, it is just the way my warped mind goes and Wendell has a warped mind too!"

As they prepare for both shows, it is clear from speaking to both men that not only are they looking forward to their upcoming show at the Aurora Cultural Centre, but also rather excited to be able to get in there and get a feel of the audience. The unexpected lends a bit to the excitement.

"Once you start the show, the set list can go right out the window," says Mr. Ferguson. "You just gauge the audience and work off them. If the guys are good enough they can follow you and there is no trepidation taking a tangent somewhere and that is the fun part. Some stuff you think is going to go over like a Homer and Jethro piece we had prepared, but we looked at each other and dropped it simultaneously right there on the stage and went into something else.

John Sheared and Wendell Ferguson combine their talents for "A Sheard/Wendellful Delight" at the Aurora Cultural Centre on January 25. Supplied photos

"Improvisation is just composition in real time."

"A Sheard/Wendellful Delight" will take place at the Aurora Cultural Centre on Friday, January 25 at 8 p.m. Tickets are $25 and available in advance at the Centre or at the door. For more information, contact the Centre at 905-713-1818.

Cultural Centre board is "fairly satisfied" with new draft agreement

By Brock Weir

Aurora's potential new deal with the Cultural Centre is likely to be one of the key topics for discussion when Councillors reconvene next Tuesday, but the Cultural Centre board is set to take a crack at approving the draft agreement this week following lengthy debate and discussion.

The Board is set to meet this Wednesday to give their final approval on the draft plan, which includes many new measures to draft a new agreement that is satisfactory to both parties, including a new clause to require the Cultural Centre to present their budgets to Council during the municipal budget process, the addition of two Councillors as full voting members of the Cultural Centre Board, and new permanent exhibition space for Aurora's historic collection.

According to Frank Pulumbarit, the Cultural Centre Board's present, the group is "fairly satisfied" with the new direction.

"The board is looking at the agreement and is fairly satisfied with what is there and we're hoping Council will support what is in the agreement," Mr. Pulumbarit told The Auroran last week. "Everybody has really worked quite hard at trying to satisfy some of the initial concerns brought from February last year and we're really hoping we have done a good job along with the Town to try and get some of those things addressed.

"We're just hoping that everyone will see the same thing that everybody has worked hard to get this done and the best intentions are out there and we just want to get on with the business of providing great cultural services to the betterment of the Town of Aurora."

Once the Board approves the agreement and it clears the Council hurdles, Mr. Pulumbarit said he thinks the public will see the Centre "operating in an open and transparent way" and people will be "happy to see services will continue and all the things we've tried to deliver in the past."

"Hopefully we will have the budget to continue to do so in the future based on the budget meetings we'll have," he said. "It is difficult to see exactly what will happen in terms of the day-to-day operations until all of that comes together, but in terms of the agreement, I hope people will see the Centre is continuing to operate with delivering the best possible programming we can and operating in as transparent a manner as we can."

As The Auroran has previously reported, even if both the Board and Council approve the draft agreement without any further significant changes, the future appointment of two Councillors to the board is currently in a grey area. The Ontario Superior Court is expected to weigh in on whether such appointments could bring about Conflict of Interest issues next month. In the meantime, Mr. Pulumbarit said they welcome the new additions.

"It will be interesting to see what the Superior Court ruling is going to say on that matter," he said. "The one thing I hope people will take away is the Board continues to express a willingness and an openness to welcome Councillors onto the board and we think that will be a positive development that will allow us to work even more closely with the Town of Aurora and with Councillors so everyone can see the great work that is being done at the Centre and how it is being done for the betterment of the Town."

The Aurora Cultural Centre Board is expected to make their Budget presentation to Councillors next month as part of the Town's Operating Budget deliberations.

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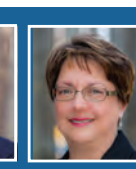
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104 Timbits - St. Louis Blue: 6 - Lucas Dang 3G, Devrim Coskuner 1G, Stefano Deappollonia 1G, Edan Kroi 1G. **105 Timbits - Pittsburgh Black: 4** - Tristen Aben 1G 1A, Ayden Burt 1G, Evan Hodgson 1A, Luke Davison 1G, Jayden Dosanjh 1A, Tyler Hewitt 1G.

101 Timbits - Calgary Red: 2 - Yiannis Skanderis 1G 1A, Lucas Reid 1G. **108 Timbits - Atlanta Sky: 4** - William Stratos 1G, Zaid Solaman 2G, Norbert Kristoff 1G.

103 Timbits - Toronto White: 8 108 Timbits - Atlanta Sky: 4

101 Timbits - Calgary Red: 10 - Joseph Richard 3G, Yiannis Skanderis 3G, Noah Rayner 3G, Andrew Mettel 1G 1A, Tyler Brown 1A. **107 Timbits - Nashville Silver: 7** - Martin McConkey 1G, Thomas Dimoulas 3G, Lucas Rossi 1G, Trevor Smith 1G.

109 Timbits - Philly Orange: 10 - Ryan Meddings 1G 1A, Andrew Aikens 2G, Owen Jacobs 3G, Nathan Lambert 1G, Ethan Lane 1G, Owen Lueloff 1G, Jack Charbonneau 1G. **104 Timbits - St. Louis Blue: 12** - Lucas Dang 3G, Devrim Coskuner 2G, Tyler Pridham 4G, D'Arcy Brierly 1G, Stefano Deappollonia 1G, Cameron Venneri 1G.

106 Timbits - San Jose Teal: 7 - Luc Warner 2G, Hayden Thorne 1G, Nate Brentnall 1G, Adam Digioacchino 1G, Luca Graneri 1G, Bryce Lamontagne 1G. **105 Timbits - Pittsburgh Black: 5** - Tyler Hewitt 2G, Ayden Burt 1G, Tristen Aben 2G.

110 Timbits - Vintage LA Purple: 7 - Jack Bulmer 3G, Will Vincent 1G 1A, Nathan Marincola 2G, Michael Sandras 1G, William Pare 1A. **102 Timbits - Boston Gold: 7** - William Dodd 3G, Adam Campagna 2G, Christian Pisapia 1G, Adam Wolanski 1G.

108 Timbits - Atlanta Sky: 5- Norbert Kristoff 1G, Zaid Solaman 1G, Daniel Nozdrachev 1G, Ryan Francis 1G, Tyler Weidenfelder 1G. **109 Timbits - Philly Orange: 2** - Noah Savage 1G, Ethan Lane 1G.

104 Timbits - St. Louis Blue: 4 - Lucas Dang 2G, Benjamin Bolger 1G, Devrim Coskuner 1G. **110 Timbits - Vintage LA Purple: 9** - Christian Rabito 1G, Cameron Rose 1G, Jack Hargrave 3G, David Simmons 1G, Will Vincent 2G, Michael Sandras 1G.

102 Timbits - Boston Gold: 7 - Max Bruce 3G, Christian Pisapia 2G, William Dodd 2G, Luke Heyting 1A. **103 Timbits - Toronto White: 11**- Alex Weir 4G, Griffin Lamanna 1G, Carter Gillies 1A, Nathan Windle 3G, Joseph Trovato 1G, Jacob Belisle 1G, Gavin Veloso 1G.

107 Timbits - Nashville Silver: 6 - Ryan Day 2G, Drake Kirkos 1G, Trevor Smith 2G, Martin McConkey 1G. **106 Timbits - San Jose Teal: 11** - Niko Andrew 1G, Nate Brentnall 1G, Andrew Mariani 1G, Bryce Lamontagne 2G, Luca Graneri 2G, Hayden Thorne 1G, Luc Warner 3G.

105 Timbits - Pittsburgh Black: 9 - Tyler Hewitt 4G, Benji Strom 1G, Ayden Burt 2G, Natalie McColl 1G, Luke Davison 1G, Jack Rispin 1A. **101 Timbits - Calgary Red: 13** - Lucas Reid 5G, Joseph Richard 2G, Andrew Mettel 2G, Jonathan Robertson 1G, Yiannis Skanderis 2G, Evan Murphy 1G.

101 Timbits - Calgary Red: 13 - Amanda Brown 1G, Tyler Brown 1A, Nicholas Ferrante 1G, Lucas Reid 3G, Andrew Mettel 4G, Yiannis Skanderis 3G, Joseph Richard 1G. **106 Timbits - San Jose Teal: 10** - Adam Schellenberg 1G, Bryce Lamontagne 3G, Nate Brentnall 2G, Luc Warner 3G, Luca Graneri 1G.

103 Timbits - Toronto White: 6 109 Timbits - Philly Orange: 2

104 Timbits - St. Louis Blue: 7 - Edan Kroi 3G, Patrick Mikkelsen 1G, Stefano Deappollonia 1G, Lucas Dang 2G. **102 Timbits - Boston Gold: 8** - Adam Campagna 2G, Max Bruce 1G, William Dodd 5G 1A.

604 Orr & Associates Insurance: 1 - Colby Harrison 1G, Daniel Babcock 1A. **605 Omar's Shoes: 3** - Guiliano Iervasi 1G, Scott Rumble 1G, Dylan Clark 1G, Jacob Cowl 1A, Jack Gauthier-Moulton 1A.

602 Aurora Chrysler: 2 - Jack Viney 1G, Paul Cotturo 1G. **607 Crabby Joes: 4** - Cameron Lang 2G, Connor Elbaum 1G 2A, Matthew Parkin 1G 1A, Hunter Gilpin-Maier 1A, Ethan Cohen 1A, Adam Wochenmarkt 1A.

605 Omar's Shoes: 7 - Jack Gauthier-Moulton 1G, Dylan Clark 1G, Scott Rumble 2G, Lucas Alberico 1G, Guiliano Iervasi 1G, Tristan Floyd 1G 1A. **607 Crabby Joes: 3** - Ethan Cohen 1G, Connor Elbaum 1G, Claudio Basso 1G, Will Reid 1A.

609 Aurora Lodge #148 IOOF: 7 - Christopher Walsh 2G, Ethan Satitkovski 1G, Dane Kerkkamp 3G, Stephen Silverio 1G, Tommy Collins 1A. **605 Omar's Shoes: 4** - Guiliano Iervasi 1G, Tristan Floyd 1G, Brock Stewart 1G, Kyle Trumper 1G, Nicholas Roua 1A, Jacob Cowl 1A.

605 Omar's Shoes: 6 - Jacob Cowl 1G, JP Schnabel 1G, Jack Gauthier-Moulton 2G, Holden Murphy 1G, Tristan Floyd 1G. **608 Mastermind Toys: 2** - Raffaelle Parente 1G, Ben Pitre 1G.

808 Twirl 'n' Top Yogurt Cafe': 1 - Joel Woodcock 1G. **810 Neuman's Puck Bandits: 1** - Kyle Wulle 1G.

801 Diamond Groundskeeping Services: 2 - Trystan Macklin 1G, Josh Hookey 1G. **802 Aurora Home Hardware Bldg Ctr.: 11**- Eric Shennan 1G, Nicklaus Reid 1G, Jack Bishenden 2G, Daniel Della Rocca 1G, Zachary Fletcher 2G 2A, Jake Hatton 1G 1A, Cameron Palmer 1G, Kyle Dungey 2G 2A.

802 Aurora Home Hardware Bldg Ctr.: 10 - Colin Boorn 2G, Theo Meadows 1G, Sean Mackrell 1G, Nathan Sherrard 1G, Jake Hatton 1G, Kyle Dungey 1G, Zachary Fletcher 2G, Eric Shennan 1G. **804 Optimist Club of Aurora: 2** - Alex Tashos 1G, Cameron Bourne 1G.

810 Neuman's Puck Bandits: 3 - Michael Montesanti 2G, Marcus Hamann 1G. **801 Diamond Groundskeeping Services: 4** - Adam Wilson 1G, Brett Diamond 1G, Ethan Brooks 1G, Josh Hookey 1G.

909 Inaria: 1 - Parker Baile 1G. **903 BMO Bank of Montreal: 2** - Bryn Burbank 1G, Matthew Pelkola 1G, Nelson Hossack 1A, Andrew Roche 1A.

910 Neuman's Puck Bandits: 3 - Matt Sanita 1G, Kevin Hillsdon 1G, Chris Sanita 1G, Austin Harvie 1A, Mitch Arnew 1A, Noah Spicer 1A. **911 Coldwell Banker Case: 5** - Paul Neophytou 1G, Spencer Green 3G 1A, Russell Johnson 1G.

906 AHPA: 7 - Adam Ashraf 2G 1A, Brady Wilson 1G 2A, Zack Cowl 2G 2A, Justin Laird 2G, Brayden Babineau 1A. **908 Laurion Law Office: 5** - Liam Coll 4G, Jake Arcangeli 1G, Nathan Nealon 1A, Oliver Jones 1A.

REP LEAUGE

Tyke Select A, Georgetown 4 Aurora 3 - Callum Millar 2G, Fionn Keon 1G, Jared McNeil 1A.

Novice AE, Markham 3 Aurora 2 - Malcolm Parkinson 2G, Josh McLeod 1A.

Novice AE, Georgina 2 Aurora 0

Minor Atom AA, Aurora 4 - Nick Giorgio 2G 1A, Anton Sopov 1A, Owen Papulkas 1G 1A, Ben Legallais 1A, Ryan Catania 1G, Nicholas Pisapia 1A, Ethan Belisle 1A, Gage Gonsalves 1A. **Nobleking 4**

Atom AE, Barrie 2 Aurora 1 - Carson Tidd 1G, Carson Klein 1A.

Atom AE, Schomberg 6 Aurora 4 - Mitchell Weatherall 2G 1A, Zachary Grant 1G, Carson Klein 1G, Curtis Manley 1A, Geoffrey Wilson 1A, Sean Haw 1A.

Atom AE, Aurora 3 - Carson Tidd 1G 1A, Geoffrey Wilson 1G, Zachary Grant 1G, Joshua Torres 1A, Quinn Spicer 1A. **Georgina 1**

Minor Peewee A, Aurora 3 - Luke Jarvis 1G, Andrew Park 1G, Connor Thomas 1A, Sam Ashton 1G, Alex Sandras 1A. **West Mall 1**

Minor Peewee A, Aurora 3 - Andrew Park 2G, Connor Thomas 2A, Blair Crabbe 1G, Alex Sandras 1A, Adam Wloka 1A, Myles Vasilevski 1A. **Bradford 2**

Minor Peewee A, Aurora 6 - Spencer Morrison 1G, Anthony DiPietro 1A, Andrew Park 1G 1A, Alex Sandras 2G 2A, Blair Crabbe 1G 1A, Myles Vasilevski 2A, Sam Ashton 1G 2A. **Georgetown 2**

Minor Peewee A. Aurora 3 - Anthony DiPietro 2G, Connor Thomas 1A, Ben Liotta 1G, Tyler Sawyer 1A, Adam Wloka 1A. **Vaughan 1**

Minor Peewee A, Aurora 6 - Alex Sandras 2G, Ben Liotta 1G, Andrew Park 2A, Noah Johnson 2A, Spencer Morrison 1G 1A, Anthony DiPietro 1G 1A, Tyler Sawyer 1G, Adam Wloka 1A, Myles Vasilevski 1A. **Caledon 1**

Minor Midget AA, Aurora 4 - Eddie Duffy 1G, Joey Stipec 1G, Nick Papousek 1G, Adam Newell 1G, Andrew Klinowski 1A, Daniel Middleton 1A, Ross Benn 1A, Jeff Skerratt 1A, Kory Wansbrough 1A, Steven Tsianos 1A. St **Catherines 0**

Minor Midget AA, Orangeville 3 Aurora 0

Minor Midget AA, Aurora 3 - Eddie Duffy 2G, Matthew Caicco 1A, Nick Papousek 1G, Steven Tsianos 1A, Lucas James 2A, Jimmy Abels 1A, Kory Wansbrough 1A. **Markham 0**

Minor Midget AA, Aurora 4 - Nick Papousek 2G, Eddie Duffy 1G 2A, Jimmy Abels 1A, Andrew Klinowski 1G, Jack Ellison 1A, Lucas James 1A. **Richmond Hill 0**

Minor Midget AA, Aurora 4 - Nick Papousek 2G, Jack Ellison 1A, Lucas James 1G, Adam Newell 2A, Eddie Duffy 1G, Daniel Middleton 1A. **Georgina 4**

Minor Midget AA, Georgina 4 Aurora 2 - Steven Tsianos 1A, Joey Stipec 1A, Andrew Klinowski 1G, Nick Papousek 1G.

Minor Midget AA, Stouffville 6 Aurora 3 - Matthew Caicco 2G, Eddie Duffy 1G, Jeff Skerratt 1A, Daniel Middleton 1A, Nick Papousek 2A.

Minor Midget AA, Aurora 5 - Nick Papousek 1G, Kory Wansbrough 1G, Matthew Caicco 1A, Jeff Skerratt 1A, Eddie Duffy 1G 2A, Joey Stipec 1G, Adam Newell 3A, Jack Ellison 1G. **Stouffville 5**

Minor Midget AA. Aurora 2 - Jeff Skerratt 1G, Adam Newell 1G, Daniel Middleton 1A, Nick Papousek 1A, Eddie Duffy 1A, Steven Tsianos 1A. **TNT 2**

Minor Midget AA, Barrie 3 Aurora 0

THE AURORAN SPORTS

Vol. 13 No. 9 905-727-3300 theauroran.com FREE Week of January 8, 2013

Tigers take two of three away games

By Laura Finney

The Aurora Tigers had a busy week, winning 2 of 3 away games.

The team ended 2012 with a 5-3 win over Pickering on December 30. The game began with an unassisted goal from Pickering's Tanner Bull in the first few minutes. The score remained unchanged for the majority of the first period until Brodie Tutton gave Pickering a two goal lead. It didn't last; Aurora's Daniel Lisi scored less than a minute later, assisted by Kory Kennedy and David Iacono.

Aurora tied the game at the start of second period with a goal from Kennedy, assisted by Robert Angiolella. The score stayed 2-2 until Pickering's Andrew McCann scored with four minutes left in the period.

Aurora dominated the third period with three goals. Angiolella scored on a power play, assisted by Iacono and Kennedy. Taylor McCloy netted the second goal with help from Dylan Wallace and Zack MacArthur. Matt Andreacchi finished off the period by scoring into the empty net, assisted by Adam DiBrina and Michael Keenan.

January 3 saw the Tigers defeat Newmarket 3 - 2 in a very close game. Newmarket's Chris Chiste scored first. Aurora's Adam DiBrina tied the game with help from Dylan Wallace before the end of the first period.

Newmarket scored at the beginning of the second period, but Robert Angiolella reciprocated during a power play by scoring a goal with help from Kory Kennedy and David Iacono.

The score remained 2-2 for almost an hour and both goalies played well until Mihkel Poldma shot a puck into Newmarket's net with help from Wallace.

On January 4, the Tigers battled the Trenton Golden Hawks. Three periods and overtime were not enough to settle the score. The Tigers played well but lost 4-3 to the Golden Hawks in a shoot out.

Period one saw an early goal from Trenton's Alex Leader in the first minute of play. Aurora's Matt Andreacchi scored next with help from Blake Forslund and Taylor McCloy.

Aurora got a 2 goal lead in second period thanks to Adam Moody and Adam DiBrina. Both notched a goal and an assist. Kory Kennedy also got an assist.

Period 3 saw the end of Aurora's lead with two goals from Trenton, including a short-handed goal by Jordan Minello.

There was no change in score during overtime and the game finally ended when Trenton's Sammy Banga scored the only goal in the shootout.

The Tigers take on the Fury in Whitby on Tuesday evening and then return home to play the Pickering Panthers at ACC Wednesday. Game time is 7.30 p.m.

Goalie Kevin Entmaa allowed only 2 goals on 32 shots in the Aurora Tigers' game against the Newmarket Hurricanes last Thursday, their first game of 2013. The Tigers beat their northern rivals 3-2. They take on the Whitby Fury on Wednesday.

Auroran photo by Laura Finney

Local girls showcase talent to scouts

By Laura Finney

Young women from six local soccer teams demonstrated their skills to university and college representatives at the Aurora Sports Dome on Saturday.

This is the second year for the Aurora Invitational Showcase and was organized by the Aurora Youth Soccer Club (AYSC).

"It's very important for these girls to get the exposure," said Chris Speller, the University Program Director with AYSC.

Teams came from Aurora, Woodbridge, Ajax, West Rouge, Vaughan, and Pickering.

Speller said about 20 coaches were in attendance.

Speller got the idea for the event when his own daughter was looking into universities.

"It's just a good way of getting to see the kids play, the coaches can watch, and maybe they can get some contact information and stuff. And then the girls get to go visit the school and see if they like it or not."

Each team played three 45 minute games on full field while the representatives and coaches watched from the sidelines.

Kevin Souter, co-ordinator of soccer programs at Ryerson, said he was glad he came.

"They did this last year, it was a good event. I actually got three players out of it, so it was a success for me."

Souter said soccer is a very important sport, and he said it gives players skills on and off the field.

"It makes for stronger women as they come into university. They come out of university with great qualities. They can have a huge impact on the world as they leave us."

The Aurora Strikers' Lizzie Trottier will be starting university later this year. She said Saturday's event was a good idea.

"We're just looking to get in touch with coaches that we've already talked to and just hoping to confirm some commitments, and just kind of get to know more about some of the programs that we're going to go into," she said.

As for Souter, he said he was glad he came out to see some potential new players.

"I'm sure I'll be in contact with several after today."

There was little rest for kids on their post-Christmas holidays as they suited up, laced up their skates, and hit the ice at the Aurora Community Centre for the popular hockey skills tournament hosted annually by the Optimist Club of Aurora.

Submitted photo

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Skating, music, bonfires and candles will kick-off "Aurora 150" on February 3

By Brock Weir

Aurora officially turns 150 next month and plans are expected to be finalized this week for the kick-off bash to the year-long celebration.

The anniversary itself falls on February 3 and the occasion will be marked on the day with the Mayor's Sesquicentennial Levee at Town Park beginning at 2 p.m., should the Sesquicentennial Ad-Hoc Committee formally approve plans this week.

Organizers promise a day of family fun, but also a few moments for reflection as revellers will be able to participate in bonfires, skating on the Town Park rink (weather permitting, of course), and take part in other games and entertainment. A multi-faith candle celebration, involving all major religions and First Nations groups, is also planned.

"[The important thing] was nailing down the actual timing of the event," said Alison Collins-Mrakas after the Levee's sub-committee met Friday to go over final details. "We did know it coincided with Super Bowl Sunday, but we can't change the Town's history, nor do we want to, but we have to be mindful of the fact lots of people want to watch the game and they have parties to attend.

"Rather than 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., we have made it from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. with official festivities ending around 5.30 so that gives people enough time to go home and go to parties."

Activities planned for February 3 were put in place to have "multigenerational appeal" to Aurorans.

Events are slated to get underway at 2 p.m. with the lighting of a large bonfire at Town Park to signal the actual event kickoff. Following the lighting of the bonfire, if the weather cooperates there will be skating on the Town Park rink to the songs and sounds one might have heard skating on local rinks in the 1930s or 40s, a broomball tournament where anyone can sign up for either Team Blue or Team Yellow (Aurora's official colours), a traditional tug of war, a reunion and photo session with all current and former members of Council and the hoisting of the official Aurora 150 flag designed by a talented local student.

"We have had quite a few entries," said Ms. Collins-Mrakas, noting the winning design would be selected this week."I don't envy the task of choosing the winning flag because I am sure they will all be really great. That will be raised on February 3 and we're really looking forward to that. It is hoped that if the child and their family are available it will be him or herself that will raise the flag."

With the flag raised and the remarks made by Mayor Geoffrey Dawe and other local dignitaries, there will then be the dedication and opening of a special time capsule, and then candles will be lit to mark the start of the serious business. This will take the form of a multi-faith candlelight service to get Aurora's 150th anniversary year off to the right start, with representation from the major religions and First Nations groups.

Although the Sesquicentennial Ad Hoc committee have been busy planning Aurora's Birthday Party since the summer, they brought on Maria Schembri in an internal hire to get the ball truly rolling as the project coordinator. Ms. Collins-Mrakas said Ms. Schembri has "really hit the ground running" in putting together the logistics of these events.

After February 3, the next event in the year-long celebration will be a military tattoo taking place on May 5. Ms. Collins-Mrakas said members of the public who want to sit on that event's committee are encouraged to contact Ms. Schembri at mschembri@aurora.ca to apply.

Accessibility eyed in Town Hall, Council Chamber renos

By Brock Weir

The floor of Aurora's Council Chamber should be raised by one foot to better accommodate members and residents alike with mobility issues, according to studies.

Approval for this work could come as early as this month, pending an additional report on further proposed renovations to Town Hall to be submitted by the end of January. Although Councillors debated the merits and fine details of the proposal at the last Council meeting before the holiday break, the meat of the discussion took place the previous week at the committee level.

The plan coming out of the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) calls on the floor to be elevated by 12 inches, accommodating for the removal of the bottom leg of each Council ramp. The two existing ramps in the Council Chambers are not fully accessible, they said.

"The existing ramp in Council Chambers was built according to building code in 1990," said Town Clerk John Leach, in a report before Councillors last month. "However, over time, revisions have been made to the building code to be more inclusive. Continuing advancements in the development of mobility aids allows people with disabilities to choose from a wide variety of products allowing them to move independently."

Steven Comisso, the consultant charged with looking at options to make the Council Chamber more accessible said, however, by the time Town Hall was opened in 1991, the ramps were no longer compliant from the plans. How they ended up with the finished product "was kind of a mystery" to him.

"There was a change for some reason and I am not privy as to why that change was made," he said.

As they exist today, the ramps were designed to accommodate only small mobility aids. Shortcomings found by the committee include the slope of the ramp being "uncomfortable and difficult to navigate", an inconsistent width being too narrow in some areas to accommodate larger aids, ramp entry and exit points being too shallow, limiting users' ability to turn around, and a sharp turn in the middle creating barriers for people using wheelchairs and scooters.

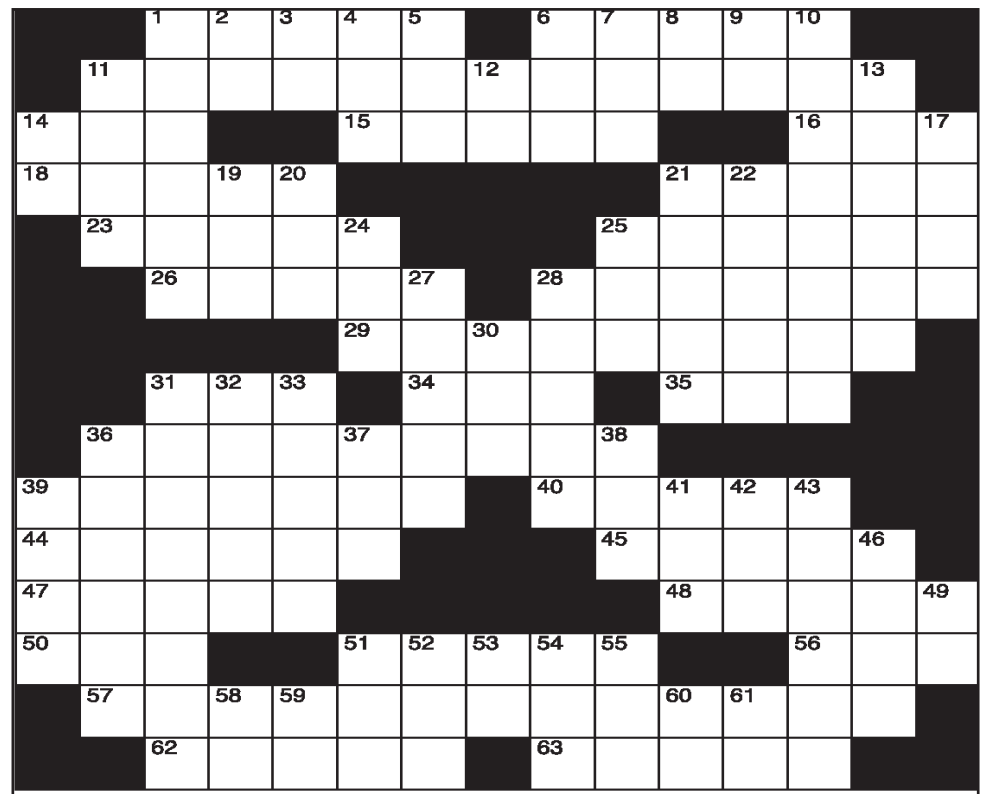
Raising the floor would eliminate many of these issues, they said, allowing for the top section to be widened, making it easier to navigate.

Should this project go ahead, the construction and renovation is estimated to cost approximately $110,000.

"[This option] is the most reasonable and we do have to make this chamber accessible," said Councillor Wendy Gaertner, chair of the AAC. "[This will cost] $110,000 and in the scheme of things, considering the various acts that have been passed by the provincial government, this needs to be an accessible chamber and $110,000 is not an outrageous amount of money to accommodate those people in the community who want to come before us but aren't able to because of the accessibility issues of getting into the chamber."

Continued on page 16

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



CLUES ACROSS

1. Winter capital of Kashmir
6. So. African Music Awards
11. The Bay State
14. A disorderly crowd
15. Actress Greta
16. Expression of surprise
18. Storybook elephant
21. John Jacob __, capitalist
23. Mulled wine
25. Membrane around the lungs
26. Shows how something works
28. Canonized
29. Layers bonded together
31. A vessel or duct
34. The fire had been ___
35. Female sibling
36. Israeli capital
39. Blocked in fencing
40. 98942 WA
44. Gasoline hydrocarbon rating
45. Light snacks with drinks
47. Supplementing with difficulty
48. Am. composer & diarist Ned
50. A waterproof raincoat
51. Accumulate a large quantity
56. Am. Newspaper Assoc.
57. Butterfly collector
62. __ and Venzetti
63. Female servants

CLUES DOWN

1. Poked at
2. Equally
3. Manuscript (abbr.)
4. Periodical (slang)
5. Fiddler crabs
6. Hero sandwich
7. Volcanic mountain in Japan
8. Of I
9. Indicates position
10. Legislative acts
11. Low sustained cry
12. Human resources (abbr.)
13. Supported by a prop
14. Megabyte
17. 9/11 Memorial designer Michael
19. The years someone has existed
20. Distilled from fermented molasses
21. a.k.a.
22. Estonian kroon = 100
24. The sun
25. Wide metal cooking vessel
27. Caesar or cobb
28. Building lots
30. 1/1000 inch
31. Apexes
32. Firth of Clyde's largest island
33. Bringing suit
36. Forsyth novel "The Day of The ___"
37. Perceive with the eyes
38. Was introduced to
39. Lines of verse
41. Household god (Roman)
42. Military mailbox
43. Challenge aggressively
46. Posted
49. One thousandth of an ampere
51. General's assistant (abbr.)
52. Bovine sound
53. Associated press
54. Opposite of LTM
55. A very large body of water
58. Ma's partner
59. Integrated circuit
60. Rhode Island
61. Potato state

January 1st Puzzle Solution

PUZZLE SOLUTION

A	B	C				A	B	A				B	R	A
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Aurora has too many strip plazas, say Councillors

By Brock Weir

Aurora has too many strip malls, according to Councillors, but whether another one will soon be found at the northeast corner of Wellington Street East and John West Way could become a little clearer at the end of this month.

The discussion stemmed over plans to build a one-storey commercial block on the corner in question, despite recommendations in plans for the Aurora Promenade, in which this particular plot of land sits, that it be at least a two-storey building with commercial at road level with parking in the rear as opposed to on the street frontage.

Issues with the size and soil quality on this plot have cropped up, according to municipal staff, and they recommended Council approve an amendment to the plan to allow a one-storey commercial plaza with parking in the front rather than the rear. The piece of land backs onto Aurora's trails network near the Aurora Community Arboretum.

When the matter was discussed at committee level, much of the discussion centred around the specific uses of the building and when it was discussed at Council it was much more of the same, but Council ultimately voted to delay a decision on the plan until the end of the month pending a further report responding to their concerns.

"This is on our gateway feature," said Councillor Wendy Gaertner of the geographic location of the potential development. "I would like to see this more of a professional presence. The land is difficult and wasn't able to do the two storey with business on the bottom and living space on the top, I understand that, but to just see another retail strip mall on our gateway...I just can't agree with that."

Councillor Gaertner made a motion to modify the proposed designation to delete retail businesses – including convenience stores – from its potential uses, but others had concerns that removing these designations could open up the Town to potential litigation. Councillor Michael Thompson, for instance, said if the issue was regarding the specific uses, one could simply vote against the motion.

"I don't see how you can take out retail stores and still expect it to move forward and still be viable," he said of the developers' proposals. "If the intent is to prevent the development of a retail plaza, so be it, but to take out that definition of retail stores just doesn't make sense to me."

Councillor Gaertner's issue, nevertheless, had supporters at the table, including Councillors John Abel and Evelyn Buck. While the former said there were enough strip plazas, he wanted to look for an opportunity to work with the developers to come up with a solution that wouldn't "set [the Town] up for a battle]. The latter said she wasn't in favour of taking out all retail, just specific kinds.

"I don't believe we have enough commercial designation and I believe we have enough multi-unit single-storey retail plazas," said Councillor Buck. "I don't see anything here to persuade me the property should be rezoned."

Added Councillor Gallo: "I think it is our job at this table to direct development as we choose and according to our plans. Developers have rights, absolutely, [and] I am hoping the developer will listen to our thoughts. I don't want to kill this development, but I think it is important to do it right. I don't know how we can pick and choose which are most appropriate."

"I tend to agree with Councillor Buck that it should be offices there from a starting point," he continued, before shifting back to the Promenade Study, which he discussed the previous week. "That is what we need in this Town. I realise we're not talking about the site plan, but I have a big issue with pushing the building back. It is not part of the Promenade, it is not the way we planned it, and we need, to a certain degree, to stick our feet in the ground and say this is the way we want it."

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Aurora to look beyond QR codes to keep residents informed

By Brock Weir

Aurora could be looking beyond QR codes stay in touch with residents and keep them informed.

The move came at the last Council meeting when Councillors passed a motion from Councillor Paul Pirri to look into incorporating Quick Response codes – the black and white squares increasingly seen on items ranging from concert tickets to wall advertisements – into areas such as public notices and signs in public places. Users can scan these codes with their Smart Phones to be re-directed to obtain further information.

Although Councillor Pirri's motion spoke solely to QR codes, as Councillors considered the matter, they decided to broaden the scope to include all similar and emerging technologies that are coming onto the market at a fairly rapid clip.

"I just think there is a great opportunity to utilize this technology," said Councillor Pirri. "One of the main things I see happening with this is when our planning documents are roadside and someone sees a zoning application, if there is a QR code on that zoning application then they can take a picture, snap it, and it will take them right to our website and there is no need to look it up, no fuss.

"On our trails system, if there is an important tree we think would be relevant for people to know about, again, snap a picture on the little plaque and it will go straight to the website. There are so many different ways that this can be utilized to encourage an individual to learn about Aurora. It is, to me, a no-brainer that this is the direction we should be moving in the future."

The technology is becoming increasingly prevalent in the United States, including in New York where they are used in many different applications, including public planning notices, but it hasn't caught on quite as quick where Canadian municipalities are concerned. Going forward with this, said Councillor Pirri, would allow Aurora to be a good example of a smaller Canadian municipality leading the charge.

The calls to broaden the scope of the QR motion came from Councillor John Gallo, who made an amendment to look beyond the simple black and white icon.

"There are other applications out there that do very similar things in different ways that are emerging and are moving actually even more advanced than QR codes," he said. "If we're going to be looking at QR codes, let's look at everything that is out there."

Council approved the motion unanimously and with this approval, a further report will be coming back to Council outlining the options available to Council including types of codes, how and where they can be integrated around Aurora, and how much it will cost.

What do you think? Do you use QR codes? Will they have any value for use by the Town? Send your thoughts to letters@auroran.com.

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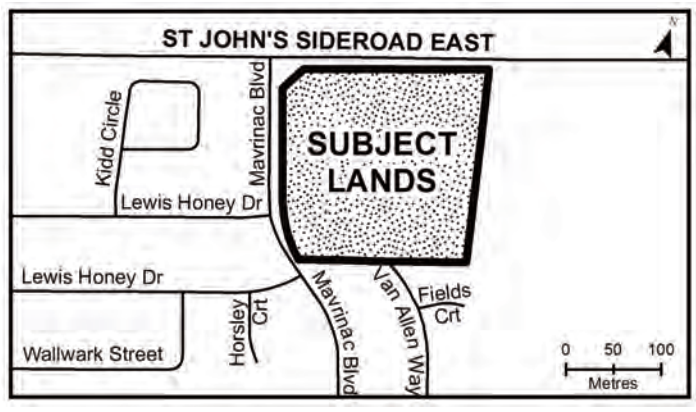
TOWN OF AURORA
PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF COMPLETE APPLICATION UNDER THE PLANNING ACT

The Town of Aurora has received the following applications under the Planning Act:

INQUIRIES REFER TO TOWN FILE NUMBERS: D12-06-12 & D14-15-12

Applications from Edenbrook (Aurora) Inc. for a proposed plan of subdivision and zoning by-law amendment for lands described as Part of Lot 25, Concession 2 and municipally known as 929 St. John's Sideroad East has been submitted to The Town of Aurora. The application seeks to develop 33 single detached residential lots and 10 residential part lots on the subject lands. The proposal includes an extension of Van Allen Way, a future use block, the creation of a new public road, and an open space block along the existing creek.



The purpose of this notice is to advise the public that a complete planning application has been received by The Town of Aurora pursuant to the Planning Act. The application has been circulated to Town departments and external agencies for review and comment. A Council Public Meeting will be scheduled and held at a later date, a formal Public Meeting notice will be provided pursuant to the statutory requirements of *The Planning Act.*

If you wish to express your views with respect to this application, please forward your comments in writing to Marty Rokos, Planner, Town of Aurora at mrokos@aurora.ca or if you have any questions please call 905-727-3123 ext. 4350. The personal information accompanying your submission will become part of the public record. Additional information and material related to this application is available for inspection between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. during regular business days at the Town's Planning & Development Services department, located at 100 John West Way, 3rd Floor.

January 8, 2013

Town of Aurora 100 John West Way, Aurora, ON L4G 6J1
www.aurora.ca/publicnotices | 905-727-3123 ext. 4350

All day session planned Saturday for 2013 Operating Budget

By Brock Weir

Saturday is usually a time where people kick back after a long, hard week of work, but it will be just the beginning for Councillors and interested members of the public this Saturday at the kick-off of the Operating Budget discussions.

The second phase of Council's budget deliberations is set to begin this Saturday, January 12 at 9.30 a.m. in the Council Chambers of Aurora Town Hall. Although Councillors are slated to wrap up debates and approve the first part of this year's budget, the Capital Budget, at next Tuesday's General Committee meeting and then final approval the following January 22, the Operating Budget will have the most direct impact on this year's proposed tax hike of 8.3 per cent on the Town's portion of your annual tax bill.

Councillors last tackled budgetary issues at the last Council meeting of 2012. At the December 18 Council meeting, they approved an operating surplus/deficit control bylaw which will put any unspent money from last year's budget back into reserve accounts with a maximum of $100,000 being put forward to this year's budget and up to $100,000 being used towards the tax rate stabilization reserve fund to account for future years.

The measures, however, were not passed without discussion with some Councillors arguing they could not approve the surplus control bylaw without firm numbers of exactly what this surplus would be, as well as putting money aside for the taxpayers of tomorrow while the taxpayers of today could get an 8.3 per cent hit this year.

"I am opposed to the principle that assessment earned by the municipality in a given year should be transferred to a future year," said Councillor Evelyn Buck. "It is the principle of applying year-end assessment revenue against your current tax rate and maintaining a reasonable level of taxes for the people who live here now, and not worrying yourself at all about the people who might live here five years from now. That is not our business. We have two more years to serve. We are serving the community we live in now."

Councillor Chris Ballard said he agreed with Councillor Buck to a certain extent, but said that philosophy has its drawbacks.

"At the same time, there is lots of evidence out there of communities that haven't planned for the future and haven't put money aside for the day to day wear and tear of their infrastructure and end up in an awful state and the taxpayers of that time are then forced to pay for repairs to infrastructure that were used by past taxpayers, so it is a fine line to walk."

He was not in favour, he added, of moving forward with this plan until there was a clear picture of what Aurora's 2012 surplus will actually look like, and indeed this was another key point in the discussions.

"My year-end results are not always known until basically...the audited financial statements and the auditors say they're okay, that's when I know what my final surplus is," said Town Treasurer Dan Elliott. "I have a pretty good idea before then, but until the auditors have gone through everything and have suggested there are no further adjustments required, then I know my surplus. It could [come] quite a bit after the budget, then we would have to open up the budget and do some cleanup. That's where it gets confusing and that is when I would like to separate the surplus of one budget from the details and workings of another."

The surplus control bylaw was passed by Councillors 5 - 4 with Councillors Ballard, Buck, Gallo, and Humfryes voting against.

Negotiations over Anne Bartley Smith lands set to resume

By Brock Weir

The Anne Bartley Smith lands in southwest Aurora will present another piece on Aurora's environmental process when negotiations over its future resume.

Talks between the Town of Aurora and the land's owners, the Ontario Heritage Trust, have stagnated over the last two years, but the Town received word over the holidays the Trust is now in a position to resume talks.

The land in question is a nearly 100 acre wooded plot of land near Bathurst and Bloomington, which was donated to the Trust in the early 1990s. In 2010, the previous Council voted in favour of exploring the possibility of a custodial agreement, giving the Town a certain level of access to the property for passive recreation, such as walking trails.

These plans stalled, however, and when this matter was put before Council last month on a pending list highlighting the lack of progress in the area, the wheels of negotiation began to turn again at the Trust.

"We received another letter just last week from the Trust saying [they] were interested in moving something along with the Town," Aurora CAO Neil Garbe told The Auroran on Monday.

"I just think other priorities came up so that has been on the backburner. Now they are interested in having a discussion."

In the time it has taken to get to this point, however, things have changed considerably in Aurora when it comes to environmental initiatives and green space. Plans marched on for the proposed Aurora Wildlife Park, while more recently Magna founder Frank Stronach proposed a nearly 90 acre eco-park on a portion of his property on Bayview Avenue near Stone Road as a legacy project. Early plans propose very similar uses to what was originally envisioned for the Bartley Smith lands.

The Town's use of the Bartley Smith Lands for passive recreation is something that needs to be considered by Council, said Mr. Garbe..

"We have to make sure this makes sense for the community," he said. "I think Council needs to consider it because of the lapse of time. [An agreement] does transfer the liability for maintenance and security of the property from the Trust to the Town and we also have other initiatives coming forward like the wildlife park, so what is reasonable to take on and what is the timeframe?"

The Trust is proposing a two-year window to get a stewardship plan in place, he said, noting that is the primary driver in negotiations and would outline the use of the property and what the Town can or cannot do with it. Any opportunity to incorporate environmental lands such as these into the "fabric of the community" is a positive thing, he added, and would provide Aurora with an opportunity of fulfilling more of the Trails Master Plan by providing formalized hiking opportunities throughout the land.

"I committed to bring forward a report saying this is the history, here's where we are, and some of the context around it to see what Council wants to do, whether they want to proceed, or just take some time to see how things evolve with the [Stronach] legacy park, and maybe there are some other discussions to take place with the trust.

"We have to fit it all together. It has always represented a good opportunity to expand our trails connections through that part of Aurora. There are some good opportunities there. It's a financial commitment that Council will have to consider."

Town Hall renos to be examined this month

From page 1 4

This was a viewpoint shared by Councillor John Gallo.

"It is a little hypocritical of us that if we mandate new buildings to be accessible and our own is not," he said. "We need to do something about this."

For Councillor Evelyn Buck, a regular user of the ramps in question, one aspect she was concerned about were the sharp angles pointing out at the top that accommodate the projection screens at the front of the chamber.

"If you're visually impaired, you will run into this barrier, and maybe something you should consider is removing them because if you're not using them, take them out and the obstruction makes everything clearer," agreed consultant Steven Comisso, whose company came up with the various options.

Mr. Comisso noted the option on the table actually accommodates for this obstacle, bringing a railing out from the wall which would guide the visually impaired a safe distance away from the corners of the screens.

As discussions went on, Councillors expressed other concerns not just with the Council chamber, but Town Hall as a whole. Councillor Paul Pirri, for instance, questioned whether the installation of the new floor had lead to any discussion about upgrading some of the equipment in the room.

"If we're putting a whole new floor on top of this floor, that would be a great opportunity to hide some of the wires," he said, noting an installation of new microphones is pending and it could be considered all at once.

Considering the Town's plans to look at renovating the first floor of Town Hall, it was suggested by Mayor Dawe and seconded by Councillor Buck that this matter be deferred until this month pending a further report on the more extensive renovations. This plan was ultimately backed by Council.

"I'm fine with that as long as it is approved in principle as something Council is serious about undertaking," said Councillor Gaertner.

Moving forward with the ramp project is expected to be considered separately in conjunction with – but not contingent on – Council's decision on the further proposed Town Hall renovations.

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Interested and qualified candidates should forward their cover letter and resume to john@simcoeyorkprinting.com

ASK TOM

Tom Mrakas

More on your Floor

Before I begin, I would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year.

In my last column of 2012, I left you with prepping and sanding your floor. Now I will explain how to finish it.

First off, if you are going to stain your floor, this is when you would begin to stain the wood. Your first step is to apply the stain with a brush. Brush liberally all over with the grain. After you apply the stain, you will take a lint-free cloth (you will need a whole lot of them!) and wipe the excess stain off (again, with the grain!).

When staining, as with anything else, always leave yourself a way out. That means don't stain yourself into a corner. You don't want to be stuck in the room for 24 hours while the stain dries, because if you walk on it, you will see footprints forever!

Leave the stain to dry overnight. When you come back the next day, you will begin to apply your finish. Now, if you want your floors to have the natural look, you will skip the staining step and go straight to the finish. To apply the finish you will need a clean brush for the edges of the room (so you can get the nooks and crannies) and a lamb's wool pad to spread out the finish across the rest of the floor. I know it sounds obvious, but I will say, once again, make sure you work to an exit so you are not stuck!

After the first coat is applied you wait 24 hrs for it to dry. Once it has dried (and really, do wait for it to dry fully), give the whole floor a light sand with a fine sandpaper (by hand or pole sander…don't use the machine (it will take too much off. You just want to sand down the fibers of the wood. The finish will pull these fibers up and the floor will feel rough).

Once that is done, proceed to apply the second coat, let dry and that is it! Now, as far as which products to use, sheen is always a personal preference, but I like a nice gloss to my floor, so I go with a gloss. The one product I would recommend you stay away from is the stain and finish in one. Believe me, the project will not turn out well. There are no shortcuts!

So your floor looks beautiful now, invite all your guests over and have them marvel at your gorgeous, newly stained and finished floors!

Until next week, remember a good job, is a job well done! You can reach me at www.facebook.com/anastasisdesign or on Twitter, @ADesign_build.

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COMING EVENTS

ON NOW

DECEMBER 1 – JANUARY 11

Have you got talent? Would you like to perform for a full house and help in the fight against cancer? Get your ACT together! Conquer Cancer: One Act at a Time is looking for musicians, dancers, jugglers, comedians and actors (must be 12 or older) to perform in their February 23 show. They are accepting auditions for large and small ensembles, duets and solo acts – variety is the spice of life! For audition information, visit www.conquercanceroneactatatime.ca.

JANUARY 3 – 24

The Aurora Public Library will host Winter Watercolours Thursdays through January 24 from 6.30 – 8 p.m. Embrace the beauty of watercolour painting with artist and teacher Alana Biasi. Both the beginner and the advanced painter will marvel at the delightful possibilities of watercolour painting. Ages: Grades 5- 100. Cost: $36. Materials not included. For more information, contact the Library at 905-727-9494.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 8

Eating Disorders of York Region (EDOYR) hosts the free Stages of Recovery Workshop at their Aurora headquarters (15213 Yonge Street, Unit 15) today. Are you ready for the possibility of change? If so, discover where you are in your journey of recovery. Stages of Recovery will help you explore the changes you are seeking. In a safe and confidential setting, the costs and benefits of changing eating disorder behaviours will be presented. We will also try to identify barriers and explore healthy coping strategies. For more information, visit www.edoyr.com. Registration is required: email info@edoyr.com or call 905-886-6632. Seating is limited.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 10

The Aurora Chamber of Commerce presents the Referral Marketing Seminar: How to Keep Your Referral Pipeline Full, with host Paula Hope of The Referral Institute of Peel-Halton. The seminar gets underway at the Aurora Chamber of Commerce office at 14483 Yonge Street from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. $25 for members or $35 for guests. For more information, call 905-727-7262.

* * * *

Amnesty International will show a video on current human rights issues tonight at 7:30 p.m., Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria St., Aurora. All welcome. Information: 905-713-6713.

JANUARY 10 – FEBRUARY 14

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, January 10 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.

JANUARY 10 – 31

EDOYR launches The Hope and Inspiration Peer Support Group at their Aurora Headquarters at 15213 Yonge Street beginning January 10 from 6 – 8 p.m. for four Thursdays. Group participants will feel empowered as they ask questions, discover answers, and gain insights together into eating disorders to help and support each other on their journey to recovery. Group participants can become role models for each other, as they witness one another overcome obstacles and make progress in their lives. Registration is $40. For more information, call 905-886-6632 or email info@edoyr.com.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 12

Want to Ace Your Grade 9 Math Exam? Head to the Aurora Public Library! The transition to high school Math can be challenging! Get ready for your first high school Math exam with teacher and mathematician Danielle Rasu-Park. Free information session for Grade 9 students only. 2 – 4 p.m. For more information, contact the Library at 905-727-9494.

MONDAY, JANUARY 14

Eating Disorders of York Region (EDOYR) launches the BREAD Support Group (Brotherhood Reflection Education Acceptance Direction) with Phil Hodgson tonight from 7 – 8 p.m. for six weeks. Phil is an experienced men's worker who has practiced as a psychotherapist in North America and Europe. He holds a diploma and Masters Degree in Counseling and Psychotherapy and a postgraduate degree in Education. The support group is intended for men who are currently considering making changes, changing or maintaining changes. The journey 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 and exploring coping strategies with the goal of learning from each other, effective coping strategies and life skills. To register call 905-886-6632 or email info@edoyr.com.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 15

Bonsai Hill Tea and Coffee will present another evening of poetry tonight with "A Portrait of Precise Words" featuring musician Alex Nugent, poets Luleta Brown, Deborah Campo, Stephanie Davidson, Sterling Dillinger, Dmitry Saltykov, Linda Squires, Dierdre Tomlinson, Malcolm Watts, and an open mic for guest poets. The evening gets underway from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Performances begin at 7.15. Limited Seating. Located at 15263 Yonge Street, Unit 2. 905-751-0797. Please note the last half hour of open mic may contain graphic language.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16

The Aurora PROBUS Club will host a joint meeting between the Aurora and Newmarket clubs and Dr. Dave Williams, CEO of the Southlake Regional Health Centre. The meeting will take place at Seaton Hall in Newmarket at 17995 Leslie Street, north of Davis Drive. Arrive at approximately 10 a.m. For more information, contact program chair Bob Staley at 905-727-5017.

* * * *

The Aurora Cultural Centre, 22 Church Street, welcomes back Jacqueline Stuart with the heritage lecture "A Virtual Tour of the Aurora Cemetery." A fascinating glimpse into important stories from Aurora's past. Admission by donation; 7 p.m. lecture. For info, call 905 713-1818, or check www.auroraculturalcentre.ca.

JANUARY 16 – 20

The Newmarket Stage Company presents Snow White & The Seven Dwarves by Stuart Ardern at Newmarket Theatre. January 16 – 19 at 8 p.m. and January 19 – 20 at 2 p.m. Tickets are $15 for Wednesday and $17 Thursday – Sunday. For tickets contact Newmarket Theatre at 905-953-5122 or visit www.newmarketstageco.org.

JANUARY 16 – FEBRUARY 10

Southlake Regional Health Centre hosts the art exhibition "Mentorship in Motion". "Mentorship in Motion" is a partnership of six accomplished artists mentoring six young students living with a challenge. Together, each team produced a collaborative piece of art showcasing how creativity can restore, repair, and renew. Art will be on display through February 10. For more information, visit www.artcures.ca.

JANUARY 18 – FEBRUARY 8

EDOYR hosts a free art program with Amanda Di Santo and Rebecca Vos-Van Soelen beginning Friday, January 18 for four Fridays from 6 – 7.30 p.m. at their Aurora headquarters. (15213 Yonge Street, Suite 15). The art program is designed to promote a healthy and effective way of expressing ones' self without necessarily having to be verbal. A calm and creative approach, this program will offer support to one another through sharing art experiences, for those that choose to do so. Multi-media, no previous art experience required. All supplies will be provided. To register call 905 886-6632 or email info@edoyr.com.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19

The first indoor edition of the Aurora Farmers' Market & Artisan Fair of 2013 takes place today at the Aurora Cultural Centre from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. All are welcome to shop, browse and visit the indoor Market that features some of your favourite farmers, food vendors and artists at the Aurora Cultural Centre. 22 Church Street. For more information, visit www.theaurorafarmersmarket.com.

* * * *

Want to Ace Your Grade 9 Math Exam? Head to the Aurora Public Library! The transition to high school Math can be challenging! Get ready for your first high school Math exam with teacher and mathematician Danielle Rasu-Park. Free information session for Grade 9 students only. 2 – 4 p.m. For more information, contact the Library at 905-727-9494.

MONDAY, JANUARY 21

Winter classes start this evening at the Aurora Cultural Centre, 22 Church Street. Programs for adults (ages 16+) include painting, drawing, wood carving, creative writing, as well as guitar, ukulele and photography. New this season – Harmonise group singing class! Children's Saturday art programs start January 26. For all program information, check www.auroraculturalcentre.ca or call 905-713-1818. Register over the phone with a credit card, or in person at the Centre.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 24

The Aurora Chamber of Commerce hosts Speed Networking with members of the Newmarket and East Gwillimbury Chambers this afternoon at St. Andrew's Valley Golf Club (4 Pinnacle Trail) from 5.30 – 7.30 p.m. Cost is $10 for chamber members. For more information, call 905-727-7262.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 25

The Aurora Cultural Centre, 22 Church Street, presents "A Sheard, Wendellful Delight", featuring John Sheard (pianist of CBC radio's Vinyl Cafe fame) and guitar wizard Wendell Ferguson in concert. From rock to mock, jazz to jokes, melody to parody, this duo (with guest bassist Dennis Pendrith) cooks up an unforgettable evening of music and humour. Concert 8 p.m.; tickets, $25 plus HST. For info, or to purchase tickets call 905-713-1818, or check www.auroraculturalcentre.ca

* * * *

The Aurora Chamber of Commerce will host Coffee with the President this morning from 10 a.m. - 11 a.m. Drop in to the Chamber office (14483 Yonge Street) to have coffee with the president of the Board and the Executive Director. Get answers to your questions or just meet the staff. Visit and see what's new at the chamber. For more information, call 905-727-7262.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 26

The White Heather Pipes and Drums presents their annual Robbie Burns Night on Saturday, January 26, at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 385, 105 Industrial Parkway N., Aurora. Enjoy a wonderful evening of music and dance along with a dinner of roast beef, Yorkshire pudding, tatties and neeps, and, of course, haggis. Entertainment by the White Heather Pipes and Drums, and Celtic Rock group Hadrian's Wall. Cocktails at 6 p.m., dinner at 7 pm. Tickets are $40 per person and are available from band members or at the Legion.

* * * *

Winter classes continue at the Aurora Cultural Centre, 22 Church Street. Programs for adults (ages 16+) include painting, drawing, wood carving, creative writing, as well as guitar, ukulele and photography. New this season – Harmonise group singing class! Children's Saturday art programs begin today. For all program information, check www.auroraculturalcentre.ca or call 905-713-1818. Register over the phone with a credit card, or in person at the Centre.

* * * *

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum and Community Centre will host History Hands-On (H2O): Winter today from 12 noon to 4 p.m. Practice knitting and corking in the Brown House parlour learn how candles were made in the log cabin. Do you know what a megalethoscope is? Come find out! Help cook treats on the wood stove in the Brown House kitchen. Experience what life was like when this area was first settled! For more information, contact the museum at 905-727-8954.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1

The Aurora Cultural Centre, 22 Church Street, presents the first concert 2013 Great Artist Piano Series. Chu-Fang Huang, piano, Winner of the Avery Fisher Career Grant, presents a program to include works by Haydn, Chopin and Wanghua Chu. A wonderful opportunity to experience world-class classical music in the intimate salon setting of Brevik Hall. Individual tickets $30 Adult; $25 Seniors (60+) and Students (up to 18 years), plus HST. Series continues March 8, April 12 and May 31; special 4-concert subscription series pricing available. For tickets and info, drop by the Centre, call 905-713-1818, or check www.auroraculturalcentre.ca.

* * * *

TOWN OF AURORA
PUBLIC NOTICE

OUR PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE — AURORA 1863 150th 2013

NOTICE OF COMPLETE APPLICATION AND PUBLIC PLANNING MEETING

Aurora Town Council will hold a public meeting on Wednesday, January 23 at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers at Aurora Town Hall to receive input on the following planning application.

A Complete Application by Rod Coutts and Brian Coutts has been submitted for a Plan of Subdivision and Zoning By-law Amendment on the lands described as Part of lots 74 and 75, Concession 1, located west of Yonge Street, east of the railway (GO Transit line) and north of Ridge Road.

APPLICATION: The owner has submitted applications for a Plan of Subdivision and Zoning By-law Amendment to allow Residential Blocks (195 units), Environmental Protection Blocks, an Institutional Block and Open Space.

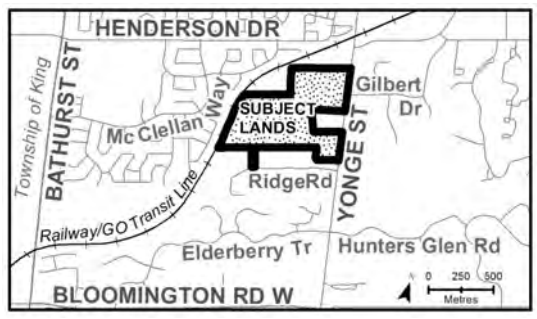
A Block Plan (Block F) for the Yonge Street South Secondary Plan (File D12-01-10) has been previously submitted by The South Aurora Landowners Group and approved by Council on the subject lands.

PROPERTY: Part of lots 74 and 75 Concession 1, located west of Yonge Street, east of the railway (GO Transit Line) and north of Ridge Road

APPLICANT: Rod Coutts and Brian Coutts

FILE NUMBERS: D12-03-12 and D14-16-12

CONTACT: Additional information may be obtained from Drew MacMartin, Planner, Planning & Development Services department at 905-727-3123, extension 4347. Comments may also be mailed to the Planning & Development Services department, faxed to 905-726-4736 or emailed to planning@aurora.ca prior to the meeting. Please quote file numbers D12-03-12 and D14-16-12.



Additional information and material related to this application is available between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. during regular business days at the Town's Planning & Development Services department, located at 100 John West Way, 3rd Floor.

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.

Plan of Subdivision (O. Reg. 544/06)

If a person or public body does not make oral submissions at the public meeting or make written submissions to The Town of Aurora in respect of the proposed Plan of Subdivision before the approval authority gives or refuses to give approval to the draft Plan of Subdivision, the person or public body is not entitled to appeal the decision of The Town of Aurora to the Ontario Municipal Board.

If a person or public body does not make oral submissions at the public meeting or make written submissions to The Town of Aurora in respect of the proposed Plan of Subdivision before the approval authority gives or refuses to give approval to the draft Plan of Subdivision, the person or public body may not be added as a party to the hearing of an appeal before the Ontario Municipal Board unless, in the opinion of the Board, there are reasonable grounds to do so.

If you wish to be notified of the decision of The Town of Aurora in respect of the proposed Plan of Subdivision, you must make a written request to The Town of Aurora to the attention of the Director of Planning & Development Services.

Zoning By-law (O. Reg. 545/06)

If a person or a public body does not make oral submissions at a public meeting or make written submissions to The Town of Aurora before the bylaw is passed, the person or public body is not entitled to appeal the decision of the Council of The Town of Aurora to the Ontario Municipal Board.

If a person or public body does not make oral submissions at a public meeting or make written submissions to The Town of Aurora before the bylaw is passed, the person or public body may not be added as a party to the hearing of an appeal before the Ontario Municipal Board unless there are reasonable grounds to do so.

If you wish to be notified of the decision of The Town of Aurora in respect of the Zoning By-law Amendment, you must make a written request to The Town of Aurora to the attention of the Director of Planning & Development Services.

January 8, 2013

Town of Aurora 100 John West Way, Aurora, ON L4G 6J1
www.aurora.ca/publicnotices | 905-727-3123 ext. 4347

Aurorans celebrate 2013 at Family First Night

Magician Brandon David kept kids entertained with two shows of illusions and sleight of hand

Alessandro and Jean-Luc stopped to make a few sparkly crafts to take home.

Zoo Tek's Doug Grabinsky brought a healthy supply of furry and slippery critters to the Leisure Complex, including Cadbury, a big-boned rabbit.

Greg Way, right, cut the 2013 cake with his grandson Julian. The cake was baked and decorated by Katelyn Forgione

Darcy, 7, provided a perch for Nikki, 22.

Mark, Christina, and Annabolla got into "Get Into The Game"

Sarah's station was busy as she served up free hot chocolate, courtesy of Tim Horton's

Party goers braved the cold for a wagon ride through the freshly fallen – and falling! – snow

Auroran photos by David Falconer

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CREDIT

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For the latest information, visit us at gmc.gm.ca, drop by your local Buick GMC Dealer or call us at 1-800-GM-DRIVE. *Offer applies to the purchase of 2013 GMC Sierra 1500 Crew Cab SL 4WD G-BBPR. ‡0% purchase financing offered by GMCL for 72 months on 2013 GMC (Sierra 1500 Crew Cab SL 4WD G-BBPR/Terrain SLE FWD G-BBP0). O.A.C by Ally Credit/TD Auto Finance Services/Scotiabank. Rates from other lenders will vary. Example: $10,000 at 0% APR, monthly payment is $138.89 for 72 months. Cost of borrowing is $0, total obligation is $10,000. Down payment and/or trade may be required. Monthly/Bi-weekly payment and cost of borrowing will vary depending on amount borrowed and down payment/trade. Monthly/Bi-weekly payments based on a purchase price of $32,518 with $0 down payment. ▼Based on a 48 month lease for 2013 GMC Terrain SLE FWD G-BBP0. Annual kilometre limit of 20,000 km, $0.16 per excess kilometre. OAC by GM Financial. Monthly payments may vary depending on down payment/trade. A down payment or trade of $3,785 and/or $0 security deposit is required. Total obligation is $18,136. Option to purchase at lease end is $12,441. Excess wear and tear and km charges not included. Other lease options available. ♦$7,000 is a manufacturer to dealer delivery credit (tax exclusive) for 2013 GMC Sierra 1500 Ext. & Crew Cab and is reflected in offers in this advertisement. Other cash credits available on most models. See dealer for details. */‡/▼/♦Freight & PDI ($1,600/$1,550), registration, air and tire levies and OMVIC fees included. Insurance, licence, PPSA, dealer fees and applicable taxes not included. Offers apply as indicated to 2013 new or demonstrator models of the vehicle equipped as described. Offers apply to qualified retail customers in the Ontario Buick GMC Dealer Marketing Association area only (including Outaouais). Dealers are free to set individual prices. Dealer order or trade may be required. Limited time offers which may not be combined with other offers. GMCL may modify, extend or terminate offers in whole or in part at any time without notice. Conditions and limitations apply. See dealer for details. ***Factory order or dealer trade may be required. ©The Best Buy Seal is a registered trademark of Consumers Digest Communications, LLC, used under license. ®Bluetooth is a registered trademark of Bluetooth SIG Inc. ©For more information go to iihs.org/ratings. ♠Comparison based on 2012 Wards segmentation: Middle/Cross Utility Vehicle and latest competitive data available and based on the maximum legroom available. Excludes other GM brands. ††2013 Sierra 1500 Crew Cab SLT 4WD with PDJ, MSRP with freight, PDI & levies $50,924. Dealers are free to set individual prices. ¥Valid at participating GM dealerships in Canada only. Retail customers only. Offer ranges from 750 to 3,000 AIR MILES® reward miles, depending on model purchased. No cash value. Offer may not be combined with certain other AIR MILES promotions or offers. See your participating GM dealer for details. Offer expires February 28, 2013. Please allow 4–6 weeks after the Offer end date for reward miles to be deposited to your AIR MILES® Collector Account. GMCL may modify, extend or terminate this Offer for any reason in whole or in part at any time without notice. Miles are issued by LoyaltyOne Inc. and are subject to the terms and conditions of the AIR MILES Reward Program. ®™Trademarks of AIR MILES International Trading B.V. Used under license by LoyaltyOne, Inc. and General Motors of Canada Limited.**